



## A day in the life of a stray

It isn't easy surviving on the streets, especially since I am just a kitten and smaller than those belligerent tomcats with notches in their ears.

Many times, I've hidden from antagonistic critters and people who shooed me away from their doorsteps. Blood is oozing from my nose because of all this sneezing and it's unattractive on my white popcorn cheeks. The rest of me is butterscotch, but my chest and paws are white - or were before I became homeless. Right now, my grooming is somewhat lacking until I can find a safe haven.

An enormous white van is crawling to a stop, probably wanting to take a look at me. I'll sit up very straight and look as smart as possible, so this man will think I'm an extraordinarily handsome feline and he will surely want to take me home.

Wait a minute, Mister. Why are you putting me in this cage in the back when I want to ride in the front with you? Besides, I'm not sure I like these whimpering dogs; the evil-looking one is growling at me. What a long bumpy ride, and that vicious dog is so close that I can feel his fiery breath.

We have arrived at our destination, and I'm glad to be out of the van, although this building doesn't appear much better with the intense noise of so many meowing cats and barking dogs. I am very unhappy here and have decided to join the deafening chorus of wayward animals. My cage mate appears preoccupied with a ball, which looks like more fun than standing here looking forlorn. At least these people are giving me food and water, but I really want someone to pamper me while whispering softly in my ear.

A woman wearing a white coat has placed me on a high shiny metal table. Yikes! That's the first time I've ever been jabbed with a needle. And what is she going to do with that thermometer?

Bath time is next on the agenda - guess I'll have to tolerate it, but I guarantee you it won't increase my optimism. In the past, I've been a fairly good escape artist, so why not break loose and run up that wall? Didn't work, but I don't give up that easily, even if these people do have unbelievable patience.

My health is gradually improving; apparently, I'm looking better, too, for people are gazing inside my cage. The gray kitten that is constantly playing with the fuzzy red ball is attracting more attention, but in my weakened condition I am barely able to sit on my haunches. Several days have passed and the gray girl just got adopted, so I'm huddled all alone in this big steel cage.

A nice lady who was here yesterday has returned and she is asking to see the butterscotch kitten. Now, the warden is encouraging the lady to hold me and I immediately sense her benevolence as the lady embraces me in her warm arms while rubbing my ears, subsequently generating a loud



Military Moms enjoyed spa treatments that included manicures, massages and pedicures, as pictured above.

## Mother's Day treat

### Tamara Spa eases stress with spa services for metro area's military mothers

BY JONI HUBRED  
STAFF WRITER

Tamara Friedman can barely contain her tears as she talks about a group of women she might never have met if not for the war in Iraq. On Sunday, her Farmington Hills spa hosted a group of military moms whose Mother's Day celebrations will be missing at least one of their children.

"I heard about the group called Military Moms," Friedman said. "I thought they would have a hard time celebrating Mother's Day, and I wanted to do something for them."

When she learned the organization had 170 members, she realized she couldn't host them all, much as she wanted to do so. Instead, the spa held a drawing in which 25 mothers were given a full range of spa services - everything from manicures and pedicures to a relaxing massage.

"Those women were so thankful," Friedman said. "Some of them, it was their first time for a pedicure and manicure."

Karen Clower of Farmington Hills has seven sons, and five are in the military. Two of her sons in the Navy are preparing to go to Iraq on ships. War has been a way of life for her family, but her day at the spa gave her a chance to forget about it for a while.

"It's been lovely, the staff has been wonderful," she said. "(They) just made us all feel so special. How can I put it in to words, I feel like a princess. Having seven sons, I've

never been pampered like this and I enjoyed every minute."

One of the mothers couldn't make it; happily, her child was coming home. Friedman told her not to worry, they could arrange another time for her to be treated.

For the other two dozen women, the day included three hours of relaxing services. Friedman's husband, Gene, was up even earlier, preparing a delicious, cooked-from-scratch lunch.

"He wanted them all to feel like a million bucks," Friedman said.

While she had planned to pay her staff members for the day, all of them volunteered their time when they heard what was happening.

About 25-30 spa employees were on duty, treating their customers so well, some offered tips - which the girls refused to take, Friedman said.

"They were just happy to help," she said, adding the moms gave each of the employees a yellow ribbon, which has become a symbol of support for troops involved in Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Employee Jane Kotkovsky, who came to the United States 24 years ago, has worked at Tamara Spa as a facialist for 23 years. She said it was a pleasure to serve the military mothers.

"Coming from Russia, I appreciate the life that I have here in this country. Thanks to their sons and daughters fighting for our country, we have freedom, safety and so much more," she said.

The spa served women in two



Military Moms Maxine Ben-Yuri of Farmington Hills (left) and Karen Clower of Farmington Hills (right) are pictured with Tamara Friedman, owner of Tamara Spa in Farmington Hills. The ladies enjoyed several hours of relaxing spa treatments on Sunday.

shifts, one from 9 a.m. to noon and the second 1-3 p.m. Each mom's day of pampering included European facials, massages, manicures and pedicures.

"It was such a heart-warming experience," Friedman said through tears. "I feel bad we couldn't treat everybody."

That desire, however, has given her the motivation to contact other spa owners with a proposal.

"I want to implement this program in all spas. We had many of them in this area," Friedman said. "It would be an Adopt-a-Mom program. Each spa would maybe take five moms and treat them. That would be wonderful."

She's even planning to contact other spa owners she knows from across the country, with the idea of making this a national program for

mothers who know better than anyone the price of military service. "Those ladies needed this so bad," Friedman said.

"We watch the war on TV. They live the war every day."

Maxine Ben-Yuri of Farmington Hills has a daughter, Sherrillann Hayes, and son-in-law, both of whom are serving in the Army. While the spa treatment was a real treat for her and helped her relax, she believes the war is all in God's hands.

"What's meant to be will be. Faith in God gets your through," she said. "He's taking care of my kids. Regardless of what religion you are, you have to have faith and a philosophy, a belief in something."

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## Stores suffer as roadwork blocks shoppers

BY CAROL MARSHALL  
STAFF WRITER

When the orange barrels first hit the road, it was a little inconvenient. But now it's a traffic stopping nightmare, say store owners and managers near Seven Mile and Middlebelt.

"The road construction here has ranged from mildly inconvenient to completely closed," said Bobbi Gelman, Livonia Mall marketing director. "It really is wreaking havoc on a lot of bottom lines."

Gelman plotted out the roadwork affecting the mall the most. "We've got a project

at Seven Mile and Middlebelt, and Middlebelt is closed.

There are projects at Eight Mile and Middlebelt, Grand River and Middlebelt and I-696 and Middlebelt," she said.

"Thirty-seven percent of our customers come from areas impacted by the construction, which has basically created a wall between them and the mall. They can't get to us without going to a lot of trouble."

Customers from Redford, western Detroit, eastern Livonia, Farmington and Farmington Hills are the mall's bread and butter, Gelman said, and those shoppers are the mall's most loyal. "We've got a project

About a month ago, the projects began and the construction was inconvenient.

"Then on April 21, other projects kicked into gear and immediately we began to feel it," Gelman said.

The merchants began to feel the effects quickly.

"Our store had been one of the top performers in the region," said Tom Perkins, Value City store manager. "Now our sales have dropped to the middle of the pack, where we don't belong."

Although Perkins has not had to lay off any employees,

PLEASE SEE MALL, C70



Stores are open and the spaces are nearly filled, but shoppers are scarce at Livonia Mall during road construction.