

Look for Backdoor Friends cat rescue van in Saturday's parade

**BY SUE BUCK
STAFF WRITER
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Driving home the need to find more foster families for homeless cats, Backdoor Friends Purebred Cat Rescue will have a decorated van in Saturday's Founders Festival parade.

The van, decorated by employees and customers under the direction of project manager Dee Walsh, has faux-fur ears and tail, eyes and whiskers made of black-painted wooden dowels woven through a pink basket.

"Voila," said store owner Anne Broneman as she showed off the van. "We have a cat."

The rescue has its home base

at Backdoor Friends Cat Shoppe, 35562 Grand River in the Muirwood Shopping Plaza located at the corner of Drake and Grand River.

"We specialize in rescuing purebred cats, but we also do domestic cats in an emergency," Broneman said. "In the spring with all the kittens, we have been inundated with moms and babies. This spring alone there were six mother cats and babies in addition to a variety of kittens."

She gets two or three calls a day from folks who need to find other homes for their pets. "Some people are moving, some have developed allergies," she

said.

Rescued cats have also been found by the side of the road and under decks.

Cat information

The cat rescue will also have a table outside Dammann Hardware in the downtown center 9 a.m. to closing, during all three days of the Founder's Festival July 19-21.

"Cat owners who have adopted cats from the rescue will man the table," Broneman said. "We won't have live cats there. This weather isn't good for them. But we will have a book with pictures of all the cats in it with details about the cats."

Proceeds from a raffle and the sale of promotional items will go toward the rescue.

"We want to get some recognition and find more foster homes," Broneman said. "There's a lot to rescue to do it right. You have to have a good process."

Dr. David Carron, a veterinarian who works for Plaza Veterinary, examines the cats and vaccinates them. He checks for fleas and ear mites and tests for feline leukemia and feline immunodeficiency virus, known as FIV.

"There's a home for every cat regardless of type, breed and age," Broneman said. "You have to present them right and know what people are looking for."

The adoption fee, which includes vaccinations, is based on what other people charge and is based on age and type of cat. Based on the veterinarian's recommendation, kittens aren't spayed or neutered until they are six months old. When the kitten is spayed or neutered, \$25 is returned from the adoption fee, Broneman said.

Cats are adopted when they are 10 weeks old. "It's better for them," she said. "If cats are with the mother, they need that motherly love. Mother cats teach

their young how to socialize properly, use the litter box, and how to eat."

Pat Rusnell and her sister, Mary Ann Meilleur, both of Commerce Township, are willing to pitch in when it comes to helping cats. They worked hard to adopt out a litter of four kittens and visited the store recently.

"The day we adopted out two siblings, these two cried all night and I knew we couldn't separate the two," Rusnell said.

Now available for adoption are litter mates Bonnie, the runt, a gray tabby with hints of tortoiseshell, and Clyde, a brown tabby with white markings. They are about 10-12 weeks old.

She complimented Broneman for always taking the cats to the veterinarian first, the runt, a gray tabby with hints of tortoiseshell, and Clyde, a brown tabby with white markings. They are about 10-12 weeks old.

Broneman calls employees Jeff and Susan Oller, of Farmington Hills, who are husband-and-wife, two of her best foster

parents. "They not only work here but have become actively involved in the rescue," Broneman said. "They are fostering a bunch of our cats, giving them a home until we can find them a permanent home. She's training them on how to do interviews and assessments."

They try not to get too attached to the cats. "I just think, I am helping out this cat because through Anne it's going to get a good home," Susan Oller said. "I know it will have a perfect home."

Broneman is also interested in ways she might make presentations to school children. She would be willing to bring a cat with her to teach children how to properly care for cats.

"I had a dozen children regularly come in to the store to play with the cats. A lot of kids are interested in animals at a really early age," Broneman said.

For more information, call her at (248) 442-0873 or e-mail at BDFCATShop@aol.com



Ready to roll: Backdoor Friend's owner Anne Broneman is ready for Saturday's parade with her van, decorated to resemble a cat. Jeff and Susan Oller will carry a banner.

Residents ask Hills officials for help with airplane noise

**BY KEVIN BROWN
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You can forget conversation on the backyard deck when the jets start passing overhead.

Richard Kraus told Farmington Hills city council members Monday that increased jet traffic can force you inside the house for normal conversation, as he once experienced while living in Raleigh, N.C.

"What we're concerned about is in December they're (Detroit Metro Airport) going to have another runway,"

said John Plonka, adding that aircraft now pass at 4,000 feet over his house in the Quaker Valley subdivision.

Plonka said he has also brought the jet noise problem to the attention of U.S. Rep. Joe Knollenberg.

"We've never had them over this community and they create noise. Why do we have to have this happen to us?" Plonka asked.

Mayor Nancy Bates responded, "I'd like to meet with you and talk."

Farmington Hills residents Richard Kraus and Bill Obremak joined Plonka before city council. "This is a long-

term quality of life issue with the community," Krause said.

"If you live this far out, it's just not a reasonable thing to expect this many aircraft. One doesn't hurt, but one after another, after another," he said.

Plonka presented council members with copies of correspondence he's had on the issue with Knollenberg, the Federal Aviation Administration, and State Rep. Andrew Raczakowski, R-Farmington Hills, since 1998.

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