



# PAW Shakes

The Newsletter of the Partnership for Animal Welfare  
SPRING 2004

P.O. Box 1074, Greenbelt, MD 20768  
www.paw-rescue.org

## Duckpin the Cat: From Neglect to New Home



by Janet Drazek

Duckpin's is one of our most satisfying success stories, because it is a real rags-to-riches tale. Duckpin was taken from an abusive home

along with a dog. Sadly, the dog had been so mistreated he was too aggressive to be safe with people, and he had to be euthanized. Duckpin was also badly traumatized, and she was in terrible physical shape. She was suffering from alopecia (loss of hair, caused by overgrooming, possibly from flea allergies), severe ear discharge, broken teeth and gingivitis. She required ear and dental surgery, and she had to stay at the vet hospital for weeks and weeks, waiting for a foster home and intimidating the vets and techs. She wasn't a happy camper and she didn't care who knew it.

Finally Duckpin found a place in a foster home, and she went to live with—horrors!—other cats. Well, it was better than living in a cage, but Duckpin was definitely not in her element in this house. What she wanted was to be an only cat and the center of attention. She was grouchy and irritable and she was now intimidating the cats and human in her new abode. But as time went by she became more and more affectionate. Soon she and her human bonded, but she still objected strongly to the presence of those other cats.

We were pretty much resigned to the idea that Duckpin wasn't likely to be adopted and that she would be a permanent foster cat. She was nine years old by now, not exactly a beauty, and had a personality that took some getting used to, to put it mildly. Other volunteers asked her foster mom why she didn't just go ahead and adopt Duckpin herself. She would have been glad to do that, but she knew that Duckpin would never be truly happy in a home with other cats.

Then one day the miracle happened. A woman emailed about Duckpin and asked to meet her. Joan was a retired Detroit police officer, so she wasn't likely to be intimidated by one grumpy little cat. She had no other cats, just a dog, and we hoped that Duckpin could deal with that. So we arranged a meeting, and Joan and Duckpin hit it off immediately. It was amazing to see how comfortable they felt with each other from the first minute. So we decided to do a trial adoption to see how Duckpin would get along with the dog, Sasha.



Things were a little tense at first, but even on the first day Duckpin started to assert her authority. Within a few days she was settling in and she and Sasha were working out their pecking order (with Duckpin on top, of course). Joan's family was eager to meet her new

baby, and here is how she describes the first meeting between Duckpin and her son Richard:

"Just want to share my son's first meeting with Duckpin. Richard was home for an 'overnight' on Sunday through Monday evening. In short, if he lived here full time, Duckpin would become HIS cat! She came right to him as soon as he came in the house. Once he sat down, he hadn't been sitting for three minutes before she jumped right up into his lap. She even slept in the bed with him all night. It was funny because every time Sasha wanted to get in the bed with him, Duckpin would snarl and growl. She clearly considered him hers! Wherever he was, she was, the whole time he was here. I tried to get a picture of her draped across his lap but 'Sasha the Ham' kept getting in the shot, and Duckpin would have to chase her away. Richard has fallen totally in love with Duckpin. And to think that I'd thought that they wouldn't be interested in each other!"

Is this the same Duckpin? No, not really. This is the HAPPY Duckpin, a cat who was finally able to put her sad past behind her and who knows that she is safe and loved and will be for all the rest of her nine lives.

## Adopters Say...

### PAW DOG PARTICIPATES IN PETS ON WHEELS

#### Adopter Rosanne Greco wrote...

*I am renewing my membership and sending a donation in honor of Charlie, the little Jack Russell Terrier I adopted from you on March 26, 2002. Charlie (who you called "Turbo") is the love of my life. He is an extraordinary dog who EVERYONE (except cats, rabbits, squirrels, and birds) just adores. He visits a local assisted living facility (Heart Fields of Bowie) on a weekly basis as part of the P.G. County Pets on Wheels program. He is a BIG hit with the residents and staff there.*

*I've had Jack Russell Terriers for 20 years (Charlie is my only pet right now) and Charlie is unusual in his loving, cuddling ways. While he's lively and energetic and focused when it comes to his interaction with small critters, he is amazingly affectionate and friendly with adults, children and other dogs. He doesn't chew or otherwise damage the house (he does cuddle, or attack, his many stuffed toys). He hardly ever barks, but is a good watch dog and alerts to someone at the doors. Like I said, he is practically perfect! Thanks so much for finding him for me.*

Thank you, Rosanne, for "recycling a life" by adopting a homeless pet!

#### Volunteers Wanted

A gift of your time can help the animals in so many ways. New volunteer orientations take place the first and fourth Saturdays of the month from 1:00 to 2:00 p.m. Volunteers are needed for countless jobs, and there is no minimum time commitment. To sign up for an orientation, please email Kathleen Krebs at krebs-paw@comcast.net.

Payroll Deduction Helps PAW  
Save Lives... United Way / CFC  
#9167

## How to Contact PAW

PAW is a private, nonprofit, and all-volunteer pet rescue group. We do not have a shelter; instead, we keep dogs and cats in foster homes and in temporary kennel space until permanent homes are found.

### Here's how to meet our adoptable pets:

- **ADOPTION SHOWS:** Visit one of PAW's weekend adoption shows, held at participating pet supply stores throughout the Maryland/DC area. For information on our next adoption show, visit our website, call the number below, or see our ads in the *Washington Post* Classifieds under *Pets:Dogs* and *Pets:Cats*. We usually have an ad every weekend listing the show location, date, and time.
- **WEBSITE:** To see photos and descriptions of all of PAW's adoptable animals, plus a list of upcoming adoption shows, events, tips, volunteer information, and more, visit our website at: [www.paw-rescue.org](http://www.paw-rescue.org).
- **CALL 301-572-4PAW** (301-572-4729) for listings of upcoming adoption shows, volunteer information, donation information, and more. (Since PAW is all-volunteer, we can't always return phone calls as quickly or in as much detail as with e-mail. Please visit our website for photos and information on our adoptable pets, since we may not be able to return such calls as quickly.)
- **E-MAIL:** For cat questions: paw\_cats@yahoo.com. For dog questions: dogs@paw-rescue.org. Other addresses are listed on the website.

## PAW Shakes

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## Woody Update:

### Starved Dog Has New Leash on Life

by Amy Bleich

Many of you followed Woody's story online and in our newsletter four years ago. His story with PAW began in May of 2000, though he must have had a much longer saga to tell.

A lonely, emaciated dog staggered by the side of the road in a rural area. He was sick, hungry, tired, perhaps hours or days from death. His fur was mostly gone, and he was weak. But, luckily for him, he was sighted by a PAW volunteer who was traveling the road.

She pulled her car over, not even sure that the animal she saw was actually a dog. He was pretty much a shell of an animal.

"I was so shocked... I called another volunteer, Chris Lord, from my cell phone to help since she lived nearby," says Joan Marshall. "When Chris approached him, she leaned over and said soothingly, 'What's the matter?' to which he responded by pressing up against her. That won her heart. She carefully lifted him into her jeep, nestled in a soft quilt."

Woody was brought to College Park Animal Hospital, where his intensive medical treatment began. I saw him on his second day there (picture above), where he was barely able to stand on his own, even for the food he so badly wanted. He was fed small meals so that he could digest safely as his system re-accustomed itself to food. But yet, even though it pained him, he wanted human contact—a pat, or a touch. I softly touched his mostly fur-less head and could see his contentment.

Weeks went by as Woody was treated for a host of ailments, and once he was strong enough, he began the difficult treatment to be cured of the deadly heartworm parasite. He continued to thrive as the summer of 2000 progressed.

Then he began to go to adoption shows to meet the other dogs and prospective homes. Enter Katrina Pearthree, who saw him at a show and adopted him later that year.

"Woody came to me as a dog to make two and share my life with Zorro, a Belgian Shepherd mix. I didn't know that he had such a story until I saw him at an

adoption show and when I adopted him—he came with lots of well wishes and good will. He is the perfect fit for my house and he and Zorro are soul mates."

Woody's transition from rescue to home, however, was not easy—after a life on the streets, he developed the behavioral issue of "resource guarding" and had issues around food and other dogs. His new adoptive mother attempted to do the right thing and took him to local trainers who suggested methods of harsh corrections to discourage unacceptable behavior. It didn't start out so badly—but the more excited he became, the more physical corrections he received. It was a downward spiral for a dog who had been through so much.

"Woody's spirit started to break—and my heart did too. We kept looking for answers—and they came—in the form of 'positive dog training,'" Katrina remembers.

Katrina persevered and secured private lessons for Woody with a positive trainer who turned him around using a clicker, a head halter, and some treats. The trainer called him her "best boy," and his resilient spirit began to soar once again. Within a few lessons, he was able to walk calmly on a leash within the presence of another dog. After that, his improvement was remarkable.

That same year, he went to the beach for the first time and continues to go places with a national walking club. In the fall of 2003, Woody returned to a classroom setting for more socialization with new dogs, and he graduated as class valedictorian!

Rescued animals come with a past. Some are able to adjust quickly to a loving and stable environment; others take more time and devotion. Every animal and every adoptive home has a different story, but all will agree that their rescued animals become very special family members who have much to give.

"Woody hopes that others will learn from his experiences," says Katrina. "As for his life now—it all finally fits together for him in a wonderful way."



**PHOTOS: Left: Woody, shortly after his rescue in 2000. Right: Woody at the beach after his rehabilitation and adoption. Yes, it's the same dog!**

# Are Pets Dying for a Green Lawn?

## Yard Chemicals Put Pets... and People... at Risk

by Kathleen Summers

Spring is finally upon us, and our gardens are starting to bloom. Some of these blossoms will be the “good” flowers—tulips, daffodils, and garden roses. Others will be the “bad” flowers—dandelions, daisies, and other unwanted weeds that run amok... We also look forward to the “good” bugs, like butterflies and ladybugs, while waging war on the “bad” ones, like ants and aphids. Time to get out the lawn sprays and chemicals...

But wait... which is really more harmful to our overall well-being—the bright yellow dandelion, or the chemicals that we spray and sprinkle upon these unwanted blooms? As I sat in my veterinary oncologist's waiting room week after week for more than a year, trying to save my dog from Stage Four Lymphoma, I often thought about how many pets and people are suffering just for the dubious benefit of having a greener lawn. My dog's oncologist had told me that the type of cancer that affected my pet, and so many other dogs, had been linked to lawn chemicals—in this case, herbicides. Are we killing our pets, and maybe even ourselves, just to stamp out a few weeds?

And it's not just our dogs. Childhood cancer rates have been increasing over the past 20 years, and some of the increases have been linked, at least in part, to pesticide exposure. Parkinson's disease is also on the rise, and has been linked, in many studies, to pesticide use. Are we killing our pets, our kids, and ourselves, just to stamp out a few ants and spiders?

The following sources imply that the price we may pay for a greener lawn (or an ant-free garden) may be too high—not just for our pets, but ourselves...

- The Journal of the National Cancer Institute reported in 1991 that **pet dogs exposed to the weed killer 2,4-D are dying of cancer at twice the normal rates**. 2,4-D is an ingredient in many popular over-the-counter weed killers.
- The ASPCA's Animal Poison Control Center (888-426-4435) reports receiving many calls about dogs and cats becoming severely ill after walking on chemically-treated lawns.
- A study published in 1999 in the Journal of the American Cancer Society showed a strong link between the world's most commonly-used herbicide

(glyphosate, an ingredient in products like Roundup) and non-Hodgkin's lymphoma in humans.

- The Pesticide Education Center ([www.pesticides.org](http://www.pesticides.org)) has compiled a collection of more than fifty studies demonstrating a link between childhood cancer and pesticide exposure.
- A federally-sponsored study tracked farmers in several states who used pesticides regularly. It found that they had higher than normal rates of several types of cancer.
- Over 40 studies have found a link between pesticide exposure and Parkinson's Disease, as well as many other devastating neurological impairments (see report at [www.pesticides.org](http://www.pesticides.org)).
- More than 380 studies over the past 35 years have linked many types of cancer in adults to pesticide exposure in the home, work, and environment (see list at [www.pesticides.org](http://www.pesticides.org)).

### SUGGESTIONS FOR A SAFER HOME AND LAWN

To avoid toxic exposure to chemicals, consider reducing your exposure with a few changes...

**Use organic fertilizers and lawn treatments.** There are many organic lawn care products available. Insect repellants made from garlic and fertilizers made with seaweed are just a few of the products that can make your plants healthy without making them toxic. There are many different brand names on the market. For more information, search the Internet for “organic lawn care” or ask your local garden center or organic marketplace.

**Remove insects the non-lethal way.** An occasional spider, cricket, or moth in the home can be removed safely and humanely and placed outdoors. If you don't wish to go near the insect, consider buying an inexpensive catch-and-release tool such as The Bug Wand. The Bug Wand is a small battery-operated vacuum attached to a long tube—you simply point it at the insect, vacuum the bug into the tube, and shake it loose outside without harm.

**Raise your tolerance.** Consider whether a few dandelions or beetles in the yard are really going to ruin your outdoor enjoyment. Many homeowners have healthy lawns without the need of chemical treatments. They “grass-cycle,” allowing clippings to remain on the lawn to naturally re-fertilize it, use natural soil enrichments, and allow the local birds to do away with most of their unwanted insects. Nature does have a way of taking care of itself if allowed to return to an organic cycle.

A natural lawn can be beautiful—as well as much safer for both you and your family and pets.

## Special Donations...

### *In Honor of People*

- In honor of Amy Bleich**, by Wendy, Skip, Daniel, Fuego, Bucky and Margo Hall
- In honor of Audra and Shadow**, my two best friends, by Peter Collins
- In honor of Deb Brudvig**, by Kathy Judd
- In honor of Dorothee Riederer's birthday**, by Iris Rainone
- In honor of Dr. Tom McMichael and Susie Leone**, by Marc Pound
- In honor of Fenris Cavnor**, by Alison Wainwright Davitt
- In honor of Iris Rainone**, who has devoted her entire adult life to the humane treatment of animals
- In honor of Iris Rainone's birthday**, by Dorothee Riederer
- In honor of Janet Drazek**, by Bailey and Reilly
- In honor of Joe and JoAnn Lamp**, by Bailey, Reilly and Coal
- In honor of Joyce Richardson**, by Linda Coleman
- In honor of Kathleen Summers's birthday**, by Andi and Bob Summers
- In honor of Kelly Minchik**, by David Harwood and Ellen Marshall
- In honor of Margot Osborne**, by Coal
- In honor of Robin Tierney**, by Janet Soslow
- In honor of Ruth Rathburn, Kady's "mother,"** by Carol Rathburn

### *In Memory of People*

- In memory of Anna Norwood**, by Carol Hysong
- In memory of Bud Terry**, by Katie and Rusty
- In memory of Carole Anderson**, a dear friend and a lover of animals, by Judith M. Smith
- In memory of Debbie Breuer**, by Fran and Ted Hodges
- In memory of Jackie Novak**, by Judy Novak
- In memory of Margaret Archer**, by Client Network Services, Inc., Jenny Wierschem, Jim and Sue McCurdy, Amber Johnson, Dorothy Coder, Yvonne Albrecht, Alida Friedrich, Kerry A. Lowell, Stacy Goldman, Mike and Nancy James, Rachel Wallenstein and "The Yahoo Moms"
- In memory of Quinton Mouldale**, by Bert and Nancy Brown
- In memory of Riki Middleton**, esteemed teacher of yoga, with love and devotion, from her students.

### *In Honor of Pets*

- In honor of Curly, and thanks to foster mom Rosemary Watton**, by Elizabeth Seastrum
- In honor of Stojko and Sato**, by Lee Morey
- In honor of Chance and Kyra**, by Christie-Sue Decker
- In honor of Charlie, adopted from PAW 3/26/02, who is a practically perfect pet**, by Rosanne Greco
- In honor of Crissy, my cat**, by Beverly Sabol
- In honor of Czar and Gavin**, by Jane Goode
- In honor of Honey B. Carr**, by Jill Baxter
- In honor of Molly Sunshine Raney**, by June Raney
- In honor of Tasha**, by Dan Riazzi
- In honor of Tyler Mackenzie**, by Judith Smith

### *In Memory of Pets*

- In memory of Casey**, by Margaret Flynn
- In memory of Cindy Sue Raney and Candy Lou Raney**, by June Raney
- In memory of George and Shen**, by Lee Morey
- In memory of Ginger**, by Dan Riazzi
- In memory of Henry (a PAW adopted dog)**, by Jonathan Morris
- In memory of Marcus**, by Robyn Zeiger
- In memory of Marshmallow**, by Dori Steele and Robyn Zeiger
- In memory of Max and Alexandra**, by Dr. Julie Smith
- In memory of Molly and Tobie**, beloved dogs of Nancy Yusi and Dave Turnbull, by Amy Bleich
- In memory of Moody**, by Dennis Meldrum
- In memory of Mooshi**, by Willie Arnett
- In memory of Nannie**, by Dorothy L. Casey
- In memory of our sweet and handsome boys, Chester and Dumplin'**, by Jo Ann and Joe Lamp
- In memory of precious Kady**, by Ruth Rathburn and Carol Rathburn
- In memory of Rudy**, my Husky dog, by Beverly Sabol
- In memory of Timber**, beloved dog of Gloria and Marc Pound, by Ruth and Harry Cottman
- In memory of Timber**, by Marc Pound

**PLEASE NOTE: Some gifts may have been received after the deadline for this issue. They will be printed in the next issue. The animals thank you for your support.**

## Little Bites...

### *Cats and Dogs Seek Loving Foster Homes*

The need for dog and cat foster homes is always urgent. Without them, PAW cannot save the lives of dogs and cats who have run out of time at local shelters. Foster pets share your home until they find their "forever families." You provide food, love, and gentle training; PAW provides all necessary medical care, and can loan crates and other supplies.

To read more information about fostering for PAW, go to: <http://www.paw-rescue.org/foster.html>.

To discuss fostering a dog, please contact [dogs@paw-rescue.org](mailto:dogs@paw-rescue.org), or for cats, contact [paw\\_cats@yahoo.com](mailto:paw_cats@yahoo.com). Thank you!

### *Your Online Shopping Can Help PAW*

Whenever you shop online, whether it's for books, pet food, clothes, or even office supplies, a portion of your purchase price can be donated to PAW, **at no cost to you!** Just go to [www.greatergood.com](http://www.greatergood.com). Click on "find a cause" on the homepage, and type in "Partnership for Animal Welfare" as your charity of choice. Then shop away at hundreds of major retailers—everything from Barnes and Noble to PetSmart—all while helping the animals. You can also shop at a similar site, called IGive, [www.igive.com](http://www.igive.com), the same way. Both sites will help us save dogs' and cats' lives at no cost to you.

*Continued, next page...*

## Little Bites, continued...

### Free Demonstrations on Responsible Pet Ownership

PAW volunteers are available to provide free RPO (Responsible Pet Ownership) presentations to schools and community groups. Dogs and/or cats accompany the volunteers to help demonstrate humane pet care issues. For information about having a free presentation for your school, scout troop, office, or other gathering, please contact: tierneydog@yahoo.com.

## PAW Shakes to...

- **LORI THIELE** for her devotion to transporting multiple kenneled dogs to adoption shows on a regular basis. Woofs and wags!
- **JANET DRAZEK** for her dedication to fostering so many of PAW's cats and kittens over the years.
- **KRIS JORDAN** for the integral part she plays in PAW's fostering program. Arfs!
- **LIZ DIETZ** for the myriad of tasks she coordinates to support PAW. Purrs...
- **GAZETTE NEWSPAPERS** for featuring a promotional spot for PAW in some of their weekly editions. Meows and woofs!
- **PAW'S BASKET BINGO VOLUNTEERS** for organizing and staffing these highly successful fundraisers; the last Basket Bingo event raised over \$3000 for the animals! Purr-fect!
- **PAW's FOSTER FAMILIES**, who open their homes seven days a week to give PAW's dogs and cats a second chance at happiness. We couldn't save lives without you.
- **VETERINARIANS AND STAFF at Beltway Referral Associates, Chesapeake Veterinary Cardiology Associates, College Park Animal Hospital, Family Veterinary Clinic, Gaithersburg Animal Hospital, Hyattsville Animal Hospital, Kenhaven Animal Hospital, Laurel Park Animal Hospital, Metropolitan Emergency Animal Clinic, Nebel Street Animal Hospital, St. Charles Animal Hospital, St. Leonard Animal Hospital, VCA Veterinary Referral Associates, Watkins Park Animal Medical Center, and Wheaton Animal Hospital** for providing reduced-cost vet care to so many of PAW's homeless dogs and cats. Wags!
- **PRESTON COUNTRY CLUB and REISTERSTOWN BOARDING KENNEL**, for boarding some of our homeless pets at reduced rates. Wags and woofs!
- **PRINTING IMAGES of Rockville**, for printing this newsletter at reduced cost. Meow!
- **WUSA TV'S PETLINE 9** for featuring an adoptable PAW dog each month on a live TV spot on the Saturday morning news.
- **WTOP NEWS RADIO STATION** for broadcasting PAW's humane pet care tips one day a month.
- **LAST BUT NEVER LEAST**, we thank the Maryland-area **PETSMART and PETCO** stores, for hosting our weekly dog and cat adoption shows. Paw shakes and purrs to all!

#### Membership/Donation Form

Partnership for Animal Welfare, Inc., P.O. Box 1074, Greenbelt, MD 20768

www.paw-rescue.org 301-572-4PAW

#### PLEASE CHECK AS MANY AS APPLY:

\_\_\_ **Membership:**  **Single** (\$25)  **Family** (\$45)

\_\_\_ **Renewal:** Please check here if this is a renewal membership.

\_\_\_ **Additional donation:** I am enclosing an additional gift of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ I enclose an additional donation **in memory of:**

A person: \_\_\_\_\_ A pet: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ I enclose an additional donation **in honor of:**

A person: \_\_\_\_\_ A pet: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_ **Volunteer:** I am willing to help in the following capacity:

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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*Please make checks payable to the Partnership for Animal Welfare and mail to the address above. The animals thank you.*

# Pregnancy and Babies and Cats . . .

## Myths, Folklore, and Urban Legends

By Janet Drazek

Sadly, even in these supposedly enlightened times, there are people who insist on giving up their cats when they get pregnant. There are a variety of reasons, few if any of them valid. Some have heard the old wives' tale about cats sucking the breath out of babies. Some worry about allergies (although recent studies show that babies raised with animals are less likely to develop allergies later on). Some worry about toxoplasmosis, which is no risk at all if common-sense precautions are taken. And some are convinced by doctors that they should "get rid of" their pets.

Those are the myths. Here are the facts:

### Cats and Newborns

Cats don't suck the breath out of babies. Theoretically, a cat might nuzzle a baby's face to investigate the smell of milk. But common sense would dictate that a cat shouldn't sleep in the baby's crib. There are crib covers (mesh or netting) that prevent an animal from jumping into the crib, or the nursery door can be shut if necessary. Older babies and mellow cats might become devoted sleeping companions, but at first it's best to keep them separate.

Babies may have reactions to any number of allergens, but they often outgrow the allergies. Attempting to remove all allergens from the environment might simply exacerbate the problem later on, when the immune system will over-react to new stimuli because it has not been challenged early on. Getting rid of the rugs is usually more effective than getting rid of the cat, but if the baby is having significant allergic reactions to the cat, try separating the two for awhile. If that doesn't work, and the baby's health might be compromised, *then* it might be time to try to find the cat a new (carefully screened) home. The baby's health comes first, but the cat's welfare should be considered too.

### Toxoplasmosis and Pregnancy

Toxoplasmosis is a frequently-mentioned threat, but a little careful research will confirm that there's no risk for a pregnant woman if sensible hygiene routines are followed. Of course, a little *less* careful research might turn up scary warnings with little scientific basis. It's important to validate your information with sound science from reputable sources. Toxoplasmosis is a disease caused by the microscopic parasite *Toxoplasma gondii*. It is often asymptomatic and is normally no risk to humans or cats with normal immune systems, but an

unborn baby could be harmed if—and only if—a woman is exposed to *Toxoplasma* for the first time shortly before or during pregnancy. A person could conceivably be infected by ingesting *Toxoplasma* eggs from soil (for example, after gardening in contaminated soil) or other surfaces contaminated with cat feces, but studies show that infection is most likely from eating undercooked meat.

If a cat has been exposed to Toxoplasmosis it will only be contagious for two or three weeks, and after that it is highly unlikely to be re-infected. Free-roaming cats can become infected through contact with infected soil or by eating an infected bird or rodent, or a kitten may be infected by its mother (kittens are more likely to have the disease because their immune systems are less developed. Toxoplasmosis is far rarer in adult cats). If a woman has been exposed to *Toxoplasma* before becoming pregnant (millions of people have been infected without knowing it), she will not become infected again. To find out whether there's any chance of her becoming infected, she can get a Toxoplasmosis titer to see whether she has been exposed in the past. If she has been, there is no danger of infecting the baby.

### Toxoplasmosis: Simple Prevention is Key

All that being said, simple common-sense procedures can prevent any risk at all. According to all sources, a woman should avoid cleaning the litter box when pregnant if possible. If that's not possible, she should wear gloves while cleaning and wash her hands thoroughly afterward. If a cat does have toxoplasmosis and is shedding eggs in its stool, the eggs are not infectious for at least 24 hours. If the litter box is scooped daily, the parasite eggs will never have a chance to become contagious. Millions of women who live with cats have gotten pregnant and had babies. If a baby is harmed by toxoplasmosis, the mother may have been careless about litter box hygiene, but it's far more likely she contracted the disease from handling raw meat, eating undercooked meat, or gardening in contaminated soil. Unfortunately, the cat will probably be blamed, and the myth will be perpetuated.

Most human doctors are humane and rational, but there are regrettably some who consider pets disposable. They simply don't understand that the pets are family members too, and they believe that getting rid of the animals is a quick and easy solution to many problems—sometimes whether the problem is actually caused by animals in the household or not. But with a little preparation and knowledge, a healthy cat and a healthy mom and baby can live happily in the same household, both before and after the delivery.

**Partial list of sources:** *Catnip* (Tufts University School of Veterinary Medicine), Sept. 2000, Oct. 2003, July 2003; *Cat Fancy*, April 1998; *Cat Watch* (Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine), April 2001.

## Beautiful Baylor Needs a Special Home



*Baylor is a 7-year-old shepherd/husky mix with beautiful eyes—one turquoise and one brown.*

*Baylor ran the streets for weeks until someone was clever enough to catch him.*

*What we found at that time was a dog that was all skin and bones. Because of his*

*past, it took him time to learn to trust people. Now, he's friendly and loyal to those he trusts—and it doesn't take much. Just a few kind words, a soft touch, and a belly rub! And, since coming to PAW,*

*Baylor has put on some much-needed weight. He still is a bit of an escape artist, and he needs a home where he will know he can stop running and be loved and cared for and just be a happy-go-lucky dog. Baylor would be best as an only pet in the household. Baylor has been boarded at a kennel for months now and would love to enter your heart and*



*your home (either on a permanent or foster basis). For more information about meeting Baylor, please call 240-375-3165.*

*Thank you.*



**Partnership for Animal Welfare**  
**P.O. Box 1074**  
**Greenbelt, MD 20768**

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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