

2018 Quarterly Issue: Vol 4 - Saving Lives Everyday

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News

2018
Vol.4



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SCAN ME



LETTER FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR



Photo taken by El-Ileen Tan

CWS Executive Director, Laura Ann Meranda

This year has flown by especially quickly. We are fast approaching the Christmas season, my favourite time of the year.

It's been an exciting year for Cat Welfare Society (CWS). Earlier in April, a major milestone was reached with the announcement that AVA had appointed CWS as their third party mediator. This is firm affirmation of the work that CWS does and marks our nation's full commitment towards the humane management of cats in Singapore. Following the news, we have expanded our mediation team in anticipation of the increase mediation caseload. Read about how Jiehui, our newest member, is learning the ropes of mediation in this issue.

Mediation continues to be one of CWS' core functions as we believe it forms the critical backbone to achieving the society's milestones in sterilisation, adoption and cat ownership. It has also been crucial to breaking grave issues of abandonment, abuse, hoarding and neglect in our communities into our national consciousness.

As we come to the close of 2018, we would also like to take the opportunity to thank all our volunteers, members as well as donors and sponsors for all the support given throughout this past year. With your help, we were able to organise and participate in an increased number of adoption drives and events this year, which saw an increase in the number of cats adopted.

We were also able to expand our education outreach efforts with the launch of the Catopia Travelling Exhibit tour in June, to schools and public spaces like shopping malls and national libraries.

None of what we have achieved this year could have been done without the help of all our supporters and on behalf of everyone at CWS, I would like to thank you from the bottom of my heart. I hope that you can continue supporting us even as we press on to pave the way for the eventual legislation of HDB cat ownership in Singapore.

Wishing everyone season's greetings and happy holidays!

Laura Ann Meranda



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<https://catwelfare.store>

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Mews 2018, Volume 4

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MEDIATOR FEATURE

Learning The Ropes



Disagreements and disputes are part and parcel of our everyday lives, but resolving them in a healthy and positive way is a skill that many of us spend years trying to develop. Cat Welfare Society's (CWS) mediators provide an invaluable service to our neighbourhoods by managing cat-related conflict and ensuring that our community cats never become collateral damage in human disputes.

With the recent announcement of AVA appointing CWS as their third party mediator, we have expanded our mediation team. In this issue, we talk to Jiehui, our newest member.

Tell us about yourself

Hi! I'm Jiehui and I am a new mediator in Cat Welfare Society. Before joining CWS, I worked in the Maritime industry. In my free time, I enjoy going to the movies and spending quality time with my loved ones. I also love traveling and exploring nature, and I often go hiking at local nature parks like Bukit Timah Hill and Sungei Buloh Wetland Reserve etc. I also have a pet dog, a Jack Russell mix called Candy!

What prompted you to join Cat Welfare Society? Have you always loved animals?

I joined CWS because I've loved animals since I was a child. My parents are big animal lovers too, and I remember an incident where my Dad and I took care of an injured community cat together. In my growing up years, it was hard to do volunteer work because I was still studying and many organisations have a minimum age requirement for volunteers.

After I completed my university degree in Maritime Business, I worked for 2 years in the E-commerce and Maritime industry. It was a very typical 9-5 office job and I was never really satisfied.

My interest was piqued when I chanced upon CWS' mediator recruitment post on their page in May this year. Straight away, I thought, "This could be an opportunity for you to do something for the community cats and for yourself!"

In a way, joining CWS as a mediator and becoming a voice for our community cats is the realisation of a long-time dream of mine.

What do you think is the most challenging part of being a mediator?

The most challenging part of being a mediator is approaching the situation with empathy and trying to put myself into the positions of all parties involved so I can understand their points of view.

This enables me to mediate more effectively between various agencies, cat caregivers/feeders, feedback providers and residents.

Depending on the nature of the case, you may also need to be assertive and determined to ensure that the situation is resolved humanely, with no harm coming to the cat. I am still learning every day and am very grateful to my colleagues Laura and Michelle as they have been sharing invaluable tips and experiences with me.

What do you think is the most rewarding part of being a mediator?

The most rewarding part is when the conflict is resolved and the community cats can continue to remain in their 'home' environment without being removed or relocated. Many community cats have regular caregivers who feed them daily and love them dearly, and so when I can resolve a complaint or an issue, the caregiver and their community cats will not be separated. This really warms my heart because I know how much the caregivers love and care for their cats, even paying for the community cats' food and medical bills out of their own pockets.

Is there a message that you would like to share with our readers?

I personally believe that tolerance and consideration are very important because we live in a densely populated country. Cat feeders should feed responsibly – clear any leftover food after feeding and refresh water bowls daily. Feeding is not illegal, but littering is, which means food must be cleared after the cats have eaten! It's also important to



feed away from high human traffic areas and to never feed at common or upper-storey corridors of HDB flats. We see too many cases of community cats becoming a nuisance to residents simply because the errant caregivers feeding the cats in the wrong areas.

Having said that, tolerance amongst neighbours is very important too. If a community cat is causing a nuisance where you live, there are many deterrent yet humane measures that can be taken to solve the problem. We strongly advise against relocation or removal of community cats, and this is where CWS mediators (like me) step in to help resolve the tension.

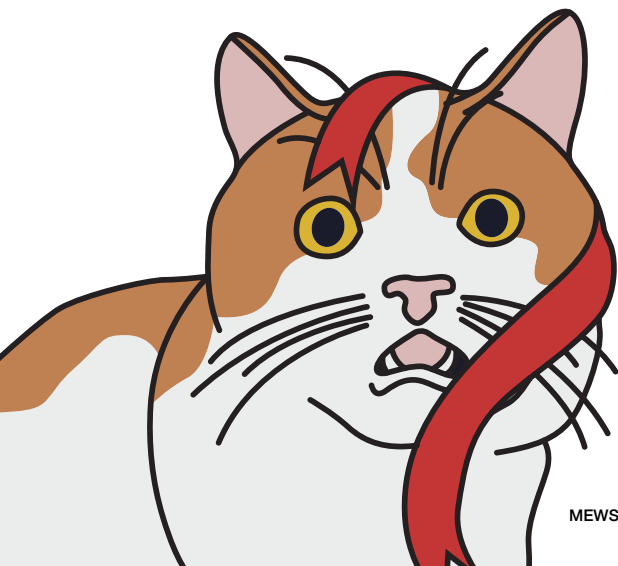
There are instances where cat feeders or caregivers are harassed by residents who are unable to tolerate the cat feeding. In my time with CWS, I have been involved in cases where feeders have been scolded with vulgarities. Some of these feeders have also had water thrown down on them from upper floors and countless threats have been made on the community cats lives. This is unacceptable.

As a society, we can definitely move towards becoming more tolerant and considerate of our neighbours, and this will ensure that we – and our community cats – can continue to live side by side in harmony for the years ahead.

HEALTH BITES

Tis' The Season To Be Jolly

For many of us, the holiday season means gatherings with our nearest and dearest, lots of good food, presents and merry-making late into the night! While this may sound like the perfect way to end the year for many of us, the sudden changes to our home during the festive season can affect our sensitive cats who are suddenly treated to new smells, new sights, and new sounds. Here are some tips and tricks to ensure that you and your kitty have a peaceful and stress-free holiday period!



Having a Meowy Christmas

In preparing our homes for parties, the Christmas tree is usually the first thing we think to put up. Unfortunately, for many young cats, your beautiful tree looks like a giant scratching post-cum-obstacle course! To deter your cat from having too much fun with your tree and risking injury to themselves or others, place orange or lemon peel around the base of the tree, or spray the tree (if it's artificial) with a citrus spray as cats dislike the smell. Hang fragile ornaments or dangerous decorations on the top half of the tree, and ensure your cat has plenty of other appropriate toys to play with.

With Christmas trees come Christmas presents, and many a cat would love to 'help' you with your gift-wrapping. It's very natural for your cat to want to play with ribbons, bows, string and tinsels but close supervision is needed as string-like material can cause dangerous linear foreign body obstruction if consumed which, in the worst cases, require surgery – definitely not something you want to risk during the festive period. As an alternative, avoid using strings or ribbons when wrapping and be sure to clear any leftover decorating material when you're done.

If you're going full out with the décor, you may also be interested in getting holiday plants to brighten up your home. But take note that this can be risky. Lilies and mistletoe are notoriously toxic to cats and can cause kidney failure, cardiac issues, shock and death within hours. Holly and poinsettia are less poisonous but can cause vomiting, diarrhea and indigestion.



Sharing May Not Be Caring

It's not just you who may be tempted to let Kitty try a special treat during the holidays, your guests may sneak them some delicious morsels from the table too! While most cats are not interested in non-meat items, do exercise more caution when choosing to share your platter with your cat. Onions, chocolate and avocados are toxic to them, and your cat may suffer from indigestion or vomiting if they consume rich, dairy, fatty or hi-sodium foods.

Instead, share your holiday spirit – instead of your plate – with your cat by buying them an extra fancy can of wet food. You can also choose to buy some extra treats, so that any guests who are tempted to feed your cat from their plate can give them a feline-friendly snack instead!

All Dressed Up & Nowhere to Run

Many cats are shy or nervous around strangers, and their sensitivity to loud and sudden noises can make the holiday period very stressful for them. You can choose to keep your cat in an off-limits room and move their litter box and food/water dish into it temporarily, or allow your cat to roam the house freely.

Should you choose the latter, keep your front door and gate shut (and remind your guests to do so too) but open a bedroom door so that your cat may escape to that room if they become overwhelmed by the activity and noise. And, if your cat should disappear into their safe haven, tell your guests to leave them be. You may also choose to plug in an animal-friendly diffuser to fill the room with calming influences and help your kitty relax! This is especially important for older cats as they may be more prone to stress-induced illnesses.



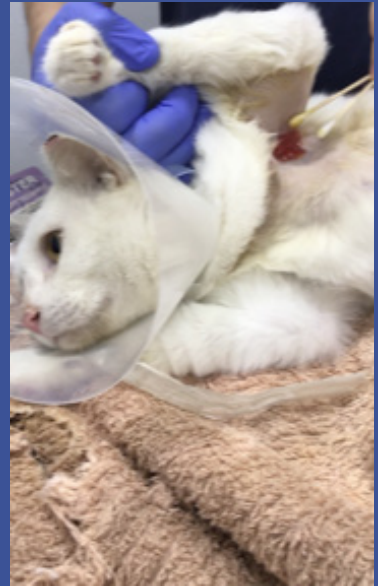
But On A Serious Note...

Cat caregivers often dread festive seasons because abandonment figures tend to spike during these periods. If you know anyone who is thinking of giving someone a cat or kitten as a present this holiday season, do advise them to think again. While it seems like a sweet gesture and an amazing gift, it is very often a bad idea.

Becoming a cat owner is a big responsibility and a great deal of reflection, research and commitment is needed to ensure that the cat or kitten lives a happy and healthy life for the years to come. Too often caregivers are saddled with more abandonment cases when adults and children alike become unwilling to care for their cat when the sparkle and shine of the holiday period is over. As such, giving a cat or kitten as a present should very rarely be considered.

Cat Welfare Society wishes everyone Happy Holidays and a very Happy 2019 ahead!

THE COLLAR CAT



My name is Collin, and I was known as the unfortunate “Collar Cat” on Facebook. My rescuer nicknamed me “Sad Eyes”, because I looked perpetually sad.

A lady named Suzliani, who was visiting relatives during the Hari Raya period this year, spotted me hiding under a car in Bedok. Upon closer inspection, she was shocked to see that I had a collar stuck between my neck and the upper part of my leg that connects to my torso.

You see, I had been awkwardly stuck in the collar for weeks, and despite my best attempts to pull, lick and even bite it off, nothing worked. You can imagine how uncomfortable it was for me as I could not walk properly nor lift my head up beyond a certain angle.

I was afraid if anyone tried to come close to me. The only way I would have meals was if someone left it on a disposable plate and walked away! I was in constant pain and discomfort as the collar was digging into my armpit. I wished to be put out of my misery.

My picture was circulated around various cat forums on Facebook and Shelby, who is a committee member of Cat Welfare Society was alerted to my situation. I was immediately sent to the vet the next day when the trapper realized that the collar had embedded so deeply into my flesh that it could not simply be cut away with a pair of shears.





“The entire experience was so horrible and traumatising and I would squeeze myself closely into the furthest corner of the cage.”

Upon examination, the vet found a hole the size of a fifty cent coin where the collar had cut into my skin. It was badly infected due in part due to my constant licking and futile efforts to bite the collar off. I had to be sedated so the vet could remove the collar and spent 38 days in the clinic. Due to the size and severity of the wound, I had to be stitched up twice as my wound did not heal well. The vet said that it was possible that someone had intentionally done this to me by re-adjusting my collar but since I cannot speak and tell people what actually happened to me, the culprit may never be caught.

The entire experience was so horrible and traumatising and I would squeeze myself closely into the furthest corner of the cage. I was in pain and terrified. Every single sound jolted me. I didn't know that the nurses and the vet were trying to help me so I kept growling at them.

Just when I thought things could not get any worse, they started to get better. Thanks to the Cat Welfare Society's Stray Cat Sterilisation Scheme, Shelby was able to get me sterilised and microchipped. This took some financial strain off from my medical and boarding fees, which amounted to over \$2000. Thankfully, this bill was paid for by Shelby, with the help of online crowdfunding.

After my discharge from the clinic, I was sent to a boarding facility where I spent 2 months in rehabilitation and further recovery. I blossomed into an affectionate lap cat that loves to groom humans.

In mid-September 2018, about 3 months after I was rescued, I finally found my forever home. Now I have a daddy, mummy as well as 2 sister cats. I couldn't ask for more.

My ordeal may be over, but scars remain, a daily reminder of what I went through - my neck is tilted permanently to the right so I cannot keep my head straight when I eat from my food bowl. This means I often create a mess when I eat. My new daddy and mummy don't scold me for this as they know I cannot help it.

Although I still get spooked by sudden movements and sounds, I am now a happy and loving kitty. My new family has installed meshing on their windows and doors to make sure that I will never roam out again and be subject to such cruelty.

Thank you to everyone who has shown me kindness. A little empathy and kindness can make a big difference in the lives of others, especially animals like us who cannot speak our needs.

ALL I WANT FOR X'MAS

Since the festive season is just around the corner, we asked the Executive Director and Board Members of Cat Welfare Society what their Christmas wishes are!



**Thenuga,
President**

"... for every cat owner to be responsible and do their part for our Singapore cats' welfare."



**Vanessa,
Vice President**

"...for all Singaporeans, cat-lovers and non-cat-lovers alike, to show more initiative, respect and kindness towards our feline friends. Oh, and a new cat tree for my cats!"



**Laura,
Executive Director**

"...for everyone to know that we are the voice for cats and we should stand united against backyard breeding, abandonment and ignorance."



**Fareena,
Secretary**

"...for our community cats to remain a part of our landscape. Loved and respected as all living creatures should be."



**Emi,
Treasurer**

"...for everyone to accept and embrace community cats as part of Singapore's landscape!"



**Celine,
Committee Member**

"...for cats to be treated with kindness as part of our community!"



**Siyan,
Committee Member**

"...for potential cat parents to know the importance of adopting over shopping, so that illegal breeders will go out of business."



**Ed,
Committee Member**

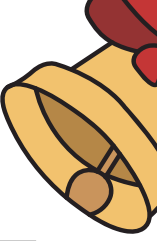
"...for the love, peace and hope between hoomans and community cats to grow meowingly stronger!"



**Shelby,
Committee Member**

"...not to worry anymore about the removal of community cats every time there's a complaint."

#EVERYCAT HASASTORY



Renee



Hello, I'm Renee. I'm 2 years old but I sometimes feel really, really old. I think it's because of what I went through before I came to live with my foster mama. I was a young mama and had to raise my four kittens on the streets, which was very tiring and stressful for me. Thankfully, two of my babies now have loving homes of their own. My daughter Jiy and I are still waiting to be adopted. I hope we can stay together because we are very close. Jiy is a bundle of energy while I am more cautious and quiet. I like to just hang back and keep an eye on her to make sure she doesn't get into any trouble! I do hope you'll consider adopting both of us together.

If you can give Renee a home, please contact PG at 8127-4108.

Lucas



What's up, everyone? I'm Lucas! I'm 7 years old and I'm a Siamese-cross cat... whatever that means! One morning, I was taking my usual stroll when I saw this really cool housing estate. Straight away, I wanted to live there because the hoomans looked super friendly. But it turns out they didn't like me very much and a kind rescuer quickly took me into her home before they could "remove" me. Since then, I've been living with my pawsome rescuer! She teases me because I am quite 'bo-gay' after living on the streets for so long but hey, this means I get to eat wet food every day! Yum! My rescuer says I am a relaxed, well-behaved and independent boy so I hope you'll consider giving me a proper home for life.

If you can give Lucas a home, please contact Jeanette at 9696-0535.

Ivy



My name is Ivy! I'm almost 3 years old and I've been waiting for my forever home for a while. It's hard because I am shy and timid. Growing up on the streets as a kitten meant that I was naturally wary of humans. I'm ok with people now, but I still get scared when people try to touch me. My foster mama jokes that I am the hairdresser in my circle of cat friends! I love my fellow cat friends very much, so I like to groom them, especially when they feel irritated or frustrated. I guess you could say I'm a peacekeeper! I am hoping to find a forever home with existing pet cats that I can befriend and a patient family who will give me time to come out of my shell. Will it be you?

If you can give Ivy a home, please contact Simone at 9364-9423.

**Cookie**

I am Cookie. I was rescued from a very dark and dirty building with a lot of big machines, and my rescuer says I am very lucky because the humans who had been working there were moving out and there would have been no one who could have taken care of me after. I can't imagine not having any food to eat, that sounds so scary. Right now I am only three-and-a-half months old and I love to explore and figure out the world around me. It's a big world! But maybe that's because I am a small guy. One day I'll grow up big and strong though! I love playing and eating, and although I am a bit shy around new friends at first, I really like snuggling and chin tickles. Do you think I could grow up in your home? I promise to give you my heart if you give me yours.

If you can give Cookie a home, please contact Helen at 9691-2116.

Sunnie Mel

Hi, I'm Sunnie Mel! I'm only 9 months old but I've been through some pretty dark times. I remember feeling a lot of pain in my leg. Kind people took me to see a doctor. The doctor told them that it's likely that I fell from a height. I wish there had been meshing to prevent me from falling – it really, really hurt. I've finally made a full recovery, thanks to all the love and care from my amazing foster parents! I'm hoping to meet my forever family soon, but till then I'm very happy to keep playing with my fellow cat friends and finding the best cardboard boxes to nap in. Please consider giving me a safe and loving home for life!

If you can give Sunnie Mel a home, please contact Jenn at 9689-0460.

Carrie & Ella

Hi there! I'm Carrie and this is my daughter, Ella. My foster mama rescued my kittens and I from a big building that was badly kept. It was very difficult keeping my babies safe every day. I'm so happy that they have all managed to grow up into loving and strong young adults and now they are off having their own adventures in their forever homes. Well, except me and Ella. My sweet Ella is 6 months old now and she is playful and independent – just like me, I would say! Ella and I are both tortoiseshell girls, and you know what they say about Tortitude? We have it in spades! I love hanging out with my foster family when I'm not playing with Ella. We have a lot of love to give. I hope you'll consider giving us girl a forever home filled with love and kisses.

If you can give Carrie & Ella a home, please contact PG at 8127-4108.

CAT MAMA SHOP

Purrfect Gifts For The Season

December is quickly approaching, and you know what that means – 'tis the season for family, merry-making and lots of presents! Here are some great gift ideas specially selected from our Cat Mama Shop to ensure that you have a wonderful festive season ahead.

Stocks are limited so do place your orders early on our online store to avoid disappointment:
<https://catwelfare.store/>



\$18



Cat Scarves

Measures 70cm x 70cm

Petite silk scarves with gorgeous cat prints in the bold colours of red and mustard yellow.

\$10



Piggy Baby Bibs

Make any new mommy or mommy-to-be happy with these pink, white or grey Piggy Baby Bibs, which are made of quality thick cotton and come with 2 size adjustment clips.

\$18



Fleece Blankets

Measures 100cm x 70cm

Supurrsoft fleece blankets with the cutest cheerful cat prints. Available in pink and yellow.

\$15



Dear Mister Cat

A perfect gift for little ones, "Dear Mr Cat" is beautifully illustrated children's book produced locally by Elieth Sardiñas.

\$18



Sabun Gentle Oatmeal Pet Shampoo

Homegrown aromatherapy brand Sabun is about to make all your pet's bathing dreams come true with their Sabun Gentle Oatmeal Pet Shampoo which works to soothe and moisturize dry, itchy skin with pure oatmeal colloidal and sweet almond oil.

\$50



Rattan Cat Bed

Available in two sizes with or without cushion

Splurge on this beautiful and stylish Rattan Cat Bed for your feline-loving pal specially made in Thailand!

\$32



Litter Catcher

Measures 75cm x 55cm

Save your cat-loving friend valuable time cleaning their home by getting them this Litter Catcher, made of a dual layer of honeycomb trapper and flat mat that catches litter as the cats leave the litter box.



CWS CALENDAR 2019



Photos
taken by:
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Nadiyah Hazman
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**CWS' 2019 Calendar
have arrived!!**

In celebration of our
Singapore cats, this
beautifully designed
calendar features
12 of our community
cats from across
the island along
with their stories
and quotes from
their feeders. Order
yours today!



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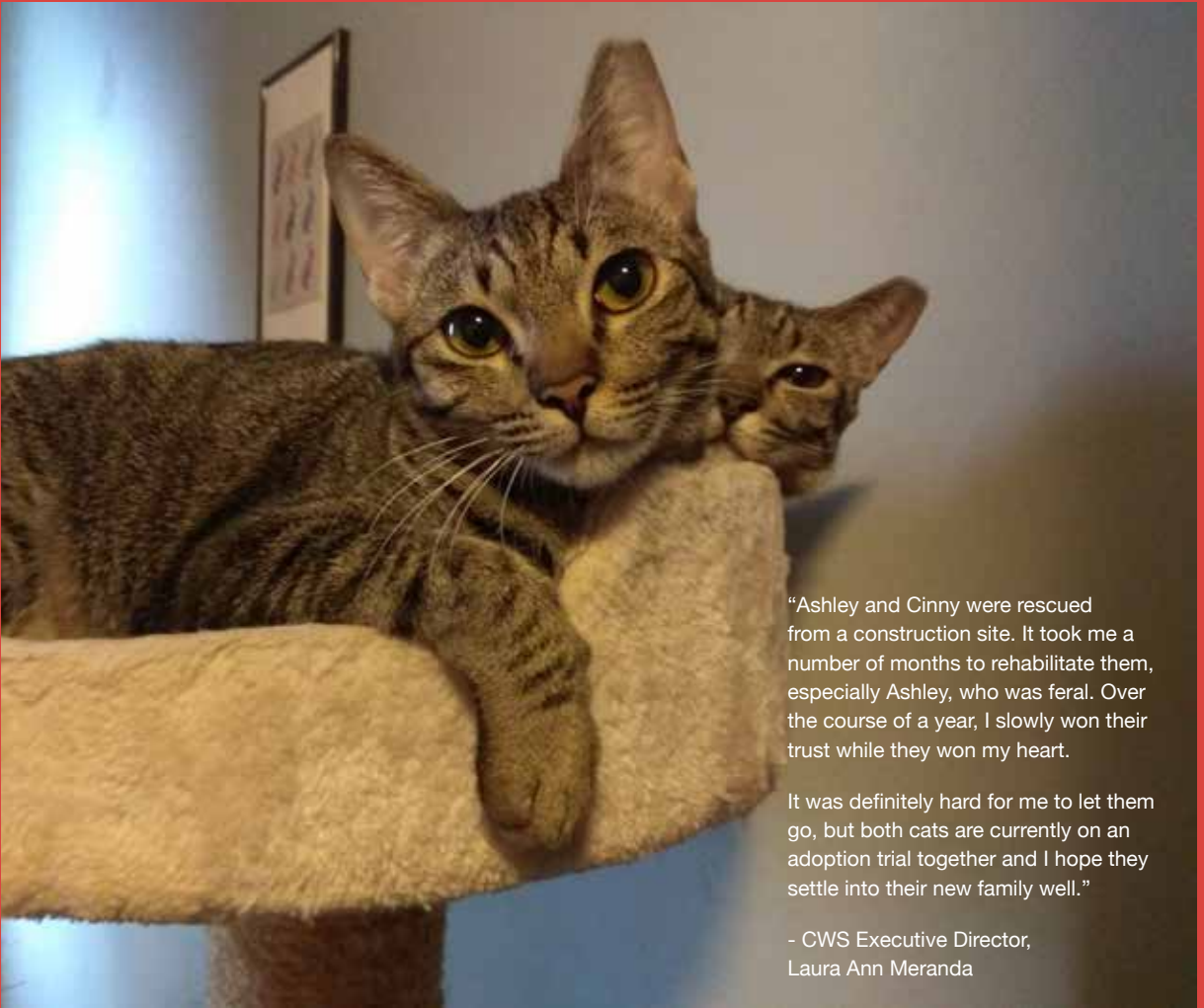
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#SAVINGLIVESEVERYDAY



"Ashley and Cinny were rescued from a construction site. It took me a number of months to rehabilitate them, especially Ashley, who was feral. Over the course of a year, I slowly won their trust while they won my heart.

It was definitely hard for me to let them go, but both cats are currently on an adoption trial together and I hope they settle into their new family well."

- CWS Executive Director,
Laura Ann Meranda

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