

Haven Happenings

Haven Happenings, Issue #19

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ingridshaven.net.au

Welcome to the latest issue of *Haven Happenings*, the quarterly newsletter from Ingrid's Haven cat sanctuary.



What a summer it has been! Never in my entire life as a shelter have I seen so many kittens and their mamas as I did in December. The Friday before Christmas I had 73 kittens in various ages. I tore my hair out, there was simply no room for them all but I had to fit them in somehow as they all faced a certain death if I didn't take them in. Pounds were emptying out because of the holidays and emptying out meant killing if no one took the cats in. I had to call on friends to take in some of the mamas with underage kittens to hold while I adopted out the older ones and that way made space for the mamas to come back.

Well, as always, my vollies came to the rescue. Kylie and I were frantically organising the shed with pens to fit as many as possible in. Alison and Christina put up pleas on Facebook and the following Saturday adopters were literally queuing up to adopt. They arrived well before opening hours to secure a tiny Havenite and for a couple of hours one could hardly move in the kitten shed because of the influx. Not only was the Saturday busy, it kept up during the holidays and I extended my opening hours and so most of the little ankle biters found

homes. The Christmas kittens are all gone but new ones have taken their place. The best news is that I didn't have to say no to a single adopter – they were all keen to offer a 'forever home' and were very sincere about giving a home to a little shelter cat that had already faced death.

Now things are back to normal again, well, as normal as it can be. Kittens are still coming in but at a more sedate pace.

Some weeks ago I got an email out of the blue from a gentleman called Tim. Tim offered his services as a volunteer as he was between jobs and added he is a professional welder. At first I read the email a few times over because this mail was the answer to all my dreams, I just couldn't believe my luck. Well, Tim arrived on the scene and in a few days had fixed most of my problems that demanded the touch of a man's muscles and brain power. Once that was out of the way, Tim started welding new pens together for the cats/kittens in the big shed – pens that meet the standard of the Animal Act, pens that are tall and one can stand upright in. Pens that are simply perfect. Tim, you have changed my life and I can't tell you how much this means to me.



I have also been blessed with some new volunteers, affectionately called 'vollies'. Now I don't have to do the whole shelter by myself any longer during the weekdays. This has changed my workload enormously and I have had time to fix things, tidy things that have called for my attention for a long time but haven't had neither the time nor the energy to attend to before.

Welcome aboard, I hope you are going to become long stayers and thank you for offering your spare time for the benefit of the cats.

A huge thank you goes as always to the seasoned vollies, to my supporters, to the sponsors.

You all need to know that without you I could never take in all these cats and help them into decent, loving, ever-lasting homes. We are all happy little Havenites.

Ingrid & the Cats



Climbing cats

Cats love to have a bird's eye view, and to be able to explore their environment. However, this often means you may find them on top of inappropriate objects such as kitchen benches, tables, chairs, TVs, and in some situations, even climbing the curtains. It is normal for a cat to climb and scratch, so it's very important for them to have somewhere appropriate to climb.

Provide appropriate climbing opportunities

Designate cat climbing objects or areas for your cat to use. For example, install a climbing post and connect it to a special viewing platform such as a bookshelf. You can even secure a box or small cat bed on the shelf so he/she can seek comfort from their viewing position.

If at first they are not interested in their new climbing equipment, place some of his/her favourite food treats or toys on the platform or shelf. Also make sure you use lots of positive encouragement when they are exploring the new area.

Prevent your cat from climbing on inappropriate objects

If you find your cat climbing on inappropriate objects, deter him/her by using some of the following techniques.

- Cover the area with double sided tape - the unpleasant surface will act as a deterrent.
- Place shallow dishes containing water near the area. As your cat leaps on to the surface, the water will deter him/her.
- Trim your cat's nails carefully.
- If all else fails... when you catch your cat in action (climbing or clawing) use a fine spray of water to deter them. After a few times, they will associate this behaviour with the unpleasant spray and stop their actions.



Introducing Annette Basile... volunteer extraordinaire!

Annette Basile is one of the Haven's incredible volunteers. As much of her volunteer work is done remotely, she may not be a face you see around the Haven regularly, but she's always working hard behind the scenes. We are delighted for you to meet Annette...



How long have you been volunteering for the Haven?

Almost nine years. I started building Ingrid's website in May 2006 – it was a holiday project.

How did you get involved with the Haven?

I used to work for a non-profit project called Petmatch, which ran two rehoming sites – one for dogs and one for cats. Ingrid's cats were regulars on the site and I met Ingrid via email in 2002. We struck up an e-friendship and I quickly recognised Ingrid as an authentic animal lover doing her incredible best in a largely indifferent world. I always knew she was something special. I kept in contact with Ingrid after I left Petmatch. I had always planned to "one day" do volunteer work but hadn't thought seriously about it – but then something happened...I became angry and upset about certain political events and decided that I just had to do something to help make the world a better place. Ingrid's hubby had organised a website for her but it wasn't really being maintained or being looked after in terms of getting Google's notice. So I suggested to Ingrid that I could help.

In what capacity do you volunteer?

I maintain the website and update the cat listings. I built the site as you see it today – and yes, I know it needs a refresh for the modern mobile world! There are plans afoot to get a revamped site off the ground. I've come along way with design skills since I did the website but technology has raced ahead of me, and I've found a volunteer to build it.

Why do you like to volunteer at the Haven – what do you get out of it?

I love it because I know what I do makes a difference. So that's what I get out of it in essence, but – especially at the start – I also learned an incredible amount about websites and Search Engine Optimisation (or SEO – which is all about making your website visible to Google). I also love that Ingrid and I have remained great friends all this time – we have seen each other through many ups and downs in life (despite the distance – I'm in Sydney). We finally met in person in 2009. She is godmother to my two (rescue) dogs. Ingrid really is a special person who would rescue not just every cat, but every homeless animal on the planet if she could. I'm not sure if people realise just how much she has accomplished with limited resources (although her personal resources are limitless). She has not chosen an easy life for herself. She has, however, chosen a meaningful one.

What would you say to others who might be interested in volunteering at/supporting the Haven?

People can help in so many ways! Locals can always contact Ingrid and lend a pair of hands – I know it makes a difference. I think the single biggest thing you can do, though, to support the Haven, is to adopt – the older ones, especially, need homes. And if you can't adopt or already have adopted, it's time to spread the word.... You can do something as simple as download a flyer from the website, print it, and put it up at your workplace (the flyer link is on the homepage, right hand column, roughly halfway down the page). You can support the Haven's Facebook page by Liking and Sharing posts to help them have greater reach and be seen by more people. Or you can forward this newsletter to cat-loving friends. Word-of-mouth is powerful – tell people about the Haven and take every opportunity to remind people that adopting a pet is the only way to go. These small acts take little time but can have an incredible impact – and there's no better feeling than to know you've helped a rescue pet.

Kitten items desperately needed

Ingrid's Haven is in urgent need of the following brands of wet kitten food:

- Royal Canin
- Hills
- Fancy Feast

We would also very much appreciate other items for kittens including toys, tunnels and climbing towers.

Please call Ingrid on **0417 360 700** or email **ingridarving@hotmail.com** to arrange the drop-off of items.

Thank you for your generous support!



Follow us on Facebook



<https://www.facebook.com/Ingrids.Haven>

Happy tails

Hi Ingrid

I just thought on the eve of a New Year that I'd write again and give you an update on Mims.

Since adopting her early in 2009, she has come in leaps and bounds personality-wise. It's actually remarkable how different she is from when we got her. She is a cranky (but charming) lady, who started off shy and aloof, but every single year brings the development of a new affection. We've since moved into a bigger house and the move didn't even seem to be a stress for her, which we were worried about.

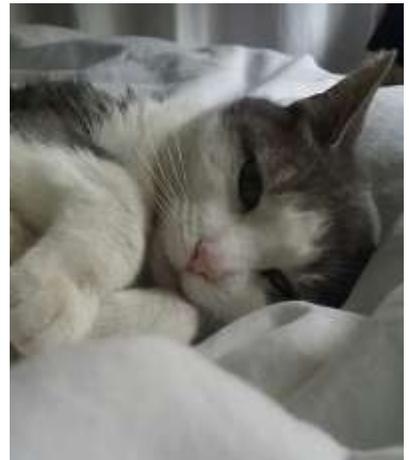
She would never sit in one spot for very long, and would startle easily, but this has changed! I woke up the other morning to her sleeping ON MY CHEST. She has never even sat on my lap before, and here she was, curled up on me, purring. I was so excited and honoured that I was too scared to move, even though I was busting for the loo and my leg had gone numb. Here was a cat that was never meant to be a lap cat. She was meant to be a bit of a loner. And initially she was, but now she follows me around the house and makes her funny little chirping sounds, and sleeps curled up next to you, wherever you are. She is amazing. She will even happily greet guests and sit next to them now. Her little face in the window greets me now whenever I come clomping up the driveway. She knows she's valued. She gets cranky on occasion but will follow it up with a little head bump or come and lean against my leg with her tail perked up as if to say, "You know I didn't mean it!"

Thank you for providing me with one of the most rewarding experiences of my life. My partner and I are eternally grateful to you for choosing Mims for us. We were suckers who would've ended up with 15 cats had our circumstances allowed, how anyone has difficulty 'finding the right cat' is beyond me, they're all pretty amazing when you get down to it. We think asking you to make the decision for us was the wisest choice, as you know your cats well, and Mims has been astonishing. I had my first cat for 17 wonderful years before she passed away, and I honestly didn't think I could ever love another cat like that. Mims made me realise that there is room enough for another 'great love' in my life.

Thank you again, hope you are doing well and that you and your loved ones have had a lovely, relaxing Christmas. You deserve to be spoiled rotten.

Love Bec, Matt and Mims

PS. I've included a few new pictures for you. I love it now that she faces me all the time instead of constantly giving me her butt view. I think that means I've graduated to "you're a bit of all right in my book" :)



Fascinating feline facts...



Did you know...

1. There are over 100 different cat breeds
2. Cats can see up to 120 feet away. Their peripheral vision is about 280 degrees
3. The oldest cat known, lived to the grand age of 36
4. The average age for an indoor cat is 15 years while the average age for an outdoor cat is only 3-5 years
5. Blue eyed cats are often prone to deafness
6. Cats lap liquid from the underside of their tongue rather than from the top when drinking
7. The largest breed of cat is the Ragdoll
8. At birth, kittens can't see or hear
9. Cats can see in colour - they are partially colour blind
10. A quivering tail is the greatest sign of love a cat can give you
11. A cat can jump 5 times as high as it is tall
12. If a cat snores, or rolls over on his back to expose his belly, it means it trusts you
13. Cats respond more readily to names that end in an "ee" sound
14. Compared to a dog's 10 vocalisation sounds, cats have 100 different vocalisation sounds
15. Cats purr at the same frequency as an idling diesel engine – approximately 26 cycles per second
16. Sir Isaac Newton, discoverer of the principles of gravity, also invented the cat flap
17. A cat will almost never "meow" at another cat. This sound is mostly reserved for humans
18. Cats have the largest eyes of any mammal in relation to body size
19. Cats are the sleepest of all mammals. They spend an average of 16 hours sleeping each day
20. The nose pad of a cat is ridged in a pattern that is unique, just like the fingerprint of a human

