

Haven Happenings

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



Winter has arrived and with it some very cold days and nights, the temperature hovering near frost some mornings. The cats are hugging their heat pads and electric blankets and then there are some that will not have a bar of the warmth – they are few but I do have them and they prefer to cluster together instead.

These last weeks have seen some changes in the kitten shed. A consultation room and an isolation unit are being constructed meaning that our visiting veterinarian Darren will have a better work place and that I finally have better control over the cats needing ongoing medication or that I can simply isolate the cats in a more efficient way coming from the pound with flu, which is ripe. The sudden cold weather has wreaked havoc with the poor cats suddenly having found themselves homeless and stuck in a cold pound, their immune system depressed because they have lost everything that was important to them, mainly their families and homes. Then they arrive here, sneezing the place down.

These upgrades are of course also important to one day reaching the goal of registering the Haven as a shelter. The most important things have been done or are being done but there is a huge amount of money and effort still needed.

Adoption wise, well, it is as always up and down. Some Saturdays you have no expectations and then the adopters come to whisk the cats away to a better future en masse. Other Saturdays, you do have expectations and the adopters don't turn up at all. I have never been able to figure out what causes all this but let's say I have learnt not to be too optimistic beforehand instead I take the joy when it happens and deal with the disappointment when it doesn't.

As always, I do dream, hope and work for a future when I will be without a job because all the cats will have homes – we will have no stray cats living miserable lives on the streets and no more unnecessary breeding. Will this ever happen?

Ingrid & the Cats

Quote of the Day

“As every cat owner knows, nobody owns a cat.”

- Ellen Perry Berkeley



Chit-chat with your cat!



Did you know that you and your feline friend actually have a language of your own? In fact, there are no universal cat meows so you and your cat speak an utterly unique language. What's also interesting is cats don't really meow to communicate with other cats. Research conducted in 2015 by Vet Gary Weitzman, author of *How To Speak Cat*, reveals that cats only vocalise to humans. He says that each cat has around 24 different vocalisations that mean different yet consistent things. Their meows are specifically designed to tell you something, and over time your cat will train you to understand what each different meow means. Whether your cat is vocal or not, they will be fluent in body language, a key component of their interactions with you and other animals. The following vocalisations are fairly common to most cats:

- **Short meow:** "Hey, how ya doin'?"
- **Multiple meows:** "I'm so happy to see you! Where've you been? I missed you!"
- **Mid-pitch meow:** A plea for something, usually dinner, treats, or to be let outside.
- **Drawn-out mrrraaaaaooow:** "Did you forget to feed me, you idiot? I want dinner NOW!" or similar demand.
- **Low pitched mraaooww:** "You are so lame. The service around here sucks," or similar complaint.
- **High-pitch RRRROWW!** "OUCH! YOU STEPPED ON MY TAIL!"
- **Purr:** Most often a sign of contentedness, but can also be used when in pain or afraid – an instinctual response to hide weakness from predators.
- **Hiss:** "Steer clear. I'm angry and I'm not afraid to draw blood."
- **Clicking sounds:** Cats who are tracking prey will make a distinctive clicking sound.

Most cats also use the following gestures to communicate:

The tail:

- **Tail straight up or straight up with a curl at the end:** Happy.
- **Tail twitching:** Excited or anxious.
- **Tail vibrating:** Very excited to see you.
- **Tail fur sticks straight up while the tail curls in the shape of an N:** Extreme aggression.
- **Tail fur sticks straight up but the tail is held low:** Aggression or frightened.
- **Tail held low and tucked under the rear:** Frightened.

Eyes:

- **Dilated pupils:** Very playful or excited. It can also indicate aggression.
- **Slowly blinking eyes:** Affection, the equivalent of blowing a kiss.

Head:

- **Ears pinned back:** Fear, anxiety, aggression
- **Tongue flicking:** Worry, apprehension
- **Rubbing head, flank and tail against a person or animal:** Greeting ritual, ownership claim
- **Head-butting:** Friendliness, affection
- **Face sniffing:** Confirming identity
- **Wet nose kiss:** Affection
- **Licking:** The penultimate sign of affection. Or an indication that you need to clean up after a sardine snack.

By tuning in to your cat's body language and voice, you'll become an expert at differentiating between "Feed me, now!" and "This is an emergency!"



Happy tails



Hi Ingrid

Can you believe that it is now just over one year since Greg and I came to adopt Angel from you? That time has gone so fast!

We bought Angel a play centre to celebrate her 5th birthday in October and her one year adoption anniversary for the 8th of this month. As you can see

she loves it! Angel and Precious have become very good friends and indulge in a daily greeting of a nose sniff and up to three kisses.

She has totally completed our family!

Lots of love to you and all the Haven cats and kittens...

Lee and Angel

More happy tails



Dear Ingrid

We picked up beautiful little Diddle a couple of weeks ago from the Haven – best decision ever!

He's right at home sleeping on the end of the bed, playing in the garden, and even sometimes trying to find a nipple to suck from on our adult male cat, Ducky!

Thank you for everything!

Evie Louise

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You think *your* cat is naughty?!

