



EDITORIAL

It takes a village to raise a CAT

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Even if you're more of a dog person, you have to be impressed by the success of Sherwood's Cat Adoption Team.

In just 10 years, the local shelter has seen a 1,300-percent spike in the number of cat adoptions; become the first shelter in Oregon to set up a full-service, on-site veterinary hospital; and gained a reputation for being one of the most innovative cat-only, no-kill shelters in the Pacific Northwest.

Despite its tucked-away location off Tualatin-Sherwood Road, the CAT shelter is known far and wide. Volunteers come from all parts of the Portland metro area to offer their assistance; future pet owners attend CAT's adoption outreach events in cities throughout Washington, Multnomah and Clackamas counties; and the shelter takes in stray and surrendered cats from the entire region.

Earlier this year, CAT's popularity came to the forefront when the organization placed 34th out of 3,900 shelters in an online contest for a \$1 million shelter remodel. The placement wasn't high enough to win the makeover, but for a shelter that didn't even exist 11 years ago, ranking in the top 1 percent is a tremendous accomplishment.

Over the course of the next year, you'll be hearing more about Sherwood's CAT shelter. First will be the fun stuff, including a 10th birthday bash and a Wheels for Whiskers car raffle in May; a kitten adoption event in June; the Pets in the Pearl festival in July; and a French Flea Market in August.

One of the easiest — and probably most enjoyable — ways to support CAT is to come to the 10-year anniversary party on Saturday, May 10. (For more information about the celebration, see related story on page 38.)

Later this year, you may hear about CAT's "building campaign." We know it's easy to push these types of major fundraisers out of your mind, especially in these rough economic times, but if you've ever been to the shelter, you know how desperately CAT needs to expand. In the large, upstairs room, volunteers greet potential cat owners next to the shelter's washer and dryer, at the same table where vet techs discuss complicated health treatments.

The on-site veterinary hospital also could use a major overhaul. The space is narrow and less than ideal, especially when more than three people get into the room at one time. Despite this, the hospital staff managed to do thousands of spay and neuter operations last year while taking care of the shelter cats' every cough, sneeze and skin allergy.

The CAT capital campaign would raise money to expand the hospital and shelter, hopefully alleviating the pressure of growing by 1,300 percent in just one decade.

CAT has the space to grow into — right now they use much of their dedicated building for warehouse purposes — but the real issue is money. It will take about \$2 million to get the shelter ready for the next decade.

So when you hear the call to donate to CAT's capital campaign, remember that this popular, no-kill cat shelter is a source of pride for Sherwood.

Even if you can't afford to donate money, you can support CAT in other ways. Spay and neuter your own cats so they don't create even more kittens in need of homes; remember the local shelter the next time you want to adopt a cat or kitten; or donate your time. CAT has a variety of options for volunteers and for foster families. For more information about the Sherwood organization or to view cats now available for adoption, visit

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