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FEATURED

Every cat has a story at Torrington's Kitty Quarters

By Jo Ann Jaacks Mar 13, 2019



Fourth-grader Ava reads to Lacy, who has happily been adopted.
Contributed photo

TORRINGTON — It's fitting that Kitty Quarters animal shelter has the motto: "Pairing cats with people to benefit both," since founder and President Bobbie Chamalian was on a mission to create a nonprofit rescue, adoption and education sanctuary utilizing a version of the nationally acclaimed Read-to-Succeed Program. Focusing on children, especially fourth-graders, who are at a pivotal age, Kitty Quarters pairs youngsters with a shelter cat, bringing confidence, calm and valuable life skills to the child, and attention to the cat.

The beautifully restored interior of the facility, previously a neglected brick building, offers everything a cat could desire, from their own private cubicle, shared play stations, high perches, and even an artistically painted cheery wall. They also receive a lot of personal attention from a dedicated group of volunteers. Rosalie Bouchard, one of those dedicated volunteers, often reads classic children's books to several attentive cats, including Bayboo, who loves to hug her yellow duck. Bayboo's owners, who had a dog and two cats, were penalized by their landlord and when they left their apartment, they kept the dog but released their cats in the street to fend for themselves.

Rosalie said, "My husband and I attended a Dining for a Cause event at Ninety Nine Restaurant and learned about Kitty Quarters. The two of us do evening feedings a couple of times a week and are so happy to help this sweet little Torrington organization that cares for the physical and emotional needs of these beautiful kitties. It warms our hearts to know these little creatures have a safe place to sleep and food in their bellies. We want this for all stray kitties everywhere."

Randall, a Maine Coon cat, has not yet gone through the five levels necessary to be a "service" cat, but is a valuable "working" cat, has lifted the hearts of clients at Torrington West Assisted Living. Petting and holding therapy cats has been proven to lower blood pressure and lessen depression. Also, cats are good listeners, which can help autistic children become more communicative, and provide company for seniors.

The human companion of Jiggers and Boo, a bonded pair who share a cubicle, insisted the two felines must be adopted together and Bobbie promised to comply, even though adopting out more than one cat to the same person takes more time. Black cats are also more difficult to place in homes, and there are several perfectly black, perfectly lovely kitties awaiting their forever homes.

Bobbie Chamalian shared that all nonprofits need to do their own fundraising. "We are currently benefiting from a wonderful program called Clear the Closets. Donors can bring soft goods, textiles, shoes, boots, bedding, towels, clothing, accessories, curtains, ties, rugs, handbags, etc., to Ninety Nine Restaurant in Torrington, which has a collection bin in their lobby through April 21," she said. "We also welcome cat food donations, which can be left at our door. All the cats are on a strict diet to guarantee their best health so we can only accept Friskies Paté, Turkey & Giblets or Mariner's Catch cat food."

Bobbie said Kitty Quarters is also grateful to Bunnell Farm in Litchfield for hosting a corn maze fundraiser last Fall, and St. Michael's Parish in Litchfield for offering use of their community house for a tag sale.

Kitty Quarters is located at 1188 New Litchfield Street in Torrington and can be contacted at 860-482-2888, or visit www.kittyquarters.org for more information.

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