



# Shelter News

Harvest Hills Animal Shelter 1389 Bridgton Road, Fryeburg, ME 04037 • 207-935-4358 [www.harvesthills.org](http://www.harvesthills.org)

## Reversing the Stigma: Feline Leukemia



'Combo' testing cats (blood test for Feline AIDS aka FIV and Feline leukemia aka FeLV) is the norm at shelters across the country. It was part of their 'core' medical treatments along with vaccines before adoption. If a cat tested positive for one of these diseases then the outcome was usually never a good one. Our perspective on FIV changed a lot sooner

than the one for FeLV, realizing that they could indeed live long, healthy, normal lives in the right environment. The public perception on leukemia has taken longer however, with the stigma that it's still very contagious, their life span is short, and the diseases associated with leukemia caused a painful passing.

Idexx is one of the corporations who has developed these combo tests. They have been doing more and more research into leukemia and passing that info along to shelters and veterinarians to try and change the stigma. While there is still the possibility that testing positive for leukemia on a combo test can lead to a shorter life span, there are more tests that can be done to find out *what type* of leukemia your kitty may have.

Feline leukemia is a complex disease, and it's not leukemia like humans get. It only effects 1-2% of the feline population and is only contagious to cats. It is spread by bodily fluids such as saliva (grooming), urine and feces (shared litter boxes); as well as from mom to kittens. The virus does not live long outside the body, and depending on the stage of leukemia, your kitty may be able to fight it off! The combo test only shows the presence of the antigen that causes leukemia, not what stage it is in. A positive test could mean your kitty was just exposed and is fighting off the disease or that they have the 'progressive' form.

There are 3 stages of FeLV infection: Abortive, Regressive and Progressive, and this is a VERY basic explanation of those 3 infections. By drawing more blood, spinning it down and doing further testing, Idexx can distinguish which of the three infections your kitty might have. An **abortive** infection means your cat tests negative in all tests. A **regressive** infection means your kitty may test negative or positive on a combo test, but

when more blood is tested, it is found they are unlikely to develop diseases associated with leukemia or shed the virus to other cats. The **progressive** infection is the one we all know and hear about. The kitty will test positive on the combo test and positive on all the other blood tests run. A kitty with a progressive infection will infect other kitties in the home and will most likely live a shortened life with leukemia related health issues.

Conclusion: Please don't pass over a cat with FeLV (or FIV for that matter) until more testing has been done because they can lead normal, healthy lives! Kittens under 6 months should not be considered positive for life until additional tests are done when they are over 6 months because there is the possibility they will fight it off. Sadly, there is no cure, but as more and more research is done, we can help save lives.

## New changes at Nine Lives Thrift Shop!

We would like to thank the Kendall C. and Anna Ham Foundation for their continued support of our shelter. This year they have granted us money for a new storage building at the thrift. We will be using this to store larger donations and summer items that won't fit in our basement

Nine lives started an exclusive mailing list for weekly coupons! Each week an email is sent out with a coupon only available to those on the list. If you would like to receive these coupons, please sign up at Nine Lives Thrift Shop. The sale of your donations to Nine Lives Thrift Shop supports Harvest Hills year-round.

## Beautification Project

Have you noticed?! We are working on beautifying the entrance to the shelter! We would like to thank our volunteer Barbara and staff member Greg for all their hard work.

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### Harvest Hills Animal Shelter

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207-935-4358 • 935-7058 fax  
info@harvesthills.org  
[www.harvesthills.org](http://www.harvesthills.org)

Open 10 a.m. to 3 p.m.  
Every Day Except Thursday  
Open until 6 p.m. Friday

*Contracted to serve the towns of Albany, Baldwin, Bridgton, Brownfield, Cornish, Denmark, Fryeburg, Harrison, Hiram, Lovell, Naples, Newary, Parsonsfield, Porter, Sebago, Stoneham, Stow, Sweden and Waterford and also lending support to other towns in Maine and New Hampshire.*

### *staff*

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Rachel Thurston, *Manager*  
*Nine Lives Thrift*  
Carol Allen  
Tiffany Brown  
Michelle Buzzard  
Jean Cressy  
Meredith Hendricks  
Kayla Legere  
Greg Merrill  
Tina Reimers  
Madelyn Rivers  
Trina Sandborn  
Amy Tupper  
Mandy Vigneault

### Board of Directors

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## BEHIND THE SCENES:



### *Fostering Puppies*

Very seldom do we get in puppies, and when we do they get adopted quick! This year was a different story, however. You may not know that we had a litter of puppies for adoption this year, and that's because this litter was unusual from any we've had before.

Someone reached out to us because they had a litter of pups and one was pretty sick. They were not in our contracted town but couldn't get anyone else's help. There were 9 border collie/ pitty mixes, about 8 weeks old, and appeared to have some skin issues and some were acting lethargic. While originally diagnosed with

Puppy Strangles, it turned out that was the least of our problems.

During a regular vet day visit to the shelter, it was noticed that one of the pups' jaws was looking quite large and abnormal. Our vet said, "I know what this is, but I can't think of the name" Well, Craniomandibular Osteopathy or 'Lion's jaw' is one of those things you learn about in vet school and move on since it is uncommonly seen, especially in larger breed dogs.

"Craniomandibular osteopathy, also known as lion's jaw, is a developmental disease in dogs causing extensive bony changes in the mandible and skull. It is an inherited disease and symptoms include firm swelling of the jaw, drooling, pain, and difficulty eating. It usually occurs between the ages of 3 and 8 months, but growth of lesions will usually stop around the age of one year, and possibly regress".

Here we have this litter of wonderful, playful, gorgeous pups that cannot be vaccinated or spayed/neutered until their symptoms clear.... It's impossible to get them the socialization that is so critical at this age because they cannot be vaccinated, fixed and adopted out. We had to look for alternatives to them growing up in the shelter since this disease won't stop affecting them until they stop growing. We started reaching out to people we knew or in our database for a pup to see if they wanted to foster. We are NOT a shelter that has a large foster base, especially for dogs, since we rarely foster out dogs. We were extremely fortunate to be able to place all the pups in the litter with either foster-to-adopt parents or foster parents so they could get the socialization and training that they need. Our foster homes are working hard to teach these pups about life and the world as much as possible! We had 4 pups that showed no signs of the disease and were able to be adopted quickly, however most of the others still have flare ups that cause them to be in pain. We work closely with our vets and the families to help keep these pups comfortable until they are ready to officially be adopted out. A huge thank you to all the foster parents who have stepped up to make this unusual situation a success!

These pups may be out of the shelter, but when in foster we still provide the medical care. Any donation towards medical care is greatly appreciated, and no amount is too small. We are a small, private shelter that receives no funding from the state and rely primarily on donations from the public.

**FREEZING FOR A REASON**  
**FEBRUARY 15 at Bridgton Winter Carnival**



# Freezing for a Reason

Freezing for a Reason is happening on February 15th during the Winter Carnival, hosted by the Greater Bridgton Lakes Region Chamber of Commerce! Held at Highland Lake in Bridgton, this is one of our largest yearly fundraisers, and it is ALWAYS a great time! Jumpers who DARE will jump into the frigid waters of Highland Lake, after raising money through pledges, to help the animals. Jumpers, start your campaigns now.



# Light Up

**Harvest Hills Animal Shelter & Nine Lives Thrift Shop**

**Light of our Lives - Snookie**

Snookie is a middle aged girl who is our longest term cat resident. She basically runs the joint. This independent girl likes to explore and find new spots to lay, especially in the sun! Snookie is also a wonderful lunch partner. She can hear the fridge open from a mile away and is a huge fan of chicken. Don't let Snookie's annoyed puss deceive you; this girl can be sweet when she wants to! She likes head pats but will let you know when she has had enough.

**Now thru Dec. 25th**

Please help make a brighter future for all the homeless animals. A \$5.00 donation in honor or memory of a loved pet will light up one magical light on the exterior and interior of Harvest Hills Animal Shelter & Nine Lives Thrift Shop.

**THE LIGHT OF MY LIFE**  
**HARVEST HILLS ANIMAL SHELTER**  
**1389 BRIDGTON ROAD**  
**FRYEBURG, ME 04037**

## Pet ID Tags . . . make great gifts!

Made right here at the shelter. No more waiting 4-6 weeks. On the tag you can put your pet's name, your address and phone number. Let's not forget your pet should also be wearing a rabies tag and license (for dogs). These tags are a great way to help ensure your pet makes it home safely if it becomes lost. Price per tag - \$8.00.

**HEART**  
Lg. (Red)  
Sm (Red/Purple/Pink)

**CIRCLE**  
Lg. (Black)  
Sm. (Black/Red)

**PET TAG ORDER FORM**

**BONE**  
Lg. (Black, Blue/Red)

**ROSSETTE**  
(Blue)

**OVAL**  
Lg. (Orange)

QUANTITY	TYPE OF TAG	PRICE /TAG	TOTAL
<b>TOTAL</b>			

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone Number \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

**Information for tag** (We'll put as much info on as possible)

Side One: \_\_\_\_\_ Side One: \_\_\_\_\_

Side Two: \_\_\_\_\_ Side Two: \_\_\_\_\_

Make checks payable to HHAS, 1389 Bridgton Road, Fryeburg, ME 04037. Please include a self-addressed stamped envelope with your order.