

## Oisten: Foreclosures affect pets, too

February 18, 2010

One week before Christmas, a phone message was left for Animal Placement Bureau, a dog rescue organization based in mid-Michigan. The caller asked for help for a friend who was losing her Eaton County home due to foreclosure. They had to move out in three days and needed to find homes for four outdoor dogs.

An APB board member advised the owner to contact the Capital Area Humane Society about taking back the dog previously adopted from them (a requirement of the CAHS adoption contract). CAHS took two of the dogs.

A volunteer with both Helping Eaton Animals Resource Team and APB was contacted. The two volunteers met at the house, and agreed to take the other two dogs into foster care through APB. It was discovered there were more than 20 cats and older kittens left outdoors on the property, too.

There were major concerns with temperatures. And the cats were not spayed or neutered. After the homeowners had moved out, three volunteers spent hours making several trips to the house to feed and water the cats each day. Two cats in need of immediate medical care were brought to the vet and then to the volunteers' homes to recover.

HEART, a new organization in Eaton County whose mission is to promote animal welfare in the area, sent out a plea for help to other animal welfare groups. That networking enabled people to work together.

The volunteers began capturing the cats and seeking temporary placement for them. CAHS took in four of the cats, Trinity Acres accepted two, and one of the volunteers rescued the other 17. It was amazing how friendly almost every cat was, and it was a relief when the last one was caught on Jan. 11.

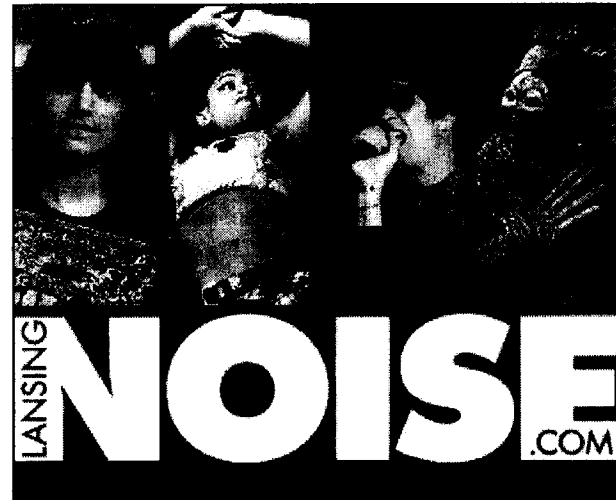
It is expected that total medical expenses for the 17 cats brought into foster care by the volunteers will be \$1,200. to \$1,500. Lakewood Veterinary Hospital in Lake Odessa has been extremely generous in offering their services to these cats at a reduced cost.

A startling statistic is that the leading cause of death in domestic cats in the United States is euthanization in shelters due to overpopulation. If you are looking to adopt an indoor cat, please contact HelpingEatonAnimalsRT@gmail.com for more information.

The dogs also had medical needs (heartworms, surgery) that were addressed, again, at some cost.

Please spay or neuter all the animals in your care, give a monthly heartworm dose and vaccinate for rabies. If you are facing foreclosure and you can no longer care for your animals, contact rescue groups for help.

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