

Backdoor Friends Purebred Cat Rescue



Rescue

Lucy McGuire, Editor

Bi-annual newsletter



Care



Place

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Rose's Story

by
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A CAR, A CAT AND A FAMILY OF FIVE

Rose was an indoor/outdoor cat enjoying the good life in Tallahassee, Florida when the Harris family brought her with them in the car for a two-day drive to relocate in Michigan. She had special significance to Freyja because her husband's first gift to her when they were dating was this Maine Coon cat he adopted from the Denver Humane Society in 2002.

After the long trip, Rose and Freyja's 14-year-old son Evan went outside at her in-law's (Jerry and Susan Harris) house in Novi where they were going to live for a few weeks. Freyja said, "Within minutes she disappeared. We have moved four times, and Rose had never gone far before. When you lose an animal, it goes fast! We looked in the neighbor's yards, posted flyers..." Evan helped her search shelter websites on the computer.

SIXTEEN MONTHS LATER

Midnight on December 29, 2012, Freyja was in bed with her cell phone and became overwhelmed with a need to find her cat thinking, *I want my cat!* "I felt she was out there." BFPCR caught her attention because we specialize in rescuing purebreds, so she scrolled through our Petfinder.com pet list. She used her cell phone to email while lying down on her bed—we were the only rescue she contacted in this search—to ask if she could meet Charlotte who is listed as a Maine Coon. Our process requires an approved application before someone goes into a foster home to meet the cat, so I emailed an application.

APPLICANT HOPES OUR FOSTER IS HER MISSING CAT

"I don't want to fill out an application until I see the cat." She sent a picture of Rose, and Charlotte's foster mother Nancy McVicar and I were sure she was not her missing Rose when we saw the photo. Nancy mentioned that a man borrowed a trap from her to try to catch a beautiful stray cat he had been feeding in a park at Nine Mile and Beck, but he had not been able to catch him/her. We did not know what the cat looked like.

A WALK IN THE PARK

Months earlier, Jan and John Dennis were walking in Maybury State Park when Jan saw a cat in the woods near the corner of the east parking lot. "We seldom use that entrance, but for some reason we decided to park there," John said. While they watched the cat play on some logs, a man in a parked car said, "She's available."

THREE CARING RESIDENTS

Jan and John met Bill Spagnoli, who first noticed the cat two weeks earlier. "She had some kind of elastic band around her waist, not a collar, but it looked like someone had put it on her and dropped her off." The cat was living in a small culvert drain pipe that ran under the parking lot. "I remember she was sunning herself that fall day." Bill began coming twice daily to feed her.

On the way home from their walk, Jan told John, "We need to do something to help the cat, especially since winter is around the corner." From then on, Bill, John and Jan checked on and fed the cat.



Stray cat

Photo by
John Dennis

John Dennis said,

Over the next several weeks, I would try to coordinate various times to meet Bill at the park and catch the cat in a cat carrier. On Thanksgiving weekend, we met Bill at the park and he was able to pick her up and take her to my car. He put her in my cat carrier, but before I could shut the door, she quickly ran out. Looking back on this, it was a blessing because we did not have solid plans on a home for her yet. During December, we made other attempts to capture the cat. I needed Bill's help, because he could get close to her and I could not. She was very skittish around me. She liked Bill and would often sit in his car.

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Jan and John Dennis



Every morning Bill Spagnoli reads the paper in his car at Maybury Park.

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Bill really liked the cat but said he could not take in a pet at this time. I gave him a collar to put on her, hoping that we could capture her that way, but she quickly wriggled out of that and ran back in her drain pipe hiding place—about a foot in diameter.

Until we could rescue her, Bill continued to feed her daily and Jan and I would also check on her often and feed and water her when we visited.

Jan and John had experience with trapping feral cats in their yard and, together with a feral cat advocate, got them neutered and spayed over the summer. Through her, they learned about Backdoor Friends Purebred Cat Rescue and got a "Tru-Catch" trap, an easy-to-handle and humane way to catch a small animal. <http://www.trucatchtraps.com>

TRAP

John contacted Maybury State Park's ranger named Trevor to get permission to trap in the park. Approved and armed with food and a skipped supper the night before, the cat went in the trap within ten minutes.

VET



At Sheldon Vet
Photo by John Dennis

John took her to Sheldon Veterinary Hospital in Plymouth to be examined and checked for a microchip. All of us who were aware of this effort hoped there would be that identifying chip, because the Denver Humane Society told the Harris family they microchipped their rescues. It was just before closing time, so they didn't have time to examine her further but let her spend the night until she could be vaccinated and more thoroughly checked out

on Saturday. They said she was a spayed, female, senior Maine Coon. The scan did not detect a chip.

DENVER HUMANE SOCIETY

Rose had been found on a highway in Denver in 2002, rescued and brought to the shelter. They discovered she had a fresh spay surgery incision line and was probably born in 2001.

NEVER GIVE UP

Freyja, Evan and Alina had to see if this was their Rose, especially since a microchip can migrate in the body, and she had not actually witnessed Rose getting chipped in Denver. Saturday morning she hurried to see this stray cat and meet the man who trapped her. "Yes, she is Rose!" She brought her home and showered her with as much attention as the prodigal son's homecoming. "I definitely believe there was a spiritual aspect to this. God takes care of people and animals equally. I had never lost a pet before and didn't even know how to go about finding her."

After an initial shell-shocked look, Rose settled in, remembering



Freyja's family reunited with Rose at the vet.
Photo by John Dennis



Photo by John Dennis



Tool Tip Magic Zymes Odor Remover

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Rose's Story *continued from column 1*



Adelle, Alina, Freyja Harris and Rose

her family, their routines and taking back her favorite spot on the couch where she sat when they were in Florida.

"I got her collar and bell like she had always worn. She purred and sat while I put it on."

At first she was kneading her paws in Freyja's lap with her sharp claws, but she sensed she needed to retract them and started being gentler. They bought the same kind of litter box she liked to use, and her old habits resumed. "She sleeps with us. In the morning she hears my voice, and I have to pet her."

In John Dennis' words:

Later that same day, I spoke with Trevor the park ranger to let him know that we rescued the cat. He said "I'm glad to hear that, because I blocked off the entrance to that parking lot today, and it won't be reopened until the spring". I had no idea they would be closing the parking lot just 24 hours after I captured the cat. If I had been a day late, it would have made for a more complicated rescue attempt.

The next day (Sunday) we saw Bill in the park when Jan and I went to Maybury to go cross-country skiing there. We talked about how we were all thrilled that Rose was reunited with her family. Bill remarked that it seemed like we had a series of miracles that all came together to get Rose back to her family. I couldn't agree with him more.



Photo by John Dennis

The best thing I did was share what was going on. If people would just let each other know...Freyja Harris, an urban planner working with the Max Fisher Foundation.