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2012 The Year of Heartbreak and Hope Part 2

Mon, 2012-12-31 09:46 — Robin Olson

July

July was even more difficult on us than June. Maria had taken in two more kittens from her neighbor who were very sick. **A buff tabby named Tater Tot was the most ill. The Vet told us it was the "wet" form of FIP which is fatal. His sister, Latte was struggling with a terrible upper respiratory infection. Maria took time off from work to care for the cats around the clock.** Neither of us slept much. I researched alternative treatments, testing, anything I could think of while we expected that Tater wouldn't be with us for much longer.



©2012 Maria S. (inset). ©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. Our amazing survivor-Tater Tot.

Because Maria is so good at what she does, she noticed that Tater had tapeworms. We ran more tests. **His belly was big and round from the tapeworms, giardia and what was almost pneumonia. Once we started treatment he began to show improvement.** It took a few weeks but we were very happy to take FIP off the table as we saw Tater eat on his own and gain weight.

King arrived in my home for a few days. He was quite the charmer, but he wasn't meant to be here for very long. **Sam and I drove King to New Hampshire, to his new home where his mom, Judy was waiting to adopt him.** I loved this home for him and this good woman and her sister. I never thought King had a chance and here he was 1400 miles from the palette factory in a safe, loving environment.

Two of my dear friends adopted Sabrina and Cutie Pie. Their mom, April, found a home in Brooklyn, NY and their sister Bon Bon was adopted in June.

August

We took on another pregnant mama named Winnie and got a new foster home here in CT. Donna and her husband, Paul are great foster parents. Winnie had five amazing kittens on 8.10.12 named Buttons, Bandit, Honeydew, Charly and Pinkie.



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. Mama, Winnie (inset) waiting to see Dr. Chris. Buttons flying high while Honeydew and sister, Bandit look on.

I took another fistful of Xanax and flew to Topeka, Kansas to tour the [Hill's Global Pet Nutrition Center](#) [1]. I tiptoed through the "dark side," but made some good friends and learned a lot more about pet food ingredients.

Something horrible happened to my cat Spencer. He stopped eating and hid. X-rays showed a strange mass in his sinus. I tried to prepare myself for the worst. It turned out to be a false alarm which added many more gray hairs to my head.

September

I was honored to be chosen as one of five members of the Animal Control Advisory Panel, overseeing the operations of our brand new town's Animal Control facility here in Newtown, CT. We had our first meeting and I was delighted to be nominated as Co-Chair of the committee.

Just as I was about to get inundated with kitties from Maria and Cyndie, I found a foster home for two of the remaining black kitties and the final one, Hello Dahlia, was adopted. **We got the word that Miss Fluffy Pants found a GREAT forever home and Coco, Chichi, Choco, Tater Tot, Latte, Fred & Barney, and Willow arrived!**



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. (inset) the DOOD [2] resting in his cage while his mysterious back injury slowly healed and a few months later enjoying the new cat tree in my office.

Chichi and Choco got adopted right away into a great home.

One morning, the DOOD couldn't get up and walk and was in terrible pain, growling or crying if we touched him. We did x-rays that showed nothing and began talking about taking DOOD to a neurologist or starting him on steroids. **It took six long weeks, most of it forced cage rest, before he was well enough to walk again without pain.** I think he fell down the spiral staircase to get into the basement where we store food for our feral cat, but we'll never really know what happened.



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. Jackson getting oxygen before we raced him to the Emergency Vet and Intensive Care (inset). Jackson at home feeling better.

Jackson fell ill with a temp of 105.1°F. We put him on antibiotics and waited two weeks to do a re-check. At his re-check, since Jackson did NOT like to be messed with, we had to sedate him to get a good x-ray. I didn't like the way his chest looked when he breathed. That day Jackson went into heart failure from the effects of sedation and we almost lost him. He had undiagnosed hypertrophic cardiomyopathy [3] and was in poor condition. The next day Jackson was supposed to be adopted. Instead, Jackson fought for his life in intensive care at an emergency Vet. We took Jackson home later that night, unsure of how much longer we'd have with him.

With Maria having space in her home open, we took on a kitty named Bongo who has nerve damage to his front leg. It had been a Hell of a month, but we kept on.

October

Opal went to a sanctuary and is doing well. She is becoming more friendly each day and she may one day be put up for adoption.

There was troubling news about King. **He'd been struggling with chronic, severe and frankly bizarre ear infections. He had to have surgery, loads of daily cleanings, antibiotics.** The other cats in the home weren't too sure about him. King faced losing his ears and his home, but his mom never gave up on him.



©2012 Maria S. Bunny Boo Boo (inset) with Bongo (left) and George (right)-who are all ready to be adopted! Email info@kittenassociates.org [4] for more info.

I rescued a knockout silver tabby Maine coon mix named Nico from a kill shelter in Georgia because I knew I could find him a home and I wasn't going to let him die.

Maria found a kitten in a parking lot she named, Bunny Boo Boo that she rescued on her own and we took on another cat whose former mom was going to lose her home if the landlord found out she rescued a cat from the parking lot nearby. **We named him George and he and Bongo and Bunny Boo Boo are great friends.**



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. Hurricane Sandy, no power for almost a week-just a bad flashback to the year before when we got nailed at almost the same time by "Snowmageddon."

Hurricane Sandy killed the power and made life HELL for a week making a mess of my home in Sandy Hook, CT.

November



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. You are deeply missed, sweet girl.

More vet runs, some of Winnie's kittens found forever homes, but all that didn't matter after learning the shocking news that Bobette, who was now named, Kissy, had passed away shortly after surgery to remove the same leg we'd tried so hard to save. JaneA drove five hours to be with us over Thanksgiving so we could all mourn together. I had a breakdown, sobbing uncontrollably, saying I wished I could make it better or could have done something different. JaneA comforted me when I really wanted to comfort her. I'd rescued Kissy over a year before and suffered when three of her kittens died a few days after rescue from a kill shelter. Here it was just over a year after I'd saved her life. I'd never worked so hard or for such a long time to make a cat's life pain free and happy and now she was lost to us forever.

December

Nico arrived and was adopted a few weeks later. The rest of Winnie's family found their forever homes. There were lots of inquiries about adopting kittens since the Holidays were approaching. **Tater Tot, in a surprising twist, got adopted instead of Willow, who the family had come to meet.** Willow, Fred & Barney and Latte were still with us waiting for their forever homes.

I got good news that King overcame his severe ear issues and was finally settling in with his new family. The other kitties were slowly accepting him and King was finding his place. His mom is the sort of adopter I always wish for-after a very rocky start, loads of vet bills and difficulties, she kept on. She never complained. She was completely devoted. My only hope is that her reward is enjoying the love of a very dear cat and hopefully a much easier future.



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. Our mascot of Covered in Cat Hair and my baby, Spencer before and after surgery.

Spencer had a very challenging dental cleaning where he lost two more teeth and surgery to remove a mass from one ear and another from inside the other. I prepared myself for bad news, but **the shock came as the test results indicated it was an apocrine gland cyst with “no content”-meaning NO CANCER.**

Sam and I cleared out the garage of recycling one bright sunny morning. After we were done we went to Panera Bread to have a late breakfast. While we were sitting there we saw police cars racing past. **I knew something bad had happened and a few minutes later I heard the news of the shooting at Sandy Hook Elementary, which you can read more about [HERE](#) [5] and [HERE](#) [6].**



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. My home town will never be the same again. The school is a few miles from my home.

Wanting to reach out and help heal the broken hearts in our town, I created [“Kitties for Kids”](#) [7] a kitten-therapy for the children, first responders and residents of Newtown, CT. We were featured on national television news and major news outlets online. We got loads of donations of plush toys and the first children and parents began to arrive to visit our kitties.

Although we had no Christmas and sent out no card (*for the first time in my adult life*), the joy of knowing I was helping people and the overwhelming honor of so many people reaching out to us was my gift.



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. *We will never forget and find a way to heal our hearts.*

As the year draws to a close, we have saved over 60 lives by networking, rescuing, fostering... and many of those cats were tough to place. I also helped people keep their cats by offering them suggestions on how to work with their cat's behavior and health issues. I even covered the Vet bill of a few cats in dire need so they would keep their homes, too.

It's been quite a challenging and painful year. I realize that 2013 may be no easier. All I can do is hope that I'll be better able to handle what is yet to come and that for the cats out there who need me, that I'll have the resources to help them when the time comes.

Happy 2013 to All!

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Comments

Mon, 2012-12-31 13:26 — Michelle, & Suki (not verified)

An inspirational site ^[49]

I was just browsing the internet when I came across your page and decided to sit down and have a read and I cried at your stories, but happy tears! My own lil miss Suki is a mere 10 weeks old and she is the apple of my eye! :) I've wanted a cat for so long and have never before been in the position to have one until now. But when I found Suki it was love at first meow.

But how you manage to handle so many is amazing! I have my hands full with one rambunctious little kitten! :) well practice makes perfect lol. Keep up the amazing work you do and all the best for the new year.

With love and best wishes from Michelle and Suki.

Mon, 2012-12-31 16:44 — jmuwj (not verified)

RE: 2012, Part II ^[50]

Words are superfluous. You and your associates are nothing short of amazing. Wishing you all, and the cats and kittens you work so hard to help, a safe, healthy, healing, and joyous 2013, and may you all be many times blessed for your compassion, kindness, caring, and continuing responsible care/protection of your community's (and beyond) most vulnerable, blameless, innocent, and deserving of all. Happy 2013.

Mon, 2012-12-31 18:46 — [Whskr](#) (not verified) ^[51]

Our hero ^[52]

I came to you via Sparklecat and her notice about your work helping after the Newtown tragedy. You are one of the unsung heroines that keep the rest of us fostering, adopting and loving (in our case 7 - including two new rescue kittens!).

We think Tater's story is little short of miraculous too!

Thank you.

Marjorie and Dash

Tue, 2013-01-01 06:12 — Michele (not verified)

Happy New Year ^[53]

Happy New Year to you, Sam, and all of the amazing kitties! I always keep up with what you have going on. You are an inspiration to us all!

Tue, 2013-01-01 12:45 — [Caroline](#) (not verified) ^[54]

Amazing ^[55]

Not many people can say they saved 60 lives this year....60 lives.

xo

Tue, 2013-01-01 20:26 — Baylee (not verified)

You are amazing! ^[56]

I found this blog through facebook and I am so happy I did. You and Maria are so amazing. You truly are an inspiration on how people should lead their lives. Thank you for all you do for the kitty world and everything you do for the human world. Your work in Sandy Hook was just awesome. True role models you are!

Wed, 2013-01-02 00:16 — Esme (not verified)

Bless your heart. I cannot ^[57]

Bless your heart. I cannot imagine the work you do-the gratification and the heartache. Those little and big kitties need someone like you in their camp. Every community needs someone like you. May 2013 be rewarding and healthy for you and the kitties.

Wed, 2013-01-02 07:23 — Barbara UK (not verified)

The good that you do [58]

Just look at all the good that you do! To see it all summarised like that over an entire year, it's absolutley amazing what you have acheived. You have had many sad, heartbreaking moments along the way but the good far outweighs the bad and that's what keeps you soldiering on. You really are wonderful.

Then in the face of the terrible shooting, you still find a way to do good and I really hope Kitties for Kids is helping everyone in Sandy Hook. An inspired idea.

I give you 3 great big cheers for 2012 and wish you all the best for 2013

Barbara UK

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Robin @ [Google+](#)

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- [3] <http://www.winnfelinehealth.org/health/hcm.html>
- [4] <mailto:info@kittenassociates.org>
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