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[Home](#) > Birth, Death and Everything Inbetween.

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## Birth, Death and Everything Inbetween.

Mon, 2014-08-11 15:34 — Robin Olson

It's been a tough month since we took on ALL the cats from one home in town in suburban Atlanta, Georgia. The woman said she someone gave her a cat we call Laney and she never got around to getting her spayed. Fast forward 3 years and there were 13 cats roaming around her yard, all offspring of this one cat or her "old enough" kittens. Many more than the ones we were able to account for "disappeared" or were flat out killed by wildlife or died from never getting vet care. Laney's own daughter Winnie was the latest in a long line of pregnant offspring, but she would get the care she needed, unlike the others.



©2014 Foster Mom Moe. Mother, Laney (left) and her daughter, Winnie (right)

Their miserable life ended on July 1 when we took them into our rescue. Kitten Associates is "full-up" with other cats and kittens but because our foster mom, Moe was willing to make room, we decided to take on the risk. It's very hard to turn your back when you know something terrible could befall little kittens and their parents. It meant a big challenge for us because we haven't had any adoptions this summer and what little interest we've had hasn't panned out. Trying to find the funds to feed all these cats plus the dozen plus more I have in my home is difficult, but it must be done. We are devoted to ending their misery by providing for their well-being for however long that means. We treated their flea infestations and took them to the vet over and over again. Two of the kittens, Jasper and Julep, were chronically sick to the point of us fearing we would lose them, but they recovered and for now they are doing well.



©2014 Foster Mom Moe. Laney has got to be due soon!

Meanwhile, Celeste, our friendly stray who was dumped and pregnant in a nearby town to my home in Connecticut is ready to be spayed. Her kittens are already vetted now that they're 12 weeks old. Astro, Hubble, Twinkle-Twinkle and Little Star are delightful. They've grown like weeds and are full of love and joy, but they're outgrowing the small blue bathroom and it's tough to keep them in such a small space. We let them out of their room for a run down the hallway a few times every day. They love to race back and forth after pom poms, spring toys and pretty much anything else they can get their paws on until they get so tired they lay flat on the floor having no further desire to run around until they recharge their battery with a nap. I can't believe they're getting so big already. Seems like only a week or two ago that I watched them being born. Sometimes I imagine little Fiorello, their sibling who died a day after he was born, running around with the others, finally getting to live the full life he deserved.



©2014 Robin A.F Olson. Celeste getting ready for the next part of her journey.

Mia, who came to us from northern Georgia, and her kittens are doing well, too. Although it was the right choice to bring Mia to my home in Connecticut to be fostered with her kittens, it was also the wrong choice to make. Mia and I haven't bonded. She always hisses at me when I come near her. I've snuck a few pets in but she recoils fearfully. If I'd left her behind and only transported her kittens to my home leaving Moe continue to work with her, the 13 cats we just rescued wouldn't have had a space to live and we would have had to leave them behind to fend for themselves.



©2014 Robin A.F Olson. *A little bit of everything going on here.*

Mia's kittens are a riot and the two who were most shy are starting to warm up to me. They're all getting to be too big, which always makes me worry, but I have to have faith it will work out and they'll find their homes soon regardless of how big they are now.



©2014 Robin A.F Olson. *Who is the most beautiful one of all?*

Wallace, our little brat, has had a few setbacks, but has also made some great progress. Wallace, who was rescued by the Danbury, CT Fire Department when they broke him out of a wall, needed to be bottle fed for many weeks. With Nina, a Great Dane, as his only animal friend, Wallace didn't learn his "kitty manners" and became fearful and aggressive with humans. I was shocked this happened to Wallace and felt like blaming his foster mom for not doing a good job, but after doing some research it was clear that Wallace needed the company of other kittens to help him learn how to be a proper kitty—to not bite hard, to not be aggressive. He couldn't learn this from humans so he returned to my home for what I call "Kitten Bootcamp."



©2014 Robin A.F Olson. *Hubble (left) and Astro (right) growing like weeds.*

It wasn't easy to make the choice but after careful consideration I put Wallace with Mia's kittens instead of Celeste's even though her kittens were the same age as Wallace. They were already vetted and were less likely to cause Wallace to get sick and vice versa. They were older and bigger and could also handle Wallace's rough play-behavior. I worried that Wallace would get hurt especially after seeing how Mia's kitten Woody reacted to meeting his new friend.



©2014 Robin A.F Olson. *Little Star at 10 weeks.*

It took a few days for the hissing and growling to subside. The once sweet Woody turned violent and unpleasant with all of us during those days. I was surprised since Woody has always been the most friendly and outgoing, but apparently he's also the most possessive of his humans.



©2014 Robin A.F Olson. *Mia's son, Fernando. Just chillin'.*

I didn't think this test would work very quickly, if at all, but within a week I began to see big changes in Wallace. His initial anger was gone. He was no longer frustrated by not having an outlet for his pent up energy. He could chase and be chased. He could wrestle, jump, bite and burn off any excess energy he had. He'd come over to me when I entered the room and he'd PURR. He'd climb up on me and rub his face against my cheek. He couldn't get close enough to me. I wanted to relax and enjoy it, but I was still very careful in how I handled him. I didn't pet him a lot because I didn't want to over-stimulate him and I wanted him to have positive reinforcement for his good behavior, too.



©2014 Robin A.F Olson. *Ivy (left) and brother, Fernando (right).*

He definitely seemed to have a point where it was too much and I didn't want to get to that point. If he started to jump or nip I

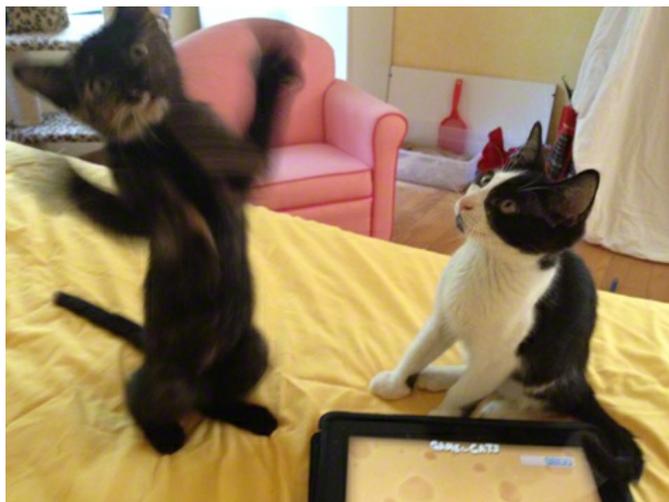
stopped giving him attention. He needs more work but he's so much better and our little punk has gained over a pound! He no longer looks like an elf with his big ears and eyes. I miss the silly face he once had, but I'm glad to see him maturing normally and losing that scary-big belly that made us worry he had the wet form of FIP.



©2014 Robin A.F Olson. Sweet Greta.

Junebug and her sister Maggie are STILL waiting for their forever home. The once shy kitties are much calmer and living a great life with Jame and her family. They are our newest foster family and have helped the kitties overcome their fears. The cats are almost full grown and gorgeous. It pains me that only their brother Purcree has been adopted. I hope their turn will come soon.

I had a chance to see them today when Sam and I visited them and showed Jame how to do claw trims, but it also left me feeling guilty that I haven't found their home yet.



©2014 Robin A.F Olson. One of the weirdest photos I've ever taken.

And lastly there's Winnie and Laney, our pregnant ladies. Two days ago Winnie gave birth to three kittens. Sadly, only one of them survived. The others were stillborn. Winnie didn't have the best odds coming from a lousy environment, being very young-barely out of kittenhood herself, and her offspring were likely inbred. It just doesn't add up to producing healthy, viable kittens.



©2014 Robin A.F Olson. *Wallace makes friends with Fernando.*

It's heartbreaking that the kittens didn't make it. Tigger and Eeoyre deserved to have a long, wonderful life, but they never even took a breath. Their little sibling, Piglet is precious and pale, but is nursing well. Winnie is too young to understand the responsibility of being a mother. Maybe her hormones haven't kicked in or there's something wrong with Piglet. All we know is she's not being a great mother. Unless she's supervised she doesn't feed Piglet consistently. She hasn't abandoned the kitten so we don't think anything is wrong with him. She has gone over to the place where she gave birth and cried out. She's possibly mourning her losses. It's hard to say. We're praying that she adjusts to motherhood soon and/or that her mother, Laney, finally gives birth and will accept an extra kitten to care for.



©2014 Foster Mom Moe. *Winnie rests her head on a warmed rice-filled sock after her first day as a mom while Piglet enjoys his first day.*

Laney is HUGE. I keep seeing photos of her and wonder how she walks and how many kittens she's going to have. She's been a mama many times before so we hope all her kittens will be big and thriving and maybe be willing to share their mom with Piglet if needed.



©2014 Foster Mom Moe. *Piglet. 2 ounces. Resting on a gently warmed sock filled with rice.*

Tonight is the night of the Super Moon. It's big and peachy in color. It's been giving me strange dreams. My gut says this is the night when Laney will give birth because we are pulled by the unseen forces of nature and the moon's tug on us is one of them. Everyone will be all right and Piglet will survive. It just HAS to be that way. It just HAS TO. We've lost two kittens to the

Heavens. The price has been paid. I hope the ones yet to be born as well as little Piglet will be all right so we can focus on celebrating our new arrivals and starting their story with joy in our hearts instead of the sting of disappointment and sadness over more who don't make it.

**UPDATE:** The super moon didn't work its magic on Laney. No kittens yet. We're still waiting for her to give birth. Piglet went from 2 ounces to 2.5 ounces. Moe is supplementing his food with extra syringes of formula. All we can do now is cross our fingers, toes, paws, whatever we've got. It's up to Piglet and Winnie now.

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## **Comments**

Mon, 2014-08-11 21:01 — jmuwj (not verified)

### **RE: Updates** <sup>[8]</sup>

Thanking you for these progress reports/updates, both the hopeful and the not-so. What amazing work you do. Those who have made it look like they are thriving. \*PRAYERS\* and love for them all, and may that little runt Piglet thrive!

Tue, 2014-08-12 17:16 — Catnonymouse (not verified)

### **update** <sup>[9]</sup>

Great update on kittens and their Mums which I really enjoyed reading and seeing photos. My fingers are crossed for all of them to do well and find good homes. They are so lucky to find themselves in your care - you will give them their best chance for a good life

Barbara UK

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[1] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/33>

[2] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/48>

[3] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/97>

[4] <https://coveredincathair.com/taxonomy/term/100>

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[8] <https://coveredincathair.com/comment/9198#comment-9198>

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