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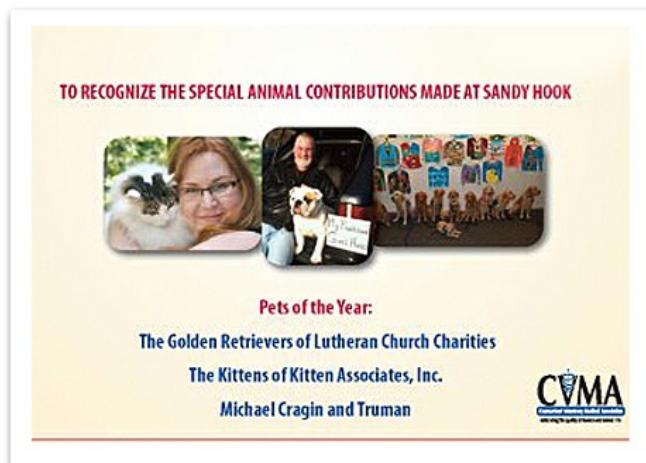
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Kitten Associates Featured in the December 2013 Issue of Cat Fancy

Mon, 2013-12-02 15:58 — Robin Olson

On December 14, 2012 my neighbor was murdered in her bed. Her son took off, armed to the hilt and for reasons we may never know, headed for our local elementary school and murdered some of the staff and 20 children.

From the moment I heard the news, I knew I had to do something to help my community. I didn't have much to offer, other than a house full of foster kittens, but what I take for granted, I knew other people might find unique. What I also knew is the healing power that resulted in spending time with kittens. Pet a kitten. Watch them play. You can't be sad when you're in a room full of kittens. The day after the tragedy, my program Kitties for Kids was born. **A year later I can say that it was possibly the best thing I've ever done in my entire life.**



I had no idea we'd get accolades from the [Connecticut Veterinary Medical Association](#) [1] or that I'd meet someone I look up to-[U.S. Senator Richard Blumenthal](#) [2], who also awarded our program with a Special Certificate of Recognition. I just wanted to help my broken-hearted community and had no idea or expectation that anything would happen to me as a result of giving back.

Our program was extended into the spring of this year, then it faded away when our dear kitten Fred, grew ill and later died from the dry form of FIP. I didn't give Kitties for Kids much thought. I was too busy grieving. We didn't get requests for visits and I thought it was time to close the program.



This summer, I was surprised when [Susan Logan](#) [3], the Editor of Cat Fancy contacted me and asked me if I'd be interested in having them do a story about our program for their December 2013 issue. I didn't hesitate to offer to write the article myself, but in all fairness she said it would be better reporting if she sent someone to me to do the story. I agreed, though as a cat writer, I admit to being a bit frustrated to being so close to writing for a national publication I'd admired since I was a kid.

I met with Kellie Gormly, a cheerful, chatty, cat-lover early in April. We talked at great length about not only doing rescue work, but how the residents of Newtown were coping. I took her on a tour, showing her the Newtown Healing Arts Center where the arts were used to help the children express their feelings and where many donations of artwork were displayed from around the world. I showed her other areas that were about being positive and hopeful, instead of focusing on a tour of

where grisly events unfolded. We paid respect to the little fire station near where Sandy Hook Elementary once stood. On its roof are 26 bronze stars, one for each of the victims in the school. It was a cold, bright day, not unlike the day of the shooting. I didn't want to be anywhere near this place and was glad to leave it behind.

Kellie got to work on the article while the design staff at Cat Fancy reviewed the photos I sent them and made their selections for what would make the issue. At the time I had no idea which photos were going to be used where, nor how long the piece was going to be. I hoped for at least a 2-page spread, but had no idea what they'd end up doing.



The article about Kitties for Kids starts on page 16!

My dear friend Ingrid King sent me an email with the subject saying something to the effect of: "**OMG DID YOU SEE THIS??!**" Ingrid had attached a scan of the article. Unbeknownst to me, Cat Fancy came out early to subscribers and Ingrid hadn't known Kitten Associates was going to be featured. **I imagined her turning page after page, then seeing someone she recognized...there's ROBIN and Spencer!**

To quote my mother, I think I "plotzed" when I saw the scan. **There, on the very first page of the article was a photo of me with Spencer. It took up more than half the space. When I envisioned the photo being used, I assumed it might be a thumbnail-size near the end of the article. Oh no...it was me in all my glory.** Holy moley. I wondered if this is what it's like to be a celebrity? I admit to feeling a mix of delight and horror. Yes, I need to be out there in the public so my rescue can get more help, but wowie it is a strange feeling to see yourself in a magazine you often read.



Here's a sneak peek of the December 2013 Issue of Cat Fancy. To get your own copy, visit [Cat Fancy online](#) [4].

The next day I had to bring some kittens to Dr. Larry's and the second I walked in the door, I ran over and grabbed their copy of Cat Fancy. I asked if I could do "show and tell" during my appointment and they looked at me like I was crazy (*which they are also used to by now*). I went into the exam room and looked at the article. It blew me away. **Kellie did a great job and I loved the layout. It is 4 pages long and full of photos from our program. They even honored Fred's passing, which meant the world to me.**

My parents died many years ago and this is one thing I wish they had lived to see. All the hard work, the tears, resulted in something wonderful for [Kitten Associates](#) [5]. **When Dr. Larry looked at the spread, his face lit up. He smiled. He was really impressed and proud of me. In that moment I realized how meaningful it is to get a reminder that you're doing the right thing. It gives me fuel to keep going when times get tough.**

Kitties for Kids hasn't come to an end. After careful consideration, we have decided to do a special 2-week run of our program. It will start on December 14th, the first anniversary of the tragedy and will run until December 28th. Though we hope no one will feel the need for kitty play-therapy because their hearts are healing, we'll be ready in case we're needed. **If you live in Newtown, CT and would like to book a play therapy session, just email us at info@kittenassociates [6], org and we'll fill you in on how to sign up.**

If you'd like to purchase a copy of the December 2013 issue of Cat Fancy, check your local retailers right now or visit [Cat Fancy](#) [7] online. Be sure to check out their [Cat Channel](#) [7] which has loads of helpful information about cats, their health and behavior issues. Oh, and don't forget to LIKE them on [Facebook](#) [8]!

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[Shooting in Sandy Hook](#) [14]

Comments

Mon, 2013-12-02 18:12 — Barbara UK (not verified)

[Congratulations](#) [15]

Congratulations! That is fantastic and I am so happy for you. You created a wonderful therapy for traumatised children after a terrible event in the only way you could think of. You so deserve this - and you and Spencer look just fine as celebrities!

Barbara UK

Tue, 2013-12-03 09:46 — Catnonymouse (not verified)

[wonderful! been reading the](#) [16]

wonderful! been reading the blog for a very long time and glad you are having the recognition Robin! congratulations!!!

Tue, 2013-12-03 12:03 — [Riverfront Cats](#) (not verified) [17]

[Congratulations on Cat Fancy Article!](#) [18]

Robin this is beyond amazing!!! I am soooooo thrilled for you!!! This will no doubt lead to greater awareness of the need for more volunteers, foster parents, the healing benefits of having a pet...Each person giving a little in time or skills MAKES A DIFFERENCE. Teamwork, love and peseverance makes a difference. Thank you for your efforts!

Christine Michaels

Founder, Riverfront Cats

Miami, FL

Tue, 2013-12-03 15:18 — jmuhj (not verified)

[RE: CAT FANCY ARTICLE](#) [19]

I can't think of anyone more deserving of the recognition and praise, Robin. Hoping the article will generate a lot of positive interest and many bookings >^^<

Tue, 2013-12-03 17:06 — Carolyn Schellhardt (not verified)

[Robin](#) [20]

I am so proud of all that you do!!! You are truly a cat saint!!!!!!

Tue, 2013-12-03 21:47 — [Bobbi Hahn](#) (not verified) [21]

[Congratulations!](#) [22]

Although I have never had the pleasure of meeting you in person, Robin, I feel as though I know you through your heartfelt writing. You have made me laugh; you have made me cry. Reading about your being featured in Cat Fancy magazine brought tears to my eyes because you are again being acknowledged as a remarkable human being. I am especially touched by your planning a two-week run of Kitties for Kids because, as you know, my great-niece, Vicky Soto, was one of the educators murdered at Sandy Hook. Her family is dreading the approaching anniversary, and I imagine there are folks in Newtown who are, as well. I share your hope that kitty play-therapy won't be needed, but if it is, it comforts me to know that you'll be there. I am sooo very proud of you!

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Robin @ [Google+](#)

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Links

- [1] <http://www.ctvet.org/>
- [2] <http://www.blumenthal.senate.gov/>
- [3] <https://twitter.com/CATeditor>
- [4] <http://www.catchannel.com/cat-fancy/default.aspx>
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