



**Our Mission: Improving the lives of cats through humane care, spay/neuter, adoptions, education and support services.**

**Serving Marion and Levy Counties**

To learn more about us visit [www.shelteringhands.org](http://www.shelteringhands.org)

April 2021

## **Olaf's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Chili Challenge**

Held on January 9, 2021, this is one of Sheltering Hands' biggest annual events to bring in funds for our low-cost, spay/neuter clinic and feline rescue. Everyone was very excited!



As we finalized our plan of attack, we decided to give our community some normalcy and chili, of course. With Covid-19 guidelines in place and a very stringent layout of all the activities for the day, we felt we were ready.

Sheltering Hands decided on the name Olaf's Chili Challenge last year to memorialize a young kitty who made it through a rough start to be given a second chance with a loving family in our very own community.

Marion County's own Sheriff Billy Woods adopted Olaf after a tragic incident left this poor girl in need of some major TLC. As many of the shelters and rescues in our area and in other communities know, cruelty to animals is too commonplace.

Sheltering Hands wanted to host an event that brought together all the area rescues and shelters to share with our community the services and support we all have to offer.

As this was our second year, we were even more eager to gain momentum and provide this day of family fun to our community on an annual basis. This year was impacted by the necessary restrictions and precautions we have not dealt with before.

It was a very cold, January day, and we knew that our crowd would dwindle no matter how warm the chili was! Even with all the stumbling blocks, the event was a success, raising almost \$15,000 for Sheltering Hands and providing all that attended a day of great chili, wonderful music and a great cause to be a part of!

Sheltering Hands held a "Chili Paw Challenge" division which is open only to our rescues and shelters; the winner takes home a \$500 cash prize along with bragging rights for the best chili, and their name on a perpetual trophy. This year Quality of Life Rehab and Foster's head chili-chef Brian, was able to win the Chili Paw for his organization with his amazing chili recipe.

Sheltering Hands enjoyed putting on this event to meet some wonderful CASI chili members and network with our community on helping our community cats.

We will see everyone next year!  
Mark your calendars for **January 8, 2022!**

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### **Our Programs**

#### **Adoptions:**

**Seniors for Seniors**

**Barn cats**

**Take A Chance On Me**

**Low-Cost Spay or Neuter**

**Trap/Neuter & Return**

To learn more:  
[info@shelteringhands.org](mailto:info@shelteringhands.org)

[www.shelteringhands.org](http://www.shelteringhands.org)

**Follow us on Facebook!**

**GET YOUR CAT'S FAVORITE  
CATNIP TOYS,  
PET ODOR CANDLES, CAT  
QUILTS AT  
SHELTERING HANDS  
MONDAY-SATURDAY 10-5  
CASH, CHECK OR  
CREDIT CARD ACCEPTED.**

## CONSIDER ADOPTING A FELV CAT

## Our Wish List

You can drop off any of these items at  
Sheltering Hands  
10397 N. Hwy 27  
Mon. Wed. or Fri.

10 am to 4 pm

- Paper Towels (white)
- Gas Cards for Animal Transports
- Bleach, Dish & Laundry soaps
- Canned Cat Foods
- Trash Bags (13 & 39 gal, sizes)
- Copy Paper
- Dry Cat Food (Iams, Purina One, Authority)
- Disposable Bed Pads/ Puppy Pads
- Towels, flat sheets, pillow cases
- Thank you notes

### Up Coming Events!

**We are at PetSmart in  
Lady Lake  
Saturdays: 10-5  
Every other day but  
Monday: 11-2**

**Come and visit!!**

### **NEW MEMBERSHIP PROGRAM!!**

**Get or Gift an annual  
membership for \$25.00.**

**You'll receive an email copy  
of our quarterly newsletter,  
a Sheltering Hands car mag-  
net (first-time members), a  
10% discount on one of the  
following\***

**Spay/Neuter**

**Adoption**

**Retail Purchase**

*\*One per year and non-  
transferable.*

Feline Leukemia is one of the most infectious diseases affecting only cats but cannot be transmitted to other animals or humans. The virus is passed through saliva and blood but can also be contracted via feces and urine. A positive cat may not display symptoms for days to years after exposure.

There is no known cure and infected cats have a higher risk of acquiring secondary medical issues like lymphoma. The incidence of FeLV has diminished, due to vaccines and better testing methods. Even with vaccination, a cat is not fully immune, as efficacy is only about 85% which is why we recommend they be the only cat in a household. (One exception would be if your other cat is also a positive FeLV cat).

Outdoor cats are more likely to catch and spread the virus. While it remains one of the most common causes of death, many cats are able to resist infection and some can even fight it off on their own. Actually, many FeLV cats may live a normal life span of 15+ years. Cats with weakened immune systems are not as lucky and may succumb within a few years of diagnosis. Prognosis varies with age and general health condition.

Kittens and young cats are more likely to contract the virus than an older cat, which is probably due to resistance increasing with age.

However, medical management including more regular vet visits, monthly at-home checks of weight, reddened gums and bad breath, and keeping the cat indoors. So why would *anyone* want to adopt a cat who's tested positive for FeLV?

FeLV is no longer the death sentence it once was, but misconceptions linger. This article will hopefully dispel those misconceptions and awaken a compassionate interest in learning more about the sweet cats currently available for adoption at Sheltering Hands.

Once diagnosed many live for years and with an abundance of TLC, she will provide you with the love and cuddles any "normal" cat would also provide. There are a few considerations you should think about to ensure that quality of life is achieved:

Will your home keep him/her as the only cat?

Will you agree to keeping the cat indoors all the time?

Will you be able to afford more frequent vet visits and testing (at least bi-annual checkups)?

Will you be sure to provide a balanced, low-carb, healthy diet?

Will you be sure your cat gets plenty of love and attention?

**...See adoptable cats on page 4**

## BRINGING HOME A NEW CAT: "HOW-TO" TIPS TO MAKE IT A SUCCESSFUL ADOPTION

There is a good deal to consider when bringing home a new cat or kitten, but our adoption would be a bit more challenging as we also have a dog in the home. Using the advice on Sheltering Hands' webpage, I learned how to let our new 4-year-old cat Maggie, and our very calm Schnauzer Bella, interact safely, which led to both comfortably sharing the whole house.

The website mentions that it's easier to introduce a cat to a dog than a cat to another cat. In the former instance, the cat doesn't perceive the dog as competition. Maggie just needed a safe place: a room of her own, as she adapted to her new surroundings. After the first overnight, we let Maggie out of her room, while Bella was on the enclosed porch. They could see and smell each other and still feel safe.



Once they'd had a few days of "supervised visitation" I felt they could be put into the same room safely. The only issue was where to feed her, as her food would be too tempting for Bella to resist!



Before we brought Maggie home, we got all the important supplies for her like food and water bowls, a comfy cat bed, toys, a brush and of course a litter box. To ease the transition from the shelter to our home, we stuck with the food she was used to eating, then gradually switched to a food our vet recommended. This idea works with the litter as well.

Initially, most cats/kittens will likely be stressed from the change of environment. Maggie adjusted more easily by being confined to one room with regular time spent with me. We used our bedroom and an enclosed living area for exploration. A litter box, food and water, a few places to hide such as a cardboard box with a blanket also helped her comfort level.

We watched for signs of stress such as decreased appetite and/or grooming, lack of interest in attention or affection. I knew that very stressed cats might behave somewhat aggressively or fearfully but will come around in time. While Maggie does not like being held, we bonded over brushing and playing.

Approximately 3 months after Maggie's rescue, we adopted a kitten. Dexter was sequestered and slowly introduced to the rest of the household following the same procedures. His energetic kitten behavior was a challenge for Maggie, so we learned to give Maggie a break by setting up a play area in Dexter's room where his food and litter box were located. Dexter's gradual introduction to the dog allowed him to feel safe, and he showed very little fear of Bella.

The house has been kitten-proofed by removing house plants and putting out scratch pads and using double-sided tape to protect the furniture. There is a new cat tree and toy box for both cats to choose from. Dexter loves being in high places, so we have given up keeping him off of the refrigerator as long as he has a safe way to get down. Maggie's adoption was nearly 1 year ago, Dexter's 6 months ago, and we truly love our new additions.

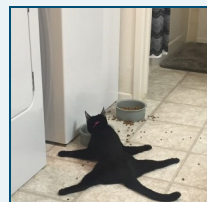
...Barbara Verde for Sheltering Hands

### DID YOU KNOW?

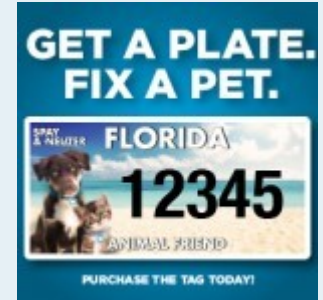
Cats do not like to have surfaces pressing against their whiskers when they are eating. So they are happier eating from a plate or a wide shallow bowl.

It also makes it easier for them to eat daintily and not get food on their faces.

Also, some cats may develop chin acne from getting food or bacteria (from old food) on their chins; or from allergies that can develop if their chins touch a plastic bowl.



**Florida Animal Friends**  
Help end pet overpopulation and purchase a Florida Animal Friend License Plate today!



**Chewy.com**

For every new customer purchase through this site, Chewy will donate \$20 to Sheltering Hands:

<https://www.chewy.com/rp/4793>



**Fresh Step**

For every 10,000 points Sheltering Hands receives, we get 23 boxes of free litter!

Select us as your favorite charity and shop at [www.Smile.Amazon.com](http://www.Smile.Amazon.com)



If you are interested in volunteering, please contact Elena at [Elena@ShelteringHands.org](mailto:Elena@ShelteringHands.org)



Sheltering Hands would like to extend a Paw of Gratitude to all the *Sponsors, Volunteers & Participants!* With all of your time, effort, donations and support, Olaf's 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Chili Challenge was again a success.

We thank you for being so Paw-some!



Donations were received from:

Horse & Hound, KitNipBox.com, KongBox.com, Mrs. Renfro's Ocala Breeders Feed & Supply, PetSense, Piesano's Stone Fire Pizza Sammy's Italian Restaurant and Total Wine & More

## ADOPT ONE OF OUR FeLV CATS!



Hi! My name is Tall Tree!



I'm called Warrior!



They said my name is Cool Breeze!



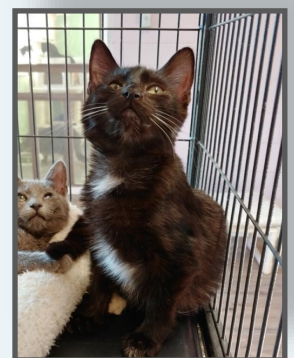
I'm Cirrus...maybe because I look at the clouds?

Check our webpage for details on how one of these sweet fur-kids can be yours!

Fill out the pre-adoption form and come in for a visit soon!

[www.shelteringhands.org](http://www.shelteringhands.org)

352-840-0663



I'm little Levi!