



theCatdoctor

GERALD BROWN, DVM

Cat angels

WHEN THIS COLUMN FIRST appeared in January 1998, I received numerous calls and letters about it. Since that time, there have been so many requests for copies that I decided to run it annually to bring in the New Year.

This year, the "Cat Angel" column is in honor of Paula Fasseas, super Cat Angel, and dedicated to Alexis Fasseas, Laurie Murray, Stephanie Roman, Josh Petuchowski, Valery Duelecher, Evan Luraux, Lisa Ward, Toni McNaughton, Stephen Ritzo and Ed McLarren, super volunteers, who run the PAWS adoption center at 2337 North Clark Street. The PAWS shelter brings healthy, neutered pets from Chicago community shelters and adopts them to wonderful loving people in the area. Many of these pets come from the city pound and animal welfare, both of which are located in inner city neighborhoods where adoption rates are low.

Cat Angels are those special people who never fail to notice a bit of fur or hear the plaintive meowing of a homeless cat that usually goes unheeded by mere

mortals. Cat Angels never fail to spot a kitty huddled beneath a dumpster or building grate. Angels will crawl in the dirt or snow to reach a litter of kittens abandoned under a porch. And they can hear the almost inaudible sounds of a starving or injured kitty and won't give up searching until it's rescued.

Cat Angels have been known to cajole unsuspecting friends or neighbors to house a rescued kitty "for just a day or two." It hardly ever ends up being temporary and often produces a new angel.

These angels are dedicated to the mission that every cat on earth deserves a warm home, enough to eat, and lots of love. If you see a dish of food on a patio or back porch, it's likely that a cat angel lives there.

Some angels, at their own expense, humanely trap, vaccinate, neuter and let go again those feral felines who no longer trust and are unable to live with people - cats that have been thrown away and somehow manage to survive anyway.



Paula Fasseas, founder of PAWS and chief planning and development officer for the Metropolitan Bank Group, and her daughter Alexis cuddle two of their kitties, Thelma and Louis. Sisters Thelma and Louis, both six years old, were rescued from a shelter along with Paula's three other kitties -- Romeo, Mercutio and Clyde. PAWS, Pets Are Worth Saving, has saved more than 500 shelter animals from being euthanized by adopting them out to loving homes.

Cat Angels often tell me about their feline treasures. I am truly honored to share the joy of their rescues and the sadness for the little ones who were abused or those that did not live.

Angels give love, dignity and appreciation to these little creatures who are here on earth in far too many numbers because of too many people's carelessness and disregard for their lives.

I've come to believe anyone who truly loves cats is a special person, an angel, for giving affection and caring with respect to these wondrous pets who add so much to our own existence.

Thanks to my readers for your letters, faxes and kind words. Happy New Year! ■

CATOID

Bridget Bardot is not only an animal lover, advocate and protector, she is particularly partial to cats. In her own home she has sixty (not a typo) stray cats, many of which are allowed to sleep with her at night.

Write to *The City Cat Doctor*, 600 North Wells, Chicago, Illinois 60610, or fax 312.944.9940. Please include your phone number. Dr. Brown will try to personally answer your question.