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**Pet Tips 'n' Tales**

by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

*Devil to Angel!*

When a stray cat adopted Dick and Barb's neighborhood, it was upsetting seeing the starved animal dragging an injured leg. Over the next three years, Dick and his neighbor, Ned, fed it and tried catching it to take to a veterinarian clinic so the "...little devil would not suffer". But with only three good legs, the cat was still faster than the men.

"The cat would not get close to us, but he sure ate our groceries!" said Dick.

"The cat was so darn homely he needed a name to live up to," said Dick, who is an old movie buff. He recalled the quote that re-furred to dashing handsome men, "He's a handsome devil" and named the kitty Handsome Devil.

One night, Barb and Dick heard the neighbor's dogs "raising a ruckus over something." The next morning, when Dick went out to walk their dog, Pup, he found the homeless cat lying up against their house.

"The cat looked horrible," said Dick. "He was obviously the object of the dogs' 'play'. He was injured and appeared dead."

Not wanting the "critter" to suffer, the couple made plans to take it to the vet, but they had concerns for their own pets' health, not wanting to place a filthy, diseased kitty in their pets' carrier. They phoned the vet clinic, which immediately lent them a carrier.

Wearing rubber gloves, Dick gently and carefully lifted the very still cat into the carrier.

Dick told the vet, "If you can save him, save him, if not, euthanize him. He's been through enough this lifetime. If he can be saved, clean him up inside and out of parasites, and give him a bath."

Eight hours later the vet's receptionist phoned and announced, "Your kitty is ready." Well, you should have seen our new family member's bill! We are retired, and it was quite a chunk of change for a budget that is already feeding a dog and another cat! We'd apparently just bought ourselves a wild cat — or so we thought!

It turns out the once starving feral cat is a domesticated cuddle bunny who knows a good deal. And three years after that memorable day when I phoned for this interview, "The Handsome Devil" was not home. Spoiled Mr. Handsome was over at the



Photo by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

**In cat years, this "Handsome" cat must be 101 years old! Once a little devil, Handsome, the once homeless cat has turned into a loving house cat.**

groomer's for his thrice-yearly trim, bath and blow!

"Handsome tries biting the groomer," explained Dick, "but his attempts are futile. He has no teeth left. His years of starvation, before we began feeding him, caused most of his teeth to rot. The vet pulled the few remaining ones to stop dental pain, which also changed his health for the better."

After the vet cleaned up Handsome, Ned came over for a visit and I heard "the rest of the story!"

He, too, had heard the dogs' ruckus and went out to investigate. In the dark and pouring rain, he saw that the cat had escaped into his back yard and was lying there. Ned nudged the cat with his toe and mentally declared it dead. But to Ned's surprise, the next morning he went out to bury the cat — but it was gone! Apparently Handsome, in pain, had crawled under the eaves of our house to stay dry. Now, Ned looked down at "our" recovering cat and exclaimed at the once "dead" animal, "That is one darn good vet! I knew that cat was dead!"

Barb built a warm shelter outside for the convalescing cat. "He seemed content with his new warm home," said Barb.

"He used the shelter and ate our groceries," added Dick. "Little by little Barb

moved the shelter closer and closer to the house. Until Handsome is inside, sleeping with us!"

"I was never nervous of Handsome," said Barb, "He has a wonderful personality, and he was so homely you couldn't but help fall in love with him. He needed so much mending. Just look at how handsome he is now! Dick was right, the cat grew into his name!"

Their dog, Pup, would like to be friends with Handsome, but after that eventual night, Handsome learned not to trust dogs. Pup loves everyone, but Handsome does not love Pup. The cat's spirit has healed enough now that he is peacefully co-existing with the dog.

"Handsome follows Barb around like she is covered in catnip!" said Dick. "He knows he won the lotto with her care and love. In the mornings, he even follows her to the shower and sits on the throne until she is done."

And what about Handsome's injured leg? It took a year to heal, leaving him with a soft limp.

"All he wants is to be loved," said Barb, "and to be brushed and petted. He sleeps with me, actually on me, purring either on my chest or up on my head like a hat. When I was ill, he slept on my chest as a little healer for three solid days. Who would have thought a wild devil cat was really an angel in disguise who wanted to teach about and give love?"

**TIPS**

Groom pets daily. Cats purr-fur the feel of a man's soft-bendable black plastic comb on their skin instead of wire combs/brushes.

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**South Lane County Fire & Rescue has a position open on the Civil Service Commission.**

South Lane County Fire & Rescue services a 132 square mile area for Fire/Rescue/EMS services based on voter approved taxing rates, levies, and bonds equaling \$1.80/\$1000, beginning with fiscal year 2016-2017. The current voter approved permanent and levied rate is \$1.50/\$1000 of assessed property value, including a house and five acres within the District's boundaries. The District further provides advanced life support ambulance service to an area totaling 850 square miles. The area outside the District's 132 square mile area does not provide tax revenue. The District operates from four fire stations and staffs the Cottage Grove and Creswell stations 24/7, with a combination of career/resident and community volunteer personnel. The Saginaw station is staffed 24/7 with off duty residents and the Camas Swale station with community volunteers. The District is managed by the Fire Chief who reports directly to the five member Board of Directors. All other District personnel report to the Fire Chief utilizing a chain of command.

The district is seeking an individual who has the desire to contribute to ongoing efforts aimed at enhancing and improving Fire Services in the South Lane County community. Interested applicants must be at least 18 years of age, be an elector, or a property owner within the district.

The Civil Service Commission's primary responsibilities involve overseeing competitive examinations for Firefighters and Fire Officers on an as needed basis. The Civil Service Commission meets quarterly to comply with the provisions of the Oregon Revised Statutes.

Interested persons may secure an application from the Business Office Located at 233 E. Harrison Ave, Cottage Grove, OR 97424 or by going to our website at [www.southlane-fire.org](http://www.southlane-fire.org) or by calling the Office at 541-942-4493.

All Applications due by June 8, 2016 at 5:00pm.



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