



# Pet Tips 'n' Tales

by Mary Ellen "Angel Scribe"

"... the only true religion consists of having a good heart." H.H. Dalai Lama

Anna, a Buddhist nun, was ordained by His Holiness Dalai Lama. She divides her time between her homes and cats in Eugene, Oregon and its sister city, Kathmandu. Anna takes the Dalai Lama's words to heart, "Having a pet teaches service, compassion and kindness" so for 19 years, she has rescued trafficked Nepalese children.

During Nepal's civil war, impoverished families sent their children, as young as four-years-old, with strangers who promised to educate and protect them. But, instead they innocently handed their child to a trafficker who would inflict fear, hunger, and disease on their child. The now "owned" children were forced to beg, serve their "master", become domestic help, break rocks, or worse.

When Anna learns of enslaved children, wearing her nun's robes, she takes a taxi to their location and announces that she has, "Come for the children." Once in the care of the "Next Generation Nepal" organization, their parents are located and the children returned home. Donations allow for these rescues and reunifications, making her acts of humanity paws-ible. (www.NextGenerationNepal.org)

In Kathmandu, street cats are considered one step above rats. The felines traverse the 15 foot brick walls that surround buildings, seldom

touching the ground in their search for food. Oddly, these "pests" are rare Bengal cats.

In Eugene, Anna has two Oregon rescues: a Bengal named "Mandu" and a Manx named "Katcat". Her cats are so beautifully marked that she calls them "house art".

"After adopting Mandu," said Anna, "I wanted a second cat, so I introduced him to two different cats, but he intimidated the frightened 'intruders'."

Then she brought home a long-hair-grey Manx, Katcat. This time the reception was jaw dropping! Mandu purred around the cat's carrier and rolled next to it like it was soaked in catnip.

When Anna let a fearless Katcat out, Mandu patiently watched his new friend explore their home. It did not take them long to become best friends.

Bengals are an amazingly intelligent breed. Mandu has 15 different tones to his voice so Anna can differentiate them and understand what he is saying. Three weeks after Katcat's arrival, he must have said something that infuriated Mandu.

"In a demanding meow Mandu announced, 'I have had enough! Katcat is an intruder,'" said Anna. "He clearly stated that it was, 'time for Katcat's stay to end'. He argued insisting, 'His visit is finished!' He made fun of Katcat and said, 'What's with his no tail? He looks like a rabbit not a cat. He has to go!'"

Anna disappointed Mandu by telling him that Katcat was now part of their family.

Mandu retaliated by refusing to sleep with her, and in protest he laid across her bedroom's threshold stretching out, so that Katcat would have to jump over him to enter.

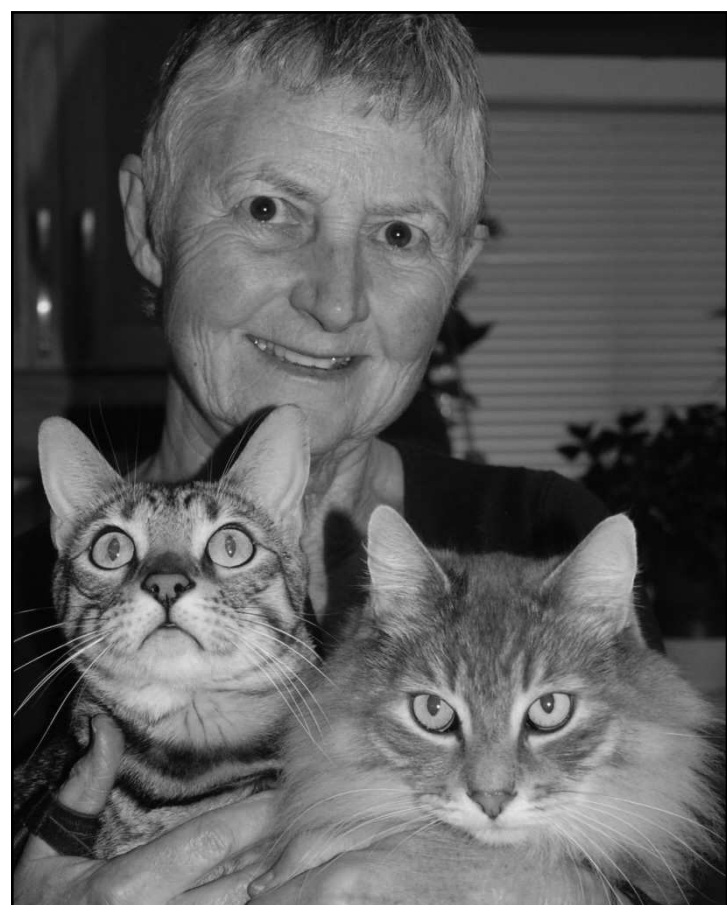
Katcat wisely made a wide turn to avoid a cat-frontation. Mandu then 'tailed' Katcat around the house intimidating him for a week making everyone's lives miserable. Finally Anna said, "Mandu! Enough!"

Whatever their hissy-fit was, Mandu got over it and the cats are back sharing her bed and lovingly washing each other!

Every morning, Mandu puts his head on my shoulder," said Anna, "and talks and purrs trying to rouse me. He becomes annoyed if I do not jump up and feed him. So, he swats my head and I bury myself under the covers. He is relentless though; there is no way that I can sleep. He is better than an alarm clock, as long as you are on Mandu time!"

#### TIPS

Cats instinctually scratch. They need tall cat



posts to sleep on, stretch their back, and scratch. If your cat "accidentally" scratches your furniture, place crinkly aluminum foil on the corners as a deterrent.

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## Dr. Cura's tips for summer safety



Summer is upon us! For many families, that means a lot of fun out and about in the sun. Here are a few tips to ensure your little ones remain safe and healthy during the exciting summer months:

Don't forget the sunscreen: As you begin summer activities outdoors, have sunscreen

on hand for regular use – for you and your kids! Sunscreens can be used for children as early as six months. Look for a sunscreen that is broad spectrum, water-resistant, at least 30 SPF and protects against both UVA and UVB rays. Mineral-based sunscreens, containing zinc oxide or titanium oxide, provide great protection, sitting on top of the skin and forming a barrier against the sun. And, although they're not as easy, go for lotions to provide more assured coverage and avoid the risk of inhalation. Reapply every two hours, and more frequently if water or sweat are involved. For younger infants, limit direct sun exposure, keeping them shaded and using clothing and hats for protection. And I'd advise that everyone – you too, parents! – limit sun exposure between 10 a.m. and 4 p.m., when the sun is at its harshest.

Hydration: The sun and heat can speed up dehydration, so make sure children hydrate well by drinking water frequently. Everyone should be drinking about eight, eight-ounce glasses of water every day, and more if you're exercising or under the sun. If your child is engaging in sports/activities for more than an hour, sport rehydration drinks – which contain electrolytes to replenish what the body has lost through sweating – may be more beneficial. Don't forget –

those that offer some sun protection on covered areas. Hats are important to cover the sensitive face, ears and neck. Both parents and children should use sunglasses that offer UV protection, and remind your kids to never look directly at the sun.

Water activities: Keeping cool in the water is a great way to pass the time here in Lane County, but choose appropriate activities based on your child's age. Smaller children need to be closely supervised wherever immersions can occur, including shallow water. Even confident swimmers should be carefully watched for signs of exhaustion or struggling. Flotation devices – equipped properly – can put both you and your child more at ease. Remember, an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

Plane/road trips: The best advice is to be as prepared as possible! For infant trips in planes, give them a pacifier during take-off and landing to help equalize ear pressure. For long trips, I recommend having a variety of activities prepared to keep your children occupied: videos, coloring books and games, with headphones if they will be using personal devices. Remember to bring any medications your children use, and consider bringing emergency medications for fever, insect bites and allergies. Hand sanitizers and wipes are also useful while on the plane/road! If you're heading out of the country, check travel advisories far ahead of your actual trip – some trips may require additional vaccinations and medication to protect against specific diseases.

Implement these basic safety measures and summer should be a time for the whole family to enjoy, away from the hustle and bustle of the standard school year. And, if you have any questions, you can always reach out to your local PeaceHealth pediatrician for advice.

Dr. Leda Mae Rabot-Cura, MD serves in pediatrics at PeaceHealth Cottage Grove Community Medical Center

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