



# The JAZZPURR JOURNAL

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## *A Really Good Story*

*by Dorit Girash*

We hear and get involved in so many cases that just break your heart - there's so much that needs to be done, and that just can't be done - in today's world. But we never "stop thinking about tomorrow". And as I always say to our volunteers - not being able to do everything we want to do should never stop us from doing everything we can do. And every little bit makes a difference; and every little bit makes it better.

So here's a little story that just has to be told (names have been changed). Late last year, late on a Friday afternoon, I was working alone in the shelter. The door bell rang so I went to the front to greet the visitor. I met a bent-over, aged little woman, very unsteady on her feet, quickly falling into a chair, and so out of breath she could barely speak. She had walked all over the building looking for the elevator, and it wasn't working. So, she climbed those long stairs and came to see us.

She was very upset and frightened. She needed our help. She spoke with great fear and desperation - she was going to lose her cats; she may lose her home. With shaking hands she pulled a letter out of her bag - it was from Windsor Housing. It was a cold, demanding, threatening letter saying she had to get rid of her cats. Emilia had ten cats.

Emilia told me about each of them and how she cared for them. From her tale it seemed that the cats received excellent care. She gave them high quality food, changed the litter boxes twice a day, and had them all neutered and cared for. She said that the people at Clearwater Animal Hospital (Way to go, Murray!) were very helpful to her - caring for her cats and bringing her food. She proudly announced that there was no smell and that they are all healthy.

Emilia told me the names of several agencies that were involved - CCAC, Windsor Social Services, Windsor Housing, and possibly By-Law Enforcement.

I told her not to worry. I would help her - it's part of what we do. In her presence, I called CCAC and Windsor Housing. The CCAC representative was extremely harsh and crude with me and informed me that Emilia has to get rid of the cats, but that it was not their concern. I called Windsor Housing and requested a meeting. I attempted to call Social Services but it was too late in the afternoon. I told Emilia that I would contact them. I told her not to worry.

Emilia was 90 years old - in my own mind I thought "what

a way to treat a 90-year old woman" - I found it absolutely appalling. I was ashamed of my community.

At the time that I was speaking with Emilia, one of our volunteers came to work her Friday evening shift. She caught me after Emilia left and asked me if that was "Emilia ....". I said yes, but how did you know? Margaret worked for Emilia 40 years ago and "loved her" - everybody "loved her". She is a wonderful woman. There isn't a kinder person in the world!

When I met with Windsor Housing, I found myself speaking with two women with apparently little empathy or compassion.... One of my concerns had been the welfare of the cats. Is this a case of animal hoarding? The two women stated that no, the cats were well cared for and that Emilia takes care of herself - although how she does it, they couldn't understand. So what was the problem? Here we have someone willing to look after homeless cats and doing a good job. Since there are so few homes for all the cats that need homes, why in the world take them out of a good home? "She's not supposed to have that many". Indeed - they were doing their job; one cannot fault them for that. In many ways, I understand - it is the "system" that is cruel, not the people charged with enforcing it. And, if an individual has a personal moral conflict enforcing a "cruel" regulation, that person's defensiveness can cause her to appear cold-hearted.

Everything quieted down over Christmas. Emilia called me once to tell me that Windsor Housing is threatening her. She said that if she has to she can part with the three youngest of her cats. I told her we would help find homes.

In early January, By-Laws Enforcement called - they have this problem that they have to solve. What can Jazzpurr do? I invited the gentleman to meet with me and he did (with a colleague). Before he came, I called Clearwater to learn their assessment of the situation and they reported that the cats were in great shape; Emilia has all their medical needs taken care of, she pays immediately without problem, and they had visited her apartment to pick up the cats and had determined that all was well.

When the By-Laws people came, we danced through some initial pleasantries and posturing but I soon sensed that this giant of a man wanted to help. He told me that he had visited Emilia and that everything was great. The apartment was clean and the cats were in great shape. So what's the problem? He has this

complaint from Windsor Housing - he has to do something. As we sat across the desk from each other, musing about solutions, it dawned on me - and almost simultaneously to him - that she could become a Jazzpurr foster home which through a special by-law exemption would allow her to have ten cats.

We would go and inspect her home and the cats and determine if she would be willing to have her cats under our supervision. Good - that might solve his problem.

Margaret and I visited Emilia the following week. Although all was as others had reported, but Emilia looked very worn and despondent. And the apartment was quite cluttered - it was filled with all her worldly possessions - very understandable given her age and living conditions. But, it was not symptomatic of the horrendous mess one finds in the home of an animal hoarder. She happily agreed to work with us as a foster care giver and we set up a weekly visit with Margaret, who would be her support specialist.

We did some paperwork, notified the By-Laws

representative that we would work with her under these conditions and received a response that "that's fine". Then Margaret started to visit Emilia. And that is the miracle. Now, Emilia is fixing her hair, uncluttering her apartment, and chatting merrily. Margaret loves the woman and loves visiting her. I don't know exactly what it is - perhaps, Emilia's kindness to a 17 year-old kid 40 years ago is being returned when she needs it most.

10 cats can now stay with their "Mom", Mom has support from somebody that loves her; and Margaret is thrilled to be able to help her old "Auntie Em".

**It's a little miracle - and it's the volunteer spirit!**

*Postscript: Windsor Housing let us know that they did not recognize this arrangement and are holding us responsible for any and all damages caused by the cats. They had given Emilia a March 31<sup>st</sup> eviction notice - this has now been rescinded.*

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## ***Introducing:***

### **Ms Ashliegh Gehl, Jazzpurr Volunteer**

Just 18 years of age, Ashliegh has an outstanding résumé as an animal lover and a committed environmentalist. Among her many accomplishments, she is a member of PETA and "Friends of Killarney", has helped with the "Ontario Living Legacy" programme, participated in ERCA tree plantings and the Little River Cleanup, and has a medal from the Youth Environment Network.



Ashliegh is currently an OAC student at F.J. Brennan High School and also enjoys outdoor activities such as hiking, canoeing, and walking. Her talents also include writing poetry and painting. She is a committed vegan and lives with her mother and three animal siblings: Simba (a dog), Thumper (a rabbit), and Ralph (a fish).

Ashliegh began volunteering at Jazzpurr in August of 2001 and quickly proved invaluable. She donates many hours (114 in the last quarter alone). She is on the Education and Fundraising Committees as well. Her friendliness, enthusiasm, and love of cats make her an excellent volunteer. Brava Ashliegh!

#### **THE JAZZPURR JOURNAL**

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Dorit Girash, M.Sc.

**THE JAZZPURR CAT CARE SOCIETY** is a Not-For-Profit Corporation and a Registered Charity dedicated to improving the lives of domestic cats through shelter, reproduction control, adoption, support and education.

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<http://www.jet2.net/~jazzpurr>

# Acupuncture in Cats

Dr. Janice Huntingford, DVM

Dr. Glen Porteous, DVM

## What is Acupuncture?

Acupuncture has been used by the Chinese for thousands of years. The use of acupuncture in animals is well documented in Ancient Chinese history. The Chinese practitioners primarily treated horses but treatments in other species are recorded. Treating cats with acupuncture is a relatively new use for an old form of medicine.

Acupuncture forms part of treatment in a system of medicine known as Traditional Chinese Medicine or TCM. The basis for TCM is the theory that when an animal is healthy the life force or Qi (pronounced chi) flows freely through the body along channels. These channels are called Meridians. These Meridians are all connected to a different internal organ, muscle, joint or nerve. Acupuncture points are points on the skin which lie on the meridians and are places where the flow of Qi can be influenced. When an animal is diseased, there is an imbalance or blockage of the Qi. The acupuncturist attempts to balance the Qi by manipulating the energy flow along the meridians. To influence the Qi, very small and sharp needles are inserted into the acupuncture points to stimulate a response. It is thought that the needles cause a release of some of the body's own chemicals such as pain killing endorphins and natural cortisone.

## What conditions can be treated with acupuncture?

Conditions that can be treated with acupuncture are musculoskeletal problems such as arthritis or disc disease (back pain), gastrointestinal problems like vomiting and diarrhea, as well as some respiratory and skin problems. In my practice cats have been treated for back pain, asthma and allergies and skin disease with acupuncture. One particularly interesting case that responded well to acupuncture was a cat that had a condition called "Feline Head and Neck Disease." This is essentially a non healing sore on the back of the cat's neck. The conventional treatment for this is cortisone injections or surgically removing the affected area. Although this particular cat had had both of these treatments, the problem kept returning. Localized acupuncture in points around the lesion for 5 treatments caused a complete cure!

From a TCM approach, acupuncture may be used along with herbs as a complete medical system to treat anything from respiratory disease to reproductive problems.

## What is involved in the treatment?

The treatment conditions really depend on the patient's

condition. For arthritis and other chronic syndromes, multiple treatments begin rather intensively (1-3 times weekly for a total of 4-8 treatments), and then taper off depending on the pet's response. We usually know whether the animal is responding to acupuncture within 3-4 treatments. Only "tune-up" treatments should be necessary over the long term, perhaps 2-4 times per year. For acute problems, such as mild disk disease, only 1-2 treatments may be necessary.

Treatments may last as little as the time it takes to insert and withdrawal a needle up to 30-40 minutes. A patient may receive a "dry needle" session (using special acupuncture needle only), aquapuncture, where substances such as B-vitamins are injected into acupuncture points, or electroacupuncture, which consists of mild electrical stimulation to the points. Laser acupuncture may also be done and this has many applications in cats particularly if they do not like needles.

## Is it painful?

Acupuncture needles are very small, and beyond a very tiny sensation on insertion of the needle, treatments should not be painful. Some animals may feel tingling or numbing sensations similar to what humans describe when undergoing acupuncture. If the pet seems distressed with this, treatment may be adjusted to reduce this feeling. Many animals relax and fall asleep during the treatment.

## Side effects of acupuncture

Acupuncture is extremely safe. Most veterinary acupuncturists use disposable needles to prevent the spread of infectious diseases. Broken needles and puncturing organs and body cavities are possible but extremely rare, and trained acupuncturists have the knowledge to avoid these complications. In old animals, particularly small animals like cats, if the acupuncturist is not properly trained and too many needles are inserted the cat could go into needle shock. A trained veterinary acupuncturist knows how to avoid this complication.

Sometimes after an acupuncture treatment the cat's symptoms get worse and the cat becomes lethargic. This is a temporary condition that last about 48 hours and is an encouraging sign because it means that the treatment is working.

Acupuncture works very well along with other alternative treatments such as chiropractic. Often these therapies work for chronic problems when conventional

medicine is no longer effective. We can improve the quality of our pet's lives with these simple, painless, drug free therapies.

If you are interested in having your cat treated with acupuncture be sure to visit a veterinarian that has been certified by the International Veterinary Acupuncture

Society. A list of certified veterinarians can be found on the IVAS website at [www.ivas.org](http://www.ivas.org).

Essex Animal Clinic  
355 Talbot St. N.  
Essex, ON, N8M 2W3  
776-7325 Fax:776-5405

## ***JAZZPURR TO ORGANIZE THE FIRST CANADIAN NO-KILL CONFERENCE***

*2003 will be historic. It will be the start of a major change in the lives of companion animals in our country. Your Board of Directors has decided that it will organize and host the first Canadian No-Kill Conference right here in Windsor.*

*As the City of Windsor prepares to become the first Canadian No-Kill City, it is fitting that the first conference be held here as well. Across the US, the no-kill movement is well established and mainstream. It is time we brought the wealth of information learned by our neighbours to the South to our part of the world and bring this nation to a higher level of compassion and empathy.*

*We need volunteers! If you have experience in conference organizing or want to learn, please join us! Just call us at 258-9299 and say "I want to be part of making it happen in Canada".*

### ***Pet Trusts***

Occasionally we receive a call from a lawyer inquiring about pet trusts. These are the provisions you make for your pet(s) in your will. It is of course an extremely good idea to include your furry children in your plans.

We would be happy to speak with any Jazzpurr member about providing for their cat(s) at the time of their passing - or if the member can no longer care for her or his cat(s) for any reason, such as having to move into a nursing home. Of course we will do all we can to care for your cat(s) at any time.

If you wish to make financial provisions for your cat(s), we suggest speaking to your lawyer about creating an endowment that provides interest income in the amount of \$2,000 per year of the remaining life of each of your cats. This is our average cost of caring for a cat; it includes sheltering costs, clinical costs, food and supplies.

## The Education Committee

As many of our members know, Jazzpurr Society has three major charitable programs: the no-kill shelter, the spay/neuter program and the education program. All are important, but the education program is probably the one you hear the least about it. Yet, it does so much!

We have our own library of books, periodicals and brochures. It is probably the best resource centre for information about animal care and research on the human-animal bond in this city and county, and we should make this fact known. A lot of people must wonder where to turn for information about what to do for their cats (illness, behavioural problems, etc.) and not know that we are the people to consult. We offer both literature and professional counselling on these matters.

Our members also get informative articles with every quarterly issue of our newsletter, the Jazzpurr Journal. We hope to make it more “interactive” - so please send us your letters with your questions and comments. As you know, we are all working very hard to bring the no-kill movement to Canada. Your helpful hints and suggestions are most appreciated. Frequently asked questions will be featured. The cats in the shelter sometimes have problems which can interest everyone.

Our web site has moved; it is now at [www.jet2.net/~jazzpurr](http://www.jet2.net/~jazzpurr) and we soon hope to have our own domain name. With the help of some savvy volunteers, we will soon have membership and volunteer application forms on the web, as well as the means to accept secure credit card donations.

We also publish Cat Care Communiqués. Many of these articles began life as articles in the Jazzpurr Journal. In fact, we have a whole package of information for those interested in adopting one of our cats, and we intend to make it into a booklet. And we have kids’ colouring books and abuse prevention brochures.

Many other activities come under the Education Program, and we intend to keep as many of these on the go as possible - quite a juggling act. For our own staff there are professional development plans and standard operating procedures, all educational tools. For the general public we have held seminars, workshops and conferences in the past, and we intend to do so again. We will continue our advertising campaigns on radio and TV (and we had billboards once) urging people to “Choose Love.” Plans are being made to shelter pets in this building in a disaster. We will go on working with city council to bring Windsor into the no-kill movement; the more people speak up, the more clearly council will realize the time has come to join our colleagues to the south. School visits, the annual biophilia award, animal-assisted therapy - there is plenty of work to keep us out of mischief.

Basil D. Kingstone,  
Chair

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### *With Our Deepest Sympathy and Gratitude for Your Memorial Donations*

*In Memory of:*

*Evelyn Broy*

*William Fuerth*

*Irene Critchley*

*Betsy*

*Martha Nazarewich*

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