



**Mission:** *To advocate for all animals through education & community outreach*

**Vision:** *A compassionate society that respects the innate worth of all animals*

**Spring 2018**

## 3 Needing a Special Home



They don't look or act sick...but they have a latent illness called feline leukemia.

Jasmine came off the streets as an adult and she started to exhibit signs of being unwell. We did some blood work and unfortunately the results were not what we expected. Her white blood cell count was so low, unbelievably low. Tests revealed that she tested positive for Feline Leukemia (FeLV). We were saddened to learn of her diagnosis because of the widespread misconception that feline leukemia is an automatic death sentence. This line of thinking is so unfortunate since there are many variables that determine how FeLV will affect a particular cat. With lots of TLC, Jasmine's health has improved and she is now healthy and otherwise showing no signs of illness. Jasmine is very motherly and has taken Benny and June under her wing (younger cats who were taken from the same street and also tested positive for feline leukemia) as if they were her own kittens. Jasmine does enjoy being

petted but it takes her a while to learn to trust.

Benny and his sister June were born in a colony and spent the first few months of their lives living on the streets. Benny is doing well in foster care despite his illness and is otherwise happy and healthy. He is a laid back kitty, but still hesitant of humans. He loves his sister (June), and he thinks food and toys are awesome. You can also get his attention at any time with treats! He would love to be adopted with his sister June.

June is also doing well in foster care and is healthy. June is a sweet girl that loves attention and being petted. She purrs upon finding comfort in her foster humans.

Given their FeLV status, Jasmine, Benny and June must live indoors and they must be the only cat(s) in the household OR live with other FeLV cats (or other species of animals). NAFa is desperate to find the right home for these 3; let us know if you can help. More info about FeLV on overleaf.



[niagaraactionforanimals.org](http://niagaraactionforanimals.org)



@niagaraactionforanimals &  
@NAfAadoptables



905-682-4970



@CKKLP



@nafa\_adoptables

## In Honour Of...

### **NAfA gratefully acknowledges memorial and celebratory donations in honour of the following people and animals:**

*Topaz*, our beautiful toy poodle shared her life with us for 17 years. They say memories are golden, well maybe that is true. But I never wanted memories, I only wanted you. Miss you, Carol & David.

Marilyn and Paul Shepherd remember *Pat Calder*.

Dianna Beilschmidt in loving memory of *Beauregarde, Sampson & Bessie*.

Monica Steele remembers her Florida vet, *Dr. Michael Cole* who saved the life of her companion dog Brule.

Mary Mizen, Stephen Aitken, Nicole Williams, and Rosina McCrea all fondly remember *Anna Marie Vanderbugh*.

In memory of *Linda Stilges* from Sherry Scott, Beth Sheffield, Mary Belt, Lydia Nelson, Doug Scott and Dixon Edwards.

## **NAfA's new website will be launched soon; Watch for it!**

## **What is Feline Leukemia (FeLV)?**

FeLV is a virus that over time suppresses a cat's immune system predisposing the cat to certain infections and disease. However, many felines who test positive for the virus can remain healthy for years after their diagnosis, especially when precautions are taken to protect their more fragile immune systems (i.e., balanced diet, regular wellness checks, vitamin supplements, reduced stress, etc.). Some cats can even fight off the virus and become immune to it, while others can be healthy carriers that never get sick themselves, but can still infect other cats. While the disease CAN be managed and even go into remission, a FeLV+ cat may have a shorter lifespan. Regardless of the length of their life, cats with the virus can still lead happy and fulfilling lives, just like any other cat. The feline leukemia virus is contagious to other cats with transmission primarily occurring through prolonged periods of intimate moist contact (e.g., biting/fighting, grooming, sharing food/water bowls and litter boxes) between infected and susceptible cats. Consequently, it is with utmost importance that FeLV positive cats live indoors and as the only cat in the household or with other FeLV+ cats. FeLV is NOT transmittable to humans, dogs, or other non-feline animals, so infected cats can safely enjoy the companionship of other species. It takes a very special, caring, and compassionate person to adopt a FeLV+ cat; a person who can see beyond the misconceptions and commit to supporting an otherwise happy and seemingly healthy cat who is as deserving of finding a loving home.

**Animal Research:**  
*If they are like us what are we doing; if they are not like us, what are we doing??*



### **NAfA's Statistics**

From beginning of August '17 through 'til end of Feb. '18 we found loving homes for **24** animals. We spayed & neutered **176** dogs/cats/rabbits and we aided with **94** 'distress' situations.

If you have room for one more companion animal in your home, visit our Petfinder page at [pefinder.com/shelters/ON11.html](https://www.petfinder.com/shelters/ON11.html)

In addition to our adoption centre at Fitch St., Pet Valu in Welland, we now have one at Global Pet Foods on Portage Rd., in Niagara Falls. Come visit a new friend!

## NAfA Sponsors Brock Conference

NAfA is proud to have taken part in the 'Thinking About Animals' conference on March 1 & 2 at Brock University. We want to thank the Trustees of the *Hugh James Corcoran Memorial Trust Fund* for the grant we received which sponsored this event. Keynote Speakers were Karen Davis of United Poultry Concerns and David Nibert of Wittenberg University.

There was a good mix of academics in attendance from various corners of the globe: England, Australia, Japan & Ireland, as well as the U.S. and Canada. Some of the activist speakers were well known to NAfA friends and included Rob Laidlaw—Zoocheck, Anita Krajnc—Toronto Pig Save, Chantal Theijin—Hobbitstee Wildlife Refuge, Darren Chang, Jenny Brown—Woodstock Farm Animal Sanctuary and Sandra Higgins, who came all the way from Ireland (Eden Farmed Animal Sanctuary).

The discussions focused on two broad themes: **"Structural Violence and Trans-Species Social Justice."** While capitalism did not create animal exploitation, it intensified the effects and has made this into a system of total violence that threatens all life on the planet. The second theme was **"Resistance, Rescue and Sanctuary,"** in which speakers discussed individual nonhuman animals who have managed to resist and survive their oppression and also celebrated the work of human activists who have dedicated themselves to the practical work of resisting oppression by helping other animals and advocating for their interests.

*Photo; Catharine Ens, NAfA director, introduces Sandra Higgins and Jenny Brown who both spoke on 'Sanctuary'.*



## Opening Day Demo at Marineland ...

A group called 'Marineland Demonstrations' is hosting the 2018 Marineland 'Opening Day' Demo on Saturday, May 19th from 11 a.m. They write: "Marineland has announced they will open in 2018, so we will return, as well, to meet them with force. We were there in strong numbers last summer, watching families turn away, and some even picking up signs to join us on the RIGHT side of the fence, and we can't wait to see this amazing turnout again!"

The event is listed as family-friendly and Marineland Demonstrations continues to liaise with the local police on safety issues.

We encourage NAfA friends to attend. There will be signs and banners provided, but you are welcome to bring your own (please keep signage up-beat and child-friendly). Remember to bring hat, sunscreen and drinking water according to the weather but please leave companion animals at home.

## And Enclosed with this Newsletter ...

Along with this newsletter is a sign-on letter to Senator Don Plett, who seems intent on blocking the passage of Bill S-203 (Ending the Captivity of Whales & Dolphins Act). Please take a minute to sign the letter and add comments if you wish. No postage necessary; just fold as indicated and tape the sides to close. This is an easy way to make our feelings known regarding the keeping of whales & dolphins in captivity.

Also, Phil Demers, who is being sued by Marineland, answers some questions about his time at Marineland and how he sees things for the future. You'll find Phil's comments on the insert sheet!

# Phil Demers Speaks About Marineland & the Future

**Given that there was so much in the media last year about Marineland and other parks who hold marine mammals captive, I thought it was time to catch up with Phil Demers and get his thoughts on a few things. As you may recall, Phil is being sued by Marineland for \$1.5 million after he blew the whistle on the theme park.**

*Q1. How far into your time at Marineland did you realize that things were not as you expected/wanted them to be?*

Phil - I realized something was amiss at Marineland on my very first day of employment; but as I was a young, naive person I assumed that things must be fine because the industry (which was celebrated at the time) had experts and vets overseeing the operation. Soon thereafter I was groomed, with lies and mistruths, (and unbeknownst to me) also touted to be an "expert".

*Q2. Has what you witnessed at Marineland changed or altered your views on animal captivity in general and cetacean captivity in particular?*

Phil - When I first spoke out in 2012 my focus was the poor conditions of Marineland and the hardship the animals endured. I've since broadened my perspective to realize animals shouldn't be confined to cages and concrete pools. The science is clear that this is torture.

*Q3. Have your views on other animal issues changed due to your fight for the animals at Marineland?*

Phil - I admire animal activists for their tireless pursuit for justice for the voiceless. The world needs and benefits from our voices. Never give up!

*Q4. Do you think that Marineland will ever change their business model and phase out animal acts and animal displays?*

Phil - I don't believe Marineland will willfully evolve to phase out the cruel captivity of their animals, but I assure you they'll be forced to.

*Q5. Do you hold out any hope of Kiska getting out of Marineland alive?*

Phil - I certainly hold out hope for Kiska, but the odds aren't in her favour given her emotional/physical state. Marineland will also fight hardest to ensure she remains in the pit till death. So sad and cruel...

*Q6. Tell us about any campaigns or other initiatives you are working on in respect of animals either generally or those in particular at Marineland.*

Phil - Progress on Bill S-203 appears imminent. I'm also being followed by a film crew to further expose Marineland's abuse. I suspect this project will be their final demise. Stay tuned!

# It's not just a grunt: Pigs really do have something to say

While, sadly much of this research is used in conjunction with animal-based agriculture – we can still learn something about the animals we are working to liberate.

Scientists (at the University of Lincoln, U.K. specializing in animal behavior and welfare) devised an experiment to investigate the relationship between personality and the rate of grunting in pigs. They also examined the effect different quality living conditions had on these vocalizations.

The study involved 72 male and female juvenile pigs. Half were housed in spacious 'enriched' pens with straw bedding, while the other half were kept in more compact 'barren' pens with partially slatted concrete floors, which adhered to UK welfare requirements.

To get a measure of the pigs' personalities, the researchers conducted two tests: a social isolation test and a novel object test. Each pig spent three minutes in social isolation, and five minutes in a pen with a large white bucket or an orange traffic cone they had not previously encountered. Their behaviour, including vocalizations, was observed. These tests were repeated two weeks later, allowing the researchers to determine if the pigs' responses were repeatable -- the defining characteristic of personality (also known as 'coping style' in animals).

They also recorded the frequency of grunts they made by counting the number of grunts produced per minute of the test, and investigated the effect different quality environments had on the sounds made.

The study indicated that pigs with more proactive personality types produced grunts at a higher rate than the more reactive animals. The study also found that male pigs (but not females) kept in the lower-quality conditions made fewer grunts compared with those housed in the enriched environment, suggesting greater susceptibility among male pigs to environmental factors.

The results add to evidence that acoustic signaling indicates personality in pigs. This may have had far-reaching consequences in shaping the evolution of social behaviours, the researchers believe. The findings also suggest personality needs to be kept in mind when using vocalization as a measure of the animals' welfare status.

Principal investigator, Dr Lisa Collins, a specialist in animal health, behaviour and welfare epidemiology in the School of Life Sciences at the University of Lincoln, said: "The domestic pig is a highly social and vocal species which uses acoustic signals in a variety of ways; maintaining contact with other group members while foraging, parent-offspring communication, or to signal if they are distressed.

"The sounds they make convey a wide range of information such as the emotional, motivational and physiological state of the animal. For example, squeals are produced when pigs feel fear, and may be either alerting others to their situation or offering assurance. Grunts occur in all contexts, but are typical of foraging to let other members of the group know where they are."

Mary Friel, lead author of the study and PhD student at Queen's University Belfast, added: "The aim of this research was to investigate what factors affect vocalizations in pigs so that we can better understand what information they convey. Understanding how the vocalizations of pigs' relate to their personality will also help animal behaviourists and welfare experts have a clearer picture of the impact those personalities have on communication, and thus its role in the evolution of social behaviour and group dynamics in social species."

**Summary:** The grunts made by pigs vary depending on the pig's personality and can convey important information about the welfare of this highly social species.

Freil, M., Kunc, H. P., Griffin, K., Asher, L., & Collins, L.M. (2016). Acoustic signalling reflects personality in a social mammal. *Royal Society Open Science*, 3, DOI: 10.1098/rsos.160178

**NAfA**  
**94 Welland Avenue**  
**St. Catharines, ON**  
**L2R 2N1**

Thanks to all who have donated their Shoppers Drug Mart points to NAfA. This program has now concluded.

We can, however, still use UPC bar codes from **Natural Balance 'pet' foods** (dry bagged or cases of cans only). The UPC's must be sent in with the matching cash register tape.

We welcome **Canadian Tire** money to buy live traps for feral and barn cats as well as items for our events and sales.

**Be a Weekend Warrior**

Stickers on your luggage or car bumper help to get people thinking! When you educate to liberate, you can bet that you will reach some people and they will reach some more.

**NAfA does not condone the use, abuse or exploitation of any animal for any purpose!**

**Share or recycle this newsletter!**

*Founded in 1989, NAfA is a registered charity. We receive no government funding. NAfA is run strictly by volunteers and relies on local fundraising events and your support to continue our various programs.*

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Phone #: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ Postal Code: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Please contact me about volunteering [  ]

Please send me an educational package on animal-related issues [  ]

Charitable #85868 3188 RR0001. Tax receipts issued for donations of \$10 and over. Annual Membership Fee is \$15.

Enclosed is my contribution of \$\_\_\_\_\_

In an effort to be environmentally (& fiscally) responsible, please call 905-682-4970 if you no longer wish to receive this newsletter. Opinions expressed in this edition are not necessarily the views of Niagara Action for Animals unless expressly stated as such.

## **Taking Action for Animals**

### **Thanks once again, to all of our volunteers who go out of their way to make this world a better place for all animals!**

Our Bingo revenue goes from strength to strength; since our last report, during the month of August(2017) \$1658; September \$1927; October \$1691; November \$1699; December \$2390. The total earned for 2017 was \$22,493. And so far in 2018, January \$1614, and February \$1886. We wish to acknowledge the OLG (Ontario Lottery & Gaming) and the Delta Bingo & Gaming (Bunting Rd.) for this great opportunity to raise funds for the work we do for animals. Thanks too, to Bob Moore and all the Bingo volunteers (you know who you are). We are always looking for volunteers and it is only a 2 hour session, once a month or so. If you think this might be a way you would like to volunteer for NAfA, please get in touch with Bob on 905-735-0586 where you can leave a message.

Thank you to Gerda Ryckaert who has continued to lead classes for QiGong and asks for donations to NAfA in return for the lessons. In 2017 Gerda raised \$355 for NAfA. Gerda may start up her classes again later in the year—if you are interested, let us know!

The year end yard sale (2017) at the NAfA house netted \$307; the Fairview pre-Christmas Bazaar generated \$705; a pop up bazaar in Rockwood, raised \$125 and with the help of those who faithfully collected Natural Balance Pet Foods UPC's, NAfA made \$100.

Thanks once again to Wheatley School Student Council (aided by staff member Julie Aylward) who raised \$105 for NAfA last autumn!