

# The Big Fix Homeless Cat Project

❄️ Holiday & Winter 2016 ❄️



We are a 501c3 and our work is primarily sustained from tax deductible donations. Contact (830) 896-6053 for more information or to become a volunteer. What type of volunteer help do we need? Trappers, telephone counselors, transportation for vet visits, and more. Your help is vitally important to our success and we thank you for your support!

**Cat Names:** Holly, Cookie, Dreidel, Tinsel, Star, Rudolph, Halo, Noel, Snowflake, Jingle Bells

The holidays are tough when you have lost a loved one. Are they just as tough when you've lost a beloved pet? Many think so. Let's examine why that is. First of all, our pets, just like the members of our families, live with us and we form a bond that is deepened due to spending hours each day together. We don't wear our 'social masks' around our pets – so they know who we really are when no one else is around.

Our pets comfort us. We often have conflicts with our human families. Our pets soothe us partially because we don't have conflicts with them. Many pets are content to sit with us and although there have been studies showing that petting our cats and dogs lowers our blood pressure, all pet owners know their pets receive benefits from being petted and sitting next to their favorite humans as well.

We delight in the personalities and antics of our pets much the same way we do with babies and toddlers. We exclaim and encourage our little ones to crawl, walk and talk (and laugh at the mispronunciations). We play with, praise, and encourage our cats to jump, pounce, and do other things that make us laugh. So in a way our relationships with our cats are happier and more positive than the ones we have with other people.

How soon should you adopt a new kitten after losing the cat who was with you for many years? There is no exact answer for that. If you adopt too soon, you may still be grieving and possibly won't bond well with a new pet—so take some time to grieve. When you become interested in seeing and playing with new kittens that is the time to consider opening your heart to a new pet.



No one pet can replace another one. Each has their own personality so it is you that needs to be ready for this step.

What if your cat is grieving the loss of their companion cat? In the short term, your cat will call for and search for their companion. When your cat accepts the other is indeed not around anymore, they will withdraw and appear to us to be depressed. Inactivity and loss of appetite is common. Should they go too long without eating you may need to take them to their veterinarian to see if they can be stimulated to eat normally again. The last

stage is acceptance. They might become more vocal, active, or more affectionate with their human companions at this time.

What if you have taken in a cat that has lost their human companion? Bless you if you have done this. To give a cat a home at this point in their lives is truly their good fortune. Be patient with them. They have to grieve the loss of their owner and their former home. Resist the temptation to give them treats when they meow excessively or show any other unwanted behaviors. Instead try to distract them with playing. They have new surroundings and people to adapt to. Provide them with mementos from their old home – familiar toys, a blanket, scratching post or even an article of clothing from their former owner will be helpful.

Follow these basic suggestions and you and your pet will be enjoying each other's company soon and for years to come.

To refresh your memory on how to care for feral or outdoor cats during the cold winter months, go to our website and read the "Holiday & Winter 2014" newsletter. ([bigfixcats.com](http://bigfixcats.com))

Looking for the Purrfect Gift for the Cat Lover on your list? A gift to *The Big Fix* is a wonderful way to celebrate your shared love of cats and to make the world a better place for them. We will send a card notifying your honoree of your thoughtful gift in their name. Your tax deductible gift of as little as \$10 will allow us to continue our mission. Your donation goes directly (and only) to humane trapping, neutering, and veterinarian care. Simply fill out the form below and enclose it with your gift donation.

Checks should be made out to: *The Big Fix* and mailed to: The Big Fix, P.O. Box 294003, Kerrville, TX 78029.

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