

All my life I have shown a great interest and respect for all animals. I have grown up in a house that has always had at least one animal. The way I have been raised with these animals is to treat them like family and that if you commit to getting an animal then you must love and care for it its whole life. My Interest in animals caused me to watch Animal Planet more than regular children shows. I also spent much of my time researching different animals, from dog and cat breeds to slow lorises and aardvarks. I always wanted to know more. I remember laying in bed one morning watching Animal Planet and a WWF commercial came on. This commercial had a video of a tiger being poached. This was the first time I heard of the bad things that happened to animals and I broke down bawling. My mom ran in wondering what could have happened. To make a long story short, both my mom and the WWF worker had a chuckle over five year old me crying over the staged video, because of this breakdown my mom started funding tigers for me.

Fast forward 12 years and 17 year old me is still just as passionate about animals. I've always ached to make a change in an animal's life. I've helped with many things like finding puppies and returning them to their family on the other side of our little town. Living in such a small town the opportunity to help in a big cause doesn't often come up. I've always dreamt of one day owning my own no kill shelter so that I can help animals in a bigger way. I believe all animals deserve a chance to live.

People think I'm crazy because I love some of the most misunderstood animals, from pit bulls to snakes to all rodents. I think if we can just educate people we can teach

them that they all do make great pets. A couple of months ago we had a mouse in our house. My parents of course wanted to set out a trap and kill it but I told them no and once I stood up for it my dad backed me, despite him thinking I was still crazy. We crawled around for a long time till we finally corralled it and caught it in a granola bar box. I then took the box with the small, scared grey pied mouse on a long walk into the bush until I found a nice flat area that was perfect for its release. I put the box on the ground and watched the mouse pause as it left the box then scurry away. That was the first animal that I first handedly saved. It felt great and I wanted nothing more than to help more animals.

I continued through life, helping animals when I could. Our local dump has had a colony of cats living there for quite some time. They had shelters and food so no one bothered them. One freezing Canadian winter night we were sitting having supper and it was brought to my attention that a fire burnt down the cat houses. This worried me so I got to work immediately. I messaged quite a few animal shelters across Saskatchewan hoping that they could help me in rehoming some of these cats, but they all turned me down giving me their condolences. The response from most in town was to look the other way or that they should be shot. Then I got an email from an independently run cat rescue, she stressed that she understood how quickly we needed to help these cats before they all froze to death. She drove hours to join me at our dump. There we spent at least five hours once a week for some three plus months catching cats. Some nights I had to do homework and studying between catching cats. Once caught we moved them into animal carriers and then into my big warm garage for the night where I then fed and

watered them, and over everything else worried about them. At the end of our last night the last trap clasped shut. To our fear and dismay it was not a cat that was caught. Instead it was not one but two skunks. Some members from the town decided it would be best to put the whole trap in water and drown the sad animals, and despite not being happy about it most of us had no choice but to agree with it. Most of us, but not me. I heard of their plan and said “no they aren’t” I then put on a bunch of old clothes and headed back out to the dump where I let out the two skunks. Luckily they did not spray or bite or anything instead they rubbed up on my leg like a couple of happy cats and tumbled away. At the end of this project we caught, fixed and rehomed 48 feral cats. After being in contact with members from the town and sending letters with them to read at their meetings a bylaw was put in place for abandonment of animals at the dump with fines ranging to two thousand dollars as well video cameras have been placed at the dump. I even got to keep one of the kittens for myself, he turned from a skittish feral kitten into a comfy house cat in only a couple of months time.

I caused a huge rescue to happen just like I always dreamed. It felt better than I could ever imagine. My actions in ensuring the betterment of future animals lives. Who knew that such a big impact could come from a 17 year old girl in a small town in Saskatchewan who grew up watching WWF. If we could all do just a bit for the voiceless the impact would be significant.

Pictures:



**Town of Hudson Bay**

March 4 · 🌐

Town Council recently adopted a Bylaw to prohibit dumping of stray animals at the Waste Disposal Site with fines for contravention ranging up to \$2,000. The Saskatchewan Ally Cats foundation assisted with the capture, treatment and relocation of over 40 cats from the waste disposal site and their work here has now been completed.

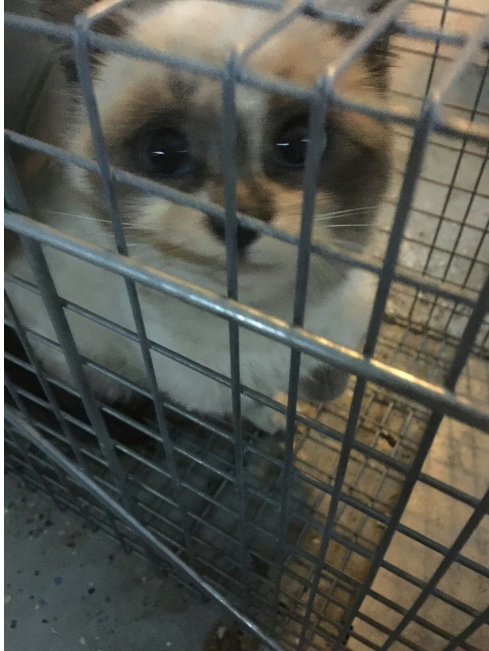
We will continue trapping of the few stray cats that are left at the dump. Remainder of the cats captured will be treated by our local vet as they are apprehended.

Donations to support the treatment, care and relocation of additional cats can be made at the Hudson Bay Vet Clinic.

Post made by our town shortly after the rescue.



Me, after catching for the night.



My kitten moments after being caught.



Me, moments after releasing the skunks.



My kitten once he started adjusting to house cat life.