Diamond Wins the Game of Hearts

It was a Friday morning in late December when Emily and Bob Collins first visited Heaven on Earth’s sanctuary. They met a host of adoptable cats of all ages, sizes and colors. But only one stayed in their mind’s eye after they left. It was the one who had quietly... insistently... followed Emily around.

Some people say the right cat will find you. Cats, of course, know this to be true. And when the Collinses returned for a second visit, Emily’s footsteps were again dogged by a pretty, 7-year-old tabby with a cute white diamond on her nose.

The newly minted Diamond Collins wasted no time making herself at home. Within days, she had developed a routine – sleeping with mom, napping with dad, supervising everything from bed making to meal prep. And when Emily and Bob had friends over for canasta, Diamond served as co-hostess, dutifully greeting guests with a hospitable paw to the arm. Said one, a confirmed dog person, “maybe I ought to get a cat, too.”

That Diamond has slipped so comfortably into her new life makes the contrast with her old one even more startling. Because she was rescued last year from a grim hoarding situation, one of several dozen “Project Halo” cats whose lives were saved in collaboration with another rescue.

Indeed, there is nothing to indicate that Diamond gives the old days a passing thought. She is much too busy earning nicknames – as “my little darling,” she snuggles with Emily and the morning paper; as “La Diabla” she opens cabinets, steals food and, just for grins and giggles, disconnects TVs. Bob just calls her “adorable.”

Diamond played to win and did.
In spades. And hearts.
Where to begin?

2011 was clearly the most remarkable in Heaven on Earth’s history, as we furthered our mission in a number of exciting ways:

1. **We doubled the size of our sanctuary**, as a result of Project Halo, in which we partnered with another rescue group to save more than 70 cats from a horrible hoarding situation.

2. Our adoptions team retired after 6 years of weekly dedicated service, which meant that we had to recruit and train new volunteers. And recruit them we did, so that we are now able to staff **two adoption events a week**, one at the Van Nuys Petco and the other at the Santa Clarita PetSmart. The results speak for themselves: 38 cats adopted in the last 6 months of 2011, topping our previous record for an entire year!

3. Before suspending our **SpayShip program** in November, due to lack of funding, we had helped trap and transport 1,662 cats in three years to our spay/neuter partner, FixNation. 97% of these were feral cats, so our program has enabled cats to be spayed or neutered who otherwise would have continued to add to the overpopulation problem. We hope to secure a grant in 2012 so that we can resume doing our part to stabilize the feral cat population.

4. **We formalized our Heaven Can Wait program**, through which we provide temporary housing for cats pulled from city shelters by individual rescuers as well as organizations who don’t have their own facility. As a result of developing this network of colleagues in the animal rescue community, we helped save 47 cats, many of whom were on “death row”.

5. Finally, as the year came to a close, we were in the process of purchasing our very own property, thanks to the extraordinary generosity of Family Guy creator, Seth MacFarlane. The Perry MacFarlane Sanctuary, named in memory of Seth’s and sister Rachael’s mother, will move with us to our new North Hollywood location.

What is it that distinguishes Heaven on Earth Society for Animals from other rescue organizations?

1. We are committed to working corroboratively not only with the public but with other rescues, our program partners, and municipal animal services. **Our shared vision of Los Angeles becoming a no-kill city** will be realized only through leveraging our collective resources by working together.

2. In addition to promoting a collaborative spirit among those in the animal community, we pride ourselves in being well managed, accountable to our donors, and responsive to the public.
We concentrate our limited resources on programs in which we have a particular expertise and where there is an unmet need.

a. For example, the Heaven Can Wait program provides a valuable service to other rescue groups by making it possible for them to "iso" or quarantine their intakes for two or three weeks in our isolation room. They can then be transferred to foster or adoptive homes.

b. We are also known as an organization that takes in the cats no one else wants, many with special needs, whose lives have just as much value as healthy and otherwise adoptable cats.

c. The SpayShip program is another example of our filling a special niche.

What are our major challenges as we look to the future?

1. Sustaining our recent growth and level of expanded services.
2. Completing the build out of our new sanctuary, "Perry's Place", and relocating our 140 feline residents to their new home.
3. Paying off the balance owed on the new property and funding the renovation work, as well as securing the funds to resume the SpayShip program.

And how are we planning to meet those challenges?

As we write this message, we are already preparing to launch a three year fundraising campaign later this year. The campaign will raise the remaining capital funds needed for our new property, annual gifts to sustain our increased operating budget, and commitments of future gifts through bequests and trusts that will establish an endowment.

None of this would be possible without the extraordinary generosity of our donors, the commitment of time, talent and treasure of our board of directors, and the dedicated efforts of our wonderful volunteers. For that we are both humbled and deeply grateful, and we look forward to our continuing work together on behalf of the homeless animals who depend on us.

Yours in service,

Eri Kriteman
Founder and Executive Director

Ritchie Geisel
President, Board of Directors
Tribute to Perry MacFarlane

On July 16th, 2011, Heaven on Earth and Seth MacFarlane (creator of Family Guy, American Dad, The Cleveland Show, and director of soon to be released film, Ted) announced the establishment of Perry’s Place – The Perry MacFarlane Sanctuary at Heaven on Earth. It was the one-year anniversary of the passing of Seth and sister Rachael’s mother, Ann Perry MacFarlane, and Seth chose to team up with Heaven on Earth to pay tribute to her. Seth’s generosity has empowered us to purchase our own property so that we can continue our lifesaving work as Perry’s special legacy.

Perry was a lifelong and avid animal rescuer. She cared for all kinds of wild and domestic animals and, like Heaven on Earth, was especially drawn to working with the ones no one else would help. She embodied Heaven on Earth’s mission, “to improve quality of life for homeless animals, especially those who are often overlooked because of special needs and low potential for adoption.” Establishing Perry’s Place seemed truly to be a match made in Heaven.

November 10th, 2011 was another memorable date, as we held our 2nd annual fund-raising gala, in which we paid further tribute to Perry MacFarlane. Local celebrities Rachael MacFarlane (American Dad, Family Guy, writer, singer), Carrie Ann Inaba (Dancing with the Stars judge, dancer, actor), Valerie Swift (dancer, singer, actor, writer), Jon Mack (actor, model, musician, lead singer of Auradrome), Jose Yenque (ALMA Award winning actor), Sean Kanan (The Young and the Restless), Kate Linder (The Young and the Restless), Bruce Neckels (Emmy-award winning writer) and John J. York (General Hospital) were among the many guests who made this night a great success.

D’Caché Latin Fusion Restaurant in Toluca Lake provided a festive atmosphere along with delicious tapas and cocktails for the more than 100 guests. The event featured a tribute presentation by our Board President, Ritchie Geisel, and remarks by Rachael MacFarlane, Marie Ambrosino, a long-time MacFarlane Family friend (and magic maker), and our Founder, Eri Kriteman. A highlight of the brief program was a beautiful rendition of Julie Andrews’ Something Good, Perry’s favorite song, sung by our Vice President, Jennifer Parsignault, and our dear friend, Alli Spotts De Lazzar. The event came to a close with the auction of a Family Guy table reading, in which Annabelle DeSisto outbid a number of other Seth MacFarlane fans.

This amazing event would not have been possible without the support and generosity of our sponsors: Gursey/Schneider LLP, Night Vision Entertainment, Brian and Janelle Wedesheim, The Pet Doctors of Sherman Oaks, and Rita J. Runyon at TRC Entertainment.

Thank you to everyone who participated!

From left to right: Ritchie Geisel, Bruce Neckels, Carrie Ann Inaba, Eri Kriteman, Jose Yenque, Rachael MacFarlane, John J. York and Valerie Swift. Photo by George Atoraya Simonov
Our Fiscal Picture

2011 was our most successful year ever in terms of both our mission and financial bottom lines.

In addition to the extraordinary gift that has enabled us to own our sanctuary, Heaven on Earth was the beneficiary of record-setting annual support from our friends ($295,176), which enabled us to provide quality care for twice as many cats as ever before.

As the pie chart shows, most of the funds raised were used to directly fund our programs. This is because we have historically had no paid administrative staff, but rather a board of directors that has handled nearly all the administrative and fundraising work pro bono.

Now our challenge is to increase the level of charitable contributions, in order to properly compensate our sanctuary manager, grow our Heaven Can Wait and adoptions programs, and resume the Spay/Neuter Transport program, while continuing to provide a safe and loving home to the senior and special needs cats who have no other place to go.

Thank you so much for taking care of Oscar Wild this year. You helped us both get through a very difficult time and I promise to make my house the last home Oscar will ever need. You are a wonderful organization with limitless compassion for both cats and the people who want to help make a better world for them.

Sincerely,
Steve C.
Thank you Donors!

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