

Flapjack Flips His Luck: Disabled Cat Finds 'Fur-Ever' Home ^[1]

By kasu on February 29, 2020

We're so thrilled that our friends at the Newtown Bee covered Flapjack's journey! Here's full article:

By Alissa Silber



"Whatever it takes," was the vow Robin A.F. Olson, president and founder of Kitten Associates in Sandy Hook, made to ensure Flapjack Shortstack had the best chance at a good life.

Affectionately known as "Flap" and "Flapjack," the young orange-and-white kitten came into Ms Olson's care through her nonprofit organization's rescue program.

One look at his physical appearance and it was clear that he was a special needs kitten.

"Flapjack's legs were turned and twisted in unique directions due to his mother being far too young to be pregnant and there not being enough space in her uterus for him to develop normally," Ms Olson said.

Internally, there were also abnormalities that risked his odds of leading a full, healthy life.

"Flap's ribs came to a point, instead of a smooth curve," Ms Olson explained. "There was concern his heart and lungs were also compressed, which could give him a shortened lifespan. Flap's spine had bumpy ridges from his muscles awkwardly contracting while he tried to walk, yet, there was still hope."

Readers first learned about Flapjack's medical journey in *The Newtown Bee's* article "[Flapjack The Kitten Hoping To Flip His Luck](#)" ^[2] from August 2019, when he was just four months old.

At the time, Flapjack was going to weekly physical therapy sessions in addition to wearing custom-made splints on his front legs. He was also being monitored by a board-certified veterinary surgeon.

The methods proved to be helpful. The young kitten not only gained strength in his leg muscles and had the bumps in his spine smoothed out, but it was determined that he did not have to undergo any amputations.

However, it was believed he would still need corrective surgery on all his limbs when his growth plates closed, a process that would not be completed until he was done growing.

Recent Results

Earlier this month, after reviewing many radiographs of Flapjack's limbs and chest, it was even revealed that his heart and lungs were normal and no intervention was needed for his legs.

"It was clear to [the vet] that the best thing for Flap was to do nothing," Ms Olson said. "Putting pins in Flap's front legs or resecting a hamstring on his back-right leg could risk causing Flap to lose mobility, not gain it."

No matter what his physical differences are from other cats, Flapjack always follows a mind-over-matter mindset.

He has proven to be determined in achieving his goals when he sets his mind to a task. His tenacity for life has caused him to learn to navigate through the world in his own way. While other cats run, he tends to scamper, but gets where he needs to go.

Ms Olson added, "He could use his litter pan as long as the sides were low. He loved to play and look out the window, chattering at birds as they flew to a nearby feeder . . . Flap was like any cat. He just moved differently."

Fur-ever Home

Ms Olson's efforts to keep him alive and give him the best quality of life proved to be the right decision, because despite the odds being against Flapjack, he is now being fostered and loved by his soon-to-be official family.

Rachael and Chris DeMaida, of Waterbury, have decided to adopt Flapjack, as well as his fearless sister, Sugarsnap, with whom he is incredibly bonded.

"This loving couple didn't balk at continuing Flap's physical therapy for the rest of his life, if need be. They changed things in their home to make it easier for Flap to get around," Ms Olson said. "They respected that Flap and his sister, Sugarsnap, shouldn't be separated, even though Sugar has no disabilities. So Flapjack and his sister will stay together for the rest of their lives."

The friendly and outgoing siblings will be adopted in just two months, as Flapjack will need to undergo an exploratory neutering surgery for one of his testicles that did not drop.

In addition to continuing with physical therapy once a month, Ms Olson said, "We have to continue to monitor how he's doing as he ages. He will likely need some pain management like joint supplements and possibly laser therapy or acupuncture/chiropractic [care] in many years."

The progress Flapjack has made over the last eight months is a jubilant surprise, considering a whopping four vets once told Ms Olson that he would be better off euthanized.

A proponent for trying everything possible, Ms Olson said, "You can put a kitten down any time if the odds are not in the animal's favor, or you can lean in and work hard on their behalf. You can be willing to focus on the needs of one, even though others might say you could have saved so many more in that same amount of time."

She added, "I see the kitten in front of me, who is sweet-hearted and happy, who got dealt a tough hand, who needs someone to stand up for him when no one else would. That's my priority. I know I can't save every cat, but I can save this one."

To stay up to date of Flapjack Shortstack's adventures, check out his Instagram page at [instagram.com/flapandfriends](https://www.instagram.com/flapandfriends) [3]. For more information about Kitten Associates in Sandy Hook and to make a donation, call 203-744-9228, e-mail info@kittenassociates.org [4], or visit [kittenassociates.org](https://www.kittenassociates.org) [5].





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