



Photo by Christie Leja

**Brogan Prytuliak, founder of Friends and Ferals Cat Rescue, gives some love to her own cat Oscar. Brogan's love of cats sparked her passion to rescue ferals within Centre Hastings, where the goal is to trap, neuter or spay then release or rehome strays. Since beginning their operation in February of 2021, they, along with volunteers, have helped a total of 55 cats/kittens.**

# Stray cats feeling the love in Tweed

Couple makes it their mission to help felines

By Christie Leja

A young couple has turned a series of calamities into their passion project, making it their mission to rescue, rehome or release ferals and stray cats in Centre Hastings.

Brogan Prytuliak and her fiancé Jeff McCullough moved to Tweed with their three cats, Otto, Winnie and Oscar in 2019. It was that summer when Brogan noticed a particular stray cat that would torment her cats through the window, and it continually sprayed the house. Being a cat lover all her life,

she tried befriending the cat, but she soon realized this guy was the definition of feral.

Over the next year, this cat visited the home daily, but it was the summer of 2020 when everything came to a head. One night after returning home from a friend's wedding, Brogan walked into a scene no pet owner ever wants to see. Their kitchen window screen has been pushed in, her whole house smells like spray, and her three cats were nowhere to be found. "I was devastated. Those are my babies...it was 3 a.m. and I was running around the neighbourhood. All I could smell was spray - I knew it was him."

One of the three cats, Winnie, was found under their deck that night, and Oscar was stuck way up in their neighbour's tree. With the help of Hydro

One, he was rescued the next morning, and returned home.

As for Otto, he went missing for days. After some research, Brogan scrubbed her house down of the marking spray smell and Otto felt safe enough to return home on that 10th night. It was then that the couple decided something had to be done to make sure their own cats were safe.

"I've always been a crazy cat lady," Brogan admits with a smile, "so I decided to learn about what is called TNR."

TNR stands for Trap, Neuter, Release or Return and is the most humane and effective method known for managing feral and stray cats and reducing their numbers. The goal is to trap the stray, take them to the vet, have them spay or neutered, vaccinate and do a full check-

up to make sure the cat is as healthy as possible. They are then released back to their colony or rehomed, depending on the impact on the cat.

By October of 2020, Brogan had set a trap and the feral cat was caught. They named him Eddie, as it was the day Eddie Van Halen passed away, and from there, their TNR mission was born.

As of February 2021, Brogan and Jeff's cat rescue has gone live. Eddy is the face of Friends and Ferals, which is a small organization with a big heart. Since then, they have helped save 55 cats in Tweed and area through TNR, fostering and adoption.

Lisa Rose adopted two kittens from Brogan and gushed when talking about her experience. "We couldn't imagine life without them! Friends and Ferals

is a fantastic organization run by truly fantastic people."

The feedback from their community has been outstanding. They recently held a raffle that had over 30 prizes donated by community members and supporters of the cat rescue. They were able to raise \$2,300 in ticket sales, with the money going to help pay medical bills for the cats and kittens they are continuing to save. Moving forward, Brogan plans to become a registered charity and focus on educating people about TNR and how beneficial it is to the cat colonies that live in the area.

Brogan leaves one final tip for anyone who wants to help the stray cats in their neighbourhoods. "Remember the golden rule; if you feed them, you need to fix them."

# Exhibit displays work with two perspectives

By Annie Duncan

The John M. Parrott Art Gallery located in Belleville's downtown is hosting the art exhibition *Two Women Two Perspectives*, a collection showcasing the artwork of Aileen Cherry (1895-1958) and Philippa Faulkner (1917-2001).

The exhibition has been a year in the making and was supposed to be up in the gallery last summer, but due to COVID, it was forced to be postponed until January, and then postponed again.

Both women spent their lives studying art across the world, pursued careers as artists and were born and raised in Belleville. Cherry grew up in Belleville's west end on what then was called Commercial Street, whereas Faulkner was raised in what is now Glanmore National Historic Site in the Old East Hill.

But despite their similar life events, the two had very little in common, explains Acting Curator at the Parrott Gallery, Wendy Rayson-Kerr, who used the delay of the show to learn more about the two women's history.

"They were like a world apart in character," says Rayson.

Cherry originally studied fine art through correspondence courses at the Minneapolis School of Art and went on to graduate from the Ontario College of Art.

Despite working and travelling through Europe and the United States and having her art showcased in New York, London, and Paris, Cherry pre-

ferred to paint in the Quinte area solely for her own enjoyment. Cherry's art was never sold while she was alive, but some 20 years following her death in a barn north of Belleville, a collection of her work was located and made famous.

Faulkner studied at the Parsons School of Fine and Applied Art, Advertising and Design in New York City and The Doon School of Fine Art.

Faulkner's work has been held in a solo show at the Eatons Fine Art Gallery and can be found in many private and public collections as well. She has received many international awards for her work. She was a very diverse artist, dabbling in sculpting, photography, and graphic design as well as painting.

Rayson explains that the exhibition of these two women's art was to highlight the work and lives of two Belleville women and continue to give them a voice.

"The number of artists that get left behind; they get forgotten if they're not mentioned," says Rayson. "It's nice to see their amount of work and to share it and say look at these women."

The exhibition can be viewed in gallery two of the Parrott Gallery until Oct. 23, 2021 and is open from 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Admission to the gallery is free.

The next exhibition at the John M. Parrott Art Gallery showcases the work of Sarah Winn and her work titled *Masked*, and Michella Rose and her work titled *Colour on Edge*. For more information, visit the Parrott Gallery website.



Photo by Annie Duncan

**The art of the late Philippa Faulkner and Aileen Cherry is on display in the John M. Parrott Gallery in an exhibition called *Two Women Two Perspectives*. A description of the two artists' lives can be found in the gallery along with a collection of their work.**