



GOOD CATS,
GOOD PEOPLE,
GOOD MEWS.

Kitten Lady to the Rescue!

BY ELISA JORDAN

It's tough to believe that someone has the job title "Kitten Lady," but Hannah Shaw is the woman lucky enough to hold it. She devotes her life to saving lives. The day she stumbled upon her first orphaned kitten, "my whole world changed!" she said.

Hannah discovered that very few resources were available for neonatal kitten care and that many shelters aren't equipped to handle their unique needs, which would sometimes mean euthanasia.

"I found my first orphaned neonatal kitten about eight years ago," she said. "Once I discovered the extreme challenges they face, I felt compelled to step in and become the hero they so clearly need."

Without specialized, around-the-clock care, they stand no chance of survival. "Once I began to rescue orphans, I started finding them everywhere and receiving call after call asking for my help," Hanna said. "After a few years of taking in kittens from the streets, I started to work with local shelters, offering to save their neonatal kittens

rather than let them be euthanized simply for being too young."

Hannah's project, Kitten Lady, is about more than just rescue. She makes herself available for lectures, trains shelters in kitten care, helps manage anti-cruelty campaigns, lobbies for policy changes, and teaches others how to build sustainable programs.

As she's grown in her career as a "professional cat lady," Hannah has seen a tremendous gap in public awareness about neonatal kittens and wants the animal advocacy world to look at the struggles kittens face on the streets and in our shelter systems. "Saving neonatal kittens requires specialized knowledge," she said. But with some training and a little experience, anyone can do it.

Hannah's hard work pays off, but she still faces challenges. As Kitten Lady's reach expands, she's faced with more opportunities to save lives. "My greatest challenge is scaling in capacity so I can say yes when a shelter wants help developing a program or when an orphan needs me to come to the rescue," she said. Funding is also a factor, which covers everything from basic necessities to expanding the program to advocacy work.

Hannah continues motivating those around her with outreach. "Knowing that Kitten Lady is inspiring so many people to save lives gives me tremendous motivation to continue the push to change the world for kittens. I truly believe that once people understand the challenges these neonates face and have the tools to save them, it will be a new day for orphaned kittens. And until that day comes, I'll be here ... sticking up for the little guys!"

Elisa Jordan is a Southern California freelance writer specializing in pets. She has a terrier, Gidget, and a cat, Izzy.



HANNAH SHAW



SHEENA OZZELLA



SHEENA OZZELLA