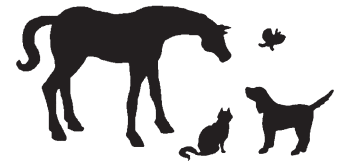


# FMCA news



*"Dignity for Animals"*

## **Message from the President: Return to Paradise**

In 2005, I visited a unique part of the Seychelles, Cousine Island. In 2011, I found myself again helping to launch baby Hawksbill Turtles into the Indian Ocean.



Cousine, 65 acres in size, is a private nature preserve "purchased in 1992 and set aside as a nature reserve primarily for the existing population of endemic land birds and to provide protection for breeding populations of sea birds. Giant tortoises living in poor captive conditions within the Seychelles are purchased and released on the island giving them the freedom they so rightly deserve."<sup>1</sup>

In 2000, Cousine became a tax-exempt Conservation Trust. "Cousine is unique, remote, and secretive, offering a maximum of ten guests"<sup>2</sup> private, spacious villas in the Old French Colonial style. Cousine Island is biologically important nationally and internationally because it is free of alien mammals except for *Homo sapiens*!

To me, Cousine is a magic place! A host of different bird species makes the island their home or breeding ground, and 40+ species are rare visitors. The all-white Fairy Tern (indigenous) lays one egg on a precariously thin branch with no nest! As they are comfortable around people, you can watch the brown fuzzy chicks sit there, (a little like watching paint dry) waiting patiently for mom or dad to return with dinner. In August, an island-wide fruiting of many *Ficus* trees ends in a brawl between Blue Pigeons and Seychelles Fruit Bats. As a result of their gorging on the fermented fruit, several drunken pigeons have to be nursed back to health each year!

Needless to say, I could write a book about my four days on this fantastic island paradise, but the newsletter would cost a bundle, and many of you would become frightfully bored! Therefore, I will concentrate on two endemic, endangered birds, the Giant Tortoises, and the critically-endangered Hawksbill Turtle.

### **BIRDS**

Many of the endemic land birds (found only in the Seychelles) are considered threatened or endangered due to habitat loss or the introduction of predators. Cousine has seven of the thirteen endemic birds of the Granitic Seychelles, three of which were reintroduced.

I did not realize on my 1993 cruise of the Seychelles that our stop at Fregate Island allowed us to view the most endangered bird species in the world, the Seychelles Magpie Robin. Only twelve remained when most were re-introduced to Cousine and several other islands. When I was there in 2005, the Cousine population had grown to 20-30, and in 2011 the population in the entire Seychelles is around two hundred, still precarious and intensively monitored on Cousine. The Seychelles Magpie Robin is a handsome medium-sized black bird with a prominent white shoulder bar.



2007 brought the successful release of Seychelles White Eyes onto Cousine Island. It was definitely a highlight for Kevin and San-Marie Jolliffe, the resident naturalists who patiently answered all my questions in 2011!

Twenty-three Seychelles White-Eyes were translocated to Cousine from Mahe. The White-Eye is one of the three endangered, endemic species reintroduced to Cousine. Although the bird's former distribution is unknown, the remaining populations on Mahe and Conception are under constant threat from



human impact. These little blue-grey birds with a distinctive white circle around the eye might not be as spectacular as the white-and-black plumed, white-tailed Tropicbird whose long

*(continued on page 2)*

The Friends of Montgomery County Animals, Inc. is an all-volunteer, non-profit, tax-exempt humane organization. FMCA does not have a shelter. All rescued animals are in foster homes. We receive no government funding and are entirely dependent on private donations.

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Interested in sharing a heart-warming poem or article of interest to be included in our next newsletter? Contributions are welcome. Please mail your articles to FMCA, PO Box 386, Germantown, MD 20875.

Do you have friends or neighbors who you think might like to join Friends? Please feel free to share this newsletter with them. We would love to have them as new members!

**Don't forget to visit  
our Friends website at  
[www.fmca.freeservers.com](http://www.fmca.freeservers.com) or  
[www.friendsofmontgomerycountyanimals.com](http://www.friendsofmontgomerycountyanimals.com)**

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*(continued from page 1)*

white central tail feathers make them look like soaring kites, but they are gutsy! The White-Eyes have proven that they can adapt to a new environment and have grown to twenty-one birds after a drop to nine birds after their relocation.

One obstacle for the White-Eyes was an assault from the Magpie Robins on White-Eyes fledglings that fell to the ground. Kevin and San-Marie came to the rescue! They safeguarded future chicks by first placing the chick "in a cage and allowing the parents to feed it through the netting"<sup>3</sup> and then "capturing the chick on the day it fledged and placing it in the specially constructed fledging protection cage suspended below the nest tree."<sup>3</sup> The adults fed the chick through the netting, and after three days, the clumsy baby's flight had improved to the point that it flew directly to the canopy of a large ficus tree where it remained for a number of days before taking flying lessons from the adults!



## GIANT ALDABRA TORTOISES

Giant Tortoises, among the world's most primitive reptiles, now only survive in the Seychelles and the Galapagos Islands. The endemic Seychelles Giant Tortoises, which have saddle backs, were virtually wiped out by man (although Cousine is lucky to have two). Giant Tortoises from the remote atoll Aldabra, which have round backs, were moved to the central granitic islands where they were kept in confinement, often under appalling conditions.

In 1993, twenty-one Giant Aldabra Tortoises from Praslin and Cerf Islands were introduced to Cousine. In 2009, a total of twelve Giant Tortoises arrived on Cousine and a thirty-six member breeding population from Silhouette are expected this year. Many were purchased and have traded inhuman confinement for the right to roam free. Presently, thirty-two surviving tortoises, many of which are youngsters, play an important role in distributing the seeds of many plant species on Cousine and act as giant lawnmowers on grassy areas.



The male Giant Aldabra Tortoises are much larger than the females and more receptive to man. The males love a good scratch under the chin and on their heads. Reproduction seems to be as slow as the tortoise's gait, as the success rate of mating is as low as 1 – 2%. In both 2005 and 2011, I was startled to hear loud groaning sounds shattering the usual tranquility, only to find a copulating pair very close to my villa. The rumbling by the male is part of the quaintly named "groan and thrust" phase of mating. Watching two tortoises copulate is like watching a movie in very slow motion. One Giant Tortoise male, Albert, has developed a love of the beach – very unusual behavior, as tortoises must regularly find shade to avoid overheating.

## TURTLES

Hawksbill Turtles, relatively small sea turtles with beak-like mouths, are considered critically endangered in the wild. The world population has decreased by 80% in the last century. Their range is throughout the tropical and sub-tropical waters of the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans. The highest threats to the species include habitat destruction and the harvesting of their shells for "tortoise shell" ornaments.

*(continued on page 3)*

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

(continued from page 2)

Cousine Island has been running a turtle-monitoring program since 1993. The main focus is safeguarding the nests and helping hatchlings make it safely to the sea. The highlight of each day is observing and helping the conservation officers dig up the babies from marked nests on the day they hatch and protecting them from crabs and birds as they exit the bucket close to the water's edge. Luckily, the females nest during the day so about 60 days later the young turtles are ready to go!



Since I was there in 2005, one great improvement has been moving many nests and lining the nests with heavy mesh. This prevents the crabs from eating the eggs. During the 2005 – 2006 season, 60+ nests yielded 8,500 Hawksbill hatchlings. “By December 31, 2010, Cousine Island had already recorded 139 Hawksbill nests, twenty-six nests more than the total number of nests from last year which was the previous record for the most nests in a season.”<sup>4</sup> Over 12,400 hatchlings have been launched into the sea. Kevin and San-Marie also estimate that the survival rate once seaborne has grown from 1-2% in 2005 to nearly 10% in 2011.



Another interesting addition to the Cousine turtle project is its partnership in a DNA study with the University of East Anglia in Great Britain. Small notches are taken from the carapace of all females and twenty random hatchlings per nest and sent to Great Britain. (Don't worry, it neither hurts nor harms them!)

The study will determine several

unanswered questions. Do the females mate in between the two-to-five times they lay eggs in one season? Are all the hatchlings of a single nest from more than one male? As the male Hawksbill mate and remain at sea their entire lives, what is the size of the male Hawksbill population? Do hatchlings return to the same beach where they are born (suspected by not proved)? An interesting indirect result from the study would be the return of a notched adult, which might give scientists more information about how long it takes a female turtle to mature, something which is currently unknown.

### SEYCHELLES FRUIT BATS

#### *A Story of Cruelty and Rescue with a Happy Ending*

In December 2009, a very young (less than a week old) Seychelles Fruit Bat, now named Squeaker, was found floundering on the roof of one of the staff apartments. Assuming that he had fallen off his mother, Kevin and San-Marie left him for the night to see if mom reclaimed him – she didn't. So began round-the-clock feeding of powdered milk. Unlike orphaned kittens, Fruit Bats quickly learn to hold the bottle! Slow weaning to fruit followed, although he still tries to sample anything his foster parents eat or drink! Squeaker is still

with them after three failed attempts at returning him to the wild.

Fruit Bats, the largest of the bat species, are simply adorable! With their reddish coats and pointed ears, they look like miniature foxes with black wings. Squeaker now has a girlfriend, Sassie. She was bought from a woman on La Digue, who, after capturing her in the wild at three months, kept her in a small cage barely a foot across. She had suffered a broken wing in captivity that was an old break and could not be fixed according to a vet on Praslin. Sassie had other problems associated with the appalling conditions (underfed, no water, etc.) she had endured. After a week with the vet who treated her for free, she came “home” to Cousine. The introduction of the two bats was both comic and sad. Squeaker's initial interest turned to fear. After all, he had never



seen another bat. Sassie, having spent the first three months in the wild, wanted to cuddle up to Squeaker, who kept moving away from her! Ken and San-Marie devised a complex introduction system and now they are best friends! An open aviary door allows Squeaker some night flying before returning in early morning to snuggle up to Sassie. Meanwhile, Sassie is taken for regular walks to explore the trees. As heart breaking as it is for her foster parents to see her trying to fly with a broken wing,

I sense they secretly hope Squeaker will not leave them and Sassie to fly to Praslin, where he could easily end up in a curry pot, a frequent dish on many hotel menus!

**Note:** Many thanks to the staff of Cousine Island, especially Kevin and San-Marie Jolliffe who gave me permission to quote and paraphrase material from newsletters and other sources.

Sincerely,



Claire B.M. Proffitt

- 1 “Cousine Island, Private Nature Preserve,” published by the Cousine Island Conservation Trust. Page 2.
- 2 Ibid. Page 4.
- 3 Cousine Island News, Kevin and San-Marie Jolliffe, April – June 2008.
- 4 Ibid. October – December 2010.

## Dog Parks

Marion Webster

I have a wonderful rescue dog. Her name is Zoey. She loves all people and she especially loves other dogs. She weighed forty-three pounds when I adopted her. She now weighs in at seventy-six pounds and has abundant energy. When she sees another dog she gets so excited that she is hard to control, even though we have been to school.

I was elated when I read that Montgomery County was opening a new dog park in Cabin John Park. I could not get both of us in the car fast enough!!

This Park is situated in a lovely, partially cleared area surrounded by woods. Of course, it is fully fenced. The fenced area is divided into two areas. The thirty-five pound and under dogs go to one side and the larger pooches go to the other side. The side for the larger dogs has a rock bridge for them to climb over and go under. The other dogs have a smaller rock structure. The ground is covered with wood chips in both areas. There is a gated "reception" area and a second gate to the main playground.

Dogs that are already inside rush to meet the new arrivals. Once through the second gate all dogs are "off leash." After the obligatory sniffing, the play begins.

It is a wonderful experience to see so many dogs racing, catching balls and having a great time.

A few months ago the county began to require owners to pay forty dollars for a permit. Your dog must have a license as well. It does seem a bit strange that no other park facilities have a fee unless you are renting space.

There are a few other rules that are for the safety and enjoyment of all. No aggressive dogs allowed, pick up your dog's litter (plastic bags provided), dogs must be older than four months, no glass or metal containers and no handler under the age of thirteen.

If you and your dog or dogs have not taken advantage of our parks, I strongly recommend that you and your friend (s) do so. Each of you will benefit. It is great fun to talk to other dog lovers and to swap stories and experiences.

Other park locations including Wheaton, Gaithersburg and Boyds are listed below. For more information, call 301-495-2525 or [www.parkpermits.org](http://www.parkpermits.org).

## AREA DOG PARKS

### IN MARYLAND

Black Hill Regional Park  
20030 Ridge Road  
Boyd's, Maryland

Cabin John Regional Dog Park  
10900 Westlake Drive  
Bethesda, Maryland

College Park Dog Park (at Acredale Park)  
Metzerott  
College Park, Maryland

Frederick Creek Dog Park  
5420 Ballenger Creek Pike  
Frederick, Maryland

Gaithersburg Dog Park (at Green Park)  
151 Bickerstaff Way  
Gaithersburg, Maryland

Greenbelt Dog Park  
Hanover Parkway and Hanover Drive  
Greenbelt, Maryland

Heurich Dog Park  
Ager Road and Nicholson Street  
Hyattsville, MD

King Farm Dog Park (at Mattie Stepanek Park)  
Pleasant Drive at Piccard Drive  
Rockville, Maryland

Maryland City Park  
Brockbridge Road  
Laurel, Maryland

Olney Manor Dog Park  
16601 Georgia Avenue  
Olney, Maryland

Ridge Road Recreational Dog Park  
21155 Frederick Road  
Germantown, Maryland

Wheaton Regional Dog Park  
Orebaugh Avenue and Arcola Avenue  
Silver Spring, Maryland

### IN NORTHERN VIRGINIA

Benjamin Banneker Park  
1701 North Van Buren Street  
Arlington, Virginia

Chandon Dog Park  
900 Palmer Drive  
Herndon, Virginia

Clarendon Park  
13th and N. Hartford Streets  
Arlington, Virginia

Del Ray Dog Park  
500 Monroe Avenue  
Alexandria, Virginia

Four Mile Run Park  
3100 South Gelbe Road  
Arlington, Virginia

### IN WASHINGTON, DC

Historic Congressional Cemetery Dog Park  
1801 E Street, SE  
Washington, DC

Kingsman Field Dog Park  
13th and D Street  
Washington, DC

Neward Street Dog Park  
39th and Neward Streets, NW  
Washington, DC

S and T Street Dog Park  
17th and S Street, NW  
Washington, DC

Shaw Field Dog Park  
11th Street and Rhode Island Avenue  
Washington, DC

## Go Greyhound

Ellie Brown

Greyhounds are beautiful, elegant athletes. Once revered in Egypt, they were adored as family pets and respected as hunting companions. The birth of a greyhound puppy was second only to the birth of a son in an upper class Egyptian family. Images of greyhounds adorn the walls of tombs where favorite hounds were often mummified and buried with their owners.

How different is the treatment of Greyhounds today. Greyhounds were first brought to this country in the early 1800s to control the wild Jack Rabbit population. Soon their owners were betting on whose dog could catch a rabbit first! Voila – the sport of greyhound racing was born! Today dog racing is legal in sixteen states with Florida boasting the majority of racetracks. Today's greyhound is rarely a family member. He is a commodity with a short and sad life. Assuming that he is fast enough and injury free, his career will range from twenty months to five years – when the law says he must retire.

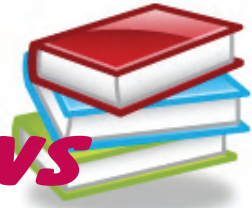


There are few options for these beautiful athletes when they retire. Some are retained for breeding, many are euthanized, and some are sold to research labs or kept as blood donors.

A few lucky ones are rescued, rehabilitated, and adopted out by various Greyhound Rescue groups. Sadly, many people never consider adopting a greyhound because they believe these dogs need constant exercise. Actually greyhounds are delighted just to be couch potatoes. They need no more exercise than an average dog.

So, if you are thinking of adopting a dog and you want to save a life, consider the advice of the bus company, "Go Greyhound."

## BOOK REVIEWS



### Chet and Bernie Mysteries

Ellie Brown

If you like a good who dun it, if you like dogs, and if you like to laugh, read the "Chet and Bernie" mysteries written by Spencer Quinn, applauded by the NY Times, and narrated by Chet the dog!

Chet has a nose for crime, bad guys, and anything edible. Bernie is his human, a private eye who brings his own set of talents into play. The three books *Dog On It*, *Thereby Hangs a Tail*, and *To Fetch a Thief* are adventure stories full of suspense, humor, and surprise. You will love the "dogged" determination of both Chet and Bernie as they follow their noses and dig up the truth!

### The Art of Racing in the Rain

Susan Cameron

"In Mongolia when a dog dies, he is buried high in the hills so people cannot walk on his grave. The dog's master whispers into the dog's ear his wishes that the dog will return as a man in his next life. Then his tail is cut off and put beneath his head, and a piece of meat or fat is placed in his mouth to sustain his soul on its journey; before he is reincarnated, the dog's soul is freed to travel the land, to run across the high desert plains for as long as it would like."

Not all dogs are ready to return as men, but Enzo is ready. So begins Enzo's memoir of his life with his devoted master Denny, a semi-pro racecar driver. Enzo was picked from a litter in a small town in Seattle. Enzo, named after Enzo Ferrari, quickly partnered up with Denny to appreciate the metaphors of racing and living, understanding that both require balance, patience and anticipation, to do them well.

This wonderful, inspirational book is written in the first person, or first dog. Enzo shares with the reader his beautiful friendship with Denny, his love for Denny's wife Eve and daughter Zoe. But the bond between Denny and Enzo, is unparalleled. He is Denny's greatest ally as events unfold and the two of them do their best to overcome great challenges along the way.

We follow Enzo's journey as a key member of the Swift family. His days are spent watching The Weather Channel, National Geographic, and his favorite, racecar videos. Denny worries the Enzo watches too much TV when no one is home, but Enzo is sure that he has learned a great deal from his pastime.

Throughout this touching tale, the reader is struck by Enzo's insight and wisdom as he lives and learns. Such beautiful musings by Enzo as "The race is long. It is better to drive within oneself and finish the race behind the others than it is to drive too hard and crash," or "When I return to this world, I will be a man . . . when I see a man or woman in trouble, I will extend my hand, both metaphorically and physically. . . to you. . . to the world. I will be a good citizen, a good partner in the endeavor of life that we all share" make this book not only engaging, but inspiring.

SAVE THE DATE

FMCA's Fall Luncheon,  
Holiday Bazaar and Fashion Show will be  
held on Wednesday, November 9.  
The remodeled TPC Potomac at Avenel  
Farm will be the site for this annual  
fundraiser. Join us for a late morning and  
afternoon filled with vendor  
boutiques, scrumptious food, door prizes,  
and a fashion show by CAbi.



Mark your  
calendars now!





## MARK YOUR CALENDARS

for an extraordinary opportunity to enjoy an expansive Potomac estate and help support the humane efforts of Friends of Montgomery County Animals (FMCA) at the same time! Be sure to join FMCA on Wednesday, May 18th for our annual spring luncheon meeting with silent auction, featuring items from Claire Proffitt's trip to Africa as well as a

Talon 150 go kart, and CAbi fashions all in a beautiful setting at the home of Joe and Missy Walsh. The 15,000 square foot Walsh home was built in 1986 and sits on 42 lush, rolling acres with a conservation easement and an equestrian right-of-way. The colonial style, stone and clapboard residence has been renovated twice and was featured in and on the cover of Architectural Digest. Be sure to be there! You don't want to miss this one! Many thanks to Joe and Missy for sharing their magnificent estate with FMCA!

### Talon DLX 150r

**MANUFACTURER** Carter Brothers

**MODEL YEAR** 2005DLX 150-R

**MEASUREMENTS:**

**LENGTH** 84 in.

**HEIGHT** 57 in.

**WIDTH** 53 in.

**WEIGHT** 470 lbs.

**GROUND CLEARANCE** 7 in.

**ENGINE** 4-stroke, 12.5 hp @ 7,500 rpm

**DISPLACEMENT** 150 cc

**IGNITION** Electric start **DRIVETRAIN**

**TRANSMISSION** Automatic, reverse gear **OPERATIONAL**

**SUSPENSION** Front: Dual A-arm , Rear: Swing arm cantilever

**BRAKES** Disc, Parking brake with brake light

**TIRES** Front: 20 x 7-8, Rear: 22 x 10-10

**DISTANCE TO PEDALS** 36-41 in. (adjustable)



## CAbi Fashions

CAbi models will be mingling during the FMCA Spring Luncheon / Annual Meeting in a variety of Spring 2011 fashions. You can take a closer look at the entire line, try on and order you favorite CAbi pieces. As usual, a percentage of the sales will be donated to FMCA. CAbi Spring 2011 brought to you by Lori Veirs, Independent CAbi Consultant.

Take a sneak peek at [www.loriveirs.cabionline.com](http://www.loriveirs.cabionline.com).



# Available for Adoption

All of the animals available for adoption have been spayed or neutered and are up-to-date on their vaccinations. If you are interested in adopting any of these cats, please leave a message on our phone line (301-977-4833).



**BILLIE** lived with a woman who just did not know what to do with her. She loves attention, but sometimes gets rambunctious, is smart, lively and just loves to play.



**BUSTER** is a really nice boy. He was rescued from the Outer Banks of North Carolina. He is great with other cats and probably children. He just loves food!



**FOG** is definitely all girl! She swishes her fuzzy tail, rolls teasingly on the floor, and has a distinctive, high, chirpy voice that lets you know where she is.



**LITTLE MAN** is approximately 9 years old. He is a laid back guy and nothing, except the vacuum cleaner, bothers him. He loves attention and will even watch TV.



**MITZ** is a very sociable, cuddly and playful kitten with a high purr index. He enjoys playing and hanging with other cats.



**NIMITZ** is a handsome devil and both of those attributes are obvious in his personality. He is very energetic and very intelligent. He is good with other cats.



**PIERCE** is playful and affectionate, will watch TV with you – probably on your lap, if that is permitted and will sleep on your bed with you if he is allowed.



**SARGE** is an active, engaging, bright fella. He often communicates and watches intently for your response. His favorite game is catch. He is 3 years old.



**TIGRE** was born in Madagascar and raised in France. When his owner decided to move back to France, she left him behind. He is the sweetest boy and full of love.

Friends of Montgomery County Animals, Inc.  
14211 Dufief Mill Road  
Gaithersburg, MD 20878  
301-977-4833

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**RETURN SERVICES REQUESTED**

## Donations

*The following made donations (monetary or volunteer time) in 2010 to help support FMCA:*

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