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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NORTHERN DUTCHESS NEWS welcomes your letters. Letters must be submitted via e-mail to be considered for publication; e-mail to northern.dutchess@sdutchessnews.com and include the phrase "Letter to the Editor" in the subject line. Include a telephone number and address for verification purposes. Letters may be edited for legal considerations, reader interest and length. We look forward to hearing from you.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

NOTE: Letters to the Editor do not necessarily reflect the views of the Northern Dutchess News. Letters must be e-mailed to be considered for publication. We cannot accept handwritten or faxed letters.

Feel free to mourn - naturally

To the editor:

Recently a dear friend of mine died. Within a week, there was nothing left to remind me that he had existed at all except a few pictures on the wall and my memories.

In today's ibuprofen culture, I wonder if we don't rush mourning. I wonder if we have become so afraid of any sort of pain that we fail to mourn naturally. My friend was a great guy, funny, loving, a good companion. Such a life shouldn't be rushed away.

People ask me how I'm doing. I'm awful. And I will be awful tomorrow. Ten years from now, I'll still have moments when I'm awful. And that's okay. Some voids are never filled, never meant to be filled. My friend had made a special home in my heart that belongs to him, and until I see him again, that hole will remain. It's his and only he can fill it.

I think they mourned better years ago. A widow wore black, a friend a black arm band, a reminder that the world is a lesser place today than yesterday. Not that death should crush us. I don't think our loved ones would want that; I certainly don't, but they do deserve some time, we deserve some time, time to be sad, time to cry, time to be angry, time to remember and laugh. That time takes time and shouldn't be rushed. You can't rush a wound. It has to heal naturally, at its own pace, according to the severity of loss and the nature of each person.

To all those who have lost a loved one, I'm sorry. It will never be completely okay. A part of us is gone. That is the way of it. Feel free to mourn.

Jeffrey Mahoney
Hyde Park

Cat Yoga Classes for kids, adults at Dutchess County SPCA

by Anna Barton

"Let's do something new," thought Jenny Fox, a local children's yoga instructor, while brainstorming with a board member of the Dutchess County SPCA. "Nobody in this area is doing it!"

And thus began the idea for cat yoga, offered once a month through August, with classes for adults and children taught by certified yoga instructors.

The classes are held at the DCSPCA Adoption Center, and several of the most sociable and outgoing cats are free to wander around the yoga participants during the class.

The feedback was quite positive after the first class in April, Fox noted. Yoga participants were divided between wanting to get their pose right – and petting the cat at their side!

"One cat just took over the mat!" Fox said with a laugh.

"The long-term goal for me is to raise awareness about the SPCA," Fox said. All of the proceeds raised from the yoga classes will be directed back to the DCSPCA.

Director of Development for the DCSPCA John North says the first yoga class held in April was very successful in terms of adoption rates. Many participants returned to the shelter looking for specific cats they had done stretches with, North noted.

Fox will be teaching the children's yoga program for the monthly classes. She received her Yoga certification in 2012 and teaches "Yo Yogi!" - a children's yoga program - at Poughkidsie.

Adult classes will be offered by Darrigan DeMattos, a professional dancer with Awaken Dance Theater, and a teacher at Ayo Fitness in Middletown and Athleta Studio in NYC. Alternating the instruction for the adult class will be Christi Botello of Hopewell Junction, whose specialty is yoga's vinyasa flow technique.

Children and adult classes are held in the same time slot, but in different locations in the Adoption Center. This allows parents to have 45 minutes of peaceful solitude while still making one trip and creating a "family outing" together.

North added that cats are social, soothing and calming, which makes them great yoga partners to have.

He remembered that George Balanchine, co-founder of the New York City Ballet, would often study felines and incorporate their sleek and gentle movements into his choreography.

"Cats are naturally very centered in yoga," Fox said. "They embody what the essence of yoga is."

The classes will be offered on May 14,



From top: Kids pose with a DCSPCA kitty during the April 10 children's yoga class, in partnership with Jenny Fox of FoxYoga. Yoga with adoptable cats at the Dutchess County SPCA will be offered throughout the summer as a method of promoting health, community and cat adoptability. Courtesy photos

June 11, July 9 and August 13. Each class will run from 5:30 p.m. to 6:15 p.m. and fees per class are \$20 for adults, \$10 for DCSPCA members and \$5 for seniors and children.

The classes are open to those beginning

or experienced with yoga. Space is limited, and pre-registration is required ahead of time. To register, visit www.dcsPCA.org or call (845) 452-7722. The DCSPCA Adoption Center is located at 636 Violet Avenue in Hyde Park.