



Best Friends
ANIMAL SOCIETY

NEWS RELEASE

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Feline Flyaway:

Cats rescued from Middle East war end sojourn at Best Friends, flying to new homes

Kanab, UT -- 11/24/2006 – For 16 cats rendered homeless by the war between Israel and the Hezbollah, their happy ending starts Sunday, when they fly from America's largest companion animal sanctuary to their new homes.

Best Friends Animal Society worked with both Israeli and Lebanese humane groups, and these cats were part of the unprecedented airlift of almost 300 cats and dogs from war-torn Beirut after local shelters were destroyed in the bombing. The four-footed victims of war came to Best Friends Animal Sanctuary in Utah on their way to finding new families.

Now these 16 cats are flying again....this time with a Best Friends staffer who owns her own small plane and admits she is cowed by cats.

"I'm a dog person myself, and I've flown lots of dogs and also rabbits to their new homes," said Juliette Watt. "But cats are superior beings, so I hope they enjoy the flight! It's a lot quicker, easier, and less expensive than driving them."

The cats' odyssey to their new homes will be a two-day journey on a small plane with stops at seven different airports. The flight leaves Kanab, Utah at 8 a.m. Sunday, Nov. 26 with stops in Chicago, Cleveland, Rochester, Nashua, Martha's Vineyard (or Hyannis), Baltimore and finally Richmond, with an estimated arrival time of 5:30 p.m. EST on Monday, Nov. 27.

Joining Watt will be Pamela Crook, who was part of the Best Friends rapid response team that went to Beirut and who has been helping care for them. They include a blind cat, a litter that was rescued together and is now going to a home together, and a group of feral cats who will have deluxe barn accommodations.

The efforts to help rebuild the Lebanese humane society continue. Donations are much appreciated, and can be made on the Best Friends website: www.bestfriends.org.

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Best Friends Animal Society operates the largest sanctuary for homeless animals, and provides adoption, spay/neuter, and educational programs nationwide. For more information, go to www.bestfriends.org.