

PET TALES

Pet cats come to rescue in time of need

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Sadie and Vader are two felines that know what's up.

These two kitties' seem to have special antennas that detect their human mom and my fellow gal pal's feelings.

I got to see first hand just how in tune the cats - particularly Sadie, a strawberry blonde ball of fluff - are with my friend this weekend.

sensed that my pal was feeling a bit blue.

They stayed extra close and snuggled with her. There was none of the usual feline shenanigans of throwing up hair balls or shredding the bills.

But probably what warmed this pet lover's heart most was how just the cats very presence soothed my friend. No matter how much I talked with her and hugged her, that paled to the gentle roar of two furry motors purring against her chest.

This reinforces what most of already know - pets are the best therapy. Between their unconditional love and their slapstick antics nothing can cheer us up the way our furry four-legged pets can.

I remember years ago when my now senior Scotty Argyle would not leave my side after I tore a chunk of my cornea during a vacuum cleaner accident - don't ask. Suffice to say never swing the end of a vacuum cleaner hose to close to an open eye.

But during my recovery it was

Argyle that stood sentry over me and cuddled with me when I was not allowed to move about. And the few times I did leave my bed or couch to use the

restroom my intrepid Scotty would circle me making sure I was safe. He was like a miniature seeing-eye dog.

But during my recovery it was

Pets' therapeutic values are so renowned that many communities even have pet therapy training programs. At Florida Gulf Coast University there is a pet therapy program that once completed can let you become a member of the Delta Society Certified Pet Partner Team

At Florida Animal Assisted Therapy pets and owners train and are evaluated as a team. For more information, contact Dr. Linda Buettner, FGCU Department of Interdisciplinary Studies, (941) 590-7497 or Dr. Myra Marcus, College of Health Professionals, (941) 590-7758. ■

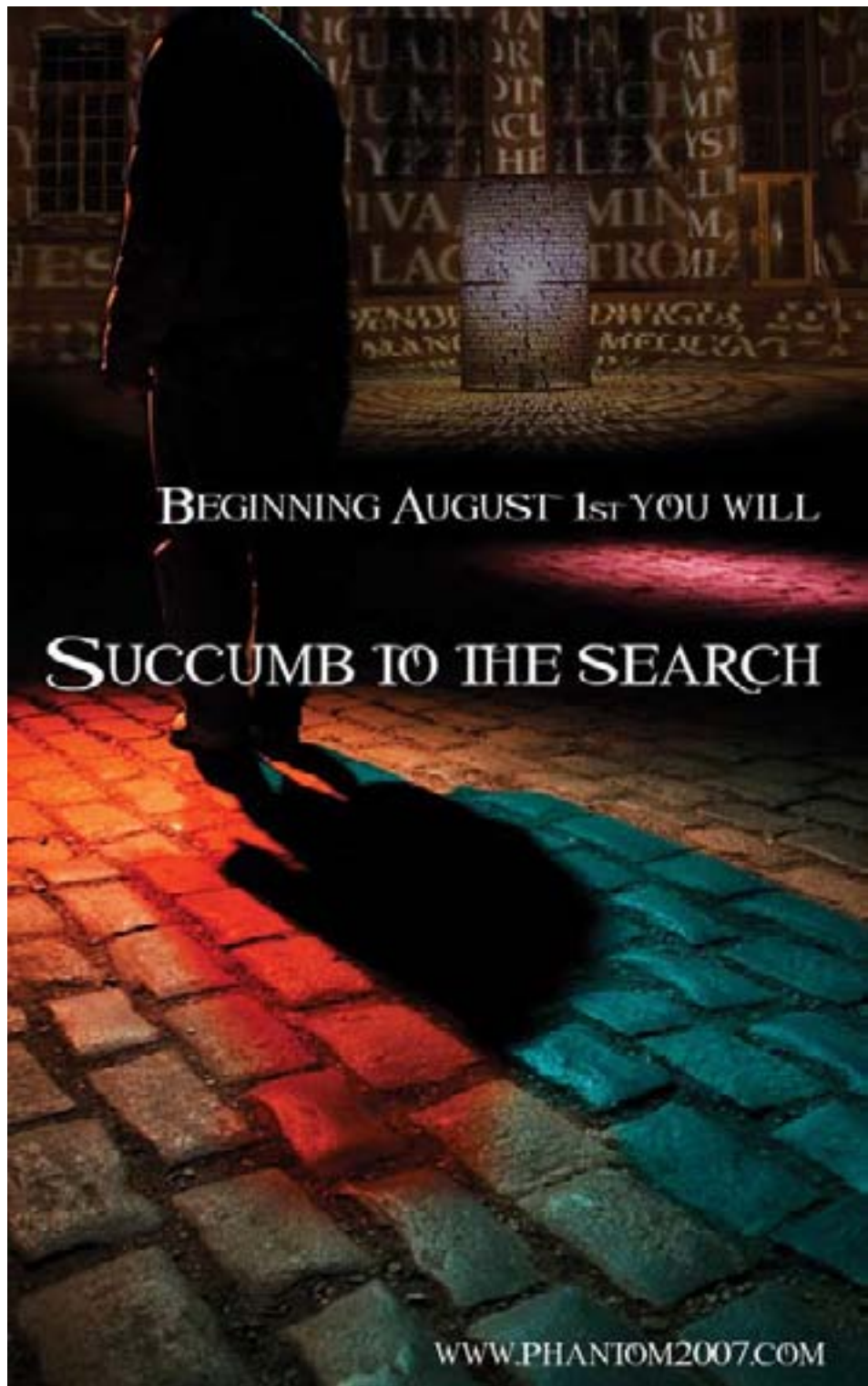


Continuing saga

For those of you who read my pet column last week - the couple who were worried about introducing their dogs are doing fine. Apparently the two of them - one who owns a rescued pit bull mix and the other who has as a cairn terrier - had success this weekend. The pit mix was a bit more antsy than the smaller fella who just wanted to befriend him. But all went well after the two went on a walk and had trees, bushes and garbage cans to distract themselves with. So another triumph in the pet world.

Contact Ella

>>Readers are welcome to share their stories, information and needs with Ella Naylor at enayor@florida-weekly.com. Pet Tales is designed to provide entertainment, support and education to our pet lovers.



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