

## Injured kittens find the purr-fect family

• **SAN RAMON: Man finds two felines hiding under the hood of his car, adopts them after paying \$4,000 in medical bills**

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Jeff and Karen Westin have adopted two new family members who were severely injured and found in the most unlikely place.

Kittens Sammy and Rocky survived a harrowing run-in with the Westins' sports utility vehicle thanks to the kindness of the couple and quick work by the staff of the Bishop Ranch Veterinary Center.

Jeff Westin was backing out of his driveway last week when he heard cries. He said he thought he ran over a cat, so he put his vehicle in park and looked underneath but found nothing.

But the cries continued.

Realizing the sounds were coming from inside his car, Westin opened the hood and found -- inside the radiator and stuck in the fan -- a golden, furry face looking up at him. With the help of a neighbor, Westin eventually fished out two 8-week-old male kittens, one with a badly injured leg.

"I thought the leg was severed off," Westin said. "It was all dangly and sticking through the skin."

Covered in blood, Jeff Westin rushed the kittens to the Bishop Ranch Veterinary Center for emergency care.

Sammy had to have an eye removed and one of his two broken legs amputated, Dr. Shann Ikezawa said. Rocky suffered internal bleeding and serious head trauma, leaving him with permanent neurological damage.

"At this stage, [Rocky] should be running and jumping around more, but he seems to be a little slow," Ikezawa said.

Sammy has adjusted quickly to walking on just two good legs and should fare better in three weeks when the splint is removed from his third leg.

Ikezawa said it is not uncommon for cats to seek shelter inside cars, but they usually do so during the winter.

The Westins are grateful the cats survived the ordeal. When they brought the kittens to the center, they had to agree to pay the emergency-care bills before the kittens could be treated.

"If it weren't for the Westins, we probably would have had to euthanize them right there," Ikezawa said.

With the veterinary bill hovering around \$4,000, the Westins tried frantically to find a home for the kittens. They asked neighbors and friends, but ultimately decided to adopt them.

"You would think that it would be hard for a three-legged cat with one eye to find a home," Jeff Westin said.

Bearing the financial burden for the cats' treatment, the Westins are asking family, friends and community members to help pay the medical costs.

"We feel so passionate that these sweet kittens have come into our lives for a reason," Karen Westin said in an e-mail. "If 10 caring individuals donate \$10, it would be a miracle."

But the Westins were just happy to finally bring the two brothers home. Sammy and Rocky have now joined two other pets in the Westin household.

"It's gonna be interesting to see how the dog and the cat react to two new family members," Jeff Westin said.

Donations can be made to Bishop Ranch Veterinary Center at 2000 Bishop Dr., San Ramon, CA 94583.

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