

Fashion felines model for charity



Animal lovers hold fund-raiser for furry friends

By PAM NOLES

The Desert Sun

PALM SPRINGS — Animal Samaritans held their first-ever fashion show fund-raiser Sunday afternoon in Palm Springs, where fuzzy and feathered beasts served as adorable accessories to design clothing.

The event was organized by Diane Matzner, owner of Aritstokatz, a cat-centered boutique, and La Mariposa, a clothing store. The fashion show was held at The Wilhows Inn in Palm Springs.

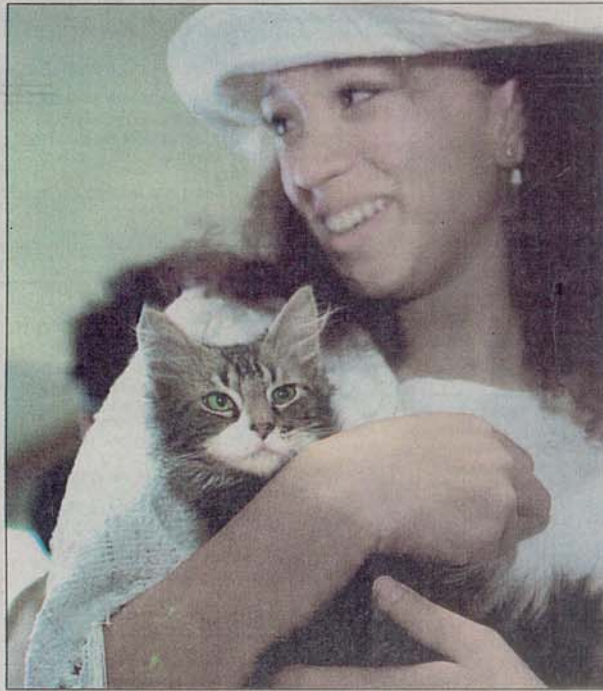
"I have a real love of animals," she said. "Owning my stores is my business, but it also gives me an opportunity to work with the community and give exposure to causes I believe in."

Seven human models showed off eight outfits from Matzner's clothing store. The animals came from the shelter, Guide Dogs of the Desert and homes of the models.

Proceeds will go to the nonprofit organization, which runs an animal shelter, and offers free spaying and neutering, pet visitation and humane education programs.

Teri Webb, 40, of Palm Springs modeled with her 11-year-old pomeranian, Shadow, which was as small as a teddy bear and about as cute. Webb said she wanted to do something to help.

"I just love animals. They are just the best," Webb said. "I told Shadow this morning when we got up that we were going to do a fashion show to save the little puppies at the shelter."



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Cat style: Model Nichole Ervin, **above**, cuddles kitten Hanzel. Sunday. Ingrid Olsen of Palm Desert, **top**, communes with a cockatiel.

Lauri Aylaian, 39, of Palm Springs, a shelter volunteer for two years, modeled with Majestic, a Himalayan Siamese cat that appeared to be purebred.

"People move, and they can't take them. Or they adopt them and people in the house develop allergies," she said. "People leave them

in cardboard boxes on our doorstep. It's sad."

Helen Snyder of Palm Springs had a good time.

"I love animals," she said. "I have nine cats of my own that some mother cat dumped in my yard. That's probably eight too many. What can you do? I love them."