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## Eight lives left

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**A** young kitten is lucky to be alive after a worker at Pine Banks Park found the injured feline crawling along the ground at the park earlier this month. When the worker took the cat across the street to the Pine Banks Animal Hospital, x-rays revealed a broken jaw, fractures on both legs and in the ball of the hip joint.

"She's a very lucky kitty," said Claire Smith, director of the Melrose Humane Society. And very appropriately, Smith has named the kitten Miss Lucky. Smith currently has the kitten in her care as it continues to recover from surgery.

After taking x-rays, Pine Banks Animal Hospital contacted Melrose Animal Control, and Health Director Ruth Clay worked with Smith to bring Miss Lucky to the Massachusetts Veterinary Referral Hospital in Woburn. There, the kitten went through two surgeries on successive days, where veterinarians installed plates and screws.

"It was standing the following day on all four legs and walking, which was amazing," said Dr. Karen Pastor, who completed one of the surgeries. The injuries resulted from severe trauma, most likely being struck by a car.

John Burgess, the superintendent of Pine Banks Park, has expressed interest in adopting the kitten.

"I have to see how much care is needed. I'll talk to Claire when the time comes," Burgess said. He and other workers at Pine Banks have already donated money towards the kitten's expensive medical bills.

Even with discounts provided by the Massachusetts Veterinary Referral Hospital, Miss Lucky racked up a bill of nearly \$4,700. Smith has collected approximately \$1,000 in donations for Miss Lucky thus far from people at Pine Banks, the animal hospital, volunteers at the Humane Society and others.

The kitten still needs to attend physical therapy, and had staples and sutures removed on Wednesday, but Pastor and Smith both expect Miss Lucky to make a full recovery.

"It's been like a community effort for this little kitty because she has such a strong will to live," Smith said.

Donations for Miss Lucky's medical bills can be sent to P.O. Box 760668, Melrose Humane Society, Melrose 02176, with a note identifying the cat as the recipient of the funds.

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