

MILTON CAT RESCUED ON QEW 50 KILOMETRES FROM HOME

One day Minnie the cat was at home, chilling out with her family in Milton. The next, she was falling out of a truck on the QEW 50 kilometres away in Grimsby. She was reunited with her family Friday in St. Catharines because of a wedding in Niagara-on-the-Lake, a couple from Chicago and a microchip.

The adventure started Wednesday when the indoor cat dashed out the front door.

"She bee-lined it to the door and took off," said pet owner Rob Rowse, whose three-year-old daughter Sloane is very attached to Minnie.

The family searched for the cat, driving up and down street. Sloane was calling out the window, "Minnie come home."

"There were plenty of tears that night," Rowse said. "It was breaking my heart."

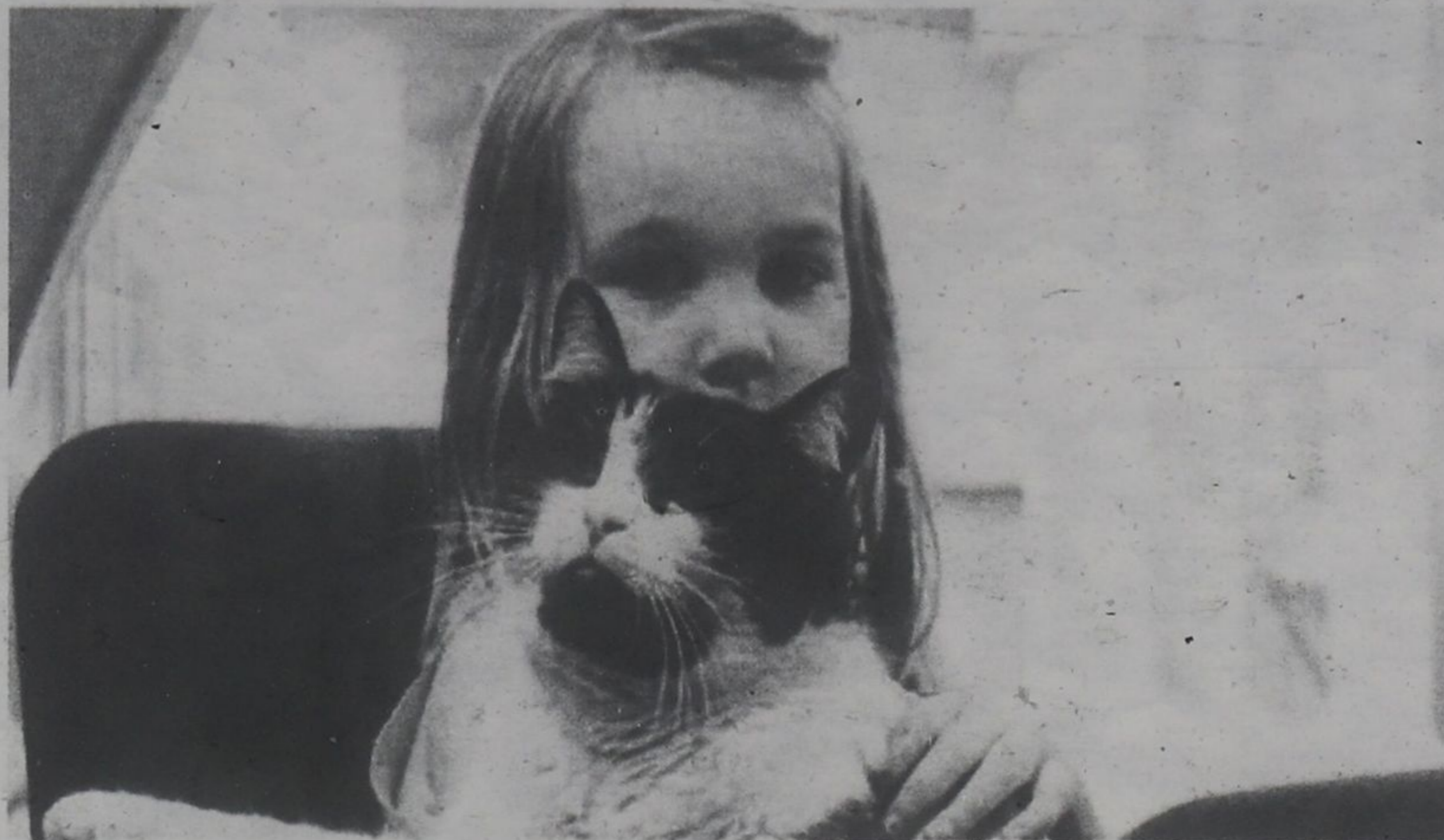
They reported Minnie missing at the local humane society and left food on the front porch hoping to entice the one-and-a-half year old black and white cat back.

So it was a shock when Rowse got a call Thursday from the Lincoln County Humane Society in St. Catharines telling him they had his cat.

Minnie had been rescued on the QEW in Grimsby.

Chicago resident Taylor Gothard and his husband D.J. were on their way to Niagara-on-the-Lake for a wedding when they spotted the cat on the QEW. It looked like it had fallen from a truck or been hit by a truck.

"I'm an animal lover, so I slammed on the brakes and my husband and I got out and rescued the little guy," said Gothard by phone Friday.



Karena Walter/Torstar

Minnie is reunited with three-year-old Sloane Rowse of Milton at the Lincoln County Humane Society in St. Catharines on Friday. The cat had run away and was rescued by drivers on the QEW.

He said there was enough of a shoulder to pull off on, but he was more worried about the cat than his own vehicle.

"The cat was in shock. He tried to jump up on the

barrier and run into the opposite direction of traffic," he said.

"If you had just fallen out of a car or been hit by a car you'd probably be in shock too."

The couple called a nearby animal hospital and were instructed to take the cat to the humane society in St. Catharines.

Gothard said they hoped it was microchipped.

"It was a little bit out of the way, but the cat was way too friendly to be a stray so we figured he had a family."

Minnie's family made the drive to St. Catharines from Milton Friday to pick her up.

Lincoln County Humane Society executive director Kevin Strooband said the cat has a scrape on her chin, likely from road burn, and a nail ripped out, but seems alright otherwise.

"She's doing remarkably well for falling out of a truck onto the QEW at 100 kilometres an hour."

He credited the Chicago passersby for saving her life. "I think there's a small percentage of people who would stop on a highway."

Minnie's family was very grateful for the reunion. Rowse said he forgot the cat was microchipped.

"Without that, she would have been a lost cause. One thing I'll do from now on is microchip my animals."

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