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THE CAT HOUSE Scoop

Cat pictured: Chai © Essence in a Flash by Kimberly McCarly

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ADOPTION FACILITY

1935 Q Street
Lincoln, NE
Tuesdays & Thursdays 6–8 pm
Sundays 1:30–4 pm

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The Cat House is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, all volunteer organization, funded entirely by donations and adoption fees.

The importance of microchipping

By Anne Stubbendeck

Does your cat have a chip on its shoulder? Well, it probably should. Any loving pet owner can tell you, losing an indoor pet to the great outdoors ranks among the most stressful experiences of all. You look, you search, you wonder, you worry. Ultimately, you feel helpless. That is unless you have your pet microchipped. TCH cats are all implanted with microchips. This cutting edge technology goes a long way toward ensuring that the search for and rescue of these cats, if needed, will end in a joyful reunion.

A grain of rice. That is roughly the size of a microchip implant which could literally be the difference between losing a beloved pet forever, or finding it rather quickly. Something so small can make a huge difference. Microchipping your pet is both wise and responsible. If more pets were implanted with these little saviors, shelters, animal control agents and Good Samaritans everywhere would have a much easier time locating the owners of lost pets. Fewer pets would end up in shelters and fewer families would suffer this sad loss.

Take the recent example of Narnia, the wayward cat who found herself separated

from her family during a cross country move. Luckily for Narnia, Doug Kielian spotted her as she was making her way through traffic. Being a huge cat lover, he stopped to rescue her. Doug, a long-time volunteer at TCH, and his wife, Stephanie, were equipped with not only a charitable love of felines, but also the wherewithal to have the cat checked for a microchip. Turns out Narnia did have a microchip and has been reunited with her loving family.

Microchipping is both simple and affordable (usually costing around \$45). Your vet can insert the microchip, between your pet's shoulder blades, in a matter of seconds during a scheduled office visit. The procedure doesn't require anesthetic and will feel no different to your pet than a routine vaccination would. Each microchip contains a unique identification code that, when scanned, will help identify your pet and begin the process of getting them back home to you.

TCH volunteers are experts at making the most out of the little things—from any size donations of time or money to the little four legged reasons we do what we do. So many of

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Volunteer Opportunities

The Cat House has a very hard-working and dedicated crew of volunteers committed to improving the lives of cats in Lincoln and the surrounding area.

If you are interested in helping, you can fill out a volunteer application online at www.thecathouse.org or contact us by phone at 402-441-9593 or e-mail at volunteer@thecathouse.org.

You're in for a rewarding experience!

Opportunities to help include:

- Care, feeding, exercising, and socializing of cats
- Laundry
- Facility maintenance
- Facility organization and restocking
- Transporting cats to and from vet clinic
- Newsletter articles, photography, and production
- Assisting with communication to volunteers and/or the public
- Adoption counselor
- Post-adoption follow-up calls
- Volunteer training program assistance
- Volunteer scheduling assistance
- Filing
- Grant writing
- Fundraising
- Feral/TNR program
- Foster home

GARAGE SALE Christmas at TCH!

Get ready for the holidays at bargain prices during Christmas at The Cat House. Our next garage sale will feature loads of Christmas items, plus other goodies. The sale is scheduled for 3 p.m. to 8 p.m. Friday, Nov. 11, and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, Nov. 12, and will be upstairs at the shelter, 1935 Q St. Then watch for announcements about The Cat House Flea Market, a series of monthly garage-type sales to begin in the new year. All proceeds support the cats.

Spotlight on... Ashley Carstens

By Martha Stoddard

Ashley Carstens got her first taste of working with feral cat colonies last summer. Already a volunteer with The Cat House, she offered to help an elderly woman trap the cats living in her barn on the edge of Lincoln. Ashley took the cats to be checked and vaccinated by a veterinarian, got them spayed or neutered and, finally, released them back at the woman's barn.

There, the cats will be able to live out their lives in better health and without their numbers multiplying. Because they grew up on the fringes of human society, there was little hope they could become adoptable.

"I trapped almost every single cat at her colony and really liked it," Ashley said. She liked it so much that, when Dennis Mathias, the former coordinator for The Cat House's trap-neuter-return program left the job early this year, she agreed to take it over. She has become a passionate advocate for TNR.

"I personally feel that's the backbone of what we do, to stop the reproduction of cats," Ashley said.

But as coordinator, she spends most of her time working with people. Calls come from people with concerns about feral cats in their neighborhoods. Some have been feeding a cat or two and want to intervene before there are kittens. Others have seen growing cat numbers in their area and feel overwhelmed.

Ashley helps callers figure out a plan, loans them TCH traps and arranges vet visits. Most people do the trapping and transporting themselves. Almost all pay at least part of the cost of spaying or neutering and continue caring for the now-fixed cats.

Thanks to her work, which built on the foundation Dennis created, TCH is making a dent in the population of street cats. About 160 cats have been through the TNR program just since March.

Ashley also does other volunteer work for TCH. She is the team leader for the



Ashley with Chai

Tuesday cleaning and feeding crew, works open hours and provides foster care. She started volunteering in February 2009.

Originally from Columbus, Ashley works as a nurse in the progressive care unit of St. Elizabeth Regional Medical Center. She and her husband, Rick, a dental student, like to travel and be active. They snowboard in winter, wake board in summer and camp when they can. The couple has two cats, Tigg, a red tabby they rescued as a sickly kitten, and K.T., a TCH foster with three legs that became a permanent resident. They also have a border collie mix, named Hailee.

If you'd like to donate food, become a feral colony caregiver, or report a colony to be TNR'd, please call 402-441-9593 and leave a message on our hotline.

Happy Tails Stats

Here are the number of cats adopted in recent months.

April	10
May	22
June	20
July	27
August	31
September	28

Donations in memory & honor of...

In memory of

Ludmilia Pavlik, a kind lady who took care of lost cats, from the families of Jean Walstrom, Don McElhose, & Ron Pavlik

Richard Ray Buss from Sue Buss—animals and the love of them provided them a great deal of solace—coming home to our family made each day a blessing.

Alicia Rea, who loved animals, from her mother, Tammi Rea (Alicia was only 25 years old when she passed away)

Marcella Canuso from Connie Buchmeier

Riley, beloved dog of Holly and John Matzen, from Bea & Jack Flanagan & Amanda & Chris Ray

Maizy, a very special cat, from Betty & Kermit Wolff (Maizy was one of the first cats adopted from The Cat House.)

Maxwell Louise Carman Hanes from Angie Carman

Donated by or in honor of

Richard's Cat Walk donations, in recognition of runners and donators for TCH in the Lincoln Marathon

Paddy, Maura, & Maddy, my three foster kittens, from Cindy Stryker

Oliver, Simon, & Blackie from Lindy & Robert Nolan

Special thanks to

Dr. Shelley Knudsen from All Feline Hospital for donating her time to make onsite vet visits to The Cat House.

BK Pet Necessities for providing wonderful cat furniture for TCH cats and donating a percentage of sales.

Cause For Paws for donating a percentage of sales.

Nature's Variety for donating food for Sloopy, Thunder, Ashes, and ferals in Lincoln.

Thank You!

Helping the Y Street cats

By Faye Stevens

The Cat House volunteers were happy to help some unfortunate cats recently. In late August, Lincoln Animal Control found some 90 animals, about one-third of them cats, in a home on Y Street in central Lincoln. TCH was able to take in 10 of the cats.

All were infested with fleas, ear mites, and intestinal parasites. Some had upper-respiratory infections, as well. Five of the 10 taken in by TCH tested positive for feline leukemia virus (FeLV), a condition that weakens the immune system and can predispose cats to other diseases, including cancer. The other five cats will need to be tested again after the FeLV incubation period has passed. There is no cure for FeLV, but cats can be happy and healthy for quite a few years if they get vet care and are protected from exposure to other illnesses.

Our "Y Street cats" are recovering well and will be altered as their health permits. Some will have needed dental work. If you want to meet some fun and friendly cats that are real survivors, ask to meet the Y Street cats! Thanks to the generosity of our donors, The Cat House is able to help these and other cats find better lives!

Photo Op



Don't forget to shop at Cause for Paws, located at 57th & Old Cheney Road. This "boutique for cheap" turns your donations and purchases into cash for animal charities, including The Cat House.

Calendar of Events

Please join us in participating or celebrating the following events.

Sandhills Cat Club Show

October 8 / 10 am-4 pm / Seward County Fair Grounds, Ag Pavilion

Meow & Chow

October 15 / 6-9 pm / Scottish Rite Temple, Downtown Lincoln

Adopt-a-Senior Cat Month

November

Christmas Garage Sale

November 11 & 12 / Friday 3 pm-8 pm, Saturday 8 am-3 pm / The Cat House, 1935 Q Street

St. Mark's Fall Arts & Crafts Show

November 12 / 9 am-4 pm / St. Mark's Church, 84th & Pioneers

PetSmart Adoption Event

November 12 & 13 / 5200 N 27th

Seward Craft Show

November 19 / 9 am-3:30 pm / Seward County Fair Grounds, Ag Pavilion

Lincoln Women's Expo

January 28 & 29 / 10 am-5 pm / Lancaster Event Center

PetSmart Adoption Event

February 11 & 12 / 5200 N 27th

Kitty Lit

A Snowflake in My Hand by Samantha Mooney

A book review by Jeff Kennedy



In this endearing memoir, the author relates her experiences working as a veterinary assistant in the oncology unit of New York City's Animal Medical Center. The cats are the (deserved) center of attention in the narrative, which can be at times both heartwarming and heartbreaking.

There's bold, beautiful, tiger-striped Clancy, who refuses to be kept in a cage and makes his own rounds in the unit, including lounging on the paperwork of the attending veterinarian's desk. Another is gentle, quiet Oliver Cromwell, who summers in Maine and adopts a seagull. Perhaps the most touching story is that of Fledermaus, a tiny black cat with big ears, who provides the author an emotional release following the loss of her father.

Veterinary medicine, like every other scientific field, is constantly making

advances. This book, published in 1983, may seem to have some antiquated ideas with regard to the care and treatment of cats with feline leukemia and other diseases. But the larger idea, that the best treatment is personal affection, will never change.

Although meandering at times, Ms. Mooney's writing style is engaging and personal. She draws you into her life by introducing you to the cats she cares for so deeply, despite illnesses that would be cause for euthanasia at many shelters. Her method of caring is reminiscent of "Pisa's Buddies"—a group of volunteers who provided an exceptional level of care for a special needs cat at TCH.

The reader of this book will probably not make it through without shedding a tear or two, but the book is by no means depressing. To the contrary, it is a celebration of the love and lessons our feline friends can provide for us, if we let them.

In addition to monetary donations, you can donate items that we use in the day-to-day care of our feline friends. To arrange a drop-off time and location, you can call us at 402-441-9593 or email info@thecathouse.org.

DRY CAT FOOD

- Science Diet, Regular Adult & Kitten
- Science Diet Light – Adult
- Iams Regular & Kitten
- Royal Canin Baby Cat
- Science Diet W/D, R/D, C/D or K/D*
- Purina NF*

CANNED CAT FOOD

- Science Diet or Iams – kitten & adult – turkey, chicken, salmon (ground or minced)
- Fancy Feast – turkey, chicken, salmon (ground or minced)
- Science Diet A/D, W/D, R/D, C/D, or K/D*
- Purina NF*

CLEANERS

- Scent-free liquid laundry detergent (sensitive skin)
- Scent-free dryer sheets (sensitive skin)
- Clorox bleach (regular type)
- Anti-bacterial hand soap
- Dawn dishwashing soap
- Dishwasher detergent
- Clorox disposable wipes
- Hand sanitizer

* sold at vet clinics

CAT LITTER

- Non-clumping, regular clay litter (no clumping, pine, or newsprint type litter)

SUPPLIES

- Brooms
- O'Cedar Light 'N Thirsty cloth mop refills
- Paper towels & bathroom tissue
- Dixie heavyweight disposable bowls, 10 oz
- Large trash bags (heavy duty)
- Kitchen and office size trash bags
- Copier/printer paper

MISCELLANEOUS

- Shallow, stainless steel food/water bowls, 16 oz or larger, with a wide bottom and low sides to accommodate whiskers!
- Meat flavored baby food (chicken, turkey, beef, ham)
- Small chenille or cotton reversible bath rugs (no rubber backs)
- Catnip in bulk
- Rotating teeth combs for cats
- "Slicker" brushes for cats
- "Cable Cuffs" or "Cable Clamps" cable management tool
- Pet carriers, hard plastic with metal doors
- Large litter boxes without covers

Liberty

By Anne Stubbendeck

Lady Liberty is brimming with sass and personality. She definitely knows what she wants, and she's certainly not shy about letting people know just what that is. Liberty's meows ring out like a bell, they are both chirpy and sing-songy. Oh, and if there's an empty box, Liberty will be in it. If there's a ball, Liberty will be batting it around the room. She is a very playful and funny cat.

Liberty was surrendered when the couple who previously owned her were expecting a child. They thought her feisty demeanor and occasional tendency to nip would not be a good fit with a child in the house. When Liberty first arrived at TCH she was not accustomed to being petted and was somewhat resistant to human contact. Through the diligence of volunteers, Liberty has now learned to enjoy this contact.

Liberty is six years old, front declawed and looking for a forever home with someone who can give her lots of attention, appreciate her for who she is and has an understanding of what she's trying to say. Liberty really is an open book, filled with pages and pages of body language. Can you read between the fe-lines?



Patrice for Sisters Photography

Bandit

By Anne Stubbendeck

Bandit is a big, black, beauty. He's got flowing black waves of fur and a big fluffy tail. Bandit does a great job of keeping himself well groomed but



Patrice for Sisters Photography

LOVES being brushed as well. He's very friendly and gets along great with people and other cats. He avoids drama at all costs.

Bandit came to TCH after he was found roaming a neighborhood where a volunteer lived. He was limping on an infected paw and was also discovered to be infected with feline leukemia virus. Bandit was initially terrified of people and wouldn't let anyone near him. It was the attempts to remove the mats from his coat that were able to first break the ice. Bandit has never forgotten this and invites everyone to come visit him at TCH, take a seat and give him a good grooming while he reveals what a truly great cat he is.

Cats with FeLV have a compromised immune system which puts them at risk of developing other illnesses, but with proper care, the disease can be managed and cats can live many healthy years. FeLV is incurable and can be transmitted to other cats through prolonged exposure to saliva and other body fluids. TCH has a special unit for these cats. Bandit has been with TCH since 2006 and would love to find a home of his own where he can really let his hair down.

These cats are looking for forever homes.

The Cat House is celebrating Adopt-a-Senior Cat Month in November when the adoption fee for cats seven years or older is only \$60!



Laci - 11 years



Loretta - 8 years*



Small, FeLV+ - 9 years



Izzy - 7 years*



George - 15 years*



Vicki - 14 years*



Clooney - 15 years*

Visit our shelter at 1935 Q Street on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6-8 pm and Sundays from 1:30-4 pm. You can also visit The Cat House kitties at the PetSmart adoption center located at 5200 N 27th Street.

* Photos by Patrice for Sisters Photography

The importance of microchipping

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these cats come to TCH with the chips already stacked against them. TCH microchips all their cats to give them a leg up and ensure that if ever lost, they will have a better chance of being returned to their owners. It is important, even if it means there will be just one less cat living in a shelter, that you do all you can to ensure your cat will be returned to you. Contact your vet if you would like more information, or to schedule a time to get your cat microchipped.

Pampering your senior cat

- Place water bowls in different locations around the house. Older cats tend to drink less, but with water readily available your cat is less likely to become dehydrated. Drinking more than usual, however, can be a sign of kidney disease or diabetes.
- Many senior cats still possess a kitten's desire to play, so continue daily exercise.
- After your cat's seventh birthday, schedule a checkup that includes blood and urine samples. The results will provide a baseline of your cat's condition and help your vet to customize her care as she ages.
- Senior cats deserve to have litter boxes on each level of your home, especially if they have arthritis, which can make moving up and down stairs difficult. Also be aware that stiffer joints make climbing in and out of a deep box more challenging. Your cat might appreciate boxes with lower sides.
- The sense of smell in cats can fade with age, which in turn can diminish interest in eating. To spark your senior cat's appetite, make his meal more tempting by warming it in the microwave for a few seconds before serving.
- Provide your old friend a cozy bed with plenty of extra padding and place it near a source of warmth.

Happy Tails...

Patience rewarded

By Martha Stoddard

For days, the beautiful calico ran and hid every time Mallory Dimitt stepped into the room. Mallory knew she was eating and drinking only from the evidence she left behind. It wasn't the kind of beginning most people look for with a cat they just brought into their lives. But Mallory wasn't upset. She had expected as much, and she was prepared to be patient.

See, Mallory had done her homework. She knew Maggie, the long-haired calico, and Milo, a handsome long-haired flame-point originally called Devlin, were shy cats. She knew they had spent much of their early years living outside and came to The Cat House in 2009. She knew they were inseparable at TCH and should be adopted together. And she knew they had been adopted once but were returned when the previous owners decided they wanted more outgoing cats.

"After reading Maggie and Milo's story online, I realized that they might be the perfect cats for me and that perhaps I could be the perfect person for them," Mallory said. She always had a soft spot for long-haired cats and for calicos, she said. Living alone, she knew she could offer a quiet home for a shy cat. And she was willing to take a cat that might otherwise get overlooked.

Mallory wasn't discouraged by her initial meetings with the pair. "Milo tolerated me while Maggie wanted very little to do with me, but I decided to give them a chance anyway and I could not have chosen any better cats than these two."

Once at home, Mallory put the cats in a room where they could feel secure and

she supplied them familiar food and their favorite types of toys. She made sure to spend time with them, even if it was just doing homework for her graduate courses. Milo adjusted quickly. Maggie was more cautious. But she slowly became more trusting until, within a few months, Mallory said she was nothing like the cat she originally brought home.

Maggie came out from hiding and allowed Mallory to brush her. She started to play a bit, along with her best buddy, Milo. The two of them watched birds through the patio door in the mornings and kept Mallory company at night. With more time, Maggie started following Mallory around the apartment and talking to her, especially when Mallory wasn't doing what Maggie wanted. Maggie even allowed some of Mallory's friends to pet her, while Milo grew to love the extra attention.

"The best advice I can give anyone when adopting shy kitties is just to give them time and space," Mallory said. "It's important to realize that they may never be one of those incredibly outgoing cats, and that is okay."



Catnip stix, pet beds, and carrier liners!

To purchase, stop by the shelter, or call the hotline at 402-441-9593.

Coloring books!

Filled with wonderful illustrations, tips and puzzles.

Tees and sweatshirts now available!

Please visit the shelter to purchase one of our new tees or sweatshirts, available in many colors!



Vonda's Views

Dear Vonda,

My mom wants to adopt a cat that is 10 years old. Why would anyone want a cat that old? It won't play with me. It will just sit around. It's going to get sick and die soon. Can you help me convince her to get something younger, like a kitten?

Signed,
Kitten-loving kid

Dear Kid:

Well, well, well. I'm not so old I can't enjoy playing with a bit of string but I've been around long enough to know a few things. I know that, with any luck, kittens grow up to be adults and adults go on to become seniors like the fortunate cat your mom wants. The same goes for people, although getting older and growing up can be two different things. But I digress. Any cat that reaches age seven is classified as mature, even though that's barely halfway through our lives, and age 10 can be considered senior. Many cats live into their teens and

a few into their twenties. Even the oldest of us may enjoy some play time and we can be as loving and friendly as we ever were—or as full of attitude, too. When you adopt an older cat, you know what you are getting. No surprises like when that little bundle of fluff grows up.

That means there's plenty of time left for you and your mom to enjoy that 10-year-old cat, especially if you keep up on veterinary care. It could be many years before anything develops. But, it's true, older cats have more health concerns, just like older people. Surely, you're not planning to put your mom on the curb when she develops a few old-age problems. Are you? No need to pass up a perfectly wonderful cat for a few potential health issues, either. Get your cat in for regular checkups, including laboratory work to check for the beginnings of kidney disease, diabetes or hyperthyroidism. Each of those can be managed if you catch them early. Watch for signs of arthritis, dental problems or



Have a question for Vonda?

Email her at info@thecathouse.org
Selected questions will be answered in the next newsletter.

infections, all of which can be treated. An older cat may lose some hearing or sight and even become a little senile, although with our superior natural abilities, you may never know. We also may need a little extra help grooming ourselves and some accommodations like additional litter boxes or ones with lower sides.

I hope this has gotten you straightened out about senior cats. If not, I can come over and teach you respect for your elders.

Sincerely,
Vonda 

The Cat House expands

By Jeff Kennedy

For the first time since moving there in 2006, The Cat House is the sole tenant at 1935 Q Street. That has meant space for an indoor garage sale as well as the expansion of the facility's Special Unit.

"The expansion is great because it provides a better living space for our special needs kitties as well as giving us the security of an extended lease," TCH President Faye Stevens said.

Stevens also said that the move was cost effective because the landlord appreciated being able to rent the whole space to a single tenant. Two other tenants that had occupied portions of the upstairs have moved out allowing TCH to expand. TCH increased its square footage from 7,500 to 14,000.

So far TCH has hosted two successful garage sales with a special Christmas-themed sale planned for November.

"Thank you just doesn't seem like enough for all the volunteers who donated their time and stuff to make this sale a huge success," said TCH board member and



Special Unit coordinator Julie Dahlke.

Dahlke also reported the newly renovated Special Unit is a great improvement for the resident cats, who are considered special needs because of having either Feline Immunodeficiency

Virus or Feline Leukemia Virus. One cat, named Cindy, who was a bit aggressive in the old unit, has calmed down greatly. Yet another named Bandit, who was shy, has started to come out of his shell in the new space, which features, among other things, a slide to play on.

The Special Unit has a large living space, two isolation rooms, and separate dishwashing location and food storage. The unit rooms were designed and built entirely by volunteers, with O Street Carpet offering the flooring at a reduced price.

Having the garage sale location outside the windows of the Special Unit provides one other unforeseen benefit, Dahlke reports. "The cats love attention and having all the activity and people right out their window really perks them up."

The Cat House needs your support so we can continue helping our feline friends. To donate food, toys or supplies, please call 402-441-9593 for an appointment. Contributions can also be made with a credit card through Paypal. Please consider donating, or visit our website to learn how you can help!

The costs to operate the facility continue to grow. One way of reducing costs is to minimize the number of newsletters that are printed and mailed out to our supporters. We are, therefore, asking if we can send future issues of The Cat House Scoop to your email address instead of mailing you a printed copy. Rest assured though, if you don't have access to a computer, we will continue to send the newsletter to you by mail!

If you'd like to receive The Cat House Scoop by email, please send your name, home address, and email address to info@thecathouse.org. Please use "Newsletter" as the subject of the email.

We need your support!



Please select your contribution amount:

- \$25 \$50 \$75 \$100 \$250 \$500
- Other \$ _____

Make checks payable to: The Cat House
 Mail to: PO Box 23145, Lincoln, NE 68542

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