

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

"Cleaning Crew"

Team Leaders

PAGE 2

TOXIC HOUSEHOLD ITEMS

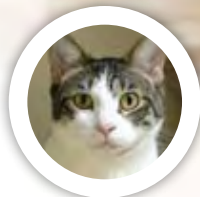
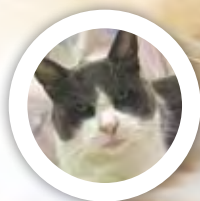
How to help keep your feline friend safe.

PAGE 4

FEATURED CATS

Sugar & Edgar

PAGE 5



THE CAT HOUSE Scoop

Cat pictured: Tigress © Sisters Photography

VOLUME NO. 9 | ISSUE NO. 2 | FALL 2009



ADOPTION FACILITY

1935 Q Street

Lincoln, NE

Tuesdays & Thursdays 6–8 pm

Sundays 1:30–4 pm

PO Box 23145

Lincoln, NE 68542

Hotline: (402) 441-9593

Fax: (866) 817-8819

info@thecathouse.org

www.thecathouse.org

BOARD MEMBERS

Faye Stevens *President*

Stephanie Kielian *Treasurer*

Nicole Narboni *Corresponding Secretary*

Suzie Meierdierks *Recording Secretary*

Lori Dittrich *Director*

Dennis Mathias *Director*

Alma Vlasak *Director*

Jana Wruck *Director*

Dr. Rebecca Arnold, DVM

Consulting Veterinarian

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

Wild cats of Lincoln

By Dennis Mathias

You've surely seen Lincoln's feral cats. They may be a flash of fur disappearing into the bushes or a cautious kitten slipping into the storm sewer as you approach. They can be found in all parts of the city, from the busy downtown streets to quiet park areas. Some estimate there are 75,000 cats roaming in Lincoln alone. So it's not surprising The Cat House gets a lot of requests to help people take care of this ever growing problem!

A feral cat is different than a stray cat. Feral cats do not care for petting although they will readily accept food from you. They live under porches and in storm sewers and come out to hunt at night, keeping Lincoln's rodent population under control.

A stray cat, on the other hand, may have been a pet that was discarded and, if rescued, can be adopted. But if not neutered or spayed, stray cats may have a litter of kittens in the wild and these may become

feral and not adoptable. They continue to breed until we have the problem of overpopulation we have now.

You can identify a feral cat by its manner of running around with its tail tucked between its legs, whereas a stray will have the tail straight up. It's possible, but unusual, that a feral cat can become a loving pet. It takes a lot of love and attention and usually doesn't work out. A feral cat's home is outside!



continued on page 3...

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 441-9593 or email 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
- Website design/creation
- Filing
- Fundraising
- Photography
- Feral/TNR program
- Foster home

Spotlight on... Team Leaders

By Martha Stoddard

Anyone tempted to take home all the cats at The Cat House would have second thoughts if they knew about the huge job of feeding and cleaning for the cats. Our team leaders know. They head up daily crews of volunteers that put out food and water, clean litter boxes, wash dishes, sweep and mop floors, change laundry and do the other not-so-glamorous tasks necessary to keep the cats healthy and happy. Their dedication and love for the cats makes TCH possible.

ERIC BORDEN Two years ago, Eric wanted a cat but lived in the dormitory. So he started volunteering at TCH instead. The Superior native became a

TCH events. He is married with two adult daughters and four cats. He sells coffee for Valley Vending Service.

SARA LANEY Sara has been a volunteer about five years now, long enough to have started at a previous TCH location. "I wouldn't give that up for anything," she said. Sara cleans, feeds and trains volunteers. She is married with an adult son. What she doesn't have are cats of her own—her husband's very allergic. Sara works as the media center secretary at Scott Middle School.

KYLE MARTSCHING & JACKIE BRENDEN

It was after adopting the second cat from TCH that Kyle decided he needed to do more. He started at TCH in March 2007 and has been cleaning and feeding ever since. "I look forward to it every week," he said. Kyle is married and has three cats now, all TCH alumni. He works as a grant coordinator and academic coach at Union College's Teaching Learning Center.

Jackie used to stop by and see the TCH cats at PetSmart every time she bought food for her first cat. One day she saw a sign there seeking volunteers for TCH and jumped at the opportunity. That was in Dec.

2006. She started cleaning and feeding, then became an open hours volunteer as well. Jackie said she likes helping at TCH because it gives her a chance to be around "happy kitties and happy people." She has three cats now and works at the family business, Premier Boating Center.

BETTY WOLFF & BELINDA GILLAM

Betty encountered TCH six years ago, when the group took in 40 cats seized from a Lincoln home. She adopted one of those "South Street" cats and became a volunteer soon after. Along with cleaning and feeding, Betty helps the TCH treasurer, makes followup phone calls to adopters and retrieves phone messages from the hotline. "It's just something I believe in and I love cats," she said. Betty has a husband, an adult son and two former TCH cats. She teaches Braille part-time for the state Department of Education.

continued on the next page...



Back Row / Left to Right: Sara Laney, Jackie Brenden, Kyle Martsching, Doug Bedell, Belinda Gillam, Eric Borden
Front Row / Left to Right: Nicolette Brenton, Betty Wolff, Cassie Martin
Not Pictured: Andrew Brown, Michelle Bohan Brown

team leader when the previous one took another TCH job. "I like doing it and I like giving back to the community," he said. Eric is now out of the dorm and has two cats of his own. He plans to graduate with a master's degree in accounting in May.

CASSIE MARTIN & DOUG BEDELL

Cassie originally came to TCH to adopt cats. That was nearly four years ago. She wound up with two cats and a new volunteer job as a TCH cleaner. Her longevity earned her a spot as co-team leader. "I like helping the cats and I know that the Monday night people wouldn't like it if I quit," she said. Originally from central Illinois, Cassie is working on a doctorate in biology.

Doug and his family started volunteering about 2½ years ago. Along with cleaning and feeding, Doug has helped sell cat beds and catnip sticks and staffed other

Donations in memory & honor

In honor of Gypsy for her finding a forever home from Jill West
In honor of Mattie from Mattie & Carolyne Filbert
In honor of Flame 2 and as a thank you for Dennis from Charlene
In honor of William Paxton from Marta Paxton
In honor of Bellini from Kimberley Wands
In honor of Silas from A Novel Idea from Michael Sayward
In honor of feline friends around the world from Jeanne Holdren, Janet Noddings, Dianne Ferguson, Bobbie Lehl
In honor of William Edward Mericle from Paul & Jackie Provorse, Lori Wright, Phyllis Kraft & family, & Phyllis Prieb
In honor of Tika, Abby and Sammy Jo from Pat Powell

In honor of Marie Rowland, an avid cat lover, from Ed & Jan Seltmann
In honor of Cheri Larson - happy birthday from R J Pasco
In honor of Verna Lautzenheiser from Conference of Consulting Actuaries

In honor of Suzie Meierdierks on her retirement by Flo & Craig Ditzler

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.

Team Leaders, continued...

Belinda told herself she wasn't going to get very involved when she started volunteering with TCH about 1½ years ago. Now she is co-team leader on Thursdays, fills in on other shifts, shows cats during open hours, helps with vet visits and does some of the work with feral cats. "It's my passion," she said. "It's actually my stress reducer." Belinda is married, with an adult son and five cats. She works in the UNL office of sponsored programs, which oversees grants and contracts.

ANDREW BROWN & MICHELLE BOHAN BROWN Andrew and Michelle (yes, they're married) found out about TCH more than a year ago when visiting the TCH cats housed at PetSmart. They adopted a kitten, who joined their dog, rat and fish. They also picked up a volunteer application and have been cleaning and feeding ever since. Andrew is working on his doctorate in nutrition at UNL and has a research appointment there. Michelle is finishing her doctorate in biochemistry from Iowa State University.

NICOLETTE BRENTON Nicolette wanted to volunteer with animals but had been warned a traditional animal shelter might be too depressing. She found TCH about 3½ years ago and figured it would be perfect. Nicolette started as a fill-in cleaner while she was between college and finding a job. She settled on Saturdays after getting a job in the accounting department of Allied Insurance. Nicolette is also one of the TCH cat photographers. "I've just gotten so attached to everyone there," she said. She has one cat of her own.

Wild cats of Lincoln, continued...

Since the 1950s, Lincoln Animal Control working with the Capitol Humane Society, has tried to keep the cat population under control. They have used a method of "euthanasia," which means killing healthy cats for which they can't find a home. In fact, 70% of the cats that enter Capitol Humane Society never make it out alive. This includes ferals and strays. Ferals are killed 99% of the time.

That's why The Cat House started a program of Trap-Neuter-Return, or TNR, in the early 2000s. In 2005, The Cat House undertook a city-sanctioned pilot program. When cats are TNRd, volunteers trap and transport them to a veterinary clinic where they are neutered or spayed, given rabies and distemper vaccinations, and microchipped. The veterinarian also removes the very tip of the left ear so people know the cats have been treated. After they have recovered, the cats are returned to the site where they were trapped. This stabilizes the size of a colony, or group of cats, and puts an end to the cycle of breeding. A caregiver makes sure the cats have food and water and a warm, dry place to go in the winter. Unless there are severe underlying medical reasons, The Cat House never euthanizes a feral cat.

It's easy to see why The Cat House should make a major effort with TNR. Two cats can typically have 12 kittens over a year. Half of these are females who are ready to have their own kittens in 9 months. Now there are seven females that have six kittens. So that's 42 cats and we're

not done with the first year!

In the last few years, The Cat House volunteers have TNRd only about 200 cats, which is not even the tip of the iceberg. What we need is a city plan encouraging TNR by allowing citizens to legally neuter and spay as many cats as they can. Currently, city ordinance limits each household to five cats. Each cat vaccinated for rabies—whether a TNR feral or an indoor pet—counts toward the limit. You have limited options of licensing more. The Cat House and other animal welfare organizations are drafting an ordinance that will change the situation, and we hope to introduce it in the coming year.

It's not the cat's fault that it finds itself in this situation. It's because of people's lack of responsibility to their animals. You can help by immediately grabbing a stray cat or two and getting them the very basic medical procedures they need. If the cat is feral, beg or borrow a trap to get them into the vet. Otherwise you'll be looking at their offspring—soon! You can also help by supporting the proposed ordinance change and by helping educate others about feral cats. For more about ferals, go to www.alleycat.org.



Calendar of Events

Please join us in participating or celebrating the following events.

National Feral Cat Day
October 16
www.alleycat.org
for more information

National Adopt-a-Senior-Cat Month
November
Adopt your new senior (7+ yrs) furry friend for a special rate of \$60.

Seward Craft Show
November 21, 9 am-4 pm
Seward County Fairgrounds
North 14th Street, Seward, NE

National Animal Shelter Appreciation Week
November 1-7
Spay Day USA
February 23
www.spaydayusa.org
for more information

Santa Photos @ Petco & PetSmart
December
Check our website for dates and times.



Catnip stix, pet beds, and carrier liners for sale!

To purchase, stop by the shelter, or visit www.thecathouse.org/store.

Curiosity really can kill the cat

By Denise Anderson

Having cats in your household is always a joy. They are playful, enjoy your company and are curious by nature. Watching one explore and find hidden objects can be very entertaining for all. Sometimes their curiosity can get them into trouble. We as owners need to be aware of what is safe or harmful to our feline friends.

Plants, household chemicals and even human food are a few items that can cause your cats to become sick or die if ingested.

Following you will find different web sites that can help you to keep your cats safe and healthy.

ASPCA has a website that lists toxic and non-toxic plants inside or outside the home. The pictures of what the plant looks like are very helpful if you are unsure of the name. www.aspc.org/pet-care/poison-control/plants/plant-list-cats.html

The website **Cat Health** lists household items that felines should avoid. Always remember to store, handle and dispose of

these items in the proper manner. www.cathealth.com/Tox

The website **Cat World** has an extensive list of human food that should not be fed to cats. We all know they can be great beggars, but no matter what they say, it is not a good idea. www.cat-world.com.au/ToxicFoodsToCats.htm

Signs of cat poisoning to watch for are vomiting, acting lethargic or agitated, diarrhea, rapid breathing rate, blood in vomit or stool, weakness or unsteadiness, staggering, excessive salivation, swelling of tongue, and tremors or seizures. If you see any of the previously listed symptoms, immediately take your cat to the vet. Also, be sure and take along a sample or the packaging from the item that you believe the cat ingested. www.aspc.org/pet-care/poison-control/what-to-do-if-your-pet-is-poisoned.html

By keeping your cats away from harmful items, it will make your life a lot easier and your time together a long one.

Coming Soon!

- The Cat House coloring book, filled with wonderful illustrations, tips and puzzles.
- The 2010 calendar featuring the winners from our photo contest.



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 441-9593 or email info@thecathouse.org.

DRY CAT FOOD

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

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, or C/D*
- Purina NF*

CLEANERS

- Tide Free liquid laundry detergent (sensitive skin)
- Scent-free dryer sheets (sensitive skin)
- Clorox bleach (regular type)
- Anti-bacterial hand soap
- Dawn dishwashing soap
- Dishwasher soap
- 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

- Stainless steel non-tip food/water bowls, 8 oz
- 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

Edgar

By Martha Stoddard

Edgar never belonged out there with those tough street cats. He was too friendly, too much of a pussy cat. That much was clear when he showed up at a feeding station provided for some of Lincoln's feral cats. He wasn't as wary as the rest of the cats there, and he had obviously been through a few scrapes.

The person looking after the feeding site managed to catch Edgar and take him to the vet. There, tests showed he had been infected with feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV), a disease spread cat-to-cat by deep bite wounds. That was his ticket into The Cat House, where he joined the cats in the shelter's special unit.

In the eight months since, Edgar has become a volunteer favorite. At three years old, this gray-and-white cat loves chasing shoestrings, attacking brooms, hanging from cat trees and playing like a kitten. He also loves attention and has become good friends with some of his roommates.

FIV attacks and weakens the immune system, making a cat susceptible to infections and diseases that don't usually affect healthy cats. There is no cure, but FIV is a slowly developing disease. Edgar could live for many years, even up to a normal lifespan, without any signs of the illness. He would be happy to spend those years in a forever home. Stop by our shelter to meet him.

Sugar

By Martha Stoddard

Life hasn't been very sweet for Sugar. When she was just a youngster, she was left at a farmstead to fend for herself. The farm family took her in and things seemed fine for a while. But suddenly, after four or five years, the other cats in the household turned on her. Sugar found herself getting beaten up by her former housemates.

For a while, she lived in a room by herself. Then she moved to another home, where she was relegated to the basement. Finally, the family turned her over to The Cat House in hopes she could find a better home. She's still waiting.

You see, Sugar isn't a pushy cat. She's happy for attention and likes being petted. Yet, when visitors stop in, she hangs back and lets other cats grab the spotlight. Sugar has gotten over being nervous around other cats—as long as they are not aggressive—but she would be happy being an only cat. Stop by our shelter at 1935 Q Street to meet this pretty white cat with the gray accents.



Sugar



Edgar

Happy Tails Stats

Here are the number of cats adopted in recent months.

April	19
May	27
June	24
July	31
August	16
September	39

These cats are looking for forever homes.



Milo – 12 years



Goliath – 12 years



Love – 11 years



Ringo – 11 years

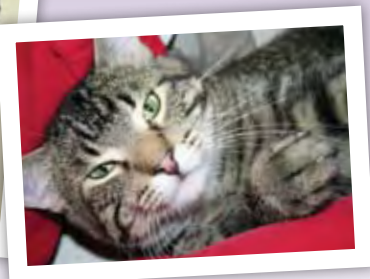
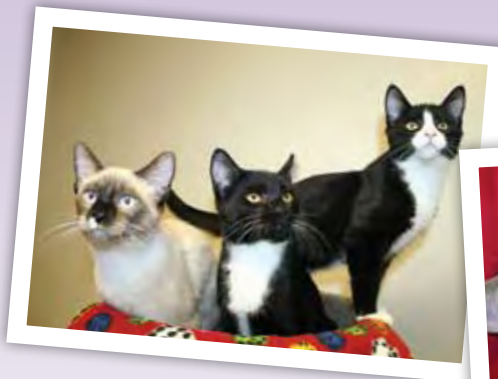
Visit our shelter at 1935 Q Street on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6–8 pm and Sundays from 1:30–4 pm. You can also visit The Cat House kitties at the PetSmart adoption centers located at 5200 N 27th Street and 2801 Pine Lake Road.

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:

- ☐ \$10 ☐ \$20 ☐ \$25 ☐ \$30 ☐ \$40 ☐ \$50
☐ Other \$ _____

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

THE CAT HOUSE | THE NO-KILL ALTERNATIVE



NON-PROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
PERMIT NO. 800

THE CAT HOUSE
THE NO-KILL ALTERNATIVE
PO Box 23145
Lincoln, NE 68542

