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# THE CAT HOUSE Scoop

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## ADOPTION FACILITY

3633 "O" Street  
Lincoln, NE  
Tuesdays & Thursdays 6-8 pm  
Sundays 1:30-4 pm

PO Box 23145  
Lincoln, NE 68542  
Hotline: 402-441-9593  
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The Cat House is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, all-volunteer organization funded entirely by donations and adoption fees.

## COVID-19 and your cat

By Martha Stoddard

News at the beginning of April that a tiger at the Bronx Zoo tested positive for COVID-19 caught the attention of cat lovers across the country. The case raised questions and fears about how the novel coronavirus might affect our "house tigers."

According to reports, the tiger was tested after several lions and tigers at the zoo showed symptoms of respiratory illness. All had been under the care of a zoo employee who was diagnosed with coronavirus. The animals were expected to recover.

The zoo case followed news that two domestic cats--one in Belgium and one in Hong Kong--also tested positive for the virus. The Belgian cat showed signs of respiratory illness, nausea, and diarrhea but recovered. The Hong Kong cat had no signs of disease. Both lived with people who had been infected with COVID-19. As with the tiger, it appears the cats got the virus from humans. However, the American Veterinary Medical Association noted that the Belgian cat was not checked to see if a more common disease caused its symptoms.

That handful of animals are the only known cases of cats testing positive for a virus that has infected more than 1.5 million humans and counting around the world. Experts say there is

little reason to worry. Given the millions of cats in the U.S., there would be lots of unexplained illnesses popping up if household cats could easily catch the virus.

The veterinary association said there have been no reports of pets or livestock in the United States becoming ill with COVID-19 and no evidence that domestic animals can spread the virus to humans. However, scientists are still researching possible links. Humans and cats have some of the same cell receptors--the places on a cell surface where the coronavirus attaches--and cats are vulnerable to a feline coronavirus.

In the meantime, the veterinary group advises people infected with the coronavirus to restrict contact with their pets "out of an abundance of caution." They recommend having someone else care for your cat if you can. If not, wear a facemask, don't share food, don't hug or kiss them, and wash your hands before and after any contact with them.

give  
To Lincoln Day

THURSDAY  
MAY 28<sup>TH</sup>  
2020

# 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.

Our volunteer needs change frequently. We encourage you to check our website at [thecathouse.org](http://thecathouse.org) for updates.

You can fill out a volunteer application online at [thecathouse.org](http://thecathouse.org), come in during open hours to fill out an application, or e-mail questions to [volunteer@thecathouse.org](mailto:volunteer@thecathouse.org). You're in for a rewarding experience!

## Opportunities to help include:

- Open hours
- Daily care, feeding, room cleaning, and socializing of cats
- Facility maintenance
- Newsletter articles, photography, and production
- Assisting with communication to volunteers and/or the public
- Adoption counselor
- Post-adoption follow-up calls
- Filing
- Grant writing
- Fundraising
- Data entry
- Retail events
- Feral/TNR program
- Foster care

# Happy Tails Stats

Here are the number of cats adopted in recent months.

October	39
November	24
December	36
January	53
February	28
March	46

# Volunteer Spotlight: Laura Wong

By Jeff Kennedy

In fall 2009, college student Laura Wong became a volunteer at The Cat House after one of her classmates told her about the shelter. Laura was living on campus and missed her own cat at home. "I started out so I could get a weekly cat fix," Laura recalled. Little did she know that her future with TCH was going to grow into much more than a weekly visit.

"I currently wear a number of cat hats," Laura quipped when asked about her roles at TCH. She wasn't kidding. Laura has many responsibilities, and quite diverse ones, within the organization. She sits on the Board of Directors and acts as the shelter's Strategic Planner. Her roles as the Adoption Coordinator and Open Hours worker help fulfill one of TCH's central goals of adopting cats into caring homes. She organizes (and bakes for) bake sales, which raise funds. And last, but not least, she is still on the weekly cleaning and cat socializing crew where she has been getting a cat fix for 10½ years.

After moving off campus, Laura was ready to have cats of her own. The cats who live with her came from (surprise) The Cat House. TCH alumna Stromboli (formerly known as Bounder) was a tiny brown and white tabby who had been found in the undercarriage of a camper carrier. The kitten and her siblings' rescue story was even featured in an "Omaha World-Herald" news article. Within days of returning from a study abroad program, Laura adopted the little girl and now that kitten is a smart and sassy 10-year-old who loves people and will find her way onto anyone's lap. About a year after adopting Stromboli, Laura was



cleaning at the shelter and a loveable little red cat named Red Skelton jumped into her arms. She spent some time getting to know Red (now Wonton) while he lived at the shelter. After a few months, she knew it was meant to be and Wonton, now a handsome, goofy cat with a loud purr, came to live with her as well.

Laura loves to travel and spend time with her family and friends. She currently works as a quality assurance supervisor for a loan servicer. In her spare time, Laura loves to cook and bake and discover new restaurants.

"Volunteering here provided the opportunity to learn more about the community, non-profit world, and cats, of course," Laura said. "I've made so many friends with people and cats over the years! I'm proud to say I have family at The Cat House. It takes a lot to keep this place running, and I don't know where I'd be without it."

## Catnip sticks, pet beds, and carrier liners!

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





# These cats are looking for forever homes.

Visit our shelter on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6 to 8 pm and Sundays from 1:30 to 4 pm.



## Spotlight: Daisy

By Martha Stoddard

Daisy was already getting on in years when she landed at The Cat House. Her person moved to a place that didn't allow cats. Daisy was left behind with the owner's parents, who weren't really interested in having a cat. So, this stately black cat wound up coming in to the shelter to wait for a new person. That was more than three years ago.

Daisy has spent that time establishing the rules. No, she's not all that fond of other cats and really deserves a single room. Yes, she likes to be petted and brushed, but there can be a limit. No, she doesn't care to miss a meal. Yes, she likes to rearrange her room. Sometimes the bed is better on the bench. Sometimes it is more comfortable upside



down on the floor. And yes, she loves to lounge in her window when the afternoon sun hits just so.

After all, a 13-year-old cat is entitled to a certain deference, especially when the old body isn't quite what it once was. Daisy has some problems that come with aging but all are manageable. What she doesn't have is a home and people with whom to live out her years in peace and comfort.



# Calendar of Events

## Give to Lincoln Day

**May 28** / Midnight to 11:59 pm  
Give all month long online at [thecathouse.org/give](http://thecathouse.org/give)

## Haymarket Farmers Market

**June 27 through August 1**  
Saturdays / 8 am to Noon  
The Haymarket Farmers Market is subject to change. It is held in downtown Lincoln. TCH volunteers will sell cat beds, catnip sticks, and other items.

## Mother of All Garage Sales (MOAGS)

**October 16** / 5 pm to 9 pm  
**October 17** / 8 am to 3 pm  
Lancaster Event Center  
4100 N. 84th St.

## Fall Blessings Arts & Crafts Fair

**October 10** / 9 am to 4 pm  
Lancaster Event Center  
4100 N. 84th St.

## St. Mark's Fall Arts & Crafts Show

**November 14** / 9 am to 4 pm  
St Mark's Methodist Church  
84th & Pioneers

## Holiday Spectacular Arts & Crafts Show

**November 21** / 9 am to 4 pm  
Lancaster Event Center  
4100 N. 84th St.

## Seward Junior Women's 40th Annual Holiday Craft Show

**November 21** / 9 am to 3:30 pm  
Seward County Fairgrounds

# Give to Lincoln Day: Thursday, May 28

By Alma Vlasak

The 9th Annual Lincoln Community Foundation's Give to Lincoln Day (G2LD) is scheduled for Thursday, May 28.

Begun in 2012 this effort to raise money for nonprofits in and around Lincoln is now more important than ever. This year other fundraising methods have been severely limited because of COVID-19. As a result, what you donate is even more important.

As in years past, nonprofits will share match funds based on the amount of money each organization raises during G2LD. This year the match shared will be \$500,000.



The paradox we are encountering this year at The Cat House (TCH) is the increase in the number of adoptions! This results in more new cats coming into the shelter, which has increased the amount in medical costs to care for these cats. Expenditures by TCH include physical examinations, spay/neuter, vaccinations, tests, medication, microchipping, and various veterinary procedures needed by these cats. Additional ongoing expenditures include those encountered in the operation of our Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program.

Check for the link at [thecathouse.org](http://thecathouse.org) or [givetolincoln.com](http://givetolincoln.com). Gifts can be made online beginning May 1 through May 28 to qualify for Give to Lincoln Day totals and match funds.

Your generosity and caring will let us continue our work in Lincoln and the surrounding area in 2020. Thank you for caring!

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](mailto:info@thecathouse.org).

### DRY CAT FOOD

- Any dry cat food
- Science Diet Optimal
- Science Diet M/D, C/D Stress\*
- Royal Canin Baby Cat
- Calm or Royal Canin Rabbit\*

### CANNED CAT FOOD OR PACKETS

- Science Diet or Iams – kitten & adult – turkey, chicken, salmon (ground or minced)
- Fancy Feast – turkey, chicken, salmon (Classic); Grilled Delights with Cheddar; or Broths sold in pouches
- Fancy Feast Kitten
- Hartz Delectables – sold in packets
- Science Diet Light
- Science Diet A/D, M/D, C/D Stress, or Z/D\*
- Royal Canin Rabbit\*
- Royal Canin Baby Cat Loaf

### SUPPLIES

- Brooms
- O'Cedar Light 'N Thirsty cloth mop refills
- Paper towels and bathroom tissue
- Kitchen and office size trash bags
- Copier/printer paper

### CAT LITTER

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

### 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
- Swiffers
- Hand sanitizer

### MISCELLANEOUS

- Meat flavored baby food (*chicken or turkey*)
- Small chenille or cotton reversible bath rugs (*no rubber backs*)
- Large litter boxes without covers
- Aluminum trays (*no smaller than 8" x 13"*)
- Lint rollers
- FortiFlora® Feline Nutritional Supplement
- Gift certificates to [entirelypets.com](http://entirelypets.com)
- Gift cards to Tractor Supply, Walmart, Target, Petco, or PetSmart

\* sold at vet clinics

# Donations in memory & honor of...

## In memory of

Shirley Moog from Don Moog

Julian Zwiener from Joni Piccolo

Max from Todd Moran

Geanine Bordogna from Geanine Bordogna Charitable Trust

Tillie, Wilber, Gladys, and Jack from Brad Thiel

Darlene Adams from Williamette Gallagher, Marlinda Mead, Judy Martin, Gregory and Theresa Guyer, Sally Schultz, and Tamela Ferguson

Darlene Adams and Snowball from Joline Adams

Carol Brown from Amy Brown, Kim Mayhew, Lorna Ellinger, and Pamela Vajgrt

Linda Hagewood from Sean Hagewood

Elaine from Bill Bonacker and Sherry Cox

Rachel and Eric Garten from Nancy Swetland

Timothy Konold from Maria Soto-Henry

Jim and Muffy Mertlik from Sandra Mertlik

Roger Barber from Roberta Barber, Jerry Loos, Suzanne Johnson, Linda Wunderlich, Diane Goers, JoAnn Mach Kreitman, Kelly Gillespie, Elaine Sittner, Steven Knobel, Yvonne Nunn, and Gordon Bair

Clyde and Mary Parton from the Clyde A. and Mary F. Parton Foundation

Lillian Porter from Anna Silliman

Sophie and Zolie from Anita Friehe and Tom and Jill Nickerson

Benson, Fluffy II, and Chloe from Shalla Young

Max T. Cat from David Johns

Jackie Skalak from John Skalak, Sheila Sommermeyer, Connie Didier, and Gayle Petersen

Douglas Amedeo from Patricia Amedeo

Douglas Moser from Emilie Needham, C.A. Vanberg, Kenneth Nicholson, Pamela Savery, Jean Morrison, Linda Knox, Lisa Good, Royce Kreitman, Dolores Schaffer, William Wheeler, Carol Wolf, Mariella Wightman, Moira Isaacson, Karen Loibl, Billie Jo Mertz, Kevin Miller, Sheila Krivohlavek, and James and Mary Lynn Schaffer

Bootsie, Mousie, and Briand from Diana Conrardt-Mullen

Angela Robinson from Catherine Cecava

Silky from Don Wendling

Nikko Flowers from Paula Lampe and Debra Pearson

Pamela Gray from Vonnie Samus

Sophie Cable from Frances Cable

Iris from Levi Mefford and Summer Preuit

Helen Kassing from Kelley Jones

Punkin from Suzon Ahern and Denise Wiemer

Carolyn Wren from Vern Fairchild, Carol Hillis, Betty Birdwell, and Donna Stinnett

Wes Springer from Janet O'Neal

## In honor of

Brownie from Peg Halverson

Emily from Carolyn Harp

Kaitlyn Waller, Junior, and Kitty from Kathy Waller

Dewey Roy from Emily Tyler

Sophie from Jo Ann Pappas

Lori Doty from Kristin Doty

Sylvana Airan from Megan Schaefer

Robb Crouch's birthday from Karl Skinner

Pat Kessler from Colby Lamb

Noelle Pinneo's birthday from Hanna Pinneo

Paul DeVore from Catherine DeVore

Lea, Lovie, Lily, and Winnie from Lisa McNeel

Mimi from Cecilia Ruley

Pat Kitchen from Dottie Kitchen

Martini from John and Brenda Roby

Dianna Logan from J.K. Miller

Buddy and Lovey (aka Flicka) from Katherine Kerner

Howard and Marion Stillenger from Dylan Rief

Macy and Diamond from Candace Griswold

Minnie from Jill Heese

Cocodrilli Family from Joan Krick and Gini Knorr

David Anderson from Marge Anderson

Snickers from Lois Anderson

Tracy and Joker Ray from Michelle Rohman

All kitties looking for forever homes from Kerri and Rick Egner, Brian and Colby Kitty Shryock, and Steven Shipma

## Special thanks to

Dr. Kelly Jordan

Cause For Paws

Dr. Shelley Knudsen

Nature's Variety

All Feline Hospital

Petco

Wachal Pet Health Center

PetSmart

Vondra Veterinary Clinic

Walmart

Pitts Veterinary Hospital

# Thank You!

## Looking at future fundraising

By Alma Vlasak

Fundraising has taken a major hit as COVID-19 has us working for the greater good by staying home as we strive to keep ourselves and those around us healthy.

TCH had decided to change our spring fundraiser, Catsino Night, well before COVID-19 began spreading throughout the United States. We were thinking "Feline Fiesta," which would feature Bingo, which we all enjoy, as well as food and our ever-

popular raffle. We are so excited about the theme this year we may feature it this fall depending on whether it is reasonable to hold a fundraiser of this type or whether we are still social distancing.

Other fundraising changes include the decision to separate fundraising efforts from Lincoln Animal Ambassadors. After 10 years Meow and Chow had run its course as a joint fundraiser, and we wanted

to develop more of our own events.

Events for our supporters not only raise much needed money for the cats but also let us entertain and host those who make TCH possible with something "fun" for everyone.

Please watch for upcoming events on TCH's social media pages, which include those on thecathouse.org and Facebook.



# Tessie finds the home she knew she deserved

By Martha Stoddard

Nancy Bidrowski promised her rescue dog, a Pyrenees/St. Bernard mix, that she would get him a cat friend if he aced his obedience training. He did, and Nancy headed to TCH to find a new housemate. She loved many of the cats but finally settled on Tessie, a fluffy brown tabby with plenty of attitude.

Tessie was born in a TCH foster home and first adopted as a kitten. She came back to TCH when her person returned to her home country. Now a sassy 6-year-old, Tessie soon made it clear she wasn't going to put up with those other cats at TCH. It took a few months, but eventually Tessie got the single room she wanted. She waited there for most of a year to find the right person. Most walked on by in search of younger, cuddlier cats.

Not Nancy, though. She chose Tessie because she knew older cats had a harder

time getting adopted. Nancy tried to keep as many things consistent for Tessie at her new home, including the same food and same purr pad she enjoyed at TCH. Still, it took Tessie a while to decide the new setup was acceptable.

"She was fairly standoffish at first," Nancy said. Then one day, when Nancy was dishing out the food, Tessie asked to be petted. That



was a couple months after she had come home. A couple more months passed before Tessie actually purred while being petted. The moment was even more special because it happened on the same night that Bonnie, a good friend of Nancy's and a former TCH volunteer, entered hospice.

More than a year later, Tessie now has established the routine. She tells Nancy when it is time to get up, comb her, and fork over the wet food. She lets Nancy know when it is time for her evening treats, her back end scratches, and her brushing. She keeps an eye on the dog and makes sure he doesn't get out of line.

"She was so ready for a good home, and I was ready to give her what she wanted," Nancy said. "She rules the roost."

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## Sundance and Erle Stanley team up to explain about bonded cats

Dear Advice Cat:

*I was told recently that a pair of cats were bonded and had to be adopted together. What does that mean? I thought cats were solitary animals, like that old story, "The Cat that Walked by Himself."*

Signed, Singleton

Dear Singleton:

What a strange idea. Good thing you came to me. You humans sure have a lot of misconceptions about cats, and I'm making it my mission to set you straight. Let me introduce myself. I am Sundance, and I have had a lot of time to observe humans here at The Cat House. Sally has moved to a home, so I agreed to take on her column. My best friend, Erle Stanley, is going to help with the column, too. Aren't you, Erle?

Erle: Yep.

First things first. Cats in nature hunt alone, but they often live in groups, what humans call colonies. Or they may live alone. Cats do what cats want, after all. Some cats, though, are like soul mates

or maybe best friends. They have a close attachment to each other; what the humans call a bond. We know about that, don't we, Erle?

Erle: Yep.

Anyway, when two cats are bonded, they get stressed, anxious, or depressed if they are separated. Splitting them up would be cruel. That's why those people told you the bonded cats had to be adopted together. Usually, bonded pairs are siblings or maybe a mother and child. Take our former neighbors, Ninja and Sox. They were brothers and had spent their whole lives together. Then there are some cats that meet and just hit it off. They become best friends, like you and me, Erle. Right?

Erle: Yep

Even humans can tell when two cats are bonded because they hang out together a lot. They play together, they sleep together, and they groom each other. They also like to rub their faces and bodies on each other, mingling their scents or, as some humans say, sharing their pheromones. Whatever. I remember when Erle moved in and he liked

it when I started cuddling up next to him. We hit it off pretty good, didn't we, Erle?

Erle: Yep.

So, the lesson for you, human, is that bonded cats should be adopted together. You will have cats that you know get along. Caring for two isn't that much more work than caring for one. They can keep each other company when you are gone or busy. They will be happier and so will you. Isn't that so, Erle?

Erle: Yep

Two are better than one. Gotta go take a nap.

Erle Stanley and Sundance



# Counter-jumpers, door-dashers, and more: Cat training for beginners

By Allison Hunter-Frederick

Most cat owners have had a cat that misbehaved—a cat that dashed outside when it shouldn't, jumped on counters, was too aggressive with your other pets, or did other naughty things. Wouldn't it be nice if we could train our cats not to do bad things?

Good news: we can! Cats are smart creatures that just need us to show them what we expect. With a little time and effort, we can have a cat that does what we want.

To start training a cat, you'll first want to identify the natural need that your cat's naughty behavior satisfies. Then you'll work on changing the environment. After that, you'll take steps to discourage the bad behavior. Finally, you'll figure out a way to satisfy your cat's needs with a new behavior that you reinforce.

To explain how all this works, I'll use the example of teaching a cat not to jump onto counters. The first step is to figure out why your cat is jumping onto the counter. There are four main reasons: to scavenge for food, to check out surroundings from up high, to feel safe, or to get attention when we pick our cat up or yell at our cat for being naughty.

The second step is to change the environment. If your cat is a foodie, you should eliminate any traces of food. Do this by washing and putting away dishes and cleaning counters as soon as possible after food preparation.

If your cat is an explorer or a safety-

seeker, you need to provide an alternative high spot. Do this by placing a tall stool, window perch, or a cat tree near the counter, and then use positive reinforcement to encourage your cat to use this new spot.

Here's how positive reinforcement works in this situation. The first time your cat jumps on the counter, remove her and place her on the floor. Then tap on the stool, perch, or tree with a treat or toy, whichever your cat favors. When your cat jumps on the stool, reinforce her with the treat or a few seconds of playtime. If your cat doesn't respond to your tapping, hold the treat or toy in front of her and lure her to the new spot. And, if that doesn't work, reward your cat for smaller steps towards success—for moving towards the new spot, for being near the new spot, for touching the new spot, etc.

If your cat is an attention-seeker, you'll use a slightly different approach. Foremost, you must stop giving your cat attention when he's on the counter. Yes, as tough as this will be, you'll need to ignore his counter-surfing. This solution alone won't be enough. You'll also need to "capture" the behavior you do want. Basically, whenever your cat jumps off the counter, you should reinforce her for being on the floor.

Unfortunately, these measures alone are unlikely to be enough, as by now your cat views the counter as a source of food. The third step is to make the counter

unattractive to your cat. There are several accepted ways for doing this—cover the countertops with aluminum foil, bubble wrap, or placemats with double-sided tape on top.

The final step is to find another way to satisfy your cat's natural needs. For example, if your cat counter surfs in search of food, discourage him from counter-surfing during your mealtime by feeding him at the same time.

Depending on what behavior you're trying to teach your cat, here are some tips to keep in mind. First, keep training sessions short. Often several short training sessions will work better than fewer long training sessions. Second, be consistent. If you're trying to teach your cat to pee inside the litter box, you should "capture" her desired behavior every time you see her go.

Third, generalize as much as possible. If you want your cat to claw a scratching post and not your furniture, teach your cat to use scratching posts in different locations and have everyone in your family involved.

Fourth, never punish. It might produce short-term results, but over the long run the behavior is unlikely to change. You'll also risk damaging your relationship with your cat. Finally, try to make training fun. The more fun it is, the more the two of you will look forward to it and the better your bond will be.

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## Why do cats flip for catnip?

By Ann Adams

It's the oldest trick in the book, right? Give your cat a toy stuffed with catnip and watch it go crazy. It can be very amusing for us to watch, but have you ever wondered what it is about catnip that causes cats to freak out?

Catnip is a fragrant plant in the mint family. The potent part of the plant is an oil called "nepetalactone" that can be found in the leaves, stems, and buds. Cats are drawn to the smell, and after just a few sniffs, the oil

binds to receptors in their nose. This results in a variety of feline responses ranging from euphoria to drooling to friskiness. Catnip is safe to use with your cat, and the effects don't last too long. Cats usually become numb to the effects a few minutes after being exposed and will need a 2-hour break before they fall under its spell again.

Not all cats react to catnip, and kittens don't typically react until they reach 3

to 6 months of age. Cats can lose their susceptibility to catnip when they reach their senior years. Even large cats like lions and tigers can experience the effects of catnip.

The Cat House makes and stuffs our own catnip sticks in a variety of sizes. Stop in and pick one up the next time you want to make your cat a little crazy.



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

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 PHILOSOPHY IS THAT EVERY CAT  
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 Other \$ \_\_\_\_\_  
 \$25  \$50  \$75  \$100  \$250  \$500



**We need your support!**

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.