



The Cat House Chronicles

Volume #8 Issue #1

A Publication of The Cat House

April 2008

In This Issue

Klaus Finds His Calling	1
Cat Calendar Contest	2
Happy Tails	2
Featured Cat	2
Spotlight On....	3
Celebrate Seniors	4
Important Victory for Animals	4
Upcoming Events	5
Cats Effective Medicine	6
In Memory Of	6
Special Thanks	7
Wish List	7

Klaus Finds His Calling

Written by: Martha Stoddard

Klaus is one special cat – and he’s got the papers to prove it. As far as anyone knows, he is the first and only alumnus of The Cat House to be certified as a therapy cat. His job is helping Bethany Szydlowski stay calm and confident when her husband, Mick, has to travel for work.

See, Bethany struggles with anxiety. Before Klaus came to live with the Szydlowskis, she coped with Mick’s absences by going to stay with her parents. Now, because of a cat with a scrunched up ear, who once lived on the street and was so sick he nearly died, Bethany has the freedom to stay in her own home and Mick can do his job without worry. “It’s amazing and it’s helped so much,” Bethany said. “I can talk to him and tell him when I feel overwhelmed.”



Their conversations typically begin when she gets home from work. “Hello, Klaus,” Bethany says. Purr, meow, Klaus replies. “How was your day?” Purr, meow. And it continues from there. Klaus knows when Mick is gone and sticks close by Bethany at those times. When Mick is home, Klaus is more likely to take off for a nap by himself. The qualities that earned Klaus his certification weren’t immediately apparent when he was found living with a group of feral cats near a northeast Lincoln business. Klaus wasn’t feral, he was friendly to people. But he was thin and sickly, with such severe diarrhea that the veterinarian worried he would not make it. He did, though, and The Cat House took him in.

There he continued to recover and his personality blossomed. Then known as Neffer, he was a favorite among the volunteers. He showed his clever side also. The Cat House even had to develop a special “Neffers lock” after he figured out how to get his room door open so he could wander blissfully around the halls.



When Mick and Bethany came to The Cat House looking for a cat, they instantly fell in love with Klaus’ outgoing personality. They brought him home Dec. 10, 2006, and have been discovering his special qualities ever since. First, they found that Klaus absolutely loves people. No matter how many people come to visit, he’s right there in the middle of the group. With regular guests, he has special routines. This toy for Bethany’s mother. The foam ball for a game of soccer with another friend.

He also knows and obeys commands: Jump up, get down, come here, let’s go for a walk. At that last command, he runs over to the door where his harness is kept. Put it on and he’s ready to go for a walk to the mailbox or a trip to Petco to ride in the cart, see the birds and shop for food. He even went for a ride once back and forth across the kitchen on Mick’s skateboard. It was last July that Mick and Bethany got the idea of having Klaus certified. They thought it might help them in looking for housing. Bethany’s doctor encouraged them and arranged to get it done. Klaus, naturally, aced the certification tests. A special cat, indeed.

Calendar Cat Contest

Written by: Beth Boal

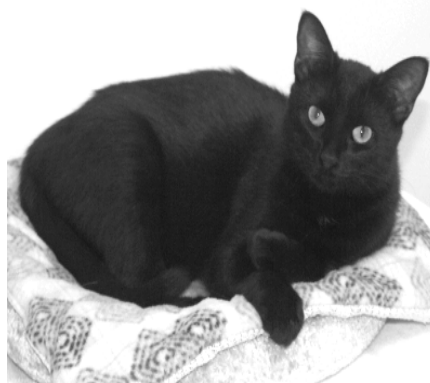
Does your beloved shelter cat deserve to be in the limelight? Do you care for a particularly photogenic feral? Make your kitty a star by entering them in The Cat House's first **Calendar Cat Contest**. Twelve winners will be chosen from all entrants to display the beauty and antics of shelter cats. Any cat from any shelter is eligible, as are photos of stray, feral neighborhood cats you alter and care for.

Photos can be taken with traditional or digital cameras. If using a digital camera, use the highest photo resolution your camera will handle as we will need to print these photos fairly large. If you have questions, you can email contest@thecathouse.org. Also, more information on the contest, rules, deadlines and file formats can be found at: <http://www.thecathouse.org/calendar2009.php>.

Hurry, the May deadline is approaching and we'd love to see lots of TCH alumni enter the contest! Winners will each get a copy of the 2009 calendar and other great gifts. So don't delay, charge up that camera, and be ready when your feline femme fatale says, "I'm ready for my close up, Mr. DeMille!"

Featured Cat....Luna!

Written by: Martha Stoddard



Luna is a friendly, laid back cat with lots of patience. That's fortunate. She has needed that patience plenty of times while she's been with The Cat House. She needs it every time one of her roommates finds an adopter and leaves for a new home. She needs it when new roommates take the previous cat's place. For two years, this sleek black beauty has seen other cats come and go. But Luna's still waiting for the moon and stars to align for her. If you are interested in meeting Luna, stop by 1935 Q St. during open hours or call (402) 441-9593. Open hours are 6-8 p.m. Tuesdays and Thursdays and 1:30-4 p.m. Sundays.



TCH Board

President:
Faye Stevens

Treasurer:
Stephanie Kielian

Corresponding Secretary:
Nicole Narboni

Recording Secretary:
Suzie Meierdierks

Directors:
Beth Boal
Dennis Mathias
Alma Vlasak

Consulting Veterinarian:
Dr. Rebecca Arnold, DVM

You can also help TCH raise funds by shopping at our Café Press store for shirts, coffee mugs, mousepads, license plate frames, and much more!



www.cafepress.com/thecathouse

Happy Tails

Here are the number of cats adopted in the recent months.

November	21
December	20
January	21
February	14
March	17

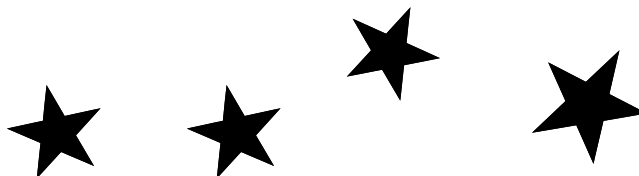
Visit TCH Store

In October of 2006 TCH began construction in its online store. It's now complete and ready for shoppers. Simply point your browsers to <http://www.thecathouse.org/store/> to discover our pet beds and other kitty related merchandise.



Spotlight on..... Susan Merrill

Written by: Martha Stoddard



One story tells you everything about Susan Merrill's passion for helping the cats at The Cat House. It was late on Christmas Eve. Susan was in the hospital recovering from serious health problems. A nurse stopped by and wondered about the jar of catnip on Susan's bedside table. The catnip was there, of course, so Susan could keep stuffing catnip sticks from her hospital bed. The popular sticks help raise money for The Cat House. Susan wound up stuffing and selling two sticks that night for the nurse to give her daughter's new cat on Christmas.

Susan got involved with The Cat House out of concern for the 80 or so cats that Animal Control seized from a home on South Street. The Cat House took in several of those cats. Susan's first effort was putting out donation jars to raise money for the cats' care. Then she started taking home laundry. Next she began fostering kittens, especially kittens of mothers who had become wild, or feral. By her count, she has fostered 34 kittens and managed to let 30 of them go for adoption.

Soon she was doing all that plus reorganizing files, helping with open hours, stuffing catnip sticks, doing spot cleaning, staffing tables at various events, arranging to get donations by collecting Best Choice labels and helping trap feral cats so they could be neutered or spayed and released.

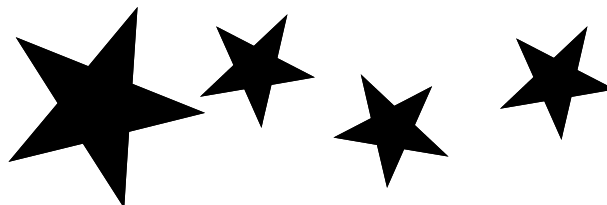


Susan making catnip sticks

"The longer I'm there, the more I want to do and the more I do do," Susan said. "It's a feel-good thing for me. I love cats." Along with her own cats, Susan takes care of some neighborhood ferals, who keep her company during the hours she's outside gardening. When she's not doing Cat House work or digging in the dirt, she works in the air quality section of the state Department of Environmental Quality.

Spotlight on..... Julie Dahlke

Written by: Martha Stoddard



Julie Dahlke got introduced to The Cat House through Suzie Mierdieks. Suzie was on the board of the credit union where Julie works as assistant manager and they soon found they had cats in common. But it was Simba who talked Julie into becoming a volunteer. He was among the cats Animal Control seized from a house on South Street in 2003.

When he arrived at The Cat House, he was bedraggled and very sick. With care, his gorgeous coat was restored and his regal personality shone through. "Once I saw that boy and met that boy, I was hooked," Julie said. She began by taking care of the cats with feline leukemia, the first of which came from the South Street raid.

Next, Julie took on a Friday night cleaning shift along with Suzie. The two often spent hours cleaning and playing, cleaning and playing. Two years ago, she became coordinator for the leukemia-positive cats. About one year ago, she took on the task of being volunteer coordinator for the whole Cat House. That means she contacts new volunteers, matches them with Cat House needs, schedules volunteers and makes sure the cleaning shifts have enough people. When the shifts are short, it's often Julie who fills in.



Julie Dahlke along with daughter Kaitlyn

"It is possible that some of the cats at Q Street see her more than her family does," said TCH President Faye Stevens. Julie often brings her daughter, Kaitlyn, to help clean and play with the cats. Kaitlyn was six when she started coming in, making her one of the youngest volunteers. Along with her daughter, Julie lives with her husband, a yellow lab and cat Chloe. She also is currently fostering Jillian, a TCH cat that needs insulin twice a day.

Special Rates for Special Adoptions—Come Celebrate Seniors!

Written by: Beth Boal

Adding a new feline family member to your household is always a rewarding experience. The benefits of adding a bundle of kitten energy to your family are easy to see. Other adopters prefer to adopt an adult cat, who has grown out of the wild kitten stage and whose personality is already known. However, the benefits of adopting a senior cat are far too often overlooked.

Senior, in cat terms, really refers to cats of about 7 or 8 years of age or older. Considering indoor, mixed-breed cats routinely live to be 15 years of age or more, the term “senior” is often misunderstood. It’s not uncommon to find a 12-year-old cat racing from one end of your home to another in the evening, or sitting high atop the cat tree “chattering” at the birds outside your window. Advances in veterinary care, diagnostics and nutrition help keep cats healthy, active and playful – even into their 20s!

When you adopt an older cat, not only are you providing a loving home for a cat that is more likely to be passed over in a shelter, but you are getting a loyal companion who will often stay by your side and not shred the curtains! Senior cats blend “established” personality and the ability to adapt to new situations and form strong bonds with their new family. They are still playful and curious, but no longer too busy to sit with you while you read a book or watch a movie.

Over the past winter, The Cat House began a promotion to celebrate seniors. The goal was two-fold: to encourage adopters to consider a senior feline and to reach out to older potential adopters who would enjoy the companionship of a pet, but may have housing requirements or fixed incomes that limit their choices. As there are so many older kitties needing homes, and so many wonderful older adults looking for companions, we’ve decided to continue the promotion indefinitely.

Adoptions of senior cats qualify for our special adoption rate of \$60. In addition, if you are 60 years of age or older, the adoption of any of our cats is only \$60. So come by and meet our lovable – and playful – cats and help us celebrate seniors throughout the year!

These Wonderful Kitties Are Looking For Forever Homes			
			
Isabelle	Lacy	Loretta	Molette

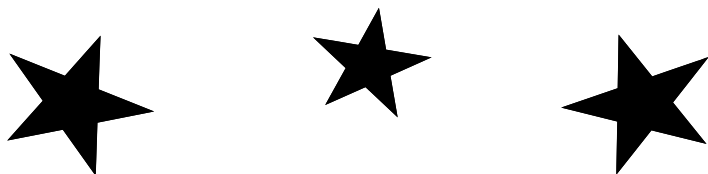
Important Victories for the Animals

Cats and other animals have won important victories in the Nebraska Legislature. One new law increases the penalties for people who abandon or neglect animals if the animals wind up being seriously injured or even die. In those cases, people can be charged with a felony and could face up to five years in prison if convicted. Previous law made abandonment or neglect a misdemeanor, no matter what happened to the animals.

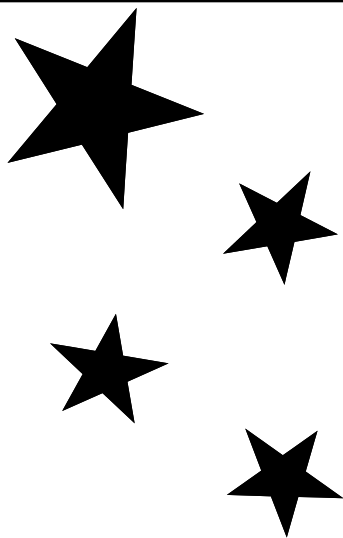
A second new law requires inspections every two years for cat- and dog-breeding operations, pet stores, licensed dealers, boarding kennels and animal shelters. The law also increases the number of state employees assigned to the inspection program and gives the state more options for penalizing problem breeders and facilities. Previously, the state had only one inspector for 721 license holders and inspections were done only when the state received a complaint.

Upcoming TCH Events

Please come to the following TCH events. All donations and profits from items sold will go to help defray the cost of housing the cats and seeing to their medical needs. If you're interested in volunteering or adopting, any of these events would be a good opportunity to speak with a TCH volunteer.



Quilt Shop Hop Spring 2008	PETsMART Spring National Adoption Weekend
<p>The Quilted Kitty April 10 – 19, 2008 during business hours 2295 S. 48th Street</p> <p>Our feline-approved cat beds, carrier covers & catnip stix are available for sale!</p>	<p>May 2 – 4, 2008 Saturday 11 am – 4 pm Sunday noon to 4 pm 5200 N. 27th Street</p> <p>We'll have a table with information, cat beds, cat carrier liners and cat stix for sale. Of course, our cats are always available for adoption through their Luv-A-Pet Adoption Center.</p>
Earth Day Community Event 2008	TCH Photo Contest
<p>April 20, 2008, noon to 4 pm Location: Antelope Park</p> <p>We are planning to have a table with information and possibly cat beds/ stix for sale.</p>	<p>"Make Your Cat A Star" Photo Contest Submission Deadline: May 15, 2008</p> <p>Visit www.thecathouse.org/calendar2009.php for more information</p>



Ringo Starr, a TCH kitty who's looking for a new home.

If you are interested in submitting articles, taking pictures or helping out with the production of the newsletter, please contact the Newsletter Committee at editor@thecathouse.org

WANT TO VOLUNTEER?



If you are interested in volunteering with The Cat House, we have many positions open, everything from making phone calls to medicating cats.

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 by email at volunteer@thecathouse.org.

Opportunities to help include:

1. Care, feeding and exercising of cats
2. Laundry
3. Help with the facility
4. Transport cats
5. Newsletter committee
6. Assistant Volunteer coordinator
7. Adoption counselor
8. Adoption follow-up
9. Virtual foster care
10. Fund-raising committee
11. Advocacy committee
12. Photography



Cats More Effective than Cholesterol Medicines

Written by: Beth Boal

This was the title of an article posted on the EndFatigue.com website, a support site for individuals suffering from Chronic Fatigue Syndrome or Fibromyalgia. Cat lovers, however, probably aren't overly surprised by the title. We've always known that cats have an almost mystical connection to the humans they choose to share their lives with. Lowering cholesterol? Sure why not?

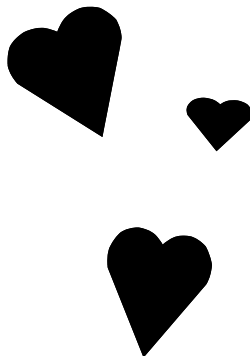
The posted article included the following information:

"A research study found that having a cat can reduce stress in people's lives, and consequently lowers the risk of having a heart attack or stroke or developing a heart disease. The findings are based on a 10-year study, carried out by the researchers at the Stroke Research Center at the University of Minnesota. The study, which looked at 4,435 Americans aged 30 to 75, showed that those who did not have a cat had a 40 percent higher risk of having a heart attack and a 30 percent greater risk of dying from other heart diseases than those who have or have had a cat. ... Several studies have confirmed that owning a pet reduces stress, decreases blood pressure and cholesterol, and reduces risk of depression."

With an estimated 9 million cats and dogs being euthanized every year because homes cannot be found for them, wouldn't adopting a cat be a lot more fun and less expensive alternative to lower your risk of heart disease? Of course, never stop taking prescribed medication without your doctor's authorization. To find an adoptable pet, you can check out our site at www.thecathouse.org or visit www.petfinder.com or www.100saveapet.com. The life you save really may be your own!



Spike, a TCH kitty who's looking for a new home



Silas, a TCH kitty who's looking for a new home.

Donations In Memory & In Honor Of

In loving memory of Precious and Goatee - Douglas Hruby

In honor of the second anniversary of Wallace's adoption - Douglas Hruby

In loving memory of Amy Leavitt from her friends and family

"In loving memory of Toee. My heart is broken, but now you are forever in the sunshine." Mary Batterson



Special thanks to....

Thank you to All Feline Hospital, Williamsburg Clinic and Nebraska Animal Medical Center for their participation in the new Trap-Neuter-Release program for feral cats. If you use any of these vet clinics, the next time you are in, please tell them Thank You for supporting The Cat House Program.

These Wonderful Kitties Are Looking For Forever Homes



Chelsea



Katie

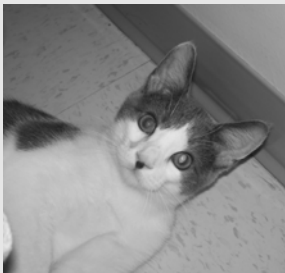


Macy



Herman

THE CAT HOUSE WISH LIST



There are many ways you can help. 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 us at info@thecathouse.org.

Dry Cat Food:

Science Diet Regular Maintenance
Science Diet Kitten
Iams Regular
Iams Kitten
Science Diet Z/D (sold through vet clinics)
Science Diet R/D (sold through vet clinics)
Science Diet C/D (sold through vet clinics)

Canned Cat Food:

Iams – any flavor other than seafood
Fancy Feast – any non-seafood flavor
Science Diet A/D (sold through vet clinics)
Science Diet R/D (sold through vet clinics)
Science Diet C/D (sold through vet clinics)

Cat Litter:

Any brand of non-clumping, regular clay litter is fine. We do not use clumping, pine or newsprint type litters.

Cleaners:

Clorox Bleach – regular type
Purell Hand Sanitizer
Dial Anti-Bacterial Hand Soap
Ivory Dishwashing Soap
Clorox Disposable Wipes

Supplies:

Paper Towels
Large Trash Bags (Heavy Duty)
Kitchen Size Trash Bags
Office Trash Can Size Trash Bags
Bathroom Tissue
Copier/Printer Paper

Miscellaneous:

Large stainless steel non-tip food/water bowls

**The Cat House needs your support so we can continue helping our feline friends.
Please consider donating, or visit our website to learn how you can help!**

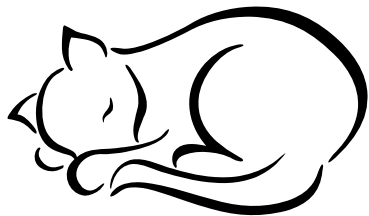
Please Select Contribution Amount:



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

**Make checks payable to
The Cat House and mail to
PO Box 23145, Lincoln, NE
68542**

**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. Visit www.thecathouse.org to learn how.
Your donations may be tax deductible!**



NONPROFIT
ORGANIZATION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
PERMIT NO. 800
LINCOLN, NE

The Cat House
PO Box 23145
Lincoln, NE 68542