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SPOTLIGHT**
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THE CAT HOUSE Scoop

© Eye on a Flash by Kimberly McCarty

VOLUME NO. 16 | ISSUE NO. 1 | SPRING 2016



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
info@thecathouse.org
www.thecathouse.org
facebook.com/thecathouse

BOARD MEMBERS

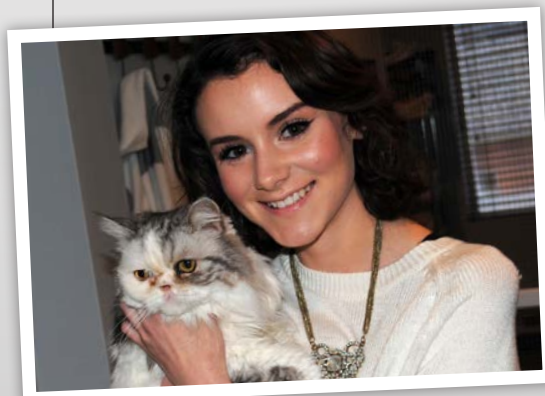
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The Cat House is a 501(c)(3) non-profit, all-volunteer organization, funded entirely by donations and adoption fees.

"If this was a movie" ... it could hardly have a better ending

By Mindy Peck

Meet Tilty, a 10-year-old, purebred Scottish Fold. She is a beauty with long, soft fur and the signature "smushed" nose of her breed. Both made her a perpetual draw for visitors to TCH. But every time someone adopted her or took her home as a foster, she wound up back at TCH. Tilty spent half of her life in and out of TCH. You see, Tilty is a special kitty that requires special medical attention and can only thrive in a truly special home.



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Cat-ification: Enhancing your cat's environment

By Ann Adams

Is your house a cat house? Your home is surely a reflection of your own personal style, but have you considered your cat's style? Cats are climbers, perchers, and players that crave a space of their own. Cat trees have been around forever, but not everyone has the money or space for such a large piece of cat furniture. Luckily, there are a variety of options to accommodate the environmental needs of you and your cat.

A happy home is one in which both form and function meet to create an esthetic of comfort and delight. It is pleasing to the eye as well as the body. Cats are like people in that they need to feel safe, secure, and engaged by their surroundings. Surely your cat has a favorite window in your home where it likes to spend hours performing its neighborhood watch duties. The addition of a window perch will make the location even more enjoyable for your feline roomie. Window perches come in a variety of styles and can add a touch of comfort to your cat's favorite sun spot. Placing a bird feeder outside the window will stimulate your cat's mind and keep boredom from setting in.

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Volunteer Opportunities

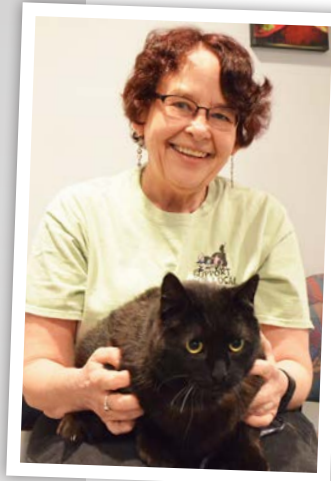
The Cat House has a very hard-working and dedicated crew of volunteers committed to improving the lives of cats in Lincoln and the surrounding area.

If you are interested in helping, you can fill out a volunteer application online at www.thecathouse.org, come in during open hours to fill out an application, or e-mail at volunteer@thecathouse.org.

You're in for a rewarding experience!

Opportunities to help include:

- Open hours
- Care, feeding, exercising, and socializing of cats
- Laundry
- 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



Volunteer Spotlight: Denise Wiemer

By Jeff Kennedy

There once was a big furry black cat named Charlie. It is unknown where Charlie came from, who the person was that decided to abandon him, or why the person felt it was necessary to make that decision. The Cat House took Charlie in that day. He would be safe, fed, and receive medical care as well as loving attention. But at the time Charlie joined TCH's ranks, no one knew what was going to transpire in the next

few months and how it would lead Charlie to the home and heart of a volunteer named Denise Wiemer.

When Charlie came to TCH, he weighed in at a not-so-dainty 20+ pounds. "Overweight," the vet said. After Charlie was medically evaluated, he went to live in the room with the other plus-size cats where his food intake could be controlled and where he could lose weight so that he would be healthier.

But what happened was the opposite, Charlie didn't eat. Whether he was bullied away from food by other cats or was a really picky eater or for some other reason, Charlie lost too much weight too fast and developed an unhealthy condition called hepatic lipidosis, or fatty liver disease. This condition can be fatal if left untreated too long. Volunteers at the shelter decided it would be best to treat him in the controlled setting of a personal home. Denise said she would take him.

Since beginning to volunteer at TCH 5 years ago, Denise has had a lot of experience

with cats. She has been on a cleaning and feeding shift, worked open hours, and helped with Cat Love Therapy, a program where volunteers take shelter cats to assisted living facilities to cheer residents. Denise was great at her volunteer tasks—trustworthy, detailed, and understanding.

When Charlie went to live with Denise, his condition was not good. Denise began the prescribed treatment of feeding Charlie through an esophageal feeding tube, four times a day, but the amount of nourishing liquid food was too much at a time. Denise had to increase the frequency of feedings and decrease the amount of food syringed fed each time, sometimes giving only 20 cc an hour, pushed into the tube very slowly. The two, this big black cat and this determined lady, spent hour after hour, day after day, sitting on the floor of Denise's bathroom. She cleaned up his messes and talked to him. He looked to her for life. They bonded. Charlie began to thrive. "He is a foster but he may become my next adopted cat," Denise said. "We spent so much time together, he became my 'Velcro cat.'"

With the successful fostering of Charlie, Denise recently accepted another medical foster. This one was a handsome blue boy named Jay, who had an inoperable tumor. Since Jay's condition was terminal, Denise's focus wasn't on helping him to get well. It was on making him comfortable and happy and to give him a last gift—unconditional, one-on-one love. "It was a different situation than with Charlie. Jay was fading away, but he knew he had a loving home."

It is through the efforts of people like Denise, who step up and provide extra time, care, and love, that The Cat House is so successful.

Happy Tails Stats

Here are the number of cats adopted in recent months.

October	22
November	26
December	41
January	44
February	22
March	22

TCH Retail Space

Settling into a new home always takes time and The Cat House is no different. Since moving in June 2015, we find ourselves continuing to "tweak" our home at 3633 "O" Street.

One of our most exciting additions is a small retail area to serve visitors. It is easily accessed and offers some of our most popular volunteer-made items, including both large and small catnip stix as well as pet beds in

cat and dog designs. We also have a selection of our popular t-shirts and sweatshirts in various sizes and colors.

The retail area is located on the lower level, right outside our office. Consider parking on the south side of the building for easy access to this space.

All proceeds from sales go to help support TCH and its feline residents.

Thank you for shopping! See you soon.

Donations in memory & honor of...

In memory of

Birdeen Havlicek from Kathy Havlicek-Cook
King Rieke from Conrad Good, Kris Plucknett, Billie Tietgen, Berkley Insurance Co. – Continental Western Group, David Kaufman, Lucy Krause, Kathleen Holland, Erin Shafer, Denise Kaufman Greiman, Sheila Schulke, Davalynn Tietgen, and Linda Rieke
Charlene Lautzenheiser from Mary Jane Winquest
Slinky from Rita Vyhldal
Opal Wulf from JC Preston
Laverna Huff from Nadine Fricke
Kristie from Barbara and Richard Thomas
Gayle Roper from Sandra Johnson
Deanna's cat, Izzy, from the Sisterhood of Faith at St. Mark's Methodist Church
Boo from Christian Janousek
Neko Swisher from Regina Toman
Simba, Gizzy, and Kiara from Deanna Henke
Brian Elias from Patricia Metcalf
Caryll Wilson from Ryon Adams, Judith Bay, Tiffany Goeller, Tracy Kalnins, Kadra Omerovic, Joseph Swoboda, Rebecca Olander, Tina Brubaker, Rae Ellen Gifford, Judith Bromm, and Marcia Phillips
Molly and Miss Kitty from House of Flowers
Chance from Melissa Hill
Donald Allen from Judy Allen
JoAnn Boyd from Amanda Champ and Susan Hasek
Spencer from Denise Wiemer
Olivia, Sage, and Jezabel from Kerri Egner
Laci from Lois Anderson
Toni, KT, and Peter from Cynthia Stryker
Jay Fremont from Cynthia Stryker
Irvin Rothfuss from Tammy Berens

Jane E. Gohde from Susan Evans
Osker, daughter's cat, from Donna Akiyama
Fiona-Paw from Justin Berkland
Matthew Hanwell from Georgia Hanwell
Debbie Borner from Mona Daniels-Murray
Blair Callahan from Mary Chisholm, Sandy Hazlett, Maxine Meier, Lana Warner, Jennifer Armstrong, Deb Vosika, and Judith Christensen
John Norwich McLennan from Nancy Flader
Virginia Gail Lewiston from Amy Swoboda
Mikey from Joan White
Tatters from Teri Swanson
Dick Paulick from Olga Paulick
Sarah Jane from Faye Stevens

In honor of

Trixie, who was adopted on 4/10/2014, from Georganna Schroeder
Licorice from Colleen Mertins
Gail Sutton and Micky Boeckl from Nancy Sutton
Zoey Moser from Tausha Johnson
Jeff Kennedy from Kaylie Sirek
General Pershing from Kim Hachiya, Airan Sylvana, and Edgar and Rebecca Cahoon
Laci from Lois Anderson
Kellyn from Megan Paul
Nova Shasek's birthday from Linda Green and Diamond Fry
Richard and Adri Howey from Frederick Rickers
Little Nell from Susan Simon
Debra Fryda from Nadine Fricke
Granite and Logan from Kimberly Skeels
Charles Hoarty from Max Clymer

Barbara DiBernard's birthday from Sarah Gibson
Bill and Theresa Wagner from Patricia Rohman
David and Sharon Shepherd, Andrew J. Shepherd, and Athena Stephanopoulos from Andrew Shepherd
Gloria Taylor from Gerise Herndon
Ken and Arlys Reitan from Kern Family Trust
Laura Wong, Nancy and Henry Wong, Danielle Wong, Lynn and Steve Karrigan, and Dave Karrigan from Bonnie Rae
Bonnie Abbott from Darren Abbott
Jordan Blenner from Denise Wiemer
Beppo, Mozart, and Aniseed from Elinor Nevin
Hanna Hoffman from Heather Thomas
Addison, on her birthday, from Oana Costea
Karen Underwood's retirement from UNL from Michael and Amy Zeleny
Jackson Julius Peepers, who was adopted from TCH, from Joyce McArthur-Johnson
Ray Putney from Eileen Johnson
Jim Volkmer from Zuleika Doremus

Special thanks to

Dr. Kelly Jordan
Dr. Shelley Knudsen
All Feline Hospital
Wachal Pet Health Center
Vondra Veterinary Clinic
Pitts Veterinary Hospital
Cause For Paws
Nature's Variety
Petco
PetSmart
Walmart

KC's column

Dear Cali:

I am mad! Why are humans so dense? I give them all the signals that I don't want to be petted right now, don't want to go to the vet, don't want to play with those noisy, unpredictable children or whatever, and what do the humans do? Nothing! It's as if they don't have any common sense. I end up getting so upset I swat or bite at them to get my message across.

Signed,

Furious Feline

Dear Furious:

I share your frustration. Lots of humans don't understand the signs that any well-raised kitten would know. It's a puzzlement.

By the way, I am not Cali, I'm KC. Cali passed on, as you can read elsewhere in the newsletter, so The Cat House people came to me and wanted me to take over her advice column. They tried to butter me up, said I was the oldest and most experienced cat and

would have great wisdom to pass on. They must think I'm a real sucker to fall for that, especially after they interrupted my nap.

Why, if I was younger, I would have . . . well, never mind, you had a question for me. The answer is I don't know why humans don't understand cat language and why they can't seem to tell when a cat is getting mad.

Now, I assume you gave them some of the basic signals to say back off, right? You swished your tail. You hissed or growled. You spit. You gave the angry cat yowl. You stiffened your whiskers and pulled them back. You flattened your ears. You glared at them. You hunched your body and your hairs stood on end.

I know some cats are not as obvious with their signals. They may give just a twitch of their tail or simply stop purring when they cross over from loving the petting to leave me alone. Given humans' obvious social shortcomings when it comes to cats, it takes a particularly observant human to catch on

without more obvious signals.

But I've also heard some humans think a cat twitching its tail is happy, like a dog wagging its tail. Pfft! I ask you, what would make a cat act like a dog? There are also some humans that seem to think you're not serious and will persist with their annoying behavior. Some deliberately persist to see what you will do. That's when a good swat may help or, if you have been declawed, a quick bite.

The really smart humans will get your message and back off. They'll let you simmer down in a nice, secure corner and make your own decision about when you are ready to socialize again. They know not to cross your path or let other animals cross your path when you are really, really upset and ready to lash out at the next thing you see. Here's hoping you meet some of these humans. It might even make you less angry.

Now I'm going back to my nap,
KC

Calendar of Events

Cats & Crafts Sessions

Dates TBA

The Cat House, 3633 "O" Street Fundraiser and education for TCH. Check the TCH Facebook page for info.

Give to Lincoln Day

May 26 / Midnight–11:59 pm
givetolincoln.razoo.com

Adopt-a-Cat Month

June

The purr-fect month to find your new furry forever friend.

Wine & Howl

June 11 / 11 am–5 pm

Deer Springs Winery, east of Lincoln Fundraiser for Lincoln Animal Ambassadors (LAA). TCH will have a vendor booth.

Haymarket Farmer's Market

June 26-August 6

Saturdays / 8 am–Noon

TCH volunteers will be selling cat beds, catnip sticks, and other items.

Streets Alive

September 25 / 1-5 pm

29th & Holdredge (Clinton Elementary School area)

Meow & Chow

Date and Location TBA

Fundraiser for TCH & LAA.

Catnip stix, pet beds, and carrier liners!

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



In memory of Igor Solokhin, TCH craftsman

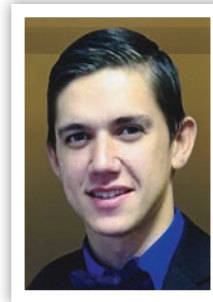
By Stephanie Kielian

Lincoln and The Cat House lost a talented and hard-working craftsman to a traffic accident on April 15, 2016. Igor Solokhin was the foreman of the crew that TCH hired to complete remodeling of the new facility at 3633 "O" St.

Igor, along with his brothers and father, Ben, installed most of the framework, drywall, and ceiling grid and tiles; finished the installation of a tiled floor; and completed various finish work. TCH had been looking for a crew to help get the remodel going, and I had mentioned to my neighbor Vitaliy that we were having trouble finding the right help.

Vitaliy said he had some friends who might be a good fit and that they would understand our time constraints and non-profit budget. After meeting with the Solokhins and the rest of the group, TCH decided to move forward with them.

Igor was only 19 at the time, but he was the spokesman for the group and would be in charge of the project. He won us over with his charisma, confidence, and obvious knowledge of construction. Igor was able to keep everything on track and help with



the changes that the city wanted, even though he was only working for TCH in the evening and on weekends after he finished working his full-time job.

Igor had a great sense of humor, and his family was a lot of fun. They brought in some toy stuffed cats to put in the room windows

– one even meowed when you would walk by. If you were in the building during the remodel, you would often hear the Solokhins Russian music playing on their radios.

Igor recently completed installation of the counter tops in the TCH office and the shelving in the work room. He was also working on the cage design for the larger cat rooms.

Igor and his family immigrated to the United States from Russia. Igor, who was also a youth pastor, was a very talented, exceptionally nice young man who was a pleasure to work with. I was looking forward to working with Igor on many projects in the future. He made a great impression with TCH volunteers who had the opportunity to work with him. Igor will be missed by all who met him.

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

- Any dry cat food
- **Royal Canin Baby Cat**
- Science Diet Original, M/D, R/D, C/D Calm, or Z/D*
- Science Diet Light

CANNED CAT FOOD

- Science Diet or lams – kitten & adult – turkey, chicken, salmon (ground or minced)
- Fancy Feast – turkey, chicken, salmon (Classic), or any Grilled Delights with Cheddar
- Science Diet A/D, M/D, R/D, I/D, C/D Calm, or Z/D*
- Science Diet Light

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

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
- Kitchen and office size trash bags
- Copier/printer paper

MISCELLANEOUS

- Meat flavored baby food (chicken, turkey, beef, ham)
- Small chenille or cotton reversible bath rugs (no rubber backs)
- Rotating teeth combs for cats
- "Slicker" brushes for cats
- Pet carriers, hard plastic with metal doors
- Large litter boxes without covers
- Aluminum trays (no smaller than 8"x13")
- Lint rollers
- FortiFlora® Feline Nutritional Supplement
- Gift certificates to entirelypets.com
- Gift cards to Tractor Supply, Walmart, Target, Petco, or PetSmart

* sold at vet clinics

Dumpling

By Jeff Kennedy

Nineteenth century author and archaeologist Margaret Benson wrote, "A cat is, above all things, a dramatist."

Dumpling, a 6-year-old Cat House resident, proves Miss Benson's statement is still relevant and accurate over 100 years later. This little gray tabby girl brings a flair for the dramatic with a punch of personality. She carries a natural swagger and is not shy about vocalizing her need for attention. Naturally curious, she stands guard at her door to see what activities are transpiring on the other side.

Dumpling's start with The Cat House was a rough one. She was abandoned in 2013, left in a carrier at the shelter's former location on a December day when the temperature struggled to reach double digits. But she proved to not only be a survivor, but a cat ready to put her stamp on the world.

Dumpling's outgoing, strong personality would probably be best suited for an adopter without other animals in the home. An experienced cat person who could recognize and appreciate Dumpling's shifting temperaments would be rewarded with a loving companion for life. Dumpling will bring the personality if you provide the home.



Simply Red

By Jeff Kennedy

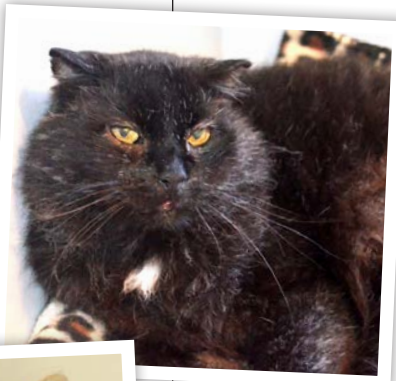
Simply Red was discovered in a feral colony, very thin and torn up, missing entire patches of fur. Colony caretaker Gail Schraeder recalls that he came up to her, meowing. "None of the other cats ever meowed at me, but he started in from about 50 feet away." Gail didn't have a trap or a carrier with her that day, but later she retrieved him from the colony to take him in for veterinary care.

"He was in bad shape," recounts Schraeder. The vet removed more than 60 ticks from him, and he was underweight and full of parasites. He tested positive for the Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV). "We weren't sure he would make it," Schraeder said. His poor condition and his bad teeth made it difficult to estimate an age. The vet's best estimate is he was born in 2010.

Gail named him Simply Red (the name of an '80s band) because his black fur had been sunburned and taken on a reddish tint. Since his arrival at TCH, he's also been known as Kenny, for Husker football standout, Kenny Bell.

Once Simply Red entered into The Cat House system, he quickly started to fill out and become the handsome cat he is today. Volunteers soon found out that he loved attention and care. His coat became full and soft, and his injuries slowly faded. His defensive nipping gave way to gentle head butts and an arching back.

You can often find him these days sprawled out on the lap of a volunteer or open-hours visitor, getting petted. He has come a long way from the beat-up cat that wandered up to Gail begging for attention and now would love to find a forever home with a person or people of his own.

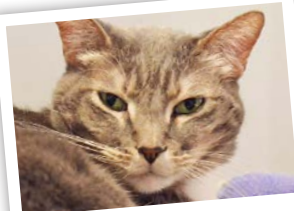


These cats are looking for forever homes.

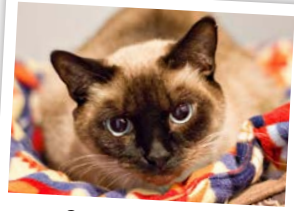
Visit our shelter on Tuesday and Thursday evenings from 6–8 pm and Sundays from 1:30–4 pm.



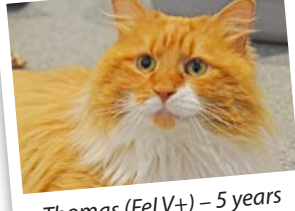
Simba (FIV+) – 2 years



Billy – 4 years



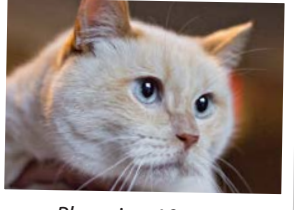
Sabrina – 5 years



Thomas (FeLV+) – 5 years



Angel – 8 years



Phoenix – 10 years



Caroline – 5 years



Sheila – 2 years

give To Lincoln Day May 26, 2016

The fifth annual Lincoln Community Foundation's Give to Lincoln Day will be held Thursday, May 26.

This event has become an important source of funds for The Cat House (TCH) and an excellent way for people to support Lincoln's only no-kill cat shelter.

The Lincoln Community Foundation initiated this event as a way to raise money and increase new donor participation for non-profits in and around Lincoln.

Funds raised during this event help defray the cost of spays and neuters, other medical needs, and dental work for the cats as well as assisting with other shelter expenses. These funds are also used to help fund our Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program.

Your generosity and caring will enable us to continue our work in 2016 in Lincoln and the surrounding area.

Cat-ification—continued from page 1

Does your cat like to look down on you? Hanging a series of shelves on your walls will bring your cat's world to new heights. Giving your cat a chance to elevate itself can do wonders for its self esteem. Being perched above everyone else gives your cat a vantage point that makes it feel safe and in control of its surroundings. Cats are territorial by nature, and expanding the room vertically for your cat will increase its territory.

Your cat may enjoy a series of shelves if you find it doing things like climbing on top of your refrigerator, kitchen cabinets, or book shelves. The shelves can be painted to coordinate with your wall color so they remain pleasing to the eye. Padding the shelves with some textured, nonskid covering will allow your cat to lay down its scent and also keep it from sliding as it leaps and runs along the path. Multi-cat households can really benefit from shelves, which may provide your cats with an escape route, should a disagreement erupt. Pay attention to where conflicts occur, and evaluate the space for the inclusion of possible escape routes.

Maybe your cat just needs a place of its own to hang out in that is lower to the ground. Putting together a kitty condo with tunnels, scratch pads, and secret hiding spots can do the trick. There are commercial cat condos on the market, but making your own can be a fun and affordable project. Sturdy cardboard and fabric that matches your home's decor can be just as effective as store bought items when it comes to your cat's happiness. After all, how many times have you seen your cat show preference to a plain cardboard box over an expensive cat bed?

Before beginning any project, it is important to evaluate what appeals to your cat in your home currently. Ask yourself the following questions: Is there a shelf that my cat feels drawn to? Or perhaps an enclosed space for hiding? Does my cat like to hang out wherever I hang out? It is also important to take your cat's level of athleticism into account to ensure safety. Understanding the types of spaces and experiences your cat craves will help you to make effective changes in your home that will enrich your cat's life.

Brush up on your cat's dental health

By Ann Adams

Did you ever wonder why your vet looks inside your cat's mouth during a routine checkup? It's because cats can suffer many of the same types of dental diseases as people. Cats are good at hiding discomfort because they have a high pain threshold, but they may be suffering all the same. Your vet checks for signs of periodontal disease by scanning for inflammation and loss of tissue around teeth. Depending on what your vet sees, he or she may recommend dental cleaning and possible tooth extraction(s). A dental cleaning, which generally involves cleaning done under anesthesia, tooth extractions, postoperative antibiotics, and pain meds can be pricey. So what can be done at home to keep your cat's dental health from degrading to that point?

First, always check with your vet if you have any questions or concerns about your cat's dental health. If your vet gives you the OK that brushing your cat's teeth would be beneficial, following are suggestions on how to brush its teeth.

Learning how to effectively brush your cat's teeth could save your cat from

experiencing dental disease and discomfort. You may cringe at the thought of brushing your cat's teeth, but there are methods for teaching your cat to tolerate the intrusion. It is important to find and purchase a pet toothpaste. Human toothpaste should not be used on your cat because it could cause an upset stomach and contain unsafe levels of sodium. Pet toothpastes are also best because they clean the teeth by breaking down enzymes that could lead to a buildup of plaque and tartar that cause inflammation of the gums. You will also need to purchase a cat toothbrush. It may be easiest to begin with one known as a finger-brush, which fits onto your index finger.

Once you have the necessary tools, you should begin by slowly introducing your cat to the idea of toothbrushing during a quiet time in your home. As with everything cat-related, patience is essential. You should hold the cat in your lap on top of a thick towel or blanket to avoid any scratches or discomfort should your cat resist. During the first few sessions, simply rub your finger or a soft cloth back and forth over the outer surfaces of your cat's teeth. It is not

necessary to reach the inner portion of the teeth during brushing because a cat's own tongue is usually able to do the trick in those spots. When your cat becomes comfortable with this process, let it taste a small amount of toothpaste from your finger.

When you and your cat are both comfortable enough to move on to full scale brushing, put some of the pet toothpaste on your choice of toothbrush and place your free hand over your cat's head with your thumb resting on top of its head. Gently angle its head upward so you can raise your cat's lip on one side with your index finger. Place the toothbrush right along the gumline and work in gentle circular motions starting at the back of the mouth. Make sure to get both the upper and lower teeth. Try to brush for 30 seconds on each side. Make sure to thoroughly wash your hands before and after brushing your cat's teeth, as well as cleaning the toothbrush after each session. Performing this type of brushing a few times a week will help to eliminate harmful levels of plaque and tartar buildup on your cat's teeth. Happy brushing!

“If this was a movie”—continued from page 1

The flat noses of the Scottish Fold breed can cause the cats to experience breathing issues, and Tilty is no exception. This beautiful cat earned her name from her signature head tilt, which is due to the fact that she was born without a left eardrum. In addition to this medical issue, she also suffers from polycystic kidney disease, breathing problems, and severe allergies. Because of these conditions, she has to take daily medication, antibiotics, and nutrient supplements and receives twice daily nebulizer treatments.

“Tilty has had it rough,” Suzie Meierdierks, the TCH medical coordinator, lamented. “She has had a nasal repair, her sinuses flushed out, dental work, and treatment for yeast infections in her ears!” Because of her medical issues, Tilty had trouble finding the right home. She was placed in a number of foster homes but was returned for various reasons; in addition, she was adopted once but returned for excessive sneezing and other concerns.

Yet, TCH volunteers were tireless in their efforts to make Tilty comfortable and happy. They devised a nebulizer treatment apparatus for Tilty—a cat carrier with the sides wrapped in plastic wrap and the front door covered with a towel where the nebulizer hose is hooked to the door making the crate a mini-sauna. Belinda Gillam, volunteer and

board member for TCH recounted, “Tilty became a new cat after her first nebulizer breathing treatment.”

Later when Tilty started to feel better, she finally started to play. Tilty might have been starting to come out of her shell, but she was still reserved around potential adopters. It was going to take a VERY special person to take Tilty home.

Enter Brenna Bode, a typical teenager; she loves to hang out with her friends and she loves Taylor Swift. Brenna wanted a cat but not just any cat. She wanted a cat like Taylor Swift has. The singer has two Scottish Folds.

“We saw Tilty on the website a few years ago, but when we came to see her, she had already been adopted,” Brenna said. “I kept looking for cats, but there were none in Nebraska.”

Yet, Brenna and her mom, Carrie, kept coming back to TCH and finally, Tilty was there. “When I saw her I couldn’t believe it!” Brenna said it was all over for her at that point.

Knowing Tilty’s reserved personality and medical history, TCH volunteers did their best to inform and prepare the Bodes for life with Tilty.

“They told me not to get my hopes up, but I came in and sat down with her and she laid her head on my lap. We chose each other,” Brenna said. Tilty quickly became queen of the Bode household. “She definitely has an

attitude,” Carrie said, “She is finally starting to warm up to me, but she has loved Brenna from the start!” Tilty hasn’t lost her vibrant personality. “Oh she’s very sassy; she doesn’t like to cuddle often—but sometimes,” Brenna recounted.

The Bodes took Tilty home in August 2015, and finally Tilty had her person and her home. “She is a lot of work and definitely high maintenance, but she is worth it,” Brenna said. “She is finally relaxing and starting to realize that this is her home.”

There is no doubt that Brenna and Carrie are her humans. Carrie is happy to have Tilty in their lives. “If I would have known what having a cat would do for Brenna, I would have gotten her a cat years ago! They have been so good for each other. Brenna is so responsible and caring,” Carrie said.

Brenna takes her cat ownership responsibilities very seriously, making sure that Tilty has her daily medicines and treatments. “Brenna will make sure she comes home and takes care of Tilty before going out with her friends,” Carrie said.

It’s clear that Tilty has become the princess of her new home. Belinda summed it up best when she said, “You know, Tilty has had it rough, but now she’s in seventh heaven. She has her teenager and her mom now, and she is a happy cat!”

TCH elder passes on

The Cat House lost one of its most special residents in November. A morning volunteer came in and found that Cali had passed away overnight. Cali’s death was not unexpected, she was 22 years old after all, but this beautiful torti’s passing left a hole in the hearts of volunteers and visitors. Following is what TCH President Faye Stevens wrote at the time:

“Cali came to us in January 2012, at the age of 19. Her ‘mom’ passed away, and her ‘dad’ needed to move to a nursing home. Cali was thought to be in end-stage renal failure. One of the TCH medicators, who also worked at a vet clinic, was helping to care for Cali and felt that she only had six weeks or so to live.

“She asked if TCH could make Cali comfortable for the last few weeks of her life. We set her up in a room upstairs at the Q Street shelter. It was a room we never intended to house cats in, but for a few weeks, it would do. However, when Cali moved to TCH and was able to consistently get the subcutaneous fluids and other medications she needed, she

thrived! Her health improved, and, like the Eveready Bunny or a Timex watch, she just kept going!

“Cali became a favorite among volunteers and visitors alike, with her (sometimes) feisty attitude. She liked to join in during meetings held in the upstairs area, as long as she didn’t have to interact with other cats, who were mostly not worthy of being in her presence (in her opinion). She would insist on being picked up to sit on the laps of people she thought were deserving of her attention.

“After we moved to the new building, Cali enjoyed even more attention, with more volunteers and visitors in and through her area. Many people were amazed that a cat could live to be 22 years old, and I hope that seeing her gave them a different perspective about the value of senior cats. On her last



Sunday, two college-age women came in to spend time with cats, and sat with Cali and her roommate, KC. They told me that Cali was their favorite. They very much enjoyed giving her some lap time (and couldn’t believe she was really 22 years old). This is how special Cali was – one visit and she’d already gained new fans.

“I’m so glad that Cali got to move to the new building with us, and enjoy having some natural light and additional attention for her last few months. And I’m proud of TCH and our volunteers for the wonderful care we were able to give her, although I think that we gained as much from this experience as she did. I hope that you will all have the opportunity to care for a senior cat like Cali. It’s truly an honor and a privilege.

“Cali, yours was a life well-lived and well-loved. Rest in peace, our special girl!”



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