

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

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Words of wisdom

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THE CAT HOUSE Scoop

© Essence in a Flash by Kimberly McCarty

VOLUME NO. 19 | ISSUE NO. 1 | SPRING 2019



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Lincoln, NE

Tuesdays & Thursdays 6-8 pm

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

Cat's Play: The Hunter Within

By Allison Hunter-Frederick

Did you know that as a cat owner you have a hunter in your home? The distant ancestors of our feline friends had to hunt for their food. Feral cats still do. Even the most well-fed cat is hard-wired with this prey instinct. The prey sequence is stimulating to your cat, and you can use that knowledge to make its life more interesting.

The prey sequence consists of four phases. First, a cat stares at its prey and then slowly moves into the best position to stalk it. Next, the cat stalks its prey. Just before springing into action, some cats will wiggle their behind to signal an impending attack. Third, the cat pounces and grabs its prey. At this point, the cat might even purposely release the prey, so that it can repeat the sequence. Finally, the cat rolls onto its side and kicks against the prey with its back legs while biting the prey. Alternatively, the cat might refuse to relinquish its prey and instead carry it off.

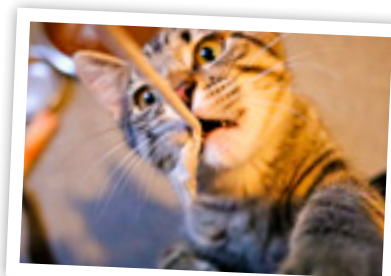
Even though domesticated cats don't need to hunt for their food, they retain the instinct to do so, and cats will benefit by replicating the prey sequence when they play.

There are different types of toys that bring out different components of the prey sequence. For that reason, it's important to provide your cat with a variety of toys. There are four main categories of toys, each of which focuses on different parts of the prey sequence.

Self-Play: The cheapest options are plastic rings from milk containers, soda bottle caps, and empty toilet paper rolls. Other low-cost options are plush mice, crinkle balls, and ping pong balls. You can increase your cat's fun with self-play toys by placing them in an empty box or hiding them around the house. Unless your cat is super energetic, self-play toys primarily serve the pounce and grab phase of the prey sequence.

Battery-Operated: These toys are powered to move on their own, which can simulate a more realistic prey-object. Cats can watch, stalk, and pounce on battery-operated toys.

The drawbacks are that these toys are more expensive and the batteries will run out quickly if left on all the time.



Continued on page 5

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 for updates.

You can fill out a volunteer application online at 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

Happy Tails Stats

Here are the number of cats adopted in recent months.

October	19
November	38
December	33
January	38
February	30
March	26

Volunteer Spotlight: Deb Pearson

Allison Hunter-Frederick

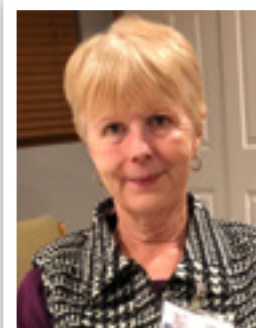
Six years ago, Deb Pearson first heard about The Cat House while helping to promote animal rescue at an information table at a local car dealership. "It was a life-changing day," Deb said.

Previously, Deb had volunteered with many different groups, but none had been quite the right fit. All that changed when she met Faye Stevens and Alma Vlasak at TCH's information table. A long-time cat lover, Deb immediately signed up to be a volunteer.

As with most new TCH volunteers, Deb started out as a cat caregiver. She spent a few years cleaning rooms and feeding cats before seeking out other responsibilities.

Now she is known for the multitude of roles she's undertaken. She has weighed cats, transported them to the vet, assisted with the monthly vet visits at the shelter, and participated in TCH's Cat Love Therapy program. She has assisted with open hours, adoption interviews, craft shows, and fundraisers. Deb has even helped make TCH's popular catnip sticks.

"I like the variety," Deb said, "but I especially like working at craft shows, where I meet adopters who share their stories and tell us how much they appreciate what TCH does. It's affirming to talk to people who are supportive of TCH."



Originally from Arapahoe, Nebraska, Deb moved to Lincoln to attend college. Eventually, she earned a degree in Library Science from the University of Missouri and then took a librarian position at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln. She's now UNL's head of Libraries Facilities Planning.

Deb describes herself as a typical farm girl. Her family always had dogs, cats, horses, and a host of other animals. Although her mom wasn't fond of cats, they were sometimes allowed to live inside. Deb's first cat as an adult came to her through a veterinarian. A cat with a treatable medical condition had been brought to the clinic by an owner who no longer wanted it. When Deb met the big, long-haired, red tabby, she changed his name from Buttercup to Bruiser and in that instant the cat became hers.

Deb adores her three current cats--a 17-year-old tortie named Skeezix (named after a character from a 1920's comic strip), a 9-year-old calico named MaeBelle, and an 8-year-old red tabby named Faye.

Since Deb first began volunteering with TCH, she has met a lot of caring cat owners and memorable cats. She has also learned how to care for her own cats better. To Deb, TCH is a great place to volunteer because she's around like-minded people. And, of course, cats.

Give to Lincoln Day: Thursday, May 30

By Alma Vlasak

The 8th Annual Lincoln Community Foundation's Give to Lincoln Day (G2LD) is scheduled for Thursday, May 30, this year. The Foundation began this annual day in 2012 to help raise money for nonprofits in and around Lincoln.

As in years past, nonprofits will share match funds based on the amount of money each organization raises on G2LD. This year the match shared will be \$450,000!

The Cat House has benefited from this important source of funding for the shelter and cats. This is an easy way to support

Lincoln's only no-kill cat shelter because the amount donated is increased through the match funds.

Funds raised on behalf of TCH help to pay for spays and neuters, other veterinary procedures needed by the cats, and our Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program.

Check for the link on The Cat House web site (thecathouse.org) or go to givetolincoln.com. Gifts can be made online at this site beginning May 1 to qualify for Give to Lincoln Day totals and match funds.

Sundance

By Jeff Kennedy

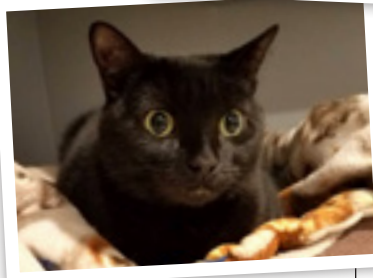
In the Purple Unit in The Cat House, in the northwest corner of the top floor of the building, there is a large room. In that room, there is a large window. And on most days, there is a beautiful black cat lying in the sunny area next to the window. That cat is Sundance.

Sundance arrived at the shelter 3 years ago, brought in from a home where too many cats had been living. She was pregnant, scared, and shy. She needed help. At TCH, she was spayed and her kittens moved on to homes of their own.

Since that time, Sundance has been loved and has slowly become comfortable with people around her.

Now 4 years old, Sundance is still a shy cat but she has made huge strides. She now will let visitors come into her room and pet her, even greeting them at the door at times. She tends to be more of an independent cat, choosing her moments to seek personal interaction and not in constant need of attention.

Sometimes Sundance is overlooked because her roommates are more outgoing. But the right person for her is out there, and she will continue to be patient until she finds the adopter who will accept and love her for who she is.



Logan

By Jeff Kennedy

Someone once told me, "Orange boys are the cat ambassadors to the human race." I didn't put much stock in that saying at the time because I knew that each cat has a special unique and individual personality, regardless of color or gender.

But looking back over the past decade that I have volunteered for The Cat House, I now know what they meant. Red (or orange) male cats have a tendency to be friendly, outgoing animals to people as well as to other cats. Logan is no exception.

Logan is a 7-year-old, red male with an affable personality, not to mention big beautiful green eyes. He is quick to greet you at the door of his room, often vocalizing his greeting with a plaintive soft-spoken meow. If you sit on the bench in his room, he will saunter over to sit on your lap or next to you waiting to be petted on his head and back. His charm has won the hearts of many of the volunteers at TCH.

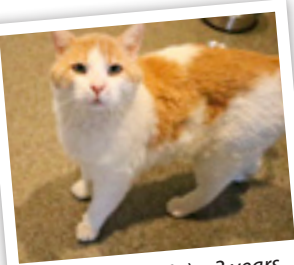
Logan is good with other cats, a friendly and playful buddy to various roommates he's had during his time at The Cat House. He would also do fine in a one-cat household.

Logan has tested positive for FeLV (feline leukemia virus) and should only be adopted into homes where the resident cats are also FeLV+ or there are no other cats. Cats with FeLV have a compromised immune system that puts them at risk of developing other illnesses, but with proper care, the disease can be managed and these cats can live many healthy years.

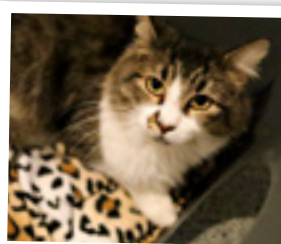
You can meet Logan in the Blue Unit of the Cat House.

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.



Woodrow (FIV+) – 3 years



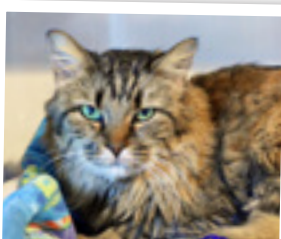
Abbey – 1 year



Slade – 9 months



Tobias (FIV+) – 8 years



Ripley – 11 years



Jericho – 11 years



Quinn (FeLV+) – 3 years



Missy – 2 years

Calendar of Events

Mother of All Garage Sales

April 5 / 5 am to 9 pm

April 6 / 8 am to 3 pm

Lancaster Event Center

4100 N. 84th St.

Catsino Night

April 27 / Starting at 6:30 pm

Center for People in Need

3901 N. 27th St.

Fundraiser for The Cat House

For the Love of Paws Pet Adoption Fair

May 18 / 10 am to 2 pm

2445 S. 48th St.

Presented by Cause for Paws

TCH will have a booth.

ACFA/CFA Joint Cat Show

May 18 and 19 / 8:30 am to 5 pm

Christensen Field

Fremont, NE

Give to Lincoln Day

May 30 / Midnight to 11:59 pm

givetolincoln.com

Purses for Pussy Cats

June 1 / 9 am to 4 pm

Purse, Bake, and PartyLite Sale

TCH Parking Lot

3633 "O" Street

Adopt-a Cat Month

June

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

Haymarket Farmers Market

June 29 through August 3

Saturdays / 8 am to Noon

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

Meow & Chow

Date and Location TBA

Fundraiser for TCH and Lincoln Animal Ambassadors

A vegan cat? Why your cat can't go meat-free

By Claire Jordan

Cats are obligatory carnivores, which means they must eat meat, and lots of it! Some people think it's a good idea to put their cats on a vegetarian or vegan diet, and some websites promote the idea. In reality, cats develop health problems and deficiencies if they are not provided the right nutrients. This article will outline why veganism isn't good for your cat and why meat is a necessary part of their diet.

Taurine. Cats must have a sufficient amount of taurine in their system in order for them to stay healthy. Taurine is an amino acid that cannot be found in plants. Cats are unable to produce taurine on their own, which is why it is so important that they are fed a diet that gives them the amount of taurine they need. Cats fed a plant-based diet often develop taurine deficiency, which can lead to heart issues, weak muscles and bones, and even blindness.

Protein. Cats also require a diet that is full of protein, which cannot be fulfilled by plants. Meats are full of protein and help cats stay strong and healthy.

Carbohydrates. Cats are not good at digesting carbohydrates. Rather, cats need calorie intensive diets, which they can get from meat.

Vitamin D. In people, vitamin D is produced through exposure to sunlight. Cats do not have that ability, meaning Vitamin D must be provided through food. Vitamin D is rare in plants but is found in both animals and fish.

For these reasons and more, a cat's health can be in critical danger if they are not given the necessary nutrients their diet requires. It is nearly impossible for a vegan or vegetarian diet to contain all the necessary dietary requirements for cats. This is why it is so important that meat is an obligatory part of each cat's diet.

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
- 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
- Swiffer
- 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
- Gift cards to Tractor Supply, Walmart, Target, Petco, or PetSmart

* sold at vet clinics

Donations in memory & honor of..

In memory of

Julian Zwiener from Joni Piccolo

Lightning Sayre from Carrie Richardson

Diane Chastain from Jon and Linda Pierce, DeAnn Stover, Terri Schuster, Lindsay Limbach, Gayland and Tresha Seidel, William and Vera Schneider, Steven and Betty Nelson, Patrick and Ellen Nisely, Two Loon Ventures, and T & J Auto Repair

Zigrida "Sue" Snook from Theresa Thomssen

The Beloved Jewel from Pat Caudill Cole

Fr. Bernie Berger from Martin

Connie, Sharri's cat, from Sharri Rowley

Lois Hubert from Sharon Kreimer and Kevin Miller

Junior M. Gregg from Kenneth and Elaine Frasier

Kate Williams from Carol McMurtry and Vick and Dorothy Williams

Shari Reisdorff from James Reisdorff

Mona Hall from Rita White, Margo Young, and Stefanie Pearlman

Diamond from Sheena Basnett

Sassy from Sheena Basnett

Max T. Cat from David Johns

Butch Cassidy from Denise Wiemer

Snookie from Denise Wiemer

Tortellini from Denise Wiemer

Mango from Cindy Burmeister and Denise Wiemer

Jim and Muffy Mertlik from Sandra Mertlik

Penny from Denise Wiemer

Luigi from Denise Wiemer

Kimberly J. Smith from anonymous

Don Allen from Judy Allen

Macy from Rick and Kerri Egner

Tom Hansen from Susan Mattson, Laurie Grell, Amy Plettner, David Morris, Sally Karel, Shelly Clark, Carla Paulsen, Vicki Christo, Diane Wilson, Judith Gibson, Lisa Knopp, Mary King, Katherine Walter, Sandra Johnson, and Marcus and Pamela Snow

Lexie from Denise Wiemer

Bella from Sandra Johnson

Betty Stewart from Teresa Elliott

Butchy and Henry from Mary Hawk

Delores (Dee) Pearson Cloyed from Julie Pearson Anderson

Bubbie from Edith Basch

Barbara Mager from Jerald Connot

Gale Ogg from Jeanne Foster, Bruce Franson, and Jennifer Walker

Mick Hoffman from Lindsey Dresden

Cheddar from Barbara DiBernard

Barbara Mager from Linda Mager

John Yowell from Sam Yowell

Bonnie Smith from Denise Wiemer and Veronica Cammarata

Gizmo from Suzie Meierdierks and Denise Wiemer

In honor of

Sophie from Jo Ann Pappas

Veronica Cammarata's birthday from Michael Cammarata

Kaytlan Rocker's birthday from Carson Rocker

Ryan and Alisha Lueninghoener's marriage from Julie Dahlke, Suzie Meierdierks, Faye Stevens, and Mark Swanson, and Ryan and Alisha Lueninghoener

Rex, Keki, and Daisy from Tracy Schilke

Martini from John and Brenda Roby

The Niemanns from Sharon Holtgrewe

Lu Kaiser from Winifred Fustos

Barbara DiBernard's birthday from Sarah Gibson

Lori Rowan-Hull from Avery Klein

Reva Coulter from Rebecca Coulter

Will Harman from Julie Thomson

Claude and Prue Coccodrilli from Joan Krick

Henry (Mr. Kitty) from Dan Rudnick

Anita Friehe from Tom and Jill Nickerson

Laura, Danielle, Nancy, and Henry Wong from Bonnie Rae

Sophie from Frances Cable

Samantha Gallentine's birthday from Phyllis Dean, Melissa Palmer, Vicki Adams, Patty Bailey, and Samantha Gallentine

Geoff Balliet's birthday from Gary Nuut

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

Cat's Play, continued

Puzzle Toys/Food Puzzles: The cheapest options are a puzzle toy created from a cardboard box or a food puzzle designed using a muffin pan. Alternatively, you can buy a puzzle toy made from wood or plastic. Puzzles force cats to use their brains and bodies in ways that mimic predatory behavior. For instance, using their paws to tease a toy or kibble out of a hole is similar to manipulating a mouse to prevent injury.

Interactive: The most popular example of an interactive toy is the wand toy. If you use a wand toy strategically, you can replicate the entire prey sequence. One strategy to try is to keep the lure on the

ground and relatively still for a while, then make the lure twitch or skitter before having it dart or leap to a hiding place. This will encourage your cat to express its predatory behavior. Your cat might even perform the death kick or kill bite on the toy.

Besides providing your cat with a variety of toys, here are some other tips to keep in mind:

- Encourage your cat's natural prey instinct by providing toys in the shape of birds, mice, snakes, and insects.
- Give your cat opportunities to play on its own, so it doesn't become reliant on you to stimulate its prey drive.

- When a play session is about to end, let your cat catch the toy and switch it with food to replicate the hunt-then-eat pattern from the wild.

- Rotate toys each week so playtime doesn't become mundane.

- Use catnip spray to renew toys!

Cats follow a set routine—wake, hunt, eat, groom, and sleep. By incorporating two or three 10- to 15-minute play sessions per day that mimic their prey sequence, we can help replicate their daily rhythm. By doing so we can help our feline friends live satisfying and rewarding lives.

Another happy adoption story: **Written in the stars**

By Claire Jordan

Twinkle and Little Star were adopted by Roxanne and Loren in February 2018. Roxanne and Loren had lost their previous cat, Ginger, to feline leukemia in December 2017. They missed their cat terribly and decided that they wouldn't adopt another cat for a long time. But in January 2018, Loren was diagnosed with cancer. It was then they decided they wanted to adopt another cat.

Their daughter had volunteered at The Cat House for years, so they knew they wanted to adopt from here. They began visiting a few times a week and finally found Twinkle and Little Star. When Roxanne and Loren were first introduced to the pair, they immediately fell in love.

Twinkle and Little Star, on the other hand, were both very shy and scared. Both cats had been living on the street until they were taken in by a TCH volunteer. Twinkle

came in first; then her kitten, Little Star, joined her. The pair had come a long way in learning to trust people at TCH, and they eventually warmed up to Roxanne and Loren.

Roxanne and Loren didn't think there could be a more perfect match: both the human couple and the cat couple were afraid and uncertain of what their futures would hold. Roxanne and Loren knew that the four of them could heal together and

help each other through the difficult times they were all having to endure.

When Roxanne and Loren brought home Twinkle, whom they renamed Willow, and Little Star, whom they renamed Aspen, they respected their space and gave them their own little sanctuary in the laundry room. Before long, the cats became queen and princess of their domain.

Roxanne said they have never had cats as playful as Willow and Aspen. They love playing with soft toys or mice and flinging them up in the air with their paws, chasing them up and down the basement staircase. Now, Willow is the biggest love bug; she curls up on Roxanne's shoulder and purrs as she is petted. Aspen is more independent and only wants to be petted when she says so, but she is loved nonetheless.

Pictured: Willow (left) and Aspen "helping" Roxanne.



Ninja – 3 years



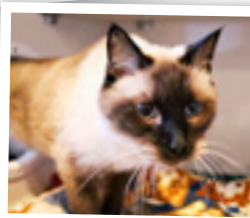
Valerie – 6 years



Punkin – 14 years



Patches – 3 years



Oliver – 15 years



Sox – 3 years

Catnip sticks, pet beds, and carrier liners!

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



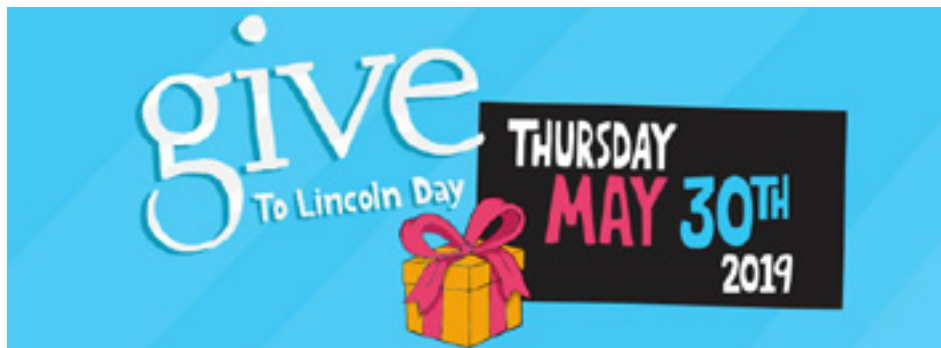
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Sally says a mouthful about biting kittens

Dear Sally:

I just got a new kitten. He is so cute! He loves to play and snuggle and uses his box perfectly. But there is one problem – he bites a lot. Will he grow out of it? How can I keep him from doing that?

Signed, Feel like a pincushion

Dear Pincushion:

Oh, oh, oh! Someone has turned my box the wrong way! It's supposed to be flat, but it's standing on end. I can hardly think ... and supper is late. It's terribly distressing. ... But I'll try to help you while I wait for someone to set things right.

Kittens often bite as part of play but they can certainly learn not to do so. In fact, that's one of the lessons they should have learned from their mom and their siblings. Kittens play rough with each other, with a lot of biting and scratching. They learn when they've gone too far if their siblings hiss or squeal or stop playing.

You can do a version of that training. But first, make sure that you are not contributing to the problem. Never use your hands as toys. Don't waggle your fingers or use your hand to wrestle with your cat. Be careful when dangling or pulling small toys because your kitten can aim for the toy and get your hand instead.



If your kitten bites you during play, give him an acceptable toy instead. If he persists, firmly and loudly say "No" or "Ouch," then slowly pull your hand away. Stop playing, so he learns that the fun stops if he bites. If he is very wound up, you may need to put him in a time out room until he calms ... Wait, I see someone coming! Will they fix my box? Will they bring my ... oh, no, it's not for me.

Back to biting kittens. One reason kittens bite may be that they are teething. Some kittens go through this phase with little problem. Others want to chew or bite more than usual. Again, redirection with a toy is best. There are some toys specially made for teething kittens. Some can be chilled to soothe tender gums.

Finally, if your kitten bites, don't hit him or spray him with water or shove him roughly. He may learn to fear you. Reward him for playing nicely and be sure to give him plenty of play time. You might think about getting him a playmate. Look for a cat or kitten of roughly similar age who will enjoy your kitten's energy and ... Oh, finally! There's my supper! And someone to fix my box.

Gotta go,
Sally

Achoo! Dealing with kitty colds

By Ann Adams

We have all seen our cats sneeze from time to time. Cat sneezes alone are generally just a sign of exposure to common irritants or allergens such as dust. If your cat is sneezing a lot and those sneezes are accompanied by other symptoms, such as watery eyes and nasal discharge, your cat may have caught something viral, similar to a human cold.

There are several common feline viruses that can produce cold-like symptoms in cats, but these are generally prevented by routine vaccinations. The best way to keep your cat from catching a kitty cold is to keep up on recommended shots and boosters.

If your cat has had all of its shots and is displaying cold-like symptoms accompanied by loss of appetite or lethargy, you will want to see your veterinarian. Some

bacterial upper respiratory infections may require prescription antibiotics. If your cat's symptoms are the result of something viral, their immune system should help them to overcome it.

Never give your cat cold or allergy medicine intended for humans. Instead, you can offer your cat some relief by keeping its eyes and nose wiped clean of any discharge with a soft, damp cloth.

A steamy bathroom or vaporizer can help to empty your cat's nasal passages of congestion. Feeding warmed up canned food can allow it to better smell its food and help to stimulate its appetite. If your cat's symptoms persist or worsen, do not hesitate to contact your vet.

*The Cat House
presents*



CATSINO & BINGO NIGHT

Saturday
APRIL 27

Doors 6:30 PM

Gambling 7:00-9:00 PM

Raffle Drawing 9:00 PM

CENTER FOR PEOPLE IN NEED
3901 N. 27TH STREET

**\$25 ENTRY
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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@thecatshouse.org. Please use "Newsletter" as the subject of the email.