

## VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

Deb Schaaf  
PAGE 2



## FEATURED CAT

Shay & Milo  
PAGE 3



## ADVICE CAT

Ruu  
PAGE 7



# THE CAT HOUSE Scoop

© Essence in a Flash by Kimberly McCarty

VOLUME NO. 24 | ISSUE NO. 1 | SPRING 2024



## 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  
thecathouse.org  
facebook.com/thecathouse

## BOARD MEMBERS

Faye Stevens *President*  
Julie Dahlke *Treasurer*  
Laura Wong *Secretary*  
Jeanné Lillich *Director*  
Martha Stoddard *Director*  
Sandi Nieveen *Director*  
Alma Vlasak *Director*  
Christine Nieman *Director*  
Heidi Borden *Director*

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

## Safety starts at home

By Kris Silva

In our homes, we strive to create havens of comfort and safety for our beloved feline companions. However, amidst the cozy nooks and crannies, there exist hidden dangers that can pose serious risks to our cats' well-being. As advocates for the health and happiness of every cat, we want to shed light on these often-overlooked hazards and provide guidance on how to mitigate them.

### Culinary cautions: Human foods to keep away from cats

While it's tempting to share our meals with our furry friends, certain human foods can be harmful to cats. Foods like ham and bacon, which are high in fat content, can predispose cats to pancreatitis, a painful inflammation of the pancreas. Additionally, grapes, raisins, onions, and chocolate are toxic to cats and should be kept out of their reach. Let's ensure our cats dine on safe, feline-friendly fare.

### Forbidden sips: Caffeine, alcohol, and more

Just as we avoid certain foods, it's equally important to keep beverages containing caffeine or alcohol away from our cats.

*Continued on page 4*

## Cats and children: Nurturing respectful companionship

By Allison Hunter-Frederick

Do you have children and are thinking of getting a cat? Cats and children can make wonderful companions for one another, especially when children are taught how to treat their new friend with care and respect.

Start the bonding process out in the right way by allowing your family's new cat to acclimate to its new home without anyone present. Let your cat settle into a routine--eating, using the litter box, and exploring its new space undisturbed. After your cat has had a day or so to settle in, then have your children give your cat the choice of whether to interact. Teach each child to hold out their hand, wait for your cat to approach, and then reinforce positive interactions with treats. If your cat sniffs your child's hand and rubs into it, show your child how to gently pet their new companion.

### Respect cat resources

Allow your family's cat to use its resources in privacy. No one should interrupt a cat when it is using the litter box or scratching post.

*Continued on page 4*

# 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
- Retail events
- Feral/TNR program
- Foster care

# Volunteer Spotlight: Deb Schaaf

By Ann Adams

At The Cat House, we're not just a shelter; we're a community of compassionate volunteers dedicated to the well-being of our feline friends. One such member of our community is Deb Schaaf, whose unwavering dedication and love for cats have shone brightly for the past 11 years.

"I LOVE CATS!!" Deb exclaims, and it's evident in every aspect of her involvement. Beyond her affection for cats, Deb resonates deeply with TCH's mission and values, finding purpose in every moment she spends volunteering.

For over a decade, Deb has served as a Team Leader on Monday nights, overseeing volunteers and ensuring each cat receives the love and care they deserve. But her contributions don't end there; Deb fosters cats, lends a hand during monthly vet visits, and even bakes treats for our bake sales.

When asked about her favorite activities, Deb finds it hard to choose, as each holds a special place in her heart. However, she particularly enjoys the medical aspects, such as weighing cats and accompanying them to vet visits. With a background as a surgical tech at a local surgery center, Deb's expertise and compassion shine through in providing essential care to our feline friends.



But perhaps what truly sets Deb apart is her ability to connect with even the most timid cats, earning their trust through patience and understanding. Her dedication to these "projects" is truly remarkable and speaks volumes about her commitment.

One special cat named Phelps has become Deb's permanent foster. Despite facing challenges due to paralysis in his hind legs, Phelps is a continually active cat. "He climbs on furniture and races around the house like the crazy guy he is." Deb's love and care have transformed Phelps's life, allowing him to thrive.

Deb Schaaf's journey as a volunteer at TCH is a testament to the wonderful impact one individual can have on the lives of countless cats. Thank you, Deb, for being a shining example of compassion and kindness. Your dedication to our cause and the love you share with every cat you meet enriches our community.

# Digging into the origins of cat litter

By Ann Adams

In the world of pet care, few inventions have had as significant an impact as cat litter. It is a product that no cat owner can imagine living without, but do you know how and when cat litter was invented? Let's uncover the origins of cat litter and how it revolutionized feline hygiene.

Before the advent of commercial cat litter, cat owners relied on materials like sand, soil, or even ashes. While these options served their purpose to some extent, they were far from ideal. These options were messy, not very absorbent, and did little to help with odor control.

In 1947, Edward Lowe stumbled upon a game-changing solution while working at his father's industrial absorbents company.

A neighbor approached Lowe seeking an alternative to the ash she had been using for her cat's litter box. Drawing inspiration from a material used to absorb oil spills in factories, Lowe suggested using clay granules instead. The first commercial cat litter, called Kitty Litter, was born.

Lowe's innovative product not only provided superior odor control and absorbency, but it also proved to be more convenient and hygienic. Word quickly spread among cat owners, and demand for his Kitty Litter soared.

As the benefits of commercial cat litter became increasingly evident, other companies began introducing their own variations of the product. From clumping

formulas to scented options, cat litter underwent continuous refinement to cater to the diverse needs of pet owners and their feline companions.

Cat litter has continued to evolve over the last 77 years. Today, there is a wide variety of cat litter options, ranging from traditional clay-based varieties to eco-friendly alternatives made from recycled materials.

What started as a simple solution to a widespread problem has transformed into an indispensable tool for cat owners worldwide, enhancing the lives of both cats and their caregivers.

# Shay

By Kris Silva

We're thrilled to introduce you to one of our most charming residents--Shay! This lovely lady has a unique blend of calico fur offsetting her white paws and belly. The name Shay comes from the Hebrew word meaning "gift."

Born in the early months of 2015, Shay's journey with The Cat House began in May of 2023 when her human had to move to a place that didn't allow feline companions. Understandably, this change left Shay with a bit of cattitude upon her arrival; however, with patience and understanding from the staff and volunteers at TCH, she has started to relax and settle into shelter life.

Shay is a cat who knows what she wants, and she's not afraid to let you know! She prefers the company of calm, patient humans who understand the art of bonding with an introverted kitty. Once she feels comfortable, Shay is an absolute delight, showering her chosen companions with affection and purrs.

It's been observed that Shay would thrive best as the sole fur baby in her future forever home. While she appreciates human attention, she prefers to keep her kingdom free from the presence of other pets. Additionally, Shay would be most content in a household without young children, where she can enjoy a peaceful and serene environment tailored to her preferences.

Despite her initial reservations, Shay has proven herself to be a resilient and loving companion, just waiting for the right person to share her life with. Could that person be you?

If you are seeking a feline friend who's as unique and beautiful on the inside as she is on the outside, we invite you to come meet Shay. She's sure to capture your heart with her gentle nature and irresistible charm.



# Milo

By Cassie Kilmurray

Meet Milo! Milo is an ebony tabby cat with splashes of white and a very lively personality. One of his favorite things to do, besides eating food, thinking about food, or anything to do with food really, is getting to talk to people. Milo lives in the first room of the Blue Unit in The Cat House where he has made himself the unofficial-official greeter of the Blue Unit. He takes his job very seriously, making sure to chat with everyone who walks by or stops in for a visit.

Milo arrived at TCH last year after an extraordinary multi-year-long adventure. Milo was originally adopted from the Capital Humane Society 3 years ago. Unfortunately, tragedy struck shortly after he was adopted when his adopter passed away. Milo went missing then and wasn't found until 2 years later as a stray cat in Wahoo by a local rescue volunteer. After reading his microchip, the rescue discovered Milo had traveled 42 miles from home!

After such a long adventure, Milo was ready to find his forever family. While the volunteer was able to contact the adopter's wife, she did not want Milo back. While at the shelter, Milo tested positive for FIV (Feline Immunodeficiency Virus). He was eventually brought to TCH where, despite our best efforts, Milo remains patiently waiting for a second chance. We remain hopeful that Milo will soon find the loving home he deserves.



## 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.



Patches - 8 yrs



Haven (FIV+) - 8 years



Jade - 9 years



Lincoln - 2 years



Mia - 10 years



Gianna (FIV+) - 4 years



Mimi (FIV+) - 2 years



Lola - 8 years



Henry - 6 years



Alice Jolene - 1 year

## Cats and children, continued from page 1

When your cat is in a high or low resting space, your child should never try to squeeze next to your cat or pull your cat out of its space. Instead, your cat should be allowed to come out on its own or be lured out in a non-stressful way with treats or toys.

To encourage respect for a cat's space, you might embrace Lucy Johnson's idea to encourage your children to create a "cat bedroom" by turning an open box over on its side, putting a cat bed in the box, and then decorating the "bedroom" with what you think your cat would like.

### Understand cat body language

Teach your children how to read and respect cat body language.

Happy cats typically have a loose posture, with limbs and tail stretched out away from their body. Their eyes may be half-closed and sometimes they'll purr or knead. This is the best time to invite interaction.

When cats are in play mode, they'll act as if they're hunting by staring at an object, then crouching, wiggling their bottom, and finally chasing, pouncing on, and biting an object to "kill" it. Their eyes will also be round, and their ears will face forward. This is a good time to throw toys for your family's cat to chase or to engage your cat with a wand toy.

Signs of anxiety in cats include dilated eyes, flattened ears, lip licking, a hunched-up body, and tucked tail. Anxious cats should be left alone and have their need for space respected.

### Offer choice about handling

Be a role model to your children in how you handle cats. Ask your children to wait for your family's cat to invite them to pet it. Show them how to touch your cat around its face and back and to avoid touching your cat's more sensitive areas such as its tail and stomach. Also, never allow your children to chase after your cat or force interactions. Otherwise, your cat will begin to avoid your child, or worse.

### Younger Children

- Minimize the stress to your cat of being handled by a young child by teaching your child to sit on the floor or a couch and inviting your cat into their lap.
- Have your child lure your cat into interactions by using treats or toys.
- Reinforce your cat for calm behavior with petting, treats, or toys.
- Always allow your cat to leave when it wants.

### Older Children

- To appropriately handle a cat, place one hand under your cat's belly and slowly lift your cat's front feet off the floor.
- Put the other hand under the cat's back end to support its back legs as you continue to pick it up.
- Hold your cat securely against your body as you support its feet.
- If your cat wants to get down, lower your cat to an elevated structure or to the floor where your cat can walk off without needing to jump down.

Encourage your children to spend time with your cat in ways that don't involve handling, such as reading aloud, playing with wand toys, or training your cat. All of these activities will give your children the chance to interact with your cat but will also allow your cat to keep its distance while enjoying your child's company.

### Play safely with your cat

When your children play with your family's cat, they should use cat toys and not their hands or feet. Playing with hands or feet teaches cats that it's okay to use claws and teeth on a person, which could lead to your cat unintentionally hurting your child.

Summer Pruitt says that in her home two popular toys for both cats and children are laser pointers and wand toys. If you use laser pointers, keep a couple of cautions in mind. First, be careful not to shine the laser in anyone's eyes. Second, always end a round of play with a treat, so that the cat actually catches its "prey." If you use wand toys, Summer cautions that for young kids, "they MUST be sitting to use the wand, tripping with one doesn't end well."

When your children are playing together or with peers, have them play in a room that is separate from your cat or play outside. Normal children's play may frighten your cat.

### Care for cat

Having a cat for a companion is about more than just snuggles and fun. Involve your children in the care of your family's cat by assigning each of them the responsibility of preparing meals, grooming, or cleaning the litter boxes.

Summer says, "I try to incorporate cat care so that they're routinely having positive interactions with each other. My toddler doesn't have the patience to sit and pet them, but he's an absolute pro at feeding them."

Lucy says, "When I've taken adoption

calls for kittens, I usually suggest that the kids are in charge of setting up a nightly play time with the kittens. There are multiple benefits: it's an opportunity to teach toy safety, gives the kids some ownership, helps develop a bond with the kittens, and if they can expel some of a kitten's energy at the end of the day, it means the humans are less likely to be woken up in the middle of the night by a bored kitten."

Remember that you are the adult and therefore are responsible for both your children and your pets. Always supervise any pet chores you assign to younger children.

By following the tips I've given you, your children can be your cat's friends and companions while also learning how to care for and respect cats.

---

## Safety starts at home, continued from page 1

These substances can have adverse effects on their health, ranging from digestive issues to more severe complications. It's best to keep our cats hydrated with fresh water and steer clear of caffeinated or alcoholic drinks.

### Toxics unmasked: Common household culprits

Beyond the kitchen, several everyday household items can lead to unexpected vet visits. Items such as pain relievers like acetaminophen and ibuprofen, medical creams containing estrogen, and sunscreens with zinc oxide should be stored securely. Similarly, insecticides containing pyrethroids like permethrin, canine flea and tick medications, and antifreeze pose risks to our feline friends. Stay vigilant and keep these items safely out of paw's reach.

### DIY downsides: Navigating crafty hazards

For those who enjoy crafting, it's essential to be mindful of potential hazards to our curious cats. Items such as needles, thread, and yarn may be part of our creative space, but they can pose dangers to our furry companions. Ensure crafting supplies are securely stored to prevent accidental ingestion or injuries.

By raising awareness about these indoor hazards and providing guidance on how to mitigate them, we can create environments where our feline friends thrive.

# Donations in memory & honor of...

## In memory of

Shari Aldrich from Beth Truesdell, Cathleen Zugmier, Kathryn Sherfey, and Jeff Zugmier

Sue Olson from Kristine Reins, Michelle Jacobsen, Bonnie Harvey, and Laura Hans

Marilyn Baalhorn from Sarah Garber

Barbara DiBernard from Aryls and Ken Reitan

Barbara Stock from Susan Steinegger, Richard Proffitt, Sheila Biggs, Sara Stephenson, and Craig and Pippa Lawson

Pam Debord from Susan Evans

Ed and Pat (Murphy) Roth from Jan Roth-Schoonover

Consuelo Schuster from Richard Schuster

Bobo from Terri Ratliff

Janet O'Neal's sweet Sunny from Kathy King

Tinker Warner from Mary and Roger Chisholm

Thomas from Judy Allen

Michael "Mike" Paul Oehm from Machel Oehm, Jan Baker, Brenda Kubicek, and Donna Bouwens

Kittery from Suzann Meierdierks

Lucy from Connie Vitamvas

Almond Joy from Pat Caudill Cole

Thomas from Mikayla Tegler

Karen Waak from Fallbrook Assisted Living

Gray from Craig Herman

Sophie and Zolie from Anita Friehe

Django and Buff from Diane Steinke

Jim and Muffy from Sandra Mertlik

Bob Hanna from Sheila Jones

Sparta, the cat, from Stacey Hauser

Coral from an anonymous donor

Myles from Ryan Bass

Sid and Sasha from Karen McCluskey

Abigale and Gracie from Leslie Gerlach

Custer from Debbie Hoef

Kitty Girl from Jan Adams

June Elaine Arnold from Jean Linscott

Romeo and Juliet from Susan K. and Jeff Hart

Jerry Northrop from Randy Vaupel

Laura Porter from Randy Vaupel

Nancy Hurdle from James Hurdle

Karen Rose Hardesty from Nancy Trouba; Julie Shasteen; Deanne Repich; Ed Trouba and families; Stephanie (Trouba) Sharp; Kevin, David, and Donnie Trouba; Lana Warner; and John and Teresa Chab

Dr. Robert Dobberstein from Greg and Barb Fauver and Melody and Paul Kasl

Ted Rinebarger from Lau Financial Group

Austin Burkhart from Samantha Burkhart, Peggy Flesch, and Michele Kelley

Butterscotch from Kathryn Zoller

Rick Conrad from Molly Conrad

Don Foley from Ann Maul

Robert Garrison Brown from Lesiie Galloway

## In honor of

Heidi Osborne from Carol Ochsner

David and Amy Marshall from Giving Realty and HMS Commercial LLC

The Licht Family from Mary King

Sue Howe from Robin Howe

Geoff Balliet and Karin Dalziel from Sandra Black

Gizmo and Pumpkin from Bill and Sandy Spielman

Bob and Joyce Howe from The Elmore's

The Boone Family, The McConnells, and The Pedersens from Theresa Wagner

Magoo and Joe Lewis from Kayelynn Roche

Bill and Mimi Zinnecker and Sunny from Teresa Jackson

Delaney Dier from Stephanie Salzwedel

Mimi, Dennis, and Harlow (Sam) from John Martin

Max T. Cat and Callie Kitty from Mr. Whiskers and David Johns

Toby's 12th birthday from Carol Knolle-Faulkner

Arabella from Joe Divis

Jay Jones from Sheila Jones

Virg and Sandi Stewart from Stacey Hauser

Milo from Katelyn Kunzman

Lynda Hames' birthday from Geoffrey Hames

Gwyneth and Ryan Bauer and Pepper from David Roberts

Veronica and Mike Cammarata from Gina Cammarata Smith

Piper and Colin from Michele Tulis

Russell Struthers Troxel for donating his birthday and holiday money to The Cat House

TCH kitties from Orson Welles, Mafi, and Azrael

Jayne Smith Boehle from Debra Boehle

Russell Troxel from Nicholas Troxel

## Special thanks to

Dr. Kelly Jordan

Dr. Shelley Knudsen

Dr. Margarita Perez

All Feline Hospital

Pitts Veterinary Hospital

Vondra Veterinary Clinic

Creature Comforts Mobile Veterinary Service

Cause For Paws

Nature's Variety

Petco

Tractor Supply

# Give to Lincoln Day 2024

By Alma Vlasak

The Lincoln Community Foundation has begun registering nonprofits in the Lincoln-Lancaster County area for the 13th annual Give to Lincoln (G2L) fund-raising event to be held May 30, 2024.

The employees who work on this project at the foundation have been especially busy this year, making it possible to offer matching funds of \$650,000! These monies will be distributed on a proportional basis to non-profits based on the amount each raises by the end of the event during the month of May.

This is an important source of revenue for The Cat House, Lincoln's only no-kill cat shelter. Our mission is to provide a place for cats and kittens who no longer have a home. We are dedicated to finding them their forever homes. We provide safe shelter, food, and veterinary care to include spays or neuters, vaccinations, microchips, and other help that the cats and kittens need. The monies we get from Give to Lincoln Day supplement funds we take in from adoptions, retail sales, and other fund-raising events.

The monies we receive also support our Trap, Neuter, and Return (TNR) program. The goal of TNR is to address the problem of endlessly reproducing cat colonies. Through spay/neuter and vaccination, we hope to stabilize non-reproducing cat colonies and to keep the cats healthy.

Most G2L fundraising takes place online. TCH will also have a link on our website, or donors can go to [givetolincoln.com](http://givetolincoln.com). Donations will be accepted from May 1-30. Learn more about G2L by visiting [givetolincoln.com](http://givetolincoln.com) and search on About.

TCH is very thankful for those donors who support our work and help us find cats/kittens their forever homes. Your generosity will never be forgotten. Thank you.

# Calendar of Events

## give TO LINCOLN DAY MAY 30, 2024

Midnight to 11:59 p.m.  
Option to give May 1 through 30  
at [thecathouse.org/give](http://thecathouse.org/give)



**Saturdays from June 29 - August 3**

8 a.m. to noon

Check our website, [thecathouse.org](http://thecathouse.org), Facebook, or Instagram for our location at the market. Pet beds, catnip sticks, and other items will be available.

## Happy Tails Stats

Here are the number of cats adopted in recent months.

October	26
November	18
December	27
January	27
February	32
March	24

## Happy Adoption: Selena picks her person

By Martha Stoddard

Selena was not very happy when she landed at The Cat House last year. She had been out of sorts in her last home, especially after the new baby arrived. And she didn't much care for ending up in a place with all those other cats and a bunch of strangers. Even a private room didn't stop her from grumping. But with time and patience from volunteers, she mellowed a bit.

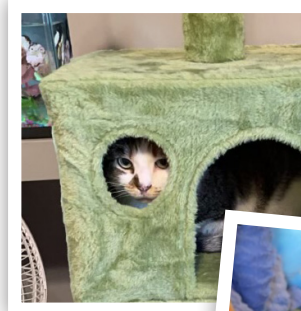
That's when Renee, Peter, and daughter Baylee entered her life. The Lincoln family never had a cat before. But Baylee wanted a cat, and she had talked Renee and Peter into the idea and they had been looking around for a while. When Baylee saw Selena online, she knew she wanted to meet her.

For Selena, it was love at first sight. The first time they visited, Renee said Selena jumped on Baylee's legs and made herself at home. After they took a few days to think about it, the family went back. Selena jumped on Baylee's legs again, and the decision was made.

"Those two are inseparable," Renee said.

In her new home, Selena was renamed Lola. She spent her early days hanging out with Baylee and sleeping with her. A baby gate at the top of the basement stairs kept the family's three small dogs out of her space while she adjusted. It took about a month before Lola was ready to brave the dogs and venture into the upstairs areas, Renee said.

The first trips were short, with Lola dashing back to her safe area at the first sign of trouble. But she learned that if the dogs get too close, she could keep them at



bay with a few hisses and swats. Now, Lola regularly hangs out upstairs when Baylee is not home. She has a cat tree in the sun, where she lounges most of the day. She hangs out with Peter when Baylee is not around and will follow Baylee to the kitchen when it's time to get her food ready.

"It's working out really well," Renee said. "I'm glad she found us."

It sounds like Lola would say the same.



Annie - 13 years



Hank - 4 years



Elmo - 5 years

# An ear-tip tale: Ruu outsources the advice column

Hey, Advice Cat:

I'm pretty new to The Cat House, so I'm still learning the ropes. Why do all these people come to visit and think my ear got hurt in a fight or something? Sure, it looks different with the tip gone, but haven't they ever heard of TNR?

Signed, Alzo

---

Dear Alzo:

Why are you bothering me? Why would I care what people say about other cats' ears? I'm trying to nap here, so why don't you just write the column this time? Tell people what happened to your ear and stop bothering me. In fact, that sounds like a great idea. I'll just take it easy this issue.

Yours, Ruu

---

Really? Wow! Okay, I'll take it from here and tell people my story. I was born and spent my first months of life outside on the streets of Lincoln. Where isn't important. It could have been almost any part of the city. My mom taught me and my brothers and sisters important lessons about finding food and looking out for danger.

When I got a little older, I started

wandering a little more and met some cats that lived in the same area. Some of the adult guys were scary. When they met, they yowled and hissed and, once, I even saw two of them get in a big fight. I mean, there was blood! It wasn't too much later that one of them disappeared for a couple of nights. When he came back, he was changed. The tip of his left ear was gone, and he had mellowed. The second guy came around and he didn't even seem to care! He stopped chasing after the females, too. Then the second guy disappeared and the same thing happened.

Then it was my turn. It happened one late summer evening. I was just checking out my usual spots when I discovered some great-smelling tuna in what looked like a little cave. Except it turned out not to be a cave. I walked in and had just reached the tuna when "Snap"! It was a cage trap, and I was locked in! I panicked and started trying everything to get out. Nothing worked. Finally, I gave up and just sat there.

Eventually, a human came by, pulled a cover over the trap and picked up the trap with me in it. Then we were off. It was my first ride in a car, but it wasn't too scary with the cover. The human left me all night in the trap, somewhere, then we went in the car again in the morning to a place with lots

of unhappy cats and strange smells. I was terrified, especially when more humans took the cover off, squeezed me into a corner of the trap and stuck me with a needle.

When I came to, I was in a carrier, and I realized that I was missing the tip of my ear. What's more, after I started cleaning the smells off myself, I realized that wasn't the only part of me missing. I heard the humans talking about Trap-Neuter-Return, which they called TNR, and about trying to catch my mom and the rest of the cats in our area to get them spayed or neutered, vaccinated, and microchipped. They said those of us with an ear tip missing had already been "done" and didn't need to be trapped again.

I'll tell you, that sounded hopeful. I knew I would never go near a trap again, but I still wondered what would happen to me. What happened was another car ride, and, Halleluia, the human opened the carrier door and I saw my old familiar home area. I shot out of there so fast they could never catch me again. So, there you have it. That's my TNR story. If you want to know how I ended up at The Cat House 3 years after that incident, well, maybe I can tell you that story another time.

Thanks, Alzo

---

## Whisker-worth DIY: Crafting a puzzle feeder for your cat

By Cassie Kilmurray

Are you a cat lover? A DIY enthusiast? Looking to enhance your cat's mealtime? Here is a cat-approved project for you. Puzzle feeders are interactive food-dispensing toys that are designed to challenge and entertain your cat. By making cats work for their food, puzzle feeders mimic the thrill of hunting. Not only do they offer a fun and engaging mealtime, or snacktime, but they also promote cats' overall well-being. Puzzle feeders can be made out of everyday items making it a very affordable and easy way to spice up your cat's life.

### Supplies List:

- Small container with a top or lid (such as a disposable food container)
- Adhesive rubber dots
- Exacto knife or box cutter
- Scissors

- Black marker
- Rubbing alcohol
- Sandpaper
- Small cat toys/balls (at least one with a bell for stimulating sounds)
- Cat kibble or treats

### Step 1: Add Rubber Dots

After gathering your supplies, flip your container upside down and add an adhesive rubber dot to each corner of the container. This will stop the container from sliding around, especially if you plan to give this to your cat on anything that is a slick surface (i.e., hardwood floors, tile, etc.).

### Step 2: Design the Puzzle

Using the black marker, draw circles of varying sizes on the top of the container or lid. Take the Exacto knife or box cutter and cut an X into each circle, this will create

an opening to allow you to use scissors to cut the rest of the circle out. After cutting all of the circles, use the rubbing alcohol to clean off any remaining black marks. You can then use the sandpaper to smooth out any edges. (Paws and jagged edges don't go together!)

### Step 3: Assemble

Next, add in the toys. The best part is you don't need to buy new toys for this, just use ones you already have. Make sure you have your quality-control inspector (your furry best friend) check your work and ensure everything is ready. Finally, add some treats, close the lid, and you're good to go! It might take some time for your cat to figure it out, but that's the point. Puzzle feeders challenge your cat, but your cat will get a lot of satisfaction once it finally gets a treat.



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

NON-PROFIT ORG  
 US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
 PERMIT NO. 800



© Essence in a Flash by Kimberly McCarty



**THE CAT HOUSE | THE NO-KILL ALTERNATIVE**

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

**Please select your contribution amount:**  
 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@thecatshouse.org](mailto:info@thecatshouse.org). Please use "Newsletter" as the subject of the email.