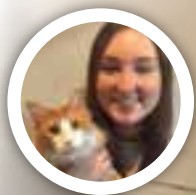


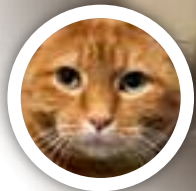
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THE CAT HOUSE Scoop

VOLUME NO. 26 | ISSUE NO. 2 | FALL 2026



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

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The Cat House is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. TCH is funded primarily by donations and adoption fees and is staffed primarily by volunteers.

TCH Cats Among Millions Saved by New FIP Drug

By Martha Stoddard

A few issues back, The Cat House Scoop reported on Walter's fight against a fatal cat disease and the new treatment that saved his life. The disease was feline infectious peritonitis, or FIP. The treatment was GS-441524, a medication that stops the FIP-causing virus from multiplying in a cat's body.

That medication has saved millions of cats around the world and turned what used to be a death sentence into a still difficult, but treatable, illness. Those millions of cats now include several from TCH. Along with Walter, there have been Ken Siemek, Bella Joele, Cowboy, and Soot Sprite. All survived FIP and got to be adopted and enjoy a home of their own.

FIP begins with infection by a feline coronavirus. Although the virus is from the same family that causes COVID in humans, this one only affects cats. This feline coronavirus is widespread, and many cats get it with few signs or symptoms. Only a few develop the mutated form of the virus that leads to FIP.

The risk of developing FIP is higher for kittens, immune-compromised cats, certain pedigreed breeds, and senior cats. It is also

higher for cats in multi-cat living situations. The mutated virus triggers an intense inflammatory response, which can affect the abdomen, kidneys, brain, eyes, or other organs.

Until recently, an FIP diagnosis meant a heart-breaking end. A breakthrough came in 2018-19, when researchers investigating anti-viral medications proved that GS-441524 could effectively treat FIP. (The medication is a chemical cousin to remdesivir, an antiviral drug used to reduce the severity of COVID.)

GS-441524 became widely available after June 2024, when the federal Food and Drug Administration announced it would not stand in the way of it being sold in the United States. Several compounding pharmacies now sell the medication in tablet form or as a liquid suspension. Some also sell an injectable form of the drug. Veterinarians are also becoming more familiar with the medication.

The drug was still new when TCH tried it with a struggling foster kitten. Penelope improved on the drug but ultimately did not survive her other health problems.

Continued on page 6

Calendar of Events

Fall Garage & Bake Sale

October 10 / 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

The Cat House, 3663 "O" St.

Bean Box Coffee Truck, 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

Mini-tours available every 15 minutes.

Calling All The Baddies...

October 24 / Noon to 4 p.m.

Amarie Beauty Studio

6116 Havelock Ave.

TCH retail items for sale.

Seward Junior Women's 46th

Holiday Craft Show

November 21 / 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Seward County Fairgrounds (event is in three different buildings)

Nerdmass V

November 21 / 10 a.m. to 6 p.m.

Embassy Suites by Hilton

Omaha/La Vista

12540 Westport Parkway, La Vista

Lincoln Women's Expo

January 2027 (dates to be announced)

Sandhills Global Event Center

Volunteer Opportunities

You can fill out a volunteer application online at thecathouse.org, come in during open hours to fill out an application, or e-mail questions to 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: Addysen Clyde

By Laura Wong

There's always another cat that needs help.

For our TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) Coordinator, Addysen Clyde, that simple truth has become both a motivation and a way of life. What started with one unexpected cat showing up on her doorstep eventually opened her eyes to the countless community cats in need throughout our area and led her to become one of The Cat House's dedicated TNR volunteers and, now, our TNR Coordinator.



Outside of TCH, Addysen works as a registered behavior technician and enjoys antiquing, thrifting, and crafts like needlepoint. But if she has free time, you're more likely to find her watching a trap, talking with a colony caretaker, or planning her next TNR stop. Addysen has also recently started fostering cats, adding yet another way to help cats in need.

Her journey with TCH began when a cat unexpectedly appeared on her doorstep. "I had no idea what to do," she says. "Spoiler alert: there was more than just one cat."

She discovered the TCH TNR program, and from there, everything began to fall into place. After starting her own community cat colony, she began venturing out to help other cats as well. The more she learned, the more she saw.

"After starting my own colony, my eyes were opened to just how many community cats are all around us," she says. "I couldn't stop at helping my own colony when I knew there were so many other cats who could

benefit from TNR."

That realization sparked a passion that continues to grow. "I knew there was work to be done, and I knew I could help, so I jumped in."

Today, as TNR Coordinator, she helps coordinate veterinary appointments, assists with trapping and transporting cats, and works with colony caretakers when a cat is sick, injured, or due for updated vaccinations. She also teaches caretakers how to trap and helps connect them with resources available through The Cat House.

For Addysen, the most rewarding part of TNR is the impact. And much of that impact is invisible.

"One single cat being TNR'd can save so many lives," she explains.

Community cats face countless dangers while living outdoors, and TNR helps reduce the number of cats exposed to those risks. The benefits go beyond population control. A TNR'd cat receives vaccinations and is less likely to engage in fighting. Having a caretaker monitoring the cat means illness and injuries are more likely to be noticed. A microchip can help connect a cat back to TCH if it ever needs medical assistance. And for female cats, TNR means something especially important: they no longer have the burden of constant motherhood. "They get to just be a cat."

That individual impact is one of the reasons TNR has become so meaningful to Addysen. One cat in particular helped her realize just how much she could do. His name was Motley.

Motley had a significant injury on his face, and at the time, Addysen was very new to TNR. She wasn't sure exactly how she was going to help him. She only knew that she was going to find a way.

The previous TNR Coordinator, Amy, brought her equipment and shared as much information as she could before heading off to help with another mission. Then the waiting began.

For days, Addysen spent hours sitting outside, hoping Motley would eventually enter the large trap. On the third day, it started to rain. She was just minutes away from giving up for the day when Motley appeared.

Continued on page 3

Emmett and Chester

By Alma Vlasak

I stopped by The Cat House the other day, and there they were—Emmett and Chester! The shelter was quiet, and I was greeted by two of the sweetest cats I've ever met. Chester gave me the obligatory sniff and leg rub and then rolled on his back for a quick tummy rub.

These bonded cats came from a home where their human mom had passed away and their human dad suffered severe allergies, which led them to TCH, their current home. Physically they resemble each other and apparently have been well cared for. Well-muscled, with round heads, they are handsome boys. Middle age has added a little extra weight, but they carry themselves well.

Emmett is the older of the two at 9 1/2 years of age; Chester is 8 1/2 years. Still playful and loving, they have many years to give the right person or people. Both



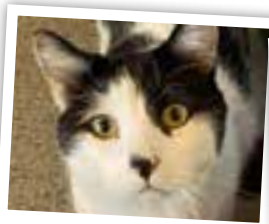
were front declawed, but thankfully they don't appear to have suffered any ill effects from the procedure. Emmett is a dilute orange short-haired tabby or buff color, and Chester is also an orange short-haired tabby with more distinctive striping, particularly around his face and tail. Both boys have green eyes, and Chester has brown flecks in the green of his right eye. His gaze draws a person in as though offering to share his life with whomever takes them home.

They would be happiest in a quiet home together, but, according to their roommate, Snowball, they get along well with other cats if introduced properly.

My visit ended with all three escorting me to their door and respectfully letting me slip away. These are cats who deserve the best a human has to offer.

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.



Meowzer (FeLV+) – 2 years



Jingle – 3 years



Jangle – 3 years



Rhea – 9 years



Ruby (FIV+) – 7 years



Maryjane – 10 years

Continued: Addysen Clyde

"He was staring at me," she remembers. "I looked at him and he looked at me for a while." And then, finally, Motley accepted her help and walked into the trap.

"For me, that was the moment I realized that I could do more." Every cat she has helped since then holds a special place in her heart, but Motley remains a reminder of why she keeps going. Whenever she finds herself waiting for another cat to enter a trap, she remembers him. She remembers the rain. The long hours. The uncertainty. And she remembers the joy of finally being able to help. "Even if it takes days and hours in the cold, every single cat is worth it to me."

Her own cats are another example of the unexpected ways TNR can change lives. She has three cats: Honey, Tiger, and Shyguy. Honey and Tiger are both girls with sweet personalities. Shyguy, however, has a special story.

Shyguy was one of her original colony members. After Shyguy suffered an injury, he was brought inside to recover, and apparently, he had no intention of going back outside. "His first night inside, he slept on his back with his belly up and his paws in the air," she says. That was all it took. "I just knew he wasn't leaving." Shyguy was adopted and is now living his best life indoors.

For anyone interested in getting involved with TNR, Addysen's advice is simple: "Just start."

You don't have to know everything before helping your first cat. She certainly didn't. There are people who can teach you, answer your questions, and help you along the way. TNR can feel overwhelming when you see how many cats need help. But you don't have to save them all at once. "Just help the one in front of you."

That philosophy captures what TNR—and The Cat House's mission—is all about. One cat. One caretaker. One trap. One life at a time.

Because there is always another cat that needs help. And sometimes, all it takes is one person willing to stop and say, "I can help this one."

Fostering Success for Hallow

By Allison Hunter-Frederick

I first met Hallow in 2020 at The Cat House while socializing scared cats. She was curled up in a ball on the bench in her room. At first, I'd sit on the floor next to her and talk softly to her. Eventually, I could brush and pet her, and I was happy when she was adopted.

A year later, I learned that Hallow had been returned for the second time due to being scared of people. I wondered if fostering her as a "project cat" might help her become more comfortable with people and eventually adoptable. The Cat House agreed to let me try, and I brought her home.

Other scared fosters had warmed up to me with treats, but Hallow didn't have any interest in anything except her meals. If I got too close, she'd hiss or swat. I began to wonder whether I could socialize her.

Because Hallow was playing with plush toys on her own, I decided to try wand toys. I discovered that she liked a long strand of fleece run underneath a blanket. Later, a feather wand became her favorite and led to a breakthrough. I could encourage her to inch closer, then pet her with the toy, and eventually with my hand.

I invited friends and acquaintances to meet her. She retreated from new people, allowing only repeat visitors to sit near

her. It looked as if she might only bond closely with only one or two people. Even so, I thought I could help a future adopter build that bond.

Our youngest cat, Rainy, began sitting outside the glass door watching Hallow. At first, she hissed at this stranger, but over time she began to simply sit and observe. Hallow was excited to rub on a cloth with Rainy's scent and liked to watch Rainy when she'd visit. My husband and I wondered whether Hallow might become a friend for her.

Over time, Hallow became increasingly affectionate with me. She started meowing for me at mealtimes, running to greet me, and curling up beside me on the sofa, sometimes happily drooling while I scratched her chin. Once, when she spotted a spider, she even called me over to investigate it with her. Hallow became a bright spot in my day and, in her own way, an emotional support cat.

She also became more comfortable in our home. Gradually, she went from being coaxed toward the stairs of her foster room to bounding downstairs on her own to spend time with us. She went from creeping



into our bedroom to sleeping beside me.

Her first year with us, we had no intention of adopting her. We had two senior cats with health issues, weren't sure another cat made sense financially, and were still working on her relationships with the others. The Cat House graciously allowed us to continue fostering her long-term.

Three years after taking her on as a foster, we decided to adopt her. She had found her family with us. Hallow has now been part of our lives for nearly 5 years. Our other cats tolerate her, and we're still working on those relationships, but Hallow is home. We love having her as part of our family and look forward to seeing how she continues to blossom.

Keeping Playtime Fresh: Fun Ways to Bond with Your Cat

By Ann Adams

Eat, prey, love. For our feline friends, that's a pretty good recipe for a happy life. Cats may enjoy a cozy bed and a full food bowl, but they also need opportunities to tap into their natural instincts. Playtime gives them the chance to stalk, chase, pounce, and "catch" their prey—all while spending quality time with their favorite person.

And the best part? You don't need fancy equipment or hours of free time. A few minutes of interactive play each day can make a big difference.

Think like prey. For cats, the most engaging toys are often the ones that move like something they might hunt in the wild. Wand toys are a great choice because you can make the toy dart, pause, hide, and suddenly reappear (all while keeping your hands safe). Try moving it along the floor,

behind a piece of furniture, or around a corner. Let your cat watch, stalk, and plan their attack before they pounce.

Avoid simply waving a toy in your cat's face. Instead, think like prey: move away from your cat, occasionally stop, and give them a chance to catch it.

Let your cat catch the prize. A satisfying play session should include the opportunity to catch the "prey." If your cat never gets the toy, they may become frustrated or lose interest.

Every so often, let your cat successfully pounce and deliver some kill bites. You can then restart the game and give them another chance to stalk and chase. Ending a play session with a successful catch can help make play feel rewarding and complete. Adding a meal or treat directly after a

successful hunt is even better!

Keep things fresh. Just like people, cats can get bored. Rotate your cat's toys rather than leaving every toy out all the time. Put some away for a week or two, then bring them back out. A familiar toy can suddenly feel exciting again when it has been "missing" for a while.

You can also change how you play. One day might be a fast-paced chase around the room. Another might involve slowly creeping a toy around a corner. Sometimes the best game is simply hiding a toy and letting your cat search for it.

Follow your cat's lead. Every cat has their own hunting style. Some love to chase things across the floor. Others prefer toys that fly through the air.

Continued on page 6

Donations in Memory & Honor Of...

In memory of

Bettie Maixner from Wendy Hladky

Debbi Schwindt from Wayne and Judy Jensen

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

Roger Prochazka from Greg and Robin Prochazka

Bettye Smidberg from Mary Krejci and Peggy McCann

Buckley from Kim Ehlers. Kim's daughter Elise and Buckley found each other through her volunteer work at The Cat House. He was her soul cat. They lived a lifetime in the 5 years they had together.

Emma from Cheryl Livingston

Norman from Mary Sullivan

Larry Arnold from Dennis and Karen Buckley, Robert and Joy Citta, Donna Ideus, Brenda Griess, Carmen Spitsnogle, Doraine Fitzgerald, Connie Mittan, Karen Dorn, Rebecca L. Arnold, Susan Lewis, and Sue Bruns

Doug Bedell from Vicky Bedell, Patricia and Kenneth VanCleave, Kari Corkle, Cindy and Kent Taylor, Karla Wingard, Marlene Pagel, and Mary and Randall Douglas

Alan Jordan from Lori Waters and Nancy Coniglio

Ardys K. from Joan Decker

Uncle Bubba from Stacey Wiltshire

John Keeling, who was a good friend and cat lover, from Sharon Kozak

Cookie (Ray Kennett, Beth Zimmer, and family) from Tami Kolar

Violet from Scott Mahoney

Alan 'Bubba' Jordan from Jennifer Monroe, Michelle Stewart, and Cecilia Ruley

Judy Sanders from James Sanders

Renate Jacobs from Norman Wozny

Colleen Mertins from Shelby Mertins, Thomas Erlacher, Megan Dunlap, Jeffrey Bacot and the Bacot family, and from friends of Megan Dunlap

Darlene Mora from Ann Beetley-Runge, Roger and Karen Trautwein, and Debra Gohl

Carolyn Prazak from her estate

Sparty from Hollie Konold

Donna with love from her children

Donita Elrod from Carolyn Kitterer

Bing from Leah Culver Whitcomb

Keith DuPont from Karla DuPont

Ted from Pamela Chadwick. You were beautiful and special and greatly loved. In sympathy to Alicia Mulhair and Molly Hoffmann.

DeAnn Bourne from Phyliss Bourne

In honor of

Mimi, Dennis, and Harlow from John Martin

Paige Vandenberg, an Open Harvest Co-op Grocery staff member who won a staff award, from Amy Tabor

Nina Karol Mulhair (my friend's mom) and Ted Mulhair (my friend's kitty) from Cheryl J. Larson

Virginia Danczak from Elizabeth Brodersen

Julie Heinrich's retirement from the animal health industry from Amanda Daugherty

Toby (Tubby) from Patrice Knapp

Lorie Lindenmuth's birthday from Harry and Wanda Drake

Jasper from Jen Wilksen

Lindy from Shawn Bescheinen

Darlene Mora from Debra Gohl

Daniel Backhus for his high school graduation from Nancy Denniston

Allison Moldenhauer from Holly Martin and Miriah Zajic

Stephanie Pittock from Holly Martin and Miriah Zajic

Jackie's 80th birthday from Mary Brenton and Jacqueline Hoyt

Special thanks to

Dr. Kelly Jordan Instinct

All Feline Hospital Petco

Beatrice Humane Society Tractor Supply

Driftwood Vet Clinic

Pitts Veterinary Hospital

Tomorrow's Veterinary Care

Vondra Veterinary Clinic

Wachal Pet Health Center

Creature Comforts Mobile Veterinary Service

Wish List

DRY CAT FOOD

- Any dry cat food
- Science Diet Optimal
- Science Diet Z/D*
- Royal Canin Baby Cat
- Science Diet Metabolic*

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 Metabolic or Z/D*
- Royal Canin Baby Cat Loaf

SUPPLIES

- Brooms
- Paper towels
- Kitchen and office trash bags (*13 gallon*)
- String mops

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/pods
- Clorox disposable wipes
- Swiffer
- Shout stain remover

CAT LITTER

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

MISCELLANEOUS

- Meat flavored baby food (*chicken or turkey*)
- Small chenille or cotton reversible bath rugs (*no rubber backs*)
- Aluminum trays (*no smaller than 8" x 13"*)
- Lint rollers
- Purina Pro Plan Hydra Care Supplement
- Purina Pro Plan Calming Care Supplement
- Gift certificates to entirelypets.com
- Gift cards to Tractor Supply, Walmart, Target, Petco, or PetSmart

* sold at vet clinics



Cat Therapy Program Returns

By Laura Wong and Cindy Wenzl

We're excited to announce that The Cat House's Cat Therapy Program is back! After taking a break, our team is once again bringing some of our special cats into the community to share a little love, comfort, and companionship.

So far, our Cat Therapy team has visited Sumner Place, Hillcrest Firethorn, and Eastmont Tower Assisted Living. We bring three cats to each visit, giving residents the opportunity to spend time with the cats, pet them, talk about their own pets, or simply enjoy having a furry friend nearby.

These visits may seem simple, but the connections we see can be incredibly meaningful.

During a recent visit, one resident who is mostly nonverbal surprised everyone when he asked for "the kitties to come back!" The request was especially touching to the staff, who were surprised to hear him express such a clear desire to see the cats again.

When volunteers looked around his room, they discovered pictures of him with his own cat displayed throughout. It was a beautiful reminder that the bond between people and their pets can remain incredibly important, even when someone has difficulty expressing themselves in other ways.

That is what makes Cat Therapy so special. A cat can spark a memory, create a moment of connection, bring a smile, or simply provide comfort without requiring anything in return.

We're looking forward to continuing to expand the program and bringing more purrs, pets, and companionship to members of our community. We can't wait to see where our cats go next!

Continued: New FIP Drug

Walter, too, succumbed to other health problems 15 months after successfully finishing FIP treatment. He originally had come to TCH because he had the feline leukemia virus, or FeLV. That virus is incurable and typically shortens cats' lives, although the outcome is variable.

All other TCH alums treated for FIP continue to thrive. That includes Ken Siemek, who went through two rounds of FIP treatment. The first saved his life and helped him grow like a normal kitten. The second addressed FIP neurological symptoms that showed up later. Post-treatment, Ken wobbles a bit and has enlarged pupils, effects that are likely permanent. But he enjoys his life with Bella Joele, another FIP survivor who became his best friend in a TCH foster home. The two

were adopted together and are loving their new life.

Little Soot Sprite began her treatment shortly after being adopted. Thanks to support from TCH, she finished the 84-day course of medication and is reported to be back to her "snuggly spunky self" with a lush coat of black fur.

Cowboy was the first TCH cat with the "wet" form of FIP to undergo the treatment. In this form, a distinctive type of fluid accumulates in the abdomen. Cowboy had large amounts of fluid drained from his belly before starting GS-441524. But, just like the other TCH cats, he started improving within the first few days of treatment. He bounced back and soon after finishing his course of medication had charmed his way into a home of his own.

Continued: Playtime

Some are expert stalkers who would rather patiently watch a toy from across the room before making their move.

Pay attention to what gets your cat's attention. If they lose interest, try changing the speed, direction, location, or type of toy. Play should be fun—not a test your cat has to pass.

Make play part of the routine. One of the easiest ways to keep your cat happy and

engaged is to make interactive play a regular part of the day. Even 10 to 15 minutes of focused play can provide valuable mental and physical enrichment. A consistent play routine also gives your cat something to look forward to. Morning play before breakfast or an evening hunting session before bedtime can become a special ritual you share.

Stuff, Socialize, & Support Cats

By Laura Wong

The Cat House's famous catnip sticks are a favorite with cats and people alike, and keeping our supply stocked takes a lot of stuffing! These fun gatherings are a great way to lend a hand while enjoying some time with fellow cat lovers.

No experience is necessary. If you've never stuffed a catnip stick before, we'll teach you everything you need to know! Friends and family are welcome, too, so bring someone along and make an afternoon of it.

One of the best things about our stuffing parties is the flexibility. You can come and go as your schedule allows and stay for as little or as long as you'd like. Whether you have 30 minutes or 2 hours to spare, your help makes a difference. Parties are on an

as-needed basis but usually scheduled on Wednesday afternoons or Sunday evenings.

And while you're helping us prepare products for event sales, you'll also have the opportunity to socialize with other TCH supporters. It's a great way to meet fellow cat lovers, catch up with friends, and do something good for the shelter at the same time.

If you'd like to be invited to future catnip stick stuffing parties, you do not need to be an official TCH volunteer. Simply email: info@thecathouse.org and ask to be added to the catnip stick stuffing party email distribution list.

Come stuff some sticks, enjoy some conversation, and help us keep the nipsticks coming! We'd love to have you join us.

Advice Cats Give Run-Down on Routine

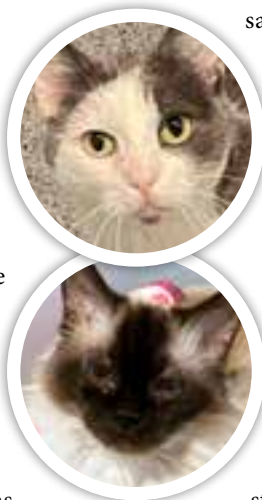
Dear Advice Cat:

My cat doesn't seem to believe in weekends. He won't let me sleep in on my days off. Instead, he jumps on me and paws at my face until I get up. What's more, he insists I go to bed at the same time every day. If I try to stay up, he meows and follows me around until I give in. What's wrong with this cat?
Signed, Wishing for flexibility

Dear Wishing:

Harley: Calm down! Nothing is wrong with your cat! He's being a perfectly normal feline, one who has a routine and wants to make sure you stick to it. He knows that routine makes life easier and reduces stress. You should be thanking him for helping you stay on track. I'm sure it's a lot of work for him.

Bella: Now, dear, before you launch into one of your sermons, we really should greet the letter writer and introduce ourselves. After all, this person probably expected to hear from Spartacus, the last advice cat. Unfortunately, he passed away in the spring and the Scoop crew asked if we could take over the job.



My name is Bella and my partner is Harley. We've been at The Cat House longer than most, so we have learned a lot about people and cats. We appreciate you turning to us for advice on an important topic.

Harley: Fine, dear. You may be right, but I think this person needs to understand cats if he's going to live with one. Cats are creatures of habit. They like to eat at the same time and in the same quiet place. They want their litter box in the usual spot with the usual litter. They want to have regular playtimes and know when they can get attention and grooming. They want their environment to be predictable, and they get upset when things change. Even cats that live on the streets or big cats like lions and tigers like routine.

Bella: Very true, dear. I've seen what changes in routine can do to cats. They can get very stressed and anxious. They may start acting in unusual ways, like not eating or pulling out their hair or not using the litter box.

Harley: Absolutely, sweetie. They may start spatting with other cats in the house or start hiding a lot. They may become

aggressive. There are lots of ways cats indicate that something has upset them. Stress can make cats sick, too, because it affects their body chemistry.

Bella: Yet, you know, dear, that some cats have more sense of adventure than others and are willing to try new and different things. I've heard some cats even like to travel and go camping. Look at yourself—you move from bed to bed and complain about getting bored with the same view all the time.

Harley: I hardly think that switching beds once in a while makes me a big adventurer, dear. But you have a point. Cats can learn new routines and adapt to change, if people think of ways to make the change gradually. When people change their routine by going on vacation, for example, cats do better if they can stay in their familiar environment.

Bella: You know, dear, that's why The Cat House always recommends slow steps to introduce one of our friends to a new home when they get adopted. That same idea applies to adding a new spouse or baby to a home. Let the cat get used to the new smells and schedules slowly, while keeping as much of their regular routine in place.

Harley: So, what do you think, honey? Have we answered the writer's question?

Bella: I think we have, dear. Time for our naps.

Patience, Not Punishment

By Ann Adams

Living with a cat means occasionally dealing with behaviors you wish it would stop. Maybe your cat scratches the furniture, knocks things off shelves, or gets a little too enthusiastic during play. Whatever the behavior, one thing should always be off the table: punishment.

Yelling, swatting, spraying your cat with water, chasing them, or using other forms of punishment are never appropriate. Punishment doesn't teach your cat how to behave—it teaches them that you are someone to fear. And that can damage one of the most important things you share with your cat: trust.

Understand your cat's behavior

Cats scratch. They climb. They explore. They pounce. These aren't bad behaviors—they're normal feline behaviors.

Instead of trying to punish those instincts away, give your cat appropriate ways to express them. Provide scratching posts and pads. Offer cat trees, shelves, or window perches for cats who love to climb. Make time for interactive play to satisfy their natural desire to stalk, chase, and catch.

And when something really needs to be off-limits, manage the environment rather than punishing the cat. Move fragile objects, secure unsafe items, or close a door.

Redirect, don't punish

When you need to interrupt a behavior, calmly redirect your cat toward something appropriate. If your cat is scratching the couch, offer a nearby scratching post. If they're getting into something they shouldn't, remove the temptation and offer something safe to explore. If play gets too

rough, end the interaction and redirect their attention to an appropriate toy.

The goal isn't to make your cat afraid to do something. It's to help them understand what they can do instead.

Protect their trust

Your cat should never have to wonder whether you are going to hurt or frighten them. A cat who is repeatedly frightened or intimidated may begin to avoid you, become anxious, or lose confidence in their environment. When your cat does something you don't like, pause and ask: What natural behavior is my cat trying to express, and how can I give them a better outlet?

Cats don't need punishment. They need patience, enrichment, and a person they can trust.



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THE NO-KILL ALTERNATIVE
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2026 Stats

Cats and kittens who received care	789
Adoptions completed	269
TNR's (Trap-Neuter-Return)	339
Spay/neuter surgeries completed	516
Vaccinations given	1,689



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