

CAT FIGHT! ☆ WHY IS KITTY SO ANGRY?

November / December 2022

Living with cattitude

catster™

Magazine

Reach Kitty's
HEALTH GOALS
at All Ages

☆ CHECK OUT OUR
Photo Contest
Winners ☆

**6 QUICK FIXES
FOR PICKY
EATERS**

**8 SIMPLE
LITTER BOX
UPGRADES**

plus!
**HEALTHY EATS
REIMAGINED**

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KITTY HEALTH GOALS

•

FIXES FOR PICKY EATERS

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LITTER BOX UPGRADES

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HEALTHY EATS

•



PURRRIFIC PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

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On our cover!

Pascal (on the left left, 10 years old) was rescued from the streets of Corpus Christi, Texas, and is now big brother to a rotating roster of foster kittens, including Spork (on the right, 3 months old). Spork and Pascal's foster siblings are available for adoption through Feral Change in Oakland, California. Visit feralchange.org or [@feralchange](https://www.instagram.com/feralchange) to learn more!

Photography by Erica Danger | ericadanger.com or [@ericalikescats](https://www.instagram.com/ericalikescats)

Breed Insets: Cat'chy Images; Imagebroker | Alamy Stock Photo.



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Editorial

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Executive Editor: **Annie Butler Shirreffs**
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Art Director: **Lori Wendin**
Production Coordinator: **Teresa Bloisio**

Contributing Editors

Jackie Brown, Steve Dale,
Kay DeVilbiss (*breed consultant*), Marylou Zarbock

Marketing

Circulation Director: **Laura McMann**

Print/Digital Advertising

NATIONAL ADVERTISING DIRECTOR:
Jason Mailliard 203-857-3170

ADVERTISING SALES MANAGER:
Rosemarie Rembao-Ledesma 203-857-3167

Subscriptions

\$19.95 (U.S.) annually to
Catster, P.O. Box 8535, Big Sandy, TX 75755-8535
Call toll free 800-468-1618 or
subscribe online at Catster.com.



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Send product samples to *Catster magazine*, 1816 Southgate Avenue, Fullerton, CA 92833. All submissions become the property of Belvoir Media Group LLC and cannot be returned to the sender. Submissions chosen for publication may be edited for length or clarity.

Catster (ISSN 2376-8258) is published bi-monthly by Belvoir Media Group LLC, 535 Connecticut Avenue, Norwalk, CT 06854-1713.

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Catster HQ *from our editor*

Through the Years

My home currently has nine cats ranging in age from 7 weeks (five foster kittens) to 13 years (the eldest of our four cats, Agatha), so I'm dealing with different levels of care. The kittens need a smaller litter box they can get in and out of, nutritious kitten food and lots of socializing. Agatha is now considered a senior cat and although she's slowing down a bit, she doesn't really need any special treatment yet — but we'll be ready when that time comes.

Our cats' needs change as they get older, and it might seem overwhelming to figure out what they need to keep them happy and healthy. That's where *Catster* comes in! This issue is full of advice on caring for your cats through all of their life stages — everything from nutrition (including some tips for picky eaters) to litter box upgrades.

The worst part of sharing your life with cats is knowing they will eventually no longer be in your life. I've had cats since I was a very little girl and have said a final goodbye to many. When you finally have to say that last goodbye, it's hard to know what to do with all that grief. Our article about pet loss can help you navigate your way through it.

As always, we've got lots of fun cat content and adorable feline photos — including our Purrific Photo Contest winners. Enjoy!



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Annie
Executive Editor

I had a great time attending my first POP Cats show in San Diego, California. The next one will be in Austin, Texas, on Dec. 2-4. Learn more at popcats.org.

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Obsessions

good cats,
good people,
good news

♥ BY THE CATSTER TEAM



1 World-Traveling Cats

Sometimes the travel bug hits the whole family, including the pets. Sponge Cake, a Scottish Fold, and his traveling companions Donut and Mocha, both British Shorthairs, became internet sensations after cat mom Olivia Nguyen and her husband, Dan, started sharing their trips to Europe last year.

"I posted a video of Sponge Cake at the Eiffel Tower," Olivia says. "It went viral, and I received so many positive messages from people all over the world."

Aside from Paris, the 2-year-old cats have visited San Francisco, the Brooklyn Bridge and Times Square, and traveled to Venice and Milan, Italy, which is the farthest trip — and the cats' favorite, according to Olivia — they've taken. Most commonly, the cats tour the streets of New York City, where they live, sitting atop Dan's shoulders or in a pet backpack, wearing harnesses and leashes.

Olivia says training and safety is key to taking the cats on adventures. Before they started their travels, Dan took the cats to Central Park and down

various city streets, encouraging their adventures with positive reinforcement.

"When we travel, we continue to give them treats and gentle petting to make them feel safe and comfortable," Olivia says.

To encourage others to properly prep their cats for adventures and attention from strangers, they post educational videos on traveling with cats, and Dan has recently published a book called *Adventure Cats: How to Train Your Cat for Outdoor Adventures*, which is available on Amazon.

The cats' outings have brought joy to the family and cat lovers worldwide.

"We really enjoy traveling with our kitties," Olivia says. "We hope that more and more cat owners will be able to do it."

Follow their adventures on Instagram @spongecake_thescottishfold and on TikTok @spongecake_cats.

— Lauren



2 Spray-Paint Cat Portraits

I don't really have a good history with using spray paint, so I was quite impressed (and more than a little jealous) when I heard about artist Jeff Evans, who creates small-scale portraits using only spray paint. Unlike traditional spray paint art, which is usually done on large walls, he paints his portraits on canvases, sometimes as small as 8 by 10 inches.

Based in the southwest of England, Jeff's art background is graphics, photography and graffiti. But it's graffiti and portraits that have been his passion for the last 20 years.

"I started out painting my name on walls (at legally designated spots), but the problem with painting this way is it's ever changing and almost as soon as you finish, someone has painted over you," Jeff says.

Over the years, he grew tired of this and wanted to produce work that people could keep. "I painted human portraits for a while and started taking commissions," Jeff says. "Then a friend asked if I wanted to paint his dogs, and I haven't looked back since."

Jeff and his wife currently have two cats, 14-year-old siblings Alfie and Amber. Jeff says adopting them was the best decision they ever made, and the cats are spoiled rotten and treated like royalty. "We love



them both to bits and can't remember what life was like before they came along," he says. "I think the world would be a better place if everyone was a bit more like a cat!"

Learn more about Jeff on Instagram @ jeff_paints, on Facebook @iamjeff paints and on YouTube @JeffPaints.

— Annie



3 New Cat-Centric Video Game — Stray

A new video game was released in July starring a most unlikely hero: a rangy, stray cat navigating a decaying cybercity looking for a way out. This third-person, feline adventure game has you roam-



ing through surroundings high and low, defending against unforeseen threats and solving the mysteries of this long-forgotten city inhabited by curious droids and dangerous creatures. You'll see the world through the eyes of a cat and interact with the environment, being stealthy, nimble, silly and sometimes as annoying as possible.

To celebrate the launch of this sci-fi cat adventure, Annapurna Interactive, the game's publishers, donated copies of the game to give away to help raise money for two cat charities: Nebraska Humane Society in the United States and Cats Protection in the United Kingdom. The main character of Stray, an unnamed orange tabby cat, was inspired by a former cat named Murtaugh, who is owned by the cofounders of the developer (BlueTwelve Studio), and was found in the streets of France. Learn more at stray.game.

— Jackie Brown, contributor

Obsessions

4 Travelers Prefer Pet Perks

Wag, a pet sitting app, recently surveyed U.S. pet owners about traveling with their pets and uncovered many obstacles to pet-friendly travel. The survey found that 94% of pet parents would trade at least one common amenity (i.e., complimentary beverage, hotel bar, gym, concierge) for more pet-friendly policies. Other key highlights include:



59% would bring their pets along all or most of the time if they had no obstacles

36% would pay more than \$100 per night extra for a pet-friendly hotel

26% said “pet friendly” was more important than service, comfort and even affordability



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In Memoriam / Faith Maloney



We at *Catster* were sorry to learn of the passing of Faith Maloney, one of the original founders of Best Friends Animal Society, who lost her battle with cancer in August.

Faith was born in England, but Kanab, Utah, became her true home when she went there 38 years ago with a group of friends to start Best Friends. Considered a pioneer in the animal welfare movement, Faith and the other co-founders purchased a plot of land near Kanab in 1984 that was once used for Western movies and TV shows. With little money and experience, they built a sanctuary for homeless animals that eventually became the country's largest no-kill sanctuary and headquarters of Best Friends Animal Society.

In the early days of Best Friends,

Faith, with no formal training, served as the de facto animal control officer of the area.

She also established the sanctuary's Dogtown area, where each day she cared for more than 500 homeless dogs. She knew every dog's name and story, and amazed visitors with her connection to all the animals.

Faith lived a life of compassion and was committed to the ideal of cheering on others and helping them do their best for animals, the planet and each other, and she paved the way for so many who emulated her commitment to animals. Her impact on the animals of Southern Utah, as well as on a large, dedicated national community of animal lovers cannot be overstated.



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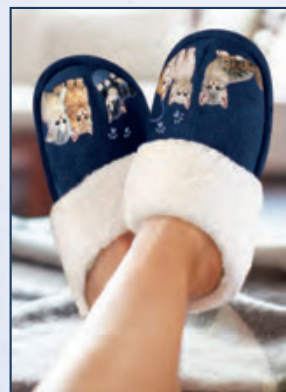
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Obsessions

HEALTH TALK

By JACKIE BROWN



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100,000 Spays and Neuters

The Shelter Medicine Program at Mississippi State's College of Veterinary Medicine recently celebrated a major milestone of performing more than 100,000 spay and neuter surgeries in the last 17 years. This year, students who graduated with a Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree completed an average 76 surgeries each. Veterinary students at the university offer spay and neuter surgeries to local animal shelters, gaining valuable surgical experience while providing these much-needed services to the community.

Shelter Euthanasia Increasing

For the first time in five years, the number of pets euthanized in U.S. animal shelters has risen, from 347,000 to 355,000. According to Julie Castle, CEO of Best Friends Animal Society, this increase is largely due to the historic low numbers of pets entering shelters in 2020 during the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. When shelters began reopening, more pets entered shelters, and adoption has not been able to outpace the intake of pets. Cats, who are euthanized at twice the rate of dogs, remain the most at-risk pets in animal shelters.



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Feline DNA Study

The largest-ever study of cat DNA has revealed disease-causing variants in new breeds, and also discovered a possible decline in a major disease in Persian cats. The study, led by U.S. researcher Heidi Anderson from Wisdom Panel and colleagues from the University of

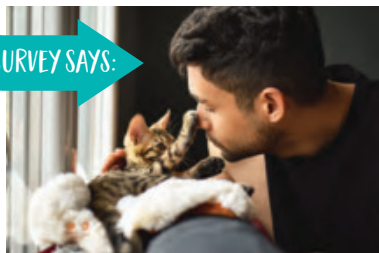
Helsinki in Finland, identified 13 disease-associated variants in 47 breeds that had not previously been documented. Additionally, none of the 118 Persians screened had PKD1, a variant tied

to polycystic kidney disease (previously reported to affect 40% of Persians). The study, which analyzed DNA from 11,000 pedigreed and non-pedigreed domestic cats, was published in June in the journal *PLOS Genetics*.



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SURVEY SAYS:



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People Look to Pets for Stress Relief

The American Heart Association recently released a survey that found 95% of cat and dog owners rely on their pets for stress relief, and 7 in 10 would rather hang out with their pet than watch TV if they are feeling stressed. Part of the AHA's Healthy Bond for Life initiative, other survey findings include:

69% say they take better care of their pet than themselves.

47% say their pets help them be physically active.

70% say having their pet at work would make them happier and more productive.

Jackie Brown is a freelance writer from Southern California who specializes in the pet industry. Reach her at jackiebrown.writer.wordpress.com.

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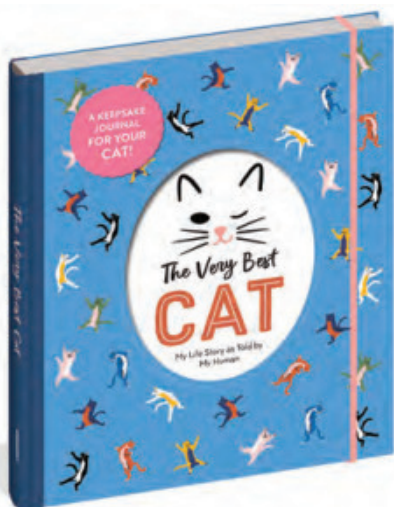
Catster Book Chat

Catfirmations

Featuring “mindful mantras to awaken your inner cat,” this fun book by Lim Heng Swee shows readers the instinctive wisdom of our feline friends.

Cats know a thing or two about living your best life, whether it’s knowing when to curl up for a nice, long nap or taking time to sniff the catnip. The book will help you distract yourself from your worries as you look for the hidden felines in every page of minimalist artwork and repeat the affirmations to find your most centered and, more importantly, playful self.

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The Very Best Cat: *My Life Story as Told by My Human*

We know that every day with our beloved pet is a gift. Featuring adorable illustrations, this keepsake journal lets you immortalize your furry friend’s milestones and is filled with ways to celebrate the special bond between the two of you. It has plenty of room for photos, space for paw prints, a roomy pocket for mementos and lots of prompts and fill-ins. Whether you’re describing your cat’s unique personality or inserting picture-perfect photos, this crafty and interactive keepsake is the purrfect way to celebrate a furry addition to the family.

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Cats in the Navy

Felines were once considered ominous creatures by ancient mariners, but they eventually became trusted animal companions to those who sailed the seas. Whether they were catching rats on the docks or on ships at sea, cats became mascots to navies around the world. Author Scot Christenson shares fascinating stories, facts and more than 80 historic photos to give readers a fun and informative history of feline friends who rode the waves.

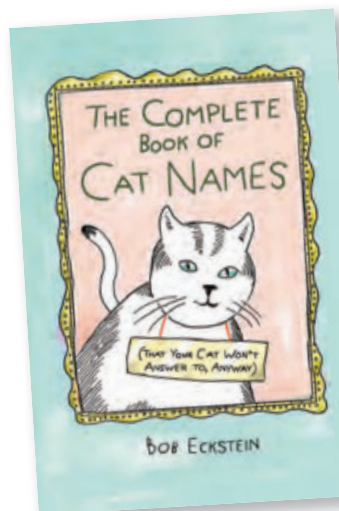
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Complete Book of Cat Names *(That Your Cat Won't Answer to, Anyway)*

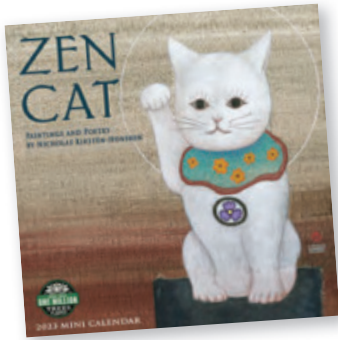
Acclaimed New Yorker cartoonist Bob Eckstein has merged his talent with his love of felines in this new book. Whether you’re naming your cat to carry on family tradition or trying to find something new and different, your cat’s name can set the tone for the rest of his life. This book is packed with options, handy charts for identifying your cat’s “type” (inside or outside; sassy or sweet) along with all-new, cat-themed cartoons. Some ideas from Eckstein himself include the most popular cat names (to avoid), names for foodies (S’more or Capers) and James Bond Villain Cats (Golden Paws or Jinx).

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Catster Calendar Chat

Get ready for 2023 with these fun, cat-centric calendars.



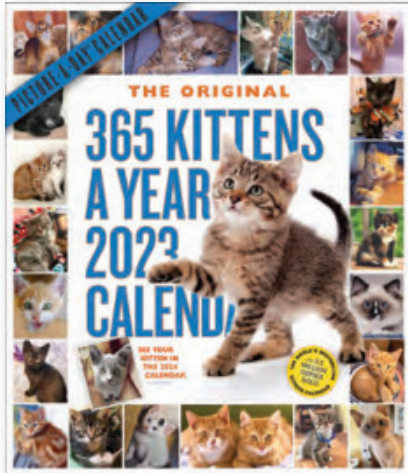
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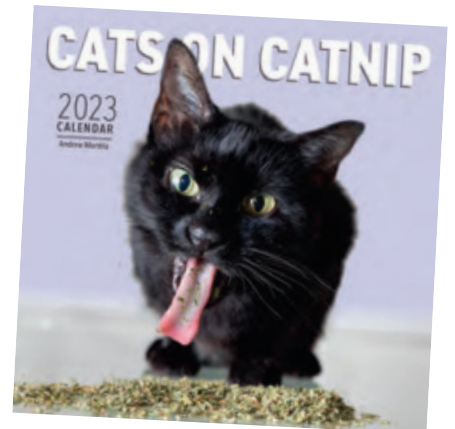
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Thanksgiving Place Card Holders

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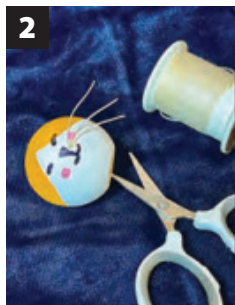
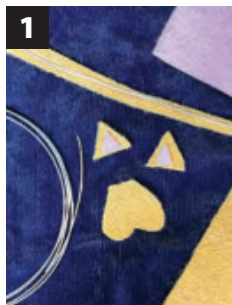
What you'll need:

- Wood beads/ wood doorknobs
- Colored markers or paint
- Scissors
- Thread
- Felt
- Tacky glue or glue gun
- Paper or stickers (for nametags)
- Wire and sandpaper (optional)



Instructions

- 1** Cut ears, paws and tail out of felt. (You can also glue a piece of wire to the tail so you can bend it.)
- 2** Give your wood beads a coat of white paint, let dry, then paint the "fur" pattern on the head and body. Draw on the faces with markers or paint.



- 3** Cut some whiskers from the thread and glue in place.

- 4** Draw legs on the bottom bead.

- 5** Glue ears, tail and paws to the beads, then glue the head to the body. (If you have round beads, sand down a flat surface with sandpaper or an emery board.) Then place or lean your name tag onto the bead. You can also add a fun scarf, bow or bow tie. 🐾



Linda Facci is a graphic designer, fiber artist and all-around crafter. Her work can be found on Etsy.com, faccidesigns.com and on Instagram @faccidesigns. She lives in Woodstock, New York, with her husband and their rescue dog, Cocoa.

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Confessions

talk
to the
paw



FACEBOOK FANS CONFESS

What would be your kitty's Thanksgiving cat-astrophe?



24%

Has a stinky litter box incident just as guests start to arrive



12%

Hides under the bed all day even though you wanted to show her off to guests



24%

Sleeps on a pile of coats, leaving behind a nice layer of cat hair



16%

Insists on sitting on the lap of the one person who doesn't like cats



24%

Sneaks off with the turkey or other yummy food items

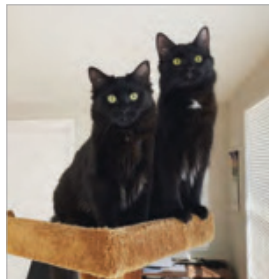
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Paw-lidays!

November

- 🕒 adopt a senior pet month
- 🕒 pet cancer awareness month
- 🕒 pet diabetes month
- 1 cook for your pets day
- 6-12 animal shelter appreciation week

December

- 🕒 cat lovers month
- 1 celebrate shelter pets day
- 9 international day of veterinary medicine
- 15 cat herders day

Events to purr about

November

Through December | Home 4 the Holidays Adoption event. Sponsored by Helen Woodward Animal Center and Blue Buffalo. Join the campaign at join.home4theholidays.org/contact.aspx

Thanksgiving through New Year's Eve | 36th annual San Francisco SPCA/ Macy's Holiday Windows. Learn more about this adoption event at sfspca.org/holiday

18-20 | Pittsburgh Pet Expo. Held at the David L. Lawrence Convention Center, Pittsburgh, PA. pghpetexpo.com



Show dates may change or events may go virtual, so check the show site for updates. You can also catch up on the latest upcoming events at catster.com. And, if you have a cat event planned — live or virtual — let us know about it by emailing catstermag@belvoir.com.

December

2-4 | Pop Cats Austin. A fun-filled festival held at the Palmer Events Center in Austin, TX. popcats.org/austin2022

4 | Jackson Galaxy's Cat Camp. Raise a Glass: Grief and the Healing Power of Ritual During the Holidays. Tickets for the webinar available at catcamp.com

12 | Costa Mesa Cat Extravaganza. Held at the OC Fair & Event Center in Costa Mesa, CA. eventbrite.com/e/costa-mesa-cat-extravaganza-tickets-388084740907



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Letters

I loved the short piece *Aloha, Snapple!* in the July/August issue. What a beautiful story about a beautiful cat and the beautiful person who had faith in him. — Sharon Faulkner

Thank you for the article *Cat Lovers Unite for Pets in Ukraine* in the September/October issue. I agree that it's impossible to list everyone who is helping in Ukraine. Although I'm aware of some of the groups you mentioned in your article, the one I support monthly and follow on a daily basis on Facebook is called Breaking the Chains (@Breakingthechainsinternational). They go into the most dangerous areas to rescue cats and dogs left behind in places that many others do not want to go. They mainly rescue cats and dogs but have helped other animals, like lions, at the request of an owner of a zoo, a bear that no one else would rescue and an abandoned, starving horse. They will not ignore any animal in need of help. They have teams that also deliver tons of food to those animal shelters, wildlife sanctuaries and zoos that have run out of food. They are saving countless lives. In my book, they are real heroes. — Linda M.

PHOTO CONTEST

behind the camera!

We had a great time with our annual Purrrific Photo Contest and thought you'd like to see some of the faces behind our finalists.



↑ Cuddle time for Cat Nap finalist **Aria** and human mom **McKenzie Eggersgluss**



↑ Cat Nap finalist **Checkers** hitching a ride with human mom **Tabetha Gallagher**



↑ Proud cat mom **Susan Ingraffea** with Friends Furever finalists **Saffron** and **Zilar**



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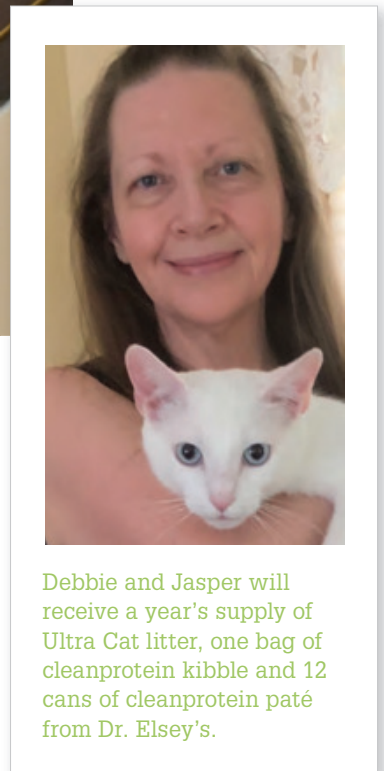
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Check out our purrrific pics & PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



Jasper is a 5-year-old cutie who loves to explore, play and chase his favorite toys. He's quite a jumper and has been known to do complete somersaults in the air while chasing his toy bird! He also enjoys splashing and playing in water, so his human mom, **Debbie Fincher**, keeps a special bowl full of water in the bathtub just for him to play in. A clever boy, he's learned all kinds of tricks: sit, beg, pray, lie down, roll over and go into a room and close the door behind him. He performs these tricks on command — all for treats! Jasper also enjoys watching the birds, bunnies and squirrels outside while surveying his kingdom from the highest perch of his cat tree.

Debbie is a retired elementary school teacher, who also worked as a tutor/mentor to teenage girls living in a group home setting after being placed in foster care. She adopted Jasper while grieving the loss of her last cat, Gracie. After bringing him home, she discovered Jasper had some behavioral issues, which she later learned were the result of a botched four-paw declaw surgery. Because of his special needs, Debbie knew he would need a safe, secure

and loving home along with lots of patience and attention.

Debbie loves spending time with Jasper, teaching him new tricks and building up his confidence. An animal lover her whole life, she's had both cats and dogs. She donates to many animal rescue groups, but her favorite is the Tuscarawas County Humane Society (tuschumanesociety.com) in Ohio, which runs solely on donations and has four special cat colony "free roam" rooms where nine to 12 cats have their own individual spaces but can interact with adoptees and other cats.

★ **How did she capture this shot?**

"Jasper loves to find new places to explore so when I saw him all curled up in the window, he looked so comfy and content, I just had to get a picture of him."

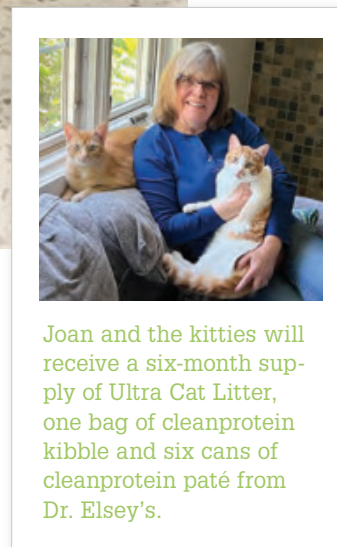
Debbie and Jasper will receive a year's supply of Ultra Cat litter, one bag of cleanprotein kibble and 12 cans of cleanprotein pâté from Dr. Elsey's.



Brought to you by:



Our fifth photo contest was just as much fun as the first four! We received nearly 2,000 entries, and we loved looking at each and every one of them. With our readers' help, we narrowed it down to these three winners:



Joan and the kitties will receive a six-month supply of Ultra Cat Litter, one bag of cleanprotein kibble and six cans of cleanprotein paté from Dr. Elsey's.



Pumpkin and Tigger are brothers who were rescued when they were 4 weeks old and have been inseparable ever since. Their human grandma, **Joan Wayne**, says that when her husband Bill found them by a river— dirty and hungry — she and their daughter, Kaity, fell in love with them at first sight. Since then, they have been the most loving cats to them and everyone they meet. Their favorite things are treats, feather toys, their cat condo and posing for photos. Joan keeps her phone on her at all times to catch their antics. She is rewarded with kisses, cuddles and kitty winks. Tigger and Pumpkin adore their mom, Kaity, who loves to snuggle with them.

A longtime cat lover, Joan is a retired bookkeeper who has plenty of time to be the kitties' grandma. She enjoys RV trips with her family, but they really miss the kitties when they're traveling.

She and her family enjoy bringing pet food to

the homeless who have pets, and they donate to their local humane society, which helps strengthen the human-animal bonds in order to improve the quality of life for both our animals and our community.

★ **How did she capture this shot?**

"As I was emailing my photo contest entries to *Catster*, Grandpa Bill said, "Come and take a picture of these cats!" I found them snuggled together in the sink (which is one of their favorite places). They just looked up at me and posed for the shot. So, I added it to my entries!"

PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS



enjoys playing her mice games on an iPad and getting treats.

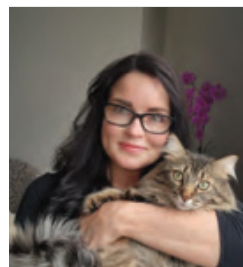
Her human mom, **Tiffany Meier**, found Penelope June on Petfinder. She created an account, and on the day she broadened her search, Penelope June popped up as a match. She ran to tell her boyfriend that she'd found the cutest, most precious kitten — but missed the fact that the kitten was in Indiana, not Illinois! But all it took was one look from her boyfriend, coupled with her excitement, and they took a road trip to bring her home.

Animals have always had a special place in Tiffany's heart, and she donates to several animal charities, including the ASPCA, the World Wildlife Fund and local pet stores. Her favorite shelter, however, is Catsnip, Etc. (catsnipetc.org) in Goshen, Indiana, because that's where she found Penelope June!

★ **How did she capture this shot?**

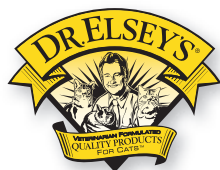
"I saw her napping in her favorite bed, and she looked so adorable all curled up. This was about a month after we brought her home, so I was still very photo happy!"

Penelope June lives with her human parents on the 20th floor of a condominium building in Chicago. Needless to say, one of her favorite things to do is sit in her cat tree and look out the window. There's a lot to see! She also enjoys looking at the bugs and birds that land on the balcony. When she's not scattering her collection of stuffed toys down the hallway for her parents to find, she



Tiffany and Penelope June will receive a six-month supply of Ultra Cat Litter, one bag of cleanprotein kibble and six cans of cleanprotein paté from Dr. Elsey's.

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Don't Miss These Cuties!

Meet our contest runners-up

Thanks to all of this year's talented photographers
(and their kitties!) who took the time to enter.



[I Fits, I Sits]
Smockey
Ann Gherardi



[I Fits, I Sits]
Nugget
Teresa Burns



[Cat Nap]
Penny
Barbara Piacentino



[I Fits, I Sits]
Lucy
Amanda Nuñez



[I Fits, I Sits]
Brix
Nicole Roach



[Friends Furever]
Saffron & Zilar
Susan Ingraffea

PHOTO CONTEST

runners-up!



[Friends Furever]
Dory & Jafar
Tracie Hansel



[Cat Nap]
Max
Heidi Tsoumbanas



[Cat Nap]
Aria
McKenzie Eggersgluss



[Friends Furever]
Finnleigh & Charlie
Megan Thut



[Friends Furever]
Paris & Emma
Patti Tan



[Cat Nap]
Checkers
Tabetha Gallagher



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Deciphering Cat Ages & Stages

BY ARNOLD PLOTNICK, DVM



Of all the myths involving companion animals, one that continues to persist (and still drives me batty) is the notion that cats (and dogs) grow older at a pace of seven years for every human year.

Frankly, this idea has never made much sense to me. We've all seen (or at least know of) cats who have lived to the age of 20. In fact, at one point I had over 30 20-year-old cats in my veterinary practice. Using the 1-equals-7 rule, a 20-year-old cat would be the equivalent of a 140-year-old person, which simply isn't possible. Let's now consider reproduction. Cats and dogs can get pregnant and produce offspring as early as 6 months of age. Using the 1-equals-7 rule, a 6-month-old cat is

equivalent to a 3½-year-old human. Can people have babies at this age? Of course not! The 1-equals-7 rule doesn't work for the simple reason that cats age faster when they're younger and slow down when they're older.

How to compare cat years to human years

A number of years ago, the American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP) and the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) collab-

orated to create an age-comparison chart that takes this into account. (See sidebar.) According to this chart, a 1-year-old cat is equivalent to a 15-year-old person, and a 2-year-old cat is like a 24-year-old person. After that, you add four human years for every cat year. This is a more logical approach and, in my experience, it seems pretty accurate. Note: This chart doesn't apply to dogs. Dogs have different age equivalents depending on their size (big dogs have shorter life spans than small dogs, for example). Cats are all roughly the same size, so the chart is universal for cats.

How many life stages do cats have?

Another topic related to age and longevity is cat life stages. There are several opinions on this subject but no consensus. The variations are mostly →

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Cat to human age chart

based on semantics, and whether you tend to be a “lumper” or a “splitter.” Lumpers prefer to group some stages together into a larger category, while splitters prefer to subdivide the stages. The only common ground among all the versions is the first life stage: kitten.

The updated age-comparison chart mentioned above also describes the life stages of a cat, dividing it into six distinct stages:

- Kitten: 0 to 6 months**
- Junior: 7 months to 2 years**
- Prime: 3 to 6 years**
- Mature: 7 to 10 years**
- Senior: 11 to 14 years**
- Geriatric: 15 years and older**

Splitters were probably happy with this six-stage version, although as a cat veterinarian, I had mixed feelings. I never knew exactly where to draw the line between “adult” and “senior.” Dividing older cats into “mature,” “senior” and “geriatric” categories based on these age ranges seemed sensible. However, dividing younger adult cats into “junior” and “prime” felt a bit contrived.

In a recently updated (2021) report, the AAFP/AAHA described four basic age-related feline life stages:

- Kitten: birth to 1 year**
- Young adult: 1 to 6 years**
- Mature adult: 7 to 10 years**
- Senior: Older than 10 years**

If you’re a lumper, you probably love this streamlined version. I’m content with the first three categories and their associated age ranges; however, I feel that the senior stage should be further divided, resulting in a five-stage classification that, in my opinion, covers all the bases:

- Kitten: birth to 1 year**
- Young adult: 1 to 6 years**
- Mature adult: 7 to 10 years**
- Senior: 11 to 15 years**
- Geriatric: 16 years and older**

I’ve seen variations of the versions described above, but with the term



“super senior” replacing the term “geriatric.” I suspect some people feel that the word geriatric is too clinical, or that it carries negative connotations. As a veterinarian, I prefer the term geriatric, although I understand why cat parents would fancy the term super senior, as it invokes awe and wonder and makes the cat sound like a superhero, which is a pretty cool concept.

Finding the right care for your cat at each stage

The main reason veterinarians divide a cat’s life into stages is to help us formulate health and wellness plans that are appropriate for that particular life stage. The illnesses and behavioral changes we’re likely to encounter, and the diagnostic tests that are recommended, will differ depending on these stages. Whether you, as a cat parent, prefer the four-stage classification (kitten, young adult, mature adult, senior), a five-stage version (kitten, young adult, mature adult, senior, geriatric) or a six-stage model (kitten, junior, prime, mature, senior, geriatric) is a matter of personal preference. As a cat veterinarian who feels that all cats die too young, the fact that so many life stage charts recognize the existence of a geriatric or super senior stage tells us that cats are living longer than ever before, and that’s something we can all agree is wonderful news. 🐾

CAT AGE	HUMAN AGE
0-1 month	0-1 year
2-3 months	2-4 years
4 months	6-8 years
6 months	10 years
7 months	12 years
12 months	15 years
18 months	21 years
2 years	24 years
3 years	28 years
4 years	32 years
5 years	36 years
6 years	40 years
7 years	44 years
8 years	48 years
9 years	52 years
10 years	56 years
11 years	60 years
12 years	64 years
13 years	68 years
14 years	72 years
15 years	76 years
16 years	80 years
17 years	84 years
18 years	88 years
19 years	92 years
20 years	96 years
21 years	100 years
22 years	104 years
23 years	108 years
24 years	112 years
25 years	116 years

You can view the entire 22-page AAHA/AAFP Feline Life Stage Guidelines released in 2021 at: aaha.org/aaha-guidelines/life-stage-feline-2021/feline-life-stage-home/.



Dr. Arnold Plotnick is the founder of Manhattan Cat Specialists, a feline-exclusive veterinary practice on Manhattan’s upper west side. He’s also an author of *The Original Cat Fancy Bible*. Dr. Plotnick is a frequent contributor to feline publications and websites, including his own blog [LeisureCommando.com](https://www.leisurecommando.com). He lives in New York City with his cat, Glitter.







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Why is Kitty So MAD? It Could Be Redirected Aggression

BY RITA REIMERS and LINDA HALL



We recently received a call for help from a very confused cat parent. It seems her cat had suddenly decided to attack everyone at random — the cat parent, the other cats, the dog ... Having always been a sweet and loving kitty, this new behavior perplexed the family. After ruling out medical issues with their veterinarian, the kitty's mom decided to book a behavior session with us at Cat Behavior Alliance.

As we asked her questions about the cat's behavior during our Zoom meeting, the reason for the "bad" conduct became crystal clear: This was a classic case of redirected aggression. What was actually the true source of kitty's aggression? New neighbors had moved in, and the sight of their cats outdoors in the yard drove the cat bonkers. Cats are always on guard for predators, and there was a possible predator right next door — one the cat could see but not reach. Unable to attack the true

source of frustration and anguish, kitty had turned the aggression toward any being that was close enough to touch.

What is redirected aggression in cats?

Redirected aggression, also called displaced aggression, is one of the most common behavior issues in cats. Simply put, something happened that caused the cat to react in fear, and their natural survival instincts took over. It's the old "fight or flight" reflex kicking in, the

one that keeps cats safe from becoming another predator's meal in nature.

Unable to reach the actual object of aggression, the cat may decide that fighting with another indoor cat, a dog pal or even humans, is necessary to survive. Take, for example, how we humans sometimes misdirect our anger. The man who had a bad day at the office might come home from work and yell at the kids. It's not the kids he is really upset with, it's his boss, but he is unable to properly direct his temper. It isn't a conscience decision. The anxiety bubbles up and must come out! Displaced aggression in cats works exactly the same way.

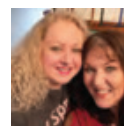
So, what is my cat mad about?

What might cause misdirected aggressive behavior in your normally friendly feline? Anything that your cat may perceive as a threat to his territory or his resources may set off the aggression, and his inability to attack the true source may cause misdirection of his survival response to the threat.

A few catalysts to displaced aggression are:

- 🔥 Loud noises or yelling in the house
- 🔥 Outdoor cats roaming around your cat's territory
- 🔥 Other animals outside, such as squirrels, dogs, rabbits or birds
- 🔥 Disagreements between indoor cats
- 🔥 Mating season (even if your cat is spayed or neutered)
- 🔥 Anything the cat feels is a threat to his world →

Continued on page 67



Rita Reimers and Linda Hall are co-founders of The Cat Behavior Alliance, offering a unique duo-approach to cat behavior correction. Visit them at CatBehaviorAlliance.com for more information. You can also find Rita and Linda on Facebook, Instagram, YouTube and TikTok @CatBehaviorAlliance.



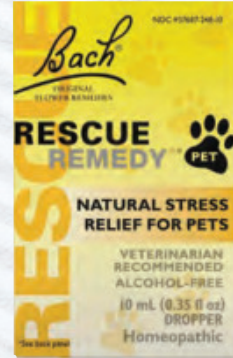
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Cat Calm; \$23.95;
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What's Trending in Treats for All Life Stages

BY ARDEN MOORE

Step up your cat's nutritional game by selecting the latest in treats, supplements and foods that are packed with healthy benefits for your feline.

The payout is priceless: Your cat may sport a shiny coat, make healthy deposits in the litter box, stave off chronic conditions like diabetes or hyperthyroidism and gracefully age pain-free.

Customizing the right diet for your cat

The challenge comes in meeting your cat's specific needs. In recent years, the pet food revolution has taken off with global sales surpassing \$85 billion. That means more options for your cat and more decisions for you: Does your feline need prebiotics and probiotics? Will switching to a super-premium food pay off in healthy dividends? Should you consider supplementing your cat's diet with CBD oil or tempt your cat for good behavior with insect protein-based treats?

Answer: It depends. Regularly check in with your veterinarian before adding any new supplement or switching to a new diet to avoid any adverse reactions.

"It's important that your discussion with your veterinarian goes beyond food choices," says Dr. Elizabeth Bales, a veterinarian who serves on the advisory board for the American Association of Feline Practitioner's Cat-Friendly



Practice and is the inventor of the Doc & Phoebe's Indoor Hunting Feeder products. "Include your cat's activity level and identify any behavior changes you notice in your cat, especially increased signs of stress."

Every cat is unique. Each cat has different nutritional needs that change as she ages.

"Diet does influence how well cats age," says Dr. Jean Hofve, a holistic veterinarian in Boulder, Colorado, who authored the book, *What Cats Should Eat: A Holistic Veterinarian's Guide to*

Your Cat's Optimal Diet. She is also the founder of the LittleBigCat website (littlebigcat.com).

"Feeding the best foods takes more effort and may be a little more expensive," she says.

"But you will save a ton of money by not having to treat diseases that can be preventable."

Let's look at some possible beneficial treats and supplements for your feline based on her age.

What should I feed my kitten?

The immune system, digestive system and key organs are still in development mode for young felines, especially those under the age of 6 months. Experts highly recommend introducing a varied diet slowly to expand your kitten's palate and acceptance of all types of foods.

"A cat's willingness as to what he eats is based on what he is exposed to eat within his first six months," says Dr. Hazel Carney, a board-certified veterinarian who served on the American Animal Hospital Association/American Association of Feline Practitioners task force. "This is the time to introduce your youngster to shreds, pate, whole meat, freeze-dried, vegetables and more. This way if you run out of your cat's favorite food, he will be more apt to eat other types."

Kitten supplements tend to provide a much-needed boost of vitamin A plus minerals magnesium, copper and iodine. Your veterinarian may also recommend a supplement containing calcium and phosphorus for bone growth and omega-3 fatty acid DHA, which is noted for aiding the brain and vision. And check out lickable treats as a tasty tactic when you need to give medicine.

Supplements to keep your adult cat healthy

The mission during your cat's adult years is to keep him at a healthy weight.

More than 70% of indoor cats are overweight or obese. Extra pounds can put your cat at greater risk for such chronic health issues as diabetes, urethral obstructions, arthritis and skin diseases.

"A sprinkle of digestive enzymes and probiotics to your cat's food can help your cat to get the most benefits," Dr. Hofve says.

When adult cats face stressful situations, it can be a punch to their gastrointestinal health or cause them to engage in unhealthy habits, such as overgrooming that leads to bald spots. Pay attention to any changes in your adult cat's eating habits or behaviors if you bring in a new pet, move into a new home or make any other major changes to your household routine.

Ask your veterinarian about options, such as CBD oil and soft chew treats, that help stressed or tense cats. Our experts recommend CBD products that have been independently tested by third-party labs for potency and purity.

Cats dealing with urinary tract infections may take feline supplements containing cranberries to aid in healthy urination and regulate pH balance.

Easing senior health issues through nutrition

Your senior cat is in the slow-down phase of life and faces many issues: arthritis, weight loss, weakened immune system and digestion issues.

"A low body mass index is a serious liability for older cats," Dr. Hofve says. "Muscle wasting can be debilitating."

Again, work with your veterinarian to come up with the right



Arden Moore is a pet behavior consultant, author and master pet first-aid instructor who teaches hands-on classes with her cool cat, Casey, and very tolerant dog, Kona. She hosts the national radio show, *Four Legged Life*, and the podcast, the *Oh Behave Show*. Learn more at ardenmoore.com.

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Hill's Prescription Diet Metabolic Crunchy Cat Treats; \$6.99. chewy.com



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supplements for your golden-aged cat. Adding a spoonful of pumpkin may tame stomach acid and temper other digestive issues. Pumpkin is loaded with fiber, potassium and

key vitamins A and C. Read the label and select canned pumpkin (not the canned pumpkin pie filling that is loaded with sugar). →

Continued on page 67



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DIY Catified Canvas Cat Shoes

BY KATE BENJAMIN

It's time for you to be the coolest cat person on the block with your very own pair of custom painted cat shoes! Create a one-of-a-kind design with some simple materials and a little creativity. Not only does this project provide you with a brand new, totally unique, cat-themed fashion accessory, but painting and creating can also be a great way to reduce stress. Have fun with it and enjoy!



Choosing your shoes

Canvas shoes are the best and easiest choice for custom painting. They come in a variety of styles and colors and are typically quite inexpensive. White canvas will make the colors pop, but other colors can work, too. You may need to experiment a little to get the right look. If you have an old pair of canvas shoes that you want to customize, make sure they are totally clean and dry before you start.

What paints to use

Paints made specifically for textiles work best. Fabric paints are designed to soak into the canvas, creating a soft texture that is flexible when dry. They are also easy to clean with soap and water. Non-fabric paints may

crack and flake off when you wear the shoes. If you prefer to use regular acrylic paint on a canvas shoe, prime the canvas first with gesso. My advice: It's easiest to find paint that is made for use on fabric.

You may see some fabric paints at the craft store that are labeled "dimensional" or "puffy." These paints create a raised design when dry. They are made to work on fabric and can be used on shoes to add details, but keep in mind that the raised surface could flake off when you wear the shoes.

TIP: Some fabric paints are more translucent, like watercolors, while others are opaque and will cover darker colors better. Test different paints to get the effect you're looking for.

Tools and materials

- ✓ Canvas shoes
- ✓ Fabric paint
- ✓ Paint brushes
- ✓ Painter's palette
- ✓ Painter's tape or masking tape
- ✓ Pencil
- ✓ Paper towels
- ✓ Cup of water
- ✓ Finishing spray



Instructions

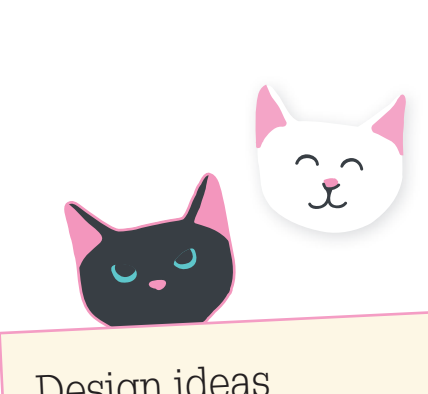
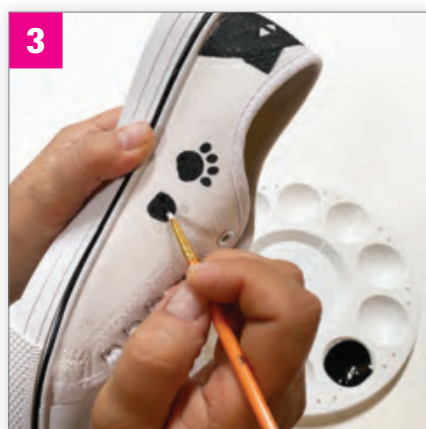
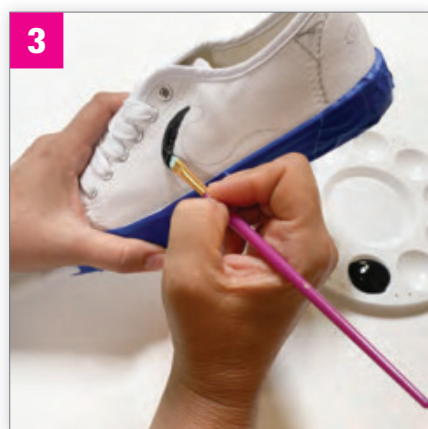
1. Prepare your shoes. Use painter's tape or masking tape to mask off any areas of the shoe that you don't want to get paint on, like the rubber soles. I recommend removing the shoelaces if you'll be painting around that area.

Tip: If your shoes are soft and flexible, stuff a small rag or wadded-up piece of paper into the toe to help the shoes keep their shape while you're decorating.



Time to DIY

Life with Cattitude



2. Sketch your design. Use a pencil to lightly sketch your design on the shoe. If your shoe has stitching on it, you can use that line as part of your design. I used the semi-circular stitching pattern on the back of this shoe as the shape of my cat head, then I just added ears and marked the spot for the eyes.

3. Paint! Get out your paint, palette and brushes and start painting! The key is to use very thin layers of paint — don't just glob it on. It's OK if parts of the canvas show through. Let the first coat dry and then go back with another thin layer. Repeat until you get the consistency you want. Try letting certain colors dry, then paint over them with other colors or blend them together while they are still wet. Anything goes, just have fun!

TIP: Use a hair dryer or heat gun to make the paint dry faster between coats; if you accidentally get paint on the rubber sole, use a cotton swab and some nail polish remover to clean it.

4. Seal. To keep your shoes looking fresh, seal them when you're finished painting. Let the paint dry completely before applying a finishing spray. Aerosol finishing spray is recommended because it will soak evenly into the canvas, rather than brush-on finishers that could make the paint bleed. Allow the finisher to dry for at least 24 hours before wearing your new shoes.

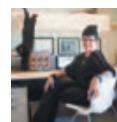
Design ideas

If you're a bit overwhelmed, start simple!

- Try using a single color on a white shoe, adding some small cat design elements, like paw prints, a tail, whiskers or cat ears.
- For a more vibrant shoe, start with a base coat of a solid color and then add designs on top.
- Look for cute cat designs on T-shirts, mugs, and even online stock illustrations and include those elements in your shoe design.
- Cut shapes out of the painter's tape or use stickers as stencils. Firmly apply the stencils to the

canvas and then paint over them. Once the paint is dry, carefully peel off the stencil. You may need to do a little touch-up to get crisp lines, but stencils can be a useful tool.

- Experiment with fabric paint pens to add detail.



Kate Benjamin has been writing about feline design since 2007 and is co-author with Jackson Galaxy of two New York Times best-selling books, *Catification* and *Catify to Satisfy*. Get more of Kate's feline design tips at hauspanther.com.



Seeing “spots”

Leopard print is an easy cat-themed motif that anyone can paint. To start, paint a base color and let it dry. Next, use a larger brush to make rough spots in different sizes all over the shoe — the rougher the better. Once the spots dry, use a smaller brush with a different color and add rough outer edges around each spot to form the classic leopard rosette pattern. 🐾



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Veterinarians at BluePearl Pet Hospital treat Buddy's injuries. He was barely responsive when he arrived.

Buddy the Cat's Rescue Inspires the World

BY KELLIE B. GORMLY

Many people would look at Buddy the cat's traumatic attack, his remarkable rescue and recovery story and say he found his human angel and that his destiny was meant to be.

A rough start but a happy ending

The poor, black kitty's ordeal started last March in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, when two dogs, nudged on by their juvenile walkers, were caught on camera brutally attacking and mauling Buddy, a stray neighbor-

hood cat. Authorities brought the cat to the Pennsylvania SPCA in Philadelphia, and then he was taken to BluePearl Pet Hospital for emergency care.

Buddy was barely responsive when he arrived at the clinic. But Dr. Katie Venanzi, who examined him, noticed the thumping tail — a telltale sign of feline annoyance — and she knew she had a fighter who just might make it.

Dr. Venanzi fostered Buddy through his healing process, and he not only pulled through but found a happy ending. Dr. Venanzi and her family adopted Buddy, who became an international celebrity through social media and news outlets, and now is a pampered puss with his rescuer.

"He's living the best life," says Gillian Kocher, director of public relations for the Pennsylvania SPCA, which received more than \$250,000 in donations as Buddy's story went viral. "He is officially in his forever home. ... Of course, (Dr. Venanzi) being a vet certainly helped.

"Think about how crazy that is for one cat to have inspired people around the globe to give that kind of money," she says. "Our work goes on every day to rescue animals just like him."

Inspiring an anti-animal-cruelty campaign

Indeed, Buddy has become an inspiring ambassador and hero for victims of

© Courtesy Pennsylvania SPCA

animal cruelty, and he touched hearts around the world with his remarkable story of recovery. The shelter used his story to start its Save Every Buddy promotion, and the money left over after Buddy's veterinary bills is now designated to help other cats facing illness and injury.

"We certainly see ourselves in animals in certain ways," Gillian says. "I think this is just one of those stories people connected to because they can see their own trials and tribulations in Buddy's story. You can go through some really challenging times and have some bad things happen to you, but you can come out the other side and have it all. ... If you have that fight in you, you can get that happy ending."

Dr. Venanzi could not be reached for an interview, but she has described Buddy as a real love bug who is, indeed, a buddy to her other resident cat named Teddy.

"He's become like my little shadow," Dr. Venanzi told *The Washington Post* about Buddy. "Everywhere I go, he's right behind me."

Gillian says that Dr. Venanzi and Buddy just seem destined for each other. "Of course, this horrible thing happened, but in certain ways you feel that Buddy ended up where he was

always meant to be," she says.

The Buddy story illustrates the resilience of animals and the transformation they go through when rescued.

"They teach us that, again, something horrible could have happened, but there's still love to be found," Gillian says. "They're just amazing. So many of the dogs and cats we see

every year — once they recover, they can just go into a home and love people all over again." 🐾



Kellie B. Gormly is a Pittsburgh-based journalist otherwise known as Mother Catresa to homeless kittens and cats. She blogs about her adventures in fostering at mothercatresaschronicle.blogspot.com



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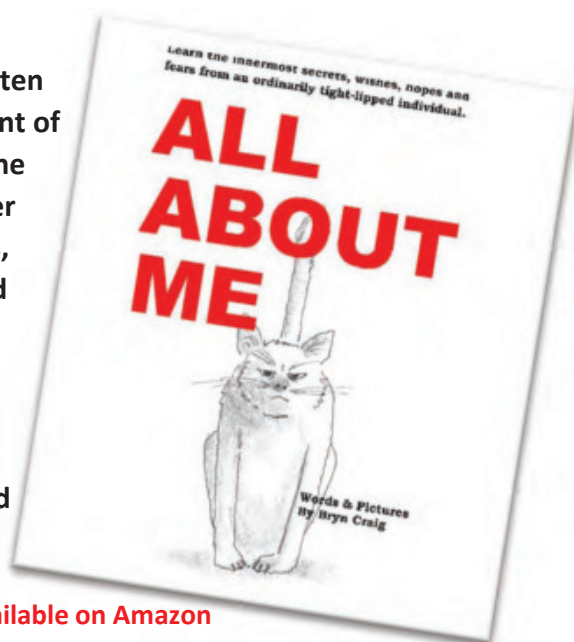
Learn more about Buddy's story at pspca.org/buddy.

The shelter is still selling T-shirts with the Save Every Buddy campaign logo to raise money for the Buddy fund at bonfire.com/store/pennsylvania-sPCA-store.



A fun book, written from the cat's point of view. "Wimpy", the author, reveals her innermost secrets, wishes, hopes and fears. She had a human do the many delightful illustrations.

An insightful and enjoyable read.



Bryn Craig books available on Amazon



Move Their Ears Around?

BY SUSAN LOGAN-MCCRACKEN

©Boy_Anupong | Getty Images

One talent felines possess is the ability to move their ears independently. Although recent research shows that humans move their ears slightly when a sound piques their interest, only about one in five people can move their ears intentionally. For most people the movement is involuntary. That ability may make the person a YouTube star or the life of the party, but it doesn't come close to the way cats swivel their ears. But why do they do this?

Pinpoint sounds

One of the reasons cats move their ears is to pinpoint and identify what they are hearing. By moving their ears toward the sound's direction, cats improve their hearing by 15 to 20%.

More than 30 muscles are involved in moving a cat's ears, which can swivel 180 degrees. With a frequency range of 45 hertz to 64,000 hertz, cats not only have the broadest frequency range when compared to dogs, rabbits and humans, but they can hear higher and lower frequencies than all of them.

In comparison, dogs use 18 muscles

to move their ears and can hear from 67 hertz to 45,000 hertz. Rabbits can swivel their ears 270 degrees, rotate them independently of each other and simultaneously listen to sounds coming from two different sources. Rabbits' ear talent supersedes that of dogs and cats in some respects, although their range of hearing is narrower, falling between 360 and 42,000 hertz. Humans have similar hearing ability to dogs at lower frequencies, but at higher frequencies, dogs, cats and rabbits prevail. The human range of hearing frequencies is 64 to 23,000 hertz.

Communicate feelings

Cats' ears are also an important part of their body language to express emotion.

- When a cat's ears are pointing forward, he's typically content. Contentment is also signaled by an erect tail that's slightly curved at the top, along with head bumps and purring. Cats welcome affection and attention when they are in this mood.
- When their ears are pointing straight up and accompanied by wide-open eyes and an alert stance, something they hear has their attention. If they rotate their ears quickly, something may have triggered their hunting instincts. This is a good time to get out their favorite interactive toy.
- Ears pointing sideways show fear that could lead to aggression. Give your cat space when his ears are in this position. Flattened ears pointing backward indicate a cat who

is about to attack, bite or scratch. These are two ear positions, which can be accompanied by aggressive or defensive body language, indicating that your cat needs to be left alone. Signals of aggression include arched back, low and stiff tail, direct stare, hissing and growling. Signals of fear include crouching, tail curved around the body, hair standing on end, hissing and spitting.

➔ Similar to this position, when a cat's ears are low and facing outward, she might not be feeling well. Cats are good at faking that everything is OK, but sometimes their ears betray them, so pay attention to the position of the ears and other body language. Cats also often hide when they're not feeling well.

Because these ear positions may be similar, keep an eye on your cat's body language, vocalizations and other behaviors.

Cat ears, along with their vocalizations and other body language, are prolific communicators. Their sense of hearing, in addition to other heightened

Fun fact

Cats are born deaf, as their ear canals are closed until they are about 1 week old.

Cats' remarkable hearing contributes to their incredible sense of balance. Few species are as graceful.



senses and numerous talents, make them an impressive species that honor us with their companionship. 🐾



Author and editor **Susan Logan-McCracken** shares her home with her husband, Mark, and two red tabby domestic long-hair cats, Maddie and Sophie.

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Page-Turning Bookstore Cats

BY PHILLIP MLYNAR

Cats and books are a comforting match. The combination drums up idyllic thoughts about sun-dappled afternoons spent in the company of your faithful feline while relaxing in a comfy chair and leafing through a captivating tome. So, it's no surprise that a growing number of kitties have decided to further their literary ambitions by taking up residence at independent bookstores across the country. Here's a spotlight on a highbrow clowder of cats who love nothing more than lounging on a pile of your favorite author's latest release.



Junie B. Jones / Cat Tales

The donation-based Cat Tales used bookstore in Portland, Indiana, is connected to and was created to help fund the Midwest Pet Refuge rescue. Junie B. Jones is a 4-year-old, affectionate girl who's been known to unexpectedly jump on a few shoulders in her time! The Cat Tales felines in residence vary, as some get adopted and others graduate to the bookstore to take their place. Junie is currently hoping to find her forever home. midwestpetrefuge.com; Facebook @MPRCatTales

Dinah / The Dusty Bookshelf

Living at the Lawrence location of The Dusty Bookshelf in Kansas, Dinah has graduated to a figurehead role as the store's official mascot (and self-appointed queen). When not prowling the aisles, you'll find this sleek midnight feline recommending "dinahmite" approved books to the venture's visiting bibliophiles. dustybookshelf.com/lawrence; Facebook @The Dusty Bookshelf - Lawrence



Emma / Recycle Bookstore

Emma heads up a clowder of kitties who roam around the Recycle Bookstore in San Jose, California. Described by shop insiders as a "sassy sweetheart," this fluffed-up, black kitty favors hanging around the mystery section of the store — although curious browsers should be forewarned that Emma shows little tolerance toward being scooped up. recyclebookstore.com; Facebook @recyclebookstore



Huck and Finn / From My Shelf Books and Gifts

The 40,000 used books piled up in the Wellsboro, Pennsylvania-based From My Shelf Books & Gifts are overseen and cataloged by a couple of kitties named Huck and Finn. Taking their local literary fame to a wider audience, the duo has subsequently been honored by the store's owner and children's author Kevin Coolidge in a fiction book that details their adventures in the emporium over the course of a day. wellsborobookstore.indielite.org; Facebook @HoboBookstoreCat

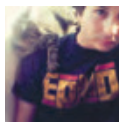
Tiny the Usurper / Community Bookstore

Tiny the Usurper is considered bookstore cat royalty. This runt of the litter ended up being adopted by the Community Bookstore in Brooklyn, New York. Tiny has since gone on to claim co-ownership of the venture (along with billing himself as the "fiercest predator in Park Slope" on his social media outlets). Tiny's recommended reading picks include the charmingly titled *On Tyranny: Twenty Lessons from the Twentieth Century* (by Timothy Snyder) and a little tome called *Of Mice and Men* authored by John Steinbeck. communitybookstore.net



Apollo and Zeus / Iliad Bookstore

Apollo and Zeus are brothers who came to live at the Iliad Bookshop in North Hollywood, California, at the young age of just 8 weeks old. The pair's backstory involves being born in the litter of a homeless person's feline. When not snoozing in the non-fiction new arrivals cubbyhole, tabby Zeus is likely leaping onto the shoulders of unsuspecting customers while the blonde Apollo prefers to zip up and down the store's ladders. iliadbooks.com; Instagram @iliadbookshop 🐟

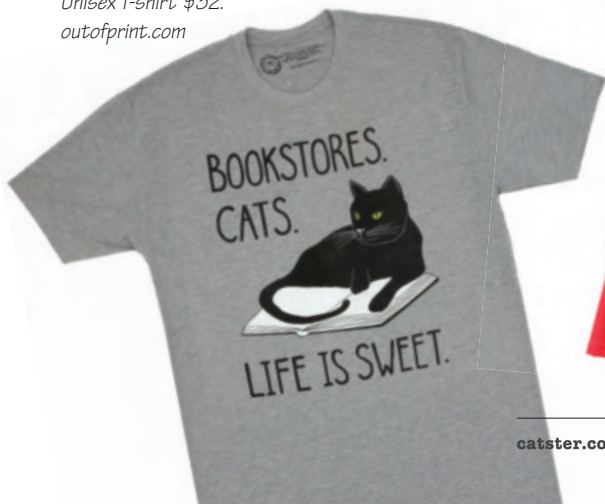


Phillip Mlynar spends his days writing about cats, hip-hop and food, often while being pestered by his rescue, a mackerel tabby named Mimosa. His work appears in *Vice*, *Pitchfork*, *Red Bull*, *Bandcamp*, *VinePair* and *Catster*. He's won various awards at the Cat Writers' Association Communication Contests.



Show off your bookstore cat love with one of these fun T-shirts.

Bookstores. Cats. Life is Sweet Unisex T-shirt \$32. outofprint.com



It's Hard to Trust a Bookstore Without a Cat T-shirt \$23.85. zazzle.com



All I Need Are Cats and Books T-shirt \$21.71 Redbubble.com



GOT A PICKY EATER?

Stop feline hunger strikes at all ages
with a variety of tastes, smells and textures.



BY ARDEN MOORE



You call the behavior as being picky — or even fussy. Your cat views his actions as being astutely selective. And, you are both correct.

“By definition, a cat labeled as a picky eater is one who doesn’t readily eat what is in front of him,” says Dr. Lisa Radosta, a certified veterinary behaviorist and owner of the Florida Veterinary Behavior Service based in West Palm Beach. “The key is to look for signs and reasons why your cat is not eating the food in the bowl. There is always a reason, but the challenge comes in finding it.”

This food pickiness in cats may be due to a variety of reasons that fall into these three main categories: medical, emotional and personal preference.

1 **MEDICAL.** Your cat may be quietly dealing with a painful and chronic intestinal issue. Or he may have food allergies or becomes nauseated easily when eating certain types of foods. Or he has trouble swallowing and keeping his food down, which causes him to regurgitate.





PICKY EATER

"Cats are very good at hiding pain," Dr. Radosta says. "I always first look at possible pain and discomfort and maybe, an underlying systemic disease as reasons why a cat is not readily eating what is in front of him."

2 EMOTIONAL ISSUES. A cat who feels threatened or scared by the arrival of a new pet in the family or being constantly bullied by another cat at mealtime will be impacted physically and psychologically. There is a connection between the gut and the brain in stressful situations that can lead to stress diarrhea and loss of appetite in

some cats. Work with your veterinarian and/or cat behaviorist to identify ways to enrich your indoors for your cat to make him feel safe and happy.

3 PERSONAL PREFERENCES. You may label it personal pickiness. Just like us, our cats definitely have favorite foods as well as ones they hope never land in their bowls due to the food's taste, smell or texture.

In my home, three out of our four cats love, love, love licking up the dollop of pureed pumpkin added to each of their bowls. The fourth, Baxter, would sniff it and carefully proceed to

eat the canned food and kibble in the bowl that is not touching the pumpkin. He was clearly telling me to skip the pumpkin.

Happy cats = eat new things



Commercial pet food, treats and supplement companies are paying greater attention to pickiness in felines. Rebecca Rose, a biochemist and founder of InClover pet supplements based in Boulder, Colorado, recognizes that the label "picky cat" comes with a lot of nuances. Before her company recently launched a lineup of four different soft chew supplements for cats, they conducted a 14-month palatability test involving cats who live indoors, at shelters and in community cat groups.

"We discovered that when cats are comfortable, well-socialized and happy, they are more apt to try new things, such as supplements that are sprinkled on their food or given as treats," Rose says.

Cat's age = food finickiness



The cat's age also plays a key role in finishing off a meal or staring at it and then walking away.

"Kittens need our help to spice up and broaden their palates," Dr. Radosta says. "By adulthood, cats have formed their food opinions. Senior cats have different nutritional needs, and their senses of taste and smell can fade with advanced age. They need access to a senior diet offering variety."

Let's delve into food pickiness in the three life stages of kittenhood, adult and senior cats.

KITTENS. Timing is everything to a fast-growing kitten, especially exposure to different types of food once weaned. Young cats need, and may be healthier, if you offer them a varied diet.

"Their willingness as to what to eat is influenced by what they are exposed to within their first six months of life,"

EAT THESE UP!

Got a finicky feline? Here are just a few yummy foods, treats and supplements to tempt him.



Fussie Cat Market Fresh Grain-Free Dry Cat Food; \$35.99. chewy.com



Weruva Kitten Can Jam Variety Pack; \$21.49. chewy.com



InClover Feline Fresh Daily Digestive Supplement; \$24.99. inclover.com



Friskies Lil' Slurprises Wet Food Topper; \$1.27 a pouch. chewy.com



©RedJina Ph | Getty Images



©Peter Dazeley | Getty Images

Within their first six months of life, expose kittens to a variety of food flavors and textures, such as shreds, paté, freeze-dried and others.

says Dr. Hazel Carney, a board-certified veterinarian who serves on the American Association of Feline Practitioners board. "This is the ideal time to safely and slowly introduce different flavors and textures, such as shreds, paté, freeze-dried and more."

ADULTS. During your cat's prime time years, resist comparing his eating habits to those of your dog. Often there are two very different reasons as to why your dog or your cat walks away from a filled bowl.

"Keep in mind that dogs do not usually go on hunger strikes unless they are sick," says Dr. Elizabeth Bales, author

and inventor of Doc & Phobes' Indoor Hunting Feeder products for cats. "But cats will go on a hunger strike if they don't like the food and don't care if they are hungry."

She adds, "For cats, it is all about hunt-catch-kill-eat. It is normal for cats to take a bite or two of food and walk away and then come back an hour later and eat a few more bites. What should matter is how much the cat ate in a 24-hour period and not in a single meal."

SENIORS. Many cats are living into their late teens and even early 20s thanks to advances in veterinary medicine, commercial food and the fact that

many now live exclusively indoors.

"With advanced years, things get complicated," Dr. Bales says. "Senior cats may be contending with hyperthyroidism, diabetes or have kidney issues. And, urinary disease is common in that age group. Or, a cat may have arthritis and not be able to jump up on an elevated surface to eat like he could when he was younger."

She highly recommends booking senior wellness exams every six months to be able to possibly catch issues in their early stages.

Our experts agreed that providing an enriching environment that brings out the playful hunter in any age of feline can boost the health and possibly broaden the food choice acceptance in any age. 🐾



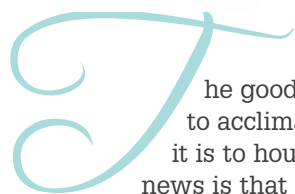
Arden Moore is a pet behavior consultant, author and master pet first-aid instructor who often teaches hands-on classes with her cool cat, Casey and very tolerant dog, Kona. Each week, she hosts the national radio show, *Four Legged Life*, and the podcast, *the Oh Behave Show*. Learn more at ardenmoore.com.

So Easy!

Litter Box Upgrades for Kittens & Seniors

Your cat's bathroom needs change with age. Help her out with these simple fixes.

BY STEVE DALE



The good news is that it's far easier to acclimate cats to litter boxes than it is to house-train most dogs. The bad news is that "thinking outside the box" — caused by a very long list of potential reasons — is the No. 1 explanation for cats either relinquished to shelters or indoor cats booted outdoors.

Keeping the cat's business in the box is essential to maintaining the human-animal bond. Litter boxes and the litter in the box are such a significant concern that an entire chapter is devoted to issues regarding this in the book *Decoding Your Cat*, authored by members of the American College of Veterinary Behaviorists, and coedited by Dr. Debra Horwitz, who says, "If you happen to get a kitten, they're fairly flexible about the box you prefer and the litter you prefer. But it's always best to watch and see what the kitten may prefer."

Dr. Horwitz says that kittens under 6 months of age are pretty adaptable, generally speaking. However, when adopting a cat from a shelter or rescue, whether she's a kitty who's 6 months or older, or purchasing a cat from a breeder, stick to the same type of litter that's already being used. Then slowly transition to your preference — or if your cat likes it, leave well enough alone.



Litter box faves for kittens

Kittens and seniors, especially, benefit from litter box upgrades as they get older. Here are some easy guidelines for kittens:

Small, easy-to-get-into boxes. For kittens under the age of about 9 weeks, veterinary behaviorist Dr. Theresa DePorter says, "Very small boxes which are easy to get into, are best. Young kitties have limited mobility and do urinate more often. Once they reach a few months old, they become circus performers — so getting into the box is no issue. And at that point, a larger box to grow into makes perfect sense."

Offering kittens early, **positive exposure to various litters** is a good idea, as they may be more inclined to accept variation throughout their lives.→



© Lightsprach | Getty Images

Litter Box Upgrades

Litter box musts for seniors

Dr. Horwitz says that most elderly cats have some degree of arthritis. That's true whether the cat is telling you, "I hurt" or not. Also, some older cats have illness that may necessitate using the box more often, such as kidney disease, diabetes and/or GI issues. So, a golden rule for cats in their golden years is: more litter boxes in more places. Here are other senior standard practices:

The easier to step into a box — and the roomier — the better.

Cut out an entrance for the cat in a large storage container (like the kind you'd keep sweaters in under a bed) so the cat can just walk in. Dr. DePorter also suggests cutting an entrance into a small kiddie pool.

Make litter boxes easy to get to. When you've gotta go, you've gotta go — making it to a basement box may be challenging to a geriatric cat.

Place a night-light near the litter boxes. For a geriatric cat, finding the litter box can be hard, particularly at night, as night vision might be compromised.



A golden rule for CATS in their GOLDEN YEARS is MORE litter boxes in MORE places.

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The litter box rules

According to Drs. Debra Horwitz and Theresa DePorter, there are three golden rules regarding the litter box:

1 Keep a clean box. Scoop the box at least once a day.

2 Have enough boxes. The general rule is one box per cat plus one. In other words, when there are three cats, that means four boxes — and not all in the same room side by side by side. Having said that, some cats want to do No. 1 in one box and use another box — often nearby — for No. 2. Veterinary behaviorist Dr. Theresa DePorter notes, "Distribution of boxes may, in fact, be more important than the number of boxes."

3 Minimize anxiety. "Stress may cause cats to have poor control of their elimination, or stress may limit their ability to get to the litter box," Dr. Horwitz says. "To some, it may seem like the cat is urinating and/or defecating outside the box out of spite. That's not the case." Anxiety can cause what some have called Pandora's Syndrome or Idiopathic Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease. One solution for minimizing this anxiety is enriching the cat's environment.

©CasansaGuru | Getty Images

What cats like in litter boxes

Dr. DePorter, who is board-certified in both the United States and Europe, says, "Each cat is an individual in every way, including litter box preferences. They like what they like. Research shows most cats like an uncovered box with unscented litter, preferably without a liner. But right now, my cat, Bacon, has lavender-scented litter in an uncovered box and with a liner. Bacon laughs at my credentials daily."

There are some litter box basics, though, that help keep many cats happy with their litter box. Here are some basic kitty likes:

- * **Fine, unscented clumping litter.**

- * **Uncovered litter boxes,** although some do prefer the privacy offered by covered boxes.

- * **The right amount of litter.** Don't drown your cat in 6 or more inches of litter, but don't be stingy with less than a quarter of an inch. Most cats prefer something in between, depending on individual preferences and the number of cats using the box.

- * **Good placement.** Litter boxes should not be too close in proximity to food or water.

- * **A clean box.** If the cat jumps into the box, does her business and instantly jumps out, it may mean she is tolerating the situation but is saying the box is too dirty. Cats who perch on the edge of the box as they do business are saying, "This box is way too dirty."

- * **The right litter.** If the cat doesn't dig first and/or after doing business, she may be saying, "I don't love this litter."

- * **The best box.** While most cats prefer conventional boxes, there are a variety of high-tech gadget boxes now on the market. They haven't been studied but, anecdotally, most cats don't seem to mind them.

Bottom line, as Meryl Streep once reportedly said, "The interesting thing about being a mother is that everyone wants pets, but no one but me cleans the kitty litter." So, scoop! Or get a box that does it. 🐾

Litter me this!

Your kitty lives in the golden age of litters and litter boxes, with more than ever to choose from. Here are four examples created especially to keep kitty happy at each age.



Catalyst Unscented Litter;
\$22.99. catalystpet.com



Dr. Elsey's Kitten Attract Clumping Clay Litter; \$19.99. chewy.com

Kitty Go Here Senior Litter Box;
\$27.95.
chewy.com



Tidy Cats Breeze Cat Litter Box System;
\$42.99. purina.com



Steve Dale is a certified animal behavior consultant who's authored several books, including the e-book *Good Cat*, and has contributed to many, including *The Cat: Clinical Medicine and Management*, edited by Dr. Susan Little. He hosts two national radio shows and is heard on WGN Radio, Chicago, and seen on syndicated HouseSmartsTV.



©SeventyFour | Getty Images

Remembering Kitty

*How to find peace when
you've lost a beloved pet.*

BY M KATRIN DARIA



ur felines are wonderful companions in the best of times and the worst of times. They are fellow couch potatoes, kind tear lickers, curled-up bedtime buddies and biscuit makers. Cats value our presence, especially as they rub up against our bodies marking us with their scent, as if to say, "You're mine!" We are vulnerable under their furry spell. Theirs is unconditional love, so it's no wonder that we love them and miss them when they're gone.

I recently became a mourning fur mama, when my beloved cat, Chen Zhen Cassiopeia de Cat, crossed the rainbow bridge at the amazing age of 23. She was a little cat, a little life, and to the world she held no meaning, but to me she meant the world. Sharing your life with even one pet makes us better people. My pets taught me how to care for someone other than myself. I have faith that Chiny and all my beloved fur babies watch over me from a place of love.

"Between us and our pets, there are no disappointments or judgements," says Reverend Kaleel Sakakeeny, an ordained animal chaplain and one of

the few credentialed pet loss and grief counselors. "The love between us is pure, unmarred by ego and conflicting needs. Our pets are the angels of our better selves. They bring out the best in us!"

Grieving for a pet is painful, but therapeutic

Grief is very strong and can be hard to deal with. Rev. Sakakeeny, also the director of Boston-based, nonprofit Animal Talks, says that we live in a grief-avoidant society.

"The expression of deep, profound grief at the loss of any being or thing (job, friendship, health, self-esteem, home, relationship) we love is not encouraged or supported," he says. "Of course, this differs from culture to culture, but here in America, it's 'business and life as usual' and only 'feel-good' things seem to matter. However, the grief from the death of our pets almost always overwhelms us, and we find ourselves shaken to the core. The

Remembering Kitty



Cat Memorial Plaque; Starts at \$55.99.
TailoredCanvases on Etsy.com



Eternity Paw
Stainless Steel
Cremation Jewelry
(engravable);
\$29.95.
perfectmemorials.com

Ways to remember your cat

Whether you choose to have your cat buried or cremated, there are many memorial products available, like markers, statues, urns, memorial jewelry, tattoo, pictures or garden art like a stepping stone with kitty's name on it.

Charms that hold a bit of cremated ash or a clipping of hair and clay pawprints next to a framed photograph or even old toys they left behind can bring happy memories.

Whatever helps make something negative into positive opens a door for celebration. It's important to celebrate love. We mourn, because we love. Here are some great memorials to keep kitty's memory close.



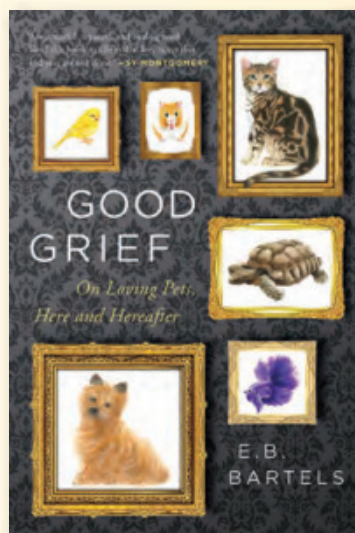
Silver Heart Opal Ring; \$119. spiritpieces.com



Original Plush Cuddle Clone; \$269. cuddleclones.com



White Contemporary
Cat Cremation
Urn; \$49.95.
perfectmemorials.com



GOOD GRIEF:
On Loving Pets, Here and
Hereafter; \$27.99.
Mariner Books

Author E.B. Bartels offers an inspiring array of rituals for anyone who's lost a beloved pet.

pain is bone-marrow deep, and our world is changed forever.”

But the death of a pet can also create a positive catharsis. Rev. Sakakeeny says that the heartbreak caused by the pet’s death can often trigger grief and mourning for previous human loss.

“Once the grief of a deceased pet is expressed, it gives us permission to grieve other losses in our life; ones we never truly mourned,” he says. “The death of our beloved pet allows us the full expression of grief we carried, often, for many years. Unexpressed, repressed and carried grief is profoundly unhealthy and can affect our well-being over the years, therefore, as the death of a pet unlocks, it unleashes the emotions surrounding other losses and becomes a profoundly positive therapeutic event.”

Will we meet again?

“Death is not a goodbye,” says Laura Stinchfield, internationally renowned pet psychic, people medium and author of *Voices of the Animals*. “It teaches us how to connect with the essence of spirit.” She says our pets often come to visit us. “The No. 1 way they visit us is by placing a memory in our minds, while wrapping their spirit around us. This can come with intense emotion.”

When this happens, she recommends breathing into the heart and feeling their presence, rather than falling into the feeling of separation and loss. “When we do this,” Laura says, “we may have a sense of knowing — a smell, a voice in our head, or the wind could pick up, the sun comes out of the clouds. The list of signs is infinite. So, pay attention, believe it and talk to them when you sense them.”

Animal communicator Danielle MacKinnon, shares **six signs that your pet is sending messages after death:**

1. Their name will show up on TV or in random mail.

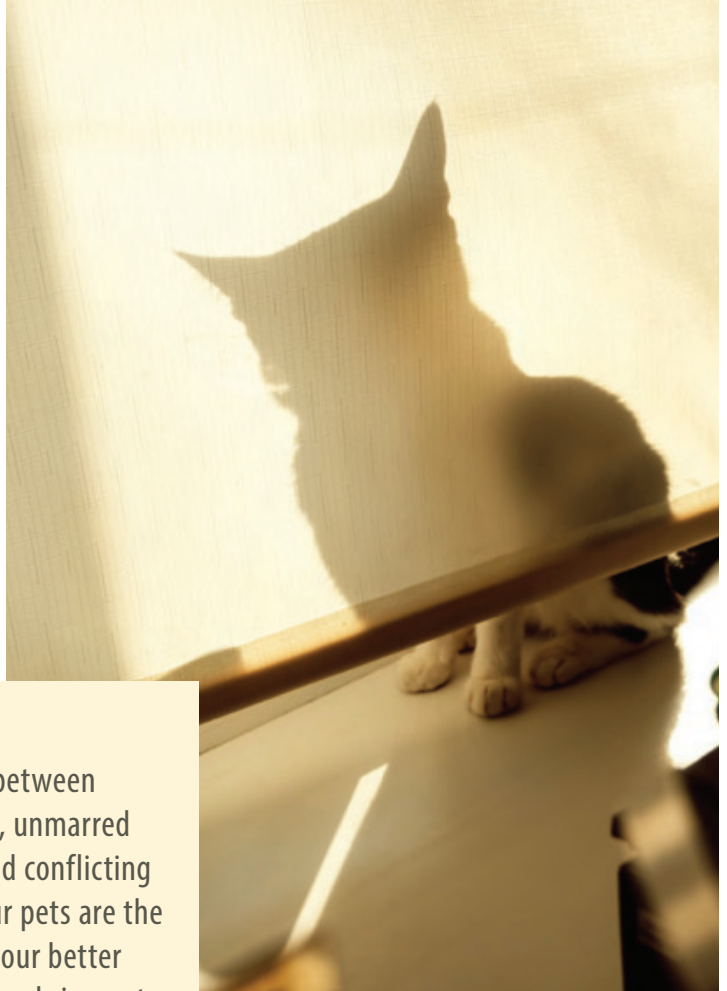
- 2.** You smell a distinct scent associated with your pet.
- 3.** You hear a sound the pet would often make.
- 4.** You might see your pet out of the corner of your eye.
- 5.** The pet visits you in your dreams.
- 6.** The pet “sends” us new animal companions.

Finding peace after a pet’s death

When our pets cross over, we look for comfort in joyful thoughts and memories. Our friends help carry us through difficult periods of mourning or we dive into comfort food to sustain us through loss. At this time, it’s important to care for yourself. Some ways to do this are by taking things one day at a time, finding a good support system to help you, asking for help when needed,



“The love between us is pure, unmarred by ego and conflicting needs. Our pets are the angels of our better selves. They bring out the best in us!”



or coping with creative outlets like journaling and art.

Laura says that meditation is another way to bring peace and a way to establish a connection with our beloved companions.

Part of the pain from a pet’s death is from wondering if our cats are really at peace now that they’re gone. According to Laura, each animal transition is different, but there are many commonalities.

“Instantly, our animals are immersed in the feeling of love and are shown that they are no longer suffering,” she says. “There is often a mirror image of home on the other side, where our animals can feel us and visit us.” 🐾



M Katrin Daria is a Connecticut-based multilingual writer and translator. She has rescued and rehomed 32 animals and is a fur mom to 13 of her own cats and a dog. She is currently working on her first vegan cookbook.

Breed Crush

Who's That Cat?

Spunky, Social & Stunning — the Singapura

BY AUDREY PAVIA

Small, beautiful and full of personality. That's how lovers of the Singapura describe this smallest of domestic purebred cats.



What is the history of the Singapura?

The Singapura's history is mired in both mystery and controversy. This cat breed was believed to have originated from three stray cats found by an American couple on the streets of Singapore in the 1970s. The cats were brought to the United States and used to create the cat breed we now know as the Singapura.

Several years later, after acceptance for registration by both The International Cat Association (TICA) in 1979 and the Cat Fanciers' Association (CFA) in 1982, the Singapore Tourist Promotion Board (now called the Singapore Tourism

Board), began researching the Singapura with the goal of making the cat the official mascot of the Asian island. The organization claimed the American couple had developed those three cats back in the United States, not in Singapore, by breeding Abyssinians to Burmese cats. Despite these claims, cat breeders who were involved with the breed's original development insist the Singapura originated in the streets of Singapore.

While the breed's origins remain

controversial, the Singapore Tourism Board made the Singapura cat its official mascot in 1991.

What does the Singapura look like?

One of the first things most people notice about the Singapura is the beautiful coat. This cat breed only comes in one color: sepia agouti. The coat features dark brown ticking on a warm, old-ivory ground color. Each hair has at least two bands of dark ticking separated by light bands,

©Cat'chy Images | Alamy Stock Photo



DID YOU KNOW?
As a Singapore tourism mascot, sculptures of this cat breed can be found along the Singapore River.



which creates the agouti look.

The Singapura's hair is fine, very short, silky to the touch and lies close to the body. While the agouti pattern appears on top of the cat's body, the underside, muzzle, chin and chest are the color of unbleached muslin cloth. The inside of the front legs and the back knees are striped.

In addition to the unique color, the Singapura is known for a distinctive head. The face has a round appearance with proportionately large eyes that can be green, hazel or yellow. The Singapura's ears are large and slightly

pointed, and wide open at the base. The eyes, lips, whisker apertures and nose are lined with dark brown.

The smallest of purebred cats, weighing in at 6 to 8 pounds, the Singapura is surprisingly muscular and heavy for its size. Singapuras are fast and agile, too, and are active cats.

What kind of personality does the Singapura have?

Though they may be small, Singapuras have big personalities. Sometimes compared to Bengals for their active

natures, they are fun and friendly. They can be shy, but their curiosity ultimately gets the better of them. Playing is a favorite pastime, and they love toys.

The best home for a Singapura is one that will offer this active cat plenty of stimulation. Cat trees, a variety of toys and hideaway places are much appreciated by Singapuras, who love to climb, run and jump.

When Singapuras are ready to settle down after hours of play, they will snuggle in your lap for a nap. They love people and want to be in the middle of whatever you are doing.

People who live with this cat breed say their Singapuras jump on the computer keyboard when they are trying to work, swat at pens when they are writing, leap into the laundry basket when it's time to wash clothes and even try to "help" prepare food at dinnertime. Living with a Singapura can be a real adventure, but those who love these cats wouldn't have it any other way. 🐾



Out of the 46 cat breeds recognized by the **Cat Fanciers' Association**, the Singapura ranks **27th** in popularity.



Award-winning writer and editor **Audrey Pavia** is a former managing editor at *Dog Fancy* magazine and former senior editor of *The AKC Gazette*. A member of the Cat Writers' Association, she has written extensively on cats and other pets. She shares her home in California with rescue cats Erma and Bodhi.



Love This Breed

Who's That Cat?



© Juniors Bildarchiv GmbH | Alamy Stock Photo

7 Reasons Why the Japanese Bobtail is on Your Side

BY ERIKA SOROCCO

Whoever said good fortune is nothing more than the luck of the draw clearly never met the Japanese Bobtail.

Enveloped in traditions and folklore in her homeland of Japan – all revolving around good fortune – the Japanese Bobtail is a celebrity of sorts, appearing in art and writing for more than 1,000 years, and being viewed as a bringer of good luck to anyone blessed enough to share a home with this happy-go-lucky feline.



1 The maneki-neko and The Japanese Bobtail

Chances are you've heard of the maneki-neko (English translation: beckoning cat). Believed to bring good luck to the owner, the maneki-neko is a common Japanese figurine, made of ceramic or plastic, depicting the Japanese Bobtail in all of her tricolored glory, raising her paw in a beckoning gesture. As the star of this likeness, the Japanese Bobtail is, essentially, the queen of good luck.

2 Rat-catching cats

This cutie is 100% unique. Native to Japan, the Japanese Bobtail is one of the cat world's oldest naturally occurring breeds. It is believed that she arrived in Japan by way of China or Korea, a stowaway with Buddhist monks in 600-700 A.D. tasked with

© J1141659 | Getty Images

fun fact

Think agility courses are just for dogs? The Japanese Bobtail is a master at feline agility and obstacle courses – jumping through hoops, leaping over hurdles and running circles around the ring with proficiency and speed. In fact, some Japanese Bobtails have been known to complete a course in under 20 seconds!



According to the most recent **Cat Fanciers' Association** registration statistics, the **Japanese Bobtail** ranks **28th** in popularity.

6 This cat breed works hard and plays hard

The Japanese Bobtail is both intelligent and active. Though this is a fairly small cat, weighing between 5 and 10 pounds, it's not uncommon to see her carrying hefty toys around in her mouth, playing fetch or even splash-splashing her paws in a body of water.

7 Japanese Bobtails love to talk

This cat breed is incredibly talkative, emitting a wide range of meows and chirps, described as being very song-like, to communicate with their owners. So, if you're seeking a kitty who loves to croon, you definitely don't have to look very far! 🐱



Erika Sorocco has been writing about cats for 16 years. She currently shares her home with a motley crew of special needs kitties, one crazy pup (Jake), and not enough closet space. Find her online chatting about beauty, books, fashion, and furbabies at Cat Eyes & Skinny Jeans (www.cateyesandskinnyjeans.com).

keeping the temples free of rats who were drawn to the rice paper scrolls. In the 1600s, with the silk trade in jeopardy due to, again, rats, she was recruited into service to save the day. The Japanese Bobtail has been keeping the streets free of rats ever since. This cat breed first made its way to the United States in 1968.

3 Japanese Bobtail's unique tail

Like a fingerprint is unique to each human being, the tail of the Japanese Bobtail is unique to each and every one of these kitties. Resembling a pom-pom, the bobbed tail is a natural genetic mutation that can present itself in a multitude of varieties: rigid or flexible, kinked, curved, angled or a combination of all. The main difference is that no two are alike. Perhaps we should refer to it as a tailprint?

4 Cats with great jumping & balance

The bobbed tail does not affect the breed's balance. The Japanese Bobtail is built with longer hind legs than forelegs, providing the ability to jump long distances. Furthermore, the stronger hind legs shift the weight to the hind end of the cat, compensating for the lack of a longer tail, keeping their balance in check.

5 Japanese Bobtails are friendly felines

Though people-oriented, Japanese Bobtails are pros at becoming paw-some pals with pups and other animals (including other cats). They also make excellent pets for kiddos who will love their lengthy life span (9 to 15 years!) and preferred mode of transportation (hitching a ride on their human's shoulder).

This Just In

for good cats

BY LAUREN KATIMS



Eat
Pure Cravings Low Mercury Cat Food | \$29.88 for a 12 pack of 3-oz cans. purecravings.com



Pounce
Natural Pet Wool Mouse and Natural Pet Corked Mouse Cat Toy | \$4.99 each. petmeds.com



Lounge
Whisker Cat Orb | \$139. litter-robot.com

Climb & Sleep

Catit Vesper castle | \$58.99. catit.com



Soothe
Earthbath All-Natural Treatment Balm | \$19.99. earthbath.com

Potty

Tuft and Paw Really Great Cat Litter | \$29 a bag monthly / \$26 a bag quarterly. tuftandpaw.com



for good people



Decorate
Hear No Evil Cat Sculpture |
\$60. novica.com



Subscribe
CatLadyBox |
Subscriptions start
at \$34.99 per month.
catladybox.com



Bake
Cat Butt Cookie Cutters | \$8 to \$9.
portraittcutters.com



Accessorize
Animal Trails Rings, set of 3 |
\$79.99. novica.com



Clean
Bona Pet System
with Multi-Surface
Floor Cleaner for
Cats | \$21.99 (mop);
\$8.97 (cleaner)
bona.com



Write
Coffee Cats Greeting Cards | \$12.95.
alexross.world



Cook
Cat Oven Mitts |
\$15 each.
nakeddecor.com

Superpowers Cats are Thankful for on Thanksgiving

BY ANGIE BAILEY



Cats have a gift for seeing favorable and unfavorable opportunities and applying the “what’s in it for me?” factor. If cats were asked what they were grateful for this Thanksgiving, they’d say their superpowers. Cats are grateful for each one. Here are six of them.

1 Shape-shifting

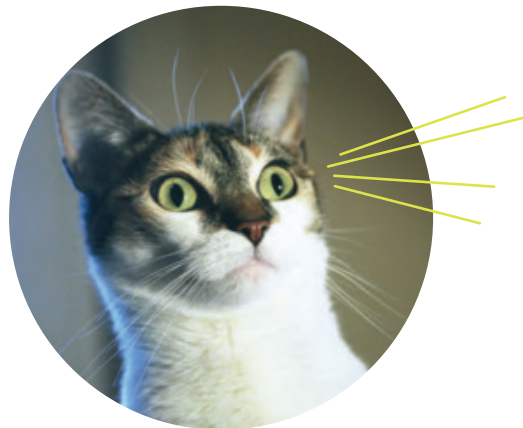
How many times have we wondered, “How is that cat going to fit inside that tiny box?” Probably only once, because after we’ve seen this superpower in action, we shed all doubt.

Kitties have all the confidence in the world that they can maneuver their nimble bodies into containers of almost any size. Even if they don’t fit perfectly, they have no shame in letting fluff and various appendages dangle outside the boundaries. Nothing is too small or oddly shaped for a cat to pretzel his way into it. Who wouldn’t be thankful for that kind of flexibility and self-confidence?



2 X-ray vision

Felines use their superpower of X-ray vision to see through walls. It’s true! How else do they know we’re putting fresh sheets on the bed and will require their “help?” How could they pop out of dead sleep on one side of the house and see us through a closed bathroom door on the other side? There’s only one explanation: X-ray vision. Cats are eternally grateful.



©EEL_Tony | Getty Images

©MihailJiankov | Getty Images

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3 Manipulation

Kitties are master manipulators, and they wield that superpower like mighty, self-obsessed, little warriors. Seriously, who's better than cats at controlling our thoughts and emotions?

We think we're going to read a book, but suddenly there's a cat lying on top of the pages, stealing the spotlight. How did that happen? And so quickly?

Of course, we oblige with pets and cuddles because we've been manipulated to believe it's what we wanted all along. Really, how arrogant are we to assume we operate with complete autonomy? Cats know the truth, and they are grateful for it.



4 ESP

How do cats know we're about to arrive home even before we pull into our driveway? They can't read clocks, yet they know exactly when it's mealtime, and they laser-eye us until we feed them. How do we explain their sense that it's the perfect time for midnight zoomies just as we've fallen into deep slumber? There's only one explanation: ESP. All cats possess the superpower of extrasensory perception, and they're thankful for using it to regularly frustrate us and freak us out.



5 Invisibility

Kitties have a magical power to make themselves invisible. Or they think they do and we play along with them. "Concealed" behind a window drape with the full length of the tail exposed? Invisible! Standing on the kitchen counter, "hiding" behind a fruit bowl? Invisible! They're especially thankful for this superpower on Thanksgiving when they jump onto the dining room table and use their cloak of invisibility to score some turkey bits and dinner rolls.



6 Therapy

One superpower we humans all appreciate is a kitty's ability to sense our feelings and respond with the perfect "therapy." They know when we're sad or sick, and come in for a cuddle. They know when we're overworking ourselves and sit directly on top of us, making us slow down and relax. Just when we think our lives are in complete shambles, they give us a loving look that assures us everything's going to be OK. Who wouldn't be grateful for that? 🐾



Angie Bailey is an author and humorist, creator of *Texts from Mittens* and loves writing anything funny related to cats or Gen X pop culture.

Photo Booth

Love of Cats



SUKI
TRACY CONE



GORDIE
JANICE PUCCIO



SAPPHIRE
JEANNIE MENOR



TINNIE
ANNE T.



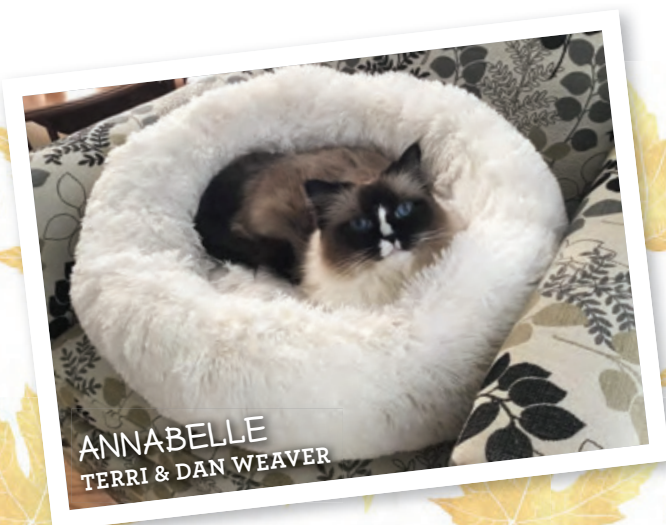
MILO
MELANIE BAKER



PAISLEY
KRIS LOHMAR



TONY & CLEO
ALEXANDRA ALSERI



ANNABELLE
TERRI & DAN WEAVER



MIA
JULIE BOLLENBACHER



SHELDON
TARA KIERSTEAD



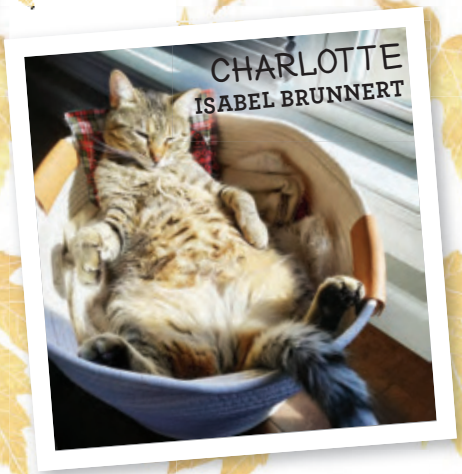
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NEXT UP: *Holiday cat pics!* Send us snapshots of your holiday felines. Selected photos will appear in the next issue of Catster, on our Facebook page @catster or both!

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Stella Talks Winter

BY MICHAEL LEAVERTON



With winter on the march, I asked my senior cat, Stella, how she felt about the cold weather. We didn't get very far.

Stella, how does it feel to be an elderly cat during winter?

Are you kidding? I'm a Bengal, bred from the fierce Asian leopard cats, who survive harsh climates from the Amur region in the Russian Far East to China, Indochina, the Indian Subcontinent and northern Pakistan.

Reading about Bengals on Wikipedia again, huh?

Just checking if my edits showed up yet. What's the harm in ONE paragraph?

Stella, you can't insert a paragraph about yourself into the Wikipedia Bengal listing.

Why not? That listing is boring! A little spice about my war with the neighbor child could bring in new readers. Maybe get me a book deal.

Can we get back to — wait, what war?

You know — the war! I've basically got Sally confined to her garage crying her eyes out.

You WHAT?!

Oh, relax. It's probably a ruse. That's one devious second grader, to be honest. Offered me a meatloaf made of snails during our last go-around. Came to regret that foray, come midnight.

What did you do at midni — wait,

I don't want to know.

Roger that. Plausible deniability. Makes it easier if the cops show up inquiring about certain events involving an unguarded compost bin and two blissful hours in the moonlight.

Please stop talking.

Fine. But maybe steer clear of Wikipedia. The Bengal listing should be blowing up any second now.

Can we get back to winter? I'm worried it could be a cold one.

Are you joking? It's nothing my Bengal winter coat can't handle.

Perhaps, but your fur has been looking a bit thin in the back.

The back? The back bedroom?

No, your physical back.

That sounds like you're saying I am ... losing my ... hair.

Ummm ...

Stella is going bald!

I didn't say that!

You did this to Stella!

No I didn't! It's fine! Ignore me!

Should I wear a bandana on my back? Let's go buy some bandanas. And hats. Can a cat get away with wearing a hat on her back?

I think we're straying off topic.

This is the topic. Forget about winter. Let's get to the haberdashery.

Stella, you're 18. Your coat is still

WIKIPEDIA

Stella— The World's Greatest Bengal

Stella Untibuste nimagna tquibus estio odiscit, autem. Um quas aut quia simincturio eum raepitur, vit que eume volore con rerumqui coest laborum eturepe raectat emolopore volorum dolor molorepe derspiduntin ex et.



luxurious, just not AS luxurious.

That reminds me: Why don't we have central heat again?

Our wall heater is fine. We live in Southern California.

I get lonely there.

You don't have to spend all day in front of it like a possum in front of a dumpster fire.

You said it yourself: I'm balding. I require whole-house heating. Vents and ductwork snaking through the walls bringing that sweet hot air.

What happened to you being bred from the tough Asian leopard cat?

I'm like five generations removed. I'm practically a Ragdoll.

I sometimes wish you were a Ragdoll. Just a giant poof of a cat.

That was a joke. I'm a Bengal. Destroyer of worlds — as per Wikipedia.

Come on, Stella. You're just a sweet, elderly cat.

Tell it to the cops. They're probably watching the house now.

Not this again.

That reminds me: Can you explain how a garden hose works? I need to know by midnight. 🐾



Stella, a Bengal, has a firm grip on her handler, freelance writer **Michael Leaverton**, whom she rescued from an alt weekly many meals ago. They live in

San Diego.



Top Cat Products

New Cattitude | Continued from page 30

How can I help my cat's bad attitude?

Correcting displaced aggression can be as simple or complex as the reason it's happening. The first step is to let your cat calm down away from you and/or whomever got the brunt of the aggression. Separate the cat from the other animals and people in the home, and let him calm down. Just like humans, your cat needs a moment to decompress and go from seeing red to a calmer state. If you go after him and try to soothe him, you may get bitten yourself. As you know, cat bites can be serious, so try not to get your cat angry and scared. Allow time for kitty's anxiety to calm down before approaching and when you do, go slowly and watch your cat's body language.

Tips for calming down kitty:

1. When outdoor animals are causing a stir, block the lower part of the window and remove any window perches or cat trees from the area so he can't see those animals.
2. During fights with housemate cats or dogs, separate the aggressive cat from the object of his displacement, then reintroduce slowly.
3. If you are attacked, put your cat in a time-out, and don't force him to interact until he's calmed down. Identify the true source of his aggression and take steps to eliminate it from your cat's world.
4. Play calming music, especially when you're not at home. Any noises in a very quiet house will sound even louder to your cat and could scare him into becoming aggressive.
5. Holistic calming remedies will keep your cat cool, calm and collected. He'll feel less apt to use "fight" as the response to things that scare or anger him.

Once you have your cat calm again, follow the tips above for handling displaced aggression and you will prevent attacks before they ever start. 🐾

Chew On This | Continued from page 33

Those supplements that contain turmeric may tone down inflammation, ease arthritic joint pain and possibly provide anti-cancer support. Other options to consider include offering extra omega-3 fats, such as fish oils or green-lipped mussel oils as well as a prebiotic fiber (such as inulin) and probiotics to aid digestion and to support the immune system.

"As a cat ages, his ability to digest and absorb nutrients changes and, in general, it declines," Dr. Carney says. "For senior cats and older, in order to maintain their weights, we need to give them easier-to-digest nutrients and more of them." 🐾

Don't forget the water!



One of the most important, and often overlooked, nutrients for cats of any age is good, ol' H2O.

Cats aren't naturally drawn to water, and they tend to consume less than they need. Water is essential for distributing nutrients, maintaining body temperature and eliminating toxins, just to name a few.

Here are a few tricks to help your cat get enough water:

- ◆ Feed wet food, as it contains more water.
- ◆ Place water bowls throughout the house to make it easier for your cat to find a place to drink from.
- ◆ Refill the water bowl regularly to keep the water fresh and clean.
- ◆ Use cat water fountains, as kitties tend to be attracted to running water.



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Cats Rule at the Kitty Bodega

BY ELISA JORDAN



©Photos courtesy Angie Ily

The past couple of years have been a time of change and reflection for many people as they dealt with pandemic-related challenges. Although the circumstances may not have been happy, making the most of a situation can make things easier.

For many years, Angie Ily ran her own business to support herself through college, then got into the corporate world for the next nine years doing project management and business development. During the pandemic, she sold her homemade macarons a couple times a month at flea markets to help fund her pet-rescue efforts. It combined two of her passions — macarons and cat rescue.

Like a lot of folks during this time, she was contemplating what to do next as the world was changing. She loves macarons, but making them can prove challenging, so opening a bakery might not be prudent. She also wasn't sure if she wanted to head back into the corporate world or run a small business. "Both come with perks and stresses," she says.

She asked herself, "What have I never gotten bored with?" The answer — working with cats!

"I have been doing TNR [trap-neuter-return] and rescue for over 17 years, starting back when I was in college in NYC. In New York, TNR and cat rescue is ingrained in the culture, so it was a natural progression for me having lived there most of my adult life."

A one-stop shop for cats

Angie decided to open a retail store to serve the needs of cats. The Kitty Bodega opened on March 1 in Houston,



Texas, where she now resides.

"I strive to provide a place cat owners can go to and ask just about anything as it relates to their cats, and get sensible and, hopefully, helpful feedback," Angie says. "It's also a place where people are encouraged to share their own lessons learned as a cat caretaker. What one person shares with me today may end up helping another person who walks in the store tomorrow."

Whether a cat has health issues like picky eating, scarf-and-barfing or gastrointestinal problems, or behavior problems like litter box avoidance or separation anxiety, the store specializes in anything cat.

While the store is still new, Angie is hopeful she can expand her efforts. Eventually, she'd like to move into a bigger space and support a wider vari-

The Kitty Bodega not only has a large selection of feline products but is a place for cat parents to get advice.

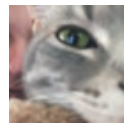
ety of health, apothecary and wellness products, she says. She would also like more room to display larger cat furnishings and build out a freezer section for raw foods, treats and ice creams.

Getting back in touch with her TNR roots may not be out of the question either. "It may come in the form of classes on how to trap or build shelters, or maybe a section in the store dedicated to colony management and TNR, which might feature things like traps, seasonal disposable shelters for colonies, or other odds and ends that make colony management and TNR much easier."

In the meantime, Angie has already started helping cats in the Houston area get what they need to thrive. 🐾



For more information, visit thekittybodega.com.



Elisa Jordan is a Southern California freelance writer specializing in pets. She has a terrier, Gidget, and a cat, Izzy.



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