



The Mewsletter

August, September, October 2007

Number of Shelter Cats Reaches Critical Mass

In this issue:

- Numbers Reach Critical Mass
- Ways to Help the Shelter
- Polydactyls
- Microchips
- Interview with a Shelter Cat
- IACC
- Volunteer Spotlight
- Silly Stuff
- In Memory Of
- Letter from the Editor
- Upcoming Events

"It's been difficult, in part because we had such a warm winter," Barb Wills explains as she cleans cages filled with kittens and nursing mothers. "As long as the weather is warm, cats will breed. And then we have a ton of kittens early in the spring and late into the summer."

That's been the case this year at Cats Haven. On top of the normal number of found kitties and veterinary referrals that come into the shelter, there has been an over-abundance of babycats and their mothers coming into Cats Haven. "What are we going to do, tho?" asks Barb. "Turn them away? I don't think so."

Now, however, Cats Haven is at critical mass. And Barb is losing sleep. "I'm worried. Adoptions and donations have slowed down, we've had a very expensive summer with the new roof on the house on top of so many ultrasounds

for sick cats, and all the spays and neuters we've done so far this year. I know it will all work out, but I'm seriously worried. We've never had this many before."

Part of the reason for the growing number of cats at the shelter is the cooperative effort being done between Cats Haven and Indianapolis Animal Care and Control (IACC). "This summer, an Ocicat breeder was shut down, and many of her cats ended up at IACC. Since we'd had experience with Ocicats in the past, we took several mothers and their litters. And when we were at IACC, we couldn't leave a mother calico and her six three-week-old babies behind. They'd have been euthanized because the kittens were too little to adopt out." Add these to the 'normal' number of cats and kittens that Cats Haven takes in, as well as the few returns that come back to the shelter when adop-

tions don't work out, and the number of feline shelter residents has exploded.

"We're just going to have to do better at getting these babies adopted into loving homes," Barb states. "And we need to find more creative ways to raise funds for the shelter and the cats." So far this summer, Cats Haven has hosted a Kitten Shower in May as well as partnering with the Rockville Road Pet Supplies Plus for the Kitten Kaboodle adoption event in August. Both events were successful, bringing in much-needed funds and supplies as well as getting several kittens and cats into their forever homes, but more needs to be done.

"Overall," says Barb, "I guess the solution is for everyone to take responsibility for their pets, get them neutered, and don't adopt on a whim. But all that is in a perfect world, and that isn't where we



Happy Halloween. My humans obviously have too much time on their hands . . .

Ways to Help the Shelter

- Pick up an extra bag of food or litter, or an extra roll of paper towels and drop it off at the shelter.
- Sponsor a kitty— for as little as \$5 a month, you can sponsor your favorite foster, or we'll choose one for you.
- Foster a kitty—If you have extra room, bring a Cats Haven cat into your home and care for it until it's adopted.
- Send pet food and cleaning supply coupons from the Sunday paper.
- Donate gift cards from pet supply stores, Wal-Mart, Lowes, Home Depot, or Target.
- Join us at adoption/ special events. We can always use an extra hand!

Hey! That Cat Has Too Many Toes!!

Polydactyl . . . “mitten kittens” . . . Hemingway cats. Whatever you want to call them, these multi-toed felines are a little different than your everyday kitty. The word “polydactyl” mean “many digits,” and these guys have more than their fair share of toes. Notice the extra “thumb” in the picture on the right. While not rare, polys are not considered common.

Polydactylism is a naturally occurring genetic mutation, and in cats can produce up to seven toes per foot. This condition produces a “thumb” that many cats can use with amazing dexterity. Poly owners have reported that their cats can actually open can lids and cartons as well as manipulate small objects with human-like ease.

Sailors considered the many-toed cats

to be good luck, and they also believed that they were better mousers. So it wasn't unusual to find mitten kittens on sailing vessels. Legend has it that one ship's captain gave a polydactyl female to writer Ernest Hemingway, who he allowed to breed freely on his Key West estate. Because of this one poly, the estate was soon overrun with these unique cats. The Hemingway cats still live on the late writer's property to this day, some of them direct descendents of the original momcat.

Polydactyls are virtually non-existent in Europe. Centuries ago, these lovely creatures were destroyed due to witchcraft superstitions, practically eliminating the trait.

The poly personality is generally laid

back and easy going, although they do seem to be a tad more curious than their four-toed cousins. They can be found in all colors and coat length, and make wonderful family pets.



Gatito Blanco is a poly who found a home through Cats Haven!

Microchipping Saves Lives and Gets Pets Home!

A little over a year ago, a decision was made to microchip every cat adopted out from Cats Haven. These little electronic chips, smaller than a grain of rice, are painlessly inserted between the shoulder blades of our kitties. If the cat ever gets loose, is found by someone, and taken to a vet, the vet can scan for the chip and immediately recover the owner's information. With that, the cat can be safely returned to its family.

You might ask “do these work?” Let me tell you about my experience. Dur-

ing one of the hottest days this summer, I found a large orange cat on my porch, lying on its side, panting. The kitty was obviously in distress. I'd not seen this cat in my neighborhood before, so I brought him in and offered food and water while I looked for my microchip scanner. After he was cooled down and settled into my guest bathroom, I scanned his back and found that he was, indeed, microchipped! A quick call to Home Again Pet Recovery gave me all the info I needed. His home was just a few houses from mine. I called the owner, left a voice-

mail message, and within an hour, the kitty's family returned my call and came to get their cat. Turns out that he'd slipped out the front door that morning, and they were looking for him when I called.

If you haven't already had your cat (or other pet) microchipped, please consider this potentially lifesaving option. Microchips can be administered by your vet, or contact Indianapolis Animal Care and Control or the Humane Society of Indianapolis to see what programs they are currently offering.

Volunteer Spotlight—Meet Dzana !

How does a Bosnian refugee named Dzana Husetic end up at the Cat House? Fate? Destiny? Accident? Well, we can thank Sue Hildebrandt for this amazing volunteer! Sue rented a house to Dzana, and the rest is history.

Dzana (pronounced Jonna) has been in the United States for six years. Always a hard worker, she and her husband owned a local

pizza restaurant. When her husband was involved in a terrible car accident in 2005, Dzana was forced to close the business. Her husband then moved back with his family to recover from his injuries. After a very rough year alone, Sue invited Dzana to attend a Monday evening Cat-aholic meeting at the Cats Haven shelter. She immediately found friends and support, and took a liking to the feline residents as

well. Dzana is currently fostering five kitties in her Fountain Square home.

Dzana spends many hours at the shelter house cleaning and helping with the cats. And being a tremendous cook, when Cats Haven finally gets a real kitchen installed, Barb just might adopt Dzana!

Interview with a shelter cat—Skittles!



Hi, guys! Raspberry here again, your reporter on the shelter scene. Each newsletter, I write this column where I interview a shelter cat. So here we go . . .

Raspberry: Today, I'm talking with Skittles, a new Cats Haven foster resident and beautiful calico mom. Greetings, Skittles, and welcome to Cats Haven.

Skittles: Well hello, Raspberry. It's nice to be here. My family and I are very grateful that you had room for us. (Be good, kids. Mom is going to talk with Raspberry now.)

Raspberry: I supposed I should introduce your kids, too. What a lovely family you've got! What are their names?

Skittles: I have Princess Di, Cali, Shelly, Quentin, Abner, and Norman. Beautiful, aren't they? (Cali, stop biting your sister!) They can be a handful, tho.

Raspberry: They are adorable, but what's up with their feet? And yours, too!?

Skittles: Hahaha! Raspberry, I am a polydactyl, as are four of my kids. Our feet look different because we have extra toes.

Raspberry: Wow! That is way cool!!

Skittles: Thank you! (Abner, stop that. Don't make me come over there!)

Raspberry: So, Skittles, what's your story?

Skittles: I was left behind when my family moved. They just left me outside to fend for myself. When a new person bought the house, I ran back inside to MY home when she opened the door, and I had my kittens. The new lady already had her own animal family and couldn't keep us, but she made sure that we were safe by getting us into Cats Haven.

Raspberry: Geez, that's really sad. I can't imagine someone going away and leaving you for good like that! But good thing someone took care of you and your family until you could be here, huh?

Skittles: Oh, yes! I know now that my kids and I will be able to find good homes. (Norman! Your face will stick that way if you do that again!)

Raspberry: Skittles, what are you

looking for in a home? Where would you like you and your kids to be?

Skittles: I've thought about this a lot, Raspberry. Most of all, I want my children to have the very best. They need food, water, treats, toys, lots of hugs and kisses, and I'd really like for them to get a good education. Maybe they could grow up to be a reporter like you!

Raspberry: They sure could! But what about you? Where would you like to live?

Skittles: I'd like to live with a family, maybe with no other pets. I'd kind of like some "ME" time, you know?

Raspberry: That sounds wonderful, Skittles. I'm sure we've got the word out that you and all your toes would like this kind of home.

Skittles: Thank you, Raspberry. (Quentin, that's not funny!!! Someone could put an eye out, now stop it. Quentin!!)

Raspberry: Contact Cats Haven if you'd like to know more about Skittles and her kids! They are just too cute! Really!

Indianapolis Animal Care and Control—Helping to Find Homes

Why is Cats Haven writing about Indianapolis Animal Care and Control (IACC)? Because we want everyone to know about the good working relationship IACC is maintaining within the animal rescue community.

Like other responsible shelters and rescue groups, IACC is trying hard to place all the healthy, friendly, adoptable cats it receives. They recently

put six new cages in their lobby to showcase adoptable cats. They also have 50 cages of adoptable cats in Cat Room #1, as well as a quiet area set aside where you can spend time with a kitty you like. All of IACC's adoptable cats are fixed, tested for FIV/FLV, are current on their vaccinations, and are microchipped.

As space allows, Cats Haven as well as other no-kill groups take animals

from IACC to lessen the number of healthy pets destroyed each year. By working together, we can make Indianapolis a more cat-friendly community, save more lives, and get more kitties adopted into loving homes.

There are always volunteer opportunities with IACC. Check out their website at www.indygov.org/accd to see if you have a special skill they need!

Donors—in memoriam, honor, etc.

Donations made in memory of beloved pets who have crossed

- Ms K Hanna: RileyCat—her friend misses him so
- Ms. B. Cartwright: Sissy Ross
- Mrs. L. Voiles: Bones was only in her life for a short time, but he was loved
- Mr. & Mrs. Holton: Their wonderful cat Sadie
- Ms. J. Dunn: Loving memory of Dusty
- Mr. E. Loya: Stinky & Mike Miller
- Mrs. V. Sanders: Her daughter's cat Elvis, truly missed
- Mrs. J. Roy: Thumbers, missing your purrs
- Mr. & Mrs. Vivian: The Queen of Cats Haven
- Mr. & Mrs. Gaylord: Freda, missing you so much
- Jane Heine: Patrick, a true bratcat, sorely missed
- Cathy White: D C, Demon Child misses you
- Dr. Hope Smith: Jingles



Donations to honor beloved pets

- Hackney—Breedlove home: Evanhaus upon the Silver
- Ms. L.A. Kline: Happy 13th birthday Waldo, a great cat

Donations made in memory of people who have crossed

- Michelle Wilson: Her mother Mylece Wilson, who loved cats and was a great supporter of Cats Haven
- Ms. B. Wills: Dr. Janet Weber, she loved her cats and was a great supporter of Cats Haven
- Ms. J. A. Wagenbreth: Peter and Regina Wagenbreth, truly missed
- Ms. Bea Boxley: Frankie J Cerk Andrus, a friend's dear daughter
- Ms. A. M. Reising: Ms. Margaret Roberts
- Mr. & Mrs. Hendrickson, Ms. Phoebe Blackburn, Ms. K. Tilson:

All donated in memory of Abby Foster who loved her cats

- Ms. J. Pearson, Mr. and Mrs. Vanderbur:

Both donated in memory of Earl Shirley, he loved his cats

- Mr. E. Loya: Mike Miller and Stinky



Cats Haven kitties who have crossed:

Olivia, Simon 2, E. Mae, Zinger, Zig (brother of Zag; son of Mother Teresa), Blond Baby, Rose, baby kits who were not here long enough to be named

Big Moose

Please remember the furry ones who are out in the world with no one to notice their crossing.

Letter from Barb

Some info on me for new readers of our newsletter; I am Barb Wills. I'm the caretaker/founder of Cats Haven. One might say that this has become my life's passion. Enough about me—there are more important items that need to be shared with our readers

Thanks to all of the wonderful Cats Haven volunteers who help make the lives of the kitties & myself easier. Sue Hobbs gets a huge thank you for creating the youtube.com video (see back page for URL). A huge thank you to The Cat Dr. Clinic & staff. With all the hot days this summer, Dr. Jones & the staff have been doing house calls almost weekly for the new kitten families & the other kitties here. Since some of our new & older kitten & cat residents have heart issues, this has lessened their stress levels. Thank you to The Emerson Pet Clinic for handling the kitties that have needed their yearly vaccines, dentals, & blood work. Thanks for letting us get last-minute appointments for the kitties found by our volunteers.

I want to thank the Humane Society of Indianapolis (HSI) & The Hamilton County Low Cost Spay/Neuter Clinic for helping get our cats & kittens spayed & neutered at a reasonable cost. Being able to use their surgery suites enables us to get more cats/kittens altered, thus getting them out to adoption events quicker. A huge Thank You to Spay/Neuter Services of Indiana (SNSI) for arranging a special spay/neuter day at the Hamilton County Low Cost Spay/Neuter Clinic. SNSI paid for the surgeries, rabies, & distemper vaccines for Southside Animal Shelter and Cats Haven. Thank you so much!!

If you have been following Raspberry's blog (www.pjfuzzypaws.com), you're aware that Cats Haven is overflowing with kittens. They have been found stuffed in a couch left for heavy trash, a young momma with kittens laying in dirt because she has no clue what to do with them, some came from Animal Care & Control because they are overflowing and needed some help. So many of our mommas and their babies have such hard luck stories, but now they are safe. I want to thank Pet Supplies Plus on Rockville Road for taking donated supplies of food, litter and other supplies for us and then matching the donated cat food & litter. They were also the site for our first "Kitten Kaboodle," a two-day adoption event. It turned out well with six kitties going to their new homes. There will be another "Kitten Kaboodle" adoption event there in the upcoming months. The Broad Ripple Pet Supplies Plus is also considering letting Cats Haven hold one there. Thank you everyone for the monetary support, coupons, certificates for free cat food, cat litter, all the donated items that help keep the shelter running

Thank you to Dzana for the big help in cleaning around the shelter house. You have definitely made life easier for me.

The computers at the shelter house have lives of their own, hence they decided to lose the address label files. Cindy Cox worked on this problem for quite a while, trying to find where the address files disappeared to. She managed to find one that wasn't current, but it made a great starting point. Thank you Cindy. I am still entering address info, so if you find that you receive two newsletters, please let me know. — Barb

The Quotable Cat

Cats seem to go on the principle that it never does any harm to ask for what you want.—**Joseph Wood Krutch**

Cats aren't clean, they're just covered with cat spit. - **John S. Nichols**

One cat just leads to another.—**Ernest Hemingway**

Carpet cleaning: \$450
Sofa upholstery: \$867
Shredded drapes: \$725
Blaming it on the dog: priceless—**the cat**

The problem with cats is that they get the same exact look whether they see a moth or an axe murderer.—**Paula Poundstone**

Time spent with a cat is never wasted.—**Sigmund Freud**

The Newsletter Aug., Sept., Oct., 2007

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Personally, I'll be glad when Halloween is over!

What's Goin' On? - Cats Haven Events!

October 6—*Petfest*, Eagle Creek Bark Park, 11 a.m. to 4 p.m.—Join Cats Haven and many other shelters/rescue groups as hundreds of available pets try to find their fur-ever homes. Browse the wares offered by various pet-related vendors, and check out the entertainment!

October 27 and 28—*CFA Championship Cat Show*, Farm Bureau Building, Indiana State Fairgrounds, 10 a.m. on Sat.; 9:30 a.m. on Sun. — Sponsored by the Indy Cat Club, Inc. Eight-ring judging; lots of vendors with great products for pets and people. Beautiful cats strutting their stuff, and our own Miranda will again be shown in the household pet category. Cats Haven will be there with cats/kits for adoption, great gift items for sale as well as our famous catnip toys. Gypsy Cat has also created some wonderful jewelry to sell to benefit the kitties. Small admission fee.

November 3 and 4—*2nd Annual Indiana Pet Expo*, Expo Hall, Indiana State Fairgrounds, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days.—Pet- friendly fun featuring over 100 local and national pet industry exhibitors. Twenty-plus shelters and rescue groups will be there with animals looking for homes. \$5.00 admission fee.

November 7-11—*58th Annual Christmas Gift & Hobby Show*, West Pavilion, Indiana State Fairgrounds, Wed/Sat: 10 a.m. to 9 p.m., Sun 10 a.m. to 6p.m.—Get a jump on your holiday shopping and decorating! This is always a great show with lots of great holiday gift items and beautiful displays. Cats Haven will be there with an adoptable kitty or two each day. Cats Haven will also have catnip toys, bowls, collars, charms, and other items to raise funds for the kitties. General admission is \$8.00, Seniors (55 and up) \$6.00; children 12 and under free.

November 17 and 18—*Great Lakes and Midwest Regions Gala, CFA Championship Cat Show*, Agriculture/Horticulture Bldg., Indiana State Fairgrounds, 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. Sat., 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Sun—This exciting show will have 500 champion cats entered! Check out vendors from around the U.S with great pet products and gift items. Cats Haven will be there with cats/kits looking for homes, great items to sell, including our famous catnip toys. Small admission fee.

November 23-25—*Starbase Indy: The Anti-Con*, Indianapolis Marriott East— A fun weekend! Enter the Mirror Universe of Classic Trek, Deep Space Nine & Enterprise. Cats Haven will be there with an adoptable kitty or two, and great items for sale to benefit the kitties. Come and join in the fun!

December 1—*Tri Kappa Gingerbread Christmas Show*, Plainfield High School, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Cats Haven will have some great holiday items for sale with all proceeds benefiting the kitties. \$2.00 admission fee.

December 2, 8, and 9—*Cats Haven's 1st Annual Holiday Bazaar*, 2603 N. College Ave., 12 p.m. to 4 p.m. all three days—Great gift items for the people and pets in your life. Snacks and beverages to enjoy, plus holiday music. Stop by and visit with the volunteers and kitties! We will be accepting donations of cat food, litter, cleaning supplies, and so on.

Wish List

Clay litter	Paper plates (small/large)
Scoopable litter	Q-Tips
Dry food	Chain-link fencing
Canned food	Gift cards from Target,
Trash bags	Lowe's, Office Depot,
Clorox Clean-up	WalMart, and so on
Laundry detergent	Gas cards
Paper towels	

Cats Haven on YouTube!

In an effort to find new and unique ways to promote Cats Haven, we've created a wonderful slide show and posted it on YouTube!! Check it out at <http://youtube.com/watch?v=EqGxiOOzPki>. The music is by Marc Cohn, and all pictures are of shelter cats, fosters, or those waiting to have a place with us.

Be sure to leave a comment after you view the show. So far, we've received positive feedback from viewers, but we're always open to suggestions. Tell us what you think! More slide shows could be in the works!!