



New Beginnings

New Beginnings: Jude

Angela Hartley, Development Director

This winter, Tabby's Place took a deep breath and a big risk...and said, "hey, Jude."

You've helped us rescue desperately needy cats through the years, so you know we embrace the "hopeless cases." But with Jude, we knew we might be signing up for heartbreak. At just a few weeks of age, Jude was diagnosed with a severe case of hydrocephalus. Tabby's Place has nurtured three cats with this condition, only one of whom has survived to adulthood.

But when we heard Jude's sad song, we just had to try to make it better.

Since arriving at Tabby's Place, baby Jude has been a fiesta of fun.

The only thing he loves more than playtime is hugging, and he spends most of each day blissfully snuggling in a staff member or volunteer's arms. But Jude's life is not all sweetness; he suffers from frequent seizures, and his future is uncertain at best. We're working closely with a world-class neurologist to give Jude the best hope at a happy, healthy life.

There's a reason we named Jude after the patron saint of impossible causes. But we know nothing is impossible with love, and we're



Brave baby Jude

going to love Jude with all our might. You can join Jude on this journey by signing up as one of his very first sponsors. Please click [here](#) to join Jude's song of hope.

2018 Income and Expenses

Jonathan Rosenberg, Founder & Executive Director

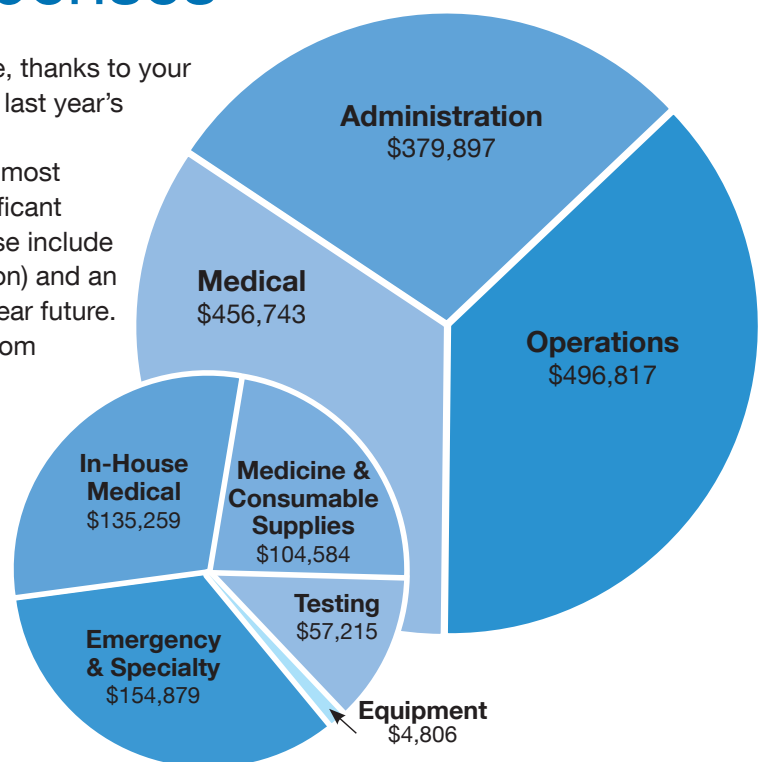
2018 was an amazing financial year for Tabby's Place, thanks to your generosity. We handily crushed our projection (as well as last year's income of \$1,132,034), raising a total of \$1,360,213.

Despite rising expenses, we showed a net profit of almost \$27,000. In addition to the usual costs, we incurred significant administrative expenses investing in future projects. These include a long-needed, redesigned web site (which you'll see soon) and an incredibly exciting project we will be announcing in the near future.

When I tell people about the cost of caring for cats from hopeless situations, they often ask, "Where does all the money come from?" I immediately answer, "It all comes from individuals." This leaves the other person stunned. "All of it?"

Truth be told, it is only a small exaggeration to say that all of our donations comes from individuals. Only 10% of our annual income comes from corporate sources (via matching contributions) or foundations.

The individual donor has always formed the bedrock of support for Tabby's Place. So, if you wonder whether your small donation makes a difference, you have your answer: it makes all of the difference.



Winter Warmth for Feral Friends

Tabby's Place kitties are warm and cozy this winter – and that includes community cats in our Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program. If you're nurturing outdoor cats, too, we recommend the following frosty-weather tips:

- **Plump up the portions:** Cats' caloric needs rise during winter, so increase serving sizes to help maintain their energy.
- **Fend off freezing:** Serve wet food in plastic containers rather than metal bowls, or switch to dry food entirely. Provide water in heated bowls, or put a microwavable heating pad under the bowls.
- **Stick with straw:** Insulate shelters with straw or styrofoam, to repel moisture. Don't use hay, and resist the urge to pad cat houses with blankets or towels, which can ab-



[Pancake](#), who once weathered the winter's chill, hopes you'll help her feral friends

sorb moisture, freeze or become moldy.

- **Shun the snow:** Regularly check cats' shelters to make sure the kitties aren't snowed in or out of their houses. Make the shelter entrance just large enough for a cat to enter, to keep wind and snow outside.
- **Keep it cozy:** Heat disperses quickly, so your cats' shelter should be only as large as necessary. The smaller the size, the better the shelter can retain the cats' body heat.
- **Elevate the situation:** Raise shelters above the frigid ground, and face the entrances away from the wind.
- **Cut the commute:** Place feeding and water stations as close as possible to the shelters, so the cats don't have to travel far in frigid conditions.



Your kindness can keep community cats like [Fluffy](#) singing all winter



Tabby's Place TNR Program cat [Maybelle](#) shows how feral cats can thrive – and live large – in all seasons

- **Remain reliable:** Feed the cats at the same time each day, so they'll know when to expect you. If they don't know when they'll next see food, they may venture out into the elements searching for it. This will also give them the chance to eat and drink before things can freeze.

Winter can be wearying for all of us, but with proper planning, you can warm it with love for your outdoor feline friends. – *A.H.*

Recommended Reading:

[Feral Cat Winter Shelters](#), Neighborhood Cats

[How to Build a Feral Cat Shelter for the Winter](#), Catster

[Top Ten Tips: Caring For Ferals in Winter](#), ASPCA

[Winter Care and Safety for Community Cats](#), Petfinder

JOIN TEAM TNR!

If your heart goes out to the wildest members of the Tabby's Place family, please join Team TNR. [Sign up](#) to sponsor the TNR Fund, and you'll help feed and care for our community cats. Each month, we'll send you email updates on the brave kitties you're helping. [Click here](#) for more information – and thank you for your generous heart! – *A.H.*

The More, the Merrier? Should You Adopt Another Cat?

We've all heard the quips. Cats are like potato chips; you can't have just one. One cat just leads to another.

At Tabby's Place, we generally believe it's best to have more than one cat. But, there are exceptions, and it's best to make careful kitty considerations:

- **Make sure you're adopting for you.** We've all entertained the idea that our cat needs a friend. But it's risky business attempting to adopt a cat solely for your cat. There's no guarantee they will ever be best buds, no matter how much they've bonded with previous cats. Would you add the new cat to your family even if he never snuggles with your resident kitty? If not, reconsider.

Recommended Reading:

[5 questions to ask before adopting a second cat](#), Lindsay Putnam

[Considerations When Getting a Second Cat](#), Debra Horwitz & Gary Landsberg

[Thinking About Adding a Second Cat to the Family?](#), Pam Johnson-Bennett



Some seniors, like [Carley Rose](#), aren't thrilled with other cats' shenanigans



On the other hand, kittens like [Rosebud](#) and [Dorothy](#) will generally welcome a new friend eagerly

a new addition. Especially if your elderly cat has chronic medical issues or has been "sole kitty" for some time, bringing in another cat may be terribly stressful. A rambunctious kitten, in particular, can be an older cat's worst nightmare.

- **Evaluate easygoing-ness.** Is your cat a calm character who rolls with life's changes? That's a good sign that she'll be OK with a new addition. But, if you have an anxious cat, forcing her to welcome a new "sibling" may not be the kindest choice.
- **Get ready to reorganize.** Do you have room for another feeding station, more toys, and an additional litter box? Can you provide playtime, proper cleanliness, and ample attention to another cat?
- **Prepare for a process.** Introducing a new cat is a delicate dance. Are you ready to keep the kitties separate for days or weeks – perhaps longer, if they

take some time to accept each other? Do you have the patience to persist through helping your cats to tolerate each other...and the willingness to accept that "mutual tolerance" may be the closest bond they can achieve? (Check out our past articles on cat-to-cat introductions [here](#), [here](#) and [here](#).) – A.H.



Cats Are Not Small Dogs

Dr. Laura Collins, Veterinarian

A favorite refrain among feline practitioners is “cats are not small dogs.” I’m frequently asked if cats can eat dog food, or vice versa. The answer is, “only in very limited amounts.” Why? Because their physiology is different, many of their nutritional requirements are different, too.

Cats¹ are “obligate carnivores.” They have evolved from ancestors that ate only meat and have lost the ability to synthesize some of the required nutrients found only



Like all cats, little Sammy is an obligate carnivore

in animal flesh. For instance, cats require vitamin A in its preformed state, whereas many other species can synthesize vitamin A from plant products.

A key discovery about cat nutrition occurred in 1986, when a team of veterinarians found that taurine was an essential amino acid for cats. All mammals are able to synthesize taurine from cysteine and methionine², but cats cannot synthesize enough to keep up with their needs. Until this discovery, 3% of cats in the U.S. suffered from the heart disease dilated cardiomyopathy. But since 1987, all cat foods have been supplemented with taurine, and we now very rarely see this disorder.

Cats also have a higher protein requirement than most other mammals, requiring 34 to 42 percent of their calories from protein (or 2 grams of protein per pound). This is twice the amount of protein a dog or human requires. Cats actually have



Shea may not contemplate the taurine in his food, but it helps keep his heart healthy

no requirement for carbohydrates.

Because of their nutritional needs, there is no way to formulate a diet appropriate for a cat that is entirely vegetarian, which is why we refer to them as obligate carnivores. Dogs have evolved to have some physiologic abilities that cats lack, and with careful planning can be maintained on a balanced vegetarian diet.

This is one of many reasons why *cats are not small dogs!*

¹ This includes all members of the cat family (felidae), including domestic cats.

² Amino acids found in small quantities in most proteins.

LONELY HEARTS CLUB

We all want to feel the love this Valentine’s Day...and four Tabby’s Place cats are looking at you and saying, “pick me!”

If you have a sweet spot for a cat who truly needs you, make Shifty, Yardley, Rufus or Jude your special Valentine this year. These Special Needs sweethearts are all brand new to our sponsorship program, eagerly awaiting their first sponsors.

You can meet our phenomenal four by clicking on their photos. You’ll receive updates on your sweetheart every month...and you’ll make one lovable cat feel cherished all year ‘round. – A.H.



Shifty



Rufus



Yardley



Jude

Forever Loved: Sabine

Sabine was born into a litter of cuddly kittens at a rescue in Pennsylvania – a nice “soft landing” for a homeless kitten.

And so it seemed, as she romped and played with her siblings. But, within a few weeks, something seemed “off” about Sabine: her front legs didn’t operate quite normally. A physical examination, x-rays and blood work showed nothing amiss. Was she just a clumsy kitten?

But her condition worsened, and the rescue was out of options. They did not know how to proceed for a kitten with a progressive, undiagnosed condition. So, they turned to Tabby’s Place, where we are known for welcoming hopeless felines.

Because of this, in our 15 years of operation, I have seen many heartbreaking cases. But upon Sabine’s arrival, I was struck by two things:

1. Her front legs were crossed in front of her chest in an un-



Beloved Sabine

natural manner.

2. Her angelic face showed complete trust, as she lay largely helpless.

My heart broke on the spot. I told myself that I had learned that there is no “why,” and that things are “just the way they are.” But, it didn’t help. This was poignant beyond endurance.

Jess, one of our premier employee-fosterers, agreed to take Sabine. There couldn’t be a better place for the kitten. She would be surrounded by love, noise, animals, children and lots of attention.

And, we still had hope. After all, we had no idea what her diagnosis might be.

Our vet said a trip to our favorite neurologist was the first stop. After a thorough examination, he felt certain that Sabine had a *lysosomal storage disease*. These are a group of about 50 rare, metabolic disorders that affect cells’ ability to dispose of waste products.¹

We had previously cared for two kittens with storage disease. Though the symptoms were very



Sabine lived her brief life to the fullest

different, we knew a rapid progress was inevitable.

Sabine made frequent visits to Tabby’s Place. I found it very difficult to be with her. She wasn’t suffering and simply coped with her limitations, but the knowledge that she was deteriorating formed a huge weight on me.

After a few weeks, Jess told us it was time. Sabine was no longer able to “be a kitten.” She was surrounded by love and warmth and left this world gently. It is amazing what an impact a 3 pound ball of fur could have. I will never forget her.

Rest well, Angel. It was an honor to care for you. – J.R.

¹ Tay-Sachs disease in humans is the most well-known example of such a disease.

Ask the Behaviorist

How Do You Feed Your Cat?

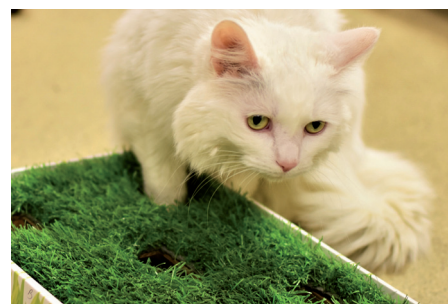
Nancy Meyer, Feline Behavioral Consultant, Volunteer, Benefactor & Adopter

The answer to this question seems obvious to many: “We keep dry food out at all times and feed one or two meals of canned food daily.”

But research has shown that this long-accepted method can cause physical ailments and be detrimental to our cats’ mental wellbeing.

Our house cats have the same needs as free-roaming cats. For optimum physical and mental health, they need to hunt for their food and eat multiple small meals a day, in privacy. I recommend the following cat-friendly feeding practices:

- 1. Puzzle feeders:** These objects hold food and must be manipulated by the cat in order to extract it. They offer a physical as well as a mental challenge. Start with an easy feeder and increase the difficulty as your cat becomes a more adept hunter. You can also encourage hunting and foraging by placing small amounts of kibble throughout your home.
- 2. Automatic feeders:** Although they do not allow for a hunting experience, they can be used to dispense multiple small meals during



Faye — like all the cats in our Weight Management Suite — is quite motivated to solve her puzzle feeders

the day. A word of caution: when incorporating any change to a feeding routine, it is always a good idea to check with your vet. You must ensure that your cat is eat-

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ing a sufficient amount, and take Special Needs and illnesses into consideration.

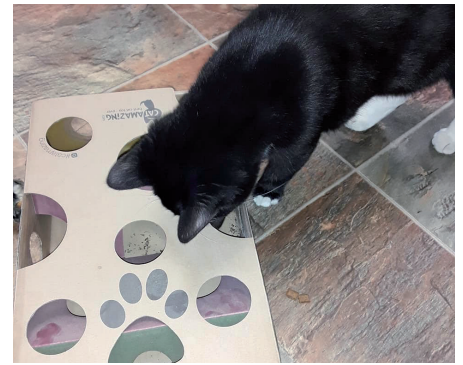
3. Privacy: Just because cats eat next to each other does not mean they like it. A study showed feeding cats “cafeteria style” can raise the stress hormone cortisol. If one of your cats normally avoids another, make it possible for them to eat with distance and ideally visual separation.

Always be on the lookout for tension, and make certain that one cat is not trying to hoard all of the food.

These simple steps will help your cat to be healthier in body and mind. Resolve to make 2019 the year you feed your cats in a truly feline-friendly way.

Additional Resources:

www.foodpuzzlesforcats.com
www.docandphoebe.com
www.catfriendly.com/howtofeedcats



Our kittens are always game to try a new foraging toy

Happy Endings

Happy Endings: Bernadette

Jessica Brent Huelsbergen, [Adopter](#) & [Sponsor](#)

Editor's note: Tabby's Place was blessed to have over 40 of our phenomenal adopters submit their “true love” stories to Petco's 2018 “Home for the Holidays” contest. Two of those stories were selected, winning \$35,000 in life-saving funds for the Tabby's Place cats. We're honored to share one of these winning stories here; we'll feature the second winner next quarter. Of course, in our hearts, every adoption is a victory, and we'll be posting additional entries on our website in the near future. – A.H.

When I began [volunteering](#) for Tabby's Place, I knew it would be hopeless to resist adopting one of their cats. There was an empty space in our house since my dear tortie Keebler had passed away suddenly the year before. But with two young daughters, a big dog, and an elderly cat in our home, I knew I'd

have to be careful about choosing the right match for our full household. The biggest requirement for us was that the cat needed to be tolerant of our two young girls. My girls are pretty gentle but they are young and rambunctious, and not every cat's cup of tea.

When we adopted Bernadette—a gorgeous, silky, green-eyed orange female tabby from Tabby's Place—we knew she was friendly and tolerant. But what we didn't expect was how much she would bond with my daughters. Perhaps it was because we introduced Bernadette into the household by starting her off in my daughters' room that she grew so attached. Whatever the reason, she became the joint occupant/ruler of the girls' room, and spends most of her days and nights snuggled in my daughters' blankets.

At night, I can hear my daughters mumbling to Bernadette in their funny cat voices as they drift off to sleep. In the morning when I come in to wake them for school, Bernadette is lying by their side, ready for a morning cuddle and head scratch. Bernadette has been very affectionate with the whole human family (the elderly cat and dog are another story—let's just say



Bernadette

they peacefully coexist), but I could have never imagined she would form such a close bond with my daughters.

That bond has become even closer as Bernadette ages and has gone through her share of struggles. Last year, we discovered that Bernadette had a malignant tumor in her hind leg. Ultimately our vet determined that the best treatment was amputation, and Bernadette is now thriving as a tripod cat. In order to ensure that she still has access to my daughters' beds, we purchased pet stairs that enable her to climb up and down at will. She is still queen of my daughters' beds, and just as snuggly and sweet as ever.

Thank you, Tabby's Place, for giving my daughters the amazing gift of feline friendship. I am sure this bond will foster a love of animals throughout their lives.



Bernadette and her beloved girls