



New Beginnings: Sunshine, Cashmere and Bud

Angela Townsend, Development Director

Summer 2016 got off to a horrifically hot start for three elderly cats. But, thanks to you, these senior survivors are rising from the ashes to thrive.

When a fire devoured their home, 11-year-old Bud and 17-year-olds Cashmere and Sunshine were

fortunate to survive. A canine companion was not so fortunate, and the flames left one of the cats' owners critically injured. With the family homeless and hospitalized, the

< **Sunshine** in his outdoor days



Beautiful Cashmere shortly before coming to Tabby's Place

senior cats scabbled for shelter on the charred grounds of their former house.

But through a fortunate series of circumstances, Sunshine, Cashmere and Bud came to Tabby's Place.

Despite what they've endured, this elderly trio is exceptionally sweet – and astoundingly healthy. Glamorous Cashmere and jubilant Sunshine purred and cuddled even



Bud

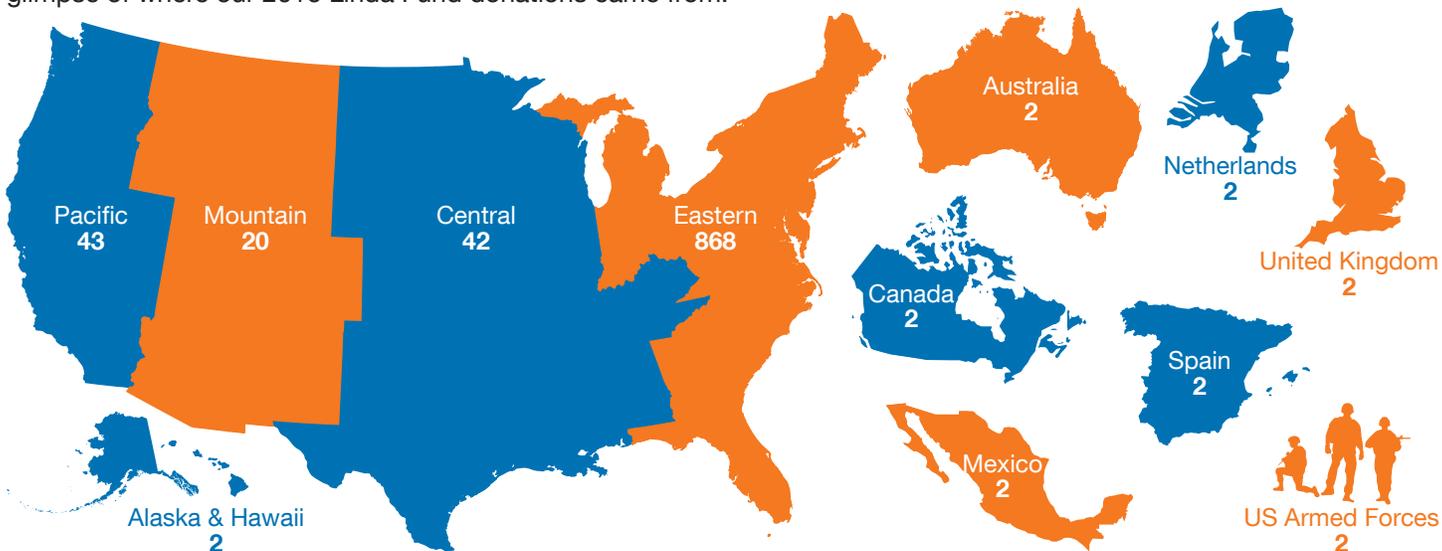
during their intake exams. Cream-sicle-colored Bud, although initially timid, has become a chirpy, cheerful boy. Other than needing dental cleanings, and, in Bud's case, surgery for entropion, the three cats are in almost perfect health.

It's obvious that Sunshine, Cashmere and Bud have been well-loved throughout their long lives. Thanks to your generosity, that love continues at Tabby's Place.

Who Loves The Linda Fund Cats? You Do!

Thank you for your spectacular generosity in the Linda Fund Matching Challenge: you donated an amazingly awesome total of \$180,183. That's \$34,000 more than 2015 – and so many more cats' lives saved and cherished together.

Tabby's Place may be located in rural New Jersey, but your love knows no limits. We thought you might like a glimpse of where our 2016 Linda Fund donations came from:



How to Pet a Cat

OK: On the face of it, this sounds absurd. Isn't it obvious how to pet a cat?

But if you want to provide your kitty with maximum handling happiness – or make a good impression on a cat you've just met – science has some suggestions. A 2015 British study in *Applied Animal Behaviour Science* measured positive and negative feline behaviors in response to various types of touches. While a head-bonk or slow blink scored positive points, biting, ear flattening or tail swishing earned negative points. So, how do you pet a cat?

- **Head for the head:** Cats showed



Irresistible though it seems, this pose is not an invitation to pet Amos' belly

the most positive reaction to being stroked on their heads and faces. Petting a cat in these areas allows her to spread her scent. Focus on the base of the chin and jawbone, base of the ears, and the cheeks (behind the whiskers).

- **Take care around that tail:** Although some cats enjoyed being petted at the base of the tail, overall this area elicited the largest negative reaction. So, if you know your cat likes being skritch'd here, go ahead. Researchers speculate that, since cats don't groom each other in this region, they don't typically associate it with positive touching. Additionally, with the caudal gland located here, this may be a region that's easily over-stimulated.
- **Respect the belly:** We know – that marshmallow-soft tummy is irresistible, especially when your cat throws herself onto the floor to show it to you. But, much as she seems to be begging for a belly rub, this is actually a greeting behavior that reveals trust. To reach out and touch that tummy is a betrayal of trust, and most cats



Sweet, timid Sammy enjoys being skritch'd on the chin and cheeks

will react negatively. A cat's belly is her most vulnerable region, where her vital organs are located, and she's likely to become defensive you touch it. Unless your cat is a known tummy-rub aficionado, take her belly-baring behavior as a cue to stroke her face.

- **Let the cat give you cues:** The most important rule is that no rule applies to every cat. Cats are individuals, so the best way we can love them is to respect them for who they are. Just because a particular cat doesn't like being touched in a certain way doesn't mean she doesn't like you. Follow her lead, respect her signals, and love her just the way she is. – A.T.

TNR at Tabby's Place

Dr. Laura Collins, Veterinarian

With your help, Tabby's Place has expanded our mission to help more cats than will ever be our residents.

Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR; also known as Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return, or TNVR) is a way to help our feral feline friends (also called *community cats*) without removing them from the place they feel most comfortable. Most community cats were born outdoors, where they grew up with little or no human contact. When kittens grow up without expe-

riencing gentle human touch, they may never be able to overcome their fear of us. Such cats cannot feel "at home" in our presence, regardless of how comfortable we try to make it for them. TNR is the kindest, most humane thing we can do for them.

Tabby's Place conducts *targeted* TNR, which involves treating an entire colony at a time and ensures a more satisfactory result. We use humane traps, baited with wet food. We then spray or neuter each cat. This not only reduces the number



Like all alumni of our TNR work, Dobro has a tipped ear

of homeless cats born outdoors, it eliminates the physiologic stress of pregnancy and lactation, and the

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wanderlust and fighting tendencies of tomcats.

Each of our TNR cats is ear tipped, a procedure involving the removal of 1 cm from the tip of the left ear. This is a universal signal to animal control officers and shelters, telling them, "This cat has been neutered and is being cared for." We also tattoo each cat at his or her surgical site, indicating the cat's neu-



Our TNR alumnae, like Maybelle, live happy, healthy lives...and don't miss many meals

tered status.

We vaccinate our community cats against rabies, distemper and feline leukemia, three infectious diseases seen most commonly in outdoor cats. If a cat has internal or external parasites, we treat her for it.

Unique to Tabby's Place, and possible only through your generosity, we provide additional procedures as needed by each cat. For instance, many free-roaming cats suffer from wounds or painful dental disease. We thoroughly treat these conditions, and ensure that each cat is fully healed before returning outdoors.

At Tabby's Place, almost every cat we trap is returned to a colony of feline friends with a caretaker, guaranteeing adequate food, shelter and ongoing monitoring. Sometimes, we trap cats who turn out to be either too friendly or too sickly to return to outdoor life. In those cases, we keep them at Tabby's Place and find appropriate homes where they can continue to enjoy the company of humans.

Our goal is to prevent the birth of future feral litters. As community cats pass away due to age, we will have a positive impact on the overall number of homeless cats. Along the way, we are also helping community cats to have the happiest and healthiest lives possible. Our hearts go out to these cats; most of the world has abandoned them, but we believe they are as deserving of our care as our beloved housecats.

Thank you for believing in the value of these cats' lives with us!



Kitten Kroger shows his blue tummy tattoo, indicating that he has been neutered

Ask the Behaviorist

Will A Kitten Be Good For My Old Cat?

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

Choosing a companion for your senior cat? Keep your old friend content with these guidelines:

- Don't project your emotions onto your cat. A resident cat may view a new cat entering their territory as a



< **Mature cats like Meatball and Valencia may do better with peers than wild kittens**



Regardless of age, easygoing cats who love other cats will be most likely to welcome a new addition (as Carrot welcomed Spumoni to Suite B)

threat. (Accordingly, a proper introduction is important when integrating cats of any age.)

- A single kitten is never a good choice of companion for an elderly cat. Seniors do not reminisce, nor do they try to recapture their youth. Cats live in the moment rather than looking back or anticipating the future. The high activity level of a kitten is likely to stress



A pair of kittens (like alumni Gandalf and Zeppelin) can entertain each other rather than torment your senior cat

- your senior rather than fostering a long term peaceful relationship.
- A pair of kittens may work. If a kitten does not have another kitten as a companion, she will miss out on learning important social skills. Adopting two kittens rather than one will benefit the kittens, while allowing your senior to have feline

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- companionship without having to be a kitten's primary playmate.
- Assess your senior's personality. Is she still somewhat active for a cat her age? Look for a fellow adult cat who enjoys play. If your cat likes to lounge the day away, an-

- other senior cat would be a great choice.
- Consider the competition quandary. Does your senior cat have a very strong bond with you? A cat who is independent and not constantly angling for attention would be best.

RECOMMENDED READING:

- 8 Tips for Helping Your Senior Dog or Cat Accept a New Family Pet, Marty Becker, DVM
- Thinking About Adding a Second Cat to the Family?, Pam Johnson-Bennett
- Choosing a companion for your cat, Ingrid King
- What You Need to Know about Cat Introductions, Tabby's Place

Forever Loved: Morgan

Jonathan Rosenberg, Founder & Executive Director

I don't know Why¹ Morgan came to Tabby's Place. Oh, I understand the why². It's simple: we received a call from a volunteer/adopter about a cat she found in her backyard, dragging his back legs and we said we would take the cat.

Like any shelter or rescue, we are always full and inundated with requests to take cats. So we entertain requests only from specific channels (local municipalities, our "colonies", other shelters). But for some "reason," we said yes to Morgan.

The outcome for a cat dragging its legs is rarely uplifting. Cat people know it's likely an HBC (Hit By Car) or a saddle thrombus. These are

truly fearful incidents.

But, Morgan came back to us from the Emergency Hospital, where he had been diagnosed with a saddle thrombus. He was not in pain and had already started to show feeling in his rear legs. We knew better than to risk hope. These are good signs, but nothing to write home about. Many thrombus patients make it that far.

Maybe we "knew," but Morgan did not. He recovered at an amazing pace. Not only was he walking, but he was running and jumping. (He remains the only cat to date that has scaled the extra high gate fronting my office.)

While Morgan was doing great symptomatically, the clinical story was different. His heart was horrible. Eventually, the radiologist recommended discontinuing his semi-annual echocardiogram. She had no explanation as to Why an animal with such significant heart disease was actually living.

Morgan romped through the Lobby and Community Room for over three years. He was one the *nicest cats in the world*.[®] He never complained. He loved every being he met. He was adored by hundreds of



Morgan

people (and a few cats).

One morning in June 2016, the morning team found Morgan lying on his side, vomiting. His toes were ice cold, a classic sign of a saddle thrombus. We administered pain medications and put him on heat support until our vet arrived. She confirmed our fears. It was time to let him go. The staff and a few close friends were with us as we kissed his beautiful head and said goodbye.

Morgan was an incredible being, who happened to come to Earth wearing a cat suit. I feel blessed to have shared a path with him for almost four years. I would be honored to meet him on another path, at another time and place.

¹ "for what reason or purpose"

² "a reason or explanation"



Morgan inspired exuberant affection from friends of all ages

Happy Endings: Bubbles

Leigh Covello, Adopter & Volunteer

Poor little cross-eyed Bubbles was starving and scared. She was part of a feral colony, and the other cats weren't playing nice with her...or even letting her eat. Luck-

ily, Tabby's Place was able to take Bubbles in and keep her safe and well fed. However, she was terrified of humans and willing to draw blood to defend herself.

Fast forward six months, I met Bubbles as a volunteer in our cat socialization program. Our first meeting was fearful for both of us, and I

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couldn't even touch her. Over the next few months, I would visit Bubbles and talk to her, but was unable to win her trust. She was either in her cat tower or with her best feline friend, Reggie. Would I ever be able to pet her?

Soon, Reggie was adopted. Everyone was happy, except poor Bubbles. Her friend was gone, and



Bubbles

she was obviously depressed. I wondered if a foster home might be a good idea for her. Maybe after some more intense socialization, she would become adoptable. After a long conversation with my husband and two sons, we decided to give her a chance. Mind you, I still hadn't even pet her.

In agreement with the Tabby's Place staff, we decided to foster Bubbles for two months and then reevaluate her behavior with people. Her progress was amazing. Only three weeks into fostering Bubbles, we were in love and officially adopted her. We are proud foster failures.



Bubbles loving life with her forever family

Scared, timid Bubbles has blossomed into a loving companion. She still has progress to make, but a cat who once hid in the corner now enjoys being pet, brushed, and playing with toys. Bubbles greets us with chatter in the morning and is learning to trust our other cats. She even tolerates the dog.

My goal is to give Bubbles the love she deserves, and to help her feel confident and secure. I honestly believe in my heart that she is happy here. The joy she has brought to our family is immeasurable. Welcome to your forever home, dear Bubbles.

Where Are They Now? Macaroon

This column usually features felines several years after adoption. Macaroon's not exactly an exception to that...she just happened to make a return trip to Tabby's Place.

When we first met Macaroon, she was a bite-sized biscuit. She and her siblings were all of four days old, with their umbilical cords still attached. The tiny orphan would ultimately be the sole survivor of her sickly litter. But sadness was soon swallowed up in joy, as Mac was adopted by a wonderful man.



She may look serious...but Big Mac is most serious about having fun

He adored her, and Macaroon was devoted to him. If ever a family was meant to be, this was it.

Then tragedy struck again.

Macaroon's dad developed a respiratory condition so severe, he could no longer breathe in her presence. He would have gone to the ends of the earth to find a way to keep his beloved Mac, but nothing eased his symptoms. With a broken heart, he returned Macaroon (who had become quite overweight) to us and pledged to visit often – a promise he's kept.

Heartbroken for Mac and her dad, we welcomed our now-colossal cookie back, keeping the promise, "once a Tabby's Place cat, always a Tabby's Place cat." Sweeter and sassier than ever, Mac wasted no time muscling her way into every lap (and smacking other cats as needed).

Today, Mac – "Big Mac" to her friends – is one of the most hilarious, affectionate, irresistible cats at Tabby's Place. All 20+ pounds of Macaroon exude exuberance and



Macaroon in all her 20+ pound glory

love, and she's guaranteed to have you belly-laughing within minutes of meeting her. Equal parts comedian and confidante, Macaroon does everything on a grand scale. If she's a cookie, she's one of those dinner plate-sized specials from a Brooklyn diner.

We believe Macaroon will find love again. In the meantime, she's loving life and living large in the Weight Management Suite at Tabby's Place, where there's no "managing" her outsized personality, or her magnificent heart.

Editor's note: Macaroon's original adopter has generously offered to pay her adoption fee. If you are interested in adopting Mac, please contact Danielle. You can also sponsor Macaroon by clicking [here](#).



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Thanks our Linda Fund Business Benefactors!

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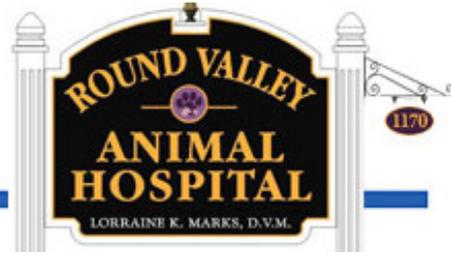


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