

# Tabby's Place®

A CAT SANCTUARY



## New Beginnings: Eva & Juan Manuel

Angela Hartley, Development Director

Puerto Rico's national tourism motto is, "Puerto Rico does it better!" After meeting Juan Manuel and Eva, we agree. The beloved island has given us two of the most darling cats we've ever met.

Originally part of a Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program in Puerto Rico, Eva and Juan Manuel stole the hearts of their rescuers. Sweeter than a mango, Eva is the very picture of "adorable." With his loving, lively spirit, Juan Manuel brings a dance of joy everywhere he goes. Clearly these cuties were meant to be cuddled and cherished indoors.

Yet life for a stray cat in Puerto Rico is perilous. The cats' rescuers report that the island's euthanasia rate was 95%...before the arrival of two devastating hurricanes. The fu-



Eva

ture looked bleak for Eva and Juan Manuel.

But Tabby's Place exists for cats in desperate circumstances, and so Juan Manuel and Eva found their refuge 1,600 miles from home. This isn't the first time (or the sec-



Juan Manuel

ond) Tabby's Place has welcomed faraway felines, and we'll go the distance for kitties who need us in the years to come. This is only possible because of your love. Eva and Juan Manuel join all of us at Tabby's Place in saying, *muchísimas gracias!*

## 2017 Expenses

Jonathan Rosenberg, Founder & Executive Director

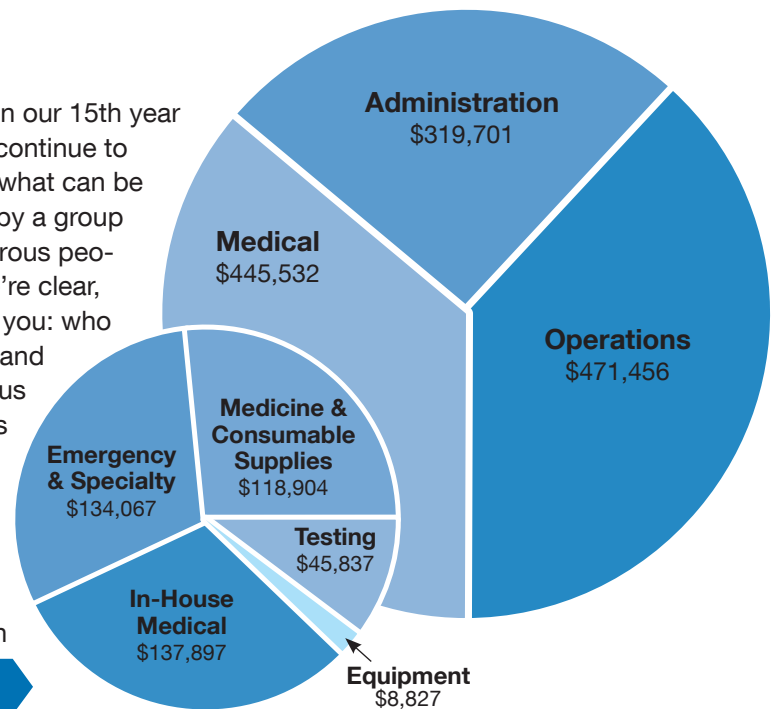
Thanks to our generous donors, in 2017 we saved 357 cats from hopeless situations, our best year to date, beating 2016 by more than 30%.

With more cats, of course, comes more expense. 2017 was our most expensive year, ringing in at \$1,236,690, and exceeding 2016 expenses by 8%. And, while we're happy to have saved 30% more cats at "a discounted rate of 8%," our income lagged, at \$1,132,034. This left us with a deficit of \$104,656.

But, thanks again to our donors, we had more than enough cash on hand to weather the deficit and leave us in good shape starting 2018.

As we begin our 15th year of operation, I continue to be amazed by what can be accomplished by a group of caring, generous people. Just so we're clear, I'm referring to you: who donate money and time to enable us to carry out this mission. You surely realize that the vast majority of cats who have passed through

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our doors would not have lived without your contributions. Frankly, there are not (m)any choices for elderly diabetics, paraplegics and the other “unwanted” felines we have had the honor of caring for.

Just 18 years ago, Tabby's Place was seen as an “impractical dream” by many people. You have proven them wrong. And, as we look forward to the next 15 years, we are considering ways to expand our mission to help even more helpless cats.

It just may be time to dream again. We look forward to sharing our dreams with you, who we see as part of the Tabby's Place extended family. (By the way, as with any good family, please feel free to drop by any time for some catnip and kibble ☺).

## Save Your Heart: Adopt A Cat

If you've ever loved a kitty, you know: cats heal heartache. Ordinary life will batter and bruise every heart, and there's no comfort like the purr of a cat.

But did you know that cats are good for your physical heart – not the Valentine-shaped metaphor, but the fist-sized muscle in your chest?

- Cat owners have a 30% decreased risk of death by heart attack compared to their cat-less counterparts. This finding was based on a [10-year study](#) of over 4,000 Americans. Even the researchers were stunned by the magnitude of the impact.
- Have a cat? You're more than a third less likely to have a stroke. This is true even if you adjust for factors like smoking, high cholesterol and diabetes, according to the same University of Minnesota [study](#).
- Researchers believe that petting your cat may reduce the level of stress-related hormones in your

blood. Stroking a kitty has also been [found](#) to release oxytocin, the “bonding hormone,” which can reduce stress and anxiety.

- Cats can cut your cholesterol (and not just because they'll eat your bacon and egg sandwich). The American Heart Association [states](#) that pet ownership helps lower triglyceride and cholesterol levels.
- Does your cat make you happy? She may also be helping to [boost your immunity](#) by producing an antibacterial peptide, enhancing multiple immune components, and enabling certain immune cells to secrete their own endorphins and improve their disease-fighting capacity.
- If your heart needs healing, lean in close to your purring pet. Cats purr at frequencies between 25 – 150 Hz, the same range that's been found to be [therapeutic](#) for bone growth and healing; reduction of inflammation, pain and swelling; tendon repair; joint mobility, and the growth and repair of muscle tissues like those in your heart.



Fill your lap with [Zencada](#), and she'll fill your heart with love – and health

- Can't have a cat right now? The cats of your past are still hugging your heart. A [2009 study](#) found that even people with only past cat ownership had a decreased risk of death due to cardiovascular diseases.

Tabby's Place doesn't usually offer medical advice, but we'll make an exception this time. Consider adding a heart-healing cat to your family...and start [right here](#), with our adoptable angels. – A.H.



[Donna's](#) deep purr is good for all that ails you

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# What Makes a Cat Feel Loved?

Nancy Meyer, Feline Behavioral Consultant, [Adopter](#), [Benefactor](#) & [Volunteer](#)

Every cat is unique, and so is the love we share with them. Each cat has the capacity to form strong bonds with her “person.”

So what are the secrets to a cat’s heart? Meeting your cat’s basic needs, combined with sufficient environmental enrichment, will win over your feline Valentine.

Loving a cat starts with **the basics: food, water and shelter**. This is the foundation for a strong bond. In a multi-cat household, it’s important to have more than enough of these resources to go around. Most cats do not like to share.

**Predictable, daily playtime** will also make your cat feel loved. Strive for at least 10 minutes of daily play utilizing a wand toy. The toy should

look like real prey to maintain your cat’s interest. This will serve as exercise and a way for the two of you to bond.

Cats love the **opportunity to hunt**. As natural hunters, cats benefit mentally and physically from having to search for their food. [Puzzle toys](#) are a great way to engage your cat in an activity she would naturally enjoy in the wild. Start with an easy puzzle and work your way up as your cat’s foraging skills develop.

Just like you, your cat needs **the right home environment** to feel loved and safe. Provide plenty of cat furniture and scratching posts. Cardboard boxes with bedding are an economical way to provide a comfy nap zone.



Vertical space (and other forms of spoiling) help [Divya](#) to feel loved

Cats are very three dimensional; they require **vertical space** to feel secure. Place cat trees in areas significant to your cat, not tucked away in corners. Likewise, scratching posts should not be hidden. Your cat is sure to love a post placed by your main entrance or between her sleeping and dining areas.

Your cat looks to you as her all-the-time Valentine. Help her to feel the love with these basic tips!



Playtime shows [Boom](#) that he’s beloved



Laptime and insulin let [Charlie](#) know he’s cherished

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Mike Clark](#) for [Cattime](#): [7 DIY Cat Food Puzzle Toys That Will Keep Your Kitty’s Brain Active](#)

[Ingrid King](#) for [The Conscious Cat](#): [Interactive Puzzle Toys for Smart Cats](#)

Wand and puzzle toys from [CoolCyberCats](#), [Da Bird](#), and [Trixie](#)

## Lasting Love

We know you; when you love a cat, you love for a lifetime.

We’ve seen your all-feline photo albums; we’ve wept and rejoiced over your stories; and we know – you, the Tabby’s Place family, are a one-of-a-kind community of cat lovers. The world needs more people with your huge hearts.

You’ve opened your hearts to the Tabby’s Place cats, too. You’ll never stop being there for them. But how can you be sure that your love

lasts even beyond your own lifetime?

You can make decisions now that will echo into the future. When you include the Tabby’s Place cats in your [estate plans](#), your amazing life will keep saving cats’ lives long after you’re gone.

Every one of us will leave a legacy; what yours looks like is up to you. The Tabby’s Place cats would be honored to be part of your [legacy of love](#). For more information, please contact Angela Hartley at [ah@tabbysplace.org](mailto:ah@tabbysplace.org) or 908-237-5300 ext 235. With your one-of-a-kind,

wonderful heart, you can love long beyond a lifetime. – A.H.



You can leave a legacy of love for kitties like [Cheddar](#)

# Why I...Chair the Tabby's Place Board *(And More!)*

Sheila Smith, Chair, Tabby's Place Board of Directors

Growing up, there were always felines bringing joy to my life! Many a day, I would sit in the sun with Pumpkin, and just "be." Later, I dreamed of owning a cat sanctuary once my corporate career was over. Lucky for me, I found and fell in love with Tabby's Place instead.

My love affair grew from cleaning suites as a volunteer, to sponsoring cats who touched my heart, to writing sponsor updates, to chairing the Board of Trustees. Why do all this? Because each thing I do with Tabby's Place helps me realize a piece of my lifelong dream. Running a cat sanctuary is no small feat (and not my destiny!), but bringing my heart, mind and hands to bear advances this critical labor of love.

Chairing the Board is a special honor. Together, we use our talents

to work with Jonathan and the managers to set plans, fundraise and perform other

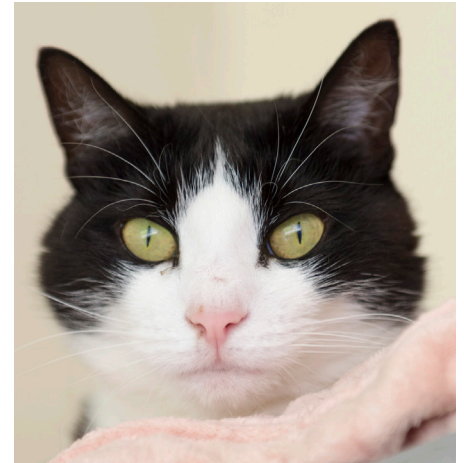
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activities core to the business of saving cats. My management consulting experience is helpful, and I get to feed my love of planning and facilitating.

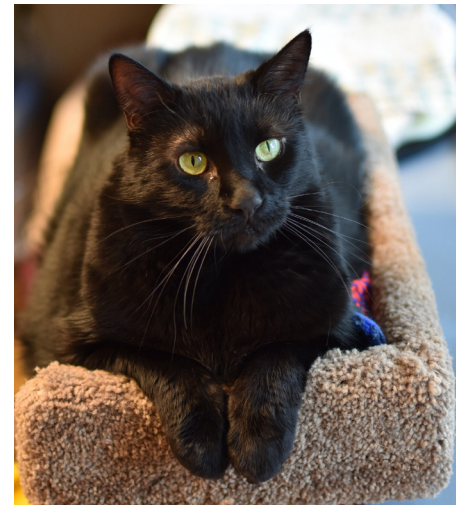
Cleaning suites brings a different kind of joy: to see cats curl up contentedly in a clean, cozy haven, and to receive head butts and purrs in thanks. This work by an army of volunteers frees up staff to focus on veterinary care, operational duties, and fundraising. Plus, I get to apply the lessons of effective housecleaning ingrained in me by my mom and big sisters!

When I write Special Needs kitty updates, I imagine a sponsor's delight in hearing the impact of their generosity. What I receive is double joy; as Anais Nin notes, "We write to taste life twice, in the moment and in retrospect."

I recently heard the term "collective effervescence," and it eloquently describes what happens to us when we participate in the Tabby's Place mission. It's powerful when we come together, all for the love of the cats!



Sheila's sponsorees, Pepita...



and Macaroon

## Forever Loved: Sam

Jonathan Rosenberg, Founder & Executive Director

Sam came to Tabby's Place in 2012 as a "hardship case" from a local shelter. He was a friendly, handsome cat with an unimaginable case of dermatitis. In fact, "dermatitis" is not adequate to convey the level of Sam's disease.

Sam's eyes were perpetually shut due to swelling; his chin was raw and bleeding from his attempts to quell the itching; and his (potentially) beautiful fur was patchy.

Allergy testing confirmed the diagnosis of atopic dermatitis (chronic, pruritic inflammatory skin disease of unknown origin, with no known cure). Our medical team tried

everything to ease Sam's discomfort. But, eye drops, allergy vaccinations, anti-inflammatories and steroids provided only short-term relief. Through all of this, Sam remained friendly, charming volunteers and visitors alike.

After 4½ years without success, our vet decided to change Sam's diet to one used for cats with food allergies. There was no reason this should work, but it



Sam

did. Sam was free of his dermatitis. He moved to the Lounge and thrived on the human attention. We were overjoyed.

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But then came the unthinkable: Sam was diagnosed with nasal cancer that was not amenable to surgery. The choices were a long course or radiation treatments or ... nothing. We opted for radiation, and Sam sailed through it like a champ.

Our joy was short-lived, as Sam seemed to begin suffering the effects of a growing tumor. But this proved to be the first of many miraculous "recoveries." Sam bounced back as

if nothing was wrong.

He lived on for months, scaring us many times with brief "apparent relapses." Sam showed an amazing zest for life, always thriving on human attention.

Finally, in December 2017, Sam told us it was time. It was so hard to let go and say goodbye to this lion.

Never was a cat more loved than Sam. And, never did a cat show more grace in the last stages of his journey. – J.R.

← [Sam's brave spirit lives on at Tabby's Place](#)

Veterinary Voice

# Heart Disease in Cats

Dr. Laura Collins, Veterinarian

Cats are unique, so of course they have unique hearts!

The heart of the cat has a number of characteristics that are uncommon in other species. This can make it especially challenging to diagnose feline heart disease.

Common symptoms of heart disease in humans and dogs include coughing, exercise intolerance and difficulty breathing, and most dogs with heart disease have a heart murmur. But only about 50% of cats with the most common form of feline heart disease have a murmur, and only about a third of cats with a murmur have any evidence of heart disease.

We rarely hear a cough or witness exercise intolerance from a



[Sammy has mild HCM, the most common form of feline heart disease](#)

cat affected with heart disease. We do observe difficulty breathing, but usually not until the late stages of the disease.

Up to 30% of cats may be affected by *hypertrophic cardiomyopathy* (HCM), a much higher rate than most other species. Because we frequently don't detect any murmur, this diagnosis is sometimes made late in the course of the disease, and it is the most common cause of sudden death in an otherwise healthy cat. Fortunately, there are treatments that can help, particularly in relieving symptoms after they have developed.

Unlike other species, cats sometimes develop blood clots secondary to heart disease, cutting off the blood supply to the hind limbs. These cats develop sudden paralysis and severe pain in their hind limbs, and are frequently euthanized due to the pain and guarded prognosis. (There are happy exceptions, including Tabby's Place's late, great [Morgan](#) and [Sylvia](#).)

Then there's the trouble with taurine. Other species can synthesize this amino acid from



[Heart disease didn't stop Boots from finding his forever home](#)

the protein that they eat, but this pathway has not developed in cats. The discovery was made through research on *dilated cardiomyopathy*, a disease of the cat's heart muscle frequently resulting in heart failure and death. Luckily, taurine is readily available in meat protein, so dilated cardiomyopathy can be reversed by adding taurine to an incomplete diet if the diagnosis is made early in the course of the disease. Because cats are the only mammal requiring taurine, this particular disease is unique to cats. (This is also why you should never feed your cat dog food, as only cat food is supplemented with taurine.)

Distinctive in their hearts and in their love, cats with cardiac disease can live long, healthy lives. Our hearts may differ from theirs, but we love them all the same!



# Sponsor Your Sweetheart



Even if you can't take Rose home, you can lavish her with love as her Special Needs sponsor

You're not too late to find the Valentine of your dreams.

If it's true love you're seeking, sweethearts like Rose and Anka are seeking you. Special Needs kitties are less likely to find their forever families, but still crave companionship. **You can wrap them in your love by becoming a Special Needs Sponsor.**

Make this your most meaningful Valentine's Day by cherishing a cat in need. You can meet all our sponsorable sweetie-pies here. Make your match and make a cat feel loved all year 'round!



Anka would love to be your all-time Valentine

## Happy Endings: Sebastian

Beaten and battered by life outdoors, Sebastian was heartbreaking to behold.

A bag of bones with a gaping hole gutting his cheek, the tabby boy was hard to even look at. Infection and maggot infestation had taken

hold, and Sebastian's sweet green eyes were buried by blood and discharge. Making his injuries even more ferocious was the fact that Sebastian was FIV+, and therefore immune-suppressed.

Most of the world would look away in horror from a cat like Sebastian. Was such a sorry soul even worth saving? At Tabby's Place, the answer to such a question is always "yes"...but only thanks to your generous love.

You made it possible for us to save Sebastian last year. You made it possible for Sebastian to spring back to gleeful, robust health (and a rather round physique). Best of all, you made it possible for Sebastian to hear the "yes" of his lifetime. Our brave, revered tabby has found his forever home.

Living with volunteer Maureen, Sebastian's life is one big "yes" of joy. Feasting, playing, and luxuriating in lavish love, Sebastian is a galaxy away from his bedraggled days.

Sebastian may not even remember his season of suffering...but we'll never forget, and we'll never forget your amazing love. Thank you for bringing Sebastian from darkness to light, agony to elation, loneliness to true love. – A.H.



Sebastian in his forever home



Sebastian's new life is full of sweet dreams



Sebastian



Sunny days are now the norm for Sebastian

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