

New Beginnings: Dot

Angela Townsend, Development Director

Born to a homeless cat in Virginia, Dot has *spina bifida*. Her spinal cord stops before it should, leaving Dot incontinent and unable to move her back legs.

That, however, is about all Dottie is unable to do. At six months of age, she has outlived early expectations that her birth defects were “incompatible with life,” while acquiring over 1,200 Facebook fans. In her spare time, she taught herself to do an astonishing “running handstand.”

It's a good thing Dot is a lion-hearted girl. In addition to her spinal defect, Dot has internal urogenital malformations that cause nearly perpetual urinary tract infections. Tabby's Place has enlisted premier specialists to help with Dot's care...and Dottie shows no sign of slowing down (or backing down, even when confronted by big cats like Boots).



Whatever her medical future holds, Dot knows she's loved – and she exudes a sweet confidence in her own “loveableness.”

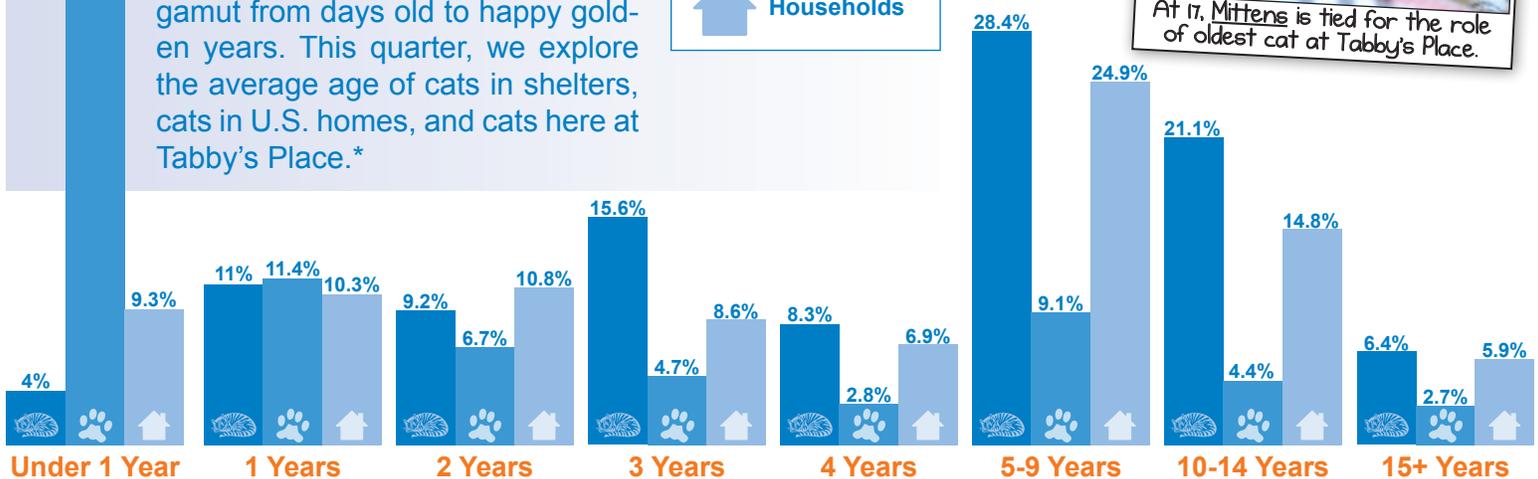
Dot would love for you to be her sponsor. And, when you visit Tabby's Place, Dottie will be one of the first faces to greet you in our lobby.

Ages & Stages

Angela Townsend

Take a quick poll of your felines: are they senior citizens, big-eyed babies or somewhere in between? The Tabby's Place cats run the gamut from days old to happy golden years. This quarter, we explore the average age of cats in shelters, cats in U.S. homes, and cats here at Tabby's Place.*

-  Tabby's Place
-  Shelters
-  Households



*Shelter and household data from <http://www.petpopulation.org/characteristicsofshelter.pdf>. Tabby's Place data reflects snapshot of resident population on 4/12/2012.

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Why Do Cats... "Go" Outside The Litter Box?

Angela Townsend

At Tabby's Place, we often hear the anguish of people dealing with their cats' "inappropriate elimination." To get to the bottom of the box issue, we need to "think like a cat."

• **Medical motivations:** What looks like "bad behavior" may be your cat's effort to urinate without pain. Your veterinarian can determine if your cat has painful issues like FLUTD or a urinary tract infection. An afflicted kitty might associate the box itself with his pain, and seek relief by attempting to urinate elsewhere. Treating the illness can resolve the behavior.

• **Balking at the box:** Keep your cat's box scrupulously clean to save you both stress. Imagine how you feel when you have no choice but to use an unflushed public toilet, and you can picture your cat's dismay at a dirty box.

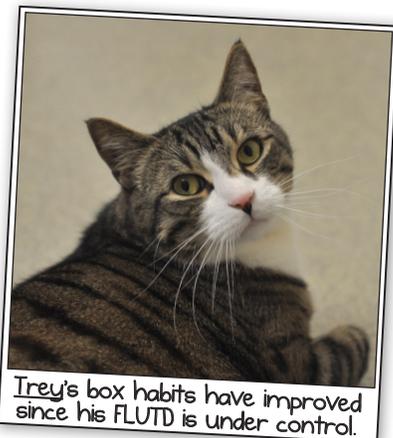
• **Crowd control:** It's best to have one litter box per cat plus one extra box. A cat may avoid a box too close to another cat's box, or in a location where a fellow feline can corner him.

• **Territorial marking:** Spraying (when a cat backs up to a surface with a quivering tail) is most common in unneutered males. Solve this issue by neutering your cat, or (if you've already done that) working with a veterinarian or feline behaviorist.

• **Unfamiliar litter:** Suddenly switching litter brands can be disconcerting. Start with the box $\frac{3}{4}$ full of the old litter and $\frac{1}{4}$ of the new; slowly shift the ratio until your cat is acclimated to the new litter.

• **Stress:** Any major change – from a new family member to a shift in your schedule – can be

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Trey's box habits have improved since his FLUTD is under control.

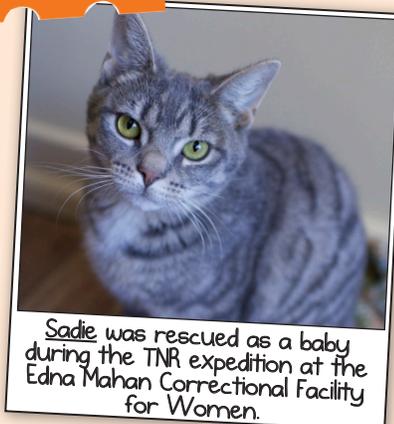


Peachy has a history of inappropriate elimination.

Letters of the Quarter



Wow! I cannot to tell you how grateful we are to partner with your organization. Your treatment of our cats went well above the care we expected. Your commitment is nothing short of outstanding.



Sadie was rescued as a baby during the TNR expedition at the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women.

We are thankful for our caring employees who brought the administration's attention to your group. I thank those individuals and Tabby's Place for providing a most efficient, caring and effective remedy for our (feline) co-inhabitants.

I was glad to see the pictures and to hear that a few found what appears to be the best home possible. I circulated your email and images to facility staff.

On behalf of the facility's administration, again, thank you so much!

- Mr. S., administrator at the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women, NJ

Editor's note: check out page 3 of our last newsletter to learn about Tabby's Place's work with the "tabbies doing time" at the Edna Mahan Correctional Facility for Women.

I am still crying at the wonderful news of Tashi's adoption.

I am sure that I speak on behalf of all Tashi's and Gabriella's sponsors (who are drowning in tears like me), that their adopters are a family of amazing angels. God bless them, and I sincerely wish them all the best.

Please keep up the good work, and thanks to you for being such special people.

- Sonia & Dave,
Tashi sponsors,
England



Tashi and Gabby loving their forever home.

Continues from the previous page...



Intimidation by other cats (like JJ's harassment of Lafawnduh, here) can lead to inappropriate elimination.

disconcerting to your kitty. Cats are exquisitely sensitive and in touch with your stress level, so offer your kitty extra reassurance in seasons of change.

Understanding cats' motivations is the first step in loving them well and making our homes peaceful for everyone.

Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV)

Dr. Laura Collins, Veterinarian

Feline leukemia virus (FeLV) is a much-feared condition – and rightly so.

Unlike feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV), with which it is sometimes confused, FeLV is commonly fatal. An FIV+ cat can live for many years with no symptoms, and FIV is generally only transmitted through deep bite wounds. FeLV is both more life-threatening and more easily transmitted.

FeLV is most often transmitted by saliva from the infected cat contaminating the eye, mouth, or nose of non-infected cats by licking. For this reason, it is sometimes called the “friendly virus” (in contrast to FIV, the “fighting virus”). It can also be passed from a mother to her kittens in the womb, or by transfusing infected blood. (Appropriate donor screening makes this last possibility unlikely.)

Fortunately, the virus is not stable in the environment, so it cannot be transmitted by petting an FeLV+ cat and then petting a non-infected cat. Likewise, a healthy cat can be brought safely into a house after the departure of a FeLV+ cat.

Testing for FeLV starts with an *ELISA test*, which screens for the presence of the virus. If this test is positive, the cat has the virus. Most cats will be able to eliminate the virus from their system and become immune, so the next step is to determine whether the cat is permanently infected.

If an *IFA test* is positive, the cat is permanently infected. If the IFA is negative, we need to wait a month to re-run the ELISA. If the ELISA remains positive, we know the cat was unable to eliminate the vi-

Recommended Reading:

- [Information on FeLV from the Cornell Feline Health Center](#)
- [Article on FeLV by the Winn Feline Foundation](#)
- [Yahoo! Group for folks caring for FeLV+ and FIV+ cats](#)
- [Listing of sanctuaries that may be able to help FeLV+ cats](#) (scroll to the bottom of the page)

rus from his system, and is persistently infected.

FeLV is immunosuppressive, so it predisposes cats to recurrent infections. It can cause leukemia, anemia, and lymphoma. Unfortunately, 85% of FeLV+ cats will succumb within 3 years of diagnosis.

Prevention of FeLV involves minimizing your cat's exposure to cats who may have the virus, or if exposure is possible (e.g., in outdoor cats), vaccination. Because it is only transmitted by direct contact, a healthy cat can live in a house with an infected cat safely, provided they are separated.

Unfortunately, we do not have an isolated area at Tabby's Place to house FeLV+ cats, so we are currently unable to accept them. We hope in the future to create an area where they can be housed separately and cared for with the love and medical care we provide for all our residents.



Living outdoors is the easiest way a cat can be exposed to FeLV. Best buds Gus, Lester and Toby enjoy the safe indoor life at Tabby's Place after their tough days on the streets.



Dillinger was lucky not to contract FeLV as a stray, but if your cat goes outdoors, she should be vaccinated against the virus.

Catoberfest Cometh

Here comes your chance to take part in feline history. You are formally invited to Catoberfest 2012 on Saturday, October 6th. Join Dot and the whole crew for:

- A spectacular silent auction (last year's included 200 items and raised over \$20,000 for the cats)
- A book signing and reading by Gwen Cooper, author of *Homer's Odyssey* and the forthcoming *Love Saves The Day* (tentative)
- Tours of Tabby's Place
- The annual Tabby's Place Blessing of the Animals
- Live music by Catster's official Cat Lady, Sarah Donner
- Free classes in cat and dog behavior
- Ultra-low-cost microchipping for cats and dogs
- Refreshments, vendors, free gifts...and over 100 cats

For more information, or to contribute items to the silent auction, contact Danielle at dr@tabbysplace.org or 908-237-5300 ext 450.



Forever Loved: Cali

Jonathan Rosenberg, Founder & Executive Director



Cali

Cali arrived at Tabby's Place in August of 2006, after her owner died. She was an incredibly sweet cat and within a week, she was scheduled to be adopted. We just wanted to hold her for a few days to be sure her recent weight loss was a fluke.

Unfortunately, we discovered she had GI lymphoma. So, we moved her from Suite B to the Lobby so she could spend her last weeks in comfort. I didn't make her sponsorable as a Special Needs cat, because I thought it would be too heartbreaking for people to sponsor a cat who was so close to death.

But, a funny thing happened. A month passed and

Cali was still with us. In fact, she had gained weight and seemed to be thriving. Months later, she looked even better.

She quickly became a favorite of everyone who passed by the Reception Desk, because she was such a sociable girl. It was impossible to resist petting her. I was especially lucky, as she lived right outside my office.

Years passed and the miracle continued, much to our delight. Sure, there were two bad bouts with ringworm, which sent dear Cali to the "Ringworm Room" for long rounds of treatments. But she bounced back quickly.

There was also a scare with a tumor that was very likely malignant. Cali underwent surgery to remove the tumor and it turned out to be benign. You can imagine how happy we were.

In summer of 2011, however, Cali's kidneys took a turn for the worse. It was painful to see our bright-eyed, dancing girl fading. But we spoiled her more than ever and let her go gently when it was time.

Cali was one of the nicest cats I have had the honor to know. She was a good friend. I miss her.

The Kitten Fund

There are little ones who need your love right here at Tabby's Place.

Now, you can care for every kitten at Tabby's Place with your monthly donation. Your monthly sponsorship of the Kitten Fund will help kittens grow up strong and adored.

As their thanks, the kittens will send you monthly updates and photos on the adventures you're making possible.

Thank you for nurturing the sweetest smidgens at Tabby's Place.



Your sponsorship of the Kitten Fund will care for cuties like Samantha and Clem.

Finding a Home for a Cat

The bad news: Tabby's Place rarely takes cats from the general public, as it is our mission to rescue kitties from hopeless situations at shelters.

The good news: If you find yourself in the position of needing to re-home your cat, we want to help you. Visit help.tabbysplace.org to fill out a short form, and we'll get back to you within 24 hours with our best customized advice.

If you and your cat are in need of assistance, it is our pleasure to help you as best we can.



The Bean family, Lentil, Garbanzo and Mung, thank you for helping them.

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Puzzled Purrs: Crossword

Karen Baron, Volunteer, Adopter & Benefactor

ACROSS

- 1. Identifies your cat if he's lost
- 5. Our founder
- 8. We save cats from this type of situation
- 9. You can purchase one for the Memorial Walkway
- 12. Tabby's Place: A Cat _____
- 15. Tabby's Place's home town
- 16. Jonathan's first office mate
- 18. Virtually adopt a cat when you become a _____
- 19. Issued four times per year
- 22. The cats' rooms are called _____
- 23. Our annual autumn event
- 25. Franny is this type of cat
- 27. _____ Angel Program for long-term care
- 28. What all cats are up for
- 30. The Memorial Walkway's garden is named for her
- 32. This year's anniversary at Tabby's Place

33. One of the world's best sounds

DOWN

- 2. Meetings and training (and Webster) are held in this room
- 3. The most common word at Tabby's Place
- 4. You can become one to help the cats
- 6. The newest, littlest heart-throb
- 7. Edward, Newman and Bo are all _____

- 10. Melanie is this type of cat
- 11. We are this type of environment
- 13. Our 1,000th cat
- 14. Where all new cats go first
- 17. Special emergency medical account
- 18. Jonathan's wife
- 20. Safe, screened enclosure
- 21. He rules Suite FIV
- 24. What Dobro, Trooper and Geri have in common

- 26. It makes some cats "high"
- 29. Toby, Mittens and Paulette are all _____
- 31. Tabby's Place provides a safe one



1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 11 12 13 14 15 16 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25 26 27 28 29 30 31 32 33

Happy Endings: How Geoff Came to Own Me

Tara McCann, *Benefactor & Adopter*

When my sponsored kitty, Tashi, was adopted, I looked through the Special Needs cats to find a new sponsoree...at least, I thought I was "only looking."

When I read Geoff's sad profile, I was mesmerized. I knew he was meant to be mine. Once I learned about his medical needs and knew I could manage them, I started the adoption process. A snowy forecast almost delayed my 2-hour trip to Tabby's Place, but I was so eager for Geoff to be part of my life that I braved the weather – and I'm so glad I did.



Geoff



Geoff's unobtrusive reminder of his need to be petted.

his nights snuggled next to me. He does not like to move when I try to get into bed, and he is quite vocal about it.

Having adopted my other cats' attitude, Geoff now owns the house and lets me live here to take care of him. If he thinks I am ignoring him, he doesn't hesitate to strut over and reach out with his paw.

Geoff has been through a lot, but he has settled in beautifully in his forever home. It is great to have him in my life.



When I first brought Geoff home, I arranged for a slow introduction to my other cats, and set Geoff up in the bathroom. In the morning, lo and behold, Geoff was not in his nice, fluffy bed...but in the sink.

Geoff now spends his days lounging on my bed or on his cat tree, and

Solutions to the crossword puzzle on page 5

ACROSS

1. Microchip
2. community
3. meow
4. volunteer
5. Dot
6. brick
9. Sanctuary
12. FIV positive
15. Ringoes
16. Slide
18. sponsor
19. newsletter
22. suites
23. Catobberfest
25. tortie
27. Guardian
28. adoption
30. Cherry
32. ninth
33. purr

DOWN

1. Linda Fund
17. Linda Fund
18. Sharon
20. solarium
21. Nuttin
24. orange fur
26. catnip
29. tabbies
31. haven

Where Are They Now? Sarah

Karen Baron, *Benefactor, Volunteer & Adopter*

"Would you believe in a love at first sight? Yes, I'm certain that it happens all the time." - Lennon & McCartney

It certainly did for me. We were in Suite B, and I was loving on all the cats when I saw her face. She was sitting all by herself, with her feet tucked under her tummy like a little meatloaf, her trademark scowl on her round little face.

I had to have Sarah. I set up a special room in our home for her, so she wouldn't be overwhelmed by the other cats. I couldn't wait to snuggle her and love her to pieces. But Sarah had her own ideas.

When she wasn't hiding under the bed, Sarah was trying to escape - even through a vent in the wall. She wouldn't make eye contact, wouldn't eat in front of me, and wouldn't let me pet or brush her. Fine – I'd been through this before, and I knew it was only a matter of time until she settled in. One month, two months, six months, a year...and Sarah still wanted nothing to do with me.

On her one-year anniversary in our home, I took Sarah to the vet for a wellness check-up. I don't know what happened at the vet's office that day, but it was like someone flipped a switch. The moment I brought Sarah back home, she decided to join the rest of the household. She began exploring every room...she stayed with us while we relaxed to watch TV...she let me brush her and clip her claws and cuddle her...and she began eating with the other cats. From that day on, Sarah has been my little buddy. She still has her trademark scowl, though.



Sarah in her fearful, under-the-furniture days.



Sarah makes herself at home, at last.



Sarah braves the top of the furniture.