

New Beginnings: Oksana

Angela Townsend, Development Director

"Thin, sickly and difficult" is how Oksana's caretaker described the little cat. In fact, the black cat was underweight, and something was not right medically...but it was difficult to see how she could be described as "difficult." "Sweet as pudding," perhaps. But "difficult?" Not a chance.

Oksana responded with gusto to the good food and lavish love she received at Tabby's Place.

Yet formidable challenges remained in Oksana's path. Oksana has a tracheal stricture, an exceptionally rare narrowing of the airway that makes her sound like Darth Vader. Steroids and nebulizer treatments help to keep 'Sana comfortable, and she will soon have surgery with a world-renowned specialist in New York City to gently open up her airway with a stent. The surgery is highly risky, but we trust and pray it will open up a healthy future for our girl.

Thank you for supporting our cats and making it possible for us to cherish Oksana. It's the least we can do for an enchanting cat who's so easy to love.



Oksana loves her new life at Tabby's Place.



2012 Tabby's Place Expenses

Jonathan Rosenberg, Founder & Executive Director

Thanks to all of you, 2012 was another great year for Tabby's Place and was the third year in which we were self-sufficient (to be precise, we raised 99% of our total expenses of \$750,000). This was especially good news as 2012 was our most expensive year to date.

While our medical expenses stayed flat, our Operations and Administrative costs increased by approximately 13%. The growth in Operations expenses is due to:

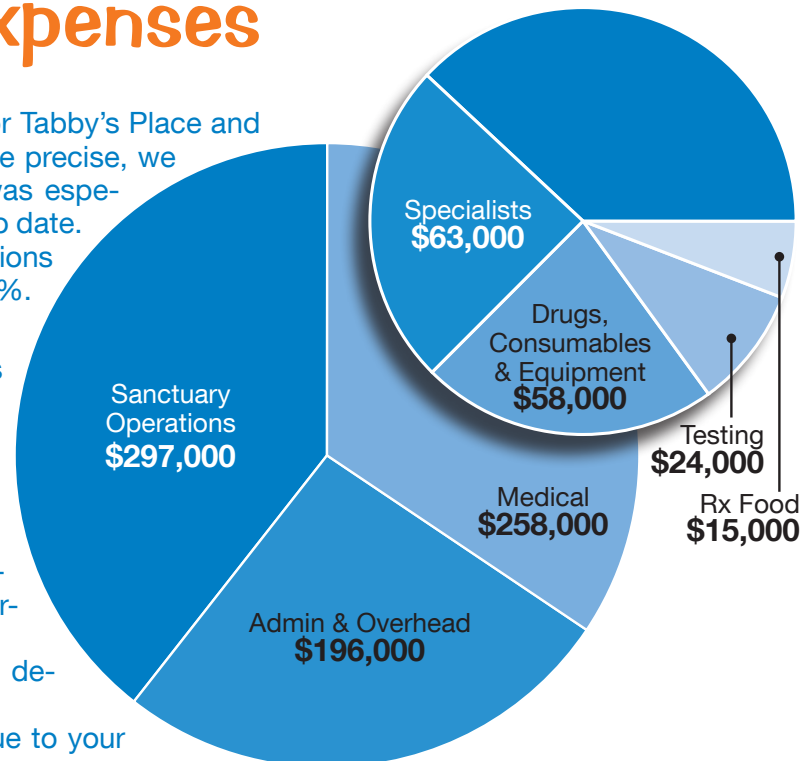
- Increased cost of benefits (Tabby's Place provides health insurance to its full-time employees).
- New part-time staff member to handle our [online help facility](#).
- Increased staff hours as we dip our toes into TNR.

The increase in Administrative costs is due to technology upgrades, including a replacement for our 20 year-old phone system.

Despite the increases, our Administrative overhead declined to 20%, down from 23% in 2011.¹

We will mark our 10th anniversary later this year. Due to your generosity, we will be expanding our mission to help even more cats in hopeless situations. Stay tuned to future newsletters as we unveil this next adventure for the cats.

¹ In full disclosure, I note that we switched to a new Accounting system in 2012. While we believe our new numbers are more accurate, they may not be directly comparable to previous years.



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Why Do Cats...Either Love or Hate Their Own Species?

Angela Townsend

Many cat behaviors are easily understood: cats scratch because it's instinctual, and they meow because it gets your attention.

This issue, however, we plunge into the murky waters of feline psychology. Why do some cats adore cats, while others insist upon being the only feline in sight?

- Domestic cats can live in groups, but they don't need to do so. Since cats – unlike dogs and humans –



After a rocky start, Max and Lizzie now tolerate each other.



Kittens Rangpuir and D'Artagnan enjoy each other's company.

are not pack animals, they feel no urge to comply with anyone else's wishes.

- Behaviorists studying urban and rural feral colonies have found that cats form "family groups" even as they continue to hunt alone. Their choice to love other cats is made freely.

- On the "nature" side of the equation, Cambridge researchers suggest that kittens inherit their personality from their fathers – a distinction that's evident even when the kittens never meet their dads.

- On the "nurture" side, a kitten's earliest experiences with other cats – or lack thereof – can be crucial determinants of later behavior. A cat who has had no feline companions between the ages of 3-12 weeks (such as the classic "bottle baby") is less likely to welcome other cats' friendship, and more prone to the "diva" or "king" as an adult.

- Like us, cats favor certain individuals. Researchers confirm that cats in neutered feral colonies have "preferred associates."

- Cats who like cats may have historically enjoyed a survival edge over loners. Since cats who tolerate human company have benefited from human care, and people tend to keep multiple cats, felines who live harmoniously with others have had an advantage. If sociability with other cats (and people) is



Some cats, such as Dobro and Cypress, love to play well with others...



...and some cats, such as Queen, do not.

heritable, history may have favored a "survival of the friendliest."

- Cats appear to have distinct "behavioral styles" that determine their modes of interaction with cats, other animals and people. Just like us, cats come in varying shades of introvert, extrovert, and every step in between.

Whether or not she's keen on other kitties, your cat's social skills are as unique as your own – and we think those quirks are worth celebrating.

Recommended Reading:

- [The Unsociable Cat: Are Cats Really Unsociable?](#), Sarah Hartwell
- [Cat Social Behavior, Perfect Paws](#)

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The Lion in Winter: Caring for Outdoor Cats When Temperatures Tumble

Dr. Laura Collins, Veterinarian

This is the time of year when we bundle up and put extra blankets on our beds. What can we do to help our cats combat the cold? Let's consider key winter issues for indoor and outdoor cats:

- **Dry air:** Dandruff and itchy skin may become a problem for indoor cats. Omega 3 fatty acid supplements, available over the counter at pet stores, can be helpful.
- **Raw, cold weather:** An outdoor cat needs access to an enclosed shelter, safe from the snow, wind or rain. Bedding should be an insulating material that dries readily, such as straw. Blankets or towels need to be checked daily and replaced if they get wet. Additionally, doghouse heaters can keep enclosures toasty and comfortable, and may be plugged in to any outdoor outlet.
- **Frozen drinking water:** Cats need access to fresh water at all times. Heated water bowls will prevent your outdoor cats' water from freezing.



Lovely Chrissy enjoys a safe winter in the Tabby's Place solarium



Geri appreciates the heated 'dogloos' in our solarium, her preferred place in all seasons.

- **Increased caloric needs:** Outdoor cats may need extra food during the winter. Check with your veterinarian regarding the optimal body condition and intake for your pet.
- **Seasonal toxins:** Anti-freeze (ethylene glycol) is poisonous to cats. Its sweet taste tempts many animals to ingest it, and it causes kidney failure if not treated immediately. You may choose pet-safe anti-freezes made of propylene glycol for your own car. If your cat displays symptoms of poisoning (such as vomiting, drooling, stumbling and



Even in the depths of winter, warmhearted Hootz chooses to lounge in the Tabby's Place solarium



Even indoor cats like Cosita can benefit from extra winter pampering.

behavior resembling drunkenness), contact your veterinarian, the nearest animal hospital, or the Animal Poison Control Center immediately.

Similarly, salt used to melt ice can cause irritation and inflammation to your outdoor cat's paws. You can use pet-friendly ice-melt on your own property, but if your pet walks elsewhere, the best treatment is to wash his paws with soap and water to remove all the salt.

The winter can be chilly, but with these tips your pet can remain safe and comfortable on even the most frigid days.

Recommended Reading:

- [How can I protect a stray cat from the cold outdoor weather?](#), About Cats
- [Winter Weather Tips](#), Alley Cat Allies
- [Warm Hearts, Warm Pets](#), Veterinary Partner

Tabby's Place Apparel Now Available Online!

Rock it out classic style and show the world your heart for cats. Shop the Tabby's Place online store for T-shirts and hoodies.

For the first time, you can purchase Tabby's Place swag from the comfort of your own home and have it shipped to you.

Let your style sing out your love for the cats – order your Tabby's Place hoodie or tee today.



CustomInk.com

Order your Tabby's Place swag today.

Feline Financial Aid

Angela Townsend

There are few things more painful to imagine than being unable to save your faithful feline due to cost.

Fortunately, a number of organizations make it their mission to assist with veterinary expenses. If you find yourself in need of a bit of help to care for your cat, don't despair: check out the following resources.

- [Animal Care for Artists](#): Assists pet owners employed in the arts (actors, musicians, writers, dancers, photographers etc.).
- [Cats in Crisis](#): Dedicated to helping with the care of Special Needs cats.
- [Feline Veterinary Emergency Assistance](#): Provides emergency assistance in the event of serious injury or illness.
- [Humane Society of the United States' Listing of Financial Assistance Programs by State](#): An extensive listing of organizations in the US and Canada.
- [In Memory of Magic \(IMOM\)](#): Funds care for pets facing life-threatening emergencies.
- [The Onyx & Breezy Foundation](#): Assists organizations and individuals with veterinary care.
- [The Pet Fund](#): Helps with the costs of treatment above and beyond routine care, but not urgent/emergency care.



Cancer survivor Flower is grateful Tabby's Place was able to afford her life-saving care - thanks to generous nurturers like you.



Caring for a Special Needs cat like Dillinger can be costly, but help is available.

- [RedRover Relief Grants](#): Financial aid for urgent veterinary care.
- [RedRover's Listing of Financial Assistance Programs by State/Province](#): An extensive listing of local organizations in the US and Canada.

Forever Loved: Nuttin'

Jonathan Rosenberg

Nuttin' had a long, storied history at Tabby's Place. During his first few years, he was, not to put too fine a point on it, a terror. He was a vet's nightmare, making each encounter into a test of wills. Many an exam ended up with unanticipated blood draws (from the humans).

Nuttin' also had a habit of biting human ankles. We eventually put him on a Prozac-like drug in hopes of curbing this behavior. We tried to reduce his dosage several times. Each time, he would bite another ankle within a day or two, and we would bump his dosage back up.

Despite this oafish behavior, Nuttin' was loved greatly and accumulated many fans over the years.

In fact, he actually mellowed and became affectionate for his last two years. He became quite the "lap fungus," and got downright friendly with his suit-mates.

On his final day, Nuttin' entertained a long line of volunteers paying their respects to the old war horse. It was an enormous outpouring of love for the old guy. He went very gently, cradled in the arms of Karina, his favorite person.

His passing feels like the end of an era. It's hard to imagine Tabby's Place without that guy.

He was such a butt-kicker that I can imagine him being sent back down from the Rainbow Bridge for bad behavior.

RIP Baby Boy.



Nuttin' faced his many medical battles with courage and spunk.



Nuttin' stole hearts right to the end.

While you're Away, the Cats are OK: Caring for your Cats when you Travel



Angela Townsend

“Oh, I don't really travel...I hate to leave the kitties.”

That's a familiar refrain among cat-lovers. But even the biggest homebodies among us must sometimes leave our nests – and our cats – for a few days. How can we make this separation as painless as possible? Since each situation is unique, we offer you an overview of your options.

Recommended Reading:

- Listing of caregivers at the [National Association of Professional Pet Sitters](#)
- Listing of caregivers at [Pet Sitters International](#)
- [Cat Travel, Cat Boarding, or Cat Sitter](#), Amy Shojai, About Cats
- [Checklist of Information for Your Cat Sitter](#), Franny Syufy, About Cats
- [Finding the Right Pet Sitter for You](#), Pet Sitters International

Option	Pros	Cons
Take your cat with you	You know exactly what's happening to your cat, and she has the comfort of your presence. If your cat is on medication or a special diet, you can ensure that she's getting exactly what she needs. An unusually brave cat may actually enjoy travel.	With very rare exceptions, cats abhor being out of their own environments. It's likely that, while your cat would miss you, she'd still feel more comfortable at home.
Leave your cat at home with a sitter	Cats find a change of environment terrifying, so staying in her home will be a colossal comfort for your kitty. She'll enjoy the reassurance of familiar routines. A competent sitter can give your cat needed medical or dietary care.	This option is recommended if you can find a trustworthy sitter. If you don't have a friend or family member who can come care for your cat, ask your vet for a recommendation. Many vet hospitals have veterinary technicians or other staff who offer cat sitting services. You can also check out listings at Pet Sitters International and the National Association of Professional Pet Sitters .
Entrust your cat to a boarding facility or veterinarian	You'll know your cat is in a safe location with professional caregivers. Staff can attend to your cat's medical and other needs.	As with the first option, your cat will almost certainly be highly stressed by being out of her element. In addition, any time your cat is at such a facility, there is a risk of contracting illness (such as ringworm or an upper respiratory infection).

Forgotten Felines



Mango will never forget your love if you sponsor this 'Forgotten Feline'

Tabby's Place has a special cadre of cats who have been with us for many, many years. Like [Nuttin'](#), cats like [Cookie](#) and [Mango](#) have been at Tabby's Place for the equivalent of two high school careers.

Although they may have their Ph.Ds in Tabby's Place life by now, these beloved ole-timers still haven't graduated to forever homes of their own. You can sweeten the lives of our "[Forgotten Felines](#)" by sponsoring them.



Cookie has lived at the sanctuary longer than any cat in Tabby's Place history.

Your monthly donation will nurture one of Tabby's Place's elder statescats, reminding her that she's as precious as any new kitten. As our thanks, we'll send you monthly updates and photos of your sponsored kitty. Or, if you'd like, you can give a sponsorship as a gift to a fortunate loved one.



Where Are They Now? Happy Endings: Flora Chopper & Abraham

Jude Figlo, Adopter, Volunteer & Benefactor

I happened to be at Tabby's Place for a meeting when, all of the sudden, a cuddly one-eyed wonder jumped onto my lap...and into my heart forever. Those soft little purrs tugged at my heart. Oh, what to do next? Should I even tell my husband? We already had 5 cats and 2 dogs...but, as soon as I mentioned my encounter, Ron was on board.

Little Flora immediately gravitated to our other Tabby's Place alumna, Dia. Flora is forever head rubbing and body rolling on her big sis, and whenever Ms. Dia is in Mom's lap, Flora is all over us in a flash.

Flora, Ms. "Busybody," has to be in the midst of whatever is happening in our house, watching over everyone with her one sparkly, discerning eye. If she is not being noticed, she will grab your attention with her repertoire of meows and other sweet sounds.

Another Flora talent is well-placed massages. She just knows the right body part to work on...most of the time. She also knows a morning belly (bladder) massage gets me out of bed real quick.

Flora is our sweet little "chunky monkey" with an exuberant personality and a vocabulary to match. Along with the rest of our brood, she truly enriches our lives. We are so grateful she selected us!

Flora shares her awesome self with her two humans, Jude Figlo and Ron Rakos, along with her feline family - Dia, Peanut, Alvin, Ben & Jerry. She misses her canine companions, Sparky & Tillie, who recently went to the Rainbow Bridge.



Flora adores big sis (and fellow Tabby's Place alumna) Dia.

Dana Maurer, Adopter

In 2009, our family walked into Tabby's Place for the first time, and came home with Chopper, a huge cat with a huge personality. He amused himself by ridding our 180 year old house of mice, and kept busy by soothing our little girls when they were upset or sick. Chopper was featured in an [online article](#) about the [extra-special relationship](#) he developed with our oldest daughter, helping her cope with her sensory processing challenges.

Thinking he would enjoy some feline companionship, I recently visited visit the "boys" in Chopper's old frat, the FIV+ Suite. I was greeted by sweet-faced Abraham. Chirping softly, he molded his body to mine when I picked him up. I learned he had arrived at Tabby's Place underweight and sick, with infected bite wounds, abscesses, a broken toe, worms, and a skin condition. His paperwork said "WILD!" all over it, and that he couldn't be handled. I couldn't believe this was the same cat. Something in my heart said, "This is the one."

I was worried that Abe and Chopper might not love each other, as Chopper is very assertive. However, Abe was determined to win his "brother's" heart, and within days, they were friends. A little over one month later, Abe follows Chopper everywhere, always with those sweet little chirps. As soon as the lights go out at night, the sounds of stalk-and-ambush and the thudding of boys-will-be-boys wrestling can be heard throughout the house. And several times each day, Chopper can be found gently grooming the little cat who was once so sick and alone and "wild." He has never been happier. Safe to say, neither has Abe.



Abe and Chopper (observed by elderly Sheltie Jack) begin a lifetime of bonding in their forever home



Flora cuddles up in her forever home.



Abe gives Sophie a kiss at Tabby's Place.