

New Beginnings: Bronx

by Angela Townsend, Development Director

During a brutal January in a dangerous urban area, there wasn't much hope for a neurologically-disabled kitten living in a trash heap. But Bronx had more guardian angels than he knew.

When Bronx came to Tabby's Place, we could barely believe that this sweet-heart could have known so much suffering. Despite all he'd been through, and the lingering bald patches and stained spots on his belly and legs (from toxic trash materials), Bronx was one of the happiest, bounciest youngsters we'd ever met.

Part of that bounciness is due to Bronx's neurological disability, cerebellar hypoplasia (CH). This non-progressive disorder won't shorten Bronx's life, but it does make him wobble. None of that worries our unsinkable Bronx. We have never met a cat so excited to be alive.



Bronx

New Beginnings: Chance

by Angela Townsend

For ten years, Chance lived in the darkened basement of a city building, surviving on the food tossed his way by maintenance men. Emaciated, blind, and covered in golf ball-sized mats, Chance was still beautiful to the big-hearted man who stumbled across him while delivering heating oil.

When Chance first arrived at Tabby's Place, he was clearly blind. But, over the next few weeks, as we slowly exposed him to light, the ginger guy with the big round head and bigger purr began to see.

At around 10 years of age, Chance is seeing, for the first time, just how sweet it is to be adored. He's still getting used to the fact that other cats exist, and will let them know with a mighty scream when they've come too close. But, with his affection-craving personality and sweet soul, we know our marmalade survivor has every chance in the world of finding a home of his own.



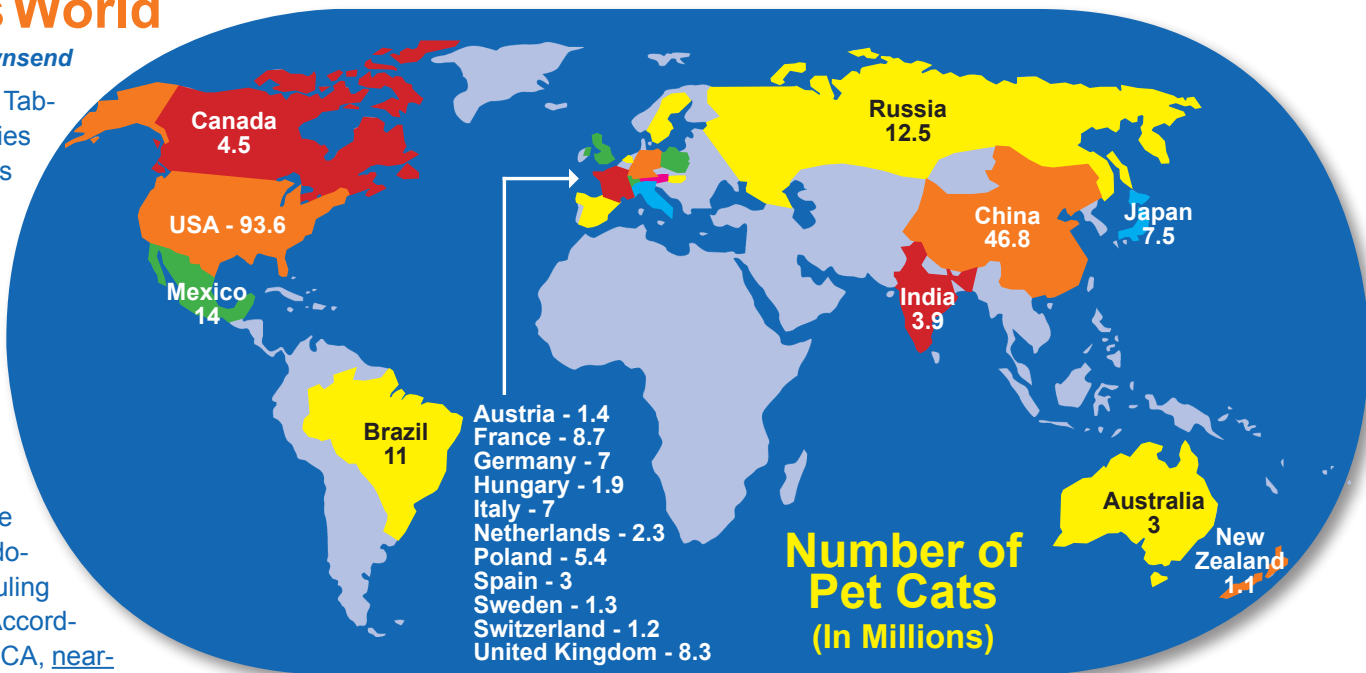
Chance

A Cat's World

by Angela Townsend

Since the Tabby's Place kitties have friends from Ringoes, NJ to Abu Dhabi, UAE, we decided to look at some international cat stats. Suite 101 reports that there are 200 million domestic cats ruling our planet. According to the ASPCA, near
ly half of those felines are here in the United States.

Whether in Brazil, India or anywhere in between, we couldn't be more pleased to know that there are so many loved cats on our planet. Thanks for helping us add to that number by caring for the Tabby's Place contingent.



What's Inside?

Vox Optio Veterinarius.....	3
Feline Forecasts.....	4
Love Your Mother.....	2
Avoiding April Foolishness..	5
What is Kitten Season?.....	2
Forever Loved: Tony.....	5
Letters of the Quarter.....	2
Happy Endings: Michael.....	6
Orphaned Kittens.....	3
Where Are They Now?.....	6

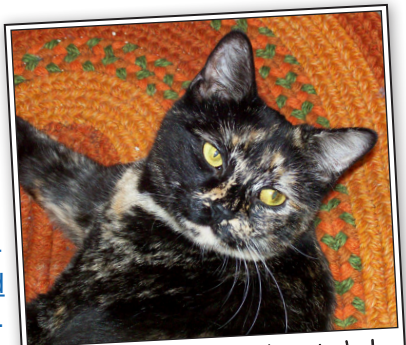
Love Your Mother... and Feline Mamas, Too!

by Angela Townsend

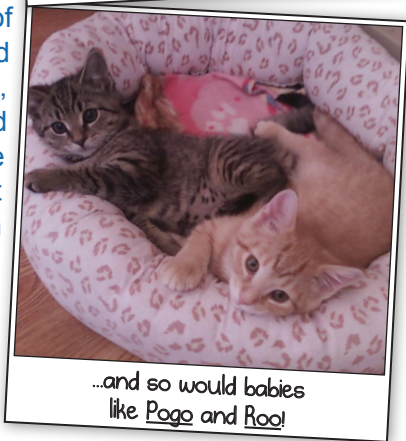
Mother's Day is almost here. Still stumped on what to get your mom? Our mama cats have got you covered.

Click the [Tabby's Place Gift Catalog](#) to customize your own [Mama and Kittens Virtual Gift Basket](#). Your favorite mom, grandma or other loved one will receive a special card, an e-card and a glossy photo of a Tabby's Place mom and kittens. It takes just minutes, is 100% tax deductible, and makes a perfect last minute gift; we can get your Gift Basket to your mom within an hour.

Best of all, you and your mom get the sweetest Mother's Day treat: caring for brave mamas and tiny babies at Tabby's Place this kitten season.



Mamas like Kim would love to help give your mom a Mother's Day to remember...



...and so would babies like Pogo and Roo!

What is "Kitten Season"?

by Angela Townsend

• Female cats' [heat cycles](#) are regulated by the weather, leading to a spike in kitten births from [March through November](#) in the northern hemisphere. A female cat in heat gives off powerful hormones, attracting male cats from near and far.

• A female cat can go into heat [every three weeks](#). Unlike dogs, a cat will [continue repeating heat cycles](#) during warm weather until she becomes pregnant.



Little McKinley was part of our most recent kitten season at Tabby's Place.

• Kitten season is serious: a single female cat and her offspring can produce [420,000](#) cats in seven years.

Spaying and neutering is the only way to prevent a surge in homeless kittens each year (and provides cats with significant medical and behavioral advantages; learn more about spaying and neutering your cat [here](#)).



Bottle babies like Flora need tender care to make it through kittenhood with sweet dreams.

Letters of the Quarter

Just a quick update - my husband...and I had our wills executed this week, and within the document, we noted the [Guardian Angel Program](#) at Tabby's Place for our 3 'fur-kids'...

As I mentioned to Jonathan, in the event that we

outlive our 'fur-kids', we have made a bequest to Tabby's Place, because we truly believe in what you all do and am awed and inspired by the work that is done every day! As I mentioned to Jonathan, you are 'living our dream.'

Again, I want to thank you for taking the time to "walk us through" the (Guardian Angel) process and giving us peace of mind in the event something were to happen.

Marie & Robert
Staten Island, NY

(We had) a wonderful visit with [Chance](#) yesterday. It was so good to see him in a clean, warm, and safe environment. I can see that he sure loves his couch & blankie.

He was dreaming and had his little feet going. I hope his dreams are pleasant now, and he can forget about that dungeon he lived in for so long. Thank you all again for taking him in and loving him, something he has never known.

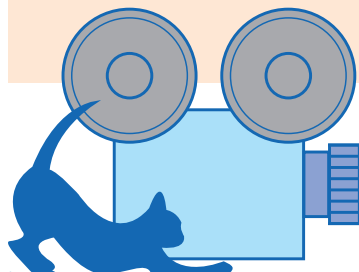
I really enjoyed seeing the other lobby cats as well: [Bellis](#) (she is such a sweetie) and [Tashi](#) (he's a great little boy), and [Polly](#) (she's a beauty; she gave me a couple little head butts. I think she knew I liked her).

They are all wonderful! Thank you all for all that you do for them!

Rich & Val
Scotch Plains, NJ



Chance enjoying his fresh start at life in the light at Tabby's Place.



Pop some corn and get in your most comfy chair, because the Tabby's Place cats have a cinematic treat for you. You made 2009 an extraordinary year for everykitty at the sanctuary, and now you can enjoy highlights in our first-ever Video Annual Report. [Click on over for your viewing enjoyment](#) – and thank you for helping to make all of this possible.

Orphaned Kittens

by Dr. Laura Collins, Supervising Veterinarian



Bottle babies like Pistachio, Cashew and Almond can grow up strong and healthy with your love.

Spring is the beginning of "kitten season" at Tabby's Place. Female cats usually begin their heat cycle in late winter/early spring and come April we usually begin seeing orphan kittens.

If you find a nest of feral kittens near you, it is best to leave them with their mother at least until the eyes open (10 to 14 days). This will ensure

they get *colostrum*, the antibody-rich mother's milk that helps their bodies defend against infections. If you decide to leave them with the mother, try not to interfere with the nest, or the mother may feel threatened and kill or move them.

Kittens can eat food when they are still very small, at 3 to 4 weeks of age. If you find kittens with their eyes open, try to feed them some canned food. If they are very young, try watering the food down to an oatmeal consistency. Kittens are messy at first, but if they are able to eat, it is safer and healthier to get them right onto canned food. Food labeled "for kittens" or "for all stages of life" is appropriate.

If your kittens are too young to eat, you will need to bottle feed them. For at least the first two weeks, they should be fed at least every four hours, including overnight.

Positioning the kitten correctly for nursing is important. A kitten should be positioned on her belly, simulating the position she would take when nursing from her mother.

If a kitten is held upside down, the way we hold a human baby to bottle feed him, the kitten can aspirate milk into her lungs, which is usually fatal. I usually hold a kitten on my lap with my left hand and use my right hand to hold the bottle in her mouth.

Because orphans have no mother to keep their nest warm, a heat source should be provided. A warm water bottle wrapped in a towel works well. Many veterinarians and cat rescues, including Tabby's Place, will help you learn to bottle feed orphaned kittens. It is heartbreak if a kitten cannot be saved, but the feeling you get from helping makes it all worthwhile.

[Click here](#) for a fuller version of this article and more tips on raising orphaned kittens at home.



You can help orphans like Mostyn to have a healthy, happy kittenhood.

Vox Optio Veterinarius: Saving your furniture and your cats' claws

by Denise Jeffries, Senior Veterinary Technician

Why do cats scratch?

Scratching serves several purposes, such as marking territory (via the scent glands in the paw pads), stretching, flexing their feet, working off energy, and grooming their nails.

What's all the fuss about declawing?

Declawing is an irreversible surgery to amputate the last joint of the cat's "toes" – the very body part on which cats walk. If done to a human, this surgery would be equivalent to removing your toes.

This procedure is painful, and some cats will have long-term medical and behavioral problems. Declawing is not a routine procedure. It is a cosmetic procedure, which has been declared inhumane and illegal in parts of Europe.

Cats' claws are important to their anatomy, mobility, social behavior and survival. Even indoor-only cats can slip outside, and any declawed cat outdoors is at high risk, stripped of her main defenses.

What can you do?

- Provide scratching posts with different textures (e.g., cardboard, carpeting, rope, wood) and orientations (vertical, horizontal, slanted). Try rubbing catnip on the posts to encourage use.
- Expend excess energy through playtime.
- Never use physical punishment. Cats don't understand and could become fearful or aggressive.
- Create a negative sensory association with the furniture your cat scratches:
 - Scent: cats dislike citrus smells.
 - Touch: temporarily place aluminum foil or double sided tape on the surface.

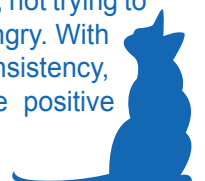


Like Trifle, your cat will enjoy having a post or tower designed to meet his scratching needs.



Even youngsters like Hera can be successfully trained to scratch where you want them to scratch.

- Feel: squirt a spray bottle when they start scratching.
- Keep their nails trimmed regularly, or talk to your vet about Soft Paws.
- Be patient, and remember your cat is only doing what's in her nature, not trying to make you angry. With time and consistency, you will see positive results.



Springing Forward: Feline Forecasts

by Angela Townsend

The following developments may be coming soon to a cat near you, and we'll continue to cover them all in the Tabby's Place Newsletter.

- **More attention to disaster planning.** The past decade's disasters have caused massive human and pet suffering. Following 9/11, the US government released disaster guidelines for pet lovers.

- **Better health care for cats.** Veterinary medicine is making amazing strides. There is great promise in current research on hypothyroidism, arthritis, heart disease, upper respiratory infections in shelter cats, and the feline genome, which scientists hope will unlock breakthroughs in issues like diabetes and renal disease.

- **Heightened controversy over declawing.** In recent years, American municipalities have started following our European counterparts in banning declawing as inhumane and unnecessary.

- **Continued "catblogging."** Tabby's Place wasn't the only place to start a catcentric blog recently. With the LOLcats leading the way, expect felines to continue their plan of total internet domination.



The great strides on the horizon for veterinary medicine bode well for Special Needs cats like little Dave.

- **A tax break that could make us all H.A.P.P.Y.** At press time, the bill to give pet parents a tax break on legitimate expenses is still under consideration.

- **More scrutiny of cat food contents.** After 2007's devastating recalls, manufacturers have become proactive about ensuring that our cats' cuisine is safe and pet owners are educating themselves about diet and nutrition. Look for this to have an impact on the offerings at your pet store.

- **Increased fuss over ferals.** Trap-neuter-release (TNR) has become the favored method for humanely managing feral cats, and feral friends and communities nationwide are working together.

- **Help for the cats of the recession.** As folks continue to feel the financial crunch, a growing number of organizations and initiatives continue helping to keep cats well-fed and in their homes.

- **More cat accoutrements.** Despite the slumping economy, the American Pet Products Association reports increased spending on pets and their food, toys and assorted goodies. Research by Feline Pine also found that cat-adorers won't cut corners when it comes to their fur babies.

- **More cats, period.** Cats continue to be the most-owned pet in the United States. Looking to help that trend along in your own family? Meet your newest family member at Tabby's Place.

Twelve-Year-Old Marvel Delivers Hope & Wet Food

by Angela Townsend

When twelve-year-old Norm Lee is on a mission, he pursues it with all his might. And, since last summer, our cats have been blessed by Norm's devotion.

Charged with a passion to help the most vulnerable, Norm has been making posters and creating donation bins to place outside local businesses.

In the ten months since Norm began collecting donations, he has delivered over 3,000 cans of cat food (valued at \$1,500) to Tabby's Place. Each weekend, Norm makes the rounds to the supermarkets and pet stores, picking up the week's haul and delivering it to Tabby's Place. His hard work has made for many full and happy tabby tummies, and helped us to save money on our cat food budget so we can help even more cats.

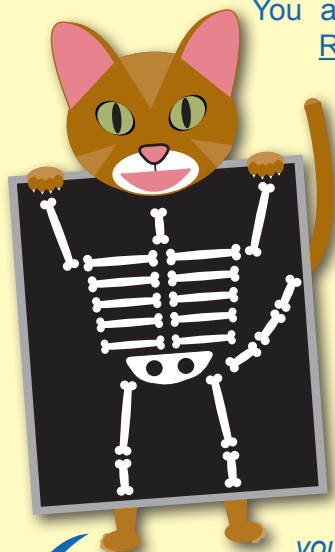
Thank you for being everykitty's hero, Norm.



Norm with beloved lobby cat Albert

YOU DID IT!

You accomplished the 90-Day X-Ray Challenge in less than 20 hours. Because of you, the cats will now have the life-saving X-ray equipment they need right here at Tabby's Place. Huge thanks to everyone who made this possible, especially the generous Benefactors who provided \$10,000 in matching funds. *Would you like to start a matching challenge for the kitties yourself? Contact Angela at 908-237-5300 ext 235 or at@tabbysplace.org. You can make amazing things happen for the cats you love so much.*



Avoiding April Foolishness All Year Long

by Angela Townsend

To make us all a little less foolish this April and all year, we've compiled the following resources for solving some of the most common reasons folks part with their cats.

- **Allergies:** It may take a few [extra steps](#) to decrease your allergies, but this is no comparison to the anguish of giving up a cherished family member. You might be amazed how often we hear that people want to give up their cats "just in case" a new baby might develop allergies. In fact, some studies [have shown](#) that exposure to pets at an early age may reduce the risk of developing allergies.
- **Moving:** Your cat will experience far less trauma from a move with you than from a move to a shelter. There are websites devoted to helping you find [cat-friendly housing](#). If you've found a rental that doesn't welcome your cats, negotiate with the landlord about possible compromises (such as a security deposit or extra monthly fee). If the landlord won't budge, keep looking - would you move to a "perfect" home that wouldn't let you keep your spouse or child?
- **Costs:** Franny Syufy of [About Cats](#) offers [excellent tips](#) on making it through hard financial times with your cat. Further, a number of [organizations](#) exist for the sole purpose of helping provide for cats' medical needs.

- **Inappropriate elimination:** Stop before you throw out the baby with the bathwater - or the kitty with the box. We have successfully retrained a host of "inappropriate eliminators" at Tabby's Place, who have gone on to live happy, litter box-using lives in homes of their own, with [these tips](#).



Little Steve was adopted and returned to us due to inappropriate elimination, but behavioral intervention is helping to make him an adoptable sweetie with better bathroom etiquette.

- **Not getting along with other pets:** It's a terrible feeling when two animals you adore can't seem to see what you see in their house-

mate. Before you break up the family forever, try [these steps](#).

If you're still struggling over how you can possibly keep your cat, there is hope. Please visit our [resource page](#) for finding a home for a cat and solving more common problems.

Forever Loved: Tony

by Jonathan Rosenberg, Founder & Executive Director

Tony had the best personality of any cat I have known - and that's close to 1,000 cats. Despite his terminal disease, Tony was perpetually good natured. I never saw him lift a paw in anger. Despite a truly insatiable appetite, caused by his disease, Tony would let kittens take the food out of his mouth. He never resisted or complained about medical procedures, but was grateful for the smallest kindness shown him. A brief pat on the head or a chin scratch and Tony was your friend for life.



Even fellow felines like Esme were warmed by Tony's love.

Unfortunately, Tony had *acromegaly*, caused by a tumor on his pituitary gland. Though benign, the growing tumor secreted excess growth hormone. This was the cause of Tony's unstoppable appetite. The other effects of the disease were more worrisome. Tony was virtually resistant to insulin, which gave him uncontrollable diabetes. At one point Tony was getting 10 times more insulin per day than any other cat.

The worst problem was that his internal organs started growing, even as his muscle mass disappeared. This distressing symptom eventually became problematic, as Tony's organs began crowding each other dangerously.

It was very difficult to make the decision to let Tony go. But when we saw that he lost his zest for life and didn't respond to human attention, we knew it was time.

Tony was surrounded by all of the employees and several volunteers as he left us gently. I still look for Tony's handsome face outside my office several times a day. I miss him more than life itself.

Adopt Across the Miles

by Angela Townsend

If your heart has room for one more cat, but your house is full, we have your answer.

When you welcome [Mr. Grey](#), [Tashi](#) or little [Dave](#) into your family by becoming a [Special Needs Sponsor](#), you "adopt" a kitty without adding to your population. Your monthly donation of \$14 or more will help to care for your new furry baby, and you'll get photos and updates on your special cat every month. You can even adopt a cat for a friend, and send kitty-love their way each month through a Gift Sponsorship. Please [click on over](#) and sponsor your own Special Needs sweetie today.



Mr. Grey



Tashi

Happy Endings: Michael

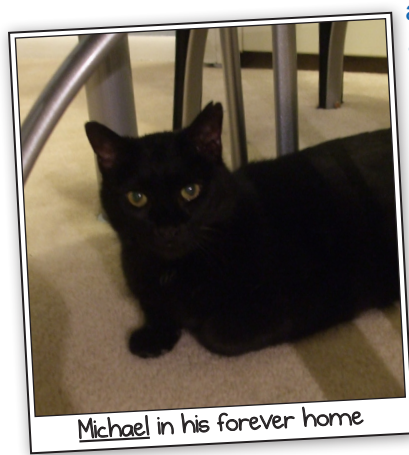
by Susan Ragazzo, *Volunteer*

Michael chose me back in October, when I attended the Tabby's Place Volunteer Orientation. When I stuck my hand in his cubby he kept rubbing and rubbing with a purr that wouldn't quit. I felt bad walking away, and I commented that I had a new boyfriend. On some level, I knew I would eventually adopt him.

Fast forward to January 29th. I expected Michael's introduction to my house to take quite some time due to his timid nature. Indeed, he bee-lined underneath the bed upon our arrival home. Those first few days, he allowed me to pet him under the bed and even fell asleep with his head in my hand (this has become a habit for us). In less than a week, he started jumping up on the bed to sleep with me at night.

My heart soared the day I came home from work to find Michael waiting for me in the hallway. He can't get enough of rubbing my hand and face with his cheeks. I feel badly when I leave for work.

Michael is a brave boy, continuously surprising me with his openness. I have enjoyed watching his personality blossom. He's enjoying being the center of attention, but he's not a glory hog about it; he's just soaking it all in and enjoying the moments. Most recently, I've discovered he likes a belly rub. Not just any old belly rub. He actually lies almost on his back



Michael in his forever home



Michael loves his life with Susan!

and sticks his legs out, like a dog. All the while, his front paws are kneading contentedly in the air.

Michael is a joy, and I fall in love with him more every day. My only hope is that he is as happy here as I am to have him. I am so glad that Tabby's Place saved Michael from being euthanized, and gave us the chance to find each other.

Where Are They Now?: Rosie

by Angela Townsend

The moment Rosie arrived at Tabby's Place, we knew we were in the presence of greatness. We hoped that this ultra-fluffy, sweet-as-pudding girl would be adopted in a flash. Despite Rosie's FIV+ status, this happy prediction proved right. Our cuddly girl's adoption was made even sweeter by the fact that she went home to a "big brother" who is a fellow Suite FIV alum: Rusty. Despite his decidedly un-kittenlike girth, Rusty is affectionately known by his family as "Kitten."

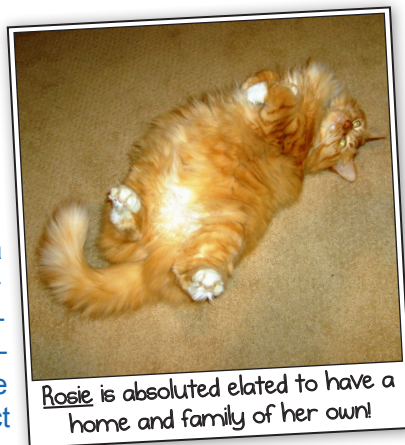
Kitten and Rosie's mom writes, "(Rosie) has many names...Dolly, Puff-Kitty, P-Kitty (Puff is due to her very puffy tail), and Lacy.

"She and Kitten, aka Rusty, get along well. There have even been a few instances where they teamed up to ambush our little Jack Russell. But Puff-Kitty and Pup (the little dog) get along very well, as they are both playful.

"We are all just so glad to have added Rosie to our family. The kids love her, and she loves them. Rosie can often

be found lounging on their beds, especially when some sunny rays of light fall on the bed. We all love her so much."

As beautiful as she is sweet, Rosie deserves nothing less than a life of love – and that's exactly what she's living with Kitten and their forever family. Thank you for helping to make this possible.



Rosie is absolutely elated to have a home and family of her own!



Kitten (aka Rusty) and Rosie loving their new home.

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Tabby's Place is now on [Twitter!](#)

Start [following the cats](#) and retweeting their adventures [today!](#)