

## **THE BOARD ROOM**

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**Adoption Event Coordinator** - Jen Gallion

**Web Master** – Michelle Laycock

**Newsletter** - Cathy McDowell  
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**Adoption Center, 614 59<sup>th</sup> Street, Kenosha  
262/605-0533**

### **From the President**

Neither rain nor sleet nor snow will keep Kindred Kitties from its appointed rounds... no matter the weather, we continue to address the plight of homeless kitties in Kenosha and Racine counties as best we can! We spent a long winter helping a significant number of cats, but with spring approaching, the demands on us will increase. As in winter, space is our biggest challenge! We continue to look for dedicated foster homes to help us take care of the many cats we rescue.

Thank you to our devoted supporters who have helped to keep us in the "black" over the winter and provided us with the funding we needed to care for our cats. We are looking forward to another year of finding "forever" homes for our many wonderful homeless kitties!

Keep an eye on the upcoming newsletters for information on a couple of fundraisers we are planning for the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> quarters of this year. We will have many volunteer opportunities including soliciting donations from local businesses, event set up, volunteering at the event itself and event follow up. We'll keep you posted on event dates as soon as we have them.

Again, thanks for all that you do and have a happy spring!!!

Sincerely,

Donna Birch, President

*If you are still talking about what you  
did yesterday, you probably haven't  
done much today!!*

*-- Author Unknown*



## **NEWS UPDATES**

### **STATS**

**Adoptions** – For 2010 full year...there were 521 adoptions (279 kittens, 111 teens and 131 adults) versus 645 in 2009. In January/February, we continue to be in a downward trend—we adopted 62 cats (29 kittens, 16 teens and 17 adults) versus 92 for January/February last year. It is a frustrating reality that there just seem to be less homes for kitties—we have to believe that the current economy is a factor.

**Spay/Neuter** – Through our low-cost spay/neuter program, we altered a whopping 801 cats in 2010! And, we continue to get many, many calls for assistance with spay/neuter. During the month of January, we fixed 60 cats and should match that number in February (we don't have final numbers for February yet).

**Foster Care** – In total, we are currently caring for 140 cats. The Adoption Center is housing 37, while the foster home count is 103 -- of these, eight are considered "permanent" fosters. We continue to keep our total number fairly steady, but the kittens are coming!! We've just received our first batch of newborns a couple of weeks ago and had six more born this week. The need for additional foster homes is still crucial!

### **EVENTS**

**Culvers** - On February 7<sup>th</sup>, a fundraiser was held at Culver's on Green Bay Road in Kenosha. The night was a success with donations of \$133.07 and Culver's donated \$218 for the 10% of their gross sales that night. Thanks go out to Michelle Simons who coordinated the event and to all the wonderful volunteers who assisted. Armitage Academy students also assisted by soliciting donations throughout the event. All in all, a great night!!!

**Plants for Purrs** – Rebecca Haberkorn, a Kindred Kitties adopter, will be selling vegetable seedlings this spring, with all proceeds going to KK! She will be growing tomatoes (beefsteak and cherry), peppers (sweet and hot), cucumbers and tomatillos. She will be asking for \$1 per plant. For more information, contact Becky at [haberkor@westosha.k12.wi.us](mailto:haberkor@westosha.k12.wi.us) or visit [www.kindredkitties.org](http://www.kindredkitties.org).

### **KK WEBSITE & FACEBOOK PAGE**

As of July 2010, the Kindred Kitties website has a new webmaster. Michelle Laycock, foster mom and professional blog designer, accepted this role, replacing Jackie Bysdorp. Thanks to Jackie for many years of service to us! Michelle has been a Kindred Kitties volunteer and foster mom for over three years, and works full time designing web and print graphics. She is also a paper crafter and Stampin' Up Demonstrator.

Prior to last July, we had been paying a company a monthly fee for hosting our website. The service, support and administrative features of the website were terrible. Michelle assessed the hosting situation and decided it was not in our best interest to continue paying the company for out-of-date service and lack of support. In addition, the site was not optimized for today's social networking trends and lack the ability to add an "rss feed."

Michelle researched potential companies known to be "friendly" to animal welfare non-profit groups who might donate website services. The goal was to dispense with monthly fees which could be better used to take care of our kitties. She ultimately approached [www.WebsbyAmy.com](http://www.WebsbyAmy.com) and owner Amy Delona was more than happy to donate website services to us! She likes kitties and is a fan of non-profit cat shelters.



Amy set up our wordpress blog and Michelle tested the banner and background. Michelle transferred and updated our content, and added a "subscribe" box so that people can sign up to receive an E-mail notice when our site is updated.

In addition to the changes in our website, we are happy to announce that our Facebook presence is growing. In 2008, Michelle set up a Facebook page for Kindred Kitties. The first two "fans" were Michelle and her husband, Frank. Since then, we have accumulated 451 fans!! Our Facebook page now has five administrators that monitor posts from the public. Administrators are Michelle Laycock, Jen Gallion, Donna Birch, Karen Podella-Reiman and Cathy McDowell.

Our Facebook page has been a great asset to us, as we interact with the public about our cats and kittens. We announce fundraisers, contests, and we encourage those who adopt kitties from us to post updates about their kitties. Jen Gallion coordinates a "Cat of the Week" feature that helps get the word out about cats we have available for adoption. We have adopted many cats and kittens to people who have inquired about them through both our Facebook page or our website pet listing.

The Kindred Kitties Facebook page is a happy place and a great online gathering spot for our volunteers and for community members who support us! If you haven't already done so, visit us at:

Website: [www.kindredkitties.org](http://www.kindredkitties.org) Facebook: [www.facebook.com/kindredkitties](http://www.facebook.com/kindredkitties)

Thank you Michelle for all that you have done to make our website presence fun and interesting!!!

### **VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!!**

Excuse our redundancy from month to month, but we are still in need of individuals who are able to volunteer their time for the following tasks:

- Individuals to assist in cleaning the Adoption Center (9am-11am daily)
- Transporting of beds/adoption box each Saturday by noon to Petco for our weekend adoption event
- Assistance in getting the Adoption Center basement thoroughly organized and cleaned
- Painting, refurbishing, and making repairs at our Adoption Center (tools/supplies provided)
- Cleaning up and repainting our basement bathroom (tools/supplies provided)
- Helping at adoption events at Petco or PetSmart on a Saturday or Sunday afternoon
- Transporting of kitties to Madison for spay/neuter (must have a van/will be reimbursed for gas)
- Fostering of cats and kittens
- Developing and coordinating a fundraising event

If you are able to help in any of these ways, please call 262/605-0533 and leave a message. Thanks!!

### **WISH LIST**

Remember, your donations are tax-deductible.

\$\$\$ Donations for Vet Care	Small/Medium Cat Carriers
Large/Medium Cat Trees	Canned Cat & Kitten Food (Ground Only)
Bottled Water (for Volunteers)	Computer Paper
Laundry Soap (Powder or Liquid)	Dish Soap
Liquid Hand Soap	Paper Towel
Heavy Duty Tall Kitchen Bags	Heavy Duty 30- or 39- Gallon Trash Bags
Tidy Cat Clay Litter	Grooming Brushes/Combs
Bleach	Lint Rollers
Toys, Toys, Toys (Especially Pole Toys)	60-Watt Light Bulbs
Post-It Notes (All Sizes)	PLEASE, <u>NO</u> CAT TREATS!



## **HEALTH WATCH – The Pleasures (and Perils) of Catnip**

Planters of catnip beware! This perennial is aggressive, reproducing by spreading runners beneath the soil. However, “despite the voracious nature of the plant, it’s worth having around. Catnip is non-toxic, non-addictive and low-calorie...it can be a valuable part of an indoor cat’s environmental enrichment,” says Carolyn McDaniel, VMD, a consultant at the Feline Health Center at Cornell University College of Vet Medicine.

The entire plant—stem, leaf and seed—is covered with microscopic bulbs that contain nepetalactone. The catnip plant undoubtedly evolved nepetalactone as an insect repellent. Like poison ivy, brushing against the leaves bruises them enough to release the oil from the trichomes, which is why you might see your cat leaning into the catnip. The oil can also be released by chewing on the leaves.

Despite cats’ fondness for munching on catnip, their response to nepetalactone is triggered by the olfactory system (which senses and processes odor), not by the digestive system. Oddly enough, even cats without a sense of smell can respond to catnip, due no doubt to the unique location of the olfactory organ—in the front of the roof of the cat’s mouth, above the palate. But despite this location, cats don’t “taste” catnip. The nepetalactone has to be inhaled rather than swallowed for the receptor to act.

What does catnip actually do to cats? It’s been suggested that nepetalactone is a cat aphrodisiac. Cats roll on the floor in response to catnip, just like female cats do when they are “in heat.” However, since male cats roll on the floor too, and since the other behaviors associated with catnip are not related to sexual behavior, catnip as an aphrodisiac seems unlikely. Dr. McDaniel says that the chemical structure of nepetalactone is unlike any naturally occurring feline pheromone. (Pheromones, like human hormones, produce a chemical reaction in cats that affects their behavior.) Instead, she says that nepetalactone seems to have excitatory and mildly hallucinogenic effects.

Not every cat responds to catnip the same way. Some cats become aggressive and may initiate fights with other animals; some get unusually active. Other cats act drunk drooling and rolling on the ground. According to Dr. McDaniel, you don’t have to worry about your cat overdosing on catnip. The response only lasts from five to fifteen minutes, regardless of how much your cat’s exposed to. After that, it takes an hour or more before the cat’s nepetalactone receptors will respond to catnip again. This acts like a built-in safety mechanism, preventing the cat from any danger of over-indulgence.

The sensitivity to catnip is an inherited gene, an autosomal dominant trait. This means that only one of your cat’s parents needs to have the gene for your cat to inherit it. With one parent sensitive to catnip, a cat has a one-in-two chance of inheriting the sensitivity; the likelihood rises to a three out of four chance if both parents react to catnip. As a result, ten to thirty percent of any given cat population won’t respond to catnip. According to Dr. McDaniel, the color, gender or breed of your cat won’t have any correlation to its sensitivity to catnip, since the gene isn’t associated with any other traits.

Kittens younger than six to eight weeks old won’t respond to catnip at all, and it may take another month after that before they’re fully responsive. Says Dr. McDaniel, “The reason for this delayed response is another one of the catnip mysteries—it may be that the receptors in the vomeronasal organ need time to develop, or that the catnip response area in the brain may not fully develop until a kitten is eight to twelve weeks old.”

Just one other interesting tidbit about catnip. In 1969, a report ran in the *Journal of the American Medical Association* claiming that catnip had mind-altering effects when smoked by humans. This caused quite a run on catnip supplies in pet stores—until someone pointed out that the picture accompanying the *Journal* article was actually that of a marijuana plant! Still, over thirty years later, rumors persist that catnip is a human intoxicant, despite considerable evidence to the contrary.

Source: *CatWatch*, May 2009



## ***DID YOU KNOW ...***

### **... that “the eyes tell the story”?**

If you live with a cat, you know how expressive your cat’s eyes are. Dangle a toy in front of your cat and watch as the pupils of her eyes dilate several times their normal size. The same holds true when your cat sees the food bowl. Dilation also occurs when your cat is frightened or threatened.

When your cat’s eyes are half-closed, he is fully relaxed, maybe half asleep and purring at the same time. If you scold your cat and he closes his eyes completely, he’s not ignoring you or shutting you out. Cats shut their eyes when faced with a dominant rival. Among cats, the victor sees closed eyes as submission and will usually walk away from conflict.

Night Eyes – Who hasn’t stared back at the glowing eyes of a cat in the dark? But a cat’s eyes don’t actually glow. There’s a membrane beneath the retina called the *tapetum lucidum* that reflects light. When a cat opens its pupils wide, as a response to being in the dark, light is reflected off the cells of the *tapetum lucidum* giving the appearance that the eyes are glowing. Scientists estimate that cats are some six times better at light sensitivity than humans. This is primarily due to a cat’s *tapetum lucidum* which reflects light back through the retina to maximize the eye’s reception of light rays.

Colorblind Myth – we used to think that cats were colorblind, but scientists have now determined that cats can tell the difference between certain colors—especially blues and greens. That may come as a surprise to us, but for cats, color doesn’t appear to be very significant because it doesn’t affect their survival. As vision goes, detecting movement is much more important than the color for a cat to find its prey and escape from predators.

*Source: CatWatch, July 2009*

## **SPECIAL ADOPTION CENTER VISIT**

On January 16<sup>th</sup>, Brownie Troop 40-988 from Antioch paid a special visit to the store, bringing lots of gifts for the kitties, including cleaning supplies, food, a cat carrier and, of course, toys! Since it was Sunday and the store was closed, the kitties were thrilled to have the company—so a great time was had by all!!

Thanks to all the girls for spending lots of time with the kitties and bringing so many wonderful gifts. You can be sure that everything given to us will be put to very good use!!!



## **FOOD PANTRY NEEDS**

When doing your grocery shopping, please remember the many individuals who are struggling financially and need help with feeding their pets. Please bring cat/dogfood donations to Salvation Army in Kenosha or to Love, Inc. in Burlington. Their pet food pantries are being used regularly!!



**THANK YOU SO MUCH!!**

We can't thank all of you enough for your support! We make every effort to acknowledge all who contribute to Kindred Kitties in a variety of ways. Be sure to know if you are not acknowledged in the listing below, that it is unintentional. You can be sure that we are very grateful!

- To Kim Lindahl and to Michelle & Joe Fehr for offering their homes to foster kitties – welcome!!
- To Jeanne Greninger for her gift in memory of Liesl
- To Brownie Troop 40-988 from Antioch, Illinois for their load of gifts for our kitties
- To Dominic & Gail Minnetti for their donation in memory of Robert L. Dunn
- To Leah Lofquist, who found a \$100 bill and when no one claimed it, chose to give it to us
- To Tayana Bell & Kristina Marshman for donating the proceeds from their Soda Sale
- To Abbott Labs and its generous employees who participate in the Matching Funds Plan
- To our Petco and PetSmart volunteers who regularly dedicate their precious time on Saturday and Sunday to promote the adoption of our kitties
- To Ruth Talbert and the patrons of Rat Race Lounge for their Super Bowl Fundraiser
- To the Perkins at Hot Rocks for their continuing in-store collection of donations for us
- To John Mattson, Mark Hafferkamp, Karen Hofmann, Michael Kukulka, Michelle Griffin and Bruce Bitzan for their generous donations of food and supplies
- To all the many 'unnamed' individuals who stop by the Adoption Center to visit our cats and leave a variety of gifts for us
- To Chris Fay for monthly donations of a portion of her proceeds from her online shoe sales (Ashado's Shoes Galore—An E-Bay Store) through Mission Fish
- To Karen Rheingans for her donation in honor of Steven Penn's birthday
- To Blake Cahoon of Amethyst Moon Company for his donation
- To Kristy McClurg of Home Buddies for her gift in memory of Kelly Larson's two special cats, Dewey and Sadie
- To all who visited Culver's on February 7<sup>th</sup> and helped make the fundraiser a great success
- To Liz Stone who helped us put together new adoption packets
- To our tireless volunteers who foster kitties, spend time with our Adoption Center cats, run errands, test and vaccinate kitties, and in general, are willing to be at our 'beck and call' when a need arises

And to those of you who consistently provide us with gifts of your hard-earned dollars, thank you so much!!!!

Marge Illich	Paula Illich	Nancy Gier
Jody Davis	Rebecca	Kenosha Air Traffic Controllers
Richard & Judith Scott	Daniel & Barbara Tenuta	Brian & Beth McLain
Karen Wollert	Bambi Kehler	Kong Enterprises
Edwin & Beverly Heys	David Wimer	Marilyn Jensen
Wendi Schneider	Marygrace Horner	Emma DeRosa
Peggy Hermann	Dolores May Alfredson	Judith Torrez & William Jewell
Cathy Klaus	James & Marylou Rush	Betty Ren Frederiksen
Alex & Kathleen Tarsitano	Donna Milliken	Mary Fairbairn
Mr. & Mrs. James Locke	Kelly Koehler	Wren Ide
Paul Cook	Robert Enstad	Jane Broughton-Schaefer

*Ever consider what [cats] must think of us? I mean, here we come back from a grocery store with the most amazing haul -- chicken, pork, half a cow. They must think we're the greatest hunters on earth!*  
~Anne Tyler, *The Accidental Tourist*



## **SPECIAL EDITORIAL & FEEDBACK REQUEST**

Recently, a local shelter leveled criticism at "no-kill" shelters. The premise of the article is that many more animals could be saved if humane euthanization were practiced. "Most 'no-kill' shelters," the article points out, "have no option once full; they are forced to turn animals away. Some people find this frustrating, and sadly, sometimes dump the animals on the roadside. The terrible reality is that these animals will still face hardship and the possibility of death."

The article went on to quote PETA, who favors open admission shelters over no-kill shelters. PETA explains, "Open admission shelters are committed to keeping animals safe and off the streets, and do not have the option of turning their backs on the victims of the overpopulation crisis as 'no-kill' shelters do. No one despises the ugly reality of euthanizing animals more than the people who hold the syringe, but euthanasia is often the most compassionate and dignified way for unwanted animals to leave the world." Part of the philosophy of euthanasia versus no-kill is that it is unfair to allow an animal to remain in a cage for its entire life. The article goes on to state that "cage-less facilities address the confinement issue, but this can result in rapid spread of disease and potential aggression between the animals."

I find it difficult to argue with many of the points made in the article. Yes, we do have to limit intake; yes, we have to turn some animals away; yes, some we turn away probably do get dumped; yes, some no-kill shelters fall into the trap of believing a feral cat should not be re-released, and inhumanely keep that cat caged for its lifetime; yes in a "free-roam" environment there is a delicate balance that needs to be maintained for cats to remain optimally healthy and well-adjusted; and yes, we know there just aren't enough places for all the "displaced" cats in the world.

An open admission facility in Kenosha boasts the ability to help nearly 4,000 animals each year. But, remember that if the shelter fills up or if the animal is not considered "healthy and adoptable," euthanasia is their choice. I just have to wonder: of the 4,000 helped, just how many of these are "helped" by putting them to sleep? I have been unable to ascertain the statistics of how many actually make it to adoption. And, I'd also be really interested in knowing what the criteria is for labeling a cat "healthy and adoptable." Is the cat who has an upper respiratory or an eye infection judged unhealthy? Is a cat who is timid or adjusts very slowly to new environments unadoptable?

Nowhere in the article is there any reference to Trap/Neuter/Release (TNR), so I am assuming that this particular shelter does not consider farm placement or TNR an option for surrendered animals. In fact, I checked PETA's website on the TNR issue as well, and it is quite clear they don't believe TNR is in cats' best interest. In their article, *Animal Uncompromised: Feral Cats*, they say, "Although altering feral cats prevents future generations from suffering, it does not protect cats from the litany of other problems that they may encounter. Allowing feral cats to continue their daily struggle for survival in a hostile environment is rarely a humane option."

And so, the debate goes on and on (it's been an active debate since the early 1900s). Is a "no-kill" nation a real possibility? There are certainly many pros and cons on both sides of the argument, and like most other societal issues, people are generally pretty evenly split on which way makes the most sense (and at the same time addresses the very serious issue of animal over-population).

We would like your input! We are open to any opinion on either side of the debate, or any information you've found from other sources. Please either E-mail your opinions and articles to [cathrynmcd@aol.com](mailto:cathrynmcd@aol.com) or drop them in the mail to: Kindred Kitties, Attn: C. McDowell, 614 59<sup>th</sup> Street, Kenosha WI 53140.

