



# Witty Kitties, Inc. Newsletter

A Special-Needs Shelter

Fall 2008

*Please mark your calendars for Saturday night, October 4, from 6—8 p.m. at The Secret Cellar in Shueyville. Witty Kitties is having its 2nd Wine Tasting Fundraiser! Everyone had so much fun last year that we decided to try it again. We'll have food, wonderful entertainment from Kat 'n Tim (see page 6), drawings for prizes, and, of course, kitties and more!*

*See the insert in this newsletter that provides all of the information you'll need. See you there!*

**OCTOBER 4, 2008**

## Witty Kitties Mission Statement

Founded in 2000, Witty Kitties provides quality care and shelter to cats with specific chronic medical needs within the five-state area we serve. Our organization is committed to providing low-cost medical care and spay/neuter services for local shelters, rural cat colonies and individuals with multiple cats. We provide rescue, care and appropriate housing for a variety of reptiles, as well.

As part of our overall service to the community, Witty Kitties works to educate the public regarding proper care of these companion animals and, ideally, to find permanent, quality homes for them.

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Jenni Doll, DVM

Torben Platt, Reptile Guy

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## A DAY IN THE LIFE OF KIRSTEN PLATT

by Jenni Doll, DVM

I've often thought my son Joseph would be a very successful writer if he chose to write a novel about his life. After all, he lives in worlds that exist on two ends of the "stress/adventure" spectrum. At his dad's home, there is not a single animal, with the exception of an aquarium of fish. Shoes must come off before entering the house. And, there are no other siblings. At our home, we have, just in our house, 4 dogs who go almost anywhere they want, 10 cats who DO go anywhere they want, 4 ferrets, and a chinchilla. I hope someday he will share some of his stories for the newsletter. Since he can probably tell the stories of his life in extremes better than me, I'll keep pushing him to do so. Until then, I figured I could try to imagine what goes on in Little K's brain in the course of a normal day.



**7AM:** Mom isn't in bed anymore, and I keep yelling for her. Stupid Cha Cha the dog is sitting on my legs, and she won't get off. That dumb-dumb head Pepper the cat keeps purring so loud and trying to get me to pet her. She gets so much hair on me! Mom finally hears me and comes in. Do I go to Tim Tim's today? No? Then I'll be home with Mom.

I watch "Spongebob Squarepants", while Mom goes out and does chores. She leaves the door to the deck open so we can hear each other.

I'm out of chocolate milk. I'll just go outside and yell to her. I don't need to have any clothes, and I like to be naked, and I can't find any clothes anyway. On the deck, I can see Mom feeding the pigs. "MMM0000MMMM I NEED MORE TOLKLATE MILK!" I know she'll be a while, so decide to play in the sand box on the deck. I used to not like being in my box until it was moved away from the side. The emus like to stick their heads through the bars of the railings and peck at everything, even me! They take my toys, and even eat the small ones. I'm still mad about the orange fuzzy mouse Flynny ate a while ago. Mom says she searched and searched the whole yard for days and days, looking for it in the emu poop, but didn't find it.

The dogs won't shut up. They're barking at someone at the front gate. Mom is coming to the house and tells me she'll be right there. That means a long time again. The man is here to fix something. He sees me on the deck, and must think I'm so cute, because he has a funny smile on his face.

Mom finally comes back. She is crabby, but gets me some milk. Mom has to talk on the phone now, so sits on the deck with me. In the middle of the call the giant alligator starts roaring. He is so big! Mom is even amazed He is almost out of his pool and making the biggest

(continued. . .)

noise at me! I hope he doesn't want to eat me.

I'm going to go inside and play with my mousies. I'm making carnivals, and parties, and statues for them. I keep needing tape, and hate that Mom doesn't get it for me fast enough. She'd rather scoop kitty poop in the sun room.

Now I'm really yelling for her, and she doesn't come. I finally hear her yelling back, and find her in the basement. She is mopping down there because the kitties don't always go in their boxes.

I'm mad because Mutter the cat keeps wobbling into my stuff and knocking them down. He doesn't have a good brain, and he walks funny. I hate when he is by me because he always ruins my stuff. I want mom to get him out of here so I can play. Rockaloe and Friendly, and Eddie, my mousies, are having a birthday party, and are eating all the food I made them....

...Oh, now Mom is making me go to the shelter. I hate that most of the time. Mom didn't bring the video player, so I play on the big slide thing in one of the rooms. Mom won't stay in there with me. She keeps going in other rooms. She'd rather scoop kitty poop again. I'm doing such neat tricks. Finally Mom rests and watches me. But now I don't feel like doing tricks. I have cat hair all over me. I keep trying to pick it off my tongue, but my fingers have cat hair on them. I'm crying and yelling, so Mom washes my hands. She seems crabby. She puts me up on the table so I can play with the chalk and the chalk board. I want the board all clean, and wipe all the scribbles off of it. That makes Mom mad. She thinks they were important. But I put notes and letters all over it, and read it back for her. I see some kitty toys I like. I want them. They are now mine. I collect them all and put them in a pile on the couch. Hey, the stupid kitty keeps playing with them! They're mine! Get away! Mom says the kitties can't help it because the "cat tip" [cat nip] in the toys make them so happy. I don't care. They're my toys. I keep making Mom get the kitties away, until I finally have the toys to myself. As soon as Mom gets back to cleaning, I have to go potty, REALLY bad. "MOM! I can't hold it. I need help going potty!" Mom looks crabby again, and takes me to the funny potty in the shelter. It has blue stuff in it. I know that blue and yellow mixed together makes green. Can you guess why?

Finally, Mom is done. She kept saying "I'm ALMOST done, just one more thing." Then, ten "things" later, she is finally done.

We stop at the little pen Pasado the donkey has to be in. Mom says he has to get tame, so every day she feeds him with her hands. I'm mad because I want to go on my jumpy jump [trampoline], but first Mom ssssqquuuueeezzzeessss through the bars of his

pen, then just sits and sits, until he eats. She ssssqquuuueeezzzeessss out. She says it scares him too much when she climbs over the pen wall. But she doesn't know how scary it is to watch her go through the bars. I'm always afraid she'll get stuck! Then what will I do?

I love the jumpy jump. I jump and jump and jump. Mom always just wants to watch, or else goes off and tries to pet Pasado. I make her jump and jump, too. She gets so tired of it. I don't know why she doesn't have fun doing it. I do cool moves, and she has to copy them. I yell at her when she doesn't do them right. Then we have to go home.

That man is done fixing something, and talks to mom. She gets her purse, writes on a little piece of paper and gives it to him. The man leaves. Mom says we just spent lots of money. I don't understand. We're not even at the store!

Mom makes lunch. After, I want to watch TV. But now Mom tells me I have to go the store. How boring. I keep telling her I'm going to throw up all the way there. She opens my window. She looks serious. I know what will cheer her up. I ask her to put my favorite Allanis Morrasett [sic] song on. Now she is happy. Too happy. She tries singing along out loud. I can't stand that.

We get the store shopping done. Yay, we can go home? Oh, no. Mom never told me about the trip to one of her work shelters. She goes to the one that is not too far away. I get kitty toys, but get bored. Mom keeps saying she is almost done, but keeps looking at animals. She says she is helping them, but she is just talking to the other ladies.

Finally we go home?...No, now we have to go to Theisens. Mom gets big heavy bags of animal food. How dumb. This is no fun. I want to go home. Good thing I brought a mousie with me. I also play with the new toys I took from the kitties at both shelters today. I keep finding more and more hair on them though, and decide to toss all of them on the floor of the van. I don't want them anymore.

We go home. Dad is mowing the lawn. Mom won't make me chocolate milk right when we get home. The dogs keep jumping up at us, and are barking. Mom has to pet them, and pet the kitties waiting the kitchen. I never get any attention.

I drink my milk, while mom gets the van unloaded. She paints with me. Finally, some fun with Mom. When we're done though, she has to go into the basement and "start her packs". I never know what that means, but I get to hang with Dad. He makes me watch boring TV for almost a whole 3 minutes, then finally puts "Spongebob" on for me. Later he plays with me. Mom makes me din-

ner. Dad does chores. Mom is glad.

Dad comes back crabby about the snakes. His hand is all bloody and gross! I think he is going to die! But he doesn't care about it. Mommy doesn't either, so I don't either. But, really!

Mom finally brings all her pack stuff upstairs, and sorts all these shiny scissor and knife things, then wraps them up. She watches my shows. I know she likes my shows.

Dad goes to bed. I want to play, but Mom can't play with me. She has a sick kitty in the bathroom she has to take care of. I hate when an animal is in the bathroom because the door is always closed, so I can't go potty all by myself. Well, that isn't so bad, 'cause I don't like to go by myself anyway. Even so, I still scream and yell at the bathroom door and say I can't get in, and am mad I need to have help.

Mom is tired. I am not.

She makes me go to bed. I want books. I want one read 3 times, and the other read 2 times. Lights out. I want a story. I like when Mom tells me the Christmas Spongebob story. I'm still not tired, but Mom says she is so tired she could cry. I guess I'd better sle.....ZZZZZZZZ. **10PM.**

## EXOTIC CORNER

by Torben Platt

Greetings from the Exotic Corner, Most of our animals have had a good summer despite the uncertain weather. Witty Kitties luckily made it through the floods and tornadoes relatively unscathed (although our duck population has certainly increased because we had several motherless groups of babies dropped off). On sunny days, our large African spur-thighed tortoise, Sully, plods determinedly through our yard, pausing occasionally to munch on a dandelion. Lex (big alligator) basks and swims in his enclosure while casting a hungry eye towards the parade of ducklings waddling by just on the other side of his fence (he is actually overfed, but try telling him that). The smaller alligators and caimans rush to the fence, mouths agape, to "greet" you, as they have convinced themselves they are not fed nearly enough, either. Up at the shed, all the lizards have spent the summer outside, but inside the snakes doze in their heated room, completely unaware that they will soon be moving. Yes, we are converting our garage once again. The garage by our house was the original site for Witty Kitties and had 3 different enclosures for the cats in it. Then we tore everything out and stuck a 400 lb. black bear in it. Last summer we tore all the bear stuff out and made half of it into a winter home for Lex and the other gators, and the other half had Amelia (the fox) living in it. Presumably, at one time before Jenni and I came on the scene, people may have actually kept cars in there. Now, due to Trish's excellent grant proposal, funding from the Miccio Foundation, a generous donation from Jan and Genevieve, and John's skill and hard work, we are in the process of converting it into a first-class reptile room. Everything should be done within a month or so and then the only thing we'll have to do is physically move all the critters into it. I'm sure there will be plenty of volunteers for that.....(ok, I'll take the bitey end). Jenni will be able to use the old snake room for a surgery or as an office or whatever she wants, and the old lizard lounge can house the cats that currently live in the common room. It should be easier for everyone involved, and having all the cold-blooded critters in one area will make it more efficient heating-wise this winter. It almost makes me look forward to that dreaded time of year.....almost. Thank you to all of our supporters!



## WE GET LETTERS!

*Dear Staff, Volunteers and Friends of Witty Kitties,*

*It is August 9, and today is my FIV+ kitty's 6th birthday! Braveheart continues to be happy, healthy and playful. My vet recommended that I give him 500 mgs. of L-Lysine a day, which I have given him for the past year. It certainly hasn't hurt him, and I take it myself!*

*Braveheart continues to be the joy of my life, and is wonderful company. I don't know what I would do without him. For a single woman, he has been a wonderful companion and friend. Thank you, Witty Kitties, for the gift of Braveheart.*

*Most sincerely,  
Joyce Suchsland*

**"WELL, WOULD YA LOOK AT WHAT THE CAT DRUG IN!"**

by Kat Schoon

I simply must sing the praises of all of our volunteers who are involved with Witty Kitties right now. That's right. We have such a great, hard working, enthusiastic and reliable group just now that I simply must sing about it. "We love you, yeah, yeah, yeah!" Some have found out about us through the corridor volunteers' web site ([www.corridorvolunteer.org](http://www.corridorvolunteer.org)), and also through [volunteermatch.com](http://volunteermatch.com). Others have reliably supported us for several years. These folks pitch in whenever they can in spite of having full-time jobs, family and many other demands on their lives. They are all heroes in my book and we are very grateful to have them involved at Witty Kitties.

All of this new rockin' energy has prompted us to install a volunteer sign-up sheet. We have posted a calendar at the shelter on the front of the refrigerator. So, if you have ever thought to yourself that you would like to volunteer some time at Witty Kitties, but you can't commit to a regular weekly day and time, now you could sign up for one morning or one night shift for the month and time of your choice. All we ask is that you let us know 24 hours in advance if you can't make your shift. This lets us line up a replacement and avoid disgruntled feline or reptilian clients. We would also ask that you become familiar with the shelter by working with some of the regular volunteers on one or two Saturday mornings so that you know what needs to be done and where to find everything. The cats need to be tended to every morning and evening and we have to stick to some hourly schedules due to medications, but actual times can be somewhat flexible within the morning/evening parameters.



*Timi Snyder & Apollo, one of our FeLV+ cats*

So welcome and thank you to the following rock star volunteers: Amy McBeth, Amy and Cynthia Holcomb, Jon and Ka-

tie Conlon-Fasselius, Mitch and Amanda Stenkamp, Matt Ogden and Shannon Stubbs, Timi Snyder, Luke Meyer & Sara Gorenson, Judy Patterson, Nancy O'Malley, Linda Skvor, Tim Van Loh, and Jen, Steve, DeArzae and Tre Fasnacht, and to all of you who pitch in, physically and financially, to support Witty Kitties. You Totally Rock!!!



*Cynthia Holcomb & Gino; Amy McBeth & Sterling; & Amy Holcomb & Graham Cracker Crumb*

**WITTY KITTIES PARTNERS WITH PETCO**

by Trish Wasek

Three Witty Kitties took a road trip to the Coralville Petco store recently, and were a big hit! Rocky, Lucy, and Haven were on their very best behavior, wearing harnesses and leads – they even got to take a few short walks through the store! Lots of people stopped to pet them and find out more about Witty Kitties. The kids loved them!



*John McLaughlin, staunch Witty Kitties volunteer, with our kitties & a new friend*

We've been trying to spread the word that **Witty Kitties are very adoptable**. After talking to Jon White, the manager of the new Petco in Coralville, about its shelter partnerships, we decided it would be a great fit. Petco provides the space, right at the front of the store, and we supply the kitties. We can let the kitties out of their haven so people can hold them and pet them, and it's okay to bring our feline leukemia

and FIV kitties. Plus, anyone who adopts one of our kitties will receive a booklet of coupons worth \$125 from Petco. What a deal!!

So stop by and visit us! We will be at the **Coralville Petco on the 1st and 3rd Sunday of the month, from 1-4 pm, through November**. (The dates are September 21, October 5 and 19th, and November 2 and 16th.) The store is located at 2515 Corridor Way, off of Hwy 965, just north of I-80. Oh, by the way, if you have a dog or cat, bring it along – the store welcomes all well-behaved pets who want to tag along with their servants!



## CUPCAKE'S BIRTHDAY BASH

by Trish Wasek

Cupcake turned eight this past June, and we decided to throw her a birthday party at the shelter. Boy, was she in rare form! You see, Cupcake's a little bit shy, and she usually doesn't care to show her face in public. But, we decided to get her all dolled up in a brand-new birthday outfit anyway. We were hoping against hope that she'd venture out once in a while so people could see just how great an eight-year-old cat with feline leukemia (FeLV) can look.



*Cupcake says, "Someone find the matches!"*

Well, that party outfit must have given Cupcake a huge boost of confidence, because she sat on the desk right inside the shelter door and greeted every single person who came to her party! For three hours she sat there, right on the corner of the desk. Total strangers walked right in and she let them pet her and scratch her ears as though it was the most normal thing in the world for her. She even sat there when we lit her cupcake candle and sang Happy Birthday to her. It was unbelievable!

Other magical things happened that day too. Lucifer, the Burmese python, got to go out and play in the grass. He doesn't get petted very often (by anyone other than Torben, that is), and he was definitely a hit with some of the kids.



*Witty Kitties' handsome Noah at Cupcake's party*

And best of all, Noah, a FeLV+ flood victim, got adopted! According to his new parents, Dan and Debbie, he's having the time of his life playing with his new brother, Parker, also a former Witty Kitty.

By the way, Cupcake got lots of great presents, and she asked us to be sure to thank everyone for coming to help her celebrate. We've put her birthday outfit on her a few times since, and she definitely seems to hold her head a little higher when she's wearing it!



*"Wow! Is that present for me?"*



*Cupcake & Zeus*

*"Do you like my party dress?"*



*Lucifer, Mama Dog, and curious friends enjoy a beautiful, sunny day at Cupcake's birthday party*

**PRESENTING KAT 'N TIM**

by Nancy Fultz



Fall is fast approaching, and so is the Witty Kitties 2nd Annual Wine Tasting Fundraiser. Last year's musical entertainment, Kat 'n Tim, will be performing again this year.

'Kat' Schoon started singing with her brother in the church choir in Texas when she was 10 years old. She moved to California to try her hand at theatre and TV, and was on her way up the ladder when her husband, Chris, who is a writer, convinced her to move to Iowa. She sang for a while with The John Lake Band in Iowa City before joining up with Tim.

Tim Dermott has been playing guitar 'all his life' and started that life in Maryland. Then he moved to New York, South Carolina...some

other places, and finally settled down in Arizona. He always played here and there, but kept the day job to assure a steady paycheck for his two daughters. A few years ago, he pulled up roots again and moved to Cedar Rapids for a job at Rockwell Collins.

The group specializes in charity functions because they love using their talents to help. At last year's event they tailored their songs to the occasion, so there were plenty of songs about cats and wine. Everyone really enjoyed the music and both Kat and Tim had a good time, and are looking forward to this year's Wine Tasting event.

Come see this great duo at the Wine Tasting on **October 4, from 6—8 p.m. at the Secret Cellar in Shueyville!**

**ADOPTION UPDATE**

by Nancy Fultz

When Tim took Newby home, he thought he was adopting her to be a playmate for his other cat, Doublestuf. As time went on, he found that he got so much more. Newby has become a super lap cat. She has a tiny little mew and quiet purr, and anytime he lies down on the sofa, she appears for a petting session. He says he could not have picked a better cat; she is a darling and a great buddy to Doublestuf. Yes, she is FELV+ and Doublestuf is not, but for such a great cat, Tim feels it is worth the slight risk.

Tim and Doublestuf would both like to thank Witty Kitties for saving the life of this sweet kitty who is an important part of both of their lives.



Tim, Newby (front) & Doublestuf



Newby



**MEMORIALS & HONORARIUMS**

*In loving memory of **Bob Becicka**, a very special friend to all of our kitties. Mr. Becicka loved to come to the shelter with his friend, Nancy O'Malley, so that he could pet and love the kitties. He will be deeply missed by all of his four-pawed and two-footed friends*

*In memory of **Paul Brennan**, and all of my sympathy and love to his sweetheart, Peggy Walker, by Kat Schoon*

*In Memory of **Eleanor Louise**, our late mother, on the anniversary of her birth, June 4, 1920, by Margalea Warner and David Crombie*

*In memory of **Emily**, beloved cat of Stephen & Jen Fasnacht, by Carole Melton*

*In memory of **Wilber**, Witty Kitties' 400-pound pig, who passed away this summer. Many adored him, and he will be missed*

*In memory of **Sassy**, beloved cat of Steve, Rhonda, Megan, and Tyler Buttleman, by Jim & Jerry Buttleman*

*In memory of Karla Sibert's beloved dogs, **Cody & Bo**, by the Witty Kitties gang*



## STILL AT THE SHELTER

by Nancy Fultz

We'd like to have you meet some of our great FIV+ cats. An FIV+ cat can live for many years without problems; however, the virus can weaken their immune system. FIV+ cats can live with 'regular' cats as long as they don't fight or mate. Since a fixed cat will have fewer reasons to fight (and no reason to mate!), most vets do not recommend that they be segregated from other cats.

Morris is such a sweet boy and has been waiting for quite some time for someone to notice him. He's a real lap kitty and quite handsome. He gets along well with the other cats in his room at the shelter, and would love a home with at least one other cat to play with.

Charlie Kangaroo Butt is another lap kitty who has been with us for most of his life, but he still would love the chance to have a home of his own. Charlie loves to be petted and held. Besides being FIV+, he has a bit of cerebellar hypoplasia, which makes him walk a bit funny. It does not affect his health and he manages just fine — it just makes him extra special.

Cats who have been in the shelter for a while usually learn how to relate to new cats quite well, which makes their transition to a multi-cat home much easier — as far as adjusting to the new cats go. Adjusting to new people can be a little tougher, but they will come to love you — just give them plenty of time and space.

Come visit these cats and all the other highly adoptable cats at the shelter — they would love to meet you!



*Morris*



*Charlie Kangaroo Butt*

## WHY A CAT?

by Nancy Fultz

Cats are poised to surpass dogs as the most popular pet in the USA. Even so, some people still think cats are aloof and don't 'love' people. Every night when I lay down to sleep with the best boyfriends I could ever have (sorry Tim), I know my cats love me and not just because I feed them. Rocky jumps into bed (all 18 lbs) to come give me a shoulder massage, and Fuzzy is right next to him curled up under my arm. They love it when I kiss them goodnight and tell them what handsome boys they are. My girls are no less loving. Amelia, aka 'Galloping Gertie,' comes running anytime I sit down in order to claim her spot on my lap.

Don't get me wrong — I love dogs. I actually wanted a dog, and went from shelter to shelter to find the perfect one. I had cats and dogs as a child, and because the cats were outside cats, they always seemed more independent and less cuddly. My ex-husband was the cat lover, and while I checked out all the dogs, he visited with the cats. One day he showed me this pretty cat that, when I opened her cage, jumped right out into my arms. Right then I decided to give cats a try. I've never regretted it. Cats are the perfect pet for someone who works long hours. I never had to worry about an 'accident' because my boss insisted that I stay late to do one more project. When I came home so tired that the thought of walking the dog would have been impossible, I got the comfort that can only come from a warm purring cat in my lap.

I still love dogs, but am glad one little cat made me change my mind.



*Rocky*

Witty Kitties, Inc.  
 3133 Roberts Ferry Rd.  
 Solon, IA 52333



Fall 2008

**To find Witty Kitties. . .**  
 Take I-380 to the Swisher/Shueyville exit (No. 10).  
 Go east one mile to Club Road (which becomes Curtis  
 Bridge Rd.). Turn right.  
 Go one mile to Sandy Beach Rd. &  
 turn left.  
 Go 1.1 miles to Roberts Ferry Rd.,  
 turn right, then left at the 3rd drive-  
 way (3133 Roberts Ferry Rd.).

Please call (319) 848-3238 and  
 leave a message to schedule an  
 appointment.



**TABLE OF CONTENTS**

WINE TASTING FUNDRAISER! ..... 1  
 WITTY KITTIES MISSION STATEMENT ..... 1  
 BOARD OF DIRECTORS ..... 1  
 WEBSITE ADDRESS ..... 1  
 A DAY IN THE LIFE OF KIRSTEN PLATT ..... 1  
 EXOTIC CORNER ..... 3  
 WE GET LETTERS! ..... 3  
 "WELL, WOULD YA LOOK AT WHAT THE CAT  
 DRUG IN!" ..... 4  
 WITTY KITTIES PARTNERS WITH PETCO ..... 4  
 CUPCAKE'S BIRTHDAY BASH ..... 5  
 PRESENTING KAT 'N TIM ..... 6  
 ADOPTION UPDATE ..... 6  
 MEMORIALS & HONORARIUMS ..... 6  
 TO FIND WITTY KITTIES ..... 8  
 HOW TO GIVE TO WITTY KITTIES ..... 8

**Gifts, Memorials and Honorariums**

Want to honor or memorialize a family member, friend or beloved pet? Want to give a monetary gift to Witty Kitties? Just fill out the information below and send your check in the envelope provided in this issue. **Your donation is tax deductible, and we'll publish your memorial or honorarium in a future issue. We'll also send a complimentary copy of the newsletter to the person you honor or the family of the person or pet you memorialize.** Just provide the necessary information below and then send this form back to us in the envelope enclosed in this issue (don't forget to add a stamp!). No stamp? No problem! **Now, YOU CAN ALSO GIVE ONLINE — check out our new website (www.wittykitties.org)!**

- Gift: \$ \_\_\_\_\_
- Memorial for: (name) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Person       Pet
- Honorarium for: (name) \_\_\_\_\_  
 Person       Pet

Send notification to: (name) \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ (please provide city, state and zip)