

KATS' TALES

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THE NEW KID by Helen Morrison, KAS President

About a year ago, a potential adopter came into the Shelter looking for a cat. She settled on one, was approved, and, several days later, came in to fill out the agreement. The adoption counselor went through all the considerations and spent some time on how to introduce the cat into his new home of a dog and several other cats. The counselor told her very specific ways to help the cat gradually adjust to its new home and to feel safe during that adjustment period. The adopter listened carefully and agreed. She took the cat home, plunked it in the middle of the living room with the dog and cats, and let the chips fall where they may. Needless-to-say, the next day the adopter called and said the cat wasn't working out, that he was too aggressive to her and the other animals. She wanted to return the cat. We gladly took the cat back. Within weeks, he found a wonderful home, among many other cats. This new home knew how to gradually ease the new cat into her home. People often ask me how to introduce a new pet into the household. I know the most about cats, of course. But I would imagine that dogs would be similar. Not so sure about turtles; snapping turtles, wouldn't even consider. It is inevitably stressful for the cat to come into a new home. The goal is to reduce that stress as much as possible. When taking a cat from a shelter or from someone else's home, if it is possible, visit and spend time with the cat in its previous home. In addition, it would be important to bring some of the items the cat is familiar with to its new home...a favorite bed or blanket that has its own scent on it, toys that the cat particularly likes. Be sure to ask for the cat's medical records. Always bring a carrier to take the cat home. It is too easy for the cat to bolt when a car door opens, to leap from one's arms. In addition, whatever their food was should be continued. An abrupt change of food can cause diarrhea. Start out with the food they are used to, then over several weeks, change the proportions gradually to the food you will be feeding them. Have a room ready for the cat to call its own for a while. It should be relatively small, a small guest room, a bathroom. A closet is probably too confining. The reason for this room is to provide a safe spot for the cat, a place the cat can begin to relax in. In in should be a litter box, water, its food. Toys are a must. A window is great....not open to the outside, of course. And it should have some places it can hide but where you can get to the cat if need be. Spend time with the cat, sitting, reading (out loud, if you wish...they love to be read to), playing with it. Begin to bring into the safe room the bedding of the other animals in the house, and take the new cat's bedding out to where the other pets can smell it. Do that often, that exchange. Then start feeding the new cat right next to the door, and feeding the other cat(s) outside the door so they begin to associate each other with something pleasurable. You can open the door a crack, let them smell one another. After some time, you can let the new cat out for a while, and the other cat(s) into the safe room so that both can begin to check out each other's spaces. Finally, they can begin to mingle outside the safe room, but keeping the safe room for the new cat for quite a while. Playing with them all together helps them focus on the play rather than their fear of each other. It is very important that if the new cat is going to be an indoor/outdoor cat, that it not go out for several weeks to a month. The new cat needs to know where "home" is. For me, it usually takes about two weeks for the cats to get used to each other and be able to share the same space. Do they all become fast friends? Some do; some don't. But at least, they learn to tolerate one another. And they often make fast friends among one another. I know many of you let your cats outdoors. We recommend that you don't because the risks are just too great...diseases from other cats, predators, traffic. But if they are at least brought in at night, their chances of a longer life are much greater. An outdoor cat has an average life span of 2-3 years; an indoor/outdoor cat, 5-7 years; an indoor only cat, 15-20 years. So, enjoy your new cat, the "new kid." If you want to chat more about introducing a new cat into your home, give me a call. Nothing I like better than to talk about cats, about animals.



WISDOM WHISKERS
Wisdom and Whiskers are two very sweet "sisters" who came from the same home. Wisdom is 8 years old, very friendly and affectionate; she loves any attention that is given, but can sometimes be a bit shy. Whiskers is about 12, very outgoing, friendly, and active. They both love to be brushed and would love to go home together, since they have been together for so many years. Can you give these two love bugs a cozy forever home with you?

UPCOMING EVENTS

- October 4 Autumn on the Green, Danville, 10 to 4:00
- October 17 Dime a Dip Supper and Pie & Cake Auction, 5 to 8:00 P.M. location TBA later.

KAS BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Helen Morrison – Co-President
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IT'S TIME TO VOTE FOR YOUR FAVORITE CALENDAR CAT
We hope you are taking time to vote for your favorite cat photo on our website, from July 1st to July 31st. (You may vote only once a day.) This is our third annual Calendar Photo Contest. Results are updated every 10 days or so. Visit www.kingdomanimalshelter.com today!



Did you know....Cats can't chew large chunks of food, as they can't move their jaws sideways.

OUR MISSION STATEMENT The purpose of the Kingdom Animal Shelter is to facilitate the placement of stray and unwanted animals and pets in desirable homes; to establish and maintain an animal shelter and associated procedures that promote health, care and handling; and to prevent overpopulation and the prevention of cruelty to animals. The animals in our care, our guests, are never euthanized merely because we lack space or because the animal's stay with us has exceeded a predefined amount of time.

Please forward this to your friends, family, co-workers, or anyone interested in supporting our shelter. If you no longer wish to receive emails from Kingdom Animal Shelter, please hit "Reply" and change the subject line to UNSUBSCRIBE. Kingdom Animal Shelter respects your privacy and will never share or sell your email address or other information.