

HAPPY CATS, HAPPY HUMANS

Cat Club fostering program helps both the kitties and the residents who care for them

By Bev Elwell

Special to the Globe

Why do these people look so happy? Because they foster for the Laguna Woods Cat Club.

Why do these cats look so content? Because they're fostered by these terrific humans.

Imagine you're a cat. You wake up one morning and your human is gone. You look all over, but she's not there. You wait, but she doesn't return.

After a long time, strangers show up. You're placed into a carrier and then a car. Your heart is beating fast.

When the carrier door is finally opened, you find yourself in a strange place that doesn't smell like home, so you bolt and hide under a bed. You're frightened and confused.

The next time you peek out, you see a litter box — your litter box — and dishes filled with food, and a tower, and a comfy bed. You're still confused, but



**Marcia Millar
and
'Joely'**



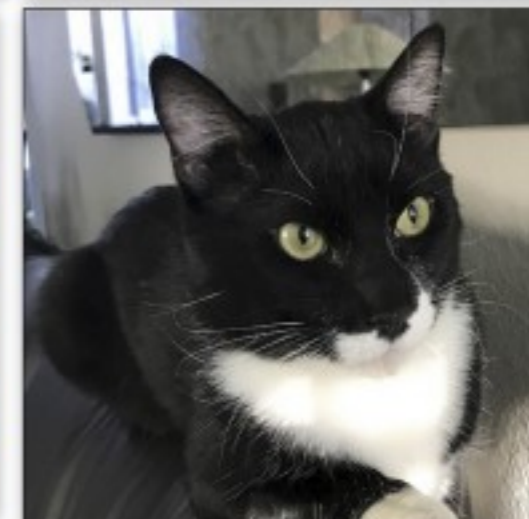
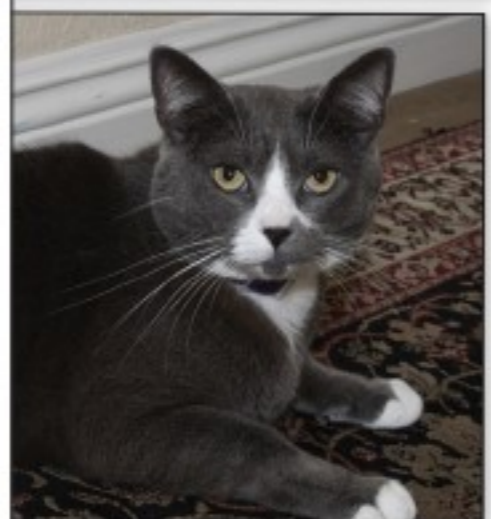
**Roz & John Dorman
and
'Frankie'**



**Ron Askew
and
'Fred'**



**Marguerite Mason
and
'Boots'**



Fostering a cat just makes some people happy, and vice versa. On Pages 10 and 11, read about the joys of giving a home to an abandoned cat from these fosters and others. And if the cats could speak, they would probably tell you how grateful they are. All were fostered through the Village Cat Club.

COURTESY OF LAGUNA WOODS CAT CLUB

you venture out and check for threats. There are none.

There is a human in the room who doesn't approach. She just speaks softly and patiently waits for the time when she knows she'll gain your trust.

The foster provides the cat with a safe, clean, peaceful environment, re-

stores its trust and turns it into a great companion.

But what does the cat do for the human? When you come home, the cat greets you — she's glad you're home. When you open your eyes in the morning, they are met by another pair, close up — she's happy you're alive because she's

hungry and needs you. When you wake up at night and can't fall back to sleep, there's a warm, furry body, tucked near your big beating heart, who will purr you back to sleep.

Recognition, gratitude, love and the satisfaction that you saved this little being — that's what the

cat gives a foster parent. That's why these people look so happy.

Don't pass up the chance to foster. Contact Sayre Weaver at 213-924 8755.

Bev Elwell is president of the Laguna Woods Cat Club.

PEOPLE

Cat tales and stories of love

Meet some of the folks fostering kitties through the Cat Club

Ron Askew and Fred

I am a dog person.

However, I received a call from a member of the Cat Club asking if I would have Fred live with me until they could find a permanent home. Well, Fred arrived, I picked him up, he settled into my arms and looked up at me.

With my limited knowledge of cats, I would have assumed he was asking me to feed or pet him. But no, he was looking for security and love.

Over the first few days, Fred would constantly talk to me, cuddle up when I sat on the couch and at night slept on a blanket I placed on the end of my bed.

This began our friendship. When the time came to make a decision to release Fred, the bond had been established.

Now, we have a great routine. He wakes me if I am not up at my customary time, he has his breakfast, I my coffee, he then goes out to the patio to lie in the sun, hunt lizards (keep them outside, Fred) and then back inside for his morning nap.

What a life.

Noemi Epstein and Darrel Vorderstrasse and Oliver

While we were in Covid lockdown in July 2020, we decided to try to help out cats in need by fostering.

We were fortunate to receive a beautiful tabby named Oliver.

It was a difficult transition for Oliver, and we saw very little of him for the first few days, hearing only hissing from him. Slowly he became "our cat," and ultimately we failed fostering by adopting Oliver.

He is truly a character, loves to spend quality time on our laps, loves chin rubs and is a very fussy eater.

If he dislikes the food served to him, he approaches Noemi



PHOTOS COURTESY OF LAGUNA WOODS CAT CLUB

Ron Askew is a self-described dog person. But after fostering Fred, he now shares his home with a cat.



Fred is the one who stole the heart of Ron Askew.



With a lot of patience, Marguerite Mason turned street-smart cat Boots into a playful, affectionate indoor cat.



Boots gave up his wild outdoor ways with the help of Marguerite Mason and has found a forever indoor home.



Noemi Epstein and Darrel Vorderstrasse first fostered a cat during the pandemic lockdown in July 2020. But they fell hopelessly in love with Oliver and adopted him.

and taps her on the arm two or three times and meows his displeasure.

However, if he is served something that meets his approval, when he finishes his meal, he approaches Noemi and taps her on the arm only once to say "thank you" and retires to his basket.

If you love cats and want to help cats in need, consider becoming a foster "parent" for one of the many cats in the Village that are abandoned due to changes in their owners' living situation.



Oliver knows just how to get what he wants from Noemi Epstein and Darrel Vorderstrasse.

Marguerite Mason and Boots

No one knew how long the handsome tuxedo cat had been on the streets. He looked well fed, yet he often turned up near the doorstep of a resident of the Village.

Then it rained. He was still out there. She brought him in and called the Cat Club.

The wheels of rescue began to roll. First step, the vet for bathing, shots and neutering. The vet thought he was about 3½ years



Roz Cole's career as a foster was short-lived after she adopted 11-year-old Mandy.

old, a fully developed and intact male cat. Oh, boy. Next step, placement with a foster — me! The adventure began.

Nights of mournful howling as he adjusted to the sudden drop in hormones and the indoor life. Days of thundering up and down the hall chasing a hot pink flamingo on a string.

Quiet times asleep in the sun in the atrium.

He was so strong and street smart he could open any door that didn't have a lever or a knob — cupboard doors, closet doors,



Mandy needed a home after her original parents returned home to Indonesia, so she was fostered and then adopted by Roz Cole.

heavy sliding pocket doors.

Weeks went by as his behavior quieted to relative calm. I called upon every trick I knew and the unfaltering support of Cat Club volunteers.

It took him two months of hard tough work, but he did it. Here was a playful and affectionate indoor cat.

Soon another volunteer found him a new home with a young couple, a cat, a dog and a two-story home with stairs. Perfect! He'll give everyone their daily

Cat Club

FROM PAGE 10

exercise. Go for it, Boots! Enjoy your new life and your new family.

And now I take care of my son's cat, Kobe ... which makes me happy.

Roz Cole and Mandy

Halfway through the first year of isolation by the plague, I felt the need for another beating heart in the house.

I asked my friend Karen Wood (who had been president of the Cat Club) to lend me one of her five cats, but she would have none of that, suggesting instead that I offer to foster cats for the Cat Club.

I applied, was accepted to foster, requested and received two bonded cats, but found that though they were litter mates, they were not bonded by my definition.

Much too soon, Skippy and Phantom (later renamed Phoebe) were adopted into separate homes.

Soon after, I saw a photo and description of 11-year-old Mandy in the Globe. Her original parents could not take her with them because they were returning home to Indonesia, a trip that would have been much too arduous for her.

I knew Mandy and I were meant for each other, and I ended my career as a foster by adopting her.

Her parents and I have kept in touch by email. I have sent them reports, photos and videos, and they have now found a cat that looks just like her.

So, all's well that ends well, and two cats have happy homes.

Annie Zipkin and Tommy

After living alone during the pandemic, I thought, wouldn't it be great to foster a cat? I saw the picture of Tommy in the Globe. He looked so beautiful, I called the Cat Club to foster him.

The people in the club were so nice. They brought over all his food, litter, a huge climbing tree and about every toy and thing I would need for Tommy.

For the first few weeks, he was really scared, hiding under the



PHOTOS COURTESY OF CAT CLUB

Annie Zipkin picked Tommy to foster during the pandemic and ended up adopting him.



Tommy was a scared kitty, but little by little, he started to warm up to Annie Zipkin.



Marcia Millar has helped Joely get rid of some bad habits and learn some good ones.



Joely, fostered by Marcia Millar, likes to be near her human friend, but right now she's looking for a forever home.



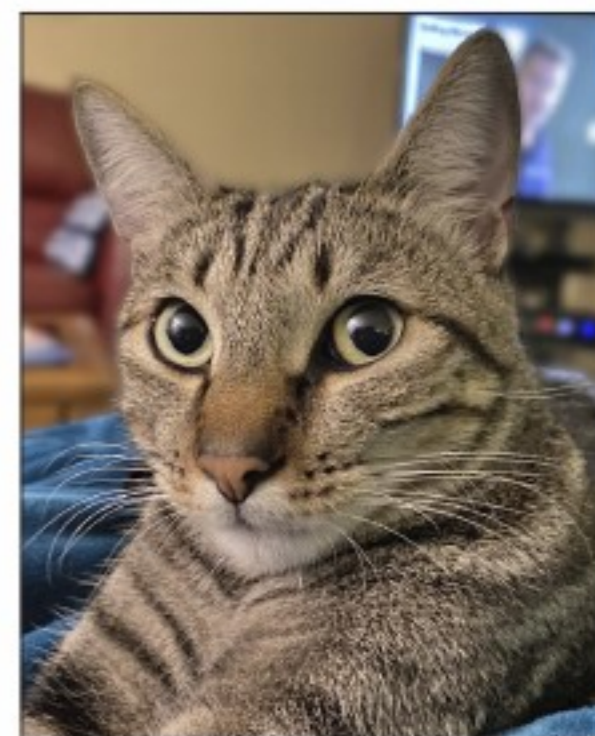
Rozanne and John Dorman had a great time and great fun while fostering Frankie.



Playful yet cuddly Frankie, fostered by Rozanne and John Dorman, found his forever home with another kitty.



Dolores De Mayo is fostering Bucky, and she's going to keep fostering until she finds her forever cat, one that's not too big for her to pick up.



Bucky is a big cat — a little too big for his foster, Dolores De Mayo.

bed most of the time and coming out only to eat. Little by little he started to warm up to me and we were getting along just fine.

Then somebody wanted to adopt him. Which they did. It felt a little lonely around here, but I thought I would get used to that.

Two days later I got a call back from the club that Tommy had run away from his new adopted mother. But they found him and wanted to know if I would continue to foster.

When he came back, he was as scared as when he first came to me. I knew at that point I would have to adopt him because I would never want to put him through that trauma again.

Now he is a totally changed cat. He is very, very sweet, very, very beautiful with the most gorgeous black coat. He lets me pet him, and every once in a blue moon he will climb up on a chair and sit next to me.

The Cat Club was great about everything — made everything easy and I have no regrets. I love my little Tommy.

Rozanne and John Dorman and Frankie

Our foster ... Friendly Frankie.

We were a lucky couple to have Frankie live with us a few months ago.

What a beautiful kitty. He's full of spunk and ready to play fetch, and no he's not a dog. He loved exploring the house, but then he would cuddle up on the sofa with me.

He added so much fun to our lives and I'm thrilled to say that he's now living in his forever home along with another kitty. The two boys are good friends and I know he's living the good life.

Marcia Millar and Joely

Fabulous Fostering is my name for fostering cats. These cats are in their most vulnerable time in life. They have lost their forever home.

Joely is no exception. She is a 3-year-old little jewel, a tuxedo cat with a beautiful thick, gray coat. She came with some habits, but it has been so rewarding to see her learn new habits and to watch her bloom.

Recently, she has been dropping a 6-foot small rope at my feet. "It's time to play, Mommy." She loves to play.

She usually settles into whichever room I have settled in. Although she isn't yet a lap cat, she likes to sit next to me, or she sleeps near me. Leave a box around and she is inside and sitting tall as if she owns it. Throw a treat out and she's running after it ... eyes like a hawk.

She comes with a tall cat tree, which she loves to climb and watch the squirrels outside. She is great entertainment and needs her forever home now. Although her foster can't keep her, it will break her heart to give her up.

Dolores De Mayo and Bucky

I admit it — I have an ulterior motive for fostering for the Cat Club. I am searching for the purrfect cat to adopt myself.

Bucky, the cat I'm currently fostering, fills every desire except one — he is too big for me to lift.

I have had three big foster cats so far and I have enjoyed all of them, but I have arthritis in my back now and I can't lift.

Since I haven't been able to find the cat I want, I will keep fostering. Something tells me they will never give me a small cat. I'll just hold out for a Munchkin.