



TIME + LOVE =
MAGIC

ANNUAL REPORT
2019





MISSION

Cat Town's mission is to transform the approach to saving shelter cats, reducing euthanasia nationwide. Our focus is to find great homes for cats who are considered unadoptable in the traditional rescue model.

We believe in investing the additional love and time it takes to bring out the best in cats who face challenges getting adopted from a cage. Typically, these cats are elderly, under-socialized, stressed, sick, or injured, and have been passed over by other rescues. Cat Town's model was created to save these cats and help them find loving homes. The results prove our efforts are worth it — since 2011, Cat Town has helped reduce the euthanasia rate for cats at Oakland Animal Services by more than 70%!

Since 2011, the euthanasia rate at Oakland Animal Services was reduced by

70%



CHAPTER

A NEW

2019 was the last year Cat Town's Founder, Ann Dunn, served as our Executive Director. After 9 years of building this organization with the support of Cat Town's staff, board of directors, volunteers, and the rest of our community, Ann transitioned to a role on our Board of Directors as Andrew Dorman stepped up from his previous leadership position at Cat Town to take the helm. "In the over two years since Andrew joined the team at Cat Town," said Ann, "I have seen firsthand that he has a brilliant combination of compassionate and strategic thinking. It is a gift to me to know this organization that I love so much will be in such good hands."

"It is a gift to me to know this organization that I love so much will be in such good hands."

- Ann Dunn, Founder of Cat Town

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR LETTER

Dear Friends,

Every Cat Town donor, adopter, volunteer, and staff member makes a promise to the shelter cats who have been overlooked. We promise to see them, and to help them — every step of the way home. We deliver on this promise with two vital ingredients: time and love.

Time is crucial for helping overlooked cats. With time, stress can build up in a cage, or melt away in a foster home. Patience — sometimes months of it — is what finally convinces a scared older kitten to trust the kindness of our volunteers. In animal rescue, a cat who needs extra time is a cat with a strike against them, and a large part of why these cats get overlooked in a shelter setting. That's why at Cat Town, we consider time to be a life-saving gift.

Love is a key component to our work because the lives we change aren't just those of the cats in our care. With your help, we lift up an entire community of caring people. The people who adopt a senior cat with the comfort of knowing we'll help with medical bills. First-time adopters, excited to have forged a special bond with a cat who needed extra time and patience. Shelter volunteers and workers who see that a scared cat has gone to Cat Town, and can breathe a sigh of relief knowing that the cat they cared for won't feel stressed any longer. Knowing how many lives can be changed when a single life is saved, our team treats every cat like family.

We are changing the traditional rescue model nationwide by demonstrating how time and love can open new possibilities for cats once deemed unadoptable. I'm honored that we have been able to share our methods with more than 63 rescue organizations across the country — in 58 cities and counting — to help more people take a chance on cats who appear unadoptable in a cage. I'm excited to tackle new problems to help more cats get out of cages and into the homes of people waiting to love them — because I know that if we need help, we can ask, and we have an incredible community ready to answer.

Cat Town is a promise to help every cat who needs us, and we can keep that promise because of you. Thank you for making everything we do possible, and for looking ahead with us to give more cats the love they deserve and the time they need.

Warm regards,

Andrew Dorman
Executive Director

PROGRAMS

Most cats respond to shelter cages with fear or aggression. These behaviors make it challenging to see their real personalities. Cat Town helps shy, scared, and stressed cats by removing the cage from the equation. We place cats who appear challenging at the shelter into our free-roaming Adoption Center, private Cat Town Studios, or one of our loving foster homes, where they can be themselves. We also provide specialized support for cats with more complex needs.



FOSTER

Many of our cats' transformations happen in our foster program, which gives our most vulnerable cats the love and time they need to find homes.

Most of Cat Town's cats are in foster-care in the homes of volunteers, waiting to be adopted or decompressing from their shelter stay. If you have a quiet space in your home and time to give to under socialized or sick kittens, or a shy, sensitive or older cat, or a cat with special needs, you might be a great foster parent for a Cat Town cat.

Once out of the shelter, many of our cats are very easy going and simply need a safe place to land. Some are very shy and need special socializing. We will match you with a cat that is right for your interest and experience and will provide you lots of guidance and support, including help from cat behaviorists if needed.



Second Chance Soirée

In 2019, Second Chance Soirée was a special opportunity for the cat community to support our mission. This exciting evening showcased delicious food, lively music, and a silent auction full of great items donated by local artists, museums, and donors.

Above all, Second Chance Soirée supported shelter cats in need of a second chance and demonstrated how much we can accomplish for our shelter's most overlooked cats when we come together as a community. We were honored to have Emmy-award winning journalist Diane Dwyer as our master of ceremonies. This event alone helped us raise more than \$60,000 through individual donations, our raffle, and other support!



FOSTER SPOTLIGHT

Emily Vander Tuin has fostered cats for many years and, thanks to her extraordinary patience and kindness, has helped more than a dozen Cat Town cats find great homes. Emily specializes in cats who need extra time to blossom and has a knack for helping bonded pairs feel safe and comfortable so they can get adopted.

She explains, "I kind of fell into this by accident! I had one longer term foster and didn't mind it. I loved him and I am very patient with cats that need any amount of time to decompress."

Patience is definitely important to make sure the magic happens. Emily says, "When I first get them, they find a good place to hide and they stay there for a while." With plenty of time and under-

standing, Emily is able to help her fosters start sharing their real personalities. Bit by bit, she learns more about who they are, and what potential adopters can expect once they earn their trust.

"A home gives them lots of hidey places to feel safe, and since there are also people around all the time, when they are ready to connect, someone is there. Most of my fosters have chosen to start connecting with me while I am in bed. I'm guessing they feel safe when I am prone and appear smaller than they are? But our connection begins there and that obviously couldn't happen in an adoption center."

Emily has no plans of letting up, and her current set of foster cats will be ready to adopt soon!



ADOPTION

Some cats find their perfect people quickly, and others need more time to find just the right adopter. No matter how long they stay with us at Cat Town, we are able to adjust our adoption process to give each Cat Town cat the chance for a bright future. Our staff spends hours every week getting to know the cats at our city shelter, identifying which most need our help, and making a plan to give them the support they'll need to thrive. By the time a cat arrives in Cat Town's care, we have a good idea of their needs. Our staff and trained volunteer adoption counselors use this information to match our cats with the best possible home. When we think a cat may need extra expertise to settle into a new home, our support continues well after their adoption day: Cat Town's volunteer case managers stay in contact with adopters to offer expert advice and support, helping cats and their families create lasting bonds.



"I really trust Cat Town," explains Jessie. **"I knew if I called Dawn, she would choose a great cat for our family."**



When Cat Town put out an urgent call on Instagram for Carmen, a cat with a bad case of ringworm, Jessie didn't hesitate to reach out about fostering.

"Carmen looked horrible," she recalls, "but I knew what I was getting into since I'd had kittens with ringworm before." After a consultation with Dawn Pieper, Cat Town's Foster Coordinator, a volunteer delivered Carmen from the shelter to Jessie's home.

"They brought me the yellow gowns you would wear in the NICU to protect me because Carmen's condition was so bad," Jessie explains. "Carmen was so sick, but the sweetest cat." It took months for Carmen to fully recover, but Jessie and her family were happy to invest the time and effort to help her. In the meantime, they also fell in love with this sweet girl and ended up adopting her!

When Jessie was ready to adopt a third cat, she didn't hesitate to reach out to us. "I really trust Cat Town," explains Jessie. "I knew if I called Dawn, she would choose a great cat for our family." That's exactly what happened. Jessie's resident scaredy cat, Shrimp, was lonesome after the passing of his best cat friend, a mellow senior named Sage, and Jessie thought he needed a new companion. She called on Cat Town, and we connected her with Mr. Seven, a senior polydactyl cat who has brought out the best in Shrimp (and vice versa).

"I didn't realize just how much Mr. Seven would help Shrimp out," says Jessie. "It was so worth it to make the trip to Oakland from the Peninsula. I think Cat Town is a great organization. They're really smart people who know their cats!"

ADOPTION STORY

IN IT FOR LIFE

Senior cats often have chronic health issues, and concerns over the cost to give them the care they need can prevent adopters from bringing home an older pet. With this in mind, we created Cat Town's "In It for Life" Fund, which is supported entirely by our donors. This fund allows us to get seniors out of Oakland's under-resourced shelter and helps cover the cost of future medical expenses that can come with an older pet. **By removing medical expenses as a barrier to adoption, we help senior cats and their people find and love each other without the worry of expensive vet bills.**

FORGOTTEN KITTEN PROJECT

It's hard to imagine a cute, cuddly kitten being forgotten, but that's exactly what happens to many young cats who are either born on the streets or are overlooked in a cage during kitten season when shelters are overcrowded. If they haven't had positive human contact by the time they're two months old, these older kittens will require lots of additional time to develop trust and bond with people — and after this age, it's incredibly difficult to socialize these kittens if they're in a cage. Sadly, that means many older kittens are euthanized each year because they're such a challenging group.

The cats in our Forgotten Kitten Project are excellent examples of our Love + Time = Magic formula. These kittens receive all of the time they need to build trust at their own pace and get adopted. We have a 100% success rate socializing kittens aged 3 to 10 months!

We have a **100% success rate** socializing kittens aged **3 to 10 months!**



EMERGENCY MEDICAL FUND

Oakland's animal shelter is underfunded and understaffed, making it a challenge for them to care for cats who are contagious or have critical injuries, even if these medical issues are treatable. Cat Town's Emergency Medical Fund allows us to rescue cats who would otherwise be euthanized due to their condition when they arrive at the shelter. Donations to this fund allow us to provide veterinary services, medications, surgeries, and supplies to vulnerable cats, so they can quickly recover and find loving homes.

APPRENTICES

Cat Town's efforts to help the cats who appear unadoptable in a cage extends well beyond Oakland or even California. After creating a successful model in Oakland, we started working with shelters and rescue organizations around the country to replicate our approach to lifesaving. In 2017, we developed and piloted a curriculum for the Hard-to-Place Cats Adoption Program as part of the Maddie's Fund Apprenticeship Program. Since then, we've helped dozens of rescue organizations from coast to coast learn how to save cats who were once thought to be beyond saving. In 2019, we reached our 63rd organization, spreading our reach to a total of 58 cities!



In 2019, we reached our **63rd organization**, spreading our reach to a total of **58 cities!**

LEGACY OF LOVE

At Cat Town, we've seen firsthand how many cats end up in a shelter cage after their people pass away, leaving no surviving caretaker. We've also witnessed how cats who once lived in a home become stressed when placed in a shelter cage. To support more shelter cats, and provide peace of mind to those who have no one to care for their cats after they pass away, we developed Cat Town's Legacy of Love program.

The cats who have been enrolled in this program will come into the care of our staff if the need should ever arise. At Cat Town, we'll care for their medical needs, supply their favorite food, and toys, and comfort them until they find their next loving home. These cats will never have to face the stress of a shelter cage. And best of all, enrollment funds ensure that we can support even more cats who need our help, all year long.



COMMUNITY IMPACT

We take on the most challenging cases from the shelter, helping cats who appear “un-adoptable” and who are passed over by traditional rescue organizations. We’re proving every year that our innovative approach to cat rescue works — in 2019 we achieved a 96.6% life saving percentage.

2019

We were able to help a total of **441** cats!

Cats Adopted	289
Cats Fostered	221
Overlooked/Stressed Cats We Got Out of Their Cages	130
Cats Received Special Medical Care	128
Bonded Pairs (and Trios) Stayed Together	125
Senior Cats Adopted	71
Cats with Vet Bills Covered for Life	26
Cats with FIV	18
Cats with Feline Leukemia	7



Forgotten Kittens Socialized
77

We couldn't do it without our Volunteers!

OUR TRAINING	
New Volunteers Trained	116
Apprentices	31
from 26 Organizations	

NATIONAL IMPACT

Roxie Richards is one of 31 apprentices who came to Cat Town in 2019 to learn more about helping hard-to-place cats. Roxie works at the Central Missouri Humane Society, the only open-admissions shelter in Boone County, and shares Cat Town’s passion for working with the more challenging cats that come through her doors.

After spending a week with our team, Roxie took lots of information and inspiration back to Missouri. She let us know that one of the biggest changes that resulted from her apprenticeship at Cat Town is how CMHS manages their volunteers. “We’ve opened up so many more opportunities for office work and online work, including someone who follows up with all of our adopters, and we’re restructuring our cat team to give volunteers more opportunities to help under-socialized and sick cats in our care.”

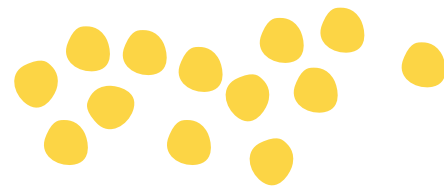
Roxie also let us know that her organization recently hired a new foster care coordinator, and together they’re seeking out specialized foster homes to accommodate the cats with unique challenges who come through their doors. “Not only did I get some great ideas and validation about some of the ways we already approached cats, being around so many wonderful people with similar ideas helped me feel recharged and excited about the future of cat sheltering and rescuing!”

We love knowing that someone on the other side of the country can come to Cat Town and leave with renewed resolve to help more cats in their own community!

Alpharetta, GA	Des Moines, IA	Milwaukee, WI	Salem, OR
Arlington, VA	Fountain Hills, AZ	Mission Hills, CA	Salisbury, MA
Asheville, NC	Fredericksburg, VA	Monroe, WA	San Francisco, CA
Aurora, CO	Hattiesburg, MS	Morgan Hill, CA	Santa Fe, NM
Austin, TX	Indianapolis, IN	Myrtle Beach, SC	Seattle, WA
Baltimore, MD	Killeen, TX	Naples, FL	Sheridan, WY
Batavia, OH	Knoxville, TN	Noblesville, IN	Sherwood, OR
Burbank, CA	Kyle, TX	Oakton, VA	Titusville, FL
Charlottesville, VA	Lafayette, IN	Ottawa, KS	Topeka, KS
Chaska, MN	Lafayette, LA	Oxnard, CA	Truckee, CA
Chattanooga, TN	Lansing, MI	Pasadena, CA	Tucson, AZ
Cincinnati, OH (2)	Lincoln, CA	Pittsburg, CA	Warren, MI
Colorado Springs, CO	Lynchburg, VA	Princeton, MN	Wasilla, AK
Columbia, MO	Martinez, CA	Riverside, RI	
Dallas, TX	Milpitas, CA	Sacramento, CA	



“Coming to Cat Town is an incredible way to feel better after a rough day”



Pam and Alex

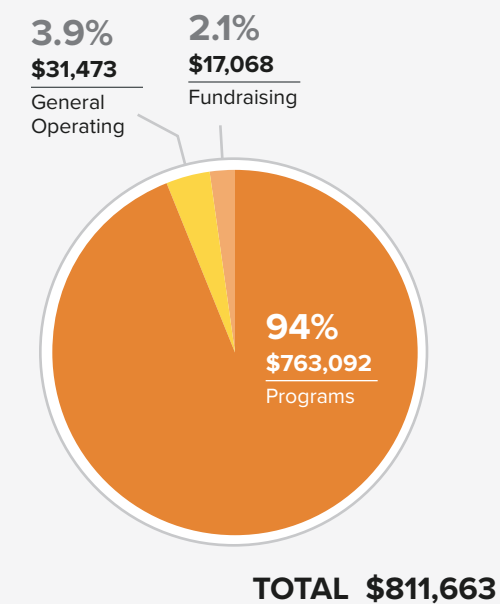
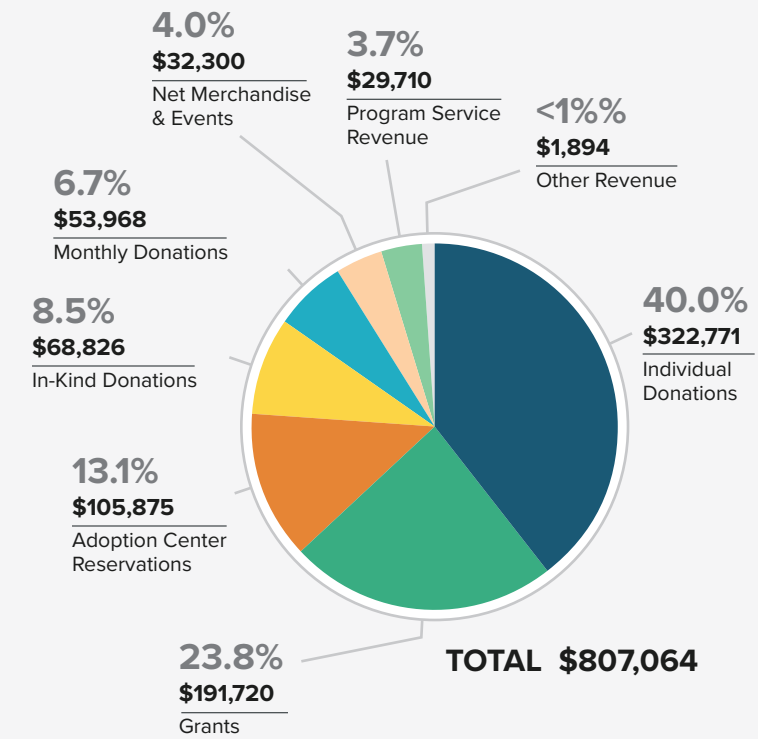
In 2019 we launched a membership program to make it easier for our community to meet our cats face to face, and visit frequently to see firsthand the transformations our cats make over time. Also, the more visitors our cats receive, the braver and more resilient they become! Two of the first members to join were Pam and Alex, a pair of regulars who love watching the progress our cats make during their weekly visits.

“We became members because it’s a great value, and we just love seeing the work you do. It feels good to help cats feel braver just by giving them a visit,” says Pam, who comes in with Alex at least once a week. “Plus we love getting to know staff and volunteers and feeling like part of a larger community. And it’s great for Alex, too.”

“Coming to Cat Town is an incredible way to feel better after a rough day,” adds 13-year-old Alex, a cat whisperer in the making. “I especially love to see cats go from red tagged to green tagged, and then get adopted. And of course, I love playing with them and giving them kisses!”

FINANCIALS

When it comes to saving lives, we know every dollar counts. That’s why we work hard to stretch every donation as far as possible. Fortunately, Cat Town has earned the support of donors, foundations, and more — so we can keep our adoption fees low to help more families find the perfect feline friend.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Nara Dahlbacka

President

Jamie Miller

Treasurer

Willow Liroff

Secretary

David Abernathy

Director

Andrea Bell

Director

Marla Cornelius

Director

Ann Dunn

Director and Founder

Stefanie Kraus

Director

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Andrew Dorman

Executive Director

Dawn Pieper

Foster Coordinator / Deputy Director

Quinn White

Development Director

Marie Carney

Maddie's® Medical Manager

Marie-Luise Klotz

*Communications and Volunteer
Manager*

Dilara Göksel Parry

Cat Care Coordinator

