



# *Scratching Post*

*From the Kentwood Cat Clinic*

*Fall 2007*

## **Dr. Joseph Simon Joins Clinic**



The Kentwood Cat Clinic welcomes new associate veterinarian Dr. Joseph M. Simon to our professional staff. Dr. Simon, who prefers to be called Dr. Joe, is the youngest of a family of 7 children and grew up working on the family farm in rural Clinton County. He attended Central Michigan University and Michigan State University, earning his doctorate in Veterinary Medicine at MSU in 1974. In 1978 Dr. Joe and his wife, Kathy, a licensed veterinary technician, opened the Animal Medical Clinic in Williamston, Michigan where they have been living and working for the past 29 years.

Dr. Joe and Kathy have been married 33 ½ years and have 4 children. The oldest, Anna is 28 and is about to leave for France to teach. Kate, 26, is Program Director for the Japan Center for Michigan Universities at MSU. The youngest two, adopted as 3 year olds from China, are JianXia (Tessa Rose) 10 and Yusheng (Andrew) 9. The family's had an assortment of pets over the years, including dairy goats, chickens, a leopard gecko, hermit crabs, canaries, Great Pyrenees and other dogs and many, many well loved cats.

You can't move a farmer too far from his roots, and Dr. Simon is an avid vegetable gardener. He's also an accomplished DIYer. The project closest to his heart is the family's cabin up north near Sleeping Bear Dunes that he's rebuilding from the studs and foundation. Rounding out Dr. Joe's interests are: singing in the church choir, Michigan history, collecting and working vintage Springbok jigsaw puzzles and enjoying Benzie County & Lake Michigan with the family.

Dr. Joe has always had a very special place in his heart for his kitty friends and family members. His own cats were adopted from multiple litters of kittens and their mothers that his family fostered for the Capital Area Humane Society. Two are domestic long-hair brothers, tabby Arthur and white and black Tibbits with the third being a short-hair tabby gal named Socks.

Dr. Simon is enthusiastic about joining the doctors and staff members at the Kentwood Cat Clinic and Cat Clinic North. He's looking forward to meeting all his new feline friends and the special people they keep. Please be sure to stop in and say HI and a give big welcome to Dr. Joe!

## **We are Getting Wired**

Recently we implemented new clinic software upgrading our capabilities. One of the features is using email to communicate with clients for specials, patient care reminders and our newsletter. We are beginning to build our records for this feature. If you would like to use email for communications like



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reminders we will need to add your address to your record. We only will use email if you request it and your addresses are safe with us as we will not use it for any purpose other than sending you information about the clinic and reminders. Please reply to this emailed newsletter providing your name, email address, and a simple statement like please add my email to my record for clinic communication and we will take care of the rest. You will see reminders by email starting in September. We hope that this new feature improves our communication with all our clients.

### **Help! My Cat is Urinating Outside of the box—Part One**

By Maria Berger, DVM

In the midst of today's hectic lifestyles, one of the many things that make cat companionship very attractive is the fact that cats relieve themselves in litter boxes. However, when they become inconsistent in this behavior, or stop using their litter pan entirely, it creates a situation which is stressful, disgusting and threatens to cost the cat its home. Most cats naturally seek soft, sandy litter and readily use their litter pans. There are many reasons that a normally well-behaved cat might suddenly have litter box problems. Some problems are medical and some are behavioral, and finding the underlying cause is the key to resolving the situation.

For many cats, the first signs of a bladder infection are urine accidents. Any cat that is urinating out of the box should have a thorough physical exam done by its veterinarian, and a sample of its urine evaluated for infection, crystal formation, and other problems. Male cats are prone to developing blockages in their urinary tract and becoming unable to urinate. Changes in their litter pan habits may be an early sign of this life-threatening problem. In older cats, urination outside of the box can be an indicator of metabolic diseases such as diabetes, kidney disease, high blood pressure or increased thyroid function. In addition, older cats often develop arthritis, and it may be difficult or painful for these cats to get in and out of the litter pan. Cats of all ages can develop painful bladder or kidney stones. Blood tests and x-rays may be necessary to identify the full extent of your cat's problem. Remember, Mother Nature made cats naturally secretive about their illnesses. A change in behavior, such as not using the litter box, may be your cat's way of telling you that there is a problem and he/she needs your help.

In most cases, resolving the underlying medical problems will result in your kitty returning to using his/her litter box. If your pet's examination and test results are normal, it is time to explore the behavioral reasons that may result in a cat not using the litter box. Next month we'll spend some time looking into these behavioral issues. Remember, the good news is that no matter what the cause of the cat's inappropriate behavior, there are many things that can be done to help correct the situation. Both medical and behavioral problems can be addressed and treated successfully.



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Marci and Mary and Memphis

## Laws of Physics as Applied to Cats

- 1 - Law of Cat Inertia:** A cat at rest will tend to remain at rest unless acted upon by some outside force such as the opening of cat food, or a nearby scurrying mouse.
- 2 - Law of Cat Motion:** A cat will move in a straight line, unless there is a really good reason to change direction.
- 3 - Law of Cat Thermodynamics:** Heat flows from a warmer to a cooler body, except in the case of a cat, all heat flows to the cat.
- 4 - Law of Cat Magnetism:** All clothing attracts cat hair in direct proportion to the degree of color difference between the cat hair and the fabric color.
- 5 - Law of Cat Stretching:** A cat will stretch to a distance proportional to the length of the nap just taken.
- 6 - Law of Cat Sleeping:** All cats must sleep with people whenever possible, in a position as uncomfortable for the people involved as is possible for the cat.
- 7 - Law of Cat Elongation:** A cat can make its body long enough to reach just about any countertop which has anything remotely interesting on it.
- 8 - Law of Cat Acceleration:** A cat will accelerate at a constant rate until he gets good and ready to stop.
- 9 - Law of Obedience Resistance:** A cat's resistance varies in proportion to a human's desire for her to do something.
- 10 - Law of Rug Configuration:** No rug may remain in its naturally flat state if a cat is present.
- 11 - First Law of Energy Conservation:** Cats know that energy can neither be created nor destroyed and will, therefore, use as little energy as possible.
- 12 - Second Law of Energy Conservation:** Cats also know that energy can only be stored by a lot of napping.



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**13 - Law of Refrigerator Observation:** If a cat watches a refrigerator long enough, someone will come along and take out something good to eat.

## Tech Tips

### Choosing Your Heartworm And Flea Preventative

By Lisa McKeiver LVT

We recommend that all cats be on heartworm preventative year round. Outdoor cats should be on flea preventative all year round due to exposure to rodents. Choices depend on what each individual cat's situation might be.

- ❑ Revolution: This is a topical parasiticide placed on the back of the neck once a month. It treats and prevents fleas, prevents heartworm disease, treats and controls ear mites, and treats and controls roundworms and hookworms. It is absorbed into the bloodstream, and 98% of fleas are killed within 36 hours. Calendar stickers are included to help remind you when the next dose is due. It remains effective after bathing and exposure to rain. Revolution, although a little more costly, is the product of choice for both indoor and outdoor cats because of its wide range of parasite control.
- ❑ Heartgard: Oral chewable tablet given once a month. Can be given as a treat or mixed into canned food if necessary. It prevents heartworm disease, and treats and prevents hookworms. It is also absorbed into the bloodstream and can be safely combined with Advantage or Frontline to control fleas. Stickers are included for your calendar.
- ❑ Advantage: Topical parasiticide applied on the back of the neck once a month for control and prevention of fleas. Kills 98-100% of fleas in 12 hours. New fleas are killed within 2 hours. It is absorbed into the fatty layer under the skin, and remains effective after bathing and exposure to rain. Stickers provided to place on calendar to remind you of the next dose.
- ❑ Frontline: Topical parasiticide applied on the back of the neck once a month for control and treatment of fleas and ticks. It is also absorbed into the fatty layer under the skin and remains effective after bathing and exposure to rain. Also comes with stickers.
- ❑ Capstar: Oral tablets that are absorbed into the bloodstream and lasts for 24 hours only. It kills fleas within 2 hours. Can be combined with other flea treatments for fast knock down of flea populations.

Please ask any staff member if you have any questions regarding the above products and we will be glad to assist you in choosing the right one for your pet.

## Featured Cat



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Baxter Wedge

Baxter Wedge is a very special little guy. About 4 years ago Ruth Wedge took her niece to pick out a kitten to adopt but what she did not expect is that Baxter would be the kitten that would steal her heart and adopt her.

Baxter is a 4 year old Manx who has the cutest feet because he happens to have extra toes. Mom says he is very good at using his toes to open the cupboard and get into the cat food; he has even been able to climb on top of the counter and open the freezer door.

He is the king of his castle, as being the only male cat in the house with 2 females it is as though he has his own harem. Peaches and Kiki are the princesses of the house. Baxter especially enjoys bathing and cuddling with Peaches. All the kitties like helping Mom with the printer.

We here at the Kentwood Cat Clinic have come to know Baxter over the past year due to his problems with chronic blood in his urine. Ms. Wedge brought him in to see us after he spotted blood in the bath tub. After treating with medications for a while he became blocked and surgery was done to save his life. The Manx breed is unfortunately prone to having urinary issues.

We appreciate Ms. Wedge for choosing us to care for her wonderful furry kids and making us feel like a part of the family, because she and her kitties are most definitely a part of ours. She is a great cat Mom.

\$3.00 off Coupon of this season's (ten doses) of Heartworm/Flea preventative.  
Expires 10/31/07



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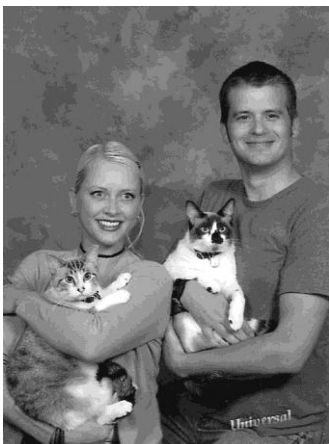
Note: In partnership with Pfizer we provide 2 doses free when you purchase 10 doses of Revolution (1 year supply)

## Cats and People

- It has been scientifically proven that stroking a cat can lower one's blood pressure.
- In 1987, cats overtook dogs as the number one pet in America (about 50 million cats resided in 24 million homes in 1986). About 37% of American homes today have at least one cat.
- If your cat snores or rolls over on his back to expose his belly, it means he trusts you.
- Cats respond better to women than to men, probably due to the fact that women's voices have a higher pitch.
- In an average year, cat owners in the United States spend over \$2 billion on cat food.
- According to a Gallup poll, most American pet owners obtain their cats by adopting strays.
- When your cats rubs up against you, she is actually marking you as "hers" with her scent. If your cat pushes his face against your head, it is a sign of acceptance and affection.
- Contrary to popular belief, people are not allergic to cat fur, dander, saliva, or urine - they are allergic to "sebum," a fatty substance secreted by the cat's sebaceous glands. More interesting, someone who is allergic to one cat may not be allergic to another cat. Though there isn't (yet) a way of predicting which cat is more likely to cause allergic reactions, it has been proven that male cats shed much greater amounts of allergen than females. A neutered male, however, sheds much less than a non-neutered male.
- Cat bites are more likely to become infected than dog bites.
- Two famous people who had the poor judgment to disliked cats: Napoleon Bonaparte and Hitler.

## New Faces

Kate



Kate joins us as a veterinary assistant. She has several years experience at a clinic in Grand Haven and comes with a wealth of knowledge. She has 3 cats aged 12, 2, and 1 ½. Living in Michigan for 2 years she moved to Spring Lake and the country from 8 years in New York City working in the film industry. There she met her husband to be, who had family back in Michigan and they came to Michigan to wed. Brad, her husband, is an area musician and played in the Verve Pipe. Kate's personal mantra has been nutrition and weight loss for cats and has personal experience in this area with her own kitties. She deals with individual diets for each of her cats in the household and manages their diets and weight very effectively.



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Chris



Chris joins us from a varied background in areas other than veterinary medicine. He has always had a love of animals and jumped at the opportunity to work with cats, his first animal love.

He was born in Michigan and moved to northern Illinois early in life to live on a horse farm. There they had many different kinds of animals from horses to goats to birds to cats. Animals became part of everyday life at a young age. Since moving back to Michigan Chris has had a regular potpourri of pets ranging from exotic birds, snakes, lizards, turtles, and most especially cats. He has a Bengal named Darianna.

In his spare time he loves to be active outdoors in activities like running and tennis.

He loves being at a clinic that specializes in cats and offers advanced care specifically for cats. He has been introduced to more cat personalities than he

thought existed in his short time here so far.

Angie



Angie is a recent graduate of Baker College and joins us as a veterinary technician. She grew up on a dairy farm in Coopersville with 2 older brothers and has lived there all her life. Her animals have included horses, cows, sheep, parakeets, dogs, cats, and chickens( which by the way will roost on her arm at dusk.) Her current animals are Jake, a golden collie, and Ted, a cat that is deaf. In her spare time Angie enjoys adventure racing where recent she and her boyfriend took their first 1<sup>st</sup> place in a 15 hour race. She also plans on running her first triathlon this fall at Reed's Lake. Go for it Angie.