



# Scratching Post

From the Kentwood Cat Clinic

# Winter 2007

## January Special

### Senior Wellness Profile for Senior Cats Open to all cats 7 Years and Up

Senior Wellness Exam	\$40.23
Baseline Blood Health Panel	\$98.53
Urinalysis With Sediment	\$29.33
Blood Pressure	\$20.50
Medical Waste Disposal	\$1.72
Fecal/Stool Sample	\$21.17
6 Complimentary Nail Trims For One Year – Up To	\$69.90
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Total Cost	\$281.38
Total Savings	\$91.05
Cost of Program Package	\$190.33



## Why Senior Testing?

Just like people, cats change as they age with incidents of diabetes, kidney disease, liver disease, thyroid disease, and high blood pressure increasing with age. In most situations, these diseases can be effectively controlled and treated if found in the early stages.

Each cat is unique in their normal baseline laboratory values. The senior wellness profile is an excellent way to establish normal levels for your cat. Cats are proficient at hiding illness and this baseline is an effective measurement to determine the changes associated with aging.

## Our Favorite Cat Commercial

### How Cat Herding Commercial was Made

EDS' first-ever Super Bowl ad spot brings to life the expression "like herding cats" -- a phrase often used in technology circles to describe the difficulty of managing the seemingly unmanageable.

"Herding Cats," a 60-second epic tale created by Minneapolis-based Fallon McElligott, is set in the genre of the great American Western Movie -- only with house cats assuming the role generally held by cattle. It follows the brave men and women responsible for moving thousands of house cats across the Great Plains. As the spot unfolds, the viewer sees a realistic portrayal of the life of a cat herder -- riding the range, herding and roping, even quelling the occasional stampede.

### The Talent

The balance of subtle humor and incredible special effects needed to create this commercial required a unique combination of talent. Director John O'Hagan was chosen for his documentary-style direction and ability to work with real people. This experience was highly valuable, considering most of the stars of this commercial are not actors, but real cowboys from ranches in California, Colorado and New Mexico.

Creatively, this was an extremely challenging concept to execute. For example, the cats and horses didn't act together -- their scenes were shot separately and compiled in post-production. There were actually only about 60 cats (specially trained sleeping cats, running cats, swimming cats, etc.) and 13 cat trainers on the set. Through the magic of cutting edge computer graphics, Hollywood special effects house Sight Effects digitally cloned the cats, making it look like there were thousands of cats being herded in the finished spot.

To view the commercial go to  
[http://www.youdoob.com/videos/Commercials/Cat\\_Herdin](http://www.youdoob.com/videos/Commercials/Cat_Herdin)

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## Feline Nutrition—Myths and Facts

By Maria Berger, DVM

As a species, cats are pretty darn interesting in many ways! Their nutritional needs are no exception. This month we'll look at some of the feline attributes that contribute to myths and facts about providing our cats with optimum nutrition.

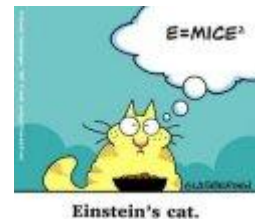
**Cats are finicky-Fact.** Yes, some cats are indeed very finicky about the food they eat. As a species, cats are very texture oriented creatures. Some cats learn to like the way certain foods feel in their mouths, and become very fixated on specific shapes or consistencies. Pet food manufacturers have learned to take advantage of this trait, and many cat foods have defining shapes in the hopes that the cat will learn to like this shape to the exclusion of all others. It's also not unusual for a cat that has not been exposed to canned foods as a kitten to refuse to eat it later in life—that mushy stuff just doesn't feel right, how can it be food? For other cats, it's all about the taste. Cats cannot taste sweet—they do not have the taste buds for it—but they can taste many other flavors. Unfortunately, some cats get fixated on flavors and textures that can be dangerous—such as the plastic bags that so many of them like to lick and chew.

**Dry cat food is better than canned-Myth.** Dry cat food is certainly more convenient to use than canned cat food, but new evidence suggests that it may not be better. Dry cat foods contain larger amounts of carbohydrates than canned cat foods. Since cats are true carnivores, they have evolved to require very small amounts of carbohydrates (CHOs) in their diet to remain healthy. The higher levels of CHOs in dry cat foods may be one of the factors responsible for the level of obesity found in our pet cat population. In addition, regular dry foods are not all that good at controlling dental disease either. Many cats do not even chew their dry food, but gulp it whole. (Dental diets are another story, but that another topic!) Cats that eat some degree of canned food as part of their overall diet often have less trouble with urinary tract diseases such as crystals and feline urological syndrome (FUS). Also, for cats that will eagerly accept canned foods, we have an alternative way of getting many medications into them, bypassing the whole joke about pilling the cat. I like feeding a mix of dry and canned foods. One trick to keeping dry food fresh: if you buy large bags of food, it may get stale by time you reach the end of the bag and your cat(s) may not eat it so well. Break larger bags of

food into smaller parcels and place them in freezer bags in the freezer. Defrost them as needed.

**All cat foods are created equal-Myth.** There are now so many brands of cat foods available on the market that I can't keep up with them anymore! It is important to remember that cats have different nutritional requirements at different stages of their lives, just like people do. The thing I like the best about "premium" pet foods (such as Science Diet and Iams), is that they guarantee two things: the exact make up of their foods, and the life stage for which a particular food is indicated. No matter what part of the country that you buy a premium food in, the food inside will match what is on the label. Believe it or not, in this country it is perfectly legal to substitute ingredients without changing the label—as long as you change it back in a set period of time. Also, did you ever look at a bag of cat food and notice that it has the words "all life stages" stamped on it somewhere on the label? In this case, even though that food may say it is for seniors, it really is a kitten type diet. It is perfectly legal to market one type of food for all life stages as long as it meets the needs of the most needful group—in this case the kitten population. In addition to premium foods, prescription diets should be mentioned as well. These diets must be sold through a veterinarian's office. These foods are formulated to help cats who are fighting chronic illness, and must be used only where appropriate. I have found no over the counter foods that can compare to prescription diets for controlling chronic medical problems with the kidneys, bowel, bladder, teeth, and stomach.

Cats are marvelous and mysterious creatures, especially when it comes to their dietary wants and needs! If you would like to learn more about your feline friend's nutritional needs, please feel free to call us at the cat clinic.





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### Cat Humor

#### Meet the Kentwood Family

By Victoria Pastars

#### Marla Mountain



We would like to warm up your winter season with the warm smile and personality of our own Marla. Marla became a member of the Cat Pack in September 2005. She has a background in medical administrative work and has always wanted to work at a veterinary clinic.

Marla truly has the personality for the job as she knows almost all of our clients and their kitties by name. She has made quite a positive impression on our clients. She has quite a special relationship with our clinic cat Patches as well as Memphis and Tooka.

Marla has some sweet furry kids of her own, 2 cats and 1 dog. Her kitties are, Emmy –an orange & white girl with attitude and Naomi- a calico sweetie she adopted from Dr. Czederpiltz. Marla's dog Max is a sheltie mix she rescued when he had 2 broken legs.

Besides playing with her animals she loves to read. She is a huge fan of Anita Blake Vampire Hunter series and the Harry Potter series. She is even a member of the Harry Potter for Grown-Ups fan club.

Marla is sweet and makes us all laugh hysterically. She is someone you can rely on and always tries to give a helping hand. The staff has dubbed her "Got your back Barbie".

We simply adore her and love working with Marla.

"There is no snooze button on a cat who wants breakfast." - Unknown

"Thousands of years ago, cats were worshipped as gods. Cats have never forgotten this." - Anonymous

"Cats are smarter than dogs. You can't get eight cats to pull a sled through snow." - Jeff Valdez

"In a cat's eye, all things belong to cats." - English proverb

"As every cat owner knows, nobody owns a cat." - Ellen Perry Berkeley

"One cat just leads to another." - Ernest Hemingway

"Dogs come when they're called; cats take a message and get back to you later." - Mary Bly

### Tips For Dieting Your Cat

Lisa McKeiver LVT

Here are some tips to hopefully make your cat's weight loss a little easier for both you and your feline friend.

1. Measure your cat's food so you know how much you are feeding every day. Reduce portion sizes if they are not losing weight.
2. When transitioning foods please mix for for 7-10 days to gradually allow your cat to get used to the changes.
3. Weigh your cat at least once a month and keep track of weight changes. We offer complimentary weigh ins here at the clinic.
4. With multiple cats try to feed on a set schedule, at least twice a day, so you can keep each cat eating its correct diet, and you can also tell if for some reason one of the cats may not be eating, you will know which one.
5. Put food on counter or shelf so the cat needs to jump up to it, so the cat hopefully gets more exercise.
6. Consider special diets if reducing quantities don't help your cat maintain a healthy weight.
7. Play time, spend more time playing with your cat so they will burn more calories.
8. Sometimes a playmate or second cat will help increase exercise.



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- 9. Reduce the quantities of treats fed.
- 10. No table scraps.

We know it can be difficult sometimes to help your kitty lose weight but the long term health benefits will make it well worth your while.

## FEATURED CAT

### CHESTER OSBORN



Our Featured Cat is Chester Osborn.

Chester has Feline Immunodeficiency Virus infection and diabetes; he was diagnosed with both conditions between 2000 and 2003. He is now about 18 years old and doing quite well.

FIV is not always a death sentence! Cats can live well into their senior years receiving yearly exams, vaccine, blood testing, monitoring for infections and treating receiving immediately. Infected cats should be indoor cats, (not allowed to go outside) to help prevent exposure to infections and to keep them from spreading the virus to other cats.

Chester was an outdoor cat before and has learned to adjust to indoor only life.

The most interesting thing about Chester is how he came to be a part of Ms. Osborn's life. One lovely day in beautiful Honolulu, Hawaii, Chester decided to adopt Silvia Osborn's father by opening the sliding screen door and sitting in the family room until someone found him there.

Silvia's father became ill a few years ago and Chester was his constant companion. He consoled Silvia when her father passed away, and then Chester came back to the mainland with Silvia. She says, "He has adapted well to the cold Michigan weather. Since joining her household he has become the alpha cat out of the three. Chester has a

great personality and loves to eat raw shrimp whenever he gets the chance.

He is also doing great with his diabetes now that he is on insulin.

We are so happy that we got a chance to meet Chester and his family.

It has been a great experience in assisting in caring for his health.

## THE NAMING OF CATS

The Naming of Cats is a difficult matter,  
 It isn't just one of your holiday games:  
 You may think at first I'm as made as a hatter  
 When I tell you a cat must have three different names.  
 First of all, there's the name that the family use daily,  
 Such as Peter, Augustus, Alonzo or James,  
 Such as Victor or Jonathan, George or Bill Bailey;  
 All of them sensible everyday names.  
 There are fancier names if you think they sound sweeter,  
 Some for the gentlemen, some for the dames:  
 Such as Pato, Admetus, Electra, Demeter -  
 But all of them sensible everyday names.  
 But I tell you, a cat needs a name that's particular,  
 A name that's peculiar, and more dignified,  
 Else how can he keep up his tail perpendicular,  
 Or spread out his whiskers, or cherish his pride?  
 Of names of this kind, I can give you a quorum,  
 Such as Munkustrap, Quaxo or Coricopat,  
 Such as Bombalurina, or else Jellylorum -  
 Names that never belong to more than one cat.  
 But above and beyond there's still one name left over,  
 And that is the name that you never will guess;  
 The name that no human research can discover -  
 But the cat himself knows, and will never confess.  
 When you notice a cat in profound meditation,  
 The reason, I tell you, is always the same:  
 His mind is engaged in a rapt contemplation  
 Of the thought, of the thought, of the thought of his name:  
 His ineffable effable  
 Effanineffable  
 Deep and inscrutable singular Name.

*T.S. Eliot*

**February is Dental Health Month**

**\$25.00 off Dental Cleanings**