The Joys of Adoption: 


“Penny is doing so great. We always knew both she and Jude would be great family cats and they really are. We all had to adjust a bit in the beginning, but we’ve settled in and the cats are both so great with our son, Dylan. They are gentle and seem to instinctively know how to be careful around them. The hardest part is keeping them out of his crib, but we’ve just accepted that Dylan will have to get used to ingesting cat hair like his parents do.

Penny used to be the alpha in our house, or at least she thought she was. She’s handled her fall from the top with grace. In some ways, it has made her a more calm and secure cat as I think she knows she needs to be more adaptable now with the changes to our family. We are still so grateful to ICRA for bringing us Penny and Jude!” - Natalie, Joe and Dylan S.

Natalie and Joe – already great cat parents - were proactive in making sure the cat-new baby experience went smoothly, such as setting up the nursery early to allow Penny and Jude time to explore and incorporate new objects and smells into their routine. To that end, there are numerous online resources with tips for getting your felines and household “baby ready.”

Ignore the old wives’ tales and misinformation perpetuating fear that cats and babies don’t mix. Simply remember that your cat is an important family member in need of your time and attention, too. This will go a long way toward mitigating any stress or sense of displacement he or she may feel when a new baby invades what had been their exclusive territory. Chances are, with a little preparation and a lot of calm, most kitties will take everything in stride as long as they know you still love them, too.

– Mary S.
Mini Moo, a tiny fearsome fluffball of a kitten, became part of our home as a companion for my then 13-year-old cat, Moo. While they look almost exactly alike, their personalities couldn’t be more different. Mini brought with her a crazy wild streak about a mile wide. She’s mellowed somewhat with age but still has plenty of sass to go around! Mini is now 5 and Moo almost 19! Mini’s incessantly youthful push to instigate play with her big “sister” has given old Moo a lot of exercise and a longer lease on life.

Despite her wild streak, Mini is now the most amazing lap cat and a fiercely loyal companion. In the middle of the night a year or so ago, a stranger tried to get in my front door. Mini growled and ran to the door, yowling like a little devil. Whoever it was left and in a hurry. Who wouldn’t?! Yeah, Mini’s a bit of a crazy one, but she claimed her home and her people just as passionately as we claim her back! Thank you, Island Cat!

- Adrian H.

ICRA works hard to make solid adoption matches up front during the application process and again when we bring cats and kittens to your home. While a wide disparity in age and energy levels between adopted and resident cats might seem like a recipe for disaster, proper introductions and patience are keys to creating a happy and harmonious forever home for two-and four-legged family members alike.

The Joys of Adoption: Bringing a New Kitty Home? Fear Not–Opposites Can Attract

Thank you, Island Cat!

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Thank you, Island Cat!

Thank you, Island Cat!
We are Growing Up in Foster Care!
We needed a little extra time and care as kittens.

**MITSU**
loves belly rubs!
Born: August 1, 2017
In foster care since: November 11, 2017
I was too shy when I was little.

**HARPER & HENRY**
quietly affectionate
Born: December 25, 2017
In foster care since: May 15, 2018
Our digestive systems needed a boost.

**TIP & NOTCH**
(formerly named Finn and Fergus)
happy / love attention
Born: July 20, 2018
In foster care since: October 1, 2018
We needed treatment for parasites as babies.

**LUKE**
energetic and funny
Born: April 4, 2019
In foster care since: May 4, 2019
My birth mom abandoned me as a baby.

We Want to Go Home for the PAWLIDAYS!
HELP US find FOREVER HOMES
icraeastbay.org/adopt
Kitty Health Corner: Holiday Safety

Tips for Keeping Spirits Bright and Kitty Out of Trouble

With the holiday season upon us, it’s a good time to think about how to include your feline companions in the festivities while keeping them safe... and you from having the veterinarian on speed dial. Whatever you celebrate, decorations, gifts and wrapping, food and guests are likely to be in the mix. Unfortunately, many things that bring us such joy this time of year are risky temptations for cats and kittens whose natural curiosity and playfulness become liabilities when their world transforms into an irresistible wonderland of new smells and flickering, dangling play toys on steroids. Add in the chance to wrestle with piles of wrapping paper, climb a mysterious indoor tree, or snag some unattended snacks and IT’S A PAW-TY!

Adopting the mindset to make your holiday safe for kitty is a lot like doing so for small children. If they can pull on it or knock it over, they probably will. If they can pick up, chew or swallow it, they probably will. If it’s hot, they’ll probably touch it.

A word about stress. Cats are creatures of habit, so try to shield them from our self-induced holiday insanity by keeping their daily routines and family interactions as normal as possible. Even the most well-adjusted cat can reach sensory overload with all that the season brings, to include furniture rearranging and a barrage of unfamiliar noises and guests. Make sure kitty has at least one safe place of its own for a quiet retreat when they’re tired of being the life of the party.

– Mary S.

Holiday Hazards

Tipping:
- Christmas trees (secure to ceiling or wall with wire or rope)
- Unattended and/or unstable lit candles

Choking/ingesting:
- Ribbons, string, and tinsel. What starts as a nibble can quickly lead to intestinal blockage, and surgery.
- Small decorations, ornaments, hooks, pins, and potpourri
- Seasonal plants, especially highly toxic lilies and mistletoe
- Christmas tree water
- Human food and poultry bones

Burning:
- Lit candles (cats are attracted to flickering flames)
- Electrical cords and strands of light (cover, tape together, or wrap them to prevent entanglement)

24/7 ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center:
(888) 426-4435

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This BEAUTIFUL GIRL was the last breeding female in a CAT colony of 20+ in North Oakland. We fixed her and her most recent litter in February.

Senior sweetheart PEACHES had dental surgery to prepare her for adoption and she quickly found a home. (see page 7 for an update)

We rescued friendly GORILLA from an Oakland park when we learned he was injured with an abscess on his leg. This sweet boy was adopted as soon as he recovered.

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Thank you!
when the Siamese mix kitten was rescued outside his new digs by their roommate Amelia E. (and eventually spayed). All is well in Dash’s life, according to his family: “They love each other! Thank you for all of your help!” Adopted September 2017 by Lauri and Anna L., Forestville.

**BOGIE + BETTY** Lounging in their favorite cat tree, Bogie (f. Calvin) and Betty (f. Cupcake) ponder: Time. Clocks. Such needlessly stressful human constructs. Asked whether he was getting any sleep with his new “roommates,” dad responded: “They settle right in at bedtime but are early risers. This works on weekdays, but I’m not a fan of 4 am wakeups on the weekends. This will all sort out in a few more weeks.” Oh, reeeally? Adopted September 2019 by Michael B., Alameda.

**FRED** Garden Cat no more, Fred dreams about just how good he has it with outdoor living behind him. Says one of his people, who brought him inside two years ago: “He is pretty happy and eager to curl up in bed next to me every night. Sometimes he’s so eager to get to his spot that it’s hard for me to get in!” Fred sees no problem here. Adopted April 2013 by James S., Alameda.

**FINLEY (f. Crowley)** When it comes to cats finding the most ingenious way to get some shut-eye, Finley proves that absolutely nothing is outside the realm of possibility. Adopted June 2014 by Lauren F., El Cerrito.

**HERMES (f. Max) + CALYPSO (f. Melody)** From quality playtime with their new family to restorative lounging with each other, Hermes and Calypso appear to have found the PURRFECT fit all around! Adopted February 2019 by Andrea L. & Elliot B., San Francisco.

**GIGI** Fearing neither shark nor egg-plant toy, Gigi shows how she’s blossoming under the care of her new family. They report: “It’s been a joy to watch her become comfortable and confident in her new home! She’s an amazing cat, and we love her very much.” Adopted August 2019 by Michelle D., Oakland.

**MAEBY** An elegant beauty today, Maeby has come a long, long way since her days as a sickly little kitten nearly four years ago. You go, girl! Adopted February 2016 by Annie L., Alameda.

**MAY (f. Pickles)** It’s nothing short of amazing when kitties with stories like May’s land in just the right place at just the right time. Covered in automotive oil and exhibiting neurological deficits when rescued, young May worked her magic to turn rehabilitative and diagnostic foster care under Dr. Megan into a permanent gig. Clearly, she has her new mom “on call” 24/7. Adopted May 2019 by Megan H., DVM, Oakland.

**MOLLY** The moment humans discover that some cats simply cannot suppress the pro bono beauty consultant within. “Sitting on the couch and something is pulling on my hair… Ms. Molly is rubbing and licking my hair! LOL! Love this kitty!” Adopted October 2008 by Karen N. and Don R., Alameda.

**PEACHES** If you’ve never seen a peach inside a strawberry, you have meow! After three long years in foster care, which included a battle with bronchitis and a mammary tumor (cont’d - page 7)
The Joys of Adoption:  
No Furry Family Members Left Behind

In the spring of 2016, I approached Island Cat intending to bring home two kittens I saw on their website. I was informed that they already had been adopted, but there was one kitten that volunteer Peggy Harding thought I should consider. This is how Tater (f. Perry), the brown tabby with an easy-going attitude, came to join me. Only a week later, after going to check out a one-eyed wholehearted orange tabby, Winks (f. Herman), joined the team. These two had about a 3-day-long negotiation in the form of wrestling matches to get to know each other. They have been an endlessly entertaining duo ever since.

Our trio was going strong in the Bay Area until my work relocated me to Tempe, Arizona. So, I packed up everything that could fit in the car plus a carrier big enough to hold my two unknowing cat companions. At first there was a lot of whining and pleas to return to the home they known for the past two years, but within an hour they settled in and slept for most part. A 12-hour drive later through 118-degree weather, we made it to the new apartment. Thankfully my two nomads settled into their new setting very quickly, and we made this our home for the next year.

Fast forward one year and it was time for another move. This would be a three-day, two-night trek from Arizona to Georgia. So, once again we hit the road with a fully loaded car, two cats, and a carrier with a travel litter box. Like first time, there were rebuttals about this new migration and some strong statements in the form of stress-induced diarrhea and treating the hotel bathrooms like their personal playground. After multiple moves, however, not only did Winks and Tater land comfortably in their new home in Atlanta but also welcomed a third feline member, Finn, to the team.

Moving with cats can be a bit hectic, sometimes loud, and sometimes smells a lot like poop, but as part of the family they go where I go.

- John M.

Adopting a Garden Cat: A Different Kind of Bond

Mac and Magee romp through my garden like acrobats from Cirque de Soleil, scrambling up and down stone walls with ease and grace and wasting no opportunity to find the perfect sunny spot for an afternoon catnap. In the blazing August heat, I spot them resting under the trees and shrubs lining the garden. Even winter rains don’t deter the boys from staying close-by lest they miss the comfort of their custom-built shelter complete with a drainage system and outdoor heating pads. Rain or shine, they’re ready for breakfast at 7:00 am and dinner by 6:00 pm. Mac and Magee will never be cats who want curl up by the fire or snuggle with me, but I derive so much joy and peace of mind just knowing they’re safer off the streets, where scrounging for food and evading four-legged predators are a way of life.

The joy of adoption takes many forms. I adopted Mac and Magee through ICRA’s Garden Cat Program five years ago, and they’ve never failed to amuse and delight. While I know that our interaction will likely always occur at arm’s length, our bond is no less special or strong than that of more conventional adoptions. It’s just different in a selfless stewardship kind of way. Although technically feral, our Garden Cats are neither wild nor aggressive, just extremely shy. All they need is a safe outdoor space to live out their natural lives under your watchful eye. Please check out the Garden Cats on our website if you’re game and consider giving one (or two) a safe place to call home for the holidays and well beyond!

- Peggy H., Volunteer
Lola and Looloo are middle-aged colony ‘sisters’ from East Oakland who were lucky enough to find sanctuary off the streets with the help of ICRA and open hearts of a generous family.

Their colony is fed nightly when the spayed and neutered cats (all black and white) enthusiastically congregate for food. When an opportunity arose for two cats to be relocated to a huge backyard in the South Bay about a year ago, I had to check it out. The owners never had cats but were animal loving people with two geriatric dogs, one of them blind. With plenty of garden hiding places to offer, these loving caretakers welcomed having company in the yard and some natural rodent control as a bonus.

I thought of all the cats at the Oakland location, awaiting their daily meal and attention every night. I wanted to find safe homes for some when possible and appropriate. Opportunity in hand, I focused on trapping two who seemed most bonded. Within a week, I caught Lola and Looloo and whisked them to the vet for a check-up, vaccines, and flea treatment. Both were deemed healthy for the next steps in the Garden Cat relocation process.

Per ICRA’s protocol, Lola and Looloo spent three weeks in a large acclimation cage in their new backyard, allowing them to take in the sights and sounds in a secure fashion. Once released, they gradually started hanging out in one front yard spot where they apparently are regulars on sunny days! Visitors and family members love seeing them nestled there. At home among the garden statues and signs, and it seems to them that “the girls” like to be welcoming, albeit from a distance.

By the way, their guardian joyfully reports there are no rodents anywhere.

– Ellen L., Volunteer

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**RECEIPTS**

- **30%** Fundraising
- **65%** Individual Donations and Adoptions
- **5%** Grants, Corporate and Foundation Matching

**EXPENDITURES**

- **41%** Spay and neuter surgeries
- **43%** Medical treatment, vaccinations, testing and medications
- **8%** Administrative
- **8%** Fundraising

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Data reflects ICRA receipts and expenditures in 2019
ADOPT PANDA  Different cat. Total transformation.

Panda Cat is so cuddly and sweet, it’s hard to believe he was once feral (not socialized as a kitten to be tame with humans). His foster human brought him in off the streets to heal a precancerous ear. Now that he’s a healthy indoor-only kitty, his favorite past-times are: sniffing, head butting, cheek rubbing, lap sitting, ball chasing, and interactive play time.

Panda has an easy-going, friendly, curious demeanor. He’s chatty and eager to socialize with humans and other cats. He still startles easily at times and has occasional shy attacks, so he’ll need an experienced, loving human. We believe he was born in 2016. We estimate he was born in 2016. Is there room in your heart for a Panda? Please ask us about him!

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WEEKLY ADOPTION EVENT
PETCO, South Shore Center, Alameda
Every Saturday*, 11 am - 4 pm
(*Not all holiday weekends - check our website about Thanksgiving, Christmas, New Year’s Eve)

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OUR MISSION: Island Cat Resources and Adoption is dedicated to improving the lives of free-roaming and unowned cats through spay/neuter, adoption, and community education.