



THE RATKAJ FOUNDATION FOR CATS

2023 Newsletter

“What greater gift than the love of a cat...”

As our passion and love for all cats continues to grow, we established The Ratkaj Foundation For Cats on July 1, 2023. Our mission is to provide financial support to cats in need. This will include veterinary care, food and shelter. Upon completion of the necessary paperwork, we received confirmation of our tax-exempt status under 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code on September 14, 2023. As a 501 (c)(3) organization, The Ratkaj Foundation For Cats is eligible to receive tax-deductible charitable contributions. In addition to our personal contributions to this effort, we have been fortunate to receive substantial contributions from The Hershey Company to pursue our mission. While our efforts are in the infancy stage, we look forward to building a foundation that truly makes a difference for cats in need of our help.

-Dave and Chris-

The Beginning

For years we have cared for five outdoor cats who made their home in our backyard. We converted our screened in porch to their sanctuary, including individual houses that are heated during the colder months. We feed them and interact with them daily. All have been spayed/neutered. One of the cats, Mama Calico, was in need of dental care in 2022. We brought her inside our home for a month so that she could have the dental surgery needed and time for recovery from the surgery. While Mama Calico was an agreeable patient, it was apparent that her desire was to be outside running free. So, she returned to the outdoors where she has food, shelter and the freedom to come and go as she pleases.



Mama Calico and her best friend Tortie



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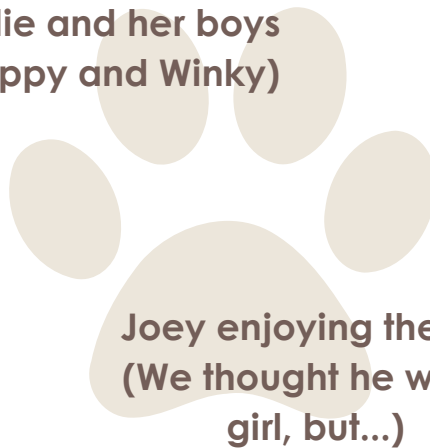
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Opportunities

In May 2023, we became aware of a female cat who had kittens in a neighbor's yard. The neighbor was not familiar with cats and reached out to local rescues for help, but volunteer resources at the rescues were at maximum capacity. We contacted the neighbor and offered help. Together, we provided food and shelter for mama and her two kittens in the neighbor's yard until the kittens were old enough to be separated from their mama so that she could be spayed. We transitioned all three to a catio on our screened in porch until all three were spayed/neutered. They now are free to come and go while always having access to food and shelter.



**Birdie and her boys
(Happy and Winky)**



**Joey enjoying the sun
(We thought he was a
girl, but...)**



During the summer of 2023, we began working with a different neighbor to spay/neuter outdoor cats that found their way to their home. While they fed and interacted with the cats daily, they needed assistance with spay/neuter efforts.

As a result of the needs within our immediate vicinity, we established the River Bend Community Cats Colony. This colony is registered with East Pennsboro Township who supports efforts to Trap Neuter Return (TNR). We will continue to connect with neighbors and provide assistance in an effort to humanely and sustainably manage our community cat populations.

We are happy to report that in 2023, we have helped 18 community cats by providing food, shelter and/or veterinary services. Cats have opened our hearts in such a special way. They fill our home and lives with incredible love and we are so very grateful for the opportunity to dedicate our time and talents to support the well being of cats in need.