

# CATNIPS



## The Sun Returns

Isn't it great being back to sunny summer days?

Now that the grey skies are behind us, we're ready for an exciting summer full of sunshine and events with our fabulous community. Keep an eye out for our monthly adoption events and yard sales!

Speaking of events, we hope you had an INCREDIBLE time at **my Big Bash** earlier in June. It was truly special getting to see most of our big ol' ASAP family in one place – and special thanks to everyone who came up to take a picture with me!

It absolutely *inflated* my ego seeing all your smiling faces and waves. For the full scoop and some great photos of the night, just open to the next page.

In other news, we're excited to announce our latest partnership with **Cat Therapy**, Santa Barbara's very own cat café. Sorta like a super cool foster opportunity, you'll see plenty of familiar ASAP kitties spending time downtown, all available for adoption and ready to meet ya. To learn more and hear about which of my buddies are currently there, turn to **page 5**.

Okay, don't tell Bernard I'm telling ya, but we've got a sneak peek coming your way: later this year we're introducing **Basil's Furever Friends**. It's got a lotta big words like "irrevocable trust" and "beneficiary designation," so I'll let our newsletter writer give you the details on **page 6**. Sounds pretty charitable to me, though!

Now that I mentioned charity, I should probably also tell you that we've started doing **Free Microchip Clinics for Cats** here at the ASAP Cats shelter. Microchipping is typically done toward the start of adoption events, and it's SUPER important for keeping my feline friends safe.

All right I threw a lot your way – I just haven't gotten to talk to you in so long! Take a read through this edition of CatNips and by all mean stop by the shelter anytime.

Until then,

*Basil, OUT*



## Summer 2023

CATNIPS  
is a publication offered free of charge  
three times a year from ASAP  
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# Basil's Big Bash 2023

Our annual fundraiser, Basil's Big Bash, was certainly our highlight of the year so far. Thank you to everyone who attended, who supported, and who made this special night an incredible success.

With the generosity of over 300 donors and sponsors, we managed to raise over \$225,000 for ASAP Cats, directly supporting and saving the lives of all the local cats in our care. We had fun cat-themed drinks and wonderful silent auction items to peruse, and the evening was lit by glowing cat ears beneath strings of lights.

We want to give a special thank you to our fantastic auctioneer Jim Nye for leading a triumphant live auction full of exciting prizes, our three sets of speakers for telling their stories and sharing their memories of ASAP, and our incredible event planner Elly Iverson for helping

us throw the best party of the year and raise critical funds for our cats. You truly made the night unforgettable.

We additionally want to extend our sincerest thank you's to our incredible team of volunteers who made this night possible, donating time, items, and even funds to support our mission; our Bash committee who helped assemble and realize our vision for the night; and our staff who worked around the clock to bring everything together. Thank you for all of the work, dedication, and love that made this Bash (and every Bash) possible.

Take a look through some of our favorite memories from this year's Bash. We hope everyone had a great time, and we look forward to seeing everyone next year for our 10-year Bash-iversary!



*A beautiful night illuminated by string lights and glowing cat ears.*



*Our annual Live Auction Instant Wine Cellar was a huge hit, raising \$4,500 for ASAP Cats.*

# Facing the Reality of FIP

Feline infectious peritonitis, commonly known as FIP in the animal welfare community, is an uncommon but often fatal disease. Typically affecting young cats less than two years old (but possible to develop at any age), FIP is caused by a viral infection called feline coronavirus, of which there are several strains. Around 65% of cats are exposed to a strain of coronavirus in their lifetime, but only 3% will develop FIP; therefore, only a small proportion of infected cats will develop clinical disease. While previously suspected to fall into one of two categories – essentially, harmful strains and harmless strains – it is now recognized that any strain of the virus can mutate into the more harmful type and cause FIP.

Because so many cats are exposed to coronavirus strains, most cats tested for it test positive, even though they do not have an infective form. This makes diagnosing a cat with FIP quite difficult. The first signs of illness can be vague, but they include lethargy, absent appetite, weight loss, and a fluctuating fever. After several days, the next stage of symptoms are either ‘wet’ or effusive FIP, or ‘dry’ or non-effusive FIP. Referring to a specific accumulation of fluid in body cavities, symptoms of the prior include fluid accumulation in the abdomen or chest cavity, leading to a swollen abdomen or difficulty breathing. Symptoms of the latter – dry or non-effusive FIP – show no fluid accumulation, but rather severe inflammation in one or more organs, including the eyes, brain, liver, or intestines. Most cats who develop non-effusive FIP will have eye symptoms.

While this reality is certainly frightening, if your cat is exposed to feline coronavirus, even to potentially FIP-inducing strains, there is a good chance they will naturally develop an immune response to protect them. Proper diagnosis requires a full blood panel performed by a veterinarian, so it’s important to take action if you suspect your cat is unwell.

If you receive the news that your cat has FIP, do not lose hope. Previously thought to be a death sentence, it is possible to recover from FIP. One of our ASAP alums Momo (the grey cat pictured to the right) recently underwent a long journey of blood tests, check-ups, and injections that eventually allowed her to be fully FIP-free.

“If it weren’t for the kind, wonderful team at ASAP, there’s no telling what would have happened to our sweet little Momo,” says cat parents Leo and Abi.

If your cat receives an FIP diagnosis, ASAP can assist you with finding resources that can help you with treatment information.



*Mimi is very excited to have her best friend Momo home, happy and healthy.*

# New Partnership with Cat Therapy

ASAP Cats is proud to announce our new partnership with Cat Therapy, Santa Barbara's very own cat café! Cat Therapy Owner Catalina Esteves reached out to ASAP Cats to establish a relationship with a local shelter after the LA group she was working with pulled out. We met to work out the details and established a new connection of which we are absolutely thrilled to be a part.



Our partnership began just a couple of months ago after we transferred the remaining cats in Catalina's care into ASAP Cats' custody. All 20 kitties came to ASAP Cats for a few days for routine check-in exams while Cat Therapy had the opportunity to do a brief refurbishment. As spaces become available when cats are adopted, we will send down additional cats from ASAP Cats to stay at Cat Therapy. Four of our ASAP kitties have moved down to Cat Therapy, including shelter veterans Lunar and Bond who have been waiting patiently to meet their forever families.

ASAP Cats staff and volunteers are providing medical and behavior support, and we will manage the adoption process for all of these cats, employing the virtual adoption model we developed during 2020. We like to think of Cat Therapy as a big foster home for our kitties, but they are all still ASAP Cats cats!



*Our sweet girl Penne is loving the lounging life at Cat Therapy.*



*All the Cat Therapy kitties have their own favorite spots when it's catnaptime.*

This will be a great opportunity for our cats to live in a fun environment while they wait for their forever home, and gives each cat the chance to make new and exciting connections with the community. Feel free to stop by and visit (admission fee required) some of your ASAP Cats favorites at Cat Therapy the next time you need some kitty time, located at 1213 State Street, Suite L!

# Basil's Legacy Society

ASAP Cats has pursued its mission of saving the lives of cats and kittens in Santa Barbara County for over 30 years, and we plan to continue to serve our community as long as there are cats in need. We pursue this mission together, and ASAP couldn't do the work we do without you! We all know that none of us has nine lives, and Santa Barbara County will need ASAP long after most of us are gone.

It is important for all of us to make sure that if the unexpected tragically happened, our estate would reflect the priorities that we held in our lifetime. Have you thought about the care of your own pet in such a time of need? By including ASAP in your legacy planning, we want to give you the peace of mind that you are providing for the most vulnerable felines far into the future.

Though ASAP isn't qualified to give financial, legal, or tax advice, we can provide a list of professional advisors that know ASAP and can guide you as you make your estate plans, while we can give our expert advice on the thing we know best – cats!

By generously including ASAP in your estate planning, you enable us to continue serving as a beacon of hope for cats well into the next 30 years. Knowing that your generosity and commitment will continue in the form of a legacy gift provides ASAP the confidence to develop programs and services with a vision well into the future.

Below are a few simple ways\* that you can help ASAP with a planned gift:

**Bequest:** Designating ASAP in your will or living trust allows you to support our work without parting with your assets during your lifetime.

**Beneficiary Designation:** Simply name ASAP Cats as a beneficiary of a retirement account, 401K plan, life insurance policy, or insurance annuity.

**Charitable Lead Trust:** Set up an irrevocable trust designed to provide financial support to ASAP Cats for a period of time, with the remaining assets going to other beneficiaries.

**Charitable Remainder Trust:** Set up an irrevocable trust that generates a potential income stream for you (or other beneficiaries) with the remaining donated assets going to ASAP Cats.

*\*Please remember that this information is not intended to give tax or legal advice and is for informational purposes only. Please consult a tax professional or an attorney if you have any questions about the estate information listed above, but also please send us an email at [legacy@asapcats.org](mailto:legacy@asapcats.org) so we can get you on our list of people interested in Basil's Legacy Society.*



# The Chronicles of Munchkin by Mary Scott

After a harrowing journey that separated them for weeks, local cat-lover Lori and her outdoor cat Munchkin have been reunited thanks to ASAP Cats, the Nextdoor community, and Santa Barbara Pet Hospital.

**Flashback to early 2021:** Lori had been regularly feeding and caring for her local community cat, Munchkin, for quite some time. When he waddled over one day with a serious eye injury, it became evident that he was not being taken care of, so Lori decided to take action and call Animal Services for a welfare check at his owner's house.

**Fast forward to fall of 2022:** Munchkin was abandoned by his owner – Lori's neighbor – so she assumed full responsibility for Munchkin. He did not get along well with Lori's resident cat, but he was content living in Lori's backyard, being fed twice daily, and getting to visit Lori inside her home.

I first heard Munchie's story upon acting as Lori's pet sitter, and thus decided to consult with an expert: Gina Sunseri, ASAP Community Cats Program Director. She advised that Munchkin could remain where he was with Lori, who even set up a nice outdoor cat living area for him on her back deck.

**February 2023:** Lori noticed that Munchkin was seriously injured in his rear leg and tail. Upon driving to the vet to have him checked out, Munchkin wriggled away and escaped into the parking lot of the Santa Barbara Pet Hospital on the Mesa. Heartbroken, Lori searched for hours around the vet's office, returning every day for a week, but there was no sign of Munchkin. We advised Lori to put up missing posters and post about Munchkin on Nextdoor, and the vet even put out a box and food for Munchie in case he was nearby. The rains were especially severe during these late winter days.

The first credible report of a Munchkin sighting appeared on Nextdoor in late March 2023, in the area of La Coronilla. Lori tried to catch him at that point, but he was so scared and fully in survival mode that she couldn't get him. He didn't stay long at the house where he was seen, but knowing he was near gave Lori hope.

**April 2023:** Another Munchkin sighting near Juanita Avenue was reported. Lori walked that street repeatedly, but had no luck. She connected with neighbors on Juanita and spread the word, so everyone was on the lookout for Munchkin.



*A true outdoor cat, Munchkin prefers to be outside in the sunshine (preferably in Lori's backyard).*

**In the early evening of April 28, 2023,** Lori received a text from a neighbor on Juanita. They spotted Munchkin on Meigs, right where it turns into Carrillo. Lori immediately went over there with food and walked up and down the street calling Munchkin's name. Despite the noisy traffic, she heard a weak and mournful meow – it was him! This time, Munchkin came to her immediately. Lori wrapped him in her arms, overjoyed to tears, and brought him home. He was skinny, scared, tired and hungry, and especially grateful to be back where he belonged.

"It takes a village," Lori says. "For two months I searched for Munchkin with the extraordinary support and help of ASAP, Gina, Mary, Santa Barbara Pet Hospital, and the neighbors on Nextdoor."

Looking for your lost loved one? Give us a call or visit our website at [asapcats.org](http://asapcats.org). We're here to help!

# Cerebellar Hypoplasia In Kittens

Cerebellar Hypoplasia (CH), also known as Wobbly or Spastic Cat Syndrome, is a result of kittens contracting the feline distemper virus during the developmental stage shortly before or after birth. If the pregnant mother cat is infected with the virus or vaccinated in the late stages of pregnancy, she may not develop visible illness, but the developing nerves in the kittens' cerebellum may be damaged.

Newborn kittens that survive infection with the feline distemper virus will appear to develop normally until they begin to walk around on their own, usually at about three weeks of age. Caregivers may then notice something odd about their kittens. They appear very uncoordinated, especially if they are trying to focus on something like a toy or food, but appear mostly normal when remaining still. Their walking is uncoordinated, often with a wide stance, and they may use a wall to lean against for support. The litter of kittens may have individuals that are much more affected and others that appear almost normal.

This syndrome is easily prevented by vaccinating your cat before they can become pregnant. Better yet, get your cats spayed and neutered to prevent increasing the pet overpopulation problem facing many of our animal shelters today.

There is no treatment for cats and kittens that are affected by CH, but many cats live relatively normal lives with the disorder. Caregivers can manage the condition by keeping these cats strictly indoors and feeding them with non-spill food bowls. Most cats affected by CH make up in personality what they lack in coordination, and plenty of cats with CH live long, happy, wobbly lives. There are several support groups for caregivers of CH affected cats that ASAP is partnered with; for more information, check out the Facebook group CHcat, or visit the CH kitties page on LiveJournal.

If you are interested in adopting a special kitten with Cerebellar Hypoplasia, please consider meeting Milkshake, Skimmer, and Sandy at ASAP today.



*Milkshake loves to say hello to all the volunteers who check in on him.*



*Skimmer may look like an old man, but he is in fact just a baby*



*Sandy has never seen the beach, but she still loves taking warm naps.*



# ASAP Cats Presents: Dr. Garrett, DVM

Written by a veterinarian, *The Perfect Cat Owner's Guide: Mastering the Art of Feline Care and Companionship* by Dr. Janice Garrett is your go-to kitty resource, packed with practical tips and expert advice helping you understand your cat's behavior, navigate medical concerns, and avoid toxic things around the home. Playtime suggestions and communication help you create a happy, healthy, and harmonious life with your beloved cat.

All of us at ASAP are grateful for Dr. Garrett's lifesaving work, and proceeds from this book directly benefit ASAP Cats when purchased on Amazon.

***Cats — elegant, clever, and beguiling...***



Janice V. Garrett, DVM graduated with her Doctor of Veterinary Medicine degree from the University of California at Davis in 1976. She has spent decades in a veterinary practice devoted to healing cats. It all started at age seven when she fell in love with a small kitten named Angel. She's dedicated

to making a positive difference in the lives of animals and those who love them.

Dr. Garrett is currently working on a new book supporting nonprofits, including ASAP Cats, where she adopted her cat, Itty. She was one of the co-founders and owners of the Cat Doctors in Santa Barbara for over 20 years before retiring in 2015. Her other titles include *The Perfect Cat Owner's Guide: Mastering the Art of Feline Care and Companionship* and the forthcoming *Putting Love First: The Journey Home*.

Purchase your copy now on Amazon to support ASAP Cats!



*Dr. Janice Garrett started Cat Doctors as a mobile veterinary clinic. She's pictured above with her niece, Laura*

***...unceremoniously bend us to their will while at the same time protecting us.***



*Dr. Garrett brought Itty home for a weekend to treat her injured back legs and instantly fell in love.*

# A Letter From Director Jessica Wiebe

Microchipping your cats is of the utmost importance, as it provides a form of permanent identification. Often our kitties don't wear collars because they fall off easily or cause mild irritation, but we all still want to safeguard our beloved furry companions. Being naturally curious creatures, cats sometimes venture too far away from home – even indoor cats can occasionally escape outside. By microchipping your cat, you significantly increase the chances of a safe reunion if they ever get lost. Studies have shown that cats with microchips are 21X more likely to be reunited with their owners compared to those without. To promote the well-being of our community's feline friends, our dedicated team is now offering free microchips for cat owners.

In addition to the general importance of microchipping your cat, it becomes even more crucial during times of disaster, such as the upcoming summer months and fire season. When faced with emergencies, it is essential that our pets are microchipped to ensure their safety. In the event of a crisis, such as a fire or other natural disaster, cats can easily become frightened and escape their homes. If they end up in a shelter or veterinary office, the presence of a microchip allows for quick scanning and identification, enabling us to locate their owners promptly. During these challenging times, microchipping acts as a lifeline, increasing the likelihood of reuniting beloved feline companions with their worried families. Let us not overlook the significance of microchipping as we prepare for the summer months and potential emergencies.

Safeguard your cat's well-being by taking advantage of our free microchipping service at ASAP Cats today.



Jessica Wiebe  
Executive Director



*Snow loves when Jessica walks through the front door of the shelter to say hi.*

## FREE MICROCHIP CLINIC FOR CATS

In addition to our monthly adoption event and yard sale, ASAP Cats is proudly hosting free microchip clinics for cats the same day! Our next event is **Saturday, July 29th @ 10am.**

Typically running from 10am — 1pm, this free clinic is a great way to keep your cat safe by getting them chipped.

Please bring cats in carriers or ask to borrow one before taking cats out of cars. For more information, give us a call:

P: (805) 683-3368

# Join Our Outreach Team

ASAP Cats is looking to reach out to our community's neighborhoods to better connect with those who need our help most. We want to bring our shelter and our shelter cats to the front of people's minds, so when they think of cat adoption, they think of ASAP. We're aiming to bring our services and resources directly to those who may need help, either now or in the future, and overall, we want to make strong, lasting connections with as many of our community members as possible.

If you are interested in helping with this goal, there are plenty of ways you can get involved:

**Spread the word** about ASAP Cats to anyone who will listen, telling them why you love our shelter. Did we introduce you to the loveliest pet you've ever met? Did we help reunite your lost loved one with their home? Tell everyone you know, and bring them into our cat-loving ASAP family.

Want something more hands on? **Volunteer** to help distribute monthly flyers about our cats and events, volunteer to go to outreach events and meet the community face-to-face, or use your creativity to share the ASAP Cats mission however your unique skills allow. Social media, speeches, essays, interpretive dance — anything to show the world who we are!



All of us at ASAP are here not only to take in cats when needed and find them families, but to help cats stay in their homes. As we grow our services and increase our abilities to help as many cats and cat families as we can, we're always looking for support. For more information and to join us, send us an email at [volunteer@asapcats.org](mailto:volunteer@asapcats.org).



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 Facebook.com/asapcats

 Instagram.com/asapcats

## Want to join the ASAP team?

ASAP Cats is always looking for new volunteers to join the team. Are you ready and willing to work with cats of all shapes and sizes? Do you have a soft spot for kittens in need? Consider joining the ASAP team and working alongside a crew of fellow feline lovers! You'll get plenty of time to make some new furry friends and will be supporting a great cause. Stop by our shelter and join today!



*Earlier this year, we celebrated superstar volunteer Fran Rosenberg, thanking her for her Tiny Lion taming and devotion to the cats of ASAP and our community. We're thankful for you, Fran!*

### **ASAP - Animal Shelter Assistance Program**

Shelter location: 5473 Overpass Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93111  
ASAP is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization ▪ Federal Tax ID: 77-0283500