

CATNIPS



Very Merry at ASAP!

Cheers to another year of helping those in need!

It's been a busy year of saving sick kitties, feeding hungry cats, and rubbing plenty of bellies (mine included), and we couldn't have done it without our incredible supporters. We've even got some fresh faces around the shelter – **turn to page 8** to see our **new humans at ASAP**.

Speaking of new, we just welcomed my buddy **Wilbur** to the shelter recently, and boy did he get into it. He told me he got to ride a motorcycle – wow! – and he's got some war stories from walking along the highway. **Flip to page 6** to read all about Wilbur's adventure.

That reminds me, have I introduced you folks to **Apple Crisp and Skippy** yet? They're a riot! Crispy is HUGE and loves to play now that his neck wound is healing – he won't tell me how he got it, but I tell everyone he fought a bear – and although Skippy prefers to be left alone, I'm just glad his scabs are all cleared up. To learn more about these two cool cats, **simply turn the page**.

Before I forget, I wanted to mention that my good friend Kate Silsbury has some nifty **tips for building your legacy with ASAP**. I gotta say, it feels real nice to know I've got friends who believe in me and my team of cat lovers. If you wanna read about Kate's helpful experience with donating, **turn to page 9** and she'll break it down for ya.

All right, that about sums it up for this end-of-year holiday edition of CatNips. Crack open a carton of eggnog, recline that La-Z-Boy, put your paws up, and enjoy the newsletter. Happy holidays – and if you need me, I'll be hanging with my pal Pichipilin in the ASAP kitchen!

Until then,

Basil, OUT



Pichipilin



Holiday 2024

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Alternate Placement: A Home for Every Cat

The ASAP Cats philosophy has always been feline-focused, determined to find ideal forever homes for each of our cats. We pride ourselves on working diligently to assess each cat's needs, whether they need a home with no other animals, or access to an indoor/outdoor lifestyle, or even an environment that will let them spend their days chasing mice – whatever will give them the happy life they deserve.

When these cats require additional planning to find their ideal forever home, they fall under the Alternate Placement (AP) umbrella, and we're thankful to have so many members of our community who are willing to get creative to home these cats. Meet two of our latest AP cats: Apple Crisp and Skippy.

Our lovable loaf, Apple Crisp, was transferred to ASAP in September with a large, non-healing wound on his neck. Goopy and irritated, it was immediately evident that he was uncomfortable and didn't want human interaction – which is to be expected when you're in pain. Dr. Ginger White performed an initial revision surgery in September to begin his healing process, and another was performed by Dr. Brie Spells in early October. His wound gradually closed and finally was able to heal – and now only a scar remains where the wound first was!

Despite likely receiving his injury from being outside, Apple Crisp still prefers living an outdoor lifestyle. His bulky exterior and coat provide the perfect protection from cold weather, and he's large enough to keep potential predators from making a move. Yet despite his rough and tumble appearance, Apple Crisp is a huge softie. Taking shelter in ASAP's Working Cat enclosure, Apple Crisp loves getting visitors. He won't hesitate to bulldoze his brawny skull into an offered hand, and he loves pets (especially when accompanied by a treat or two).

It's clear Apple Crisp prefers having the *flexibility of an outdoor home, yet he also loves...*



Dr. White and RVT Becky checked Apple Crisp's wound at the end of October, and now it's nothing more than a scar.

...attention and human interaction. For these reasons, he is classified as an AP cat.

Meet Skippy, a 10-year-old stray found in Isla Vista, initially brought to the shelter covered in scabs and the classic markers of scabies. Having a scraggly appearance of crusty, flaky skin and plenty of mite bites, Skippy initially seemed very low energy, yet he still had quite the appetite and was most active when eating. After staying with ASAP for a few weeks, his scabies began to clear up and his true personality began to shine through – albeit a little grouchy and slightly less happy being handled.



Uncomfortable and irritated, Skippy's low energy upon intake allowed our team to handle him with ease.

Our Wellness team noted that he was likely not acting himself when he first arrived because he was so uncomfortable, but now that he's healed and used to regular meals, he's unafraid to speak his mind and set his boundaries. While not quite designated as a Working Cat (more of a retiree), Skippy also falls under the AP umbrella, as he'd do well somewhere that allows him to be outdoors yet also in proximity to people.

When it comes to placing mousers and semi-social cats who would benefit from an outdoor

environment, our Working Cats program shines, but often our semi-social seniors or gentle giants who yearn for fresh air, better qualify for AP settings. Not every cat is content living their life indoors or working in barns chasing critters, and Apple Crisp and Skippy definitely fall into this category.

After staying at the ASAP shelter for a few weeks, getting much needed care, food, and attention, both of these kitties' personalities revealed themselves, and our team was able to get a feel for who these cats are. Similar to placing a seemingly shy cat in a home only for them to eventually "warm up" to their new family, our AP kitties require more attention than most of the cats at the shelter, and we're proud to take the time and give these cats the best chance at finding their forever home!

Are you looking to adopt an "unconventional" cat? Does your home have flexibility for cats who would prefer an indoor/outdoor lifestyle? Reach out to Mary, our Working Cats & AP Program Director, at workingcats@asapcats.org for more information!



Now that he's feeling better, Skippy's true personality has returned. We're glad he's unafraid to express his boundaries now that he's comfortable again!

Rescuing Kitties in the Community

It was another day at ASAP, where help was needed in the local community and ASAP was there to provide. A woman we'll call Cecilia was being evicted from her Santa Barbara home, and she needed to find a safe place for her 14 cats – fast.

Cecilia mostly speaks Spanish, so she was contacted by Mary Scott, a Spanish-speaking volunteer at ASAP, when shelter staff initially learned of Cecilia's predicament. Cecilia's 14 cats consisted of a mother queen, eight kittens, and five young adults. Between Shelter Supervisor Nicole Wisneskie, Wellness Assistant Athena Brown, and Mary, a plan was hatched immediately to help Cecilia and her kitties. Mary and Athena planned to meet Cecilia at her home to transport the cats to ASAP for medical treatment and intake, while Nicole quickly prepped the shelter for their arrival.

Cecilia fought back tears when Mary and Athena arrived with carriers. Her gratitude and relief were clear when she realized her cats would be safe, and that they were in the best of hands with a bright

future ahead. It was a bittersweet moment, but she knew she was making the right decision and that ASAP would take great care of her kitties. She took the initiative to rehome the eight kittens to a family friend, so only six cats needed transport to the shelter. Athena's expertise was front and center as she loaded the cats into carriers with help from Cecilia and Mary. Mary helped Cecilia fill out the proper paperwork to surrender the cats to ASAP, the cats were loaded into Athena's car, and they were whisked off to the shelter.

Mary received a text from Cecilia early the next morning: "Como estan los gatos?" How are the cats? she asked. Mary was happy to keep in touch with Cecilia every step of the process, reassuring her that her cats were all safe and well on their way to getting adopted.

ASAP is also keeping in touch with Cecilia's family friend with the eight kittens, ensuring all kittens will be altered as soon as they're big enough. A few have bravely gone through their surgeries already, including several males identified as cryptorchid, meaning that one or both of their testicles did not properly descend.

The six friendly, healthy cats will likely be adopted quickly, a result of ASAP's quick action and solution-centered approach to community outreach and service. Another successful community rescue from the ASAP Cats team!



When it comes to saving kittens, Athena Brown is always ready to spring into action!



Prince, one of the cryptorchid kittens, having his testicle located before his neuter surgery. Following a simple skin incision, Dr. Okuda was able to remove it with ease.

Standing Up To Feline Infectious Peritonitis

Feline Infectious Peritonitis (FIP), a disease caused by certain strains of the feline coronavirus, was considered untreatable in shelters for years, but ASAP Cats is dedicated to securing critical medications, implementing effective protocols, and providing life-saving treatment to these cats in need. When we found out that one of our recently-adopted cats started not feeling well and that he had the telltale signs of FIP, our team knew exactly how to help.

Young Simba, not even a year old, was adopted over the summer to a very excited family who fell in love with him instantly. A cute, spunky cat with a lot of energy, we knew he was going to do well in his forever home – until he suddenly started not feeling well.

His stomach began to bloat, and while still cute as a rotund little guy, it was clear Simba was growing uncomfortable. The emergency clinic where Simba's family brought him diagnosed FIP and recommended euthanizing the young cat, but thankfully Simba's family reached back out to ASAP. Having treated several cats with FIP, our Wellness team was prepared to step in and rescue Simba from his predicament.



Simba is currently healing well at home, while his family keeps ASAP updated on his condition.

As FIP treatments are rather expensive, Simba's family surrendered him back to ASAP so we could fully treat him. In the meantime, he's staying with his family as a foster kitty, and as soon as he completes treatment he'll be re-adopted. The brave young boy is slowly getting better, his tummy's bloat is decreasing, and he's still just as energetic and playful as he was before this harrowing set of events began.

As a high-save shelter, ASAP is proud to offer options to cats in need. FIP doesn't have to be a death sentence – not while ASAP Cats is here!

NINJA'S FIGHT WITH FIP

We're very fortunate to have the generous support from our incredible community, allowing us to provide lifesaving treatment to cats in need. When one of our partner shelters admitted a cat with FIP and was unable to treat it, they knew they could reach out to ASAP and we would step in to help. 1-year-old Ninja was transferred to our shelter to begin her FIP treatment, and she's already responding very well. She's currently staying in our Sick Bay while she heals, and as soon as she's recovered, she'll be ready to find her forever home. We're grateful to be an important part of the animal welfare community, giving these cats a second chance at a happy, healthy life.



Wilbur's First Motorcycle Ride

When 2-year-old Wilbur was brought to the ASAP Cats shelter from an emergency clinic, he was in pretty bad shape. Found on the side of the road, he had a fractured pelvis on his right side and severe road rash. Due to swelling and some nerve compression, he additionally had limited feeling in his left leg and tail, and there was blood in his urine. Our Wellness team suspected that he had been hit by a car and left on the road until a Good Samaritan named David drove by on his motorcycle.



RVT Becky Clement and Dr. Lisa Okuda took a look at Wilbur's pelvis and hind legs to assess his injuries upon intake.

Riding down the highway, David noticed Wilbur's limp figure on the side of the road, so he looped back around and pulled off the road to inspect the wounded cat. Seeing that Wilbur was heavily injured but still alive, David scooped him up into his jacket, held onto him with one arm, and immediately transported him to a clinic for urgent care to get help. Because of David's heroic actions, Wilbur's life was saved and he was brought to the best animal shelter around: ASAP Cats.

After spending a few weeks in our care, Wilbur's wounds are healing well. He's using his litter box successfully and no longer has blood in his urine, and he's even regained feeling in his tail. His right leg is healing and he can stand on it, though his left hind leg still seems to be getting in the way and causes him to trip on himself. We'll be monitoring it as we consider his options, which may include amputation, but for now, he's eating his meals and getting plenty of rest. David has even popped by the shelter to visit Wilbur a few times, as the motorcyclist and his new buddy compare their road rashes.

Pretty soon Wilbur will be allowed to remove the e-collar around his neck (provided he doesn't



aggravate his wounds), and before long he'll be ready for his forever home. Until then, he'll be resting plenty in the ASAP shelter!

We're proud of the work we do at ASAP and the wonderful people in our community, and when it comes to the generosity and humanity of Good Samaritans like David, we're left inspired to keep doing right by these cats.

Thank you for saving Wilbur's life, David!

Kevin's Problems Were All in His Mouth: His Teeth Had to Go

Dental hygiene is not only important for humans – it makes a huge difference for cats, too. When Kevin was transferred to ASAP, it was immediately apparent he was having issues in his mouth. Suspected to be stomatitis – an inflammation occurring in the mucous membranes of the mouth and sometimes gums, tongue, and lips – Kevin's mouth was causing him so much pain that our Wellness team initially struggled to properly assess him.

After collecting a gingival biopsy and performing a cautery of the region, results confirmed that the poor cat had a particularly bad case of stomatitis. The good news was that oral cancer could be ruled out, but the bad news was that he was still horribly uncomfortable. He still maintained an appetite, but unfortunately was in a lot of pain whenever he ate anything. Cats suffering from stomatitis often lose weight due to the pain and stress, and even can have trouble self-grooming, so we knew we had to act fast to keep Kevin's spirits high.

The preferred course of treatment for stomatitis is tooth extraction – all teeth, save for the canines. With his canines intact, Kevin would still be able to chew his food, while the inflamed ones where bacteria kept building up would no longer cause an issue.



Following his extraction, Kevin's health and demeanor improved drastically. He was so happy to be mostly pain-free that he even got to enjoy extra food at dinnertime – a great sign of his health improving!

Still a bit drooly as he heals, his chipper attitude has returned, and now he gets to spend time walking around the main floor of the shelter with a smile on his face (and a hankering for treats!)

DENTAL CARE FOR CATS

While stomatitis is a pesky disease that doesn't have a clear cause, there are a few things that you can do to try to prevent it from afflicting your furry loved ones.

The main preventative treatment is regularly bringing your cats in for check ups with your vet. Routine exams can catch diseases like stomatitis early, so establishing care with a vet and regularly bringing your cat in is your first line of defense. Additionally, take note of your cat's dental hygiene. Early signs mimic that of gingivitis, including inflamed or swelling gums, bad breath, excessive drooling, and pain when eating, so we recommend having your cat's oral hygiene monitored regularly. There are several over-the-counter cat toothpastes that could be used to brush your cat's teeth, too, so talk to your vet to see what they recommend!



Despite extracting majority of his teeth, Kevin still has quite the appetite and a positive attitude!

New Humans Around ASAP Cats

ASAP Cats has been saving cats for over 35 years, and during that time we have had a lot of new people from all walks of life join our mission. This year, we welcomed three animal lovers to our staff, and we would love for you to meet them.

Nikki Nistal, Volunteer Coordinator

Hi, I'm Nikki! I grew up in a small town in Connecticut and moved to Santa Barbara to attend UCSB, where I earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts in Dance. I later moved to Los Angeles to pursue a professional dance career. A few years later, I discovered a passion for cat rescue and joined L. A. Kitten Rescue, diving headfirst into the rescue world. Now, after almost three years, I've returned to Santa Barbara with my girlfriend, dog, Yoko, and two cats, Beau and Betty White. I'm excited to be back in this amazing town and to work with this incredible organization!



Cassandra Tai, Administrative Specialist

Hi! I'm Cassandra and I graduated from UCSB in 2020 with a Bachelor's in Language, Culture, and Society. I've stuck around since then, most recently working on campus in academic payroll administration. My twin sister and I share four cats, two of whom were adopted from ASAP! I'm ready to bring my love of cats and my administrative experience to the ASAP team!



Lauren Robinson, Wellness Assistant

My name is Lauren and I've been a volunteer at ASAP since the spring of 2019. I'm a Goleta local, born and raised in the area. I recently graduated from UCLA with a Bachelor of Science in Biology and am on the pre-vet track. I also have a cat from ASAP, who is now 2 years old, and my family has two more ASAP kitties (ages 12 and 10). I'm looking forward to helping out as an assistant on the vet team and meeting more volunteers from other shifts!



We're glad to have you three on our team, Nikki, Cassandra, and Lauren! Be sure to say hi to these feline-loving ladies the next time you see them around the shelter.

Basil's Legacy Program

Over the last three decades, ASAP Cats has had the generous support of forward-thinking donors who have passed on and have included ASAP Cats in their estate planning. The goal of Basil's Legacy Society is to honor, during their lifetime, the supporters who are ensuring a bright future for the cats of the greater Santa Barbara community.

By including ASAP Cats 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, and that ASAP Cats will still be around to continue saving lives for generations to come.

While building your legacy can feel daunting, it doesn't have to be. A long-time ASAP supporter, Kate Silsbury, who pursued a career as a financial planner offers up two uncomplicated tax-advantaged strategies that she uses to donate annually:

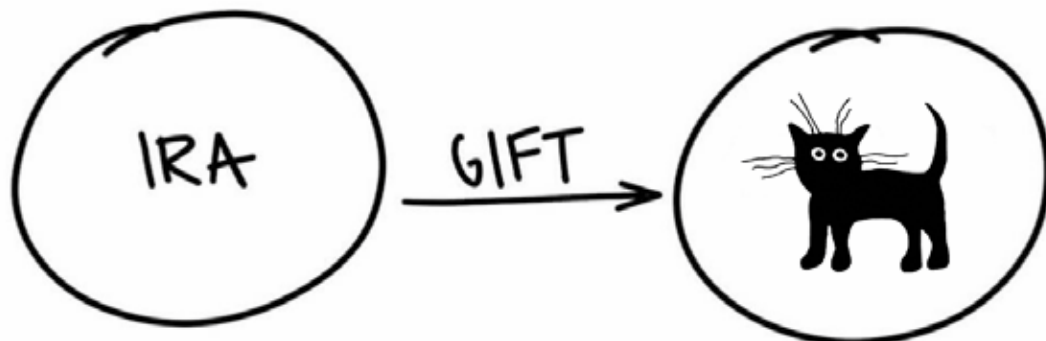
Qualified Charitable Distribution: Because she is over the age of 70, Kate can ask her broker to directly distribute all or a portion of her IRA's Required Minimum Distribution to the charity of her choice. That way she fulfills her charitable intentions without having to pay income tax on her IRA withdrawal. A win-win!



For more information on Basil's Legacy Society, please send an email to legacy@asapcats.org

Appreciated Stock: Another powerful tax saving strategy is through the gift of highly appreciated stock. If you own stock that you inherited or that you purchased long ago at a very low price, you can donate those shares directly. You would otherwise have to pay capital gains tax on the price appreciation were you to sell the stock. However, if you donate actual shares of stock, you not only avoid paying tax on the appreciation, but also are able to claim a deduction for a charitable contribution. That's a three-way benefit: the charity receives your support, you avoid capital gains tax, and if you itemize your deductions, you get to reduce your overall income through a charitable contribution.

QUALIFIED CHARITABLE DISTRIBUTIONS



A Letter From Our Director



Dear Friends of ASAP,

As we enter this season of thankfulness, I am filled with gratitude for the incredible support we've received from the entire ASAP Cats family and our community. Your

compassion, dedication, and generosity have made this year remarkable for the cats and kittens of Santa Barbara County, and I am endlessly grateful.

To our fosters: thank you for opening your homes and hearts to these vulnerable cats. Your loving care has given so many animals a warm, safe place to grow, heal, and prepare for their forever homes. Every cuddle, every late-night feeding, and every moment of care you've offered has made a world of difference.

To our volunteers: your time and effort have been invaluable. From cleaning and socializing to coordinating events and community outreach, you are the backbone of ASAP Cats. Your commitment and love for these animals are what make our shelter a true haven for cats in need.

To our generous donors: none of our work would be possible without your support. Your contributions have funded lifesaving surgeries, essential medical treatments, and so much more. Every gift you give extends a lifeline to the cats who need it most, providing them with a chance at health, happiness, and a loving home.

To our amazing staff: you inspire me every day. You pour your hearts into this work, often going above and beyond to ensure each cat receives the best care possible. Your dedication and resilience make ASAP Cats a special place for both animals and the people who come to help them.

To our community: thank you for standing with us and showing up for these animals. Whether you've adopted, attended events, shared our mission, or simply spread the word, your support has been invaluable. We are not perfect, but we strive every day to be better — to serve these animals and our community with greater compassion, care, and commitment.

And to our fellow animal welfare partners: your collaboration and shared commitment have been instrumental in our collective mission. Together, we navigate the challenges and celebrate the triumphs of animal sheltering, ensuring that every animal receives the care and love they deserve. Your dedication and hard work inspire us daily, and we are grateful for the strong partnerships we have built.

This holiday season, my heart is full with gratitude for each of you. Together, we've brought hope and healing to so many animals, and I am so thankful for the compassionate community we have built. May this season be filled with warmth, joy, and the comfort of knowing you have made a lasting impact.

With gratitude and thanks,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Wiebe". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Jessica Wiebe

Executive Director



Monet, our 9-month-old Manx kitty, loves to run around and chase lizards. Visit her at the shelter!

There's No Place Like a Foster Home

While our shelter is always welcoming new cats into our care, and a selection of our spunky kitties can regularly be found at Cat Therapy in downtown Santa Barbara, a large population of ASAP's cats are currently in foster! Whether they're newborn kittens who require regular bottle feeding, Tiny Lions in the process of being tamed, seniors and hospice kitties in need of a quieter place to rest, or adult cats on a temporary shelter vacation, plenty of our cats are currently lounging in a home while they wait to be adopted. Take a look below at some of our adoptable cats currently in foster:



Lucera



Romeo



Checkers



Sherlock



Lila Rose



Carol



Sassy



Jenny

BECOME AN ASAP FOSTER

WE PROVIDE THE SUPPLIES,

YOU SUPPLY THE LOVE!



WANT A COMPANION, BUT NOT READY TO ADOPT? **TRY FOSTERING!**

GO TO WWW.ASPCATS.ORG FOR MORE INFORMATION AND TO APPLY!

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805 683-3368
info@asapcats.org
www.asapcats.org

 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 the shelter and ask about applying today.



Our volunteers and staff got into the holiday spirit this past Halloween, enjoying a fantastically spooky October Adoption Event decorated by Volunteer Coordinator and part-time corn stalk Nikki Nistal.

ASAP - Animal Shelter Assistance Program

Shelter location: 5473 Overpass Road, Santa Barbara, CA 93111
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