

# CATNIPS



## Skipping Ahead to Fall

Summer is officially over as far as I'm concerned. Time to head back to school!

While all the kids are buying school supplies, our shelter is still getting slammed by kittens every week, and it's moments like these where I am just oh so grateful for people like

**Jill Title, Neonatal Foster Extraordinaire.** It certainly isn't easy taking care of 2-week-olds (sorry for all the trouble, Ma!) but I'm told it's a very rewarding experience. Read the full rundown of how Jill and other ASAP fosters hang in there for these little miracles, **starting on page 2.**

By the way, I'm not sure if anyone's told ya yet, but my buddy **Delorean** FINALLY found his forever home. I'm real glad for my pal, but honestly his Working Cat people are the real lucky ones – Delorean is a great kid who loves a sunbath. Check out his tale by **turning to page 6.**

Speaking of great kids, a lot of my cousins are still patiently waiting to get adopted, **some as long as over 200 days** in ASAP's care. I won't lie – it's the best shelter in town with the coolest humans supporting it – but nothing beats cuddling up for Shark Week with your forever family. **Take a look at some of ASAP's longest residents on page 11.**

Oh, did you hear? **That my Big Bash was a blast?** Fizzy drinks, dinner, dancing – as they say, it was the Basil's pajamas. And the best part? The whole theme was centered on cute black cats like me. Good choice, Bash committee. Take a look at some snapshots from the night by **turning to page 8** and make sure you look at the end for a little surprise.

Alright, my paws are starting to get tired and it's incredibly tough to type without fingers. Ha, just kidding – I make the marketing guy write this all down for me. Enjoy this issue of CatNips and I'll see you at lunchtime. I think Mom packed chicken!

Until then,

*Basil, OUT*



Lucie



## Summer 2025

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# Raising Kittens From Day 1: Neonatal Fostering

A significant portion of ASAP's cat-saving team exists in the form of our extensive foster network. Taking in cats of all ages, sizes, and shapes, we rely on our fosters to care for these cats outside of the shelter in their own homes. Not only does this create available space within our shelter for other cats in need, but it allows these cats a chance to sleep and exercise in a home rather than a cage, receive additional attention and affection, and learn to better socialize around humans. What sets ASAP apart from other shelters is that we also have a dedicated team of fosters looking after the most vulnerable cats in our care: neonatal kittens.

"I foster neonates, taking kittens no older than three weeks," says Jill Title, who has fostered kittens with ASAP since 2017. "Kittens older than three weeks are a bit more accessible, so I stay available for the ones who are teeny tiny, from brand new to two or three weeks old." From volunteering at the shelter, to managing social media, to fostering kittens, Jill has had a hand in a variety of the inner workings that keep ASAP saving lives and finding homes for cats, and because of her extensive experience working with these cats, she is one of our main neonatal



*Ahi and Scott at 2.5 weeks. Previously surrendered by owners, Jill took them in and gave them a second chance.*

kitten fosters. "I'll get a call from the shelter, I come in, pick 'em up, and it starts!" she says.

Neonates require a foster who has the time and energy to look after them, but they don't require much space. "You're weighing them when they're little, you're making sure you're aware of their activity levels, what their poops look like, how much they're eating," Jill says. "You just have to be willing to be available all the time, and for a couple of weeks it can be exhausting, but it's only a couple of weeks." Depending on their general stability and health, most neonates need to be bottle fed every 2–3 hours, which means setting alarms to wake up in the middle of the night for food. "I think to myself 'If I can sit up until this time, I only have to wake up once in the middle of the night to feed,'" Jill continues, "but when they're that tiny, they take no space at all. They're in a carrier and that's their entire world for the first few weeks."

Due to their high vulnerability, it's especially important to collect as much data as possible when fostering neonatal kittens – though this truly applies to fostering cats of all ages. "Keeping track of all of their markers of health to ensure they're healthy and growing is the most



*Ahi and Scott at 5 weeks. Eyes fully opened, their distinct personalities begin to develop.*

important thing,” Jill says, “and it’s good to be tuned in to what they’re doing, so if there’s ever a problem you can catch it early.”

Sometimes these kittens won’t immediately take to the bottle, or aren’t eating enough during feeding time, prompting Jill to try feeding them hourly instead. As adept at this work as Jill is, she is quick to express her gratitude to her ASAP mentors. “I was very fortunate to have amazing volunteers like Lisa Mathiasen and Donna Peterson who were super hands-on with me and available,” Jill explains, “so any time I had any issues or questions, they were there. It was very comforting, and it helped me feel like I could take it on.”



*Baby Banana at 2 weeks, still a silly little bowling ball with a rough road of medical procedures ahead of him.*

and have personally found homes for 80% of them,” Jill says. “They never went to the shelter, just from me to their forever home.” Typically, neonate fosters pass their babies to kitten fosters once they’re weaned, but Jill was inspired to go the extra distance. “If I’m going to do this, I need to see it through. I need to see their happy ending,” she says. “I was really intentional about this to make it feasible for my heart.”

While Jill worked at UCSB, she would often bring her neonates with her to monitor them and feed them every few hours, and this in turn brought plenty of excited visitors to her office. She would post flyers around campus and practice her photography with the neonates, sharing photos of the kittens on her personal social media pages and resharing through ASAP’s socials, amplifying the chances of these cats’ finding adopters – and it often worked! “During the time I have them, I document their growth and their personalities, and I try hard to expose them to things like people and dogs,” she says, “and the kittens I brought to work became really well socialized, used to being around people.”

People who adopt neonates fostered by Jill reap the benefits of her dedication: In addition to adopting an adorable, socialized kitten, Jill additionally assembles little baby books for them, containing photos and details of their journey. “I order two so I can keep one for myself, and now I have a library of all the kittens I’ve fostered!” Jill explains.



*Just over a year old, Ahi and Scott are as close as ever and happy to have finally found their forever home thanks to Jill.*

Part of the foster process is helping these cats find their forever homes, transitioning from “foster” to “adopted,” and while this can be unique for each cat (as we have plenty of “foster wins” where cats end up adopted by their foster), Jill’s neonates follow a different track: She finds their adopters herself. “I’ve fostered 55 kittens

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# Two weeks of little sleep to give a cat a chance at life

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Most of Jill's neonates end up finding their forever homes, but one particular kitty had an unexpected outcome – Jill herself adopted him. "He had so many health problems as a baby that he was facing euthanasia, and he was never going to get adopted. It was understandable," Jill says. "I got him at two weeks, brought him in for vaccines and check-ups and shared my concerns, and it wasn't until he was three months old that I was told he wasn't adoptable. I had those three months to get attached to him."

After speaking with her partner, Jill decided they weren't letting this baby go, and thus Banana was adopted into the family. As Jill says, "He's a happy little guy and a medical mess, and true to



*In addition to Banana, Jill has three other cats and a dog in her home. Plenty of socializing for her foster kittens!*



prediction he's cost us a fortune, but he's the favorite."

Letting go of these baby cats can be incredibly difficult, but our fosters pride themselves on being a part of their journey, not necessarily their destination. "I think to myself 'I raised this little being to be someone else's everything,'" says Jill. "It's someone else's job to give them a home, and it's my job to make sure they stay alive, grow healthy, and have a chance to find that forever family."

## WANT TO SUPPORT JILL?

Our neonatal fosters are equipped with everything necessary to raise baby kittens, and during the summer kitten season we try to keep the shelter stocked with kitten supplies. Consider donating to our **Oscar James Fund** to support the care of kittens in our foster program! Your contributions allow us to buy kitten formula, food, and medical supplies for kittens too young for immediate adoption.

For more information and to give, visit our website at [www.asapcats.org](http://www.asapcats.org) or scan the QR code to the right.



# Lucky McGee's Got Eight More Lives

As the premier high-save cat shelter in Santa Barbara County, ASAP is no stranger to saving injured cats facing euthanasia. When community cat Lucky McGee was found by a good Samaritan with a slew of injuries, the evidence pointed to his being hit by a car. He had a dislocated jaw, minimal use of his hind leg, partially healed lacerations, and plenty of skinned areas.

Though he allowed minimal handling, he appeared mostly unsocial and rather grizzly given his condition. It was difficult to get him the treatment he so desperately needed due to his initial resistance to any human interventions, but ASAP's Wellness team refuses to give up on a cat in need, so we got to work.

We eventually were able to give him medication to reduce his pain, and subsequently our team reset his dislocated jaw while he was under anesthesia and receiving radiographs. The radiographs additionally revealed a dislocated hip that could not be reset, so after sending him off to one of our veterinarian partners, Lucky McGee received a Femoral Head Ostectomy – essentially a hip replacement for cats that removes part of the femoral head of the femur (FHO) – from Dr. Jessica Scherr, DVM



Now stable and on the mend (albeit still a bit grizzly), Lucky McGee is healing gently at ASAP. Despite the immense jaw pain he initially suffered, he's been eating well throughout his recovery, lunging at his breakfast every opportunity he can grab a bite. He even permits light pets while he's eating, now that he's feeling better and no longer constantly uncomfortable.

Following Lucky McGee's recovery, he'll transition to the Alternate Placement track, where our dedicated team will work to find a suitable home fit for the fortunate boy.



*McGee's dislocated hip that could not be reset due to the length of time it had been out of the socket.*



# A Home That Works For Delorean

Delorean's ASAP journey began in early 2024 when he was surrendered to ASAP by an owner who could not keep him due to personal circumstances. Unfixed, unbothered, and plenty social, Delorean's popularity at ASAP knew no bounds, as he enjoyed time gallivanting around the outdoor runs and impressing volunteers and staff alike with his good looks and confident demeanor.



*Sunbathing has always been one of Delorean's favorite pastimes.*

After spending several months at the shelter without finding his forever home, our team decided to give him a chance as a working cat. He was placed with a feline friend from Santa Barbara Humane Society at a lovely Goleta residence, but as fate would have it, Delorean and his new "pal" Steven did not see eye to eye. Sometimes two cats simply don't get along, as is the nature of these things. However, the caretakers loved them both so much that they had trouble deciding which cat they would return to ASAP!

Ultimately it was Delorean who received the short end of the stick, facing another stint back in the shelter. Soon after returning to his favorite run and volunteers, however, a Hope Ranch working cat program applicant expressed interest in the sweet boy. Offering a beautiful property complete with pool, catio, and no pesky Steven (who in truth is quite a lovely cat), Delorean's new home was found!

Now primarily an indoor cat at his Hope Ranch home, Delorean enjoys leash walks outside and his own custom catio complete with a cat door. Delorean's caretaker loves him, saying, "He's currently mellowing. He has not had a single indoor accident, and knows how to avoid the street."

At long last: a forever happy home for Delorean and another win for the Working Cats Program! Interested in having a working cat come to your property? Contact Mary at (805) 699-5739 or email [workingcats@asapcats.org](mailto:workingcats@asapcats.org) for more information!



*Preferring to be the star of the show, Delorean adores getting all the attention from anyone willing to give it to him.*

# Caring For Kittens Found Out in the Field

Six-week-old kitten Mike Wakowski came to ASAP this summer with his brother Sully, as part of a larger colony of kittens found in an avocado orchard. He arrived with a particularly bad Upper Respiratory Infection (URI). While most of the symptoms of his URI started to settle, his conjunctivitis was so severe that it caused an ulcer to form in his right eye. As the pressure built up, his eye bulged out and started to rupture.

Too small and fragile to immediately have surgery, little Mike was delicately kept comfortable in a foster home, where his foster family cared for him until he was strong enough to face his surgery.

After growing a little larger, his ruptured eye was enucleated and he has since made a full recovery and is currently in foster with Sully.

Local cat colonies such as the one Mike and Sully came from are regularly monitored by ASAP's Community Cats team, and will be further supported by our Mobile Spay/Neuter Care Unit. By taking ASAP on the road, this mobile clinic will help underserved communities and cats living in the community.

While our Mobile Unit is officially up and running, it will require regular maintenance to ensure we can keep helping cats on the go! Consider donating to our Mobile Unit fund, where every dollar directly supports the maintenance of our lifesaving van.

To learn more about our Mobile Unit, and to help us continue saving cats like Mike Wazowski, simply scan the QR code below or visit our website at [www.asapcats.org](http://www.asapcats.org) to give.



*Mike adjusted very well to having his eye removed, and although his vision has been affected, he still has his buddy Sully to help lead him around.*



*Sporting a brand new wrap revealed at our Bash earlier this year, we're thankful to our partners at C.A.R.E.4Paws for donating their van to us.*





# Luck Was in the Air at Basil's Big Bash

Our fantastic community of feline lovers celebrated together earlier this summer at our annual fundraising gala, Basil's Big Bash, dancing to live music while surrounded by black cat decorations and mystical charms. It was quite a magical Friday the 13<sup>th</sup> — we even raised over \$150,000 to turn the luck around for all the cats in our care. Thank you everyone who attended and celebrated with us!







## CATNIPS EXCLUSIVE: WINE PRE-SALE!

Were you unable to attend this year's Black Cat Bash? Well not to worry – you're still in luck! Savor a taste of the wonderful night we celebrated by purchasing your very own ASAP Cats vintage: Black Cat 2021 Cabernet Sauvignon, available in limited supply.

*Sun-kissed and elegantly bold, this Cab displays ripe cherry and juicy plum aromas. Warm spices ripple over your palate enough to tickle your whiskers and leave you wanting more. Me-ow!*

As part of our celebration of black cats everywhere, we unveiled a specially crafted wine during the Bash, made possible by our partners at WINECULT – and now is your chance to try a glass for yourself!

PRE-SALE ENDS SEPTEMBER 14. As a CatNips subscriber, you will always be the first to hear about all of ASAP's exclusive offers. All proceeds from bottles sold will be donated to ASAP to help support our cat-saving mission. To purchase your bottle today, visit [www.asapcats.org/wine](http://www.asapcats.org/wine).



# A Letter From Our Director



The first half of this year has been anything but typical. We began 2025 with unusually low numbers of cats in our care, only to see a sharp increase in the spring and summer months. From January through July, we

returned 61 cats to their owners — a 74% increase over the same period last year — and saw a 45% increase in owner surrenders, with 170 cats entering our shelter from families in crisis who could no longer keep them. In these moments, ASAP steps in to support families by providing a safe place for their beloved cats.

Please take a moment to look at the numbers below — they reflect both the challenges we have faced as well as the incredible successes we celebrate. One of the most inspiring achievements has been the remarkable work of our staff and volunteers to reunite more cats with their families than ever before, reaching new heights for cat redemptions. At the same time our team continues to push boundaries, treating complex medical cases, preparing cats for adoption, and finding

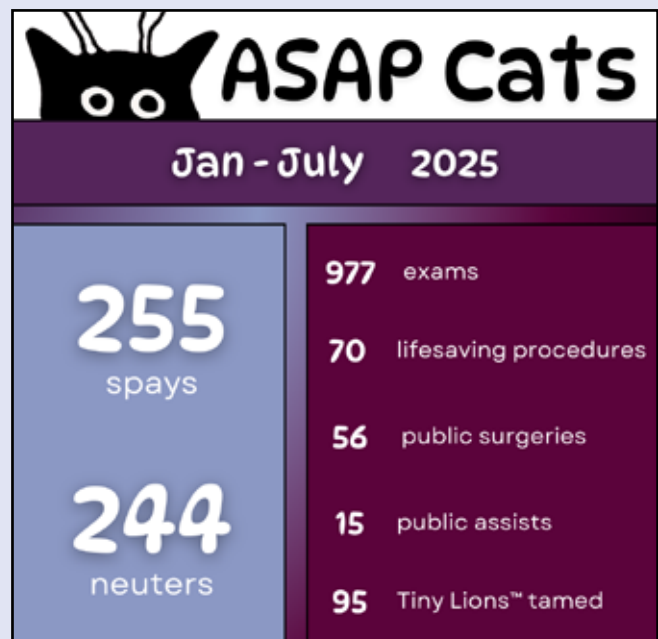
both traditional and non-traditional homes through programs like Working Cats and Alternate Placement. These efforts save more lives while carefully balancing our limited resources.

Our volunteers have already contributed over 15,000 hours in just six months, a truly incredible gift to the cats in our care. Their dedication is the backbone of ASAP, allowing us to perform 70 lifesaving surgeries and 499 spay/neuter procedures while proving what a small but mighty organization can achieve.

ASAP is also strategizing how best to support families facing housing insecurity and veterinary costs, including leveraging partnerships with other animal welfare organizations. While we find our footing and strive to finish the year strong, we are still here — for cats, for families, and for our community. I am profoundly proud of our growth, our resilience, and the lifesaving work we continue to achieve together, and want to thank you for being a part of it all.

With gratitude,

Jessica Wiebe  
Executive Director





# 200+ Days Without a Home to Call Their Own

ASAP does many things for cats. The most obvious is providing shelter in an often harsh world, but we don't intend to be any cat's permanent address. Yet several of our cats have been in our care for over 200 days — some much longer. While we're proud of the caring environment at our shelter and our amazing network of fosters, we believe every one of our cats deserves a forever home.

Not every cat follows the same path — some end up in Alternate Placement or our Working Cats program to find an environment that is more conducive to their personality; others come into the shelter as community cats and are returned to where they were found (after receiving treatment and spay/neuter) through our TNR program; and most are adopted after spending some time in our shelter or while staying with a foster temporarily.

But some of our cats have not had such luck, and therefore they continue to wait for the chance to finally get adopted. We believe that every ASAP cat deserves to find their home, so if you would like to learn more about any of the cats listed below, please reach out to [info@asapcats.org](mailto:info@asapcats.org).



*ASAP's longest adoptable resident, Smokey has a rich history full of second chances and redemption. From undergoing a feline corneal sequestrum to save his eye to navigating an FIV+ diagnosis, Smokey's resilience is only matched by his gentle demeanor and handsome good looks.*

## Smokey



in custody for 685+ days

## Lola



in custody for 618+ days

## Molly



in custody for 466+ days

## Mimi



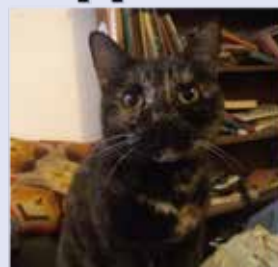
in custody for 423+ days

## Maddie



in custody for 331+ days

## Pepper



in custody for 227+ days



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## 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 cat 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.



*Wine Cellar (and Yard Sale!) Queen Lisa Mathiasen has mentored plenty of volunteers in fostering neonatals, including Jill Title! When you join the ASAP team, you join a network of cat-loving people who are always ready to lend a paw.*

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

Shelter location: 5473 Overpass Road #101, Santa Barbara, CA 93111  
ASAP is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization ■ Federal Tax ID: 77-0283500