

## Fear Free Graduates

Cat Depot staff and volunteers have been working towards attaining Fear Free certification. As Fear Free Certified Professionals, we are committed to preventing and alleviating fear, anxiety, and stress in shelter animals and pets. A huge round of applause to our first round of Fear Free graduates (not all graduates are pictured)!



## SAVE the DATE

### The Fall Feline Fun Run is Back!

Run for the kitties from wherever you call home and help us save lives!

Our second annual virtual 5K and one-mile fun run will once again take place this fall. We hope you will join us in support of the cats and kittens we serve each year and the people who love them.

Registration is open now and is \$35 per registrant. For more information and to register visit [www.catdepot.org](http://www.catdepot.org).



## Monthly Giving Program



Forever Friends make the ultimate difference in the lives of the homeless, sick, and injured cats and kittens Cat Depot assists each year as members of our monthly giving program.

Recurring gifts are special as they immediately go to work in supporting the care of the thousands of felines we assist each year through our rescue, adoption, and community cat programs.

Forever Friends show their unwavering support with a consistent gift each month that safeguards our collective commitment to saving lives.

Become a Forever Friend today at [www.catdepot.org](http://www.catdepot.org)!

# Cat Depot Connection



Photographer: Connie Summers Photography

# SUMMER 2021

## Meet Our 'Friends Like Me' Cats!

Cat Depot's mission is to save lives, find loving homes, and provide resources and education to improve the destiny of homeless cats.

Photography: Connie Summers Photography, Kim Bull, Claudia Harden, Laura Towle





# From the Executive Director’s Desk


Thank you for the incredibly warm welcome to Cat Depot! My name is Jennifer Bitner, and I am the new Executive Director as of April 13, 2021. I am thrilled to be here in beautiful Sarasota with all of you. I moved here from Pensacola, FL where I was the Executive Director for the Pensacola Humane Society since June 2017. I learned so many wonderful things during my time there. I am excited to bring that knowledge and experience to the Cat Depot family.

I have worked in the non-profit world for more than 20 years, having worked for the March of Dimes and Leukemia and Lymphoma Society. The best decision was to move into animal welfare and work on behalf of pets and their people. Like all of you, I am an animal lover, and my best buddy is Krispy Kreme (aka KK) my four-year-old Tabby. He was found on the side of the road eating a donut, hence the name! I took him to a vet appointment four years ago and he came home with me that same day. His story inspires me to do all I can on behalf of the animals in our care and in our community.

I am honored to serve on the Florida Association of Animal Welfare Organizations (FAAWO) Board of Directors. I have been an active member of the Legislative Committee since I joined the board and am a graduate of the Best Friends Executive Leadership Certification Program. I have worked with the Humane Society of the United States, ASPCA, Alley Cat Allies, Florida Leaders in Lifesaving, and countless animal shelters across the Southeast, both private and municipal, on a variety of initiatives and programs.

I am thrilled to be here with all of you and take the journey together in support of the Cat Depot mission as we save lives, find loving homes, and provide resources and education to improve the destiny of homeless cats.

My best to all,



Jennifer Bitner  
Executive Director  
Cat Depot



## A Focus on Friends Like Me!

Andie Antonik, Development Specialist

You might be asking yourself, “What exactly is a ‘Friends Like Me’ cat?” A Friends Like Me cat is a kitty that has either arrived to the shelter needing emergency medical care or will continue to need specialized attention for the remainder of their lives. Continue reading to learn more about some of these special cats currently residing at Cat Depot. They cannot wait to meet you!

### Meet Grace



Grace came to Cat Depot as a stray. The family who found her loved her dearly, but they were unable to keep her. When Grace arrived at Cat Depot, we noticed she had a pronounced head tilt. While there is no apparent cause, it does not affect her day to day life. She is able to move around normally; she just looks very curious while doing so! After testing, Grace was also found to be deaf or has considerable hearing loss. She won’t mind loud music or booming thunder, but she also won’t come just by calling her name. Although, not many cats do that anyway!

Grace is a friendly kitty who loves lounging on the lanai and watching the birds fly by. She has picked her favorite chair and can be found sunbathing there all day long. While she does like head scratches and pets, she also loves her “me” time and will let you know when she is done. Grace is a calm, easy going cat that will make a fantastic sunbathing companion.

### Meet Cato



Cato arrived at Cat Depot in October of 2020. He is currently our longest resident and Meow Mayor. Cato’s previous owner was unfortunately in a car accident that left them permanently disabled and unable to care for him. They brought Cato to Cat Depot in the hopes of him finding the perfect home. He is a sweet, loving cat who just wants a friend who understands and accepts his medical needs.

Cato has been diagnosed with Stage II Kidney Disease. This means that his kidney life span is shortened. Although he is not symptomatic at this time, he may begin to develop symptoms within the next two years. These symptoms could include decreased appetite, increased thirst and urination, and lethargy. Many cats can have a good quality of life for years after the diagnosis of chronic kidney disease. Cato is currently on a special diet, and would need to remain on that diet once he is adopted.

Cato is a funny, personable cat who will stick by your side through anything. While he is unsure about laying on someone’s lap, if you cover your legs with a blanket he will curl right up!

### Meet Draco

Draco came to us in March of 2021 and is just over three years old. When Draco arrived he was diagnosed with Feline Lower Urinary Tract Disease. He had a urethral obstruction as well as calcium oxalate crystals in his urine. We treated and relieved the immediate obstruction, but he continued to have issues. To prevent further obstructions, we performed a perineal urethrostomy, more commonly known as a PU surgery, on him. This removes the narrowest part of the urethra, where we then created a larger urethral opening to decrease the likelihood of further obstruction. This will not prevent the symptoms of cystitis or urinary tract disease, so he will have to stay on a prescription urinary diet which will help prevent life-threatening urinary stones.



While recovering from this, Draco began to over-groom himself. We believe it to be from stress or separation anxiety, but our medical team is taking good care of Draco and even bought him a few outfits to keep him from over-bathing himself. He is now the most fashionable kitty in all of Cat Depot! Draco loves chin scratches and will melt all the way to the floor when he gets them.

### Meet Hobo



Hobo came to Cat Depot at the young age of three weeks old. She was found outside by a trashcan near a set of railroad tracks. Hobo has a lesion on the cornea of her right eye, which is likely a scar from a previous infection. During her time with us, our medical team monitored her eye closely and performed three eyelid trims.

Hobo quickly became a favorite of many staff members. She is super sweet and loves to lounge around on any soft surface. It was no surprise to any of us that she was adopted after only one day of being on the adoption floor! She is a bundle of joy and will be missed at Cat Depot, but we are so happy for her and her new family!

Grace, Cato, Draco, and others like them are all in need of specialized care while here at the shelter. They need friends like you! Your support today would provide them, and our other special needs kitties, with the best chance at a healthy future. Won’t you please consider making a gift today in support of Grace and her friends’ medical care? Donations may be made via return mail, online at [www.catdepot.org](http://www.catdepot.org), or by calling (941) 366-2404. As always, thank you for your support of our lifesaving mission!