

# No Place for Senior Cats

by Shelley Thayer  
Executive Director, Cat Depot

**E**ver wonder why there are no old horses or old cats? It could be they have nowhere to go. The average life span of a household cat is 16 years of age, with many cats living late into their teens and early twenties.

Shelters however, are limiting access to older cats for a variety of



Above, Oscar, who is 9 years old, and Kurtie, who is 11 years old, are both available for adoption at Cat Depot

reasons. Kittens and young cats are plentiful and in demand. Older cats are slower to find adopters, and they may develop medical issues. Some shelters post age restrictions as young as 8 years of age, with the average age for shelter admittance being no more than 10 years old. Even if a shelter does not post age restrictions, many cats are denied entry for similar reasons.

As animal lovers, we are learning to take better care of our cats, and that includes annual veterinary exams and dental care. An 8-year-old cat who is barely middle age may be handed a death

sentence if he or she becomes homeless. As unspeakable as that sounds, the statistics are real.

There are, however, some things you can do.

## Adopt a Mature Cat

The American Association of Feline Practitioners (AAFP) and the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) agree upon the ages of mature, senior and geriatric cats. Not surprisingly, the aging process and longevity of cats seems to follow a similar pattern to humans. We all are living longer with good health!

However, some people take medication for simple things like blood pressure or cholesterol. Can you imagine being euthanized for these conditions? Of course not. Then why would we consider doing the same for our beloved cats? Many cats easily take their medication in food or a pill pocket. And, the benefits of a mature cat are plenty!



Shelley Thayer,  
Executive Director of Cat Depot  
Photo by Connie Summers

## The Unparalleled Benefits of Older Cats

- Senior cats, like many of us, are mellow. They sleep when we do, and that includes sleeping in.
- Many love to simply be with us or sit on our laps.
- They listen, love us unconditionally and help us to relax. They may even lower our blood pressure.
- Their personalities are established. What you see at the shelter only gets better at home.
- They know all about litter pans and scratching posts.
- Like us, they know that you can never have too many friends.

## Provide For Their Future

No one anticipates that his or her life will be cut short. But when it does, the family cats we love can tragically become statistics. Please plan for them.

## Lifetime Care

Cat Depot offers a Lifetime Care Plan. No money is exchanged up front, because the goal is to outlive our pets. But, should the unexpected happen, please give your pets a chance not only to live, but to be loved—for life.

For a free brochure about Cat Depot's Lifetime Care Plan, contact Shelley Thayer at [ShelleyT@catdepot.org](mailto:ShelleyT@catdepot.org), or call 941.366.2404.

I am not sure what I can do for senior horses, but I know I can champion for senior cats. 🐾

Life Stage	Age of Cat	Human Equivalent
 Kitten Eggnog, 2.1 Months	Kitten Birth to 6 Months	0 - 1 year 2 - 4 years 6 - 8 years 10 years
 Junior Kate Spade, 1.5 Years	Junior 7 Months to 2 Years	7 months 12 months 18 months 2 years 12 years 15 years 21 years 24 years
 Prime Frenchie, 5.8 Years	Prime 3 to 6 Years	3 years 4 years 5 years 6 years 28 years 32 years 36 years 40 years
 Mature Twister, 7.4 Years	Mature 7 to 10 Years	7 years 8 years 9 years 10 years 44 years 48 years 52 years 56 years
 Senior Honey, 11.6 Years	Senior 11-14 Years	11 years 12 years 13 years 14 years 60 years 64 years 68 years 72 years
 Geriatric Missy Grey 16.10 Months	Geriatric 15 years+	15 years 16 years 17 years 18 years 19 years 20 years 21 years 22 years 23 years 24 years 25 years 76 years 80 years 84 years 88 years 92 years 96 years 100 years 104 years 108 years 112 years 116 years

AAFP/AAHA Life Stages of Cats; all cats available for adoption at Cat Depot

Dedicated to saving lives, Cat Depot, a nonprofit 501(c)(3) free-roaming facility, is recognized for its progressive design and commitment to helping homeless, abandoned and injured animals. Open seven days a week, Cat Depot is located at 2542 17th Street in Sarasota. For more information, call 941-366-2404, or visit Cat Depot online at [www.CatDepot.org](http://www.CatDepot.org).

Photos by Connie Summers