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CAT set to find home for 10,000th cat

[Nick Peterson](#) - 03/27/06

SHERWOOD – The Cat Adoption Team plans to mark a milestone this month.

After eight years in existence, the cat shelter directors say they will be adopting out their 10,000th cat.

Sherwood resident Evan Kalik is the founder and president of Cat Adoption Team (CAT).

Kalik admits he was originally a “dog person.” But when his first wife passed away and he remarried, his new wife had a cat. They were living in Florida at the time.

“So she brought this old cat with her named Jesse,” Kalik said.

Jesse had bad eyes and Kalik would drive her 35 miles, one way, every week to get her eyes treated.

“Then Jesse had the nerve to up and die on me – and it tore my heart out,” Kalik said. “So I went out and adopted two more cats, and it just grew from there. I saw how great an animal they truly are. ... Jesse’s the one responsible for all this.”

Kalik retired in 1993 and, after working with a veterinary doctor in Florida on some animal rescues that year, he and his wife moved to Sherwood in 1994.

“I started CAT on May 1, 1998,” Kalik said. “I told my wife I was going to start with 10 cats.”

At the time, Kalik was constructing a building for his son’s business on Southwest Galbreath Drive, off of Tualatin-Sherwood Road. Kalik told his son he would help him out if he could have 3,000 square feet in an upstairs storage area to use for a cat shelter. Kalik had the architect design 60 glass-faced cages in the building for cats.

“At the end of the first week (after opening the shelter) we filled up those 60 cages,” Kalik said. “That told us there’s a tremendous need for what we do here.”

What they do at CAT is take in unwanted, abandoned or injured cats and kittens, vaccinate them, give them any other veterinary treatment they need, spay or neuter them, give them an identity microchip, and find good homes for them.

That first year CAT adopted out 300-400 cats.

Kalik’s son’s business “went under” and now, eight years later, CAT takes up the entire 7,000 square-feet of the building, and has become the largest no-kill, hospital/shelter for cats on the West Coast, according to Kalik.

CAT has a 20-person staff, including a full service in-house veterinary facility, an “army” of volunteers and is



Nick Peterson/The Gazette
A LITTLE ONE-ON-ONE TIME —Cat Adoption Team founder and president Evan Kalik gives some attention to Goliath, one of the cats available for adoption at the shelter. Kalik started the center eight years ago.

able to house 200-300 cats on-site, plus another 150-300 in foster homes.

Last year they adopted out nearly 2,500 cats, and this year their goal is 2,900.

“When I first started I thought, you bring the cats in, you adopt them out – how hard can it be?” Kalik said.

“Well, it turned out it’s as big a business as any business out there.”

But, Kalik points out, it’s a business with a unique twist.

“With this business the need is there – a tremendous need. But for every animal you adopt, you’re just losing a little bit more money,” Kalik said. “So the more successful you are, the more you spend. It turns your business sense upside down.

“What it takes to make a place like this work – it takes an army of volunteers and paid help, and it takes an ocean of money,” he added.

In the beginning, as a retired businessman, Kalik was financing most of the operation himself. But once CAT got to the point where it could file as a non-profit organization, they could take tax-deductible donations.

But Kalik says it’s also a business with unique rewards.

“If people come and spend any time here and see what we do, they see how rewarding it is. You just float. It keeps you up in the clouds.”

The key to CAT’s success is public support and awareness, said Britta Bavaresco, a CAT board member and former executive director.

“We don’t really believe there’s a lack of adoptable homes out there, I think it’s just getting the name out and making people aware,” Bavaresco said. “It’s been a phenomenal experience working with Evan, and we couldn’t have done it without the support of Sherwood residents, all our great volunteers and donations by the public.”

For anyone who would like to adopt a cat, Bavaresco says it’s a great deal – the cats have all their veterinary work done – spayed or neutered, vaccinated and microchipped. – “It’s not only a good deal but, of course a wonderful addition to the family.”

“Our cats get everything but a college education,” Kalik said. “And we’re working on that.”
