

PAWPRINTS

The Newsletter of the Lethbridge PAW Society

Number 176 ~ April 2026

A PAW Love-letter

The September, 2025, issue of *PAWPrints* related the adoption of Mordecai and Katia (now Tifa). They had been brought to Sara and Jerico the preceding May, and had been exceedingly shy kittens.

Such cats can be difficult to adopt out; people, not unnaturally, want a cat who is as ready to enjoy their new humans as their new humans are to enjoy them.

But it doesn't mean that the shy cats are lacking in the potential of love and joy that every animal possesses. It does mean that it sometimes takes an effort to realize that potential.

In Sara's own words, this is the story of how two very timid cats were brought out of themselves, and found a home filled with love, patience and happiness.

Back on August 7th, 2024, I sadly lost my soul kitty after 21 years of companionship. His name was Quinn and he was the best kitty anyone could dream for. He was sweet, patient and loving. This loss was heavy; I didn't believe at the time that I would be able to open up my heart to another kitty companion. No other kitty, it seemed, would ever compare.

Fast forward to Christmas time 2024 - just four months later - and my heart felt like there was a hole, something was missing. I felt it every day when I came home from a long day at work; I could feel it when I was relaxing for the evening and when I awoke for the day.

I suddenly found myself looking at kitties that needed a home, thinking, "Meh, no harm in just

looking to see who needs a home." When I got to PAW's website, I looked through a couple bios, cute kitties, but something was missing still.

I was about to give up, then came a specific bio for a kitty: Mordecai.

While reading his bio, I was fixated on his photo. It was like I felt at home. There was just something behind those eyes that felt familiar; I was instantly drawn to him. I still wasn't sure, and felt kind of sad thinking of "replacing" my old friend Quinn. So that was as far as I got that day.

Days past, then weeks. But I found myself checking to see if Mordecai was still available, and he was. After

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Tifa

A PAW Love-letter *(continued)*



bouncing this off of friends and co-workers, I decided to talk to my partner Jerico. After a long talk, and showing him Mordecai, I decided to inquire about him. At this time, Jerico noticed that Mordecai had a sibling waiting for a home as well: a petite, shy little girl by the name of Katia. He convinced me to inquire about the pair, wanting to keep the siblings together.

Then came the interview. Feels silly but beforehand I was super nervous. What if Roxanne [the PAW adoptions counsellor] didn't like our family, or our home? I would be crushed. But I decided I had made it this far and something told me to pursue this feeling, so I kept on course. Roxanne arrived and we had a long and delightful discussion about my boy Quinn and the possibility of Mordecai and Katia coming home to us. The two had been through a lot, born and captured as strays. We were told at the time they were both pretty timid and kind of "feral". I would be lying if I said this didn't put a little doubt in my mind. Would I have what it took to help coax these kitties out of their fearful, protective shell and be able to provide a home that was safe, and comfortable and fit their needs? We decided to foster to find out.

The day came when the kitties would arrive. We set up a room just for them. I actually cleaned out my entire art studio and made it a "catudio" just for them. When Roxanne arrived with our littles and we got to finally see them in real life I instantly fell in love, my heart felt at peace. Just as they were described, they were very timid. We got them out of the carrier, and they instantly ran for cover. But as the days passed, my husband, my daughter, and I would take turns just sitting with them in the room, reading or scrolling, just

getting them use to our presence. Then they started to become curious, and they got closer for little sniffs. Soon, when we ventured to the "catudio", they would be ready for play and treats. It did not take them long to want to investigate what was beyond the doors of their sanctuary. They would attempt to follow us out the door every time or try and sneak out when we entered.

We figured it was time to try it out; let them come out and check out all their surroundings. I videoed their first steps into the house as they cautiously left the room and instantly started investigating everything. We left the door open to their sanctuary in case they got frightened and wanted to retreat. This never happened; they quickly found their favourite spots in the house and started to make the space their own. They were still pretty shy at this time, but would love play time, feeding time and treats, and they were used to our presence.

Fast forward to adoption day. They had quickly become just part of our family. They would come hang out with us (at a safe distance). They knew when we were getting up in the morning and would greet us with a 'hello' and would come to say 'hi' at the end of our days. It was at that time we knew they were ours, or more like we were theirs. They made

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We need many volunteers for PAW's Casino Days (June 26th - 27th, 2026)!
See pages 5 and 6.

A PAW Love-letter *(continued)*



our home, their home. We feel in love with this duo and could not imagine a day without them from that moment on. Jerico named Katia Tifa but my daughter loved Mordecai's name and thought it suited him, so it remained the same. (Well, most of the time we call him Cai for short or, on occasion, I have nicknamed him Tank.)

When adoption day came, there was no hesitation, they had come so far and finally felt at home somewhere.

Fast forward to today, they are thriving, they have investigated and taken over every space in their new home. You can't walk ten steps without stepping on a cat-toy, and their tree is now a centre structure in our living room, looking out our main window.

They know our routines; they greet us with stretches and little squeaks and meows in the morning. They know when we are coming home and wait for us on the top of the stairs to get their pets. They also know our bedtime routines. They have become accustomed to my bedtime and if I am staying up a little later than usual, they wait and stare me down in the hallway until I give in and head to bed.

They haven't ventured up onto our beds to sleep with us yet but have made it pretty clear that under mom and dad's bed is kitty sleeping quarters. They follow us around the house and even like to reach under the bathroom doors while we are getting ready. They do not like to be closed out of ANY room, if a

door is closed they push it open as if to say, 'Hey, we want in, too,' so our house now has an open door policy - well, most times just open to let kitties come and go as they please. Every night they come hang out in their cat tree by us and watch our shows with us. If we get up for a drink or a snack, they follow us and demand pets. And every morning they perch themselves on top of the chair in the living room and watch me get ready with cute little slow blinks.

Cai and Tifa have become the centre of our days; they entertain us as we do them; we laugh at their little follies; they are so loved. Without them, I do not believe that that hole in my heart would have ever gone away. A guilty feeling was replaced with joy and love and now I believe Quinn wouldn't have wanted it any other way. In some way, I want to believe he, wherever he is, has his part in this.

Enough of the sappy stuff, but I have to say a big thank you to the PAW Society. Without their website, I would have never found Cai and Tifa. It was so easy to talk to them and Roxanne, and the transition was very comfortable and easy. They would check in and I would send them updates on the kitties periodically.

Now, onto some cuteness: I have attached a few photos of our "kids"...



**Can you bake for PAW's Spring Bake Sale (April 25th, 2026)?
We need baking donated! See page 4**



SPRING BAKE SALE



Saturday, April 25, 2026
from 10 a.m. until 3 p.m.

at **CENTRE VILLAGE MALL**

(2nd Avenue 'A' North, Lethbridge)

⇒ **We Need Your Baking!** ⇐

Drop off donated baked goods at Centre Village Mall
9:30 a.m. until 11:00 a.m., the day of the sale.

Helping
rescue cats...
like this one!



PAW Society
403-328-6700
www.pawsociety.ca



Yes! We Still Need Casino Volunteers

PAW's participation in the Lethbridge Casino - **June 26th and 27th** - is by far our most important fund-raiser; and we need a large number of volunteers for it. Volunteers need to fill out a specific form. The form may be obtained in two ways.

- 1) The form on the following page may be printed out.
- 2) The form may be downloaded and printed out from the AGLC website. Click on this link, or copy and paste it into your browser.

<https://aglc.ca/forms/casino-volunteer-worker-application>

Once downloaded, fill out **only** the section titled "Particulars of Volunteer". **Do not** fill in "Key Positions". While each volunteer may have a preference as to the position to fill, this cannot be completed on the form until all volunteers have sent in their applications. The preferences of volunteers will be accommodated as much as possible.

Once the "Particulars of Volunteer" section is completed, the signed form must be provided to the PAW Executive Board. It may be scanned and emailed (to pawsociety@shaw.ca), mailed (to P.O. Box 255, Lethbridge, Alberta,

Canada, T1J 3Y5), or other arrangements may be made by inquiring by email or telephone (403-328-6700).

Tell us your choice of position when your application is submitted; also, let us know which day and shift you prefer to work. (There are two shifts each day: 1 - 8 p.m., and 8 p.m. - 4 a.m. **The biggest need now is for the 8 p.m. - 4 a.m. shift, on June 26th.**)

Please complete and submit the form to PAW as soon as possible.

Feel free to contact the Executive if you have any questions regarding this vital fund-raiser.



Please FILL OUT the appropriate section and SIGN the form on the next page.

Who's New to PAW



RILEY

A white and black tiny cutie, Riley is the only girl in the litter of four that PAW's recent addition, Tilly, brought into the world on March 10 of this year.



LEVI

White and black, like his sister, Levi is easily recognized by the smudge on his nose. He wants to know the wherefore and the why of everything.

MARTIN

Black and white, Martin is turning out to be quite the explorer, with more than the average amount of curiosity.



TARON

This tabby and white kitten has plenty of stripes. Taron's an observant one, wanting to see before doing.



**We need books and volunteers for the PAW Book Sale (May 24th - 30th, 2026)!
Can you help? See page 7.**

Casino Volunteer Worker Application

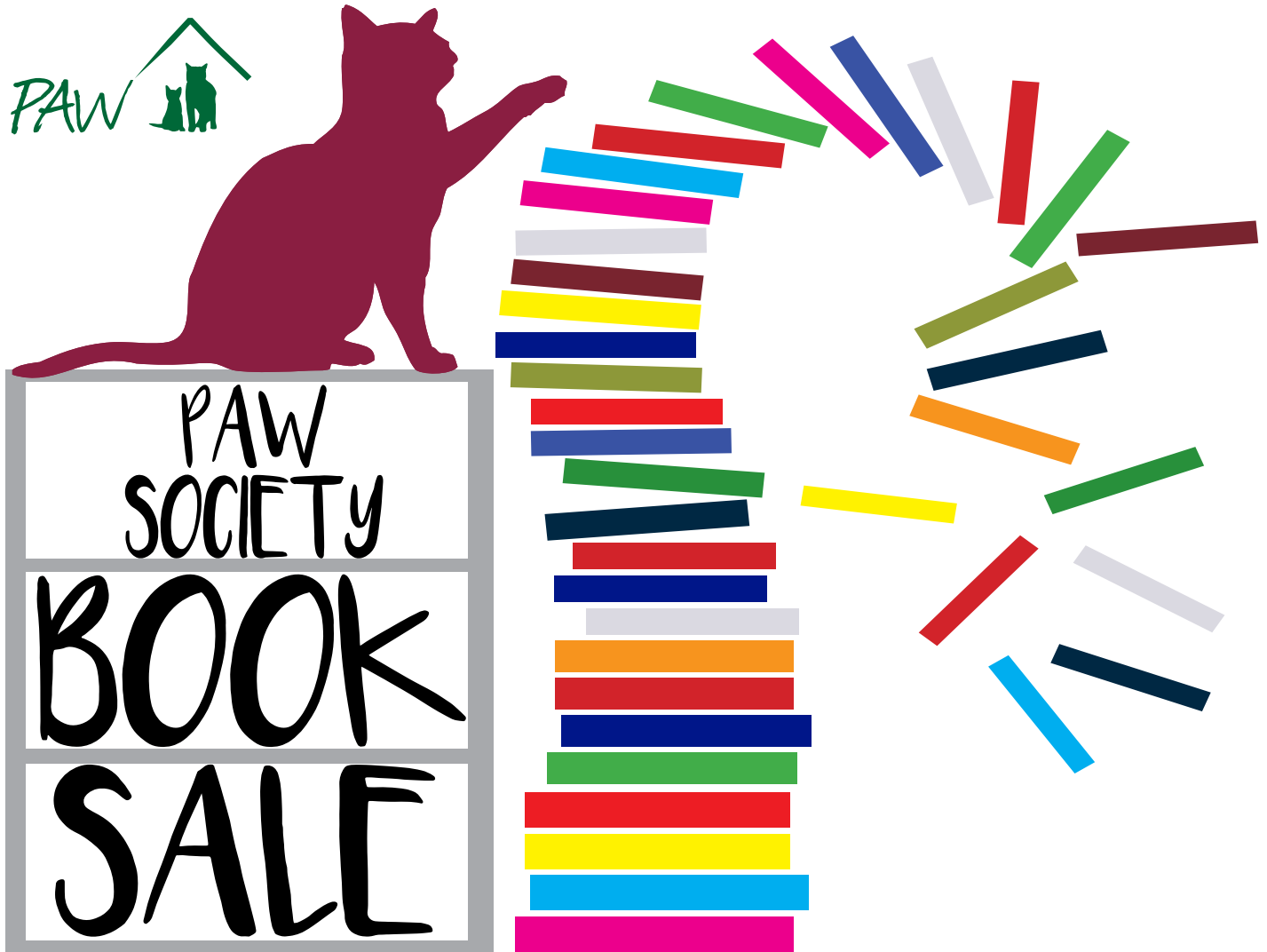
This form may be obtained from our website: aglc.ca

Volunteers in key positions only must complete this form. This form must be completed in full.

Please print clearly.

Name of Organization Lethbridge People for Animal Welfare Society			
AGLC ID# (if known) 79629		Date(s) of Casino June 26th and 27th, 2026	
Key Positions: (must be filled by volunteers who are bona fide members of the licensed charity)			
☐ General Manager ☐ Alt General Manager ☐ Banker ☐ Count Room Supervisor ☐ Cashier			
Paid staff of the licensed organization can work, provided:			
a. they are members of the organization as defined by their bylaws			
b. they volunteer their services outside normal working hours			
c. they do not fill the following positions: General Manager, Alternate General Manager, Banker, Count Room Supervisor			
d. no individual shall work more than one position during the licence period of the casino			
e. all personnel shall be eighteen (18) years of age or older			
Particulars of Volunteer			
Legal Last Name		Legal First Name	
Other or Maiden Name		Date of Birth (YY/MM/DD)	
Gender ☐ Male ☐ Non-binary ☐ Female ☐ Prefer not to disclose		Contact Phone Number	
Have you ever been charged or convicted of a criminal offence? ☐ Yes ☒ No			
No individual is eligible to work in a casino if charged or convicted, within the last five years of a criminal offence related to narcotics or to acts of dishonesty, including but not limited to offences involving fraud, currency, or gaming and betting or those against the rights of property (such as theft, robbery, forgery), or fire arms and offensive weapons, or an indictable offence for an act of violence against a person. If five years after conviction an individual is still under sentence for such an offence, approval shall not be given under this application until completion of sentence. AGLC may contact police for relevant information about the applicant. If an individual has received a pardon under provisions of the <i>Criminal Records Act</i> , this policy will not apply.			
I certify that the information in this application and any attachments are true, correct and complete to the best of my knowledge and belief. I understand that any false statement made in this application and any attachments may disqualify me from working at a casino.			
I hereby consent to and authorize AGLC to undertake a criminal record check, with any police agency, to determine my eligibility to be involved in gaming facilities, in accordance with AGLC policies. An applicant may also be required to obtain and provide a criminal record check from a police agency.			
NOTE: Any person enrolled in a Self-Exclusion Program is restricted from volunteering at a casino event.			
Signature		Date	

To sign up for a shift - many are available - click on this link.
<https://volunteersignup.org/MY7RF>



Wed. May 27 - Fri. May 29 ^{10 am}
 - 6 pm

Sat. May 30 ^{9 am}
 - 2 pm

Fish and Game Hut

(9th Ave. & 10th St. South, s.w. corner of Kinsmen Park)

Donations of books accepted at the Hut

May 24 ^{1 pm} - ^{6 pm} and May 25 - 26 ^{10 am}
 - 6 pm

Editorial: The Shy Ones

Our principal story in this issue is a significant one. It demonstrates that shy cats can come around and be the loving, open-hearted pets that we would like them to be. It's true that many of them will be open and sociable only with their own people or family, but that is often the case with cats who aren't shy.

It must be born in mind that the cats under discussion are not unsocialised. They are not feral. They are simply timid. They would prefer to be left alone. But that is not a good life for a cat, alone, isolated and distant from the humans in his home. Instead, we try to give them the life they deserve, without anxiety or fear and full of affection and friendship.

That's not always easy. As demonstrated in the case of Mordecai and Tifa, what it takes from people most of all are patience and perseverance. The cat must always be allowed to set the pace. If the process is forced or rushed, it will merely drive the cat farther away from the goal.

For those in cat-rescue, for those in the PAW Society, this is not an exercise in theory. We have other cats like Tifa and Mordecai who would make loving friends for someone or some family. But they need time to figure that out by themselves.

Something I've learned in the last two decades is that almost every cat wants to be a companion to a human, a friend. There are certainly felines who like to spend much of their time alone. I've cared for several like that. But that doesn't mean they don't want to be friends with a person. A few moments' chin-rub, a struggle before bed-time, a five-minute playing session make them very happy. An introverted cat is not one who wants to be alone all the time.

This is especially the case with shy cats, most of whom are *not* introverts. Most long to be a human's friend, to lie on a lap, to feel the warm touch of a hand on their heads. They are just frightened of taking the steps to those goals. But they will take them if given

the opportunity.

PAW has several shy cats available for adoption, such as Brazil, Esmé, and Cassie. Brazil is my foster-cat, so I am most familiar with him.

It took a long time for Brazil - nicknamed 'Shimmer', due to his smooth and handsome fur - to come around. There is usually something that starts the process, something a shy cat likes to see, something he enjoys to do. With Brazil, it was meal-times. The first time he let me touch him was while I was preparing the cats' meals. He would curl about my legs while I filled bowls and heated food. It was at those times that I was able to stroke him. Not at other times; that came later. But meal-times was the contact point. There is usually something like that for each cat.

Now, Shimmer is out all the time, wrestling with string-toys at play-time and tussling with his friend, Moxy, while they wait for meals. And Brazil will ask for attention. He will walk around the house, uttering plaintive little cries, or flop down in front of me. Then I will pick him up, sit and place him on my lap. Other times, I will walk past where he is lying contentedly and stroke his head. He will lean into my hand, enjoying the attention.

Like many shy cats, Brazil may always start easily; he hides when visitors call. But a shy cat's experience in foster-care carries over into his permanent home, when he gains one. I have no doubt that Brazil will come around faster in a new home than he did with me, especially if he has a congenial feline pal.

A shy cat needs assurance, and once he finds it from one human, he begins to suspect that he will receive it from most. And what's important to remember is that a shy cat wants that assurance, wants that attention, wants that love. If these qualities come with patience and compassion, the shy cat will be ready to accept them.

~ James Thorne.



Editor's Note: the staff of PAWPrints welcomes all comments regarding this and past issues, and suggestions for the benefit of future issues.