

Cats are wonderful, unique pets

I never take any animal home from the clinic. I'm not hard hearted. Too many sad stories pass through the clinic. If I take home the stray kitten someone found in a dumpster what happens when the three-legged pup needs a home?

About Animals
Dr. Brad Davis
an animal home.

HOUSE FILLED WITH ANIMALS

My wife never made such a voice. Our house is overrun with animals. Two dogs. Six birds. Three cats. All well taken care of and happy. People who come to the house will be fascinated by the birds, enamored with the dogs, but will often have a disdain for the cats.

I find that many people dislike cats. (My clue for this theory came from people saying, "I hate cats.")

I'm always fascinated when people say this. They puff out their chest and say it with a pride usually reserved for bragging about growing the blue ribbon radish at the state fair. It's as though they discovered the idea to hate cats, and

they're letting you in on it so you can start preaching it like it's some new anti-feline religion.

This disdain permeates our culture. Even in the lame *Dogs and Cats* movie, the cats were the villains. And it goes beyond just us.

A retiring vet from India visited my clinic for a day. A wonderful gentleman, he told me amazing stories about his practice. He videotaped me to take back and show his colleagues what American veterinarians are like. (Goofy, pudgy guys with pony tails!)

Anyway, he saw Bhubhub, our clinic cat, and stopped in his tracks, saying, "There is a cat running around!" I assured him it was fine. He then looked at me, and with a very serious expression, said, "But cats are evil!"

"Ya," I replied. "But that's part of their charm."

You can argue all day that cats are inferior pets, but they have surpassed dogs as the most common pet in the United States.

CATS ARE POPULAR

Cat popularity increases for many reasons, one important reason being the convenience. We live in a time that families don't sit around the house quilting all day. Most houses sit empty much of the time, as parents and kids race through their hectic schedules. Finding the time to get home to let the dog out can be difficult.

Finding time to play with the dog? Often near impossible. Cats don't need a lot of your time. Litter boxes can be cleaned when you get home, which means you don't have to rush back to avoid having the Yellow Sea on your hardwood floors. Also, cats take attention when they want it.

They'll let you know when that time is.

Add to that the lower cost of food and health care in cats, along with apartment living being much more conducive to kitties, and it's clear why they become a favorite in our society.

But what about that aloof personality? That lack of interest in you or your life bugs people.

Dogs bounce around the house when you get home, wagging their tail, seemingly saying, "It's you! It's you! It's you!"

Cats look at you through partially closed eyes and seem to say "Oh, it's you," then drift back off to dreamland.

CURING THE DISLIKE

People visit cat owners and become disgusted about this distant creature, and how it ignores them when they want to pet it, or climbs in their lap when they don't want it to. But the true cure for hating cats is not to visit one. The cure is to own one. Every time someone gets a kitten or an adult cat for the first time, they say the same

thing: "He (or she) isn't really like a cat at all!" Then they inform me about how the critter runs up to greet them, fetches, and plays all evening with them.

Being very social creatures, most breeds of dog play with and get petted by anyone with relatively equal excitement. You can almost see a young Labrador's eyes light up when he sees someone, seemingly screaming, "A human! Love you! Pet me!"

Most cats treat their owners very differently than guests. They don't want any person; they want *their* person. Once you own one, and you become their person, usually you get hooked.

PERSONALITIES VARY

Each cat has a different personality all its own, and most can be very charming in their own way. Get 10 golden retrievers in a room and you have maybe two different personalities between them. Get 10 cats in a room, and you'll have at least 19 different personalities! I'm a dog person at heart, but cats have much to offer, and certainly more and more people learn this all the time. You may want to give owning a cat a try. They really do make great pets!

Dr. Brad Davis is the medical director for the VCA of Garden City. Feel free to write him at VCA of Garden City, 2085 Inland Road, Garden City, MI, 48135 with questions and comments.



Cynthia Ohanian holds a magic wand that adds a touch of whimsy to a powder room.

HISTORY

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is on one wall.

Also on the wall is a collection of medals and honors that Gail Lohanoff's father, a navigator and pilot, received in World War II. These include three Purple Hearts, a Distinguished Flying Cross and a Distinguished Medal of Honor.

Ohanian had the collection, together with Capt. Creighton's Air Force uniform photo, framed at Michigan Design Center in Troy. A Masonic sword that belonged to Gail's great-grandfather hangs under the arrangement.

Next came the spacious family room, featuring deeper colors and earth tones.

The burgundy upholstery conceals normal wear and tear. Two large burgundy floor cushions for Mac and Molly, the Lohanoffs' dogs, are made of fabric developed by Robert Allen that repels water and odors. Burgundy is also on the upholstery and valance at the window seat.

A cabinet was built to house the TV. Also in the room are a recliner and a granite cocktail table.

Prints showing the Creighton family castle hang on a wall. These were found by the Lohanoffs' son when he was studying in Scotland. The Creighton name dates back to the 1700s.

LIGHT TOUCHES

A downstairs powder room features dark cabinetry, and a wide border with an elegant design of tassels topping the gold and white striped wallpaper. A magic wand adds a touch of whimsy among the accessories on the granite vanity.

The upstairs master bedroom is a cheerful room with light colors and floral patterns, including a design around the perimeter of a recessed area of the ceiling. Gail Lohanoff calls this room her "sanctuary."

"It's like Queen for a Day here," she said. "I want it to be happy and light. I'm not moving to Florida."

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