

Barn Adoptions

A home for every cat

Where do “barn” cats come from?

- Stray (including those brought in by cruelty and rescue and ACO's)
- Owner surrender
- TNR
- Cruelty cases
- Transfers from other shelters

Criteria for barn placement



- History of living outside, known or assumed
- In good body condition
- Cleared by shelter med team for barn placement
- Cleared behaviorally
- Exceptions for those not traditionally thought of as barn cats

Cleared behaviorally, what does that mean?



- History of unsocial behavior, as noted by owner/ caregiver
- Unable to socialize within a reasonable time frame
- From a hoarding case....
 - Socialize who we can within a reasonable time frame
 - Move on barn adoption for the rest, often quickly, to reduce risk for illness and stress related issues
- History of aggressive or unmanageable behaviors, as noted by owner or caregiver
 - May try to work with in shelter prior to barn placement
 - May move on barn adoption without working with behavior
 - Dependent on severity of behavior and how the cat is doing emotionally while in our care
 - Biting, destructive behaviors, inappropriate elimination, hyper-stimulation

Social Cats



- History of living outside, assumed or as indicated by owner/caregiver
- Most often concurrent with difficult behaviors
- Transparent adoption policy
- Availability of barn adopters
- Size of cat population
- Availability of traditional adopters
- Available for both barn and traditional adoption

Kittens



- Always unsocial
- Have always tried socialization within a reasonable time frame
- Generally 10/12 weeks and up
- Can be up for traditional adoption as well
- Must go to a home with other cats/ kittens

Declawed cats



- Always cleared by shelter management
- Always have a behavior concern that makes them inappropriate for traditional adoption
 - Biting/ aggression
 - Litterbox issues
- Have generally tried them in foster prior to barn adoption
- Last resort...
 - Must be in good body condition
 - Cleared by shelter med team, as well

Why not foster?



- Lack of fosters for cats with behavior issues
 - Need to commit to a long term foster
 - Be prepared for patience, lack of apparent progress and lots of hours put in
 - Be comfortable with potential barn placement
- Expectations of adopters
- History of cat suggests that barn placement is more appropriate
- We will always try foster if it is appropriate/ feasible
- Save resources for cats who are more readily adoptable = help more cats

The adopters



- ALWAYS want to help shelter cats... they can find a free cat anywhere
- Range from brand new to barn cats to folks who have been doing this forever
- Provide shelter, medical care, food and water
- Often have amazing situations!!
- Often want a buddy in a workshop or while they work on their property
- Often looking for rodent control, but not always

Screening process



- Apply for adoption
- Application is fielded by myself or the adoptions folks
- A little internet stalking
 - Google maps most common
- Speak with adopter about situation and needs/ wants
- Tricky, but not a denial
 - Heavily populated areas
 - Factories
- These are denials:
 - Any history of animal cruelty
 - No outbuilding/ safe space
 - Unsterilized cats on the property, unwilling to sterilize

Not always a barn cat



- May use “waiting barn placement” as a place holder
- May socialize while waiting for adopter, either in shelter or in foster
- New information changes outcome
 - Medical changes
 - Changes to known history

Benefits of barn placement for some cats



- Freedom to be themselves
- Freedom to engage in feline specific behaviors
- Barn adopters have different expectations
- Living in an environment they understand
- For some, it's the only outcome possible

Valid concerns



- Shortened life span.... Anecdotaly, this is not the case
 - Wildlife
 - Songbirds
 - Cars
 - Predators
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- Sterilized cats with consistent resources roam less
 - Managed colonies of cats tend to be stable in numbers, health and territory

Barn programs are widely accepted in animal sheltering as a way to save lives

Questions?