



## **“Cats & Scratching Posts”**

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**Many of us "cringe" when our cats decide to use their "thousand dollar scratching posts" (i.e. our furniture) to sharpen and liven up their claws. You know they must be ready for when that little furry mouse crosses their path, or in case there is a reason that they need to defend themselves. They walk up, stretch and then proceed to carry out their sharpening rituals. Some call this "cat scratch fever". Well actually it's not a disease, it's just the desire to claw. Usually the cat's choices may be only your finest furniture, a little wallpaper, or sometimes even draperies will do.**

**Cats will scratch for a number of reasons. First off, scratching keeps their claws shapely. We schedule manicures for ourselves because it feels and looks great to us. A cat does the same thing, however scheduling their scratching session with the sofa. It doesn't only sharpen the claws, but it removes the old outer husk of the nail, and it just plain "feels good".**

**Scratching is also a type of territorial marking. Cats will occasionally scratch in a preferred sleeping spot, or anywhere else they may spend a great deal of time. Doors or windowsills make great scratching spots. If an outdoor cat wanders by and your indoor cat sees him, she will scratch in vain to attempt to let the other cat know that this is her territory. They also want their scent to be vivid, so the other cat knows that this is their territory. The sebaceous glands in the cat's paws leave an odor at the scratched area, and this is one more way that your cat can stake her claim.**

**How can you make sure that your cat scratches only in approved areas? Well, think on their level. Cats like to scratch on sturdy, upright objects such as trees. Your furniture is the next best object. They like to stretch out to their full length, tail included. This could mean 3 feet high. Cats also like to scratch on rough objects. Make, choose or purchase a scratching post that is covered with material such as sisal or burlap. Some cats like scratching on bare wood or logs covered with bark. Provide your cat with its own small "tree" somewhere in the house & some place stable. If you use carpet, try covering the post so the rough underside is showing. Your cat will be able to distinguish better the difference between the carpet on the floor and on the post.**

Next, put the scratching post in a convenient area. If it is hidden, your cat won't be attracted to it. A corner of your living room usually works well. Sometimes a cat will protest if you change the natural order of things. Watch for a particular area that your cat goes to enjoy his scratching and that can prompt an accurate placement for your scratching post. When you teach your cat to use the post, try running your fingernails up and down the post. The sound or motion will attract your cat. You can even spread catnip at the base to spark your cat's interest.

Finally, when your cat uses the appropriate place to scratch, give her lots of "praise".

Beltrami Humane Society currently has 45 cat kennels in our facility. Each of these cats and/or kittens are beautiful in their own special way. They need individual daily attention. They have their very own temperaments and personalities. Some of them are rowdy and out-going, some are timid or shy. They display a variety of colors and sizes, and solely depend on us for their daily needs and survival. They enjoy the interaction, cares & comforts offered by our staff, but wait with anticipation for their special day to go to their new forever homes. We depend on many of you "our volunteers" to come in (as your schedules permit) to help with any extra grooming, socializing, playful interaction, and even occasional light duties throughout the facility. Because our residents are often times out of their comfort zones or original environments, they need extra socialization and assurance while they wait for their new homes. If you are somebody who can offer extra care and compassion, we invite you to come to the shelter and visit our great selection of animals. Perhaps you too will find a new shelter companion of your very own, or at least take home the gratification and reward of making a difference in the day of a very special animal.

Easter is April 8th this year. In honor of this holiday, please help us give the homeless animals at Beltrami Humane Society special attention: a treat and a toy of their very own. Your donation of \$10 for each animal sponsored will help purchase an Easter treat for one of the animals. An acknowledgement of your contribution will be displayed at the shelter and you will receive a photo "thank you" from each sponsored animal. You can make your donation online or mail your check to: Beltrami Humane Society, P.O. Box 1903, Bemidji, MN 56619-1903. If you donate online, please specify the donation is for the Easter Basket fundraiser. Thank you for your help!

If you wish to view our animals online, visit our website photo gallery at [www.beltramihumane.com](http://www.beltramihumane.com) or also see them on [www.petfinder.com](http://www.petfinder.com). Pets of the Month can be seen at Pamida, photo snapshots can be seen at your friendly Walmart at the ends of the pet aisles (we're participants of the Very

**Best Pet Network), or you can hear about our Pet of the Week on KKBJ Mix 103 on your early show. Visit our shelter at 1612 Carr Lake Rd SE, Bemidji, MN or call us at 218 751-7910 with any questions. Hours of operation are Tuesdays through Saturdays, 12-5:30 p.m.**

**Shelter Wishes: Clay Cat litter, Cat & Kitten Chow, Cat Climbing Trees, Cleaning Supplies**