

MAY VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH

LYKA NIEDZWIEDZ

What I like best about volunteering at Colony Cats:

Volunteering at Colony Cats gives me a deep sense of purpose and fulfillment. It is rewarding to know that the time, care, and attention I give are making a difference in the lives of these cats. As a bonus, I get to pet them as much as I like and share quiet moments that help them feel safe and loved. At the same time, those interactions give me a chance to unwind and connect. It's a simple joy, but it makes the entire experience more special.

My pets at home:

My one and only baby is a 9-year-old black cat named **Dexter**—yes, inspired by the TV series. He started off as a street cat, but one day decided he was done with that life and boldly hopped into the driver's seat of a kind stranger's car. From there, his journey took him to a local shelter and then to a now closed cat café, where we were lucky enough to adopt him. These days, Dexter lives the good life; completely spoiled, totally in charge, and ruling the house like the king he believes he is!

What I'd like you to know about me:

Every other week, I volunteer at the adoption center helping with cleaning, usually alongside my husband, Jeff. Behind the scenes, I also assist by processing adoption applications and transcribing intake voicemails. With my 9–6 job spent on the phone most of the day, I truly appreciate any chance to slow down, especially when it means spending time with my little family.

Where you can find me when I'm not volunteering for Colony Cats:

Outside of volunteering, you'll usually find me in the kitchen trying out new recipes I've discovered online, catching up with my family overseas, or planning fun trips with my husband. I'm a fan of true crime documentaries—oddly, I find them relaxing. And whenever I can, I go outside for a walk around the neighborhood or a nearby park to break up my routine and stay active.

What's your advice to a new Colony Cats volunteer?:

Starting out can be a lot at first, but it gets easier along the way. Be patient with yourself as you learn, and remember that even everyday tasks like cleaning and feeding make a big difference in keeping the cats happy and healthy. And if you can't always be in the center, there are other ways to help, like working on applications or be an event volunteer. No matter how you pitch in, you're making a positive impact in more ways than you think.



Your unique Q&A, thoughts, or favorite saying:

Let's look out for the ones who need us most—protect the vulnerable, care for the overlooked, and be a voice for those who can't speak. Stray animals are living stories often shaped by hunger, fear, and survival. A small act of kindness can mean everything to them. Put out a little food, leave some clean water, or offer a gentle word instead of turning them away. They don't ask for much, just a chance to live a life without pain.

