

## **General Information**

### **What is the MLAP?**

It is our acronym for the Mishawaka Luv-a-Pet Center, which is the adoption center for cats located within the PetSmart store in Mishawaka, Indiana. For years the adoption center was called the Luv-A Pet by PetSmart, and because this particular store is in Mishawaka – well, it became the MLAP. It is a great opportunity for us to show our cats.

The adoption center is actually a very small room located in the store. To find it, go in the store and walk half way to the vertical center aisle and look to your right – you will see the area. It backs up to the vet space. You can see into the room through the glass wall. Located in the room is a sink, a metal storage cabinet and two large metal set of cages on wheels.

The MLAP has five cages on the top row and three larger cages on the bottom.

It is this space that we are obligated to clean once a day while our cats are there.

### **How is it PetsConnect! cats are able to participate?**

PetSmart has an associate program. A rescue or shelter can fill out the appropriate forms and submit them for approval. Any organization doing adoptions in PetSmart stores must be a not for profit and have agreed to comply with a set of rules. PetSmart is an advocate of neuter/spay programs. All animals are spayed/neutered prior to adoption. Once a year we go over a long list of dos and don't's with the PetSmart store director and twice a year we submit a lot of paperwork to the corporate office indicating where we are at with spay/neuter and adoption follow up.

### **I want to help the cats get adopted:**

One way to help the cats find homes is to help us keep the MLAP clean! And to be at the MLAP when our cats are there to talk to potential adopters, to get cats out so they can hold them, to let the cats and kittens play in the room so people can see how wonderful they are.

## **Cleaning the MLAP**

### **What do I do?**

1. Find the key that will unlock the cat cages. For confidentiality and security purposes, we will not post that particular information here.
2. Unlock the cages.
3. Put the key back where you found it.
4. Scoop out the litter boxes, add a bit of litter as needed.
5. Clean out the water bowls and give cats fresh water.
6. Fill the food bowls. Please note that kittens get kitten food, and some cats will have special food but there will be a note indicating this as needed. Food is stored in metal cabinet.
7. Clean the cages – if needed use cleaner and paper towels provided in the metal cabinet and clean the inside of the cages, sweep as needed, shake out rugs, blankets and replace as needed.
8. Play with the cats, especially the kittens. Let the kittens run around for awhile as they need the exercise.
9. Be sure you lock up the cages before you leave, even the empty cages!

### **Some additional notes:**

- On Scooping – most of the litter is dusty and the cages the cats are in are small – please do not scoop out the litter boxes inside the cages as that litter can effect the health of the cats. Scoop the litter boxes outside of the cages – and please do so gently to cut down on the dust. This is better for your health too.
- Take a moment before hand to check out the website and read about the cats so if a guest stops by and asks you questions about a cat you can answer them.
- Let the cats out one by one if you do not know them. Generally, the cats get along but sometimes they are stressed and cop attitudes. For some cats, going from the run of a home to a small cage is simply not their idea of a good time. And it does not matter how we try to explain it to them that this is to help them find a new home – well, cats can be cats.
- Be Responsible! If you have signed up you must show up or find a volunteer to take your place. The organization gets docked when a volunteer does not show up to clean – when that happens then the employees of PetSmart must clean. Not showing up puts our cats at risk of loosing this wonderful opportunity to find homes!

## **PetSmart does have rules!**

- Dress appropriately – you know what needs to be covered. The store prefers closed shoes. Hang outerwear in the employee area on the coat rack.
- Do not leave drinks or food out where the public can see them – basically, no food or drink on the sales floor.
- Be Courteous to customers at all times! If you are being harassed by a customer seek a PetSmart Manager. If you are being annoyed, just step back out of the situation.

## **Oh My Gosh, People are Asking Me Questions about the Cats – What do I Say?**

### *Is this cat fixed?*

All the cats are neutered (male) or spayed (female).

### *Will it shed?*

yes

### *Has it been tested for Feline Leukemia?*

Yes

### *Is it litter box trained?*

Yes

### *Is it up to date on its shots?*

Yes, kittens may need another kitty shot or two, and depending on age, may need a rabies shot.

### *Is it good with dogs, cats, kids?*

At this point, you can look at the crate card for that particular cat and answer the question depending on what is noted on the cat's crate card.

### *I want a kitten to declaw:*

We do not advocate declawing: please redirect them to an adult cat who is already declawed.

### *I want one kitten and it will be left alone for long periods:*

Kittens do better in pairs, always. Redirect them to a young adult cat.

### *Have more questions?*

Email us at [petsconnect@petsconnect.org](mailto:petsconnect@petsconnect.org)