



July 15, 2023

*All times listed are Eastern Time.*

10:00–10:15 a.m.

**Stacy LeBaron, Community Cats Podcast**

Opening Remarks

10:15–11:30 a.m.

**Dr. Julie Levy, Fran Marino Endowed Distinguished Professor of Shelter Medicine Education,  
College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Florida**

### **Research Breakthroughs for FeLV+ Cats**

In this session, we'll discuss ongoing and recently published research on the health and wellbeing of cats with FeLV:

- *Good News for Florida Shelter Cats with FeLV and FIV.* Adoption of cats with FIV, which is less contagious and less likely to cause disease than FeLV, has become increasingly common over the past decade. Although lagging behind FIV, more shelters are also adopting out cats with FeLV. A survey of Florida shelters indicates that more than half now make adoption a lifesaving option for cats with FeLV.
- *The Austin FeLV Lifetime Study: What Have We Learned From 130 FeLV+ Cats?* There is little agreement about the best tests for FeLV and what results mean for the long-term outcome of FeLV+ cats. Now in its 6th year, the Austin FeLV Lifetime Study is tracking the survival of 130 cats adopted from Austin Pets Alive's FeLV adoption program more than 6 years ago. Find out how the cats are doing now and what their outcomes tell us about the battery of tests performed at the beginning of the study.
- *An FIP Miracle Cure for Shelter Cats Co-Infected with FeLV: 200 Cats and Counting.* Cats co-infected with both FeLV and FIP have historically carried a poor prognosis for survival. But a new cure for FIP, not yet approved for clinical use in the US, is surprising researchers and veterinarians by achieving the same high cure rates as observed in cats without FeLV. No less interesting are the lengths that shelters and cat owners are going through to crowd-source life-saving medication to fight one of the most deadly diseases of cats.

### **About Dr. Levy**

Dr. Julie Levy is on the Shelter Medicine faculty at the University of Florida, where she focuses on the health and welfare of animals in shelters, feline infectious diseases, and humane alternatives for cat population control. She founded Operation Catnip, a nonprofit university partner program that has spayed, neutered, and vaccinated more than 80,000 community cats in Gainesville since 1998. In 2008, she

joined Dr. Cynda Crawford to found Maddie's Shelter Medicine Program at the College of Veterinary Medicine, an educational and discovery initiative with a global impact on the care of homeless animals. In 2014, she and Dr. Kate Hurley launched the Million Cat Challenge, a shelter-based campaign that saved more than 3.5 million cats in shelters across North America. In 2022, she helped start Maddie's Million Pet Challenge to create transformative "communities of practice" that deliver access to care through humane, community-centric programming — inside and outside of the shelter — to achieve the right outcome for every pet.

11:45–12:30 p.m.

**Audry Cichosz, Shelter Operations Coordinator, Tree House Humane Society**

**Jamie Gay, Director of Operations, Tree House Humane Society**

### **Waitlist Management & Admission Processes for Feline Leukemia Positive Cats**

At times, it can be truly difficult to find placement within a shelter environment for cats who have been diagnosed with Feline Leukemia, although with the right practices in place it is possible to develop and manage one's own FeLV+ program in new ways! Over time at Tree House Humane Society we have developed a waitlist management and admission process that has been helping us successfully grow and improve our program in order to adopt more Feline Leukemia positive kitties into their forever homes. In this presentation, we will discuss Tree House's waitlist management system, admission and acclimation processes, resources provided as well as further information in regards to how our Feline Leukemia positive kitties are being brought into our care.

### **About Audry Cichosz**

Audry has worked at Tree House Humane Society since February of 2021 and is currently the shelter's Operations Coordinator. At Tree House, Audry manages the FeLV/FIV admission program, public intakes, as well as plans and facilitates transfers with partnering organizations. Outside of her work at the shelter, Audry is about to begin her senior year at Northeastern Illinois University majoring in Social Work. In Audry's free time she enjoys spending time with her dog Gabby and volunteering at her local food pantry.

### **About Jamie Gay**

Jamie Gay is the Director of Operations at Tree House Humane Society. She graduated from Purdue University in 2013 with a Bachelors of Science focused in Animal Sciences. Since graduating, Jamie has devoted her career to the nonprofit animal welfare industry. In her previous role, she served as Director of Intake and Foster at PAWS Chicago. With over 10 years of experience in the industry, Jamie has developed a knack for saving lives. When Jamie isn't tending to the garden or rock climbing, she's typically surrounded by her animals. With a full house of 3 dogs, 2 indoor cats, and 3 outdoor cats, there is rarely an empty lap

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12:30–1:30 p.m.

**Lunch break**

1:30-2:30 p.m.

**Dr. Alfred Chua, Chief Marketing Officer, Biovalence Technologies**

### **Feline Leukemia: A Novel Approach to the Treatment of an Old Disease**

Feline Leukemia (FeLV) is invariably fatal. The virus belongs to the same family as the AIDS virus (HIV) which affects humans. Like AIDS, FeLV has a short viremic phase, a long latency period, and a painful terminal phase. Onset of disease results in a life expectancy of 1.37 years (Julie Levy et al. in *Viruses*, February 2021). In this presentation, we will review the recent science and observations around a novel therapeutic approach; a novel antiviral molecule called retromad1. I will share my personal observations

on the therapeutic use of retromad1 and its impact on both quality of life and life expectancy for FeLV+ cats.

#### **About Dr. Alfred Chua**

Dr. Chua graduated with a degree in veterinary medicine in France from the Ecole Nationale Vétérinaire de Lyon. At the same time, he obtained a Diplôme (Certificat d'Etudes Supérieures) in Immunology from the medical faculty of the Université Lyon I.

Upon graduation, Dr. Chua served as a food safety regulator of the Singapore government for 4 years where he spearheaded the regulations of drug residues, notably hormones and antibiotics, in animal-derived food for human consumption. After his stint as a regulator, Dr. Chua took regional management positions in various animal health multinational corporations (MNCs), directing regulatory and marketing teams across the Asia Pacific countries for more than 20 years.

As Dr. Chua's passion lies in the health of pets and the development of novel therapeutics, he is currently involved in the review and technical support of a novel therapeutic approach to feline leukemia or FeLV that shows a good promise in alleviating the symptoms allowing cats to live longer and active lives.

In his spare time, Dr. Chua likes to travel to meet people of different nationalities, experience different cultures and trek through ancient communes. At home, he goes to the gym, enjoys long walks along the beachfront, and plays with his friend's 2 adorable pomsies, Lady Petals and Sir Truffles.

2:30–3:30 p.m.

#### **Margaret Tompkins, President, Tompkins Foundation for FeLV Advocacy**

##### **Mixed Households - Can You? Should You? Will You?**

Far too often, the owner of a group of cats who have lived indoors together for years has one cat that gets sick. The owner takes the cat to the vet only to find out that the cat has FeLV and is suffering from FeLV-related disease. All the other cats in the household have been exposed to FeLV. That's a case of an accidentally mixed household. Now what? What do you do if you want to deliberately have a mixed household? Can FeLV+ cats live with negative cats with minimal risk? What to do? Can You Mix Them? Should You Mix Them? Will You Mix Them? Let's have a conversation.

#### **About Margaret Tompkins**

Margaret Tompkins is President of the Tompkins Foundation for FeLV Advocacy. She is a tireless advocate for FeLV education and FeLV+ cats. She actively networks FeLV+ cats all over the country. She is active on social media, especially Facebook, in promoting adoptions and education. She is a huge proponent of TNR and supports shelter and rescue programs that provide positive outcomes for FeLV+ cats. Her email is Margaret.Tompkins@comcast.net.

3:30–3:45 p.m.

#### **Break**

3:45–4:45 p.m.

#### **Kelly Garlock, Feline Leukemia Program Coordinator, Austin Pets Alive**

##### **Going Viral: How To Start A Successful Feline Leukemia Adoption Program**

In this session, we'll explore current perceptions of Feline Leukemia and obstacles shelter and rescue professionals currently face in getting cats diagnosed with Feline Leukemia into adoptive homes. We will address how to safely house FeLV+ cats onsite, starting and running a successful FeLV foster program,

marketing these cats to prospective adopters, and ultimately placing cats some shelters label as “difficult” to place in adoptive homes.

**About Kelly Garlock**

Kelly Garlock is the Feline Leukemia Program Coordinator for Austin Pets Alive. Prior to this role, she served as an adoption counselor and a foster coordinator for APA’s neonatal cat program. In addition to advocating for special cat populations, she enjoys spending time outdoors with her children and traveling to find the best Texas barbecue.

4:45 p.m.

**Cat trivia and closing remarks**

*A special thanks to our sponsors who made today possible:*

*Tompkins Foundation for FeLV Advocacy  
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