

ERIN TO THE RESCUE!

Shelter life can be difficult on cats. Many cats struggle with new surroundings and meeting strangers. This can be especially true for senior cats, who have only ever known their once-homes. That's when BARCS foster volunteers like Erin Saul comes to their rescue! Erin specializes in the "hard-to-place" cases – those cats who are older, or who have medical, physical or behavioral challenges. A shelter is no place for cats like these to spend months or even a year waiting for the right adopter. So, Erin opens her home and heart to them with offerings of peace and quiet, and loving attention.

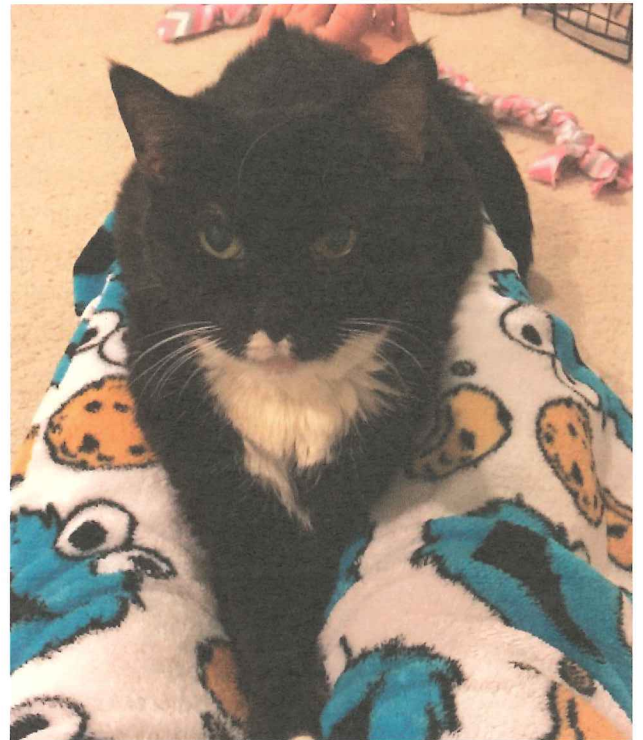
Erin began fostering for BARCS in 2012. It was May, and "kitten season" had just begun which always makes the shelter

overcrowded. **"We were inundated with cats all summer long,"** Erin said. **"And I couldn't stand to see these older cats being continually passed over."** That was when she decided to become a foster volunteer for BARCS.

"I'm a sucker for the older ones that have special needs," Erin said. Some, like her current senior foster, 14-year-old Trinity, have medical issues. "People often shy away from these cats at first," Erin said. "I foster them so the busy shelter team has one less cat to medicate and monitor daily." Senior Trinity has renal disease, and now she's on a special diet. Despite her diagnosis, Erin says that Trinity acts like a normal, happy cat and is ready for adoption.

"I've had about 47 fosters over the last 6 years." The average stay of the special needs cats that Erin chooses is between two and three months in her home. "One of my fosters took two months to come out from under the bed! I ended up fostering him for seven months, and I spent a lot of time working with him before he was adopted," Erin said. "If he'd had to spend those months cowering in corner of a cage in the shelter, nobody would have ever taken notice of him."

Instead, he was able to live in the quiet comfort of one of the



Trinity lounging in his favorite spot

two rooms Erin has dedicated for her feline lodgers.

Although Erin's current foster, Trinity, is still searching for her forever family, Erin remains positive that she has a special person out there, too. And that's what drives Erin to help, the mission at BARCS to make sure every cat gets a chance and is treated individually for their unique set of needs, no matter what their age or circumstance.

"It's so fulfilling," Erin said. "It's time well-spent. It's been the best decision I ever made."

If you are interested in giving a home to Trinity, please email foster.barcsg@gmail.com to set up an appointment with Erin. Trinity's adoption fee has been waived thanks to the Love Lasts Forever Program for senior pets (read more about this program on page 2).



Erin and Trinity