

# Meet Mac: He's One Cool Cat

By Joan Dunlop

**M**ac (Telane

Macintosh) and his brother Marty (Aston Martin) are feline residents dwelling in the Courtyard Homes of Asbury Methodist Village. Mac has achieved the distinction of becoming a therapy cat — a select grouping of animals who qualify, along with their handlers, as nurturers. They add a ray of sunshine to those who treasure the calming presence of adoring glances and soft fur to pet.

A Tonkinese breed, Mac was born on Nov. 8, 2011. He is a retired CFA Grand Premier Show Cat, who was part of the 2013 competitions and proudly bears the title of a Pets on Wheels Therapy Cat. He has his own cat calling card with his picture on the back.

Linda Pickle and Jim Pearson enjoy the prestige of being Mac's owners, but it is Linda who has undergone the rigorous training needed to make these therapy sessions possible. She arranges visits at local facilities, provides suitable transportation for Mac, and acts as the supervisor for these visits. She has a pad which she places bedside



Mac in his custom stroller.

within easy petting distance. Mac is placed there and the session begins. Through stroking and conversation (murmurs and meows) the encounter is underway. When Linda and Mac deem the timing is right, the visit comes to a close.

Mac is not a happy car traveler. This is evidenced by loud howls he makes to make his discomfort known. Once he spots his own private conveyance the situation turns completely around. His stroller is outfitted with restrictive screens, a harness complete with his identification badge which also carries his immunization records. It is hooded for seclusion. His fondness for his stroller becomes evident when it is chosen as one of his favorite napping places.

Therapy cats are not common, so the fact that Linda, Jim and Mac selected Asbury Methodist Village as their home makes this a very special environment indeed. It is in fact “the cat’s meow.”

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