

## The Cat Convert

**Learn how rescue cats won actor Bill Brochtrup's heart.**

*Laura Lee Bloor*

Actor Bill Brochtrup, best known for his role as John Irvin in TV dramas "NYPD Blue," was not a cat person.

In fact, if it weren't for a pesky rodent, Brochtrup may have never considered owning one.

"I had a rat in the house one day," Brochtrup says. "I was sitting on the floor eating Chinese food in front of the TV and all of a sudden this rat peered around the corner at me and I was like 'Ahh!' and then I thought, 'Hmm, cat, maybe?'"

So, about three years ago, Brochtrup recruited his first cat, Cindy. He went to Kitty Rescue, a Los Angeles-based organization dedicated to finding homes for needy cats, and specifically asked for a "starter cat." Brochtrup used the term jokingly to refer to a young adult cat whose personality was already set. He didn't feel comfortable enough with the feline species to raise a kitten yet.

Brochtrup will tell you he wasn't the one doing the picking that day. Cindy picked him. One look was all it took Brochtrup knew he was destined to take her home.

"Cindy is such a great cat," Brochtrup says. "She follows me around in whatever room I'm in. She's not aloof at all, she's so big hearted waits for me at the top of the stairs and everything. Its impossible to imagine that somebody abandoned her."

### Then Comes Baby

A year later, Brochtrup became concerned that Cindy was lonely while he was gone all day. Signifying his growing feline affection, he decided to get a second cat. This time Brochtrup chose People and Cats Together (PACT), a nonprofit placement group for cats. He told the workers exactly the type of cat he wanted and they produced a perfect match: Rocky a tiny feral kitten found on a dock that fit in the palm of Brochtrup's hand. After a couple of trial names, Rocky was re-named Baby.

"You can't really impose a name on a cat; they sort of pick it themselves, don't they?" he says.