

Baby's Hollywood Moment

Cat lover Suzanne Stowe blogs about taking her Siamese cat for an audition and a chance at stardom in L.A.

By Suzanne Stowe

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Baby is a star in blogger Suzanne Stowe's home. I recently attended America's Family Pet Expo and while there, talked with representatives of Hollywood Paws, an animal-training institute that prepares pets and their owners for work in film, television and print.

Since Baby has done photo shoots for CAT FANCY, I thought he might be a candidate for more work. A representative of Hollywood Paws called me last week and invited me to bring Baby to a studio in Los Angeles for an evaluation.

To make sure I had Baby under my control in a strange environment, I decided to get a harness and a leash. We practiced with the harness two days before the audition, and Baby did great. He tolerated it well and even walked around on the leash.

Bright and early Saturday morning, I packed up a bag with Baby's toys, treats and some of his pictures from the photo shoot. He put on his harness and then climbed into his crate and off we went to Los Angeles on our big adventure. An hour later we were on the lot of Los Angeles Center Studios.

Since it was Saturday, there weren't too many people around. There was a sign for parking for the TV show "Mad Men," so I was hoping to see a star.

We found our way to the offices of Hollywood Paws and waited for our appointment. Baby is a very vocal Siamese and he let all the dogs in the room know he was there. We were interviewed by a nice young lady named Stephanie and Baby was his usual friendly self. He jumped up on her desk, rubbed on her chair and explored the room.

We then met two of the trainers who evaluate the pets for confidence, body condition and openness to try new things. Baby scored very high on condition; of course, I was very proud of that. He didn't show as much confidence as they would like, but did eat his treats in a strange environment. The trainers told me that the cats that do the best are ones that have traveled and been exposed to lots of new experiences by their owners. Apparently, cats that were strays and have lived indoor/outdoors do better when going to different environments. Baby is strictly an indoor cat so considering that, he did very well.

I was offered the opportunity to attend a three-month training program. However, the cost and time involved won't work for me right now. And Baby seems really happy with his life just the way it is. But it was fun to try something new and see other people appreciate some of the special attributes I love about Baby. Maybe when I retire, we can look again into making Baby a star – but he is already a star in my household!