

## Contest Launched to End 'Cat Lady' Stereotype

**Tidy Cats' Campaign to End Cattiness invites owners of multiple cats to tell their stories.**

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A Tidy Cats national survey found that noncat owners have negative perceptions of multiple-cat owners and their homes. Tidy Cats has kicked off an essay/photo contest that aims to debunk myths about owners of multiple cats.

The Campaign to End Cattiness invites multiple-cat owners to submit stories about their fulfilled lives with their cats. Contest participants have a chance to win several prizes and just might help redefine what it means to be a "cat lady."

According to a recent Tidy Cats national survey, the majority of noncat owners have negative perceptions about multiple-cat owners and their homes. The survey, which polled 750 adults who do not own cats, found that noncat owners would describe people with more than one cat as a homebody (75 percent), lonely (69 percent) and a "crazy cat lady" (58 percent). In addition, noncat owners said they would describe multiple-cat owners' houses as smelly (75 percent), having furniture and bedding covered with hair (85 percent) and cluttered (66 percent).

On the other hand, the multiple-cat owners surveyed described themselves as being caring and loving (96 percent), generous (90 percent), and well-adjusted and fulfilled (87 percent). Nearly nine out of 10 cat owners (87 percent) said their cats do not prevent them from keeping a clean and odor-free home. Moreover, nearly a quarter of the 500 multiple-cat owners surveyed said they would like to eliminate the "crazy cat lady" stereotype, preferring such terms as "cat lover" and "animal lover."

"The survey found that 88 percent of multiple-cat owners credit their cats with making their lives more fulfilling and rewarding," said animal-welfare advocate Dr. Pia Salk, who is also the official spokesperson of the Campaign to End Cattiness. "We want to hear from these people and share their stories to help educate others about the abundant lives people live with their multiple cats."

Multiple-cat owners have until Sept. 11 to submit a photo and essay about their lives with their feline companions. Salk and cat lovers across America will select the winning entry.

The grand prize winner will receive \$5,000, a one-year supply of Tidy Cats cat litter, which is manufactured by Nestle Purina Petcare Co., and the opportunity to be featured in a Tidy Cats Cribs webisode that will appear online.