

## Hemingway Cats Under Scrutiny

**U.S. Department of Agriculture claims the Ernest Hemingway Home is exhibiting the authors famous polydactyl cats.**

Caretakers of Ernest Hemingways Key West home, which is home to dozens of polydactyl cats descended from the authors famous pet cat, have asked a federal judge to intervene in a dispute with the U.S. Department of Agriculture. The USDA says that the home and museum is an exhibitor of cats and, as such, must obtain a USDA Animal Welfare License.

The USDA wants to fine the museum up to \$200 a day for operating without the license, according to a lawsuit filed in Miami. Museum officials dispute the lawsuit, saying that visitors to the museum pay admission to see the famous authors home and office, not the cats.

The Ernest Hemingway Home and Museum in Key West, Fla., has more than 60 cats in residence. Most of the cats are polydactyl, meaning that they have extra toes on their paws. The cats are said to be descendents of a cat Hemingway received as a gift from a sailor in the mid 1930s.

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