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and costs for food and cat litter keep climbing," Kathy said. "Eventually we will need a piece of land in the country to build a larger sanctuary. The home we are in is only 896 square feet, not counting the basement. This is not nearly enough room for what we hope to achieve. That is a long-term goal."

Kathy envisions a safe haven in the country with a fenced in area and trees for cats to climb. A bigger garage and kennel is another dream.

"With enough space we would never have to worry about taking in a homeless animal," she said. "The thought makes me giddy."

She recently sent out letters to area businesses and individuals asking for support. For more information contact the sanctuary at 715-223-4147, by regular mail at 510 N. 3rd Ave., Abbotsford, WI 54405, or via email at killikat@charter.net.

Kathy got the attention of state assemblyman Scott Suder of Abbotsford, who recently wrote a letter of support for the fundraising

"You may not know that Kathy and her fiancé are both afflicted with serious health concerns and as a result are both on disability," Suder wrote. "Yet despite their physical limitations, they continue to provide whatever assistance they can to lost pets and abandoned animals in need.

"I am asking you to join me in helping her to continue her mission of mercy. In addition to monetary donations to assist with the substantial veterinary costs to nurse these animals back to health and provide continued care for them, Kathy is also in need of cat food, dog food, tovs or other related items."

Neighbors Todd and Karen Thoreson recently donated six big bags of cat food.

Cat litter is a big issue, with 16 litter boxes to maintain. They have fashioned a system to better filter the clumping type of litter, a process they are considering getting patented. All the litter boxes can be cleaned in about 10 minutes.

Kathy's stepfather, Gene Folyer, Spencer, helps with everything he can between his trips as a truck dri-

"He does the lawn, helps with the cat litter and purchases food sometimes," Kathy said. "He is the biggest volunteer ever.'

She said a lot of people want to give them cats.

"It would be nice if they could help with the expense of getting them fixed," she said.

Throughout the years Kathy has received calls from Medford, Owen, Dorchester, Colby, Marshfield, Wausau, Chippewa Falls and more, including Abbotsford.

"Members of the community are well aware I've been doing this for years," she added.

The compassion for cats stretches out into the community. They know where many wild (feral) cats are, and they take food to them during the winter. In the summer feeding the feral cats is not a big issue, as



BACKYARD VIEW- Cats being cared for at 9th Life Rescue and Sanctuary, Abbotsford, have a fenced in recreation area in the back yard they can access at any time through a two-way door in the kitchen.

their menu includes mice and other nuisance animals.

Some time ago they attended a meeting in Medford for a public hearing on a proposed law making it legal to hunt and shoot feral cats. A public outcry in the state killed the legislation, which could've led to hunters shooting someone's pet that got loose, Kathy noted.

David admits he was skeptical at first about providing sanctuary for so many cats. Now he is the first one to get out of bed at 2 a.m. to pick up a

"I never thought I'd want to live

with 25 cats," he said. "Now I wouldn't trade this life for anything. Most cats we end up with have been abused, abandoned or hurt in an accident. Animals have memories. feelings and habits.'

They shared numerous loving success stories about cats they have saved, including ones with diabetes, kidney failure, feline leukemia and ones hit by or thrown from cars.

"We give them a reason to fight," Kathy said.

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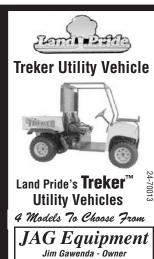




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