

MARCH VOLUNTEER OF THE MONTH EMI NISHIDA

What I like best about volunteering at Colony Cats:

Friendly and dependable staff – All volunteers are like-minded people who are truly bonded by love for cats. The whole ambience of “It’s all cats, top to bottom” sprinkled with cute cat-themed interior décor (including cat-printed used blankets!)

My pets at home:

I have no pets at home now. So, Colony Cats is a place where I can unleash my love for cats and play with them. For this reason, volunteering at Colony Cats is an important part of my life.

What I’d like you to know about me:

I am originally from Japan, and my mother language is Japanese. (English is my second language, although I have been in the US and Canada for more than 25 years.) In addition, I am a typical “owl” person (opposite of early bird), so I am usually quiet in the morning and don’t talk that much. But it doesn’t mean that I am in a bad mood or don’t want to talk. It is just because it is a little challenging to speak in English in the morning... I am happy inside every time I step into Colony Cats. Really! (You may find me talking to cats in Japanese. I may look a little crazy, but I sometimes cannot help doing so because cats seem to listen to me whichever language I am speaking. I’d appreciate it if everyone understands and bears with me...)

Where you can find me when I’m not volunteering for Colony Cats:

You can find me at café like Starbucks. I am a café goer. I like sitting at a café having a cup of coffee and a piece of sweets, while reading a book, watching YouTube videos, or doing nothing.

Dogs or Cats Rule?:

I would say “Cats Rule.” Why? Because cats can hit dogs in their face with a series of strong, quick cat punches. This is a “proven fact” that you can see in some people’s (funny) YouTube videos where the cat slaps his/her house-mate dog who takes the cat’s slap helplessly without attacking back. Also, it is usually the dog who is told off or blamed for breaking a flowerpot or vase in the living room of the owner even when it is the cat who is actually responsible for the damage. Cats are clever and crafty (AND cute and sweet at the same time...Maybe a little biased but for me). So, sorry dogs and dog lovers (including what I used to be), ...I cast my vote for “Cats Rule.”

What’s your advice to a new Colony Cats volunteer?:

My advice is that when you have a question or don’t know what to do, don’t hesitate to ask other volunteers. They are all helpful and dependable. Especially the senior volunteers don’t leave you at a loss. They send someone over to help you if they are not there with you. (I thank my shift lead



Brenda, for being able to write this.) So, don’t be afraid of not knowing much. I started volunteering with little knowledge or experience with cats. You can be a meaningful part of Colony Cats! Before anything else, enjoy your time with your lovely hairy friends!

Your unique Q&A, thoughts, or favorite saying:

The moment that touches my heart most since I started volunteering in Colony Cats is when I spotted the cats peacefully sleeping on the washed, clean blanket I had placed when cleaning their cage. I came to know that cats like clean blankets, unless the cat is still nervous and tries to hold on to the blanket given. When I watched the cats sleeping comfortably, I felt that they were now in a warm and safe place. Situations and reasons for their being brought in to Colony Cats vary from cat to cat, but they all have a harsh and a little sad background. While watching their sleeping face, I thought, “They are here with us. They are in good hands.” I was happy to feel that I was playing a tiny role in making their life a little better.”

