Tippy is my 8-year-old, 19-pound bundle of kitty love. I adopted him out of foster care, where he had been living for 3 years since he was born. Tippy's mother was found by foster agency outside, pregnant, and blind in one eye. She gave birth in foster care to a litter of three, pure-white kittens, one of whom was Tippy! Presumably nobody wanted to adopt Tippy because he has been completely deaf since birth. This is extra sad because being deaf doesn't affect Tippy at all, except that he is less jumpy than most cats, he doesn't always notice when I get home from work, and he meows extra loudly when he wants me to feed him. Tippy is very friendly and gregarious, and loves everybody he meets. He likes sleeping in my kitchen cupboards, being vacuumed with the hose, and drinking out of the bathtub faucet.

I am studying to be a social worker, and work in a battered women's shelter with families escaping violence. My work can be very emotionally taxing, but Tippy is always there for me and loves me unconditionally. He makes me laugh and cuddles with me every night. He is a perfect companion for me, and it was so sad and scary to see him suddenly get sick. Tippy had to go through several vet visits before we knew exactly what was wrong with him and how he should be treated, and it was a stressful time for both of us. I was glad to learn that his hyperthyroidism could be treated, but it was very expensive to do so, especially on my limited income. Thankfully I learned that there are many kind, generous people who understand how important pets can be to a person, and how devastating is it when we lose them. I'm grateful that I get to spend more time with Tippy, and that he has a chance to be happy and healthy.