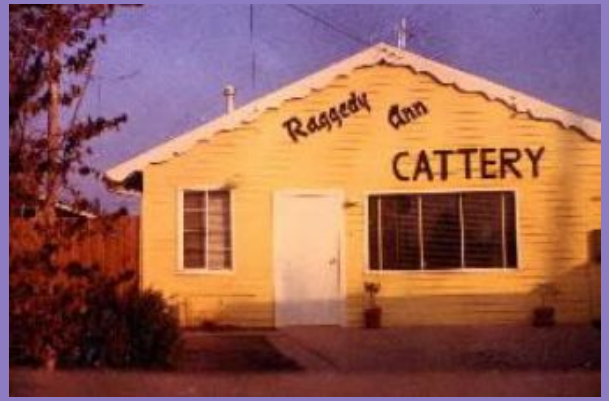
Ragdolls & Cherubim — Ideal Partners in Animal-Assisted Intervention

The gentle power of the Ragdoll Breed Group in AAI work

Ragdolls, Cherubim, and the Gift of Comfort: Perfect Partners in Animal-Assisted Interventions

The Ragdoll breed began in the 1960s in Riverside, California, where Ann Baker, a visionary breeder working with Black Persians and apple-headed lilac Balinese, founded her cattery, Raggedy Ann. From this humble beginning came the now-legendary foundation cat, Josephine, whose calm and trusting nature inspired the development of a breed celebrated for its gentle spirit.



Through selective breeding, Baker refined her cats for beauty, intelligence, and temperament—producing the affectionate, soft-voiced companions the world knows today as Ragdolls. For decades, only the pointed Ragdoll was accepted for championship competition. But on May 1, 2025, a vote by the TICA Ragdoll Breed Section of official members established the Ragdoll Breed Group, which now includes both Ragdolls (pointed cats) and Cherubim (mink, solid, and sepia cats).

The Blue-eyed Pointed, Mink, Solid, and Sepia cats in the Ragdoll Breed Group are judged by the same breed standard and now compete side by side for championship titles at TICA shows worldwide. The only genetic difference lies in one color-determining gene; their temperament, beauty, and grace are identical.

Photo Credit: Seanna Grochowski's Fuzzybunz Natalie

What Is Animal-Assisted Intervention (AAI)?

Animal-Assisted Interventions (AAI) are structured, goal-oriented programs that intentionally include animals in health, education, or human-service settings to promote **therapeutic, educational, or emotional gains**. A well-trained animal works alongside a professional or volunteer to enhance treatment or learning outcomes.

Regardless of coat type—Pointed, Mink, Solid, or Sepia—all pedigreed Ragdolls share these hallmark traits:

- Remarkable intelligence
- Deep affection and loyalty
- Gentle curiosity
- And the beloved *“Ragdoll flop”*—a symbol of complete trust and relaxation

It is these very qualities that make Ragdolls and Cherubim exceptional candidates for Animal-Assisted Interventions (AAI)—programs where animals help improve human health, learning, and emotional well-being.

The umbrella of AAI includes three main types of interaction:

- **Animal-Assisted Activities (AAA):** Casual visits that provide comfort, motivation, and recreation. These interactions are spontaneous and focus on enhancing quality of life—such as a therapy cat visiting seniors in a nursing home or students during exam week.

- **Animal-Assisted Education (AAE):** Structured, goal-driven sessions directed by educators to improve academic performance, social skills, or confidence—such as children reading aloud to a calm, nonjudgmental Ragdoll.

- **Animal-Assisted Therapy (AAT):** Documented therapeutic sessions led by healthcare or human-service professionals. For example, a physical therapist may use a cat’s presence to encourage gentle stretching or fine-motor exercises.

Service Animals

As per the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):

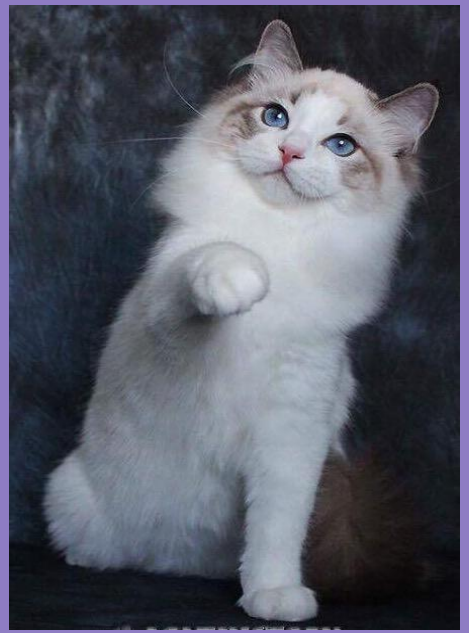
- Include service, guide, and hearing dogs trained to assist people with disabilities.
- Tasks may involve guiding the blind, alerting the deaf, reminding about medication, aiding mobility, or signaling medical alerts.
- Classified as **working animals**, not pets.
- Must perform tasks directly related to the person's disability.
- Allowed to accompany handlers anywhere the public is permitted (restaurants, businesses, airplanes).

Why Ragdolls and Cherubim Excel in AAI Work

The serene, trusting, and affectionate temperament, that defines both **Ragdolls and Cherubim,** makes them uniquely suited for AAI roles. Their quiet confidence and gentle curiosity allow them to bond effortlessly with people in hospitals, schools, nursing homes, and therapy centers.

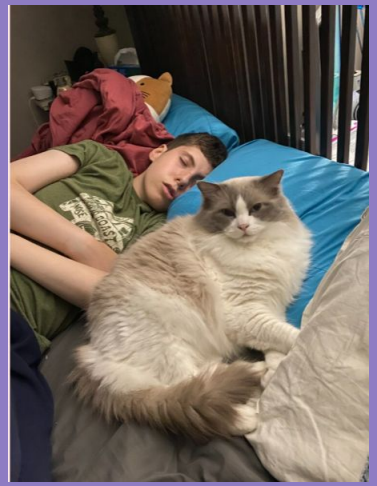
Whether easing anxiety in a child learning to read, bringing a smile to a recovering patient, or offering quiet companionship to a senior, these cats embody the very heart of the human-animal bond—reminding us, as Anatole France so beautifully wrote,

“Until one has loved an animal, a part of one’s soul remains unawakened.”



These cats don’t just win show rings– they win hearts and change lives!

- Consider training a Ragdoll or Cherubim for AAI volunteer work.
- Contemplate collaborating with reputable breeders and accredited AAI organizations.
- Join the Movement — Make a Difference!



Everyone Should Have the Opportunity to Own a NYDIVINEDOLLS Ragdoll or Cherubim…

The human–animal bond is one of life's most meaningful connections. Ragdolls and Cherubim bring peace, comfort, laughter, and unconditional love to every home they enter.

Now you can win a NYDIVINEDOLLS Ragdoll Kitten!
Enter our **Annual Essay Contest** for a chance to welcome your own bundle of joy by scanning the QR Code below for more details!

Video Credit: Miss Emily Parisette, future veterinarian and current Ragdoll fancier.