**Cat Cafe**

**By Olga Rodriguez** *| Associated Press*

Cat lovers in Northern California are pouncing at the chance to spend time with feline company at a cat cafe in Oakland.

Cat Town Cafe is giving dozens of visitors a chance to mingle with furry friends while sipping coffee and nibbling on cat-themed cookies.

The cafe opened last month and has been full since opening day. It was inspired by the cat cafe craze in Japan. There, many people live in cramped high-rise apartments that don't allow pets.

While making feline friends became popular therapy for lonely or anxious workers in Japan, the Oakland coffee shop puts the focus on the animals.

The tuxedo, orange tabby and Siamese cats napping or stretching in the sun in Cat Town come from a shelter. They are available for adoption.

The cafe wants to find homes for the felines, said Ann Dunn, founder of Cat Town Oakland. It's a nonprofit group that helps place cats least likely to be adopted from the Oakland Animal Shelter.

She said there were 14 adoptions in their first 12 days.

For a $10 donation to the organization, visitors get one hour of kitty company in the cafe. They can play with felines, scratch their backs and watch them nap. Each person is given a designated window of time. That's to make sure there are not too many people at once in the room. It is painted with cartoon-like, bright murals of cats.

Cat naps are very popular at the cafe, but Christina Souza, who visited on a recent afternoon, didn't seem to mind.

"I think it's fun, it's great, it's exciting," Souza said. "Why not have more venues where cats can let out their fun personalities?"

Cat cafes are open in London, Vienna and Paris. Cat Town's founders believe their coffee shop is the first of its kind in the United States.