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The News-Times/Bob East III
 Renee Gardiner of the New Milford Animal Welfare Center holds one of the nine cats the center is boarding for Regional Animal Control. Several other cats are being kept at other shelters.

Woman's house foreclosed; officials collect numerous cats

By Joseph Spector
 THE NEWS-TIMES

BROOKFIELD — While awaiting eviction from her house, an Overlook Drive woman has given the local animal control authority permission to capture dozens of her cats that have been drawing concern from many neighbors.

Danbury Superior Court reached foreclosure judgment on the house owned by Susan Leary and William Leary on Sept. 9 after mortgage payments to Eagle Federal Savings Bank in Torrington became overdue, according to court documents.

But dozens of cats from the Learys' property have been spotted running through the Over-

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A neighbor About Brookfield home

look Drive neighborhood, prompting complaints from neighbors.

“You see a whole bunch of cats floating around in different yards,” said one neighbor, who asked to remain anonymous. “We're all really concerned on what's going on in the house.”

The Learys could not be reached for comment.

The house was on public sale Jan. 18, but the court has yet to approve the sale to a prospective

buyer, said lawyer Robert Wolfe, whose Danbury firm is handling the auction of the house.

Audrey McKay, an officer for Regional Animal Control in New Milford, said that last year she was called upon to trap some of Leary's cats and collected 26. Susan Leary is still living in the house, McKay said.

During an eight-hour stretch Wednesday, McKay caught 14 cats in the vicinity. She said her cat-catching spree began, with Leary's permission, when foreclosure proceedings began in 1995.

“They just keeping multiplying unless it's taken care of,” McKay said. “We're trying to fix the situation and clear up the cat problem.”

Possible health risks, such as rabies, also have concerned residents since the cats, which appear friendly, have been in the neighborhood.

“No one has had any mice problems, that's for sure,” the neighbor said.



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