

## Boone County Adopts Long Claw Rule

Written by Not an Elle  
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At the end of last week, the [ABA picked up a story](#) about an Indiana courthouse using cats to control their pigeon problem.

Boone County, Indiana is about a half hour northwest of Indianapolis. The Boone County Courthouse ( [photo here](#) ) is in Lebanon, population just under 16,000. And evidently has a problem with pigeons. Since at least 2010, [local news has reported on the issue](#) and county officials have attempted several pigeon deterrents, including a plastic owl, to little avail. They've used a cat at least once before, which was apparently successful enough to merit a second attempt.

While the birds aren't actually in the courthouse, the cats are. The cats, Boone, a male, and Panda, a female, have a litter box in the dome of the courthouse and a kitty door allowing them to leave whenever they wish. Guess no one is worried about them having a kitty house party, [Tidy Cats litter commercial style](#). Or about this door letting in other animals. Like pigeons.

Cat owners might be wondering how this deterrent effect works, since cats are more or less the only creatures lazier than law students on winter break, and not much bigger than your typical well-fed courthouse pigeon. The deterrent plan plays to that strength: the cats essentially function as scarecrows, or, TRIGGER WARNING – bad pun ahead, “scaredycats”. They don't chase or hunt or eat pigeons; they merely sit in the windows of the courthouse, and that's frightening enough to keep the pigeons away. Guess there's a reason it's called “bird brained.” (Okay, we'll stop with the puns.)

According to the courthouse maintenance staff, the cats have scared the pigeons away from the courthouse and most of downtown Lebanon. The city must've been a popular avian destination, as the courthouse maintenance director claims the cats have saved the county thousands of dollars in cleanup costs and man hours, spent mostly cleaning up bird crap.

Maintenance says cleaning out a litter box is highly preferable to cleaning up the pigeon droppings that fell in front of the entrance door on a daily basis, and no we are not making any of this up.

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No word on whether there are any issues with litigants or litigators with cat allergies; or what, if anything the cats are sharpening their claws on; or what Boone County will do if the pigeons return (add more cats?). We do know, however, that Panda is spayed, so she and Boone won't be having any pigeon-repelling kittens, at least not together. The article doesn't say anything about Boone's reproductive status, but we do know that this is just another instance of the judicial system trampling all over a woman's right to choose. KIDDING.

We wish the best of luck to Boone County in keeping the shit off their courthouse, but we want to warn anyone who might try to play with the kitties. They're not de-clawed, and unlike most government workers, it doesn't take much to get them to go on strike.