



# RESQCATS™

A non-profit sanctuary dedicated to the rescue, care and adoption of abandoned cats and kittens

September 2005 Newsletter & Fall Fundraiser

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## Consider this:

- \* A gift donation to honor a friend or family member who loves cats but "has everything" – for a special birthday or "just because."
- \* Contributing to RESQCATS in memory or in honor of a special friend who has lost their furry friend.
- \* A donation in memory of a beloved pet.



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## President's Message

I want to keep this President's Message shorter than usual because I have so many wonderful stories to share with you. So here goes!

We are halfway through the 2005 kitten season at RESQCATS. As of this writing on August 1, 2005, RESQCATS has found homes for almost 70 stray and abandoned cats and kittens this year. And guess what! This is only our 8<sup>th</sup> kitten season and our **total adoptions have surpassed 900!** All of you have been part of this success and I don't want another minute to go by without thanking you and sending every one of you a great big hug!

We have continued to help stray and abandoned kittens and cats by getting them off the streets, providing them with shelter, food, love and medical care. Our normal protocol is for each kitty to have a physical exam by a veterinarian, be tested for feline Leukemia and/or FIV, receive a distemper vaccination and worming medication and of course be spayed or neutered before they go to a home. In addition, we provide any additional medical care above the normal protocol that he or she may need. Pain management is also an integral part of our protocol, especially for the mother cats who can really suffer from pain after their spay surgery. By helping them with their pain, their recovery is much faster and we really feel good about taking that extra step.

We are, however, suffering from a huge setback and need your help. The low-fee spay and neuter clinic is unable to offer their services to the public or to any rescue organizations at this time. Until a new veterinarian is hired to take on the huge task of spaying and neutering the cats and dogs in Santa Barbara, RESQCATS has been challenged to find new sources for spay and neuter surgeries. We refuse to change our protocol to have the kitties altered before they leave RESQCATS and want to continue to prevent future unwanted litters. However, even with the generous help of some veterinarians offering spay and neuter surgery at a reduced rate, our spay and neuter costs have almost tripled! A nominal increase in our adoption donation will help but can in no way make up that dollar difference. We want to be able to continue to help as many stray and abandoned kitties as possible as well as follow our normal medical protocol, including spaying and neutering the cats before they leave us.

Won't you please help?! Your tax-deductible donation will not only help cover our increased costs for surgeries, but it will prevent future unwanted litters. My fear is that many people will not alter their pets because of the increased costs and we will see all those kittens this Fall! I want to be prepared! You really can make a difference for the cats! I will continue to work hard, but I promise to also send you another thank you and another great big hug!

Sincerely,

Jeffyne Telson, President

For Saving the Lives of Stray & Abandoned Cats & Kittens!



Jeffyne with Sugarbear & Honey



## The Story of "Lilly"

(You read briefly about the pregnant mom named "Lilly" in the President's Message section of the June 2005 newsletter. Well, she did have her babies at RESQCATS and here is her story.)

At 6:30 a.m. on Wednesday, March 30, I opened an email that read: "HELP! We found a cat under our car on Easter Sunday. We think she is pregnant and it looks like she has a terrible eye infection. We have her in our apartment, but we are not allowed to have cats. What should we do?"

By 10 a.m. that same morning, Josh Distad and I connected by phone. I told him that RESQCATS takes in stray and abandoned kitties, that we take care of all their medical needs and that we do not abort kittens from pregnant moms. Josh said all that sounded great but that he would like to bring his girlfriend, Kym Pike, to RESQCATS that afternoon to check out our sanctuary before leaving the kitty with us. When they arrived, I gave them a tour of RESQCATS. Josh and Kym looked at each other, smiled and thought RESQCATS would be the PURRfect place for this beautiful sweet kitty to await the birth of her babies. We agreed to keep in touch...and that we did!

The volunteers named the Siamese mom-to-be, "Lilly" since she was found on Easter Sunday. She went to the vet immediately to be checked. She was obviously pregnant, but I was most concerned about the ulceration on one of her eyes...it protruded from the surface of what had been a beautiful blue eye and looked quite painful. The vet said Lilly was about 10 months old. An ultrasound indicated that Lilly carried at least three babies. Her eye was severely ulcerated and I was instructed to medicate it every two hours 'round the clock for the next three days! We agreed it would be fine for me to start medication at 6 a.m., medicate every two hours until 10 p.m., find my way to the cattery at 2 a.m., then begin the two-hour-interval cycle again at 6 a.m. I documented the exact times Lilly got her medication returning her to the vet three days later. Our goal was to prevent any scarring on her eye and hopefully save her sight.

The progress report was good! Over a 10-day period we were able to give the eye meds with longer intervals between sessions and each trip to the vet was showing progress. Lilly's big beautiful eye was not scarred and although it will always remain a little cloudy, her vision was saved. Then all we had to do was anxiously await the arrival of her babies!

I was amazed at Kym and Josh. I called to give them progress reports and they visited several times. They had fallen in love with Lilly and talked of moving to a place that would accept cats so that they could adopt her after she had her babies and was ready to find a



Lilly overlooking her kingdom



Tiger

home. They told me that Josh's birthday was on April 17 and that if Lilly should decide to have her babies on the 17<sup>th</sup> that they may just have to give one of her babies a home as well. WOW! We were in awe of such a special couple. Here was a beautiful, talkative sweet-heart of a kitty that someone obviously didn't care about...outside, pregnant, severely hurt with an ulcerated eye from the injury. And now...here was a compassionate couple who would even move to a new home with a landlord who would allow them to keep her.

On the morning of April 17<sup>th</sup>, I called to wish Josh a happy birthday and to congratulate him...Lilly had given birth to her babies in a basket on the upper shelf in her enclosure! Of all places! She had a secure crate on the ground filled with soft blankets and a heating pad and a condo full of luxurious fleece – all wonderful places to give birth...and she decides to have her babies up there! What if the basket had fallen! I must admit that this sort of behavior did fit Lilly's personality. She was what I call a "high maintenance" kitties...love me, love me more, love me first. She was a friendly, talkative, sweet, lap cat that we all dream of sharing our life with. Yet she always maintained her independence...it had to be her way.

By 9 a.m. many of the volunteers had dropped by RESQCATS to see Lilly and her newborns. Josh and Kym visited, of course, and celebrated not only Josh's birthday, but the special gift of Lilly giving birth on his birthday. And yes, the conversation did come up again about finding an apartment that would accept Lilly and one of her babies as well!

We moved Lilly and her three kittens to lower and safer ground! She was perfectly content inside the large crate full of fluffy warm blankets and I felt a whole lot better with her there. She stayed there and cared for her kittens during the next week but never missed an opportunity to come out to see us, eat, receive love, eat, talk to us, and eat some more!

After about a week, we just had to get in the crate and change the linens. We carefully placed her babies in a basket, changed all the blankets and put the kittens back where they were. Lilly was a



Wabbit

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*A cat with kittens nearly always decides sooner or later to move them.*

~SIDNEY DENHAM

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wonderful mom but extremely protective of her kittens and didn't go for that at all! She moved the babies out of the dog crate and into a small kitty condo. I tried three times to put the babies back into the crate...it was obviously much more spacious, they had been in it for a week and the condo was much too small for the four of them. But Lilly would have nothing to do with it and she moved the kittens from the big crate to the tiny condo every time. It was as if she put one of the signs you see in some hotels that say: "place this card on your bed if you want to help the earth, conserve water and sleep on the same linens again." Each time she moved the babies she looked at me as if to say, "I put that card on my bed and you just ignored it!" So for the next week, Lilly nursed her babies in the only way she could and would fit in the condo...in a sitting po-

*continues on page 4*

## Believe in Miracles (eight of them to be exact!)

I received a call in early May from a kind-hearted rescue person who had gotten a beautiful calico mommy out of a shelter in the Los Angeles area.. The litter was scheduled for euthanasia at the shelter due to not having a lack of space. She thought that "Betsy McCall's" babies were around 5-6 weeks old. She indicated that the three little kittens were able to eat on their own and could be weaned soon. Therefore, she had given Betsy five additional newborn kittens from another shelter to nurse because their own mother had been hit and killed by a car. I said, "WOW! That is a lot of kittens for one mom!" But it sounded like Betsy's own litter could be weaned within a short period of time and it would be okay for her to continue nursing the other five.

Normally, RESQCATS would not take out-of-the-area kitties, but something told me I needed to make an exception for these kitties.

A few days later the group arrived and I was shocked. We couldn't tell which kittens were the original three that belonged to Betsy and which were the other five that were not hers. They were all very close in size. I estimated that Betsy's three

were about 2-1/2 weeks old and the five newborns were about 10 days old...and that meant all of them were trying to nurse and none of them could eat on their own! Betsy weighed less than 6 pounds herself. The kittens and Betsy were dirty, smelly, had some kind of crud stuck under their nails, and all the boys (7 of the 8 kittens were boys) had enlarged scrotums.

I was grateful they came when they did. I knew we could help the mom and babies by supplemental bottle-feeding.

I was told that Betsy was sneezing and received some nose drops to give her. My stomach began to gnaw at me. Had the newborn litter of five been exposed to an upper respiratory virus for which they would have no antibodies to fight the infection? I knew that the person that took them in had good intentions...let the five babies nurse and grow up suckling from a mommy cat, (after all, bottle feeding five kittens around the clock for the next five weeks is a real job). I just wasn't sure that enough time had been taken to objectively evaluate the situation or make a judgment call on what would have been the healthiest thing to do rather than the easiest.

My gut feeling was right. Three of the five newborns became seriously ill with upper respiratory virus. Betsy's own kittens were able to avoid getting sick because they had received the antibodies from her to fight it off.

Within just a few days, one of the kittens became very sick. He was the tiniest of the litter and I don't think he ever had a chance. He drew his very last breath on the vet's table despite everything that was done to save him. I could only tell myself that his own mom, who had been killed by a car,



Life often starts early for Jeffyne at RQC



Jeffyne holding Betsy McCall with her flock

needed him to be with her in Heaven. It broke my heart, but my worries were not over.

Two others were sick. "Honey" gradually fought off the virus with the support of antibiotics twice a day. But little "Sugar Bear" looked as if he was headed down the same path as his brother that had died. He was the sickest little 5-1/2 ounce kitten I had ever seen. His little head was so stuffed up that he couldn't breathe which caused him to be uninterested in eating. His eye was so infected that I could barely open it to medicate it for fear of hurting him. The vet wasn't sure we could save his eye or him! His temperature kept dropping to 96-97 degrees. A normal temperature for a kitten can be as low as 99, but 101-102 is more like it!

Sugar Bear spent five days at La Cumbre Animal Hospital under the care of Beverly Holmes, DVM and her wonderful staff of technicians. He stayed in intensive care at the hospital for five days and came home with me every night. I was up every two hours to feed him, change his hot water bottles trying to keep his temperature up, medicate him, give him fluids, stimulate him to go to the bathroom...I ran my own little intensive care unit in our downstairs bathroom! His 5-1/2 ounce body fought its way all the way up to 9-1/2 ounces in about 10 days. The vet, the staff, and all the volunteers, not to mention me, were beyond happiness. By that time I was also beyond exhaustion.

Denny and Bonnie Epperson, Susan Leroy and Heather Thakarhucks took turns taking care of Sugar Bear on alternating nights so that I could catch up on some much needed sleep. I couldn't believe they would sign up for sleepless nights...but that is just how special they are.

After about two weeks, when Sugar Bear was reunited with his family it was a beautiful sight. Though he was much smaller than any of the other kittens, they all made concessions for him. He played a little slower, but we were all just glad to see him playing. Mommy and all her babies were starting to look better and appeared out of danger.

I mentioned to the vet that I was still concerned about the large scrotums on the male kittens. Upon examining one of them, the vet discovered a lot of fluid in his abdomen and feared a virus called FIP...it is 100% deadly. We had x-rays taken, an ultrasound was done, and fluid was extracted from one kitten's belly and sent into the lab for a pathologist and oncologist to review. The results: NOT FIP, but still inconclusive.

The best guess was that it was an undiagnosed virus that hit the abdomens of all of them. It may still be deadly since viruses cannot be treated. The only thing we could do was to support them with antibiotics. I left the vet's office that day with a warning that I could lose every single one of them to this unknown virus...all seven kit-



Vet technician Alithea feeds Sugar Bear



Sugar Bear sleeps & plays with one of his special volunteers

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# Danny's Corner

July, 2005

How time flies when you're as busy a kitten (teenager) as I am! My Mom and I had hoped to travel up to northern Washington State to deal with her storeroom this summer, but the van (which is where we live if you recall) needs attention. So it looks like we will continue to enjoy Santa Barbara with short trips over to Lompoc and the Santa Ynez Valley. We have safe parking places in both areas, but the BEST is right here in Santa Barbara.

Our very safe and secure home is the Holy Cross Church upper parking lot on the Mesa. There are two other RVers that park in the lot~ it's wonderfully quiet and peaceful! We are so very lucky to park nightly in this 'safe haven'! My Mom was the first to be put into the RV Safe Parking Program! It could have been very dangerous for us to park on the streets. We are blessed with our Church home now...we live on 'hallowed ground' as my Mom says.

My morning games have increased! I am the morning alarm clock for my Mom which is usually 5:30 AM or at the first crack of dawn. The first thing I do is make my presence VERY KNOWN! I pounce on her, give her one of my loving kitten kisses as she sleeps and tickle her face with my whiskers. She cradles me like a baby as we practice our kisses ever so gently. I stretch and look above the shelf over the bed, which means I want my feather stick which was once full of feathers on a wand, but I have chewed and played with it so much it is pretty bedraggled-looking. It is still a lot of fun to chase it, though~ I tear up and down the aisle in our Chevy van... it's like the Indianapolis 500!

Quite accidentally one morning my Mom waved her bra like one would when snapping a towel. What an odd contraption that was 'fluttering down from above...and it is a PURR-fect toy! I can jump almost up to the ceiling of the van which is about four feet high! This results in lots of laughter from my Mom! I usually perform these feats of high jumping several times. My job is to keep her happy!

The most recent trick I have discovered is to hide under the edge of the Indian rug that runs down the middle of the van (she can't see me this way!). The stick becomes yet another intrigue as all things are for kittens and cats. She taps it gently on the rug, my

paw darts out and then I quickly return it to my hiding place under the rug. I also crouch and hide behind the front curtain, make an unexpected dash for the bed and play hide-and-seek behind her large pillow. These are all wonderful games for both of us.



Danny's in his customary copilot's seat.

We play every morning for at least a half-hour, then we drive down to 7-11 to get her coffee and we are off to the beach. I venture out on my leash to search for what might have happened the night before (typical cat behavior) but scurry back in when I see a man walking by. My Mom is working with me on this...I was a very shy little kitten. Personally or is it cataly, I like to think I am very 'selective' about who I trust!

Weekends often find us behind Santa Barbara City College at the nice park on the knoll or having a picnic at the Edible Garden. We recently had a lovely Sunday picnic and I got a chance to explore new territory under many plants and small trees (always on my leash, of course). There's always an extra treat for me and I am quite content to be my Mom's picnic companion...flowers and all! She knits beautiful scarves while I snooze nearby. We also park at the top of Elings Park often so I can sniff out lizards and perhaps get in another nap.

I have grown into quite a handsome cat...so everyone tells my Mom. I think Jeffyne said it best when she said that we have both filled a void in each others' lives. Everyone we meet remarks on how 'bonded' we are. I still curl up near my Mom's face at night and "make biscuits" until we both fall asleep. These times grow shorter as I get older, but it still feels very loving and calming to both of us. I really love my life and love my mom!

Till next time, have a PURR-fect summer! Love~ Danny



## Lilly's Story

*continued from page 2*

sition, but at least it was on **her** terms. It did eventually get a little crowded and on **her** terms she decided that the little studio apartment was too small for her growing family and that the one bedroom/one bath (dog crate) was once again okay. It was too funny.

We watched the kittens grow into fat healthy kittens over the next few weeks. Lilly had to have extra supplements since the nursing drained so much from her body that her fur began to fall out. She was only a kitten herself and didn't weigh but six pounds. She was a kitten having kittens!

Josh and Kym visited at least two times every week for two months. They witnessed all the comings and goings of other RESQCATS kitties, got to know some of the volunteers, gave me a lot of support when I feared losing another sweet mommy kitty and eight kittens she was trying to care for, (see story: Believe in Miracles) offered a compassionate ear when my kitty, "Oreo" died suddenly and gave me a heartfelt hug when my dog, "Spirit" went to Heaven. They became part of the RESQCATS family.

Josh and Kym did find an apartment that would accept one of the little girl kittens that they named "Tiger" as well as Lilly. (Get it!...Tiger...Lilly!) They took their new little family home on June 18 after both kitties had been leukemia tested, wormed, vaccinated and spayed.

My eyes still tear up when I think about Lilly. I miss hearing her talk the minute I walk into the cattery and sitting in my lap giving so much love. I feel another tear swell up when I think about Josh and Kym. They are uniquely special in their love and compassion for this sweet little stray and her daughter. Tiger and Lilly are two of the luckiest kitties to ever come through RESQCATS. They have their own guardian angels... their names are Kym and Josh. ♦





## Some Special Thank You's!

♥ **Mary Lee Emard** fostered and adopted "Solo" from the time he was just a few days old. When he was old enough to begin eating on his own, he was diagnosed with a condition called megasophagus, which caused him to regurgitate his food every time he ate. In order to keep the food in his tummy, he had to be held in an upright position for 45 minutes to one hour after each meal. That was quite a commitment for anyone to make, but Mary Lee did not hesitate to do whatever it took. Solo has outgrown his condition and is doing just great thanks to his angel on earth, Mary Lee. She also returned to **RESQCATS** to adopt Solo's cousin, "Church" (named that because her sons say he is as quiet as a church mouse) so that Solo would have a buddy!

♥ **Denny and Bonnie Epperson** helped with fostering "Solo" as well as "Sugar Bear," a very sick kitten that required 'round the clock care. They gave me a break from several sleepless nights by taking care of each of them. They also took care of much of the extraordinary expenses for "Betsy McCall" and her kittens and fosters. Bonnie found homes for mommy and two of the kittens. (see *Believe in Miracles* story)

♥ **Susan Leroy** took in four bottle-fed babies that were found in a haystack. They were taken off the bottle two weeks too soon and arrived at **RESQCATS** suckling on each other because of it. They had to be fed every few hours, taught to eat on their own, and socialized. It took countless hours! She did a terrific job and made such a difference for them and for me!

♥ **Denny and Bonnie Epperson** took care of bottle-feeding two haystack kittens!

♥ **Candace Burton** adopted "Betsy McCall," a struggling mama cat and two kittens that she cared for. (see *Believe in Miracles* story)

♥ **Susan Leroy** helped with the 'round the clock care of "Sugar Bear," in addition to all the wonderful things she already does for **RESQCATS**.

♥ **Heather Thakarhuck** fostered "Sugar Bear" during his most critical time of need and 'round the clock care.

♥ **Beverly Holmes**, DVM at La Cumbre Animal Hospital gave "Sugar Bear" the gift of life.

♥ **HOT CATS** donated catnip toys for the adult resident cats.

♥ **Bill Payden** has helped so many of the 900 plus kitties that have passed through **RESQCATS** with his generous donations.

♥ **Mary and Edwin Taylor** fostered "Wally," "Sassy" and "Rocky" who were too sick to come directly to **RESQCATS**. They cared for these wonderful kittens with love, concern and tenderness while also attending to all their medical needs. They returned all three to **RESQCATS** happy and healthy!

♥ **Walt and Evelyne Chezum** gave a beautiful donation in the name of "Spirit" to help "Betsy McCall," "Sugar Bear" and "Honey."

♥ **Gerald Shreiber** made a wonderful donation to the **POLAR BEAR FUND** to help the kitties that need extraordinary health care beyond **RESQCATS** normal protocol. He is our angel from afar! (all the way from New Jersey)

♥ **Greg Haskell**, DVM at *Adobe Animal Hospital*, has helped with many of the special spay surgeries for **RESQCATS** kittens...especially "Patch."

♥ **Kathleen Reardon** fostered two kittens that were found inside the Summerland Market until **RESQCATS** had space for them She was the purrfect foster!

♥ **BJ Hawley** took care of "Snowie," a **RESQCATS** resident who underwent another surgery to remove skin cancer from her head due to all the years she lived outside exposed to the sun before she came to **RESQCATS**. BJ has been there to take care of our special love, "Snowie," for three surgeries now. She also dedicates hours to the feral kittens. They arrive in desperate need of love and socialization. It is not uncommon to find BJ spending hours of her time even on days she is not scheduled to be at **RESQCATS** working with them. She makes such a difference for them!

♥ **Keith and Chris Flannery** of *Flannery Designs & Graphics* donate their precious time to design the **RESQCATS** newsletter. They create three newsletters a year for us and come up with the design and fun graphics that you all enjoy!

♥ **Hayden Telson** spent a week of his summer vacation with me helping with **RESQCATS** at a time when we had many sick ones that needed special care. He helped to heal many of them.

♥ **Ron Faoro**, DVM at *St. Francis Pet Hospital*, helps so much with pain management for the adult mommies during and after their spay surgeries.

♥ **Paula and Melodie Haines** (The Polar Bear Angels) crocheted toys for the kitties, made baby blankets and put together special baskets for the kitties in memory of their "Polar Bear."

♥ **Claudia Salmone**, DVM, saw and cared for many of the hundreds of kitties that have passed through **RESQCATS** during her four years at La Cumbre Animal Hospital. We all will miss her.

*A kitten is so flexible that she is almost double; the hind parts are equivalent to another kitten with which the forepart plays. She does not discover that her tail belongs to you until you tread on it.*

~HENRY DAVID THOREAU



## Matching Gifts Program

Many of **RESQCATS**' wonderful supporters are employees of large, successful companies such as Starbucks Coffee, Blockbuster Video and Cisco Systems.

Did you know that these companies will match your cash donation to any IRS approved non-profit organization such as **RESQCATS**? Well they will!

Companies such as these and many others, will match your personal donation to a qualified 501 © (3), nonprofit organization on a dollar-for-dollar basis.

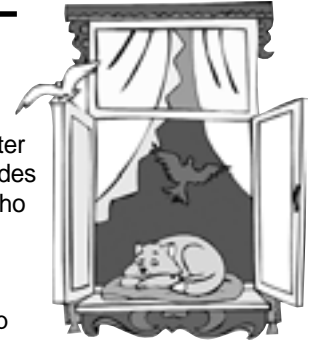
So if you'd like to double your support to **RESQCATS** without having to increase your own donation, contact your company's benefits department and ask about their Matching Gifts program.

If you'll send your company's Matching Gifts forms to **RESQCATS** along with your personal donation, we'll take care of all the paperwork.

As always, we at **RESQCATS** (especially the kitties) really appreciate your support!



# In Memory, Celebration & Honor of Some Very Special Friends



✿ In memory of my dad, **Edward Forster**.  
*From your daughter, Pru Broadwell*

✿ A remembrance for "**Spirit**," with our love.  
*Walt and Evelyne Chezum*

✿ Remembering "**Frisk**" for Jana and Steve Beck  
*Pet Sitters of Santa Barbara*

✿ For the Polar Bear Fund in memory of "**Gracie**" and for Les and Norma  
*Linda Higbee*

✿ In memory of my beloved, "**Moocher**" who died on Feb. 1, 2000 and whose company I still miss.  
*Roger West*

✿ In celebration of our kitty, "**Alfa's**" 17th birthday August of 2005.  
*Cindy and Mark Reinhardt*

✿ In memory of "**Rex**" Friar  
*Pet Sitters of Santa Barbara*

✿ In memory of "**Tia**," the sweetest feral kitty!  
*Stephanie Welch*

✿ In memory of "**Spanky**" Broderick  
*Pet Sitters of Santa Barbara*

✿ On behalf of my "**personality guy, Chico**," adopted and adored by Pat Pellino.  
*From Jo Neugent*

✿ In memory of "**Roxy Blue**."  
*Cristina and Chanel Battistone*

✿ In memory of "**Sophie**," a great dog that will never be forgotten. Died May 13, 2005.  
*The Raphaels*

✿ In memory of "**Hoku & Patches**"  
*Love, Ari*

✿ In memory of "**Scooter**" Carnahan  
*Pet Sitters of Santa Barbara*

✿ Not a day goes by that I don't think of you, "**Miejek**"  
*Love, Jeffyne*

✿ Remembering and missing my little sleeping buddy, "**Oreo**"  
*Love, Jeffyne*

✿ In memory of "Betsy McCall's" foster kitten who died so young, but resides in Heaven with his real mommy who was hit by a car.

✿ In memory of "**Boscowitz**" Tromp  
*Pet Sitters of Santa Barbara*

✿ In Loving memory of "**Ann Rothfarb**"  
*Erika Sacks*

✿ Remembering "**Basil**"...the best dog ever!  
*Pam and Rudy Perez*

✿ In honor of "**Calisto**" and "**Bowie Blue**" and congratulations to their parents, Rebecca and Jason Simpson who tied the knot and got married on July 6, 2005! (both Calisto and Bowie were adopted from RESQCATS)

✿ To all our animal friends:

It is with deep sadness that I share with you that we lost our beloved Spirit on June 15, 2005. Many of you knew that Spirit had been



**Spirit**

diagnosed with cancer of the voice box over a year ago. She had major surgery to remove her larynx and had an open breathing tube created in her neck that allowed her to breathe naturally. It was only the fourth surgery ever performed by a great team of veterinary specialists who were overwhelmed with Spirit's gentle disposition and her incredible will to live.

Unfortunately, despite the successful surgery, cancer had already spread to Spirit's lungs and in July 2004, doctors gave her only a couple of months to live. But amazingly, her wonderful attitude prevailed and she was able to stay with us almost a year!

Spirit turned 10 years old on June 1, 2005. She was the first dog that we adopted when we moved to Santa Barbara in 1995 when she became our second collie in addition to "Miejek."

Despite her grumbly exterior, Spirit was a very sweet and loving dog. Each time we added a new collie to her pack, she would accept them, hoping (to no avail), that they would raise her in the pack hierarchy.

When Spirit barked at "nothing", we used to say "she could see spirits." That is probably more true today than ever as she joins Miejek, Poseidon, Angel, Triton, and Destiny on that heavenly Rainbow Bridge.

**Spirit** leaves on the earth **Starr, Faith, Apollo, Ares and Misjef**, her collie pack friend, and two very sad guardians, **Jeffyne and Mitch**.



## Untitled

So many times I have tried to sit down and write about my beloved, "Miejek." She was my soulmate collie whose sudden death almost a year ago absolutely devastated me. I had already dealt with so many losses the year Miejek died and since then my kitty, "Oreo" and my dog "Spirit," have also joined her in Heaven. But it was Miejek's death that blew out all the light in my soul. When she died, I could not even get words to come out of my mouth the following few weeks are still a blur in my mind. I cannot talk about her without tearing up and feeling a huge lump in my throat and an empty space in my heart. For months, I wondered if I would ever be the same person again...happy, light-hearted and as much as I love to dance....would I ever feel like dancing again! I have shared with many of you that my new little collie "Misjef" (named for me..."Miss Jeff" but pronounced "Mischief" has helped bring light back to my soul. I see so much of Miejek in Misjef that I sometimes wonder if somehow Miejek's soul passes through her as if to somehow check in with me.



Miejek

I write this because I receive calls from others who have lost their animal friend and are considering adopting a kitty from RESQCATS. Pet Loss is not anything I have ever included in the RESQCATS newsletter, but I feel it is important to share some thoughts with you since so many of you share your most intimate feelings about your loss with me. I hear you open up your hearts and I understand the pain you feel. I am often at a loss for comforting words because I know there were no comforting words for me at the time Miejek died. So I just hope that my listening to you somehow helps.

I have heard so many times and experienced myself that one of the most difficult things about losing such a dear friend is that many people do not understand how special our animals are to us. Therefore they are unable to be the support that we need them to be. They have not experienced the beautiful gift of unconditional love that our animal friends give to us. They are always so happy to see us. Sometimes the wagging tail of a dog or the happy purr of a kitty is the only consistent thing in our hectic lives. In my opinion, the people who have not experienced the unconditional love of an animal have missed so much. An animal's love is love in the purest form. Therefore, when we lose them, our grief is also in the purest form.

Even now, having lost five kitties and four dogs in just a year and a half, people say.... "Well, Jeffyne, when you have as many animals as you do, you are bound to lose a lot!" Then add rescue work to that! Maybe they think I should get used to it somehow. After all, "it was just a cat"...or "it was just a dog"... "you have others or you can just get another one." Sharing any additional conversation about my feelings of loss with those particular people ends right then and there.

My advice to you would be the same...politely move onto something else or end the conversation. This is your time. And it is a time to surround yourself with the friends and family that understand what you are going through. Feel what you are feeling and experience the stages of grief. After all, there is no other way out. Understand that the stages of grief are exactly the same for the loss of an animal as they are when we lose a person but fewer people understand your feelings and therefore there is less emotional support.

My experience as a volunteer pet grief counselor on a hot-line has given me much insight into the stages of grief.

In their book, *The Final Farewell*, Marty Tousley, RN and Katherine Heuerman list the grief stages as: Shock and Disbelief, Emotional Release, Anger, Guilt, Physical Sensations, Depression, Fear and Acceptance.

**Shock** is one's reaction of numbness and even denial. It is our body's way of "cushioning the blow." We may go on as if nothing has happened because we are in such a state of shock.

**Emotional release** is when reality sets in and all the pain floods into our heart. It is overwhelming and our hearts feel like breaking.

**Anger** involves feelings of lack of control over a death..you can be angry at unrelated things, at your pet for leaving you, at the vet, at God or just everything!

**Guilt** is way of bargaining. What if I had done this..then my pet would still be here. Or if I had only seen the symptoms earlier..then I could have treated him sooner and he would be alive. Guilt is an endless effort to gain control over death..of which there is no control.

**Physical sensations** are those feelings such as a lump in your throat, a pit in your stomach, a hole in your heart.

**Depression** is just that...the horrible feeling of hopelessness and sadness.

**Fear** reminds us of how fragile we are and how temporary all lives really are.

**Acceptance and Resolution**....I am not sure what it really is. It is different for each of us. We will get to that later.

The stages of grief do not always follow the same order. A person can bounce back and forth several times in no particular order. Understand that grief work is yours and every person deals with it in his or her own way and time. And there is no time limit. You don't just wake up one morning and all the hurt is gone. We are changed forever. But grief does offer its own gift of beauty.

Part of the beauty of grief is that people will try to make you feel better...love them for that and appreciate their love for you. It does bring some very special people into our lives as well. And if you listen very carefully, one of them may just have a healing message for you. It happened to me.

For months, I tried to **accept** what happened to Miejek and to resolve her death in my heart and my mind. I felt I had dealt with all the other losses that year, even my father's suicide. I had even sort of tucked them away...as if in neat little envelopes that got filed away in my desk. I just haven't been able to do that same filing with Miejek's death.

I was in my veterinarian's office one day with a very sick kitty and feared I would have to take him to the same hospital where Miejek had died for critical overnight care. I didn't know how I could find the strength within myself to return there with "Seacliff." I had been to the hospital once since Miejek died, but suffered such a panic attack and loss of breath while I sat in the lobby that I had to leave for fear of literally passing out.

Buck Brillhart, DVM who is my veterinarian at La Cumbre Animal Hospital as well as a friend talked with me about my fear of returning to the hospital and suffering the same overwhelming feeling again. I asked him, "How do I ever **resolve** such a loss?" Buck looked at me straight in my eyes, past the tears, and said, "Anyone who thinks you ever resolve such a loss is wrong! You are never the same, but somehow you learn live with it." A few hugs later, I found the inner strength to take Seacliff to the hospital and return home. But I thought about his words over and over again.

*continues on page 11*



Dear Jeffyne,

This donation is a thank you for all the years you have given so much care and so much of your time to the kitties. As the old saying goes, "There is more room in a broken heart." Yours must be three feet wide by now and all the more to love.

Much love to you now,  
"The Polar Bear Angels"

**Paula and Melodie**

Dear Jeffyne,

We are just so in love with our lil' "Rosalie." I was a little concerned that she may not be the kind of kitty that likes to be held, but she surprised us all. Of course, it is on her terms—but then she wouldn't be a cat!

I also want to thank you for your note congratulating us on adding Rosalie to our family. Your words were so kind and sweet. You really made an impression on my daughter, Sophie. She always remembers your name when I talk about you and she was so excited to see Rosalie in your last newsletter and recognized you right away.

Rosalie's eye is doing much better now. That was quite a scare for me and I really want to thank you for your call.

Thank you again for everything.

**Love, Regina**

P.S. Just this very minute, Sophie told Rosalie, "I loved you from the first time I saw you—you were my favorite kitty!"

Dear RESQCATS,

We just want to thank you for giving us the chance to give two very special kitties a home. Our lives have been so blessed and enriched by our new "babies!" My husband wanted to name them as part of our deal for getting them. He named the frosty black one "Newton" so we call her "Lady Newton" and the tortie one is called "Snoop." They are doing so well...no bathroom accidents. We love our girls and want to thank you again.

**Christine and Brandon Armstrong**



**Lil' Rosalie**

### "Snoop & Newton"

Hello Jeffyne,

I just wanted to write a quick note to tell you the about the progress of "Joy."

The first Saturday that I brought her home I put her in my family room along with her food and litter box. By Sunday she was crawling into my lap and purring.

She is such a good and affectionate little girl even though we are still doing a little training with the squirt bottle when it comes to the drapes and plants!

I would like to thank Bonnie Epperson for introducing me to RESQCATS and your wonderful cattery. You run a beautiful operation with so much kindness and love for the animals.

I understand that you have met another one of my co-workers, Candace Burton and that she is adopting a sweet mommy and two kittens from RESQCATS.

Please keep me on your mailing list for the newsletters.

Thank you and Peace,

**Michele and "Joy"**

Jeffyne,

I wanted to thank you for making our adoption process with RESQCATS so great. "Gem" is doing just great. She and "Ginger," our other cat are getting along wonderfully. They play all the time!

Thanks again for your help.

**Amanda, Marcel,  
"Gem & Ginger"**

Dear Jeffyne,

Just a little note to let you know that "Texas Tom," also known as "Pooter" is doing just great! He is busy getting spoiled and in his spare time he tries to help around the house! Take care of yourself and God bless you and the work you do.



**Texas Tom**

I am sorry that I have taken so long to write, but I have suffered a few setbacks with my health. "Pooter" is the best prescription I could ask for, both of you have saved my life!

Much love and gratitude,

**Patricia Schaffer-Munoz**

Dear Jeffyne,

I cannot tell you how much we love "Violet." She is very rambunctious when she plays but is also very warm and affectionate when we hold her. She is so fast when she runs that we are convinced that the white blaze on her nose is actually a bolt of lightning! For the first few weeks the only way to get a picture of her was to hold her because she would always run off before we could push the button on the camera!



**Meghan holding Violet**

It has been a slow process getting Violet and our other cat, "Duchess," accustomed to each other but we love them both so much that we are determined to make it work. Violet now has



run of the entire house during the day but sleeps in her own room at night. Violet and Duchess get into all kinds of skirmishes with each other, but neither one is ever hurt and their encounters are coming less often and less intense. During the late morning and all afternoon I find them sleeping next to each other (without touching) on Meghan's bed! I think Violet has wanted to have another cat friend just like she had with her sisters at RESQCATS, but Duchess sees her more as an annoying little sister! So, Violet has turned to us for more attention and I think that is a good thing.

Thank you so much for giving all the cats and kittens such good care. They sure are sweethearts by the time we get them! Sincerely,

**Angela, Meghan, Jeff,  
"Duchess & Violet"**

Dear Jeffyne,

I have to send you a couple of photos of "Razzle Dazzle." He is the perfect kitty. He has a great personality and it didn't take long for us to find a place in our hearts for him. I am sure you've heard a million stories of how entertaining kittens are, so I won't bore you with all the details. All I can say is we love this little guy.



**Razzle (formerly Sammy)**

He is starting to make friends with our older cat "Whisper" but "Tobey" is going to take some serious work. It seems that Razzle really tries to become friends but Tobey doesn't want anything to do with him for now.

Oh, the name Razzle Dazzle is for some of the antics he goes through. Thanks so much for our sweet little guy!

Talk to you soon,

**Keith and Chris**

P.S. Since this letter was written Razzle has won Tobey over. They have become good playing buddies & now nap together.

Dear Jeffyne,

Thank you so much for introducing me to "Violet." She has been such a blessing and an absolute delight.

About two weeks after I took her home, my roommate's boyfriend moved into an apartment that does not allow pets. So we ended up adopting "Duke" from him. Violet was so excited to have a playmate! Although I think Duke gets a little annoyed with Violet sometimes, they get along really well.

I hope all is well at RESQCATS. I have told all my friends about your place!

Have a great summer and thanks again!

**Jenny Cross**



**Duke & Violet**

## "Letters to RESQCATS" Photo Contest Winners



**RESQCATS "Cutest" – WABBIT**  
"Got Milk?"

Wabbit's guardian is Peggy Nicholson.



**RESQCATS "Sweetest" – RAZZLE DAZZLE**

"Razzle will not leave you alone until you are a friend."  
Razzle's guardians are Keith & Chris Flannery.



**RESQCATS "Funniest" – TEXAS TOM**

Texas Tom must have no roaming or long distance charges. Texas Tom's guardian is Kay Hewitt.

**Turn to page 11 for MORE RESQCATS contest information!**

# The Rescuer's Final Reward



Bridge. The old dog took his place among them, watching the pathway and waiting yet not knowing for what he was waiting.

One of the newer dogs at the Bridge asked a cat who had been there longer to explain what was happening. The cat replied, "Those poor animals were abandoned, turned away, or left at rescue places, but never found a home on earth. They all passed on with only the love of a rescuer to comfort them. Because they had no people to love them, they have nobody to escort them across the Rainbow Bridge."

The dog asked the cat, "So what will happen to those animals?" Before the cat could answer, the clouds began to part and the cold turned to bright sunshine. The cat replied, "Watch, and you will see."

In the distance was a single person, and as he approached the Bridge the old, infirm and sad animals in the field were bathed in a golden light.

They were at once made young and healthy, and stood to see what their fate would be. The animals who had previously gathered at the pathway bowed their heads as the person approached. At each bowed head, the person offered a scratch or hug. One by one, the now youthful and healthy animals from the field fell into line behind the person. Together, they walked across the Rainbow Bridge to a future of happiness and unquestioned love.

The dog asked the cat, "What just happened?"

The cat responded, "That was a rescuer. The animals gathered along the pathway bowing in respect were those who had found their forever homes because of rescuers. They will cross over when their people arrive at the Bridge. The arrival here of a rescuer is a great and solemn event, and as a tribute they are permitted to perform one final act of rescue. They are allowed to escort all those poor animals they couldn't place on earth across the Rainbow Bridge."

The dog thought for a moment, then said, "I like rescuers." The cat smiled and replied, "So does heaven, my friend. So does heaven." ♦

Unlike most days at the Rainbow Bridge, this day dawned cold and gray. All the recent arrivals at the Bridge did not know what to think, as they had never seen such a day. But the animals who had been waiting longer for their beloved people to accompany them across the Bridge knew what was happening, and they began to gather at the pathway leading to the Bridge.

Soon an elderly dog came into view, head hung low and tail dragging. He approached slowly, and though he showed no sign of injury or illness, he was in great emotional pain. Unlike the animals gathered along the pathway, he had not been restored to youth and vigor upon arriving at the Bridge. He felt out of place, and wanted only to cross over and find happiness.

But as he approached the Bridge, his way was barred by an angel, who apologized and explained that the tired and broken-spirited old dog could not cross over. Only those animals accompanied by their people were allowed to cross the Bridge. Having nobody, and with nowhere else to turn, the dog trudged into the field in front of the Bridge.

There he found others like himself, elderly or infirm, sad and discouraged. Unlike the other animals waiting to cross the Bridge, these animals were not running or playing. They simply were lying in the grass, staring forlornly at the pathway across the Rainbow

## Believe In Miracles (eight of them to be exact!)

*continued from page 3*

tens and Betsy!

I do believe in miracles and I ask for them all the time... Sugar Bear had been one of them. Do I dare pray for eight! All at one time! Yes! And I asked everyone else to pray as well. I have a necklace that has two rings on it: one says "Believe" and the other says "Miracles." I hung it on the door of the isolation room where it hung along with my grandson, Hayden's, good luck charm. He helped me medicate the kitties for the next week. The good news was that none of them acted sick. They ate, played and slept as if nothing was wrong.

It took a couple of weeks of intense care and love before we knew they were out of danger. All their bellies went down and they started to look like normal kittens.

**EIGHT MIRACLES! YES, EIGHT MIRACLES AND I WILL NEVER FORGET A SINGLE ONE.**

Candace Burton gave Betsy a home along with her own kitten, "Winnie" and one of her foster kittens, "Teddy." Talk about an instant family! "Quimby" and his foster brother, "Buck" got to stay

together and went home with Will McClintock and his wife, Amy. "Daisy" went home with Rodney and Isabel Medinilla and their family that includes two sons and "Pichy" who they adopted from RESQCATS about three years ago.

Sugar Bear...well...Sugar Bear stayed with me. He will probably have to undergo eye surgery when he is a little older. We were able to save his eye from the infection but some of the tissue around it did not grow properly and blocks his vision. I love him in a way I cannot explain.

His brother, Honey stayed, too. I knew Sugar Bear would need a buddy to play with since so many of my house kitties are grown and beyond playing or are shy and hide all the time. He was chosen because he suffers from a disease called mega-colon. It is unrelated to anything else that went on with him and is probably inherited genetically although no vet has ever seen it in a kitten so young. It means that the muscles and/or nerve endings in his colon do not work and that he cannot push through his bowels because of it. He is on medication at least twice a day and will be for his lifetime. We want to avoid colon surgery if at all possible...it is dangerous and risky. I am still working on the right dosage of medication for Honey! He is doing great so far...maybe he is my ninth miracle! ♦

## Untitled

continued from page 7

The message was there. I was up half the night rolling his words around in my head. Buck's words gave me such freedom! I knew that I didn't have to tuck Miejek into an envelope and file her away like I felt I had with all the other losses. Hers is an envelope that will not seal and cannot be filed away. His words gave me permission to stop trying to do just that. It would have been an endless task that wasn't going to work anyway.

I took a big emotional chance asking him that question and opening up my vulnerable heart. But that risk paid off beyond words and I will always be grateful to him for his insight, compassion, and understanding.

We are all changed forever by such intense loss. Accepting death does not mean we resolve it and get back to where we were in our lives emotionally before it happened. Believe me, there is not a day that I do not think of Miejek and feel tears well up inside me when I think of how I miss her. But, I can also tell you that with time, the light in our heart does begin to flicker again. And sometimes, having a new animal friend to love and love you back unconditionally can help that flicker become brighter, like Misjef has for me. And maybe....just maybe...you will even be able to dance again! I do. ♦

### Enter Our Photo Contest!

RESQCATS is having a **PHOTO CONTEST** for each of our Newsletters.

To be eligible, just mail or email us your cutest and/or funniest and/or sweetest kitty pictures along with your letters. (If you mail, be sure to write your name and your kitty's name on the back of the photo(s)). There is no limit to the number of entries you can submit.

Our volunteers and staff will choose a photo from the "Letters to RESQCATS." The winners receive a RESQCATS T-shirt and will be featured in the Photo Contest space.

3 Categories to Enter: one for CUTEST, one for FUNNIEST, and one for the SWEETEST.

So have your digital cameras ready for the action. We look forward to the fun of picking a winner!

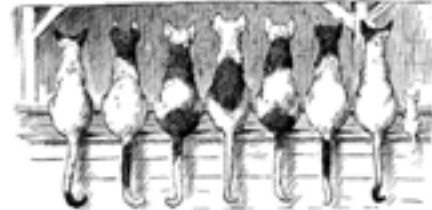
(Please note: We prefer to receive digital photos sent via email.) Thanks for your participation!

## "There is Nothing Stronger Than The Heart of a Volunteer"

There are some things in this world that no amount of money can buy...such as the love, dedication, and time that each and every one of my volunteers gives from their heart.

### Volunteers:

<i>Chanelle Battistone</i>	<i>BJ Hawley</i>	<i>Jason Sundram</i>
<i>Marci Chavez</i>	<i>Lee Heller</i>	<i>Mary and Edwin Taylor</i>
<i>Evelyne Chezum</i>	<i>Kay Hewitt</i>	<i>Hayden Telson</i>
<i>Walt Chezum</i>	<i>Linda Higbee</i>	<i>Kelsie Telson</i>
<i>Corinne Chubb</i>	<i>Wendy Hill</i>	<i>Heather Thakbarhucks</i>
<i>Lily Chubb</i>	<i>Ari Janoff</i>	<i>Linda Turner</i>
<i>Melissa Comito</i>	<i>Evelyn Kert</i>	<i>Dena Watkins</i>
<i>Kendra Costigan</i>	<i>Tricia Krout</i>	
<i>Jonathan Dean</i>	<i>Adam Lee</i>	
<i>Barbara Edwards</i>	<i>Susan Leroy</i>	
<i>Bonnie Epperson</i>	<i>Marsha MacDonald</i>	<b>Board members:</b>
<i>Denny Epperson</i>	<i>Emily McLaughlin</i>	<i>Eileen Barish</i>
<i>Patty Farmer</i>	<i>John O'Brien</i>	<i>Harvey Barish</i>
<i>Chris Flannery</i>	<i>Meghan Peterson</i>	<i>Carolyn Sacks</i>
<i>Keith Flannery</i>	<i>Sierra Price</i>	<i>Mort Sacks</i>
<i>Allie Frankel</i>	<i>Hannah Raphael</i>	<i>Sharon Sumrall</i>
<i>Jeremy Frankel</i>	<i>Erika Sacks</i>	
<i>Ashley Greco-Stoner</i>	<i>Sue Sadler</i>	
<i>Joanna Haynes</i>	<i>Barbara Sanchez</i>	



# RESQCATS

A non-profit sanctuary dedicated to the rescue, care and adoption of abandoned cats and kittens

### My Tax deductible donation is enclosed:

Angel in Heaven ..... \$1000

Miracle Worker ..... \$500

Magic Maker ..... \$250

Caring Spirit ..... \$100

Supporter ..... \$50

Helper ..... \$25

Please designate my donation to the Polar Bear Fund to help kitties with special medical needs.

Make your check payable to:

**RESQCATS**

**P.O. Box 3852**

**Santa Barbara, CA 93130**

**(805) 563-9424**

Your Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

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## Dedication

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*Miejek*

This newsletter is dedicated to "Miejek" and all the people who have loved and lost their own "Miejek"

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Visit the ResQCats website at  
[www.RESQCATS.org](http://www.RESQCATS.org)

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## Wish List!

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- \* Scoopable cat litter
- \* Nutromax **canned** kitten food—turkey or chicken flavor
- \* Cat teaser toys
- \* CDs to play in the cattery—nature sounds, soft music, piano, harp and New Age
- \* Incense for the cattery—it relaxes the kitties
- \* Petco gift card to be used for supplies
- \* Simple Solution for cat odors and stains—gallon size at Petco
- \* Cat condos
- \* New cardboard carriers for kittens to go home in
- \* Baby blankets
- \* Breakaway collars
- \* Running water fountains for the resident cats

If you would like to donate any of these items, please contact us at 563-9424 or e-mail [RESQCATS@aol.com](mailto:RESQCATS@aol.com).

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Newsletter Design Donated by  
Keith & Christine Flannery



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