

RESQCATS

A non-profit animal rescue organization dedicated to the care and welfare of stray and abandoned cats and kittens.



paws for the news



Spring 2018



President's Message

Written on April, 2018



Jeffyne and new mom "Trinity's" babies at twelve days old

Is it kitten season yet?! You bet it is at **RESQCATS**.

While I do take time off in the winter and go to my getaway home in Oregon, there always seems to be a kitty that needs emergency help. This year, it was all about a little kitten named Sparky who was found in the engine of a car. Hers is a story you won't want to miss in this newsletter!

We officially opened our doors for our 21st season on April 1st. Pregnant moms are already arriving. Kittens are on the way and I suspect that by the time you receive this newsletter we will have a full house!

And we are ready! The cattery had a brand new roof installed at the end of March thanks to the generous support of Janet Dewey's mother who passed in May 2017. Gladys heard many of the stories about **RESQCATS** through Janet, and she knew all the resident names by heart. It was Gladys' last wish to do something to make a difference for her daughter's passionate volunteer work at **RESQCATS**. And she

realized that spending thousands of dollars on a much needed new roof was never going to be in the cards for us: every dollar goes towards the care of the cats and kittens that we rescue. I am so grateful to Gladys...and to Janet... who is one of the longest time volunteers and my dear friend.

The first arrival was "Trinity," a very pregnant mother-to-be that arrived at **RESQCATS** two hours after the roof was installed! It could not have been better timing for this sweet cat. She had her babies in the soft warm comfort of **RESQCATS**. I am always relieved when we are able to rescue pregnant moms before they give birth in the vulnerable and dangerous elements of the outdoors. It is a good feeling knowing that you have made a difference for these cats and their babies.

Our promise is to provide all the medical care needed to each and every kitty whose paws come through our doors. All receive vet exams, Felv/FIV tests, fecal exams, worming meds, vaccinations, spay or neuter surgery and microchips. In addition, we provide any and all the medical care necessary to save a life...or leg! (Be sure and read the story about Sparky!)

RESQCATS will also continue to assist other select organizations with spay and neuter surgery which is the cornerstone of rescue work. It is our way of reaching beyond our doors to help other cats in the community.

This newsletter is full of updates, wonderful stories much more, therefore, my President's Message will be brief. So sit back, relax, read on and enjoy!



A view of our residents enjoying the cattery's new roof!

CONTINUED ON PAGE 16

Sparky...

A Lesson in Life

Drivers! Start your engines! Go!
Most of us do that everyday!

But imagine starting the engine of your car and hearing something that just doesn't sound right! That could change your plans for the entire day if it's something serious!

That's just how Sumi's day began one chilly January morning. She knew immediately that she needed to investigate the strange noise coming from the engine, but when she opened the hood of her car, what she found was quite unexpected.

care she needed. Sumi had not yet convinced her husband that they needed another cat...that would follow with a lot of persuading the next day! What a great guy! Since then, Sumi and Steve have never considered anything but a lifetime commitment to Sparky even as her injury proved much more serious than originally diagnosed.

Deanna embraced Sparky into her arms and heart. Not knowing exactly what lay beneath, she bathed the black grease, flea dirt and sticky street grime away and watched the filthy residue



A tiny kitten lay across the engine! She was clearly hurt and needed immediate attention, so off to the closest veterinary emergency clinic she went. On the way, Sumi named the kitten **Sparky**. How appropriate was that! I suppose if the kitten had been a male, he would be called "Sparkplug!"

While I will not go into all the details, the emergency clinic missed the fact that the kitten had a broken elbow and summed up her limp foot to being "flexible." They wrapped the foot, gave her antibiotics for a laceration and released her. But there is much more to the story!

Sumi transported Sparky to a **RESQCATS** foster, Deanna Koens, knowing that she would get the

disappear down the drain. When the bath was over, what appeared was a striking calico kitten with soft gray, pastel orange and white fur. Sparky turned out to be a beautifully marked dilute calico. Although she weighed less than two pounds, that of a seven-week-old kitten, her teeth and molars indicated she was about four months of age!

So what had happened to her? Was she lost? Abandoned? Why was she so small? How long had she been out there on her own...in the cold, hungry and in search of a warm place to sleep. We will never know!

What I am sure of is that Sparky was in good hands with Deanna. The day after Sparky arrived

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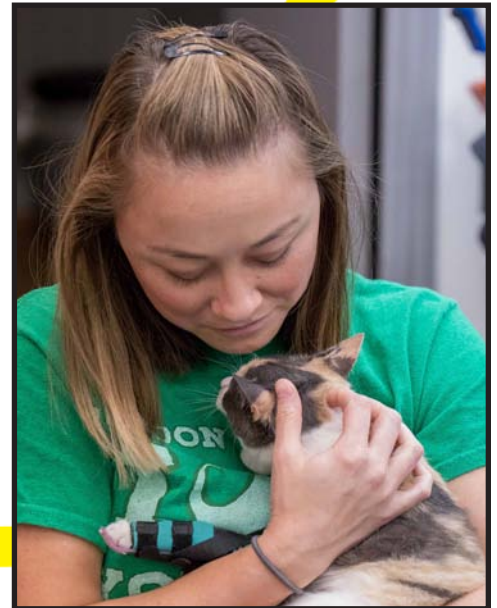
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with Deanna, she saw that there was much more wrong with her paw than being “flexible” as the original ER vet had diagnosed! So she took the kitten to the emergency clinic, a different one than Sparky had previously visited I might add!

X-rays clearly showed a broken elbow and some possible nerve damage in her foot. The attending veterinarian explained that it was urgent to have her elbow repaired before the bones began to grow back together in the wrong position, so surgery with an orthopedic specialist was scheduled within 48 hours on January 30th. Thank goodness, all went well with the surgery. The doctor prescribed limited activity along with follow-up progress exams. Sounds like good news? But there was more! Sparky’s foot continued to flop so our concerns grew more worrisome. She lacked the ability to place it in the normal forward position. The foot was just “there.” Nothing more. No movement. No feeling. The

inserting needles at specific points in the body to manipulate the flow of energy or Qi. I am a believer in acupuncture and have greatly benefited from it many times so I was certainly on board with this for Sparky. She was also treated with cold laser therapy which is a noninvasive procedure that uses light to stimulate cells and increase blood circulation. She visited Atlas Rehabilitation for Canines (but they do cats, too!) for follow-up rehab. Karen Atlas, the founder, was extremely knowledgeable and recommended the protocol for Sparky. And her compassion was pure and heartfelt. We all had such hope.

Deanna designed and sewed a splint for Sparky’s foot. The purpose was to enable her to place it properly when she walked to avoid injury. Our concern was not only her limp foot, but the permanent damage that could be caused to her foot, leg and spine if she hurt it without knowing.



diagnosis was that there was serious nerve damage in her foot and leg. I wondered, “Is there anything else we can do for her? If so, what?”

Fortunately, Daryl Metzger and his wife Joane, RESQCATS volunteers and supporters, suggested physical therapy as an option. I was certainly open to the idea. In fact, I was elated! Sign Sparky up! Let’s do this! When can we start?! We can fix this!

So Sparky began a long regimen that lasted for several weeks. Deanna followed instructions for daily physical therapy using an electrical “tens” machine to promote stimulation for the impaired nerves. Sparky saw the acupuncturist twice a week. Acupuncture is the ancient Chinese practice of

The regular attending veterinarian recommended amputating Sparky’s leg if we did not see improvement. Amputation! What?! No! That certainly was not a thought I was prepared to deal with! I knew in my heart that I needed to try everything possible to give Sparky a chance to keep her leg. So treatments continued for weeks with the hope that Sparky’s age would work in her favor. She was young, her nervous system, skeletal structure and muscles were still developing and that could be an advantage. I clung to the thought that “if I do all this, then Sparky will be fine.”

But life doesn’t always work that way. It is not a bargaining chip and sometimes, no matter what we

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do or how hard we try, it just doesn't turn out the way we want.

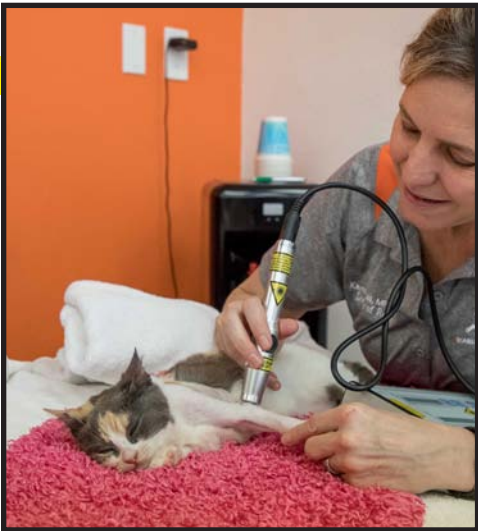
Once recovered from orthopedic surgery, Sumi and Steve welcomed Sparky into their home in March and introduced them to their two felines. They followed every protocol that had been laid out for Sparky, but she remained under **RESQCATS** care. Sparky blossomed in their home and loved the other cats and they readily accepted her. All she wanted to do was play. But such kitten play was grounds for her to injure herself without knowing it since she couldn't feel her foot...or pain. She could cause irreparable damage to her spine.

Sumi needed to confine Sparky when she was away. Sparky's play, romping up and down the stairs and chasing the other cats was all she wanted to do. It seemed unfair to limit Sparky from being the

Sparky remained with her until we felt she was ready to return home to Sumi and Steve.

Sparky woke up from surgery purring and was up and about by the next day. She quickly learned to balance on three legs. I wondered if she felt phantom pain, which is pain that feels like it's coming from a body part that's no longer there. It is quite common in patients that have lost a finger or limb. But Sparky had not been able to feel pain before due to the severe nerve damage, so I hoped she didn't experience it now. She showed no signs of affliction. However, as a precaution, she was on pain meds for several days after surgery.

Sparky also dressed in high fashion after her surgery! While I am not a fan of people dressing up their pets, Sparky's outfits served another purpose. One of the sleeves was sewn closed to protect her



rambunctious, playful kitten she yearned to be. Confinement was intolerable for such an out-going kitten. And Sparky's leg seemed to be getting worse.

In my twenty-one years of rescue, I had never faced such a decision. **AMPUTATION**. There was that word again...staring at me in the face with capital letters. It took several days for me to come to terms and accept that it would be best for Sparky to have her leg amputated. There, I said it. Sparky's leg must be amputated.

However, I felt like I had failed Sparky. But what finally came to me was that I could set her free. Deanna and Sumi understood that much sooner than I did, and I am grateful for the time they gave me to work through my guilt.

Surgery was scheduled for March 20.

Deanna took Sparky back into her care and

sutures. She hated wearing an Elizabethan collar... it just cramped her style and it is hard to watch a cat trying to run and play wearing one of those things. The dress worked purr-fectly! And she couldn't pull out her stitches!

Because I was on a winter break when all this happened, I only met Sparky through photos and communicating with Deanna and Sumi. Once the vet gave the okay for Sparky to return to Sumi, they decided to do the exchange at **RESQCATS**. They were considerate to plan it on the day I returned home from vacation. All were waiting for me when I returned home.

I gently took Sparky into my arms, buried my face in her fur and began to weep. At first, I felt sad because I believed I had failed her, as well as all those who had given so generously over the weeks

CONTINUED ON PAGE 5

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to help save her leg. My mind plummeted backwards to, "if I do this, then Sparky will be fine!"

But Sparky was fine! She was perfect...she had no idea that she was missing a leg. So my tears quickly became joyful ones. I had done the right thing for her. The outcome had just not been what I had hoped. I was elated to meet her for the first time and realized that she was adjusting well. Looking back, I would not change a single thing I tried in the attempts to save her leg. She deserved every chance possible.

But now, her lesson is clearer to me. While I am not a religious person, I am very spiritual and cannot help but remember the powerful words of the Serenity prayer:

"God grant me the serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference."



Sparky and her human dad, Steve Spurlock



Sparky and her new pal Groucho

Sparky

Her life changed in an instant,
 As so very many do-
 A shock of pain and terror,
 And then a bold rescue.
 Born in the wild and feral,
 A kitten on her own,
 She thought she'd found safe shelter,
 When a car she made her home.
 I cannot bear to think now
 Just what this girl went through
 When the engine, it turned over,
 And across the fan she flew.
 Her leg broke at the elbow,
 She was battered, she was bruised,
 But, by God, the girl survived,
 And the driver was attuned.
 She heard a thump, the driver did,
 And shut the car off quick,
 And I'm sure that when she took a look
 She felt so deeply sick.
 She scooped up the little kitten
 And took her to the doc,
 They patched her up and sent her home,
 'Though the break they overlooked.
 But now, today, some weeks have passed,
 And surgery's done, too.
 And darling little Sparky has
 A brand new team or two.
 I've never seen a cat so calm,
 Especially one born wild,
 As the therapist did her thing
 On this sweet kitten child.
 Though the electrodes she did hate,
 She quick regained her calm
 As Karen, the great therapist,
 Applied her tactile balm.
 Some soft massage, a sweet caress,
 A kindly word or two,
 And healing, sweet cold laser
 Reset her bliss anew.
 I have great hope that Sparky dear
 Some day will walk again
 With all four legs complete, intact,
 And she'll be grateful then.
 Already I believe she knows
 These human creatures strange
 Are at their best to help her out
 And make her well again.

Poem by:
Daryl Metzger
 February, 2018

And now...
A Few Words from Mr. Jeffyne...
The Story of RESQCATS...Part Two
The Early Years, 1995-1997

**Part 2 of a series on the history and evolution
of RESQCATS from 1995 to the present.**

In my last Mr. Jeffyne article written for the RESQCATS Holiday Newsletter, I shared with you the very beginnings of RESQCATS. I relayed that as my retirement from the business world approached, we began scouring virtually the entire coast of California looking for 100 acres of land for our future animal sanctuary; and how we came to arrive on our 3 1/2 acre location in Santa Barbara. After the necessary financial negotiations were completed and we closed on the property...the real work of building RESQCATS began.

We officially arrived in Santa Barbara on Memorial Day weekend in 1995...Jeffyne, me, Mijek, (the cat lady's first collie), and our 11 cats...many of whom had moved with us from San Diego to Arizona five years earlier.

The initial attraction to the property was its location...atop a 300-foot bluff overlooking the Pacific. Our dream had always been to hear the crashing of the waves as we settled in for the evening...and this location certainly satisfied that dream. But as a bonus, our land also had 102 producing avocado trees; a feature that piqued my interest as I naively thought that the profits from the sale of the avocados could pay our property taxes. Not being a particularly knowledgeable farmer, I quickly learned that small avocado farming in California is not much of a cash crop. In fact, as drought conditions intensified in the state, watering the avocado grove became so expensive that I revised my financial plan hoping that proceeds from our crop would pay our utility bills. Well, the sad fact that I've come to appreciate is that avocado profits in a good year might cover one month's water bill during the summer...but that's a whole different story!

The single greatest attribute that Jeffyne immediately recognized the first time we visited the property was a dilapidated green house that ran along the eastern property line. Now when I say dilapidated, visualize an over-sized kitchen "junk drawer" stuffed with every imaginable piece of trash from old pipes to shreds of roofing to piles of siding to weathered lengths of wood....you name it and there it was piled in Jeffyne's future cat sanctuary. Our greenhouse, where Mr. Goodspeed, the former owner, once raised prize orchids, had deteriorated into a pile of rubbish. But Jeffyne had a vision of what her cat rescue would look like, so we started building her dream.

Cleaning out the greenhouse took us several



Mitch with "Whisper," "Adonis" and "Fantazy"

weeks and more than a few truckloads of trash brought to the dump. We used every available resource including Jeffyne's old college roommate, Margie Barron Sherburne. Margie was one of our first house guests when we moved to Santa Barbara and we immediately put her to work helping us clean out the junk. Margie has subsequently visited us many times during the past twenty-two years and has remained one of RESQCATS' most loyal supporters...and we never let her forget how much we appreciated her help in the beginning.

After the greenhouse was emptied of all the trash and debris, we began the re-building process. The original floor was dirt, the sides were broken pieces of corrugated plastic and the roof was a combination of glass, chicken wire and pieces of old fiberglass...clearly not the type or quality of materials that could safely house hundreds of cats and kittens for the next several decades.

Fortunately, the original greenhouse was constructed of quality redwood so the support standards were in place, but we knew we needed a solid floor that could easily be cleaned, new secure walls and a roof that wouldn't leak during Santa Barbara's infrequent rainstorms.

Not being cement masons, we hired our nephews

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to pour the concrete floor. They also replaced the leaky roof...the first of three roofs that the cattery has had! Jeffyne and I figured that once the floor and roof were completed, we had the handyman skills to install new pine tongue and groove siding...wrong!

While our hearts were in the right place our eye for level certainly was not! Instead of running a string line to assure that each of the 8 foot pieces of siding was straight, we “eye-balled” them. After being “severely criticized” by our nephews for our lack of quality workmanship, we took down the crooked walls and re-installed them “per code” using the proper leveling tools. Frequently when Jeffyne and I walk along that side of the cattery, we have a tendency to laugh out loud remembering that early construction faux pax!

Today, as we look at pictures of the old structure, we’re surprised at how much it’s changed. In fact, when people visit RESQCATS on a tour or to adopt a cat, they comment on how well-planned and professional the facility appears. They often ask, “How did you come up with such a well-thought out and expertly designed master plan?”

Well, the reality that I sheepishly share is, “There really was no master plan, it just evolved!” In truth, we had no idea what the facility would ultimately look like. As we needed something, we scraped together the financial and human resources and made it happen.

In fact, over the years, it was not unusual for Jeffyne to come running into the house on a Friday afternoon shouting, “I’m out of space, I’m out of space! I have a mother and six kittens arriving tomorrow and I’ve got to have another enclosure...and I need to have it today!” Now that may sound strange, but honestly, that’s exactly what happened on at least 5 or 6 occasions for the first 19 years until we ultimately built out the last of the facility’s 18 unique enclosures in 2016.

At the height of kitten season, Jeffyne and I will sometimes take a moment to sit in the cattery and wonder out loud what the late Mr. Goodspeed would think if he saw his orchid greenhouse today. How would he feel about seeing so much activity and animal life where he once produced uniquely beautiful flowers?

While it would certainly surprise him, we hope he would be pleased and very proud to have provided the facility that has saved so many cats and kittens over the years...we certainly hope so!

...To be continued.

For those of you receiving the newsletter for the first time — or if you just want to go back and enjoy Part 1 — visit my website: www.RESQCATS.org and click on the newsletter tab. You will find Mr. Jeffyne’s first article, “The Story of RESQCATS...Part 1” in the December 2017 newsletter.



Mitch and friends working hard



Jeffyne, Laura & Erika Sacks putting handprints in the new cement



Mitch building the first enclosures...



...and painting cabinets!

***“Cat Tails: Heart-Warming Stories about the Cats and Kittens of RESQCATS”
wins a Certificate of Excellence from the Cat Writers Association!***

My book was entered into CWA's contest and had to score an average of 90 or above to receive this award. It is quite an honor and I am very excited to share the news!

There are also some wonderful reviews to share just in case you haven't ordered your award winning book yet!

Here are just a few reviews of the book:

“Any animal lover will absolutely LOVE this book! But this book is far more than just about the author's love for cats. Her passion for animals and how she was able to use this passion to devote her life to cats is so absolutely INSPIRING. The book made me realize that each of us needs to have a passion....a passion that will leave a mark long after we're gone. In Jeffyne's case, every single one of those kittens and cats have left little paw prints on her heart. We should all be so blessed.”



“Love this book! The stories are sweet, funny, happy & sad. There is promise and hope and learning in each. The book is a small glimpse inside the workings of an amazing rescue organization. The love, caring, and devotion is inspiring. I highly recommend this book, a thoroughly enjoyable read!”



“This book had the most heartwarming stories I've ever read about cats. After reading this book you will have a newfound perspective on the lives of stray cats. The stories are full of compassion and care. Jeffyne has a great way of explaining what cats go through “behind the scenes.” I couldn't put the book down.”



“Heartwarming, inspirational journey of Jeffyne Telson who answered her calling and has helped over 2800 rescue cats find love and forever homes. One person can make a difference!”



“This book is a gracefully written document of one person's life in the equally challenging and rewarding field of animal rescue. I feel totally inspired by the way the author has dedicated her life to the care of cats. It takes a special person to live this kind of life, and she also writes about her experiences beautifully. I think many people can appreciate this book, especially the animal lovers among us, and will laugh and cry in equal parts with reading.”



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How would you like the book to be signed

by the author? _____

Here is how you can order! Fill out the form above and send it with your check made out to RESQCATS. Mail to RESQCATS, PO Box 3852, Santa Barbara, CA 93130.

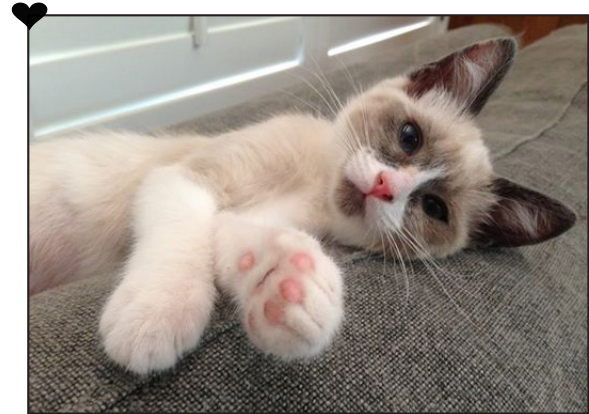
Or you can order through the following link:
http://resqcats.org/cat_tails.asp

100% of the proceeds from the sale of the book go directly to RESQCATS, Inc.




In memory of two very special felines who are missed so much..."**Jesse and Spencer Lee.**" And for my friend, **Nancy Lee.**

Paula Wascavage 





"Angels are never on this earth for very long"...in memory of "**Haiku**" and for **Lee Wardlow.**


In memory of "**Jesse**" Lee and for **Nancy.**
Maureen McLaughlin 


In memory of "**Pickles**" and for my beautiful daughter.
Peggy Rogers 

In loving memory of "**Ollie.**"
Amanda and Sarah Bacon 

In memory of "**Bobby,**" a feral cat who landed in the best home ever with **Joe and Cindy Sapienza.** He is missed so much. 

In memory of "**Jesse**" and "**Spencer**" Lee...and for my friend, Nancy.
Chuck Lynch 

In memory of "**Simon Cat**" and with gratitude for the compassion he was given by **Deanna Koens.** 


In loving memory of a very special cat named "**Romeo.**" Sometimes, I cannot help falling head over heels in love and that was the story of Romeo in June 2008. I remember when Dianne and her husband, Bob, adopted him. I kiddingly said, "Oh, maybe there is something un-adoptable about him so he can stay at **RESQCATS!**" But he was perfect. He had 9-1/2 years on this earth, not nearly long enough, but they never are here as long as we would like. So this is for Romeo and my friend, **Dianne Miles.**
With love and gratitude,
Jeffyne 

In memory of **Helen Reiner**...and the difference her generosity makes at **RESQCATS.**

Remembering my boy, "**Elliott**"...a handsome, clever loving kitty. I miss you so much and will love you always.

Dorinda Beaumont 

In honor and memory of "**Rocky**" Short. He was a delight and super snuggler. I always looked forward to some soft, purring cuddles from my friend, Rocky. I was his pet-sitter and friend... and will miss him.

Colleen Robles 

In memory of "**Haiku**"..."she was as sweet as they come, a beauty inside and out!"

Colleen Robles



In loving memory of the my friend, "**Maggie,**" and for all that her human guardians, **Gail and Jeff Brewer,** gave to her. I miss you, Maggie.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

In memory of **"Buddha Bear"** from his feline mom, "Haley," and his feline grandmother, "Zinnie," who reside in a purrfect home with Kim and Dean Pananides!

Kim and Dean 

In loving memory of **"Haley,"** Buddha Bear's mom who passed away in January 2018. May they be reunited for eternity on the Rainbow Bridge. And for **Kim and Dean Pananides.**



In memory of **"Razzle Dazzle"** and for **Chris and Keith Flannery** who said this about this special friend: "He really was the most special kitty ever - the snuggliest, most playful kitty who always wanted to be petted and spent time with each of us every day. Thank you so much for picking him out for us."



In memory of **"Katsu,"** who stole my heart.
Love, *Jeffyne*



In memory of **"MisJef"**

"It came to me that every time I lose a dog they take a piece of my heart with them, and every new dog who comes into my life gifts me with a piece of their heart. If I live long enough all the components of my heart will be dog, and I will become as generous and loving as they are." —Anonymous

Saying good-bye to Jewel... the last of the Yolo Collies

by Mitch Telson



At 14 years 5 months and 3 days, Jewel was our longest living collie. But as I've said far too many times when we lose a member of our animal family, "No matter how long we have them...no matter how many we have... no matter how long they live...it's never long enough!"

Jewel was probably the last of the infamous "Yolo's," 81 collies that were confiscated from a abusive hoarding situation in Yolo County, California in 2004. In fact,

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

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Jewel had the dubious distinction of helping convict the hoarder of animal abuse when her puppy pictures, which depicted horribly, neglectful mange covering her face, were shown at his trial

We adopted Jewel in August, 2012 from Northern California. She had been relinquished back to The Road Home K9 Rescue by her third or maybe her fourth owner with the lame excuse that, "She didn't travel well." In reality, nothing could have been farther from the truth...Jewel was a great traveler! When I picked her up, she jumped into the back of my SUV, curled up and immediately fell asleep. She slept peacefully as we drove a few hours before stopping for the night at a motel. Jewel happily leapt from the car, took care of her business, gingerly walked to our room, hopped up on the bed next to me, instantly fell asleep and didn't budge until morning. Her incredibly sweet personality showed even more when we arrived in Santa Barbara.

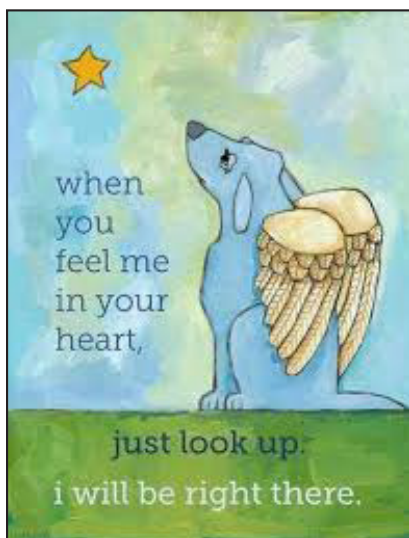
After being greeted by her new collie pack with the usual sniffs followed by a leisurely stroll around the yard, Jewel came into the house and nonchalantly met the family cats. After a few more sniffs, she spied the couch, climbed up and looked around as if to say, "Ahhh, NOW I'm home!"

Jewel had a magical way of forever growing younger. Initially, we were told that she was 11 or 12 years old, but our vet said she was more like 9 or 10; actually her behavior resembled more of a puppy than a senior. Since we had no formal records of her age, I established Jewel's birthday as September 1, 2003 officially making her 9 years and 1 month when we adopted her .

Until the end, this gentle girl stayed forever young. Despite losing her hearing and the strength in her back legs, every night Jewel insisted on walking up the stairs to our bedroom so she could sleep with her collie family.

Jewel took many road trips with us to our vacation home in Oregon...she was always the perfect lady, the perfect companion... and always the perfect traveler.

We are going to miss our Jewel...very much.



In Honor & Celebration...

Another Happy Birthday, **Julie Kaplan!**
Liz Benishin

Happiest of birthdays to **Lisa Givan!**
Dodi Gauthier

In honor of **Becki and Jay Eaton...** the best Mom and Dad ever and two of the most caring people on this earth when it comes to rescuing kitties.

Julie Kaplan

For **Mel and Hal Kyle...** great friends and neighbors. Only Mel would get out of bed at 5 a.m. to feed my kitties and do Pumpkin's insulin after I fractured my wrist and then walk home and go back to bed!

Julie Kaplan

In honor of **Liz Benishin...** there are not enough words to describe her goodness as a friend and kitty rescuer. Despite losing three kitties in a short amount of time, she opened her heart and home to a new kitten.

Julie Kaplan

For **Margaret Thompson...** she is proof that you don't need to live next door to each other to be best friends!

Julie Kaplan

For my friend...**Julie Kaplan...** in celebration of you!

Liz Benishin

In honor of **Gail, "Maggie Mae" and "Phantom" Brewer!**

Jeff Brewer

In honor of **Leah Pare.**

Sue and Cathie Sadler-Pare

In honor of **Betty Reed.**

Jane Hartough

In honor of **Barbara Abbott, Larry Hanser and their two beloved cats!**

Porter Abbott

In honor of our friend, **Chris Lavino.**

Maggie Reineke and Lisa Givan

In honor of **Susie Browne.**

Susan Browne



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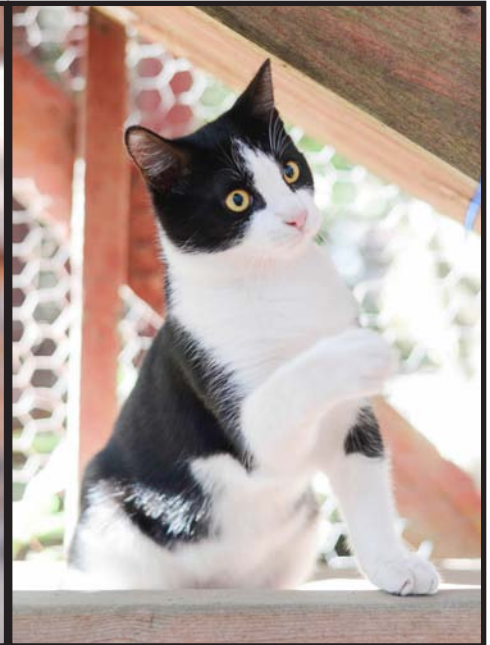
In my heart...for eternity



Liora



Asha



Katsu

It was in the spring of 2016 when three of the cutest black and white kittens I had ever seen arrived at RESQCATS. Like most of you, I can be quite smitten with kittens, but these three were exceptional and seemed to have everything going for them. They appeared to be healthy; fat and sassy is how I best described them. Unlike many stray kittens, they exhibited no fear and their feline curiosity prompted them to be out and about investigating their new digs immediately. They explored, tested out numerous toys, climbed all over me and finally settled into my lap. The two sisters and their brother were what I refer to as "instant gratification" kittens, meaning that they were what every adopter dreams of in a kitten... friendly, playful and extremely lovable lap kitties. Finding homes for them would be a piece of cake! Or so I thought!

Imagine my heartbreak when they went for their vet exams and tested positive for Feline Leukemia! The color indicator on the blood test rapidly appeared showing a positive result for the deadly virus. Now let me explain how the leukemia virus works. A cat or kitten can test positive if it has been exposed to leukemia, but their immune system may be in the process of fighting off the virus. Therefore, waiting a few weeks to retest could result in a negative outcome demonstrating that the virus has not entered the bone marrow. In that case, the cat is usually clear. Sometimes it may take several weeks of waiting and retesting before there is a negative outcome. While the vet suggested retesting the litter, she warned that based on how quickly the tests revealed positive

results she doubted that the outcome would be different at any later time. Another option, and much quicker than waiting for weeks, was to have a more definitive test that would check to see if the virus was in the bone marrow. While it involved another blood draw and was much more expensive, I decided to go ahead. Sadly, the results were positive and the virus had already invaded the bone marrow of each kitten.

At first, I was shocked. It had been many years since feline leukemia had been an issue for cats. But here it was again...staring at me through three irresistible black and white furry fluff balls! What was I supposed to do with three leukemia positive kittens whose lifespan might be three years...IF they were lucky?

I got on the internet and researched two other sanctuaries who take Leukemia positive cats and provide lifetime care. One was full and could not commit to taking them anytime in the near future. The other was managed by a lady who wanted \$2000 per kitten to care of them. After some persistent probing on my part, I learned that the kittens would live in a small cage and only be let out in a common area a few hours a day! That was just not good enough! And I truly believe the woman was just after money!

So what was I to do now? No one would adopt a kitten knowing that one day, probably sooner than later, the leukemia would rear its ugly head and sadly, there would be nothing on the planet that could save them. I get their concern. But it didn't solve the problem of what to do with leukemia positive kittens!

It is at difficult times like these that I reflect on a

CONTINUED ON PAGE 13

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 12

quote I have written on the chalkboard in the cattery. It says, "obstacles create opportunity." It is a humble reminder that all things can be seen from a different perspective. I began to realize just how fortunate these little fluff balls were to have landed at **RESQCATS**. Most shelters would euthanize them after testing positive. And while some organizations would give them a few weeks and retest, if the results were still positive, all three would be euthanized. While I understand the concept, it is not something I can do. **RESQCATS** is unique in that we can accommodate cats and kittens with special needs and commit to their lifetime care. So that became my plan.

I wanted to choose names for the kittens that would be powerful, have meaning and symbolize strength. So with the help of volunteers, we named one of the girls "Liora" which means "my light" in Hebrew. "Asha" was chosen for the other female and means "life" in Hindu. And the bold little boy was called "Katsu" which translates to "victory" in Japanese.

A special enclosure was designed for them so that there was no chance of exposing other residents or any of the cats and kittens that came through **RESQCATS**. We set up an indoor enclosure with a protective partition that avoided any risk of exposing kittens in the next enclosure. The resident cat, Sampson, who lives on the other side of them was vaccinated so he would be protected. A tunnel connected their inside space to two outdoor enclosures. The expanded area provided lots of stimulation and exercise for the siblings. Liora, Asha and Katsu loved their living arrangements....and enjoyed life.

They were quite entertaining to all of us at **RESQCATS**. But, in my mind, they had a special purpose for being there. I vividly remember seeing all three poke their little heads out of their indoor enclosure into the tunnel that lead to their outdoor space every morning as I began my daily routine. Even on my saddest days after the loss of my best friend, "MisJef," I found myself smiling and greeting

them with a cheerful "good morning!" Liora, Asha and Katsu were my "light" and taught me to appreciate "life" everyday. They presented me a way to achieve a daily personal "victory" in getting through some of the saddest days I can ever remember.

Sadly, Liora succumbed to leukemia in May 2017 at barely a year old. She was followed by her sister a few months later in October at only a year-and-a-half. And finally, Katsu joined his sisters on the Rainbow Bridge in January 2018 while I was away on my winter sabbatical in Yachats, Oregon. He was less than two years old.

Yes, I knew what I signed up for when I adopted these three darling kittens and committed to giving them the best life possible for however long they had on earth. But that doesn't make losing them any easier. I do feel in my heart that I did the right thing

in giving them a place to live out their short lives.

I know that time, no matter how long or short, does not dictate how deep my love is for my animals or the profound feelings that surface when I lose them. I also recognize this about myself...I have to work through grief in my own way...as we all do. We each have to find a way to reconcile loss and not expect that somehow, one day down the road we just "get over it." For me, sometimes it helps to write about my animals. At other times, either the words just don't come or it is too painful. Or, perhaps not enough time has passed that I can put pen to

paper. Each loss is different and recognizing that and honoring it are the paths to healing.

In remembrance of three very special kitties and as part of my healing therapy, I created a quilt to honor them and all the joy they brought to me. Yes, you see four kitties on the quilt...the fourth one is for "Endora," my seventeen-year-old feral resident who passed in July 2017. I thought of Endora, Liora, Asha and Katsu as I appliquéd each kitty onto the rainbow steps and reflected on our time together. My memories of them are vivid, happy ones and there is nothing in this world that I would change about having them.

Their stay may not have been long enough on earth...but they are in my heart for eternity.



Room for one more?

After the loss of Katsu, the last of the three leukemia positive kitties in January 2018, I found myself anticipating a sad reality. You see, I was in Oregon on my winter break when Katsu went to the Rainbow Bridge. I feel especially vulnerable when I am not with my animals when they pass, but I wonder if those that leave me when I am away do so with some intent. Do they somehow want to spare me the sadness of seeing them go? Are they choosing their time or is it just fate? That is something I will truly never know, but I like to believe they are protecting me in some way and allowing me time to acknowledge that they are gone without bearing immediate witness to it. It gives me time to accept the loss.

However, I always dread returning home to the reality that they are not there. And the absence of Katsu was going to be very sad for me. Seeing an empty enclosure where three of the best kittens in the world lived was not something I looked forward to. I would have to face the fact that he was gone and be reminded of it every day when I passed that vacant space.



I had no intention of allowing another resident cat to reside in the space at any time! In fact, I planned for the partition that separated and protected kittens coming into RESQCATS be removed. That would provide another enclosure for moms and babies or kittens to stay while at RESQCATS prior to adoption.

Then, a volunteer shared a Facebook post with me about a sweet cat named "Talulah." She had

been found as a stray and turned into Animal Control. Although she did have a collar, she had no microchip and no one claimed her. She was estimated to be between two and three years old. Sadly, she tested positive for Feline Leukemia. Animal Control had reached out to the community to try and find a home for Talulah, knowing that it was highly unlikely and that she would ultimately be euthanized.

In all honesty, when the post was shared with me, I wished that no one had told me about her! I thought to myself, "if only I didn't know about this! But now I do and I want to help!" But was I ready to sign up again for heartbreak? Not really! No one ever is! Then I thought about it. A two to three-year-old leukemia positive cat certainly deserved a home for whatever time she had left. She needed to feel love, have a great place to live and play, and most of all, she needed to be cared for with compassion and understanding. Those of you that know me probably know where this is going, but I gave myself time to consider all the alternatives knowing all too well deep down in my heart that there were no options. But I still hoped that Talulah would miraculously find a home with some good Samaritan overnight! When I woke up the next morning thinking about Talulah, I knew what I would do. Talulah would come to RESQCATS and live in that enclosure for all her days. She will bring life back into that once empty space. Yes, I do know my heart will be broken again. But I will love her and welcome her with open arms. There IS room for one more!

Her name is Talulah.

Please join me in welcoming Talulah...our newest resident cat!



CONTINUED FROM PAGE 11

This donation is for our daughter, **Lauren**, who asked us to give the gift of life to some kitties at RESQCATS instead of a gift in a box, wrapped in pretty paper with a fancy bow under the Christmas tree!

Scott and Jennifer Hansen

In honor of **Mitch Telson**.

Diane Paalumbo

In honor of **Marci Kladnik** and for all she does for the felines!

The Gonnion family

In honor **Jeffyne, and the volunteers at RESQCATS** for taking care of "Emma," "Web" and "Deacon" during the Thomas fire and slides that followed.

Penny Huff

In honor of **Mrs. George Wailes**.

In honor of **Kati Johanson**

Judy Schuck

Welcome “The Duke of Earl” to RESQCATS!



Earl is a sixteen-year-old cat that was pulled from a kill shelter by Cata Esteves, the founder of Cat Therapy, which is the first and only cat cafe in Santa Barbara. When Cata laid eyes on him at Ventura County Shelter, she knew that she had to do something to save him so she brought him to Cat Therapy. She knew she was giving Earl the only chance he had and was optimistic about finding an adopter for him. But it is a harsh reality when you realize that the majority of people do not adopt cats Earl's age.

Earl had a life of luxury at Cat Therapy...he was no longer in a tiny cage sitting behind bars at the shelter. He had access to an open room with several other cats and people to adore him. He was a handsome long-haired Maine Coon type cat with stunning emerald green eyes...a real eye-catcher!

But Earl saw things differently. He didn't care for the other cats at the cafe or the competition they presented when it came to getting adopted. I think he knew all along that he would not be an adopter's pick with so many younger and out-going cats to captivate someone's attention. Earl became sullen... and grumpy! He didn't hesitate to let everyone know of his dislike. His loud and pitiful meow reflected his gloomy outlook, so another solution needed to be found.

Sadly, my long-time feral resident cat, Endora, died in July. She was seventeen years old and had been with me since she was only twelve weeks of age. Since Endora was harassed by the other resident cats, she resided in a separate indoor enclosure connected by an open-air tunnel that led to her own private outdoor space. The outside space provided lots of shelves, baskets and a portable enclosed house for her to escape from all the activity inside the cattery if she chose to do so. She loved taking in the cool breeze that rustles through the surrounding

avocado trees from a high shelf in mild weather. Covered baskets with soft liners gave her a sense of security when she wanted to hide. Vines covered the sides of the wire enclosure and part of her overhead tunnel and added even more security for her. I often found her tucked in a basket surrounded by all that foliage. She looked like a panther peering out with her captivating gold eyes. Endora spent many happy moments in her “jungle!”

When she died, it was hard to walk past her empty enclosure and not see her. She never let me touch her...I only had that privilege after she died. But make no mistake...I loved her for who she was...a feral cat with a grand spirit.

Cata and I decided that Earl needed to come to RESQCATS. And I must say we are all happy to have him. Having life back in Endora's space makes me smile every morning when I perform my early duties. His meow is unmistakable...but it is a happy one now, not the piercing howl of an unhappy cat. He loves the attention he gets from the volunteers and his favorite thing on the planet, besides food, is his brush!

Earl is a magnificent new resident and I hope you will join me in welcoming him. There is only one thing I cannot figure out, and probably never will. How on earth could someone have turned Earl into a shelter at sixteen years old!?

Welcome The Duke of Earl!

A Polish legend tells the tale,
Of tiny kittens, oh so frail.

Along the river's edge they chased.
With butterflies, they played and raced.

They came too close to the river's side,
And, thus, fell in. Their mother cried.

What could she do but weep and moan?
Her babies' fate were yet unknown.

The willows, by the river, knew
Just what it was that they must do.

They swept their graceful branches down
Into the waters, all around.

To reach the kittens was their goal;
A rescue mission, heart and soul.

The kittens grasped the branches tight.
The willows saved them from their plight.

Each springtime since, the story goes,
Willow branches now wear clothes.

Tiny fur like buds are sprung
Where little kittens once had clung.

And that's the legend, so they claim,
How Pussy Willows Got Their Name!



Dot McGinnis

Ramblings of the Clauwy

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Speaking of reading, I am over the moon with excitement. My book, "Cat Tails: Heart-Warming Stories about the Cats and Kittens of RESQCATS" was awarded a Certificate of Excellence by The Cat Writers' Association! The book received an average of above ninety by three judges...making it a winner! You will want to order your copy!

As you enjoy the newsletter, remember, all that RESQCATS does is possible only because of people like you. We rely on your tax-deductible support. It is the most difficult part of my job...asking for your support, but I am counting on you to make this year successful as we will approach 3000 adoptions.

So please give...and know that every dollar makes a difference. I promise to do my best each and every day. There is not a day that goes by that I do not realize that none of what we do would be possible without you.

With gratitude,



Jeffyne Telson,
President, RESQCATS, Inc.

A special thank you...

I am counting on the younger generation to continue to make a difference for animals. They offer great opportunity for the future, but it is our job to educate them, teach them about compassion and share the importance of supporting non-profit organizations such as RESQCATS.

I often work with young volunteers in hopes of influencing the younger generation. But compassion for animals and learning the importance of supporting non-profit organizations begins with parenting.

So imagine how touched I was when Kyra, the eight-year-old daughter of Jeff and Jackie Tipper, made a donation to RESQCATS from her birthday money. Jeff and Jackie adopted kitties from RESQCATS well before they had children. Their cat, "Bella," is seventeen years old.

A very special thank you to Kyra Tipper...you are just the beginning of making a difference for animals!

Dear ResqCats

My name is Kyra Tipper

I am 8 years old.

I want to donate some of my birthday money to help Scared
Cats



There are other ways to give and make a difference at RESQCATS!

Sign up on AmazonSmile and choose RESQCATS as your charity of choice. We will receive a percentage of everything you purchase. Amazon shares their donation quarterly and in 2016, their charitable contribution paid for 125 vaccines!

Also, check out RESQCATS' Wish List on AmazonSmile if you want to give directly. I recently updated our list to include probiotics, lysine supplements, dose syringes, Bach Rescue Remedy, feather teasers and much more.

Thank you for choosing RESQCATS.



RESQCATS™

A non-profit animal rescue organization dedicated to the care and welfare of stray and abandoned cats and kittens.

I am enclosing my tax-deductible donation:

Angel in Heaven	\$1000
Miracle Worker	\$500
Magic Maker	\$250
Caring Spirit	\$100
Supporter	\$50
Helper	\$

() Please designate my donation towards special needs kitties and the Polar Bear Fund.

Make your check payable to:

RESQCATS, PO Box 3852, Santa Barbara, CA 93130
Or visit our website and PayPal at www.RESQCATS.org

Your Name: _____

Address: _____

City/ State/Zip: _____

And if you would like to receive our e-newsletters:

Email address: _____

Or email jeffyne@resqcats.org and we will add you to our list!

