

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 2023



President's Message

Written on April 2, 2023



Jeffyne with Lyla's kitten

Another year gone by and here we are again... kitten season 2023! RESQCATS is beginning our 26th season. And it has begun already as the first pregnant cat arrived in mid-March. Actually, last season never quite ended as you will read in this President's Message.

Most of you know that I usually take the winter months off and spend them in one of my favorite places, a little town on the Oregon coast called Yachats. That is where I write, quilt and can be a free-spirit without schedules and obligations for a few weeks. It is my break from rescue.

My respite to Yachats didn't happen this winter as yours truly wore out her hip and had to have it replaced in late January. But no worries, it has not stopped me, although it did slow me down for the winter months and I was not able to travel to Yachats. Instead, I had lots of recovering and physical therapy. I promise I have followed instructions during the rehabilitation and only been accused of overdoing it a few times! Honestly, I am doing great, am ahead of schedule according to the doctor and back on my feet kicking ___! (Admittedly, with a few limitations!)

This winter was not without rescues however. When called upon, no matter what time of year, I do my best to help whether RESQCATS is officially open or not.

Tom and Jerry were at death's door when they were found in the desert in late summer 2022. They were about six years old when Kat Foote rescued them with the intention of taking care of their medical needs. But these brothers were very ill and required a lot of medical attention. When she brought them to Santa Barbara, they were emaciated, dehydrated, matted and had severe upper respiratory infections. Kat spent the following days syringe feeding food and water until they were strong enough to eat and drink on their own. They made several trips to the vet for blood work, antibiotics and more. When I happened to speak to Kat, she told me about them. She shared that because they were from out of the area that they could not come under the care of the local shelter. I offered that RESQCATS could help, after all, they were strays and that falls under our mission. It made no difference where they came from; they needed help and the costs were something that RESQCATS could handle. That's what we do!

I provided immune support to help them recover. However, over the following weeks, Jerry needed extensive monitoring and sinus surgery. Their medical care was over \$1200. Being able to provide



Tom and Jerry in their new home

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

extraordinary medical expenses is something that is possible because of the support of many of you. So let me pause here and say "thank you!"

But there is more to it than that. Kat spent months getting Tom and Jerry on the road to recovery. She provided a safe and loving environment for the brothers and they blossomed from shy boys to inquisitive loving cats. As time passed and they felt better, they also came to trust Kat and even began to play...yet Tom and Jerry never left each other's side. When the boys were finally healthy enough to find a forever home in January, Kat took it upon herself to find the perfect one! Tom and Jerry acclimated quickly in their new surroundings. I am grateful to Kat for her compassion, diligence and heart of gold! She truly saved these two from a sure death.

Darren and Miranda reached out in November when a lone kitten was found at a construction site in Oxnard by Miranda's father. When he presented it to his daughter and her husband, how could they refuse? I mean...just look at her! But being first time kitty parents, they had no idea what kind of medical care she would need or where to get it! All they knew was that they were in love and were willing to provide a forever home.

A RESQCATS volunteer knew the couple and suggested RESQCATS. When I met Darren and Miranda they had named the precious girl, Sylvie. Over the following weeks, RESQCATS took care of her medical needs and she was officially adopted in



Sylvie



Ollie

February after her spay surgery. Another happy ending...or shall I say beginning!

Ollie showed up at Brad and Kim's house in Santa Ynez. He was a handsome orange tabby boy, less than a year old. He was friendly and must have belonged to someone at some point, but he was not neutered or micro-chipped. Brad and Kim were alarmed by the lack of mobility in his tail and suspected he had been hurt. RESQCATS reached out to a local vet and got him in ASAP. I was worried about a back injury in that he also seemed hesitant about jumping up and down from high places. Fortunately, the injury was slight and at the base of the backbone where the tail begins. It did not seem to give him any trouble...but his tail only droops. I guess we will have to read Ollie's other body language as a cat's tail expresses so much.

He also had a cracked canine that had to be removed which brought his total expenses even after a \$100 adoption fee to \$822.13!

I am happy to report he has a new home and according to the adopter, Ollie has made her twelve-year-old daughter's wish come true!

Now winter rescues are done and the doors to RESQCATS opened in late March. And WOW! Kitten season arrived within a week!

Timber and Forest were found in a shed during a storm at just a few days old. A caring lady took them in and bottle-fed them until a rescue could be found. They are in good hands with one of our bottle

CONTINUED ON PAGE 3

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 2



Forest and Timber

feeders, Deanna. They were only a week old with their eyes barely open. It will be weeks of around the clock care until they are weaned from the bottle and eating on their own. Perhaps this is the purr-fect place to stop and thank my foster bottle feeders: Deanna Koens, Athena Foley, Dana Fritzler and Karen Terpstra!

Gavi came to RESQCATS in early March as a pregnant cat. She does have an owner, but she realized that there can be complications during pregnancy and birth, so a friend suggested that RESQCATS could help. We certainly can! Gavi will give birth in the safety and comfort of RESQCATS and raise her kittens here. The anticipation of

newborns is both exciting and stressful. I feel like I'm on call 24/7. Obviously, I cannot be up all night waiting and watching, so hopefully Gavi will give birth during the day. There is nothing quite like seeing new little lives born into world. It's amazing to watch moms' instincts kick in to care for them. But if those instincts don't, I am here to help. I have cut cords on kittens when a young mother forgets or gets too tired to do so. And Mitch and I have revived kittens that were barely breathing. So I'm ready, Gavi!

It will be many weeks, but once Gavi's kittens are weaned and ready to find their own homes, Gavi will go back to her home. But first, she will have a vet exam, be wormed, vaccinated, spayed and micro-chipped at no cost to her person.

When taking in a pregnant cat, RESQCATS must be prepared to provide food and litter in addition to the medical care for 10-12 weeks or longer! It is quite the commitment of time and money. But to me, there is nothing I wouldn't do to help save lives.

Luna and Layla are two moms that were being helped by an individual rescuer in the Los Angeles area. Apparently there are a huge number of friendly moms with litters in one particular neighborhood. When I was made aware of them, I offered to help. Local shelters are sometimes limited to taking only



Gavi



Luna

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3



Lyla and her kittens

animals that are found within the county. I'm very fortunate in that I can reach out beyond our doors to help out of the area litters. Luna has four kittens and Layla has five...all enjoying the amenities at RESQCATS!

In addition, three other litters are in foster care and will be arriving in the coming weeks. RESQCATS has provided food for all three litters prior to ever coming to the sanctuary. And if anything else is needed before they arrive, we will take care of that, too.



Luna's kittens: Levi, Ritz, Maggie and Bella

RESQCATS has also reached beyond our door again this year to help people who cannot afford to have their cats spayed and neutered. We teamed with Santa Barbara Humane in 2022 and gave them a grant that take care of more than a hundred spays and neuters in the community. Our concentration for the surgeries is in Santa Maria where there are many unaltered cats.

I expect it will be another busy season and RESQCATS is going to need your support. You receive this newsletter because you have adopted or donated in the past. I know there are many organizations to consider when giving, I hope you find it in your hearts to continue to make a difference here. I cannot express my gratitude in a big enough way. Having your support is truly an honor.

Sincerely,

Jeffyne Telson
President of RESQCATS, Inc.

P.S. Of course, I would complete the entire newsletter on April 2 and just like a cat, Gavi waited until I am completely finished writing the President's Message and gave birth to five on April 3!!!

SPONSORED BY:
RESQCATS

**GET YOUR CAT
SPAYED OR NEUTERED
FOR FREE!**

BEGINNING MARCH 1
IN SANTA MARIA
BOOK ONLINE AT SBHUMANE.ORG

BACKSTAGE

Our morning crew is referred to the “Cinderella Crew” as they spend most of the morning cleaning kitty enclosures and the resident area after the party the cats have at night. I have no idea what they do out there in the cattery in the wee hours of the morning, but it is a mess. One of my long-time volunteers who requests to remain anonymous wrote about her observations and experience as part of the Cinderella Crew.

Volunteers at RESQCATS are privileged indeed. Not only do we have the joy of working at the Ritz Carlton of cat shelters but we get to witness the goodness that money can buy in the capable hands of a non-profit organization where every penny of every donation is spent on the cats.

I have had the honor of being associated with RESQCATS for many years. So many, in fact, that when I first met Jeffyne, she had only three tattoos!

Through these newsletters, we all know of her caring and giving and passion. What we do not know or ever read about is her incredible talent for making it all function smoothly.

Jeffyne runs a tight ship. She has to! The scheduling of personnel must run like clock-work. Superior standards of cleanliness must be maintained. This is visible to anyone who visits the cattery.

But behind the scenes, the diversity and bulk of supplies needed daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly is staggering. Let's take a look.

Cat litter is delivered by the pallet. That means 100 x 25 pound bags, five to six times per year. Average cost per bag is \$15. You do the math!

RESQCATS has 18 individual enclosures and several common rooms. These nice “digs” include 18 large crates for seclusion, 34 large and small condos, and 28 baskets made nice and cozy.

Further creature comforts: 30 blanket sets (five matching blankets to a set), 52 wild and crazy small and large blankets, 47 pillows, 26 padded cat cushions, 34 fleeces' pieces, 27 heating pads in individual cloth jackets, 80 litter boxes all shapes and sizes, and 24 pooper scoopers.

Cleanliness is next to godliness with three vacuum cleaners, three mops, eight brooms, 11 dustpans 11 dust brushes, 53 cleaning cloths, five scrub brushes, five buckets, and five spray bottles with cleaning solution. Litter boxes are washed with bleach to the tune of 40 gallons per year. In peak season, seven loads of laundry are done per day using Jeffyne's

industrial-sized washers and dryers.

Eat, Drink, and Be Merry by having a stock of 177 food and water bowls. The food selection is mind-boggling. To name a few brands: Wellness, Royal Canin, Pure Vita, Fussie Cat, Weruva, and Perfect Bistro. Flavors range from chicken with turkey, peas, chicken liver, tuna, and mackerel in gravy. Cat treats include: “Cats in the Kitchen,” Churus in fanciful flavors, and Temptations in Tasty Chicken, Catnip Fever, Surfer's Delight, and Backyard Cookout, the paw's down favorite! Food cost for last year was over \$25,000!

Two water coolers provide fresh water. Resident cats enjoy refreshment at four water fountains.

Not to forget extras are toys, brushes, combs, shampoo, etc. And medical! Suffice it to say that two cabinets in the cattery are fully stocked. At the ready are 16 cat carriers for emergency transport.

In all my years, we have never run out or stinted on the best quality at the least expensive price. This is an accomplishment of planning, shopping around, purchasing, and delivery. (This was particularly difficult during early COVID when supplies were not available). RESQCATS is all about each kitten and cat and all it takes to support them.

Why have I spent over 15 years cleaning fur balls from the floor and cobwebs from the rafters? My answer can be summarized in three little words “I love it.” When I am there, the positive energy is infectious.

Thank you Jeffyne and Mitch for providing a true sanctuary for felines in need and for volunteers who sometimes need those felines as much as they need us.

Signed,

A member of the “Cinderella Crew”



A Home for Sweetie

It was late March when I received a call from a twelve-year-old girl asking for help. She had found a cat and newborn babies under her house. She lived with her grandmother who had coached her on what to say in the conversation, but this young lady was confident and probably didn't need that guidance...she was on a mission to save a feline family! She needed **RESQCATS** help and she wasn't shy about sharing that! The girl had secured an area under the house so that their dog couldn't get to the kittens, but she wanted to talk about what to do next. She felt the mom and babies were safe for now. I asked her if she had had any contact with the mother cat to determine if she was feral or friendly. I explained that if we moved the mom and babies too soon and the mother was feral that she may not continue to care for her new family. She said the mother cat had let her pet her, but wasn't sure how social she was. (Sometimes feral cats can appear friendly because their hormones are raging. But other times, friendly mom can be extremely protective and cause bodily harm to anyone who approaches!)

After careful thought, we decided it would be best to leave the mom and babies in the secured spot until she could evaluate the mom a bit more. I didn't want to take a chance of needing to bottle feed six newborns if she rejected them...kittens do so much better with their mothers. The plan was to watch, wait and stay in touch. The girl continued to feed and monitor the family and reported in daily!

Within a few days, the weather turned nasty. It was unusually cold for Santa Barbara and rain was predicted for several days. That's just too risky for any stray cat with newborn kittens. The stress of keeping them warm and dry even under the house just didn't sit well with me. So we decided to take a chance and bring them all to

RESQCATS. If mom was feral, I would just deal with it! And if she rejected the babies I had fosters that were willing to bottle-feed.

The mother cat had been named "Sweetie" because as it turns out...she was a real sweetie! She was a beautiful tortoiseshell with jewel like jade eyes and, thankfully, she appeared healthy. She must have belonged to someone at some point in her life, but no one in the neighborhood had claimed her. She had no microchip and obviously wasn't spayed!



For the next two months, Sweetie raised her family in the comfort of **RESQCATS**. She occupied a nice roomy enclosure with multiple beds, a window with a view, a large cat condo, lot of toys and an endless supply of food and fresh water. And of course, she had a whole lot of love from all the volunteers. Her babies grew and as it always is with kittens, when the time came, they all found homes quickly. Only Sweetie was left behind. That usually seems to be the case with the mother cats! People are love-struck by the kittens and don't give a second thought as to where they came from...so moms are often the last ones to be adopted. And that can take weeks... or months in some

cases.

It had been three months since Sweetie's arrival and I was still searching for a home. I get extremely frustrated with people and their naiveté when it comes to adopting a one-year-old mother cat...or any grown cat for that matter. Many adopters feel they can mold a kitten into being what they want it to be; cuddly, a lap cat and so on. False! The reality is that there is already so much ingrained in their personalities that just haven't surfaced. When you adopt an older kitten or an adult, you

CONTINUED ON PAGE 7

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6

have a much better idea of their personality. Besides, they all need homes! It takes someone special to be open to giving adult cats homes. Little did I know just how special her person(s) would be...and the unique job that Sweetie would have.

Let me pause for a minute. I am fortunate in that I have led a fairly normal, healthy life without the physical and emotional challenges that many people face. Of course, there have been obstacles along the way, but I try to see those as opportunities. I am one that usually sees "the glass half full" and that perspective has always been a constructive way for me to deal with those challenges. I admit that sometimes my glass is depleted and empty, but that also gives the occasion for me to realize that I have the strength to fill the glass back up. While it's not always easy, I usually find my way.

However, my lows in life are nothing compared to those who lose everything because of an addiction to drugs or alcohol. In many cases, families are lost, the job is no more and homelessness becomes the way of life. If one chooses recovery, there are many steps to take to leave addiction behind and those steps are steep! I can only imagine the hopelessness that precedes them. But I also see such strength in those who choose the ongoing road to recovery and a meaningful life...and I admire these people for finding their power.

It was three months after Sweetie's arrival when a volunteer told me that she may have a home for Sweetie. I was elated and said, "Please give the young man my number!" Joseph called the next day and we set a time for him to meet Sweetie. He brought along his co-worker, James on one sunny Saturday morning. They were two of the most well-mannered gentlemen I had ever met. I showed them around and they loved the sanctuary. They expressed to me that RESQCATS is a very special place and they both felt that from the moment they stepped out of the car and I greeted them. They were also eager to meet Sweetie.

The majority of volunteers at RESQCATS are women, so I wasn't sure how Sweetie would react to two men however gentle they came across. But she was fine...more than fine actually! Sweetie actually put on quite a show! She played with a chaser feather toy as they teased her with it and was comfortable with being handled. But what surprised me the most is when she went belly-up wanting to be pet! I had never seen her do that before!

Joseph was to be the official adopter, but James was there as his support and to give approval. You see, these special young men worked at a men's sober house and had been through the program themselves.



James, Jeffyne and Joseph

When Joseph shared that, my mind began to spin! Could that be why he and James were so gracious in their demeanor? Was that the reason that they seemed to truly appreciate what I have tried to create here for the cats? They expressed their gratefulness for what I have created with RESQCATS in heartfelt words. I was so touched that I became teary.

I had never imagined a cat going to a sober living home with all men! But any reservations I felt at that moment dissolved as we talked about who she would live with, who would be responsible for Sweetie for her lifetime and how she would be acclimated to the home and residents over time. I was comfortable with all the arrangements, but since this was a new experience for me, I was still concerned that Sweetie may not adjust. But she did!!! She went home a few days later and adjusted to her new life off the streets easily. She enjoys her big cat condo and the company of all those men!

Joseph, James and I have stayed in touch since Sweetie went home several months ago. James tells me that Sweetie has been a wonderful therapy cat for many of the guys. He says, "She picks who she interacts with but honestly, she chooses the ones who seem to need her the most." He also says that he sees a compassionate side to many of the residents when she is around and that is healing for their hearts.

The men at the sober house have been through more than most of us can imagine. And trust is something they must nurture and develop over time. What better way than to start with the love of an animal that does not judge or criticize...but only loves unconditionally.

James and I text often. He keeps me informed about Sweetie and often sends me inspirational messages that are reminders that all of us can conquer our fears, face life's challenges and, most importantly, feel grateful for every day. One of the things he and Joseph are grateful for...is Sweetie!

And I am grateful for James and Joseph!

“The Captain and Tennille”

Two special resident cats forever in my heart

I write this with those special people in mind who adopt the weak, the sick, the old, the blind, the deformed and the special needs kitties. You are some of the most compassionate and pure souls that I know. You know who you are...and this is in honor of you and written with respect, admiration and more gratitude than I can express.

When I first began RESQCATS, it never occurred to me that I would have to make a decision about keeping any cats! My mission, after all, is to rescue, care for and **ADOPT** stray and abandoned cats and kittens. I hadn't considered that there may be a cat or kitten that wasn't adoptable. After all, what could possibly make a cat not adoptable? However, it wasn't long before I realized that my dream of finding homes for all the cats that entered RESQCATS was unrealistic!

Most adopters are interested in the “perfect” ones. You've heard it from me before...“they must be the smallest kitten possible, a particular color, the right temperament, healthy”...and so on...and on! That usually left the ones with special circumstances homeless.

Well, if they were at RESQCATS, they weren't exactly homeless! But what was I to do with the “less than perfect” ones. Needless to say, those cats and kittens became RESQCATS resident kitties.

There has only been one exception to a keeping a cat that I felt was adoptable. Her name was Smudge. She arrived when a construction site was shutting down and the workers didn't want to leave her behind. She was about two years old and about as friendly and loving as any cat I've ever had. No doubt she had charmed the workers and those who worked in the trailer where she had taken up residence. No one could take her and they certainly didn't want to abandon her to fend for herself.

She was a petite black and white girl with a black smudge on her upper lip...hence the name Smudge! She was exceptionally social. She rolled over belly-up each time I entered her enclosure wanting for attention. It didn't take long to find a nice couple to adopt her. However, when she went home with her new family, she was anything but responsive to them. She hid, wouldn't eat and just wasn't happy. I didn't understand why she had been unhappy in her new home; the couple was kind and had given her time to adjust, but she made it clear it was not the place for her. When she was returned, nevertheless, she reverted back to her happy outgoing self. So I put her up for adoption again. However, each time a potential adopter visited, she laid in her basket and played dead like a possum! She was totally unresponsive...and down right rude! As soon as

the hopeful adopters left, Smudge transformed back into her lovely, receptive self. I guess she had decided she wanted to be at RESQCATS! I gave in (or gave up) and Smudge became the first RESQCATS resident.

Admittedly, there were a few other adoptable ones that stayed. I, too, have failed at fostering a few. Pebbles, Paisley and Twilite are the only ones I will fess up to at this particular moment!

As resident cats, RESQCATS is responsible for their lifetime care whether they remain at the sanctuary or find a permanent foster home with a volunteer.

So what makes a particular cat or kitten unadoptable? Just to list a few residents in our history; Angelica and Lucy had hydrocephalus and, sadly, as is usually the case, their lives were short-lived. Roo was born with malformed front legs that she cannot use and no one wanted her. Miracle had neurological issues as did Tumbelina. Hope had cerebral hyperplasia. Houdini broke into the cattery and stayed. Although he was not feral, he was afraid of any human being and refrained from human touch for two years. Snowie, was afraid of her own shadow (although she was pure white)! After a failed attempt in a new home, she came back to RESQCATS to live out her remaining years.

Then there was Katsu, Liora and Asya...three kittens who tested positive for feline leukemia. Yes, I retested them as the vet advised, but they continued to be positive for this horrible and deadly virus. So I created a special enclosure and a home at RESQCATS when many other organizations would have euthanized them. They were twelve weeks old when they arrived. Sadly, one by one they had to be let go peacefully... Liora at just nine months, Aysa at one year and Katsu was one-and-a-half years. I still think about them today as I credit the trio with getting me through one of the toughest losses in my life...my dog and best friend, MisJef. They gave me purpose on days I didn't think I could function. Their entertaining kitten antics could only make me laugh and time spent with them, knowing any moment I could lose them, made that time especially valuable and precious.

Not long afterwards, I was asked by County Animal Control to take a cat that tested positive for leukemia. It was so soon after the loss of Katsu, Liora and Asya, but I thought to myself, “This cat needs a place to live out her life feeling love and human kindness. She deserves more than being euthanized in a county shelter while she is still happy and seemingly healthy.” So I adopted Talulah...she was with me for four years. We think she was six or seven years old when she passed; the average lifespan of a leukemia positive kitty is three so I was lucky to have her for so long. When she died, I grieved and it was tough to bear seeing her empty enclosure. I

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 8

instinctively felt that her space opened up for a cause and that reason must be that another cat that would not be adopted needed a place to live out its life.

That's when I adopted Giselle. She was sixteen at the time and had been in and out of foster care with another organization for two years. It was suspected that she had lymphoma, but that didn't matter to me. It also didn't bother me that her litter box duties were hit and miss...literally! She needed a home and love and I could give her both. I had seven wonderful months with Giselle. I'm grateful for all she gave to me in return for that home. She grounded me during the hectic kitten season as I always took time to hold her on my shoulder and dance with her to the music in the cattery. I missed her terribly after she succumbed to cancer. She peacefully went to the Rainbow Bridge. I still miss her.

To be openly honest and vulnerable, I miss them all!

Soon after Giselle's passing, I came across a posting at the Humane Society about two leukemia positive kittens. They were about seven months old and their tests results were confirmed twice. As I read about them, I told myself that I would think about giving them a home to live out their lives. Think about it...right? Right! The following morning, I made a commitment to adopt them. But it was only after a vision of Giselle that allowed me to let her go and feel okay about once again filling that enclosure that I was able to go and get them.

The Captain and Tennille became their new names. They were the cutest, funniest, friendliest kittens on the planet in my mind. They loved their indoor space that connected to not one, but two, outdoor enclosures. They were enamored with the dogs whenever they were let out front to potty or just enjoy roaming new territory in the yard. They followed the dogs from one tunnel to an enclosure and through another tunnel to a second enclosure with a curiosity that only kittens have. The Captain and Tennille never met a stranger and stole the hearts of the volunteers immediately.

I've learned that special cats, such as these two, come with some life lessons. I try to see those valuable teachings along the way while they are living. Waiting until after they are gone to realize their gifts of wisdom is a way to work through some of my grief, but I have opened my heart and eyes to appreciate them each and every day before they are gone.

The Captain and Tennille lived their lives as if every day could be their last. They loved to the fullest, played hard and for lack of better words...they didn't miss a



Jeffyne with The Captain and Tennille

beat.

Tennille went first. She became ill suddenly only after being here for three months, but she left a lasting impression on my heart. That left The Captain alone... and he was miserable being alone. It was as if he had lost not only his sister, but his best friend. I believe there is a lesson there too... that is to appreciate what you have each day as you never know when you might lose something or someone. Make sure people realize you care, that your friends and family know you love them

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 9

and that you take the time to appreciate the things around you.

I have kept and adopted many of the unwanted, un-adoptable, less than “perfect” cats and kittens over the years. I have done so because for me, it is the right thing to do. I suppose that somewhere in the back of my mind I hoped to be an example for others, but that has never been my first objective. My priority has always been to provide the cats with the best life possible.

Still I was surprised when one of my volunteers, Maddie, asked if she and her boyfriend, Jeffrey, could adopt The Captain. He wasn’t actually up for adoption, but Maddie had witnessed how lonely The Captain was since losing his sister. He had also won her heart with his gregarious personality and desire for attention... more attention than I could give him while running a rescue. Being true to my mission to give the cats the best life possible, Maddie and Jeffrey took The Captain home. While they understood the risks of losing him, we also hoped he would live at least as long as Talulah had.

Sadly, The Captain became ill only a month after he went home with this special couple. I know that my words of warning were heard, but I had hoped that their grief would come a long way down the road.

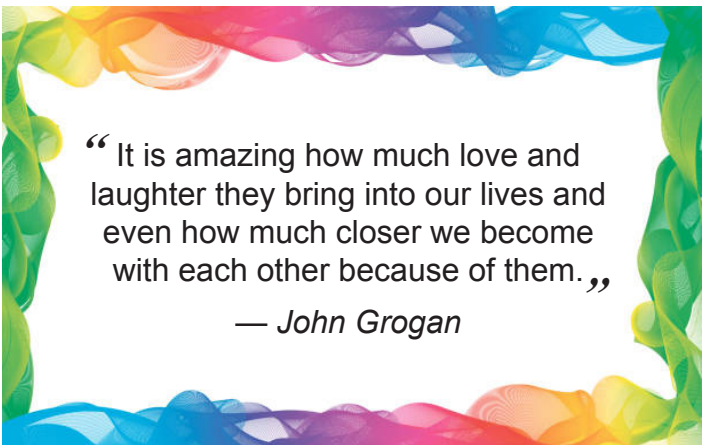
Now, not only do I grieve his loss, but I grieve for Maddie and Jeffrey. I also thank them for giving The Captain the home he needed.

The Captain and Tennille will never leave my heart... they were special beyond any words can describe.

I know that one day in the near future, there will be another, or others, that will occupy that particular enclosure here. It has become the designated spot for the un-adoptables who need a place to feel love and compassion for all their remaining days.

And as is so often the case, I expect some caring individual will say to me, “Jeffyne, how do you do it? You set yourself up for more heartbreak.” or, “I don’t know how you do it!”

My answer is sincere and heartfelt and always the same, “It’s not about me...it about the cats who need me most.”



“ It is amazing how much love and laughter they bring into our lives and even how much closer we become with each other because of them. ”

— John Grogan

Tilly

In November of 2022, I was contacted by a previous adopter, Delfina, about a kitten that her daughter, Victoria, had rescued from a colony in Paso Robles. Yes, that is the time of year that I am usually winding down the kitten season for a winter break, but she needed help for “Tilly” and I was eager to assist. I offered what RESQCATS always does.

The usual protocol is for an exam, Felv/FIV test, worming meds, FVRCP vaccination, spay or neuter surgery and a microchip. Most often, cats or kittens require more than that and thankfully RESQCATS is able to provide any and all medical care they need.

Tilly was part of a colony of cats living at Victoria’s aunt’s house. Victoria was staying with her aunt who was in hospice. She had taken it upon herself to continue feeding the colony at the house when she noticed that the seven-week-old kitten was being bullied by the other cats. They were brutal to the kitten! They attacked her when she tried to eat, so she was severely malnourished. While Victoria could provide food and love, Tilly needed medical care. Victoria was not able to leave her aunt unattended so Delfina said she was willing to transport Tilly to Santa Barbara as often as she needed to so that she could receive proper care. In the following weeks, Delfina made no less than a half dozen trips to and from so that we could provide the vet attention she needed.

I saw Tilly for the first time around Thanksgiving. She had a terrible upper respiratory infection that had manifested in not only her nasal passages, but in her eyes as well. These infections are usually viral but we treat with antibiotics when indicated and Tilly displayed all the symptoms of needing supportive care. She went home with antibiotics and I also sent Delfina home with immune support supplements, lysine, probiotics and two different eye medications for her daughter to administer. I vaccinated Tilly with an intra-nasal vaccine that would be less suppressing on her immune system than an injectible one, yet still get her started on her vaccinations.

Tilly was scheduled for an exam as soon as an appointment was available. The vet elected to do a blood panel to make sure she was negative on her Feline Leukemia and FIV test, and to check her other values. All was good, but he was concerned about one of her eyes. It looked awful so he prescribed some additional steroid eye drops hoping they would help. His concern was that her eye may need to be removed. Eyes that are extremely infected and left in the body can cause cancer some time down the road.

Victoria was on it...drops and meds several

CONTINUED ON PAGE 11

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10



Tilly

times a day; she didn't miss a beat. And neither did Delfina in that she always managed to get Tilly to the vet when she was due.

Tilly was living the life of comfort that I wish for all the strays. She was indoors with a warm place to sleep, had high-quality food to help her grow strong and the love of Victoria and her young son.

Unfortunately, Tilly's eye didn't improve...even with the diligent regimen of eye medications. Sadly, the veterinarian recommended that her eye be removed and suggested doing it at the same time as her spay surgery so that she would be put under anesthesia only once. So on February 8, 2023, the operation was performed.

Tilly did well with surgery and went home with a cone around her neck to prevent her from scratching at the sutures where her eye once was. Those cones are such a nuisance, but she did well...at least for a while! On the tenth day after surgery, Victoria came home from work to find the cone off and Tilly had bloodied her eye. So off to the emergency room she went. Luckily, she was far

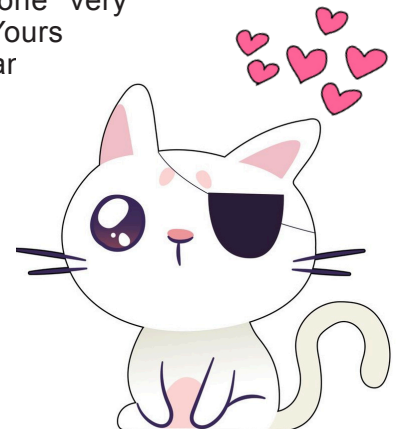
enough along in her recovery that no damage was done. The sutures were intact and the ER doctor recommended just applying warm compresses.

Two weeks after surgery, Tilly was back in for her follow-up with her regular vet. Her eye looked fine and her spay sutures were good, too. However, she had an upper respiratory infection AGAIN! That's not unusual as the stress of surgery can lower the immune system and many times symptoms reoccur. Once again, I sent Tilly home with antibiotics per the vet's instructions. I also loaded her up with immune support supplements and suggested that Victoria continue them indefinitely. As of March, after four months of care and over \$1300 in medical expenses, Tilly is doing great! I am grateful that RESQCATS can provide all that we did for Tilly. And I appreciate Delfina and Victoria for their caring hearts.

But there's more to the story. Tilly became the guardian for Victoria's dying aunt. On her last earthly days, Tilly perched herself on her aunt's body and purred. It was if somehow she knew of the impending death. Perhaps the soothing sound of a kitten's purr comforted her aunt as she passed. Victoria told me that it was a heartfelt experience that she will never forget. We believe Tilly was there to help support a peaceful passing. And no doubt, it probably helped Victoria and her son with the loss, too.

I have had some time to reflect on little Tilly and her new family. Not once did they back step on keeping her because she would have only one eye. In my experience, some would have seen her as less than perfect and she would have been passed over at adoption time. In my mind, she is as perfect as any kitten can be. That perpetual "wink" makes her especially perfect! And I think Victoria and her son would agree!

Tilly, you are one very fortunate kitten. Yours is a story of human compassion and love. I believe that when we are kind to animals, we are kinder to people. Hopefully, one day, we will all reach that point of "purr-fect" like Tilly.



And now... A Few Words from Mr. Jeffyne... *Grieving for a Pet*

During the 37 years that Jeffyne and “Mr. Jeffyne” have been married, we’ve been the devoted pet parents to 41 rescued collies...and well more than double that number of cats. As of this writing we have only three dogs...and a total of nine cats. Within those respective groups, one of our collies and four of the cats are advancing in years and in some stage of failing health. Simple arithmetic shows the facts. Over the years, we’ve lost 38 of our beloved collies...and more than 100 of our feline friends!

Having lost such a staggering number of family members, we’re frequently asked...“How do you do it?” “How do you lose so many loved ones and go on?” Well, to be honest, it’s not easy, but animals are our lives...and we understand that losing them is part of that journey... however, that doesn’t make their departure any easier.

There are some individuals that just don’t understand how we can grieve for an animal. While sharing our pain we might hear them say, “You still have other dogs!” Or, “You can always go to the shelter and get another animal!” Or the most hurtful of all, “Oh for goodness sake, it’s ONLY a dog...get over it!”

In our case, having lost so many of our loyal companions, we’ve heard all the well-meaning, but sometimes extremely painful platitudes. It still hurts.

Elisabeth Kübler-Ross, the late renowned pioneer in near-death studies, classified the five stages of human grief as denial, anger, bargaining, depression and finally acceptance. These same stages of grief are present in the loss of a pet...there is no difference.

She states that the first stage of grief is shock and denial. When a pet passes away, it can be difficult to believe that they’re really gone. One may find themselves expecting their pet to come bounding up to them when they enter the door, or hear their familiar bark or meow. Accepting that the daily routines and interactions that we once shared with our companion will no longer be part of our lives is truly tough to bear. Now, especially, it’s important to be gentle with yourself and allow time to process the reality of the situation.

As the actuality of the loss sets in, one may experience intense feelings of sadness, anger, and guilt. The second stage of grief is often characterized by these emotions. A person may feel overwhelming sadness and cry often and for no apparent reason. At other times they may feel angry at the circumstances surrounding their pet’s death, or guilty for not being able to save the pet. These are difficult emotions to navigate, but they are a normal part of the grieving process.

The third stage of grief is called bargaining. During this period, you may find yourself trying to make deals with a higher power or seek answers to questions that cannot be answered. It is what I call the “what if I’d done this, or what if I hadn’t done that stage?” It’s wanting control of a circumstances that you had no power over and wondering if you could have done something differently to prevent you pet’s death. While it’s important to acknowledge these thoughts and feelings, one must also recognize that they are not always helpful or productive, but they are part of the process.



Adonis

The Rainbow Bridge

The fourth stage of grief is depression. That deep sense of sadness and loss is difficult to shake. You may withdraw from social activities, lose interest in hobbies or passions and struggle to find joy in life. Surrounding yourself with others who understand is important. Friends, family or sometimes, a professional therapist are good listeners in validating your loss. It is also important to take care of yourself. Do whatever it takes! A walk sometimes helps shed light on your feelings. Listening to calming music or just finding a quiet place to reminisce about the special times you and your pet shared can bring peace. And of course eating well, getting enough sleep, and engaging in self-care activities are especially important now.

At some point we reach the final stage of acceptance. We begin to come to terms with the reality of our pet's death and to find some sense of closure. The sadness and grief are still present, but it's no longer overwhelming or debilitating. You find yourself remembering happy memories with your animal, and feeling grateful for the times you shared together. Feeling better doesn't mean that you've forgotten your pet or stopped loving them, but rather that you've found a way to move forward and honor their memory.

The stages of grief don't necessarily fall into this order....sometimes it follows an unpredictable path before you find acceptance.

Ultimately, the most important thing to remember is that you are not alone. Many pet owners have experienced similar losses and there is support available to help you through this difficult time. While the pain of losing your animal may never completely go away, over time, the happy memories you shared with your beloved pet can provide comfort and solace.

So why do so many of us feel this way about our animals? Well, the bond between a pet and their owner is unique and special. For many, a pet is not just an animal but a member of their family, a companion, and an unconditional source of love, comfort and joy. The loss of that pet can be a devastating experience that leaves us feeling a profound sense of grief and sorrow.

Painfully ironic, on March 15, 2023, in the midst of writing this Mr. Jeffyne article we lost our beloved Adonis. Our precious boy was 13 years, 8 months and 25 days when he peacefully slipped away in our arms. Although fourteen years is a long life for a collie...as I share far too often with others who have suffered a loss...no matter how long we have our animal companions...it's never long enough!

Adonis was a unique dog...but of course aren't they all. Who wouldn't say, "My dog is so smart...he's so handsome...he's so lovable...he's so everything!" But the fact is that Adonis was all of this to us. He deserves all the space I've devoted to this article...and much more. But that will have to come later.

In the meantime I'll simply say, "I miss you Adonis and I love you and I'll see you soon."

There is a bridge connecting Heaven and Earth. It is called the Rainbow Bridge because of all its beautiful colors.

Just this side of the Rainbow Bridge there is a land of grass, meadows, hills and valleys with lush green grass.

When a beloved pet dies, the pet goes to this place. There is always water and warm spring weather.

The old and frail animals are young again. Those who were sick, hurt or in pain are made whole again.

There is only one thing missing, they are not with their special person who loved them so much.

So each day they run and play until the day comes when one suddenly stops playing and looks up!

The nose twitches! The ears are up!

The eyes are staring and this one runs from the group!

You have been send and when you and your special friend meet, you take him in your arms and hug him.

He licks and kisses your face again and again-and you look once more into the eyes of your best friend and trusting pet.

Then you cross the Rainbow Bridge together never again to be apart.

—Edna Clyne-Rekhy;

an 82-year-old Scottish artist and animal lover. Until recently, she had no idea that the poem she wrote over 60 years ago—to honor her dog, Major—had brought comfort to so many others.



(In Adonis's case, there will be a detour through the Milky Way!)



In memory of...



"How lucky I am to have something that makes saying goodbye so hard." —Winnie-the-Pooh

In memory of **Ron Faoro, DVM**...someone who made a huge difference. —*Elizabeth Faoro*

In memory of "**Haiku**" and "**Papaya**." —*Lee Wardlaw*

In memory of "**Belle**"...adopted in 2005 from RESQCATS. —*Nita Lang*

In memory of **Buddy Borderre**. —*Dawn and Joel Kaufman...and family*

In loving memory of "**Sharon**," who was adopted from RESQCATS 16 years ago. And for her sister, "**Cecelia**" and their human mom, **Nancy Kaller**.

In memory of **Jim**...my soulmate. —*Nadine Nichols*
In memory of sweet "**Riley**"—adopted many years ago from RESQCATS. —*Nell Foster*

In memory of "**Tiger**" and for **Jenelle Mullick**.

R.I.P. **Manny**. Forever loved, never forgotten. —*Sam Kaiser*

In celebration and honor of...

Happy Birthday **Julie Kaplan!!!** —*Liz Benishin*

Happy Birthday to **John Sobalsi**. —*Betty Aileo*

Happy Birthday **Julie Kaplan**. —*Mel Kyle*

In honor of "**Mascar**." —*Diane and Doug Morgan*

In honor of "**Pandora**" and "**Pumpernickel**" who were adopted from RESQCATS in 2021. —*Erica and Van Scranton*

In honor of "**Pus Pus!**" —*Judy Smith*

In honor of **Becki Eaton**. —*Robin O'Neil*

In honor of "**Parker**," "**Rasmus**," "**Scooter**" and "**Chloe**." —*Ron Fisk*

In honor of **Susie Browne** —*Susan Browne*

Merry Christmas, **Julie Kaplan**. —*Mel Kyle*

In honor of "**Elliott**" and "**Quinn**"...adopted in 2018! —*Jayne Diaz*

In honor of **Julie Kaplan**...and 28 plus years of friendship. —*Margaret Thompson*

In celebration of **Mom and Dad Eaton**—there are no words to express my gratitude for all these two have done for me and added to my life. —*Julie Kaplan*

In celebration of **Liz Benishin**—one of the finest humans and kitty lovers on this planet. I think her heart is shaped like a cat, it doesn't beat, it purrs! —*Julie Kaplan*

In celebration of **Margaret Thompson**—what started as a chance encounter at a bike race in Augusta, Georgia in 1994 has turned into a lifelong friendship. —*Julie Kaplan*

In celebration of **Mel and Hal Kyle**—another chance encounter over taking care of a feral cat in the neighborhood and turned into a wonderful friendship. —*Julie Kaplan*

In appreciation, in the name of "**Norman**," the cat! And **Loretta Red**. —*Evelynn Smith*

In honor of **Jan Oldham**. —*Eric Oldman and Elizabeth Whitney*

Happy Birthday to my friend, **Kim Foster!** —*Rosemary Meszanos*

Agador:

"Sometimes it takes a village"

I love to share inspiring stories about Good Samaritans. A kitten named Agador had several that helped him from street life to the good life!

In early October of 2022, a caring lady came upon a lone kitten on the street. Thankfully, she noticed him. As she approached she could see that he needed help. He let her approach without the least bit of hesitation. When she picked up his emaciated body he immediately melted into her arms. He looked pathetic. He was malnourished, dirty, covered in fleas and had parasites. Realizing that he needed medical care, she took him to Advanced Veterinary Specialists (AVS). She was acting as a Good Samaritan! And of course, AVS took him in... that's just how they are!

It's simple to solve issues like hunger and street dirt. Good food and a bath resolve those problems. Fleas and parasites are easy to treat with medication. But this three month old kitten had something much more serious going on. He had no use of one of his front legs; it dangled like moss on a tree. He had obviously suffered some kind of trauma that affected the nerves rendering one of his front legs completely useless. After careful examination the veterinarian determined that the nerves were so injured that he felt absolutely no pain. That was the good news! However, the leg still needed to be amputated. If it remained, he could hurt himself when he jumped or catch it on something without realizing it causing even more serious damage.

But how was the emergency hospital supposed to provide what was needed for this poor kitten? Their purpose is to provide care for people's pets. They don't have the resources to grant care for every hurt stray that is left with them.

That's when AVS reached out to RESQCATS. I've taken many RESQCATS kitties to specialists there that needed beyond our normal protocol. In fact, several of my own dogs and cats have spent time in the hospital receiving life-saving treatment. I spoke with one of the

veterinarians that I've had the opportunity to work with many times. She explained the situation and I could hear some desperation in her voice. I listened carefully. We agreed that this kitten needed help, but funding the care was the issue. She was quick to say that one of the vet technicians named Justin was already in love with the

kitten and planned to adopt him. That was a relief as I thought ahead of myself, "How will I find a three-legged kitten a home?" That certainly wouldn't stop me from funding the vet care he needed. I replied, "This kitten was relinquished as a stray, so he fits right into our mission statement to rescue, care for and adopt stray and abandoned cats and kittens!" I then detected a wave of calmness return to her voice when I told her I was happy to help.

Justin named the blue-eyed snowshoe type kitten Agador. He came under RESQCATS care, although Justin took him home and fostered him until RESQCATS had followed our usual protocol of vaccines, worming, neuter, Felv/FIV test and microchip...and in this

case, having the leg removed.

Fortunately, because Agador's leg was not painful, amputation was not a critical emergency. That gave him time to get stronger, grow and recover from street life. I made a trip to AVS that afternoon to deliver food, vaccines, probiotics along with worming and parasite medication. In addition, I put him on some supplements to boost his immune system before surgery. The doctor and Justin met me at the car to collect the supplies. They came out with Agador for me to meet and slipped this sweet, sorrowful looking kitten into my arms. My emotions got the best of me. I wondered, "How did he end up on the street?" "What happened to his leg?" "Was it painful for him when he got hurt?" Perhaps it was better I didn't know as it would break my heart. All I knew was that I



Agador

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

was grateful that the vet had reached out and that I could help.

Justin took Agador home and did everything in his power to care for Agador. In my view, this kitten won the lottery with Justin. Here was another Good Samaritan who was eager to adopt a kitten that would only have three legs...something that many adopters would never consider.

When the time came for surgery, the veterinarian was yet another hero. She knew that performing this operation at AVS would be very expensive so she reached out to Santa Barbara Humane. They agreed to let the surgeon remove Agador's leg in their clinic, thus keeping the cost at a much more reasonable rate for a RESQCATS.

Agador did well with the amputation. He was given pain meds for several days. He had already adjusted to having only three useful legs, so there was no transition time of being without it. And surprisingly, after all he had been through, he was playful, loving and very social.

Perhaps he realizes just how lucky he is to have been found, rescued and led to the kind doctors who reached out for help to RESQCATS. It took several Good Samaritans to save Agador! His story reminds me of the quote, "Sometimes it takes a village!"

Most of all, he is one fortunate kitten to have found a forever home with Justin.

Cat Tails: Heart-Warming Stories about the Cats and Kittens of RESQCATS.

Published in 2017, "Cat Tails..." is about Jeffyne's journey of creating a cat rescue, the challenges and opportunities she has faced, and most important of all, the valuable life lessons the cats and kittens have taught her. It is touching account of her dream to create a rescue for stray and abandoned cats and kittens. It was a winner of the Cat Writers' Association Certificate of Excellence.



More Cat Tails: My Journey from RESQCATS to God's Little People Cat Rescue in Syros, Greece

Published in 2010, this is the story of an amazing journey about Jeffyne's experience working in a Greek rescue after being chosen out of 35,000 applicants. You'll find a lot of humor as she describes living in a foreign country for four months. You will also read about the cats she met, fostered and came to love. She lovingly describes the challenges and life lessons she learned from this once in a lifetime experience. It won both the Cat Writers' Association Certificate of Excellence Award and the highest honor, a Muse Award.



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!

Mail-in Order Form: CAT TAILS and MORE CAT TAILS

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone number: _____

Email address: _____

CAT TAILS: Price per book: \$35 per book including shipping.

of books: _____

MORE CAT TAILS: Price per book: \$25 per book including shipping.

of books: _____

Total amount MORE CAT TAILS: \$_____

How would you like your books to be signed?

GRAND TOTAL: \$_____