

# 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 2019



## President's Message

Written on May 1, 2019



Jeffyne and Cali's ten-day-old kitten

Could it be kitten season again already?! It is...and it began with a boom this season. This is RESQCATS 22nd year of operation and we will surpass 3000 adoptions sometime in May! What a milestone!

Many of you know that I had the honor of being chosen from 35,000 applicants to help at God's Little People Cat Sanctuary in Syros, Greece this winter. It was a once in a lifetime experience that I'll always treasure. I spent four months taking care of cats and kittens and I can't think of a better way to say it, "I was IN MY ELEMENT!" Be sure to read about it in this newsletter! But I'm back now and RESQCATS is in full swing!

I had planned on taking a few weeks off in

March after returning from my winter adventure in Greece. But I was home less than two weeks when I received a message about a sweet pregnant cat that had been turned in to another organization. I often work with one of the group's long-time volunteers and RESQCATS has taken several pregnant moms from her in the past to help out. She messaged me and was desperate to help a sweet calico who was close to delivery. "Meadow" was scheduled for spay surgery the following week which meant her babies would be aborted. She knew that RESQCATS wasn't officially open for several weeks and said she understood completely if I couldn't help. She asked if I could think of any options for Meadow...besides surgery and aborting her kittens! I didn't have to think about it for a split second! I said, "Nope, no other options, bring her to RESQCATS." Meadow gave birth to five adorable kittens on March 18.

My thought was this, I need to be there for the cats. Since then, I've teased, "I guess the cats didn't get the message about me taking a few weeks to recover from being gone all winter!" Cats always have their own agenda. Besides, it's about the cats, not about me having a few weeks off.

By the middle of April, RESQCATS had over forty cats and kittens in our care. "Starla," and "Bella" gave birth to six and four kittens respectively in the comfort and safety of RESQCATS. "Katie-Kat" was pulled from a high-kill shelter in Southern California while she was pregnant and scheduled for euthanasia. RESQCATS often works with Kitty Devore Rescue to save lives of mom with unborn kittens. We were also able to pull "Shiva" and her four six-day-old babies from the same shelter.

While some may ask why I offer to take cats from out of the area, my response is this: I couldn't live with myself knowing there was room at RESQCATS to save cats on death row and not help. When I look in the mirror each night I can honestly say, "I did the best I could today." So I DO give it my all every day to make a difference in the lives of the cats.

Our fosters, Deanna and Athena, were busy bottle-feeding motherless kittens by mid-April. "Ben" and "Jerry" were found as newborns under some bushes in Santa Maria. Well-meaning people picked them up and put them in a box knowing the mom was nearby. But the mother cat was feral and

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was too frightened to return to the kittens. When a **RESQCATS** volunteer arrived at the scene to trap the mom, using the kittens as a way to attract her, the mom was too afraid to approach. Time was running out and the survival of the kittens was paramount. There was no choice but to get the kittens into foster before they died of exposure and hunger.

When four other newborns, as well as a single four-week old kitten, were turned into the Santa Maria Humane Society, Deanna was there to take them when no one else could.

Athena took in tortoiseshell sisters, "Lily," "Lola" and "Lulu" when they were three weeks old. They were found at a recycling plant where their mother most likely died from rat poisoning. **RESQCATS** has helped several kittens in past years from the recycling plant and we're following up to see what can be done to rectify the horrible situation there.

The morning crew of volunteers is in full swing every morning by 9 a.m. cleaning enclosures and socializing kittens. I have a great crew this year and I'm grateful to them for all they make possible with the gift of their time.

It's an exciting time of year and everyone is happy to have kittens on board. But I also know what's coming...more moms, more kittens and more cats to place into homes...it sometimes seems endless. **RESQCATS** will continue to do what we do by providing all the medical care they need and by spaying and neutering the moms and kittens before they are adopted to qualified adopters.

Spaying and neutering is the cornerstone of **RESQCATS** and while we make sure that all the cats here are sterilized prior to adoption, it's also important to me to reach beyond our doors and into the community. So I made certain that our work was being done, even while I was in Greece, by assisting Volunteers for Inter-Valley Animals (VIVA) with two spay/neuter grants to help get a head start on the season and hopefully prevent the birth of litters. Since my return, **RESQCATS** has also provided the Santa Maria Valley Humane Society with a grant for spaying and neutering. Since much of the problem of pet over-population is in Santa Maria, we hope this will have a great impact in the area. By helping other groups, we can rest assured that we've done our part by preventing unwanted litters in our own backyard. I might also add, it feels good to be able to help other organizations as we all strive to make lives for the animals better.

It's only the beginning of what I think will be a long season...and it started early this year. I anticipate a very busy year at **RESQCATS**.

So, here it comes...the least comfortable part of my job...asking for your support. First, let me thank all of you for your previous generosity. You receive this newsletter because you've made a difference in

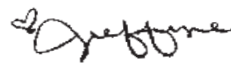
the past in one way or another: adoption, sending food and supplies and/or making a monetary donation. Not only does your support cover food, litter, supplies, vet exams, fecal exams, Felv/FIV tests, vaccinations, worming medication, spay/neuter surgery and micro-chips, but it also helps us provide special veterinary care when it's needed. Every year, we face new challenges head on with some of the cats that require life-saving measures, emergency care, critical surgery, extensive medical treatment, a veterinary specialist or all of the above! **YOU** make all things possible at **RESQCATS**.

Please consider making a donation and help us save lives. Send your tax-deductible donation to **RESQCATS** or you can donate through our website: [www.RESQCATS.org](http://www.RESQCATS.org). You can also order my book: "Cat Tails: Heart-Warming Stories about the Cats and Kittens of **RESQCATS**" with the order form in this newsletter or through the website. (just go to the *Cat Tails Book* tab)

I realize there are many organizations to consider when making a donation, and not a day goes by that I don't think about that. So every day, I feel grateful to those who give so generously to **RESQCATS**.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for all you do.

Sincerely,



Jeffyne Telson  
Spring 2019



"Is this where it hurts?"

# *A Dream Come True...*

## *my time in Syros, Greece*

Many of you may recall from the last newsletter that I had the honor of being chosen for a temporary position at a cat sanctuary, God's Little People Cat Rescue, in Syros, Greece this past winter. I usually disappear in the winter months and go to my home in Yachats, Oregon. It's there that I take some time off from the long kitten season to write, quilt and be creative; all the things I don't have time for during the peak of RESQCATS kitten season.

It began when a link about a job opportunity to help cats on a tiny Greek island in the Aegean Sea went viral. Thousands of people around the world applied for the chance to live on Syros for free, take care of the sanctuary cats and receive compensation. I had seen the link several times, although I never paid too much attention to it. But when Mitch put it in my "to read" email, I read and thought it sounded like a wonderful opportunity, but, once again, I deleted the email because I never imagined myself applying, although I had always dreamed of returning to the islands to help the Greek cats. The job would require me being away from Mitch and all my animals for several months. To my surprise, one night over dinner, Mitch asked me if I'd seen the link. I told him, "Yes, but that's a long time to be gone! How would you feel about that?" He said, "Jeffyne, this job has your name written all over it! It's a chance to live your dream and I will support you 100% if you choose to apply. And I think you should!" With his encouragement and support, I applied.

It took two days for me to compose an email to Joan Bowell, the founder of God's Little People Cat Rescue. I wrote about my experience during the past twenty one years with RESQCATS. It was important to not only share my knowledge, but to communicate about my life and dedication to animals. Still, I never suspected that I would get the job as there were over 35,000 applicants at the time. Imagine my shock, when Joan and her husband, Richard, made a personal visit to Santa Barbara to offer me the position! I ecstatically accepted under one condition: the offered salary was to be donated back to the cats.

Understand, I wanted the position, not because of the view and chance to live on a Greek island for free; I only wanted to help the cats and live my dream.

Within a few weeks, I was on a plane headed to one of the most beautiful places in the world, a tiny island in Greece that is only eight by ten miles where

22,000 people live with an estimated 13,000 stray cats! I knew I could do the job, but I wanted to make a difference, too.

When I arrived at God's Little People in early November, 2018, I was in awe of the sanctuary on Joan and Richard's property. It was heaven on earth for the sixty plus cats that live there. I wasn't accustomed to seeing outdoor cats; I require that RESQCATS adopters commit to indoor only for the cat's lifetime due to all the dangers outside. The property was located on a nature preserve and very little traffic traveled on the adjacent road. So it was safe. The cats enjoyed nature without the fear of predators. On warm days, they basked in the sun, played in the garden, chased butterflies and waited for their next meal! On cold days, there were plenty of warm places to curl up inside boxes and carriers lined with blankets under covered patios...while they waited for their next meal! I was responsible for caring for them, which was a simple task as I'm accustomed to having that many under my care during our busy season.

But Joan wanted me to have a "true Greek experience" with the cats, so she had chosen a project for us to do together. She picked a colony at a Greek Orthodox church at the end of a mountain road overlooking the Aegean Sea. We spent the next four months rescuing the sickest and most vulnerable, as well as, spaying and neutering as many in the colony as possible. Eventually, homes were found for many of the rescues we saved.

My experience in Syros tested me in ways I couldn't have predicted. It was a challenge to be in a foreign country getting accustomed to driving, learning my way around, shopping for supplies and figuring out what to eat. Luckily, I found a Greek take-out that had a variety of vegan dishes, so I didn't have to learn to prepare meals since Mitch does all the cooking at home.

But my biggest obstacle was an emotional one. There were cats everywhere; living by dumpsters, wandering the streets in the city of Hermoupolis, taking refuge in abandoned lots, and barely existing in colonies all over the island. The cats lives were ones of hardship. Where was their next meal? Was there a next meal? How did they escape from the scorching sun and heat in summer? Where did they go during the cold and stormy wintry weather? Some of the cats fared well for being strays; the lucky ones









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lived close to people and were fed on a regular basis. Others were not so fortunate. I suspect that many perished due to illness, heat, freezing temperatures and starvation. Many of the survivors were always hungry, had severe upper respiratory infections and were pregnant by the time they were five or six months old. I wondered, "How can I possibly help all these cats? How do I choose which ones to save and which to leave behind?" I knew early on that I would have to find a way to cope with so much sadness. I've always said that we can only make a difference...one at a time. Somehow, I felt like I was now being put to that test.

I can best explain my outlook in how I responded to Mitch when he visited me and we went to the church. When we got into the car to leave, he was unusually quiet. After a few minutes, I said to him, "Something's bothering you...what's wrong?" He said, "Jeffy, I feel sad. I just don't know how you do it." By then, I had chosen to see things in a different, more uplifting way. I had important work to do and in order to accomplish it, I talked to myself daily about focusing on the good and not being overwhelmed by the sorrow. I needed to stay in good spirits. I also wanted to send a message to the world. I replied to Mitch, "Here's how I do it! For every time I feed the cats a morsel of food, pet them, sit in the street and let them come to me or watch me from afar, for every time I talk to them in words or from my heart... it makes a difference for them...for that moment...or for that day. And that is better than doing nothing!"

I also had the chance to foster several of the sickest cats and kittens that Joan and I rescued. I rarely have that kind of time with all my responsibilities at RESQCATS. Several of the recovering kittens lived in the house with me. I had the luxury of spending hours with them daily. Having that hands-on time with kittens such as "Charmer," "Indigo," "Tumbelina" and "Violet" was a most memorable and heart-warming experience. They were all ill with serious eye infections and upper respiratory issues when Joan and I rescued them from the church colony. Charmer was a friendly kitten with a "runway strut" that was quite charming! He was extremely friendly and we suspected he may have been eating at a nearby house where he also had become accustomed to human touch. Tumbelina was a very sick kitten; one of the sickest I've ever seen. She was in such bad shape that I doubted she would make it another day; she was emaciated, dehydrated and had already lost sight in her eye due to an infection. When I saw her, she was on the opposite side of an ancient stone wall that separated the road from the steep mountain leading to the sea. As I peered over the wall, our eyes met and there was something about her that just pulled my heartstrings. I had no idea how I would save her, but I said, "You're going to be

okay, I promise, you're going to be okay." The next day, I quietly approached the frail kitten from behind while she was eating some tasty canned food I had put down. Because of her weakened state I was able to swoop her off the road and tuck her into my vest. Indigo and Violet were terrified as they'd had no human contact, but somehow, Joan and I managed to rescue them, too.

During the weeks that I cared for them, with the help of antibiotics, fluids and medical care, they recovered. And over time, those frightened souls, Indigo and Violet, learned to trust, feel love and return it tenfold. One of my greatest gifts at God's Little People was being part of seeing their bodies heal...and hearts mend. They were adopted and left Syros for their new homes while I was there. Charmer now lives in the Netherlands, Indigo moved to Switzerland and Tumbelina and Violet have a home together in the United Kingdom. I probably don't need to say this, but I will never forget them.

There wasn't a day that I didn't feel honored to have been chosen for the position. It was my privilege to serve. I never forgot all those who applied; I felt like I owed it to them to work hard and do my very best. I hope I didn't disappoint.

I also want to share that there are few times in my life that I've felt as connected to someone as I do Joan. It's as if we were kindred souls from the first time we met and that has continued to this day. We felt comfortable sharing our experiences with each other; the challenges, heart-aches, loneliness, as well as, the happiness of knowing that you've made a difference. To have spent four months with someone who truly understands the blessings and the difficulties of being a rescuer opened a door to a lifelong friendship based on commonality, trust and love. I owe Joan so much for making my dream come true.

I realize that not everyone has a chance to live his or her dream. My experience was a once in a lifetime opportunity that not everyone gets. I'm very fortunate. But let me make a point. We all have a chance to make a difference whether it is volunteering, donating to a non-profit or standing up for a cause. So remember, even the little things you do make a difference...and doing something is better than doing nothing!

It seems appropriate to sum up my experience at God's Little People with an important message: "Saving one cat will not change the world, but for that one cat...the world will change forever."

It's impossible to share all my experiences of this wonderful journey in a short newsletter article. So for those who have been asking, YES! there is another book in progress. I hope to have it out soon, but writing a book that tells a tale and communicates a message takes time. So stay tuned!

## Welcome “Roux,” a New RESQCATS Resident

I hope you will join me in welcoming our newest RESQCATS resident. Her name is “Roux.”

She was found with her littermates when she was only three to four weeks old. Roux wasn't like her siblings; something was different. She was born with short front legs. The condition is a genetic disorder and usually affects the front legs. For unknown reasons, the bones don't develop properly, but kittens born with the condition do just fine. So don't feel sorry for this little girl! She is resilient and does all the same things other kittens can do!

I was in Syros when Deanna Koens, one of our foster moms who bottle feeds motherless kittens was asked to take Roux and wean her. Once she was eating solid food, Roux was supposed to go to another rescue in Northern California. But Deanna and her husband fell in love with this special girl, so she became a RESQCATS resident. That means that RESQCATS will be responsible for her lifetime care and provide any medical attention she may need.

Most likely, Roux would've been considered un-



adoptable in many shelters and we all know what that means...her life would've ended. So we think she's one lucky girl!

One might expect that a kitten without the use of her front legs would be limited, but it hasn't stopped Roux! Watching her develop and discover ways to do all the things kittens with four legs do has been amazing. She

is a true testament to that saying, “Where there's a will, there's a way.” Nothing slows her down. She's learned how to play and chase toys like any other kitten. She's even mastered the three tiered tower of tracks toy and uses her front legs to chase the balls. The laser light is one of her favorites! She runs at full speed in order to catch it. Those back legs can sure go! Of course, it's best to let Roux chase it on the carpet runner Deanna puts on the floor. And believe it or not, she now jumps onto Deanna's dining room table chairs. Oh-oh, that means the table is next!

So welcome, Roux! And just one more thing; we don't call Roux “disabled.” We refer to her as “specially abled!”



**“I can't change the direction of the wind, but I can adjust my sails to reach my destination” —Jimmy Dean**



## IT'S MOTHER AND KITTEN SEASON AT RESQCATS!

"A picture speaks a thousand words" and we have Daryl Metzger to thank for the photos. *And please remember, when you're considering adopting...the moms need homes, too!*

**Page 8 (L to R):** Autumn, Summer, Breeze; Jade; Rain; Summer; Jade; Kiara; Starla; Ginseng, Banyon | **Page 9 (L to R):** Nettle, Meadow and her one-day-olds; Katie-Kat and her kittens; Bella and her babies; Meadow's babies; Bella, Rain







And now...  
**A Few Words from Mr. Jeffyne...**  
*Uncle Mitch's Big Fat Greek Adventure...*  
*OR, What I did on My Christmas*  
*Vacation in the Greek Isles*

If you've been following this column for a while, you're probably expecting the next installment of the continuing Story of **RESQCATS**. This is the series that Mr. Jeffyne began in the Fall of 2017 which has chronologed the on-going history of **RESQCATS**.

Well, I'm sorry to disappoint you, but you're just going to have to wait until the Fall Newsletter for the next episode of that story. In the meantime, I wanted to share with you a more recent **RESQCATS** event that involved both Jeffyne and Mr. Jeffyne.

For Jeffyne, it was the opportunity of a lifetime to have been selected from more than 35,000 applicants to be the temporary caretaker at God's Little People Cat Rescue on the Greek Island of Syros. For Mr. Jeffyne these last few months could be better described as Uncle Mitch's Big Fat Greek Adventure...or, what I did on my Christmas vacation in the Greek isles!

When I was younger, I can recall coming back to school after the Christmas break and exchanging stories about all the wonderful experiences that the kids had during their vacation. I remember some of my friends talking about driving a few hundred miles in their old family car to visit relatives in San Diego or Bakersfield or Palm Springs or even Phoenix; while others told of trekking all the way to northern California to go skiing in the Sequoias. Some of my friends even shared stories of their family's exotic vacation to Hawaii or their cruise in the Caribbean.

Despite the fact that my family did not have the means to take a holiday vacation, I nevertheless, always appreciated hearing the stories that my friends shared about their winter experiences. I loved learning about their family traditions; how Uncle Joe or Aunt Harriet always bought each member of the family the same patterned pajamas; or hearing the interesting stories that only grandparents are capable of relaying about Christmas in the "old country." And I really enjoyed, (albeit vicariously,) as my friends talked about their long, winding ski down the slopes from the top of Mammoth mountain, or scuba diving for conch shells with the natives on a Hawaiian reef, or the stories, (true or not,) of all the ice cream and cookies and chocolate that they ate while their cruise ship was sailing between Jamaica and St. Thomas.

And while our family wasn't able to take a holiday break like any of these when I was a kid, I still loved the

stores because I knew that someday I would have my own opportunities for a wonderful Christmas vacation.

In November, 2002, while checking the Internet for collies available for adoption, (as I frequently do,) I learned of an enormous collie rescue project that was unfolding in the little town of Shelby, Montana...just 6 miles from the Canadian border. The story was almost unbelievable...170 dogs, (mostly collies,) and 10 cats had been stuffed into 2' x 2' x 3' boxes, stacked one on top of another and piled inside a 45' windowless trailer. The dogs and cats had been "hailed like freight" for 9 days by an unscrupulous woman who was moving her backyard breeding facility from Alaska through Canada to Arizona. Fortunately, the tractor-trailer was stopped at the Canadian border by an astute U.S. border patrol officer when he spotted icicles of urine forming off the back of trailer.

Upon opening the trailer doors, the officer was greeted by dozens of collies who had broken out of their tiny boxes. One after another, they jumped out, landing on solid ground for the first time in more than a week.

Sadly, during the trek, one of the dogs had died, but miraculously, despite having no food or water and having been confined to laying in their own urine and feces, the rest of the collies had survived.

The animals were immediately confiscated and the breeders were arrested and charged with 180 counts of animal cruelty. In June, 2003, the husband and wife couple were convicted on all counts and by August, all the dogs and cats had been spayed or neutered and adopted out to wonderful families from all over the country.

And that's the end of the story...well, not quite. For me, this experience was a new beginning and has helped shape the rest of my life.

"How can you love and care for 170 collies?" That was the question I kept asking myself in December, 2002 as I made the solo 21-hour drive from Santa Barbara to Shelby, Montana. (This was 14 years before Uncle Bob and Uncle Mitch's first Most Excellent Adventure!) I wasn't sure I could handle the situation. At that point, I'd never been involved in a major animal rescue. But the answers came to me immediately when I first saw those wonderful animals. "One at a time!" That's how I'd do it. I'd care and love those collie's one-at-a-time. And that's exactly what I did. Along with dozens of other volunteers, I helped take





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care of those 180 rescued animals...one at a time!

To try to understand what the dogs felt during their horrible 9-day trek across Canada, I crawled into that filthy trailer. I crouched in the darkness trying to imagine the fear and terror that these gentle collies must have endured. I tried to understand what it must have been like for these majestic creatures to be crammed into those tiny boxes with no food or water. I struggled to feel the pain and suffering they endured not being able to stand or turn around, and the indignity they withstood when they had to lay in their own urine and feces.

The horror that overwhelmed me while listening to their silent barks was frightening. It was exactly the same feeling that engulfed me many years earlier when Jeffyne and I had visited the Nazi concentration camps at Dachau and Mauthausen. I was compelled to ask myself the same questions, "How can people do something this horrible to another living creature?" I couldn't possibly comprehend the answer to the question...I just knew I needed to help.

So for the next 14 days, in the brutal cold of northern Montana, along with dozens of others, I helped feed, walk, clean up after, bath and brush those wonderful dogs. Adjusting to the below-freezing climate was more than challenging for this southern-California kid, and, at times, the magnitude of the work was overwhelming...but it needed to be done. And while certainly not easy, the effort associated with taking care of the dogs and cats soon became a labor of love.

In January, 2003 when I returned to my regular consulting job, people would ask me, "So, what did you do on your Christmas vacation?" I said, with a great deal of pride, and not a small amount of emotion, "I helped care for 180 abused collies and cats in Shelby, Montana...and it was my best Christmas ever!" And as of that time, it really was my BEST CHRISTMAS EVER!

As Jeffyne and I had the opportunity to spend time

together on Syros, I couldn't help but think back to my Montana Christmas so many years ago. My mind wandered back to the very long and solitary drive from Santa Barbara to Shelby. I thought about so many of the collies that I fed and brushed and walked on those bitterly cold days. (I took pictures of many of the dogs that today still pop up on my computer screen saver, so it's not hard to remember their sweet faces.) And I thought about what happened to all the dogs...were they adopted to good families? Did they get to live the rest of their lives in much-deserved

comfort? Are any of them still on this side of the Rainbow Bridge...probably not.

Certainly, the circumstances of this Christmas are different. It is hard to compare Shelby, Montana to Syros, Greece. There is no abusive breeder causing the animals unnecessary pain and suffering, and this is a land of 13,000 stray cats not 180 imprisoned dogs...but there are similarities. Being here on a Greek isle in the middle of the Aegean Sea was a bit like being in the frozen island community of Shelby, Montana in

mid-winter. And the need to care for countless animals that require human intervention was very similar. The fact, that so many of the residents on this tiny island give of themselves to care and feed the cats is not unlike the many volunteers that devoted their Christmas break to helping the Montana collies.

So, I guess these Christmases were not so different after all. They were both times when caring people give of themselves to help the less fortunate. They were both times to give so that God's Little People may have a better life.

So, for me, this Christmas was a time to once again see the goodness of people who give of their time and resources to help animals.

Although I never expected to say it...and as unlikely as it seems...I can honestly say, I have now had a SECOND Best Christmas Ever!



Jeffyne and "Mr. Jeff" in Syros!

## In celebration of...

In honor of the best **Mom and Dad**. I cherish every minute I get to spend with you and will be forever grateful to Mom for teaching me how to quilt so I can gift her talents forward to charities that are dear to my heart...including **RESQCATS!**

*Julie Kaplan*

For **Liz Benishin**---one of my all time favorite people. We started as teammates, became roomies at training camp, shared our love of kitties and became **FRIENDS!**

*Julie Kaplan*

In honor of **Mel and Hal Kyle**---my neighbors, my friends and the **BEST** kitty sitter ever!

*Julie Kaplan*

In honor of **Margaret Thompson**, my cycling teammate and long-time friend. We may live on opposite coasts, but I feel like she is my next door neighbor!

*Julie Kaplan*



Happy **VERY SPECIAL** Birthday to **Julie Kaplan!**  
*Liz Benishin*

In honor of **Julie Kaplan**...a Christmas gift that saves lives.

*Liz Benishin*

In honor of my friend, **Lisa Givan**.

*Dodi Gauthier*

In honor of **Gail Brewer**, wife and cat momma!  
*Jeff and "Phantom"*

For **Laurie Ball**  
Love, *Tom*

For my friend, **Susie Brown!**  
*Susan Browne*

In honor of **Robin Machado!**  
*Jill Thach*

Happy 14th birthday to **Oliver Dworsky!**  
*Melissa Ryan and Elizabeth Karlsberg*

Happy Birthday to **Liz Benishin**---*Julie Kaplan* said, "A bird told me how old Liz is, so my cat, ChaCha ate it!"

## In memory of...

In memory of "**Takara**." Takara was a beautiful, spunky and very special kitty for my friends, Kim and Brandt Foster. She will always remain in our hearts. Rest in peace sweet Takara.

*Amanda Maffett*

In sweet memory of our "**Takara**."  
*Kim and Brandt Foster*

In memory of "**Lilly**" and "**Grace**" Welch, littermates and soul sisters.

They lived a long happy life until eighteen years old!

*Colleen Robles*

In memory of two little **brother angels** and for **Athena and Deanna**.

With love and gratitude,  
*Jeffyne*

In memory of "**Miss Oreo**" and for the gentle heart that took her in... Carol Hunt. Even though she was eighteen years old, it felt like she got her angel wings too soon.

*Julie Kaplan*



Miss Oreo

In loving memory or "**Oscar**"....and for my dear friend, **Susan**, who gives it her all when it comes to the felines.



Oscar

In memory of "**Gellie**"...a beautiful kitty who left us much too soon, but left behind some valuable life lessons.  
*Val Moreno*

In memory of "**Starr**" who reminds us that every day of life is a precious gift.

In memory of **Penny Huff**...a classy lady with a heart of gold, positive outlook on life and a great sense of humor! You will be missed by many!



## In memory of a very special kitty named “Angelica”

It is with a very sad heart that I share that “Angelica,” nick-named “Gellie”, a RESQCATS resident who had a permanent home with Deanna Koens went the Rainbow Bridge on April 2, 2019. For those of you who don’t know Deanna, she is our main foster for many newborn kittens for RESQCATS.

Gellie was born in June 2016 to a sweet mom who was in Deanna’s care. It was obvious at a very early age that something was different about Gellie. Her head was abnormally large and her eyes were spaced unusually apart. The vet diagnosed her with hydrocephalus; water on the brain. Upon the doctor’s recommendation, RESQCATS scheduled an appointment with a neurologist to see if a stint could be surgically inserted to help drain the fluid accumulation in her head. But very little brain matter was present, so Gellie wasn’t a candidate for surgery. According to the neurologist, she probably wouldn’t live more than three months. So Deanna and I appreciated every day on earth she was granted. Gellie became the center of Deanna’s life...and vice versa!

Gellie was a miracle, she lived well past what most kitties with her condition do. She was two years and nine months old when she developed some severe symptoms; high fever, throwing up and not wanting

to eat. Sadly, after several vet visits and a referral to a specialist, it was discovered that she had intestinal carcinoma, the most deadly form of cancer. The doctor said that even with surgery and follow-up chemotherapy and radiation, the prognosis was poor and might buy only a little more time. She added that recovery would not be without pain and suffering. In addition, even if surgery and treatment gave us hope of a few more weeks, or possibly months, anesthesia for a cat with hydrocephalus was extremely risky.



Gellie and Roux

When Gellie began to suffer, we let her go. She was in Deanna’s loving arms and went peacefully.

Animals do go peacefully, but what they leave behind initially is anything but peace...only sadness, tears and heart-ache. But Gellie also left some life lessons.

She taught me that “just because you look different doesn’t mean you aren’t worthy of love and compassion.” Gellie was a good friend and offered love and security to many of the foster kittens that Deanna took care of during the last three years. Gellie was a friend to all... she took all of Deanna’s foster kittens under her paws and offered them security and love. We should do the same when our friends need us.

Her best friend was Roux, a special kitten who was born with short front legs...we call them her “special” legs. Gellie’s compassion and special beauty are humbling reminders that every life is a gift and that all lives matter.

I also want to extend a very special thank you to all of you who donated so generously towards Gellie’s medical care. I’ve said this in a number of notes I’ve written to her donors, but I’ll say it again. RESQCATS can only do what we do for the kitties because of you... and for all you do I am grateful every day. EVERY day! You have hearts of gold and are a living testament to the goodness in humankind.



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

**Awarded a Certificate of Excellence from the Cat Writers' Association.**

**A book you won't want to miss and 100% of the proceeds go directly to RESQCATS!**

- ❁ RESQCATS founder, Jeffyne Telson, launched her first book in late 2017 and it has sold hundreds of copies.

In 1997, she founded **RESQCATS, Inc.**, as a non-profit organization dedicated to the rescue, care and adoption of stray and abandoned cats and kittens. In the ensuing years, with the

- ❁ help of a small group of dedicated volunteers, Jeffyne has grown **RESQCATS** well beyond her dreams into a highly respected organization that has placed over 3000 cats and kittens with qualified families and individuals.

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

- ❁ Her book has not only received a Certificate of Excellence from the Cat Writer’s Association, but also has gotten wonderful reviews:



“Jeffyne allows you ‘in’ her life as well as the kittens and cats, so you feel like you know them all individually. I couldn’t wait to get the book and truthfully, Jeffyne did not disappoint.”



“What an inspiring book. The author’s devotion and passion for animals is incredible. It’s beautifully written and a hard-to-put-down book!”



“The tails and tales in his book will open anyone’s eyes to the true, exhausting, unending soulful work that is rescue.”



“This book is a gracefully written document of one person’s life in the equally challenging and rewarding field of animal rescue. The author writes about her experiences beautifully. I felt inspired by her life’s dedication of caring for the cats.”



**See how to order your copy on Page 16!**



## *A Different Point of View*

*This may be a repeat article for some, but it's always worth reading and giving some thought to when adopting!*

During kitten season, my days are spent doing something I love and what I feel that I was put on this planet to do...care for stray and abandoned cats and kittens. Once the cats and kittens are healthy and have met the required medical protocol, it is time to find homes for them. Fortunately, the Montecito Pet Shop shares in the task of finding homes for many of the kittens so that I can spend more time on the streets rescuing homeless kitties in need and then, dedicate my time caring for them.

I do, however, handle many phone calls and emails in order to pre-screen potential adopters. It's imperative that future adopters realize the lifetime commitment they're making to a kitty. They must share **RESQCATS** philosophy about cats living indoors for their entire lifetime and also commit to never declawing them. If a landlord is involved, we require written permission for a tenant to be eligible to adopt.

I recognize that most people are interested in adopting kittens. They're irresistible bundles of furry fun. When **RESQCATS** holds an adoption event, there's usually an endless stream of people looking for kittens. I find the same thing happens when anyone visits **RESQCATS** in search of a new friend...ninety-nine percent of the time, people are only interested in adopting a kitten. I love to be part of making someone happy when they find a kitten and leave with a smile on their face. But most often, I also feel sadness and disappointment at the same time.

Kittens get adopted, but their moms are left behind because...well, I'm not sure why. Is it their size? The moms are most often less than a year old themselves. People don't comprehend that in just a few months, their two-and-one-half pound kitten will be the same size as their mom. Repeatedly, mother cats are unnoticed by most adopters.

I have a point to make! Mother cats need homes, too! These young cats have been deprived of kitten-hood in order to nurture their babies. So often, once they've raised their family, the moms burst into playful, fun-loving kittens, only in seven pound bodies in order to make up for all the time they lost because someone didn't spay them! They frequently wait weeks or even months for an adopter to come along that's willing to give them the home they deserve.

I realize that I look at rescue from a different point of view than most people. To me, it is about who needs a home. It's not about adopting the tiniest kitten with the misconception that one can "mold" its

personality. In reality, there are many factors that aren't in our control that dictate the personality of a cat or kitten.

Time and time again I open my email or listen to a phone message from someone stating the precise kitten they want with every preconceived detail listed. People request photos of the kittens so they can see if they like the way a kitten looks. Many times, make no mention about personality. Looks dictate what they are attracted to and want.

Their comments remind me of a poster I saw in a framing shop once. It said "Good Art Doesn't Match the Sofa!" The color of fur seems to be foremost in their minds. That is followed by what the fur pattern is: It has to be marble tabby, tuxedo, calico, and most definitely not black! Many are adamant about not wanting a black kitten. I hear you!

I recall a particular woman and her "list" several years ago when I handled adoptions exclusively at **RESQCATS**. She wanted to adopt two siblings. It made no difference to her what one of them looked like, but the second one had to be "just like one over there" in the next enclosure...EXCEPT, as she articulated, "with a fluffier tail, an orange nose, and white paws. Oh, and it I don't want them to be large cats when they grow up." I was astounded. But, I politely repeated the "order" back to her to make sure I got it all, and then finished by saying, "You do understand that this is rescue?!" I was never able to fulfill her fantasy. And honestly, I never would have called her back.

Human nature leads us blindly down a path of what's appealing to our eyes. But, there's so much more to beauty than our visual perception.

So let me just put this out there! I rescue! I go into the streets, strangers' homes, under bushes, into car lots and where ever else I need to venture to save cats and kittens. They look the way they do when I get there!

The eyes are the most prejudice organ in the human body. I can't manufacture a cat or kitten's appearance in order to fulfill someone's fancy, match their carpet or replace one they may have just lost. Adoption is not like ordering a new car! Every cat and kitten is different and unique and that is why each is so very extraordinary!

**RESQCATS** has several resident cats that were not adoptable or never got adopted and I am dedicated to caring for them for their lifetime. It has never mattered to me what color they are, if they are two months old or 17 years. It's my pleasure and honor to give these cats a home. Yes, I occasionally

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 15

tease that in my next life I'll be like most people and have the opportunity to choose whatever kitty I want. But you know what, I'm certain that I would still choose the ones that need homes the most!

I don't expect everyone to share my perspective. Perhaps, however, I've given you something to consider. I feel that it's very important, at least to me, to know that I've offered a different way of viewing adoption. Education is part of my commitment to the cats.

So, when you consider adoption, have an open heart and mind. Leave behind all those pre-conceived ideas about size, appearance, age and color. Your compassion will open doors to a whole new way of adopting. You'll make a difference for a rescued kitty and believe me, you will see yourself and the plight of homeless animals in a whole new light.

As for me, I will applaud you out loud!



**A very special thank you** to Sarah and Roger Chrisman for their kindness and generosity. The lives you have touched cannot be counted and the difference you have made can't be measured. I am just so very grateful to you.




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

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