



CatTALK

A Publication of the Cat Fanciers' Association®

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From the Editor

Teresa Keiger

The wheel of the seasons continues its turning, giving us cooler and shorter days as we shift our focus to autumn. And as we usually do with our October issue of *Cat Talk*, we focus on felines who are reaching the autumn of THEIR lives, and how we can best provide for them during their senior years.

All cats need regular medical care, but senior cats present owners and veterinarians with special problems. Their bodies show the toll of the passing years, which complicates determining what is wrong AND developing a treatment plan for them. Thank goodness researchers continue to make medical advancements!

Cats are not the only beings to transition into a different season of life. We take a look at why after many years within the cat fancy breeders (and exhibitors) decide that the time to retire has come. And saying farewell to our beloved feline companions is never easy, but we offer some suggestions to honor and release them.

Did you know that cats used to be featured with tea ads? And that the public loved the idea of cats taking afternoon tea. Just in time for warmer drinks weather, we take a “cosy” look at cats and teatime.

Readers know Trish Seifried from several cat training articles we have printed over the years. But they may not know that she and her cat Kit Kat just obtained a Guinness World Record award AND a *People* magazine cover! We look at that journey in this issue.

We hope that you’ve been enjoying our “Up Close and PURR-sonal” series where we feature various folks in the cat fancy and aspects of their lives that many folks may not know about. And should you have a suggestion about someone we should feature, do let us know.

This issue is scheduled to publish just before the CFA International Show in Cleveland. Here’s hoping than many of our readers from near and far will be there enjoying celebrating cats and the cat fancy. Safe travels, and many thanks for being a *Cat Talk* reader.

**On Our Covers
A Fancy Full of Fall Colors!**

front cover:

GP; NW *Ladiluck's Fuel of Metallicat* a red tabby Exotic male. Br: Sharon Soules - Kathleen Doyle
Ow: Carmen Johnson Laurence, Edward Goatseay. photo: Larry Johnson

back cover

GC, NW *Alayna Roasted Chestnut of Ragtime*, a brown R/S tabby Bengal male. Br/Ow: Elaine Magee, Bryce Magee, Melissa Magee. photo: Chanan

GC, BWI, NW *Almaros Rock My Heart*, a ruddy Abyssinian female. Br: Alice Rosol Ow: Alice Rosol, Pau Badia Grimalt, Suraphong Khamnuch. photo: Sun Suraphong

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Some Things Get Better With Age

Finding a Forever Home For a Senior Cat

Michelle Pelligrino



One of the hardest decisions we make as breeders is to rehome an adult cat. Sometimes they are a poor fit for the show program, other times they don't thrive in a cattery setting. Some cats have done their job and contributed greatly to our programs and it's just time for them to retire. Whatever the reason, these cats have become a part of our family. They have been with us, in some cases, for years; we watched them grow up, assisted them with birthing kittens, medicated them, groomed them, slept next to them and loved them. We know their likes, dislikes and special quirks. The idea of rehoming these cats can be intimidating or simply heartbreaking.

Kittens are generally easy to place with new families. Most people want a baby—they like to see kittens grow up, form relationships and bond with family members. We take cute videos and cute pictures, and if we are lucky, there are a number of people who cannot wait to bring one of our kittens home. Our babies are curious, playful and confident and most seem to walk right in to their new homes and take over immediately! But what about the older cats we have? Rehoming them may seem like an impossible task emotionally and physically, particularly for new breeders.

Why Rehome an Adult Cat?

- It prevents overcrowding
- Not all cats like other cats
- They are not contributing to the goals of your breeding program
- Illness or stress

As preservation breeders dedicated to keeping healthy cats and preventing overcrowding in a cattery, we always must think ahead about the well-being of our program, as well

as considering the needs of each individual cat. That can lead to some hard decisions but can also be seen as an opportunity to make a wonderful match, so to speak...one between a beloved pet and a person who needs a new family member to love. Lynn Cooke, of Callyn Cattery, has been a breeder for over 30 years. She shares, "One of the most important things to realize is that someone will love your cat as much as you do." The trick is finding them, but it can be easier than you think with the right tools.

Where to Look?

- Social media
- Cat shows and expos
- Word of mouth
- Veterinarians
- Breed specific or specialty purebred rescues

Social media has become a huge asset for some catteries. Frequent posts help the general public get a feel for our cats and some people even form emotional attachments to our cats from seeing them online. I have found it's not uncommon for a total stranger to reach out and ask about a particular cat, and if I can, I try to keep them in mind for when that cat retires and needs a home. A few weeks ago, I got an email from a woman who purchased one of my kittens two years ago. She recognized that one of my current queens is her cat's litter mate and wanted to offer her a home when she retires next year. Knowing that there is someone out there who has already fallen for the cat and considers her family makes the process much easier. The more your client circle grows, the more you will find people stepping up to ask about having one of their cat's relatives—a parent or sibling—join their family.

When I started breeding, I was genuinely surprised at how many inquiries I received from people who had lost a cat due to illness or old age. Most were hoping to add another adult cat to their family as a companion for their remaining cat. The adopters benefit from our knowledge of our cats' personalities and habits and can decide easily if the cat would be a good match or not. While it is not always an exact science and long introduction periods may be required, we know our cats and can usually predict how they will react to certain situations. Most of the cats we retire are still fairly young and healthy, usually in the two-to-five-year age range. In general, they are adaptable and settle in quickly. But what about the older cats? These adoptions can be a little more challenging for us. As Lynn Cooke points out, "There is someone for every cat. You just have to wait for that person to come along."

Don't be Afraid to Reach Out!

Lynn also mentions the importance of utilizing resources that the general public has access to. She says there is nothing wrong with reaching out to a breed-specific rescue for recommendations. They just might be more than happy to allow a courtesy post to reach clientele looking for a special someone.

These rescues are amazing resources for finding homes for older cats or special needs cats. They generally have an audience of thousands, even tens of thousands of people all over the country. My personal success story was rehoming a seven-year-old male, recently neutered and retired from my cattery. I was his second home, he was extremely aggressive and had digestive issues which required a prescription diet. I posted an entry on the Persian Cat Rescue Network Facebook Page (with their admin's permission) and within 24 hours I had a list

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*An Interview with
Dr. Noelle Giddings, DVM*

Ann Strople

Dental Care for our Senior Cats



Is it time to book a dental visit with your vet for your senior (or maybe even not-so-senior) cat? “Wait,” you say. “My cat’s not even close to being a senior and anyway, she’s eating all her food and seems just fine.”

To get a pro’s perspective on issues related to dental care for senior felines, we contacted cat breeder, CFA exhibitor and consultant to Cat Talk on veterinary issues, Noelle Giddings, DVM. Dr. Giddings shared her expertise and provided insights on dental issues and care for cats, senior cats in particular. While this article can’t begin to cover all there is to say about feline dental care, here’s what she had to say in answer to some questions on the subject.

Cat Talk: When it comes to felines, what age is a “senior”?

Dr. Giddings: In veterinary medicine, we start considering cats senior starting at about age seven. This is not an indication of life expectancy, because we still hope and expect that these cats will live into their mid-teens. It’s because that is the age when we often start seeing certain diseases that tend to be associated with senior cats, such as hyperthyroidism and kidney disease. These conditions require additional considerations when approaching dental procedures, as the cat may have higher risks for which the veterinarian can make adjustments.

Cat Talk: Are there differences between dental care for seniors and for younger cats?

Dr. Giddings: Dental care in senior cats will be determined by how extensive prior dental issues have been for them and how much has been done to address them. As with people, some cats have great oral health with minimal cleanings needing to be done while others, even with prompt or regular care, can have ongoing disease that can lead to tooth loss even in a relatively young individual.

With increased age, as in all things, it can be harder for the body to keep issues in check. So, for an individual cat prone to dental disease, those issues can require more vigilance later in life to stay in front of potential problems.

Cat Talk: What signs of dental issues in their cats should cause concern?

Dr. Giddings: Some things to look for include:

- Halitosis beyond normal cat breath
- Awkwardness when eating
- Preferring soft food over kibble. This alone is not a key indicator, as cats are preferential eaters naturally and being willing to eat kibble is not always an indicator that things are okay in the mouth. Cats do not masticate their food so can often still eat kibble readily despite significant dental issues.
- Hypersalivation.
- Sensitivity with handling of mouth/face.
- Sudden development of swelling along jaw or cheeks. This can be an indicator of a dental abscess, among other things.

Cat Talk: What about regular dental cleanings? Do they help minimize issues later in a cat’s life?

Dr. Giddings: Routine dental cleaning is important for cats just as it is for humans. A healthier mouth makes for an overall healthier individual. Regular dental cleanings control buildup of tartar which, left unchecked, promotes gingivitis, which then leads to recession of gums, bone loss and tooth loss. Regular care can help cats keep their teeth longer. Unfortunately, even with routine care, issues such as stomatitis and resorptive lesions on teeth will often lead to needed extractions and to minimal or no teeth.

In addition to what dental disease does to oral health and comfort, it can also lead to disease in other parts of the body, including contributing to conditions such as kidney disease. The mouth, like the rest of the cat, should be examined yearly at minimum, more often (every six months) if there are other issues. The examination can determine the need for either further evaluation under anesthesia or

the need for a cleaning and/or extractions. Keeping on top of dental health will keep your cat healthier in the long run and avoid more costly dental procedures and other preventable problems.

Cat Talk: Cats that have few or even no teeth seem to do just fine with both dry and wet food. How can they eat their usual food without teeth?

Dr. Giddings: Cats can eat their normal diet with most or all their teeth missing because they do not masticate their food in the same fashion as humans or plant eating species. Their teeth are designed for gripping prey and then shearing it into small morsels to swallow. Digestion for most carnivores, including cats, starts in the stomach whereas it starts in the oral cavity for humans. Lacking teeth is still not preferred, of course.

Cat Talk: What is different about dental care for seniors versus younger cats?

Dr. Giddings: I don't think in general dental care is significantly different for seniors and younger cats except with concerns for

comorbidities that a senior cat is more likely to have, things the veterinarian assesses with examination and pre-op testing. A cat whose mouth has been cared for through its life will likely have better oral health (and likely more teeth) than one who has not, allowing for individual dental issues.

Cat Talk: One last question. What is the most important point you would like Cat Talk readers to remember about dental care for their senior cats?

Dr. Giddings: Unfortunately, there are many diseases that can afflict our cats and compromise their health that we cannot control as owners and veterinarians. Oral health is actually an area of veterinary medicine we can control more effectively with routine exams and cleanings. Making sure that our cats receive dental exams and cleanings will benefit them down the road. Our senior cats are more vulnerable to health issues, which makes staying on top of their dental care even more important as they age.

Submissions

Cat Talk is always looking for stories and items of interest. Have an idea to contribute? A story that you think our readers might be interested in?
A photo that we might be able to use?
We welcome all suggestions.
Please contact Teresa Keiger at tkeiger@cfa.org

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Finding a Forever Home For a Senior Cat

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of wonderful applicants. I chose a retired couple close to my town, who had recently lost their 19-year-old cat and were hoping to adopt an older cat who needed somewhere calm to spend his golden years. I couldn't have imagined a more perfect scenario, and I would never have found them if I had not taken a leap of faith on a "rescue" page. Veterinary offices also have clients they can recommend, or even staff members who would be ideal homes for older cats or cats requiring ongoing medical care.

The bottom line is, there really can be a perfect match for every cat. Keeping communications open with other breeders, veterinarians and previous buyers will keep your network of options open. There are families that only want older cats, people who prefer special needs cats and people who want a senior cat. These people may be harder to find but they do exist. Every single cat in our care deserves to be the center of someone's life. Our obligation to the cats is

to make sure they have the best life possible and that can take some work, a lot of faith and sometimes a lot of tears. It also means admitting that someone other than us can take care of them and love them as well as we do. We love these cats and want them to thrive. Helping our adult cats move on and blossom with new people is a selfless act and one that is necessary for a happy and healthy cattery life.

A New Way to Manage Senior Cats' Aches and Pains

Teresa Keiger



Blu napping with his best friend, Minerva, who is also a senior cat

Blu, my 15-year-old Maine Coon Cat neuter, was showing signs of his age, most notably, a pronounced “plodding” in his walk and favoring his right back leg. He had been diagnosed with arthritis and his large size made the pain even worse. It was difficult, if not impossible, for him to climb up onto the sofa beside me (his most favorite place in the world), and he was no longer able to climb up the short cat pole for a view.

Another consequence of arthritis in older cats is one that I hadn't thought of: it hurt to squat, so of course, it hurt to squat and poop. Sometimes I would see Blu straining to defecate, but then he would fall. Or often he would squat, plop down, and THEN poop, resulting in a mess and an emergency butt bath. I knew that he was miserable.

When I took him to my vet for his annual exam, I discussed this with her, fully expecting her to tell me that his comfortable days were numbered, if not over, and to begin thinking of his future (or lack thereof). Imagine my surprise when she told me that a new drug had recently come on the market and she had used it with great success on her own older cat.

Solensia and How it Works

U.S. Food and Drug Administration approved Solensia (frunevetmab injection), developed by Zoetis in January, 2022. It is the first treatment for the control of pain associated with osteoarthritis in cats and the first monoclonal antibody (mAb) new animal drug approved by the FDA for use in any animal.¹ Frunevetmab, the active ingredient in Solensia, is a cat-specific monoclonal antibody (a type of protein) designed to recognize and attach to a protein called nerve growth factor (NGF) that is involved in the regulation of pain. When frunevetmab binds to NGF, it prevents the pain signal from reaching the brain.¹ By blocking the effects of NGF,

frunevetmab decreases signal transduction in these cell types and helps reduce pain perception.² In other words, while the cat still has the physical ailment producing the pain, the drug prevents the nerve growth factor from transmitting the pain signals to the cat's brain. Solensia is not a cure for osteoarthritis, but enables the cat to live more comfortably with it.

Drug administration is calculated by the cat's weight. A vial of Solensia is seven milligrams and the cat will be given one or two vials per dose every month by your veterinarian. The most frequently reported adverse reactions were digestive tract disorders, including vomiting and diarrhea and skin disorders, including dermatitis, eczema, and alopecia.² For best effectiveness, Solensia must be administered every 28 days. Noelle Giddings, DVM, has noted that she starts all patients with monthly doses for the first three months. She then might try extending the doses out further, having found that some cats do fine with doses every seven to eight weeks.

Determining Effective Pain Management with Solensia

Measuring pain response is not easy, and two separate assessment trials were done. The first was an exploratory field effectiveness study, a double-blind study on cats which had confirmed cases of osteoarthritis in at least two joints or spinal segments. The drug used was not the final market version, but very close. Cats were assigned a CSOM (“client-specific outcome measure”), a measure of the cat's impairment due to pain as described by the owner. Using a five point scale, owners were asked to judge the cat's perceived pain level while it performed three activities such as jumping, grooming and using the litter box. Cats with a CSOM score of 7 or higher were enrolled in the study. These cats were divided into 3 groups: one group received subcutaneous injections 28 days apart; the second group received their injections intravenously, and the third received the placebo drug first subcutaneously. If a cat's CSOM was reduced by at least two points following treatment, the treatment was considered a success. The first two groups had significantly lower scores than the control group.

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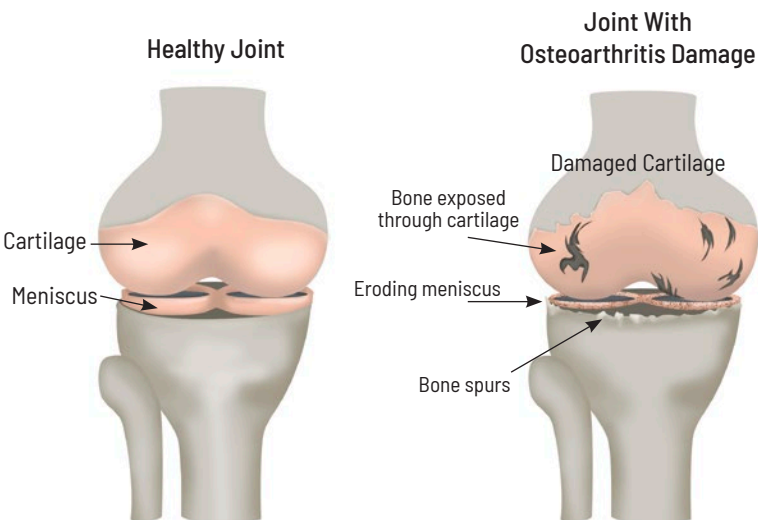


illustration: tkeiger

Why Do Breeders Stop Breeding?

Lucy Drury

Ten years ago, approaching 57 years of age, I attended my first cat show – the August 2013 Midwest TGIF Fanciers show in St. Louis, MO. There, I met my first show cat, GCD, BW, RW Slava Better Believe It, a six-month-old male Siberian we called “BB.” When BB came to live with me, I had two other cats—one aging red mackerel tabby domestic shorthair, and a five-year-old silver tabby Siberian neuter. Breeding was the farthest thing from my mind—in fact, before I went to my first show, I had only planned to show BB until he earned his Grand Champion title to fulfill my obligation to his breeder, then he would retire and become a cherished pet. There is nothing like success to keep one coming back, but more than that, I was welcomed with open arms by many Midwest Region fanciers. It wasn’t long before I had a whole new group of friends not just across my region, but across the country, and I kept coming back for more. Four years later, despite saying when I first started that I would never become a breeder, I delivered my first solo litter, and my career as a breeder was underway.

I noticed an interesting phenomenon just as my breeding career was beginning. Some of my new friends, who were long established breeders, were announcing that they were getting out of breeding. Some were older than I, some were a little younger, most were about the same age. Since I was just getting started at the same age as others who were closing their programs, this gave me food for thought. They obviously loved the cats and the shows, so why were they getting out?

“I Want To Do Other Things”

I asked one person who was closing down a breeding program why – why were you closing? The answer was simple – I want to do other things. They were retiring soon from their job, and they wanted to be free to travel (and retirement can impact income). It was hard to find people to look after litters of kittens, plus it’s a lot of work.

I found this interesting, because I did not consider that I had time to get into breeding until after I retired myself. In fact, I didn’t deliver my first litter until I had left the “9-to-5” world. As I would learn over the next six years, a breeding program can completely overtake your life. It is one thing to have one breeding pair and a couple litters a year; it is entirely another thing to have three or four females and find yourself scheduling your life around vet visits, kitten births, and kitten deliveries to new owners. You suddenly find that if you want to go on vacation, the high school kid down the block who fed your three cats is not the right person; you now find yourself hiring vet techs and professional zookeepers. (This is not a joke. I really did hire one.) Though I personally have not reached the point where my hobby breeding is preventing me from doing the things I want to do in my life, I can see how it can happen for others.

“I Can’t Handle the Stress”

I believe this is the main reason many new breeders give it up before they really get started. Breeding companion animals of any kind is not for the faint of heart. We have all heard the enthusiastic pet owner at shows—“It must be so cool to be a breeder!

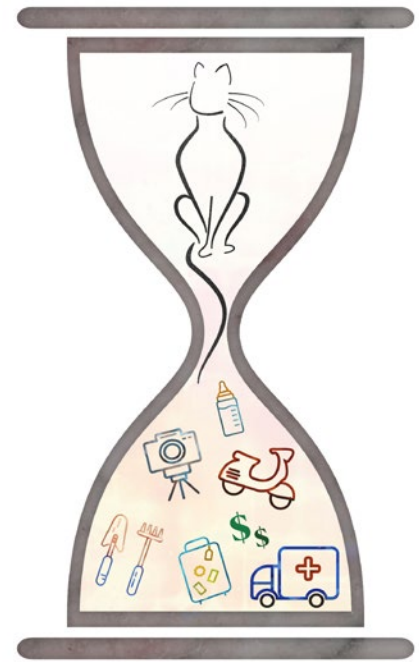


illustration: theiger

Someday, I think I want my kids to have the experience.”

If these folks understood how stressful breeding and birthing can be, they might think twice about it. While we need more people to adopt the hobby if it is to continue, it is not for everyone. In order to cope, a person must have a certain amount of patience, a strong stomach, and be willing to accept the probability that not every birth will go as hoped. Above all, they need to be able to manage the inherent stress connected to the process. Why is my queen rejecting the stud? Did the breeding take? She is not due for a month; why am I seeing a discharge? Why hasn’t she gone into labor yet? Is that the last kitten? She has been contracting for an hour, where is the kitten? Why does this always happen on a Friday night? A c-section costs HOW much???. Why isn’t the kitten breathing? Why isn’t the kitten nursing? Where is the placenta? Are the kittens getting enough milk? Should I supplement? Are they growing fast enough? Is this a good home for my kitten? Should I do an early spay or neuter? My buyer wants a refund—should I give one?

I am sure you all can add dozens of stressors to the above list. New breeders should always seek out a mentor who can explain

realistically the tools, time, and temperament for the hobby before they even acquire their first breeding cats. Knowing what to expect won't make the stress go away, but stress is always easier to manage when one has an idea of what is coming and has the resources ready to handle whatever the breeding process throws at them.

Experienced breeders should not be afraid to share their experiences with those who think they want to be breeders. Enthusiastic neophytes need to know it is more than putting two cats together and having sweet, snuggly kittens magically appear. I was once benched to a new Siberian exhibitor at a very large show in her hometown. She had two nice young male Siberians she was showing in Championship. She had imported a female Siberian kitten for her special needs granddaughter as a therapy cat from a reputable Russian breeder. She and her daughter decided that it would be a good idea for Grandma to import a male kitten and let the granddaughter "have the experience" of seeing the kittens born. So, Grandma imported two because she was a real estate agent, would be gone a lot, and didn't want one to get lonely. I decided that I needed to have "the talk" with this charming Southern lady. I could tell already she had a good head on her shoulders. She had made good decisions when importing the cats, and she asked me a ton of good questions. I was fresh off a scary but successful c-section only six weeks previously, so I knew I needed to educate her about the realities of animal husbandry.

After some preliminary questions about the relationship of her granddaughter with her cat, I asked her the question new breeders never think about when contemplating breeding their pets. How would your granddaughter feel if a kitten died, or worse, her cat died in childbirth?

"She'd be devastated," she said quietly. "Exactly," I replied. "Do you really want to risk that?"

She then asked me if I would talk to her daughter because she was planning on bringing her granddaughter to the show on Sunday. She said she was really thinking now this

wasn't a great idea, particularly after we had the discussion about male spraying . . . and now this. Her daughter, however, was seeing dollar signs and needed to hear about how no breeder makes money with one litter. The concerned owner wasn't sure the bad outcomes would have sufficient impact to deter her daughter if she thought she could make money.

Grandma was right. When I talked with the daughter about breeding the next day, she grilled me about costs. I don't know if I made an impression on her, but when Grandma packed up Sunday, she thanked me profusely for my assistance and said this would be her first and last show. She had learned this wasn't for her, and realized that to embark on a breeding program, even for one litter, could have been a tragic mistake. She had only come because the Russian breeder told her she would need to title her breeding cats if she expected to get top dollar for her kittens. I told her the boys were going to be wonderful companions for her and wished her well. Fortunately, she discovered this wasn't for her before she got very far in the process. While we need more breeders of pedigreed cats, we need breeders who come in with eyes wide open and are willing to accept the stress and work with a mentor.

"I Can't Sell My Kittens"

This can be a real challenge for some breeders, depending on their breed and location. Their breed can be so rare that there are few buyers out there who have even heard of it, or their breed can be so wildly popular and have so many established breeders that newer ones may need to take a financial loss on the kittens just to get them into new homes. While cat breeders joke about how no one makes money selling kittens, the reality is that unless they are very well off, breeders cannot bleed money for long before they have to think about giving up the hobby. Even if a downturn in demand is temporary, it is hard to keep cats raised for breeding and not breed them.

It is not just about demand, either. Costs have skyrocketed for food, litter, and veterinary care—if you can even find a breeder-friendly vet in your area. Explain-

ing to a person who has been on your wait list for two years that the price of a kitten has gone up several hundred dollars is not an easy conversation, even if people have grown accustomed to price increases daily in this post-COVID, inflationary world we currently live in.

"I'm Afraid My Cats Will Outlive Me"

Given many breeders are of retirement age and beyond, this is a valid concern. However, if a breeder has a thriving program, wants to continue and is not experiencing overwhelming health problems, there are ways to mitigate this risk. Losing one active breeder can be detrimental to the health and sustainability of some of the rarer breeds, so finding ways to ensure programs continue is a service to the preservation of that breed. The best way to mitigate this risk is involve another, perhaps generationally younger person in your breeding program. A child, a grandchild, a younger friend. Ideally, they should be someone willing to continue your lines for you, but if they are unable or unwilling to take over your breeding program for the long haul, at least they know enough about your cats and lines to close down the program and appropriately place the cats if you are unable to continue.

If partnering with another person is not an option, keeping thorough notes and documentation on all of the cats in a notebook and giving a copy of it to a trusted friend or relative is of great value should a breeder suddenly die or become incapacitated. Breeders with larger catteries place most of their breeding cats in new homes when they retire them anyway, so keeping a list of people who have expressed interest in retired breeding cats is very useful and helps put the breeder's mind at ease. Providing for your cats in your estate documents is also an option, and if you have heirs who will argue over who gets the favorite cat, specifying who is to inherit the cat is best practice. (Note: pet trusts, rather than wills, are the best way to ensure proper care for your felines after your passing, and they are now legal in all 50 states, so talk to an attorney about including one in your estate plan.)

"Too Much Politics"

This might be the elephant in the room. Ask ten people to define "politics," and you will get ten different answers, though most will probably have a negative view of politics. Irish political scientist Michael Laver noted that:

"Politics is about the characteristic blend of conflict and co-operation that can be found so often in human interaction. Pure conflict is war. Pure co-operation is true love. Politics is a mixture of both."

Wikipedia defines politics as the set of activities that are associated with making decisions in groups, or other forms of power relations among individuals, such as the distribution of resources or status. If one thinks about it, cat breeding involves both resources (cats and shows) and status (titles), so politics is a necessary part of the picture. The challenge is the governance structure. The CFA Board of Directors and Breed Councils are formal governance structures, but there are also many informal structures between co-operating breeders. Pedigree breeding programs cannot exist without formal and informal politics. Politics are unavoidable within any diverse group of individuals with common goals, particularly when those goals may compete from time to time with each other's personal goals.

How much is too much? That is a difficult question to answer, because everyone has their own tolerance level with regard to conflict. Within any organization, if there is more conflict than co-operation, the politics have gotten out of hand. Good breeding programs that endure require co-operation between breeders. Rare—dare we say non-existent—is the breeder who can maintain a healthy program without outcrossing to other breeding programs.

How does one manage the politics? Getting to know your fellow breeders well before entering into agreements with them should be a priority. The cat fancy is primarily a network of distance relationships, so finding a breeder you can work with close to home is usually not an option. This makes it challenging to get to know other fanciers. Show halls are busy places, and exhibitors are typically on tight travel schedules. The traditional Saturday night "dinner with friends" during shows is not enough to truly know someone. Gossip and hearsay are not reliable; they can often be colored by petty squabbles and personal conflicts. Finding quality time to get to know other breeders and their programs, directly and in person, is key to building solid relationships.

No matter how much you like or trust a person, written agreements acceptable to both parties are critical to prevent future

problems. Memories are short and verbal agreements can be misinterpreted. If you want a cordial relationship to continue, get the expectations of both parties in writing. An unwillingness to enter into a written agreement or inflexibility in negotiating an appropriate agreement is often a signal that this may not be a partnership you want. Sometimes cattery goals are different, and that's okay. Keep looking for a person who shares your goals and breeding philosophy.

Still Here....

I've personally experienced every one of these challenges, even the one about wanting to do other things. I find "kitten watch" extraordinarily stressful, and as I wait for what seems like an eternity for that first kitten to make its arrival after labor starts, I swear these litters will be my last. But a few hours later, when that last kitten arrives and they are all vigorously nursing on a contented, purring mama, I forget all about what I said a few hours ago. When I get that email from a happy kitten client who sends pictures of one of my graduates, tells me the kitten filled a big void in their life, and thanks me "for raising and sharing with us this precious cat!" -- it makes it all worth it. I hope for myself and all the active breeders out there, it will continue to be worth it. The cat fancy and preservation breeding need you.

Pain Management with Solensia

continued from p 8

Next, researchers did a confirmatory field effectiveness study, using the final drug formulation and using the same criteria for assessing the cats' pain. Again, the treatment groups showed lower pain scores after treatments than the control group. The studies did show, however, that the control group in both studies had a lower than anticipated CMOS (i.e. – the owners reported that they felt that the cats were doing better, even though they were receiving a placebo). The researchers attributed this "success" to both the subjective nature of the owners evaluating the pain and the fact that pain in and of itself is not constant and tends to wax and wane over time.

What About Blu?

My vet had personal experience with Solensia, having used it on her own cat, and noted to me that she had seen immediate results. Her practice had also participated in the second set of trials. And so, we began treating Blu in October of 2022; he's been on it for almost a year now. I also noted almost immediate re-

sults! He readily pulled himself up onto the sofa and could easily get up on the pole. Yes, I have also noted that if I go much past 28 days or so in getting his treatment, he begins to show signs of impairment. He is obviously much happier. I have noticed a couple of subcutaneous cysts, but unsure if they are drug-related or not. No, this is not going to be a cure for his arthritic legs. But if it is going to make his remaining days less painful, then I consider that a win.

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Don't Skimp on Senior Lab Tests

Michelle Pelegrino



Most of us immediately take a new kitten to the veterinarian's office. We like to get an overall picture of our new baby's health. It is ingrained into most of us to check a kitten's stool for intestinal parasites, have auscultation of their heart and lungs, and check for any abnormalities that may need to be addressed before bringing them into our home.

As breeders, we may take things to the next level and test for many other issues, depending on the breed. Some of us test for ringworm, run respiratory PCRs, test our cat's blood type, have DNA checked for polycystic kidney disease, take radiographs to check for hip dysplasia, and echocardiograms for heart issues. However, once we're confident that our cats pass these tests and are healthy family members, annual veterinary checkups can sometimes fall to the wayside. It is important to remember that adult cats need checkups too, especially after age seven, when most vets begin to classify them as seniors. This can be as simple as a physical exam and vaccine update, but taking it to the next level can include laboratory testing such as blood work, urine and fecal testing, and sometimes dental care.

Establishing a Baseline is Key

The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) recommends annual checkups for most felines. The frequency of these checkups may increase based on a cat's age or any ailments, since a cat's overall health and lifestyle will greatly impact its medical needs. Jack Heller, DVM, of Westhampton Beach Animal Hospital, NY, always recommends yearly bloodwork for his middle-aged feline patients. He says it is important to establish a baseline in a healthy patient and then check yearly for subtle changes. A chemistry panel and complete blood count (CBC) will give a useful picture of how things are going inside your cat. Senior cats, Dr. Heller points out, may require more frequent vet visits or lab testing, and can be overrepresented for kidney issues, thyroid

issues, and diabetes. He says with cats, the diagnostic numbers may not always match what we see on the outside, and it is very important to take both things into account when assessing the cat's overall health.

Cats can be masters of deceit. Older cats tend to be sedentary housemates that do not always communicate to us that something is off until suddenly they cannot hide it anymore. Many of us have been in a position where everything seems normal with one of our feline companions; then, seemingly out of nowhere, they stop eating or appear to be in distress. While it will never be a foolproof solution, yearly lab work can potentially catch underlying issues before they cause a sudden crash in the cat's system.

What Types of Tests are Important?

Dr. Heller stresses the importance of early detection when dealing with kidney issues in cats. A basic wellness blood panel from the veterinary laboratories Antech or Idexx could reveal early-stage changes in kidney function. Should this show up in one of your cats, it is possible that diet modification and an increase in fluid intake could help stave off end-stage disease for years, in some cases. Senior cats can also benefit from a T4 and free T4 test as a part of their annual lab work. These tests help us monitor a cat's thyroid values. A urinalysis can be useful to check for blood, crystals, or protein in the urine before they begin to affect the animal.

The test results combined with the cat's body condition, weight, appetite, and energy level will all work together to help you and your veterinarian assess how your cat is doing, decide if any changes need to be made, or add any medications to their health protocol.

The AVMA also recommends yearly fecal testing in cats¹. This may be something a lot of us with house cats slack off on. It's important to remember that intestinal para-

sites come from places other than the great outdoors, and many of these parasites are zoonotic, or transferable to humans. Well water is a notorious source for giardia. Fleas carry tapeworms. According to VCA, housecats can also get roundworms from what is referred to as an accidental host. "Common accidental hosts for roundworms include earthworms, cockroaches, rodents, and birds." Roundworms and other parasites can be detected via a stool sample by your veterinarian and should be treated before they become a major issue.

Let's not forget dental health! This can be overlooked in cats, but just like dogs and humans, cats benefit from periodic dental cleanings. While a physical examination can show gingivitis and tartar buildup, there can also be issues below the gumline. Dr. Heller says dental radiographs should always be done as a part of a routine dental examination. Fractured roots and bone loss can be diagnosed via X-ray. If not addressed, this can cause major discomfort in your cat as it ages.

We all want our cats to have long, healthy lives. Continuing veterinary visits annually and incorporating diagnostic testing into your cat's wellness plan will help give them an advantage. Choose a veterinarian you trust to help decide what the right protocol is for you and your cat. Veterinary medicine is changing constantly, and new diagnostics become available every year. Go to <https://www.avma.org/resources-tools/pet-owners> for more information and resources dedicated to helping pet owners learn more.

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The Right Way to Say Goodbye

Iris Zinck

The day I sat down to write this article was the day a funeral was held for a human friend of mine. He had been killed in a car accident two months previously, and various investigations/complications had delayed the burial. As friends and family awaited the funeral, I recalled anew how important such events are to those of us left behind. Yes, they celebrate the lost life, but in bringing together those who mourn the person, they allow us to grieve together in a way that helps us heal. The closure they provide enables us to move forward with our lives. Additionally, the placement of some sort of headstone or marker provides a sense of finality as well as a beautiful way to make a statement that someone special was on this earth, for a time that is always too short.

If we can shape some sort of equivalent experience in honor of one of our beloved cats, it seems likely it could provide equivalent benefits: comfort, closure, and where appropriate, a coming together of people whose lives were touched by the cat. Yet, very few of us are able to create such an opportunity to celebrate our Rainbow Bridge babies. We feel it is making too big a fuss, we may not have the time, our friends are too busy to be there, or we simply don't know how to proceed.

“Might I Have a Bit of Earth?”

This quote from the children's classic, *The Secret Garden* speaks to many of us who do not necessarily have an appropriate space available to bury a pet who has passed. Having once taken advantage of a yard space offered by a friend for this purpose, I would caution you to only use a bit of earth over which you have full control and ownership. Going forward, you will likely want to mark the spot in some way, which is not necessarily an option if you've utilized a friend's yard. It doesn't have to be a headstone or marker (although there are plenty of these available for pets). You may wish to plant something at the gravesite. . . a flowering shrub is ideal because when it blooms, you will think of your lost furchild and see something beautiful growing where it lies. You also want to choose the location carefully. Be sure it is not in an area that is likely to be flooded, and of course you don't want to disturb any underground pipelines! Be sure to check local ordinances as many areas may limit your ability to conduct a home burial. Also, if your cat passed due to euthanasia, talk to your vet about safety measures to make sure that no other animals are able to access your pet and be poisoned by the lethal medicine

used to help them to pass or an illness from which your pet suffered.

Assuming you DO have an appropriate space, you may wish to wrap your kitty in its favorite bed or blanket and/or accompany it with its favorite toy. It's best to provide some kind of biodegradable container as a coffin. Many options are available online. You can even find them at Amazon. Be sure to dig a fairly deep hole to prevent neighborhood predators from disturbing the grave. Three feet is advisable. That way, you will be filling in the grave with about two and a half feet of dirt, which should be sufficient in most suburban areas. If your home is more rural, dig deeper.

Most importantly, you do not want to undertake this task alone, IF POSSIBLE. Grief needs company. Ask a friend to be at your side for support. And consider using the brief memorial service in the sidebar. It's a beautiful and respectful way to let go.

Dealing with the Double Whammy

Those of us who reside in more urban areas usually have space constraints and opt for cremation rather than burial. If you've chosen a private cremation, this means you

Dr. Rebecca Schoenberg, a hospice-focused vet based in Medford, Massachusetts, speaks eloquently to the value of devising your own special way to say goodbye to a pet:

“As a culture, we have traditions for how to grieve the loss of people we love, but we have no such cultural framework for grieving the loss of a beloved pet. Even as we realize more and more how important they are in our lives, and the significance of the relationships we have with them, there's no map for how to navigate such a loss.

Without this, people can wind up left on their own to find a path through the grief that comes with losing a beloved pet. However, this also gives us the space and opportunity to create a personalized ceremony or memorial that reflects both our own values and beliefs and the special and unique relationship we had with our animal companion, and honors the incredibly important space they held in our heart and our life.”

This article is intended to offer you some useful starting points for such a memorial.

not only have the pain of watching your pet pass, you get hit with a double whammy of grief when you receive the little box with your friend's ashes in it a week or so later. It is truly like losing them twice. That is one reason why, when Dr. Schoenberg cremates a pet, she personally delivers the ashes to the owners, providing them with a sounding board for this second wave of loss, should it be needed.

While you're waiting for your kitty to come home this way, prepare for the upcoming blow by planning how you will say goodbye down the road. Just because you are dealing with ashes instead of a body, it doesn't mean you can't use the memorial service provided here.

In fact, it works very well if you plan to scatter the ashes. . . and equally well if you wish to do a burial in a small space. One of the most touching ways I have seen to honor a lost pet is to use one of the planter urns sold by Urns Northwest (<https://urnsnw.com/memorial-tree-urns/>). They are eco-friendly, sustainable planters that hold both your pet's ashes, starter soil, and seeds to grow the tree of your choice.

Many of us (myself included) simply decide to keep those little boxes as cherished keepsakes, some with the notion of taking these



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ashes with us on our own final journeys. I am starting to think this may prevent us from fully working through the loss because it does not include any sort of formal goodbye to the pet. However, there's no reason why we can't come back to honor the cat with a memorial gesture at some point in the future, perhaps on the next anniversary of its passing. I just may do this.

Another one-of-a-kind way to remember a cherished pet – particularly if you are not able to create a marker or stone—is to take an ink impression of its paw and take the result to a tattoo artist. It truly touched my heart when a returning kitten client showed me her "ink" of one of my older show cats who had shared her home in retirement. (above) Pawprint kits are readily available online. I like the one Chewy offers, which does not actually get ink on the paw. (Note: clay paw impressions do not work well for this purpose.)

Remember to take care of yourself throughout your grieving journey. It's not just about the cat who has passed but about the loss of the special bond the two of you had. Pet-loss support hotlines and online support groups are readily available (see information at the end of this article). Don't hesitate to take advantage of them and connect with others who are feeling the way you do. Recognizing and acknowledging the pain you feel is the key first step to eventually moving past it, and creating some sort of a memorial can definitely help.

Alexis Mitchell has created a multi-part pet memorial garden in her yard, complete with a real Rainbow Bridge. These photos were taken on the anniversary of a Maine Coon Cat named Sally's passing, after having left mementos at her place.



While the memorial service included here is designed to be customized for any pet, it was inspired by the tragic loss of a Siberian kitten who succumbed to complications of a failed surgery to correct a genetic defect. It is provided here for your use as is (simply fill in your pet's information as indicated—it works for dogs too) or to offer inspiration for you to create your own memorial ceremony specific to your pet.



Remembering your pet's name (insert birth date – passing date)

(ring cat toy bell)

O Great Spirit - Mother and Father of us all, we ask for your blessing on this our ceremony of thanksgiving and honoring and blessing. God, we thank You for the joy we knew because we were privileged to share a portion of our life with _____.

We miss him/her very much.

We celebrate the life of _____ during the period of time that we were able to share with him/her in our earthly life experience. We celebrate also the new life experience that s/he is enjoying, beyond our sight, free of all earthly limitations.

(light a candle)

May this light help guide _____ to a place of peace and love.

And may the power of the flame give us strength on our healing journey.

Pause for shared memories/eulogies from individual family members or others who knew the pet

Releasing the Spirit

_____ - now you are free

You have crossed over into the spirit realm.

Now you are finally free of illness.

Your body is no longer sick, or weak, or hurting.

Now you can play and run with the others.

And as the wheel of creation turns, may you find a place of joy in your next life.

(Scatter _____'s ashes or drop a handful of soil on the grave)

Mother Earth, we return to you _____, one of your children.

His/her spirit will return to her ancestors, and s/he will continue to live in our memories.

We are thankful that we were able to share our lives with him/her, and give him/her to your loving arms.

(for a cat)

Bast, Sekhmet, we give you back your child.

Noble, regal, honorable cat.

Watch over him/her, and guide him/her on the way to the spirit world.

May s/he be blessed in your names, and hunt ever after beside you.

(for a dog)

Anubis, Cerberus, we give you back your child.

Noble, regal, honorable dog.

Watch over him/her, and guide him/her on the way to the spirit world.

May s/he be blessed in your names, and hunt ever after beside you.

God's Light surrounds you, God's Love enfolds you, God's Power protects you, God's Presence watches over you -- wherever you are, God is -- and all is well.

(ring bell)

Written by Dee Ramee for Folie a Deux Zima, March 17, 2011 – June 24, 2011

The Amazing Kit Kat

From the Farm to Guinness Star

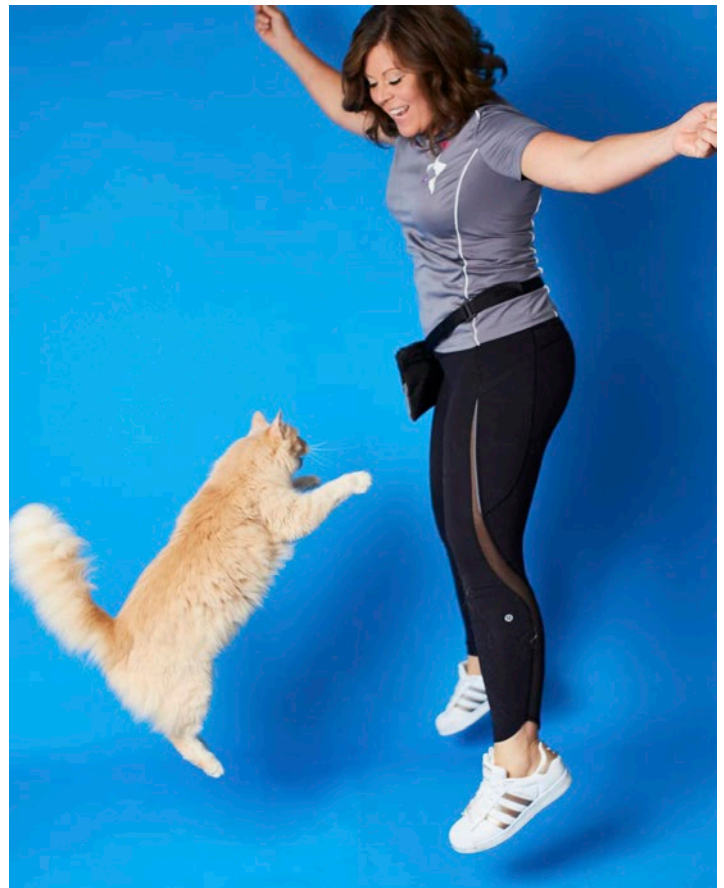
Lucy Drury

Walking into professional animal trainer Trish Seifried's spotless home in Eureka, Missouri, is a pet-lover's dream. Visitors will be greeted by three happy dogs, a chatty green-winged Macaw, and a multi-colored clowder of domestic long and shorthairs, three Siberians, and a macho Bambino, Rogan, who at any moment may launch himself on to your shoulder. The first time I walked into Trish's home to deliver her first Siberian, I was in awe. I had brought Snowball, a 9-month-old blue lynx point and white neuter who would eventually become GP, RW Cyberkoshki Moonlite Imaginations, there for a trial evaluation while I was attending the 2019 CFA Annual. We decided that he would visit her while I was in New York and if she thought he was a good fit, he would stay, if I could take him to shows to finish his Grand Premier title.

A Crash Course in Feline Behavior

I thought I knew cats after owning rescues for over 30 years and Siberians for the last eight years. I found when it came to cat behavior, I knew next to nothing. As Trish introduced me to her cats, my awe increased. I had never seen cats like this before. Many came right up to me to greet me. All of them were trained to do many tricks and behaviors, and many of them had their own, special signature tricks. Foxy, a black domestic shorthair who was featured a few years ago on the cover of *Cat Talk*, would extend his claws on command. Beans, a blue and white longhair, could do somersaults and rub objects on command. Rosemary, a tortoiseshell shorthair, was an expert at weaving through poles and Trish's legs. Jimmy Choo, a brown classic tabby shorthair had a face that seemed familiar; then I realized it was the same face that greeted me twice a day from the can of prescription cat food that one of my retirees needs. Chow Chow, a solid blue longhair could leap off a high tower, tell you his name, or walk backwards to a mark on command. Most of these cats are rescues and have a story to tell. However, none of them can compare with the story of Kit Kat, Trish's cream longhair neuter, who greeted me with purrs and high fives.

I fell in love with Trish's cats, and they with me, but Kit Kat was something beyond special. Trish calls him her angel cat—a gift from heaven—and it wasn't hard to see why. Kit Kat has a heart of gold and a work ethic that would put most people to shame. I soon learned Kit Kat's signature trick is jumping rope and he was also the leader of the CatBoss TV High Five cat team. Over the last few years, I've been privileged to spend quality time with Kit Kat and the rest of the CatBoss TV crew on the road and have learned even more about how amazing they are. So, with the exception of Trish, no one was more thrilled than I was to find out that at age of 13, Kit Kat was given the recognition he so richly deserves. On July 27th, 2023, as documented by the Guinness Book of World Records. Kit Kat officially set the world record for most skips of a jump rope—nine in one minute.



Destined to be a Star

Trish rescued Kit Kat, his mom, and his littermates from a friend's barn when the kittens were about four weeks old. Trish was the lead trainer for the Purina ProPlan Performance Team at the time and knew that Kit Kat and his brother Chow Chow were something special, so she moved them to the Visitor's Center at Purina Farms. Prior to coming back home to Purina Farms, Trish had spent the first ten years of her animal training career at SeaWorld and Busch Gardens, learning her craft from world-class animal trainers Jack Hanna and Joel Slavin. While there, Trish and her team selected hundreds of rescue animals to perform in their popular pet shows, so Trish knew how to immediately spot an animal star. While mom and the rest of the litter were eventually adopted out, Kit Kat and Chow Chow stayed at Purina Farms and were trained by Trish to be part of their small animal show. Between the early exposure to crowds of people interacting with them, to the daily training from Trish, Kit Kat and Chow Chow became rock solid performers, unphased by the noise and commotion of crowds, whether it be a production studio, a shopping mall, casino, or stage. Kit Kat, Trish, and the rest of the Purina Pro Performance Team put those talents on display at the very first cat show at the newly opened Purina Farms Event Center. During the November 2011, Midwest TGIF Fanciers CFA cat show, Chow Chow wowed exhibitors and spectators with his dives off a high jump, but it was Kit Kat who stole the show with his amazing ability to skip rope with Trish. Kit Kat has also competed in the Household Pet division at other TGIF shows.

A few years later, when Trish left Purina Farms to start her own animal talent agency, Got Pet-ential, Kit Kat and Chow Chow left with

her. Their hearts were tightly bonded with hers, and to perform with another trainer was not an option. Kit Kat and his brother, along with the growing Got Pet-ential crew, continued their career as highly sought-after animal actors, including roles as featured entertainers in vendor booths at veterinary and pet product conventions, greeting booth visitors with high fives and performing many other tricks in their portfolio to the delight of the crowds.

What – Cats Can Be Trained???

Trish often receives comments from amazed spectators along the lines of, “I didn’t know you could train a cat!”, or “My cat could never do that, they run and hide when visitors come to our home!”, or “My cat just freaks out when I even try to put them in a carrier!” These comments troubled Trish, as she knew from over 20 years of training dogs, cats, and a variety of other animals including squirrels, foxes, and even a cedar waxwing or a frog in her backyard, that almost all animals can be trained. Especially cats. She wanted to bust that myth that cats can’t be trained, along with the one that cats are solitary creatures and could care less about humans except at dinner time. While Kit Kat and Chow Chow had unusual exposure to crowds at an early age, that was not true for many of her other cats. They came to her at a variety of ages and backgrounds, from the completely feral Malibu Blue she caught while he was dumpster diving behind a local restaurant, who she then tamed and taught numerous tricks, to the pampered skateboarding Siberian Bali, who came to her at the age of 9 months after a brief CFA show career and soon joined his adopted brothers Kit Kat and Chow Chow on set and on the convention circuit.

To combat these myths regarding cats and their trainability, Trish launched her own brand, CatBoss TV, under her parent company in 2017 to change the way people see cats for the better and help them learn how to better manage them at home and away. Under the CatBoss TV brand, she promoted her training and socialization philosophies at conventions and on social media and offered tools such as training marks and socialization hoodies.

Unfortunately, just as the 2020 convention season started and CatBoss TV concept was

well under way, the COVID-19 pandemic hit, shutting down large gatherings and greatly decreasing the number of requests for animal talent. Trish needed a way to keep her CatBoss TV crew on top of their game, so she embarked on a number of projects, including creating a mobile cat training applications which kept feline crew working and in front of a camera, and letting the world know just how awesome a cat Kit Kat is.

Time to Shine

Kit Kat was not the first cat that Trish trained to jump rope. That honor belongs to Friskie, also a Purina Farms rescue whose life was sadly shortened by FeLV. Friskie is believed to be the first cat ever to be taught to jump rope. Trish honored Friskie by teaching his signature trick to Kit Kat, who thoroughly embraced it. Kit Kat’s laser focus on Trish when working made her believe he could set a world record for his signature jump rope trick, and she began learning about the process of submitting an application for a record. The process of submitting and properly validating records is detailed and exacting. Because of the pandemic, some of the rules were modified due to the lock downs, so instead of performing the record in public, Kit Kat’s attempt was recorded in Trish’s home studio with the specified timekeepers and witnesses. Much to everyone’s delight, Kit Kat completed nine skips of a rope with Trish in one minute!

Now came the difficult part—submitting the record to Guinness World Records. Not only did the team have to submit the recording and documentation of the effort properly, with all the attestations of the timekeeper and witnesses, the criteria for the record itself had to be established. That process took well over two years, with some speed bumps along the way, but in January 2023, Trish was notified that Kit Kat’s application for the record had been accepted, and things moved more quickly after that. On July 27, 2023, she and Kit Kat received the happy news that Guinness had validated Kit Kat’s record and Trish’s dream for Kit Kat was fulfilled—he was forever enshrined in the Guinness Book of World Records with the most skips of a jump rope in one minute by a cat! Now the world would know what we all knew—just how special Kit Kat is!

More to Come

Kit Kat and Trish did not rest on their laurels after submitting Kit Kat’s documentation for the jump rope record. They were already working on the next one! Kit Kat’s ability to give out high fives was legendary, with conference attendees coming back year after year to get high fives from their favorite feline, telling Trish that Kit Kat and his friends were the highlight of the conference for them! Trish decided that she and Kit Kat would go after a few high five records next – most high fives in one minute with the same person, and highest number of individuals getting a high five from the same cat in one minute.

There were a few speed bumps along the way, though. The attempt would have to wait until COVID restrictions were lifted, as this was one we could not do in Trish’s studio. After a year’s layoff, conferences again resumed in 2022 with the January VMX veterinary conference in Orlando, and Trish was taking a big crew to this show, deciding to drive the two days rather than fly. Trish had to get a lot of cats back in the groove, and she wanted to take more cats than she had people attending.

Unfortunately, tragedy nearly struck. Kit Kat was refusing to eat, only occasionally accepting his favorite Tiki Stix. He was clearly off, and we started seeing some mild seizures and tremors along with an inability to urinate. We determined that he was reacting from a new flea preventative that had been recommended, a theory that was later validated by other cats having reactions – but none so immediate and severe as Kit Kat. As soon as we arrived in Orlando, unpacked, and the other cats settled with the rest of the human crew, Trish and I headed to the nearest open emergency clinic about an hour away. It was a Friday evening on a holiday weekend, and even finding a place open was difficult, but we did. Kit Kat’s case was ruled an emergency because of the blockage and they moved us to near the head of the line. Kit Kat was admitted, his blockage cleared, and he received IV fluids. They were skeptical about his flea treatment reaction, but as they were treating his obvious symptoms we decided not to get into a debate over root cause at this moment in time. With the blockage cleared and drugs given to reduce the inflammation and swelling, Kit Kat was already showing signs of improvement.



Water, water, everywhere, nor any drop to drink....

While Kit Kat was improving, we still felt he needed more time on fluids to wash out the toxins. We were thrown another curve, though. The emergency clinic we took him to was a model we had never run into before – they were only emergency nights and weekends. During the day, they were a regular veterinary practice and he had to be out by 7 AM Monday morning, when our “day vet” was supposed to take over his care. Trouble is, we didn’t have a “day vet” in Orlando, and it was impossible to find one. They were all at the convention, and there was no room on the schedules of those who were working. Our only option was another ER even further away, and they had an 11 hour wait in their parking lot. We decided we would just pick him up, take him to the convention where I would monitor him closely. They had left the catheter in for IV fluids from the day vet, but we had a first aid kit and felt comfortable removing it ourselves. That quickly changed when we removed the bandage and found a tangled mess of hair and tape. Back to the drawing board! I finally found a vet that could see him. She gave him more fluids and then removed the catheter.

He was still recovering, so we contemplated our next move. Gamer that that Kit Kat was, he clearly indicated that he wanted to go out and work, so Trish took him out for a short visit to his friends rather than have him stress about having to remain behind.



The brief visit to the convention floor seemed to revitalize Kit Kat, but that evening he still was showing signs of tremors. We checked a walk-in clinic at a big box pet store, where there was no vet on duty, but a helpful vet tech told us to get some unflavored pediatric electrolyte solution and give it to him to continue flushing his system.

We did, and we noticed even more improvement in him. We had found a clinic in the Atlanta area that would see him on the way home, but his improvement was so dramatic after the electrolytes that we decided just to head straight home and continue to treat him ourselves with his meds and electrolytes. Kit Kat seemed to know that the electrolytes were helping him and would walk over and tap the bottle when he wanted more, which we gladly obliged. Between conventions, we continued to treat Kit Kat with extra fluids and medication. After several months of treatment, he eventually cleared the toxins and returned to the convention circuit.

At the March 2023 Global Pet Conference in Orlando, Kit Kat was ready to make his attempt in the booth of a major global cat food vendor. The booth staff lined up, and Kit Kat delivered high fives to a whopping 29 people in one minute! He followed that up with giving Trish 60 high fives in one minute, setting two records in one conference! Trish and Kit Kat are eagerly waiting for Guinness to make this new achievement official! Stay tuned!

Party Time!

Trish and Kit Kat got the big news about Kit Kat’s jump rope record less than a week before they were scheduled to appear as entertainers at the August 2023 Midwest TGIF Fanciers’ CFA cat show at their old stomping grounds, Purina Farms. They celebrated with in true CFA fashion with – what else – a cake, and a big bowl of Kit Kat bars, appropriately, at the very place where Kit Kat’s career was launched.

A few days later, Vicki Newman, the lead digital editor for Guinness World Records, published a story about Kit Kat and his story hit the newswires. Kit Kat’s amazing feat was picked up by TV stations, website, newspapers, and magazines across the world, including *People Magazine*! Kit Kat is now one of the most famous cats in the world.

Trish continues to participate in CFA as an exhibitor and breeder when not on the road or on set with her performing crew. The youngest of her current crew of performing Siberians, GP Cyberkoshki The Greatest Story, completed his Grand Premier title during Kit Kat’s Guinness celebration! In addition to Bali and Story, CH Basilic Blessing Raise A Hallelujah (Halle), a silver classic tabby and white spayed Siberian, rounds out her trio of performing Siberians. Trish is also co-owner of the 2022-23 Region 1-9 Siberian Breed Winner GC, BWR, RW Cyberkoshki Call Me Mighty, and is currently co-breeder of five Siberian CFA registered litters. A new face will be joining the CatBoss TV performance team – CH, GP Castlekatz Colby, a cream tabby British Shorthair, made his home with Trish and earned his Grand Premier title.

Want to see Kit Kat, Trish and the amazing CatBoss TV cats for yourself? They will be appearing at the 2023 CFA International Show handing out high fives and performing some of their other amazing tricks! Come see them at the show, get a high five from the crew, and learn from the best why cats CAN be trained and why you should train yours, too!

Bigger Isn't Always Better

The Prostate Problem

Nancy Kerr



mmmm...study jowls on this British Shorthair male!

Marketing and advertising companies encourage belief that bigger is always better. Why settle for just a regular burger when you can upgrade to a mega-burger combo? Why settle for a small home (that you can probably clean yourself) if you can afford a mansion (that requires you to hire help with the upkeep)? Based on that line of thinking, you would think that a male cat with an enlarged prostate gland would be a lean, mean, super-stud able to impregnate females with a single glance.

Unfortunately, it is more likely to result in a transfer to premiership.

I learned this from personal experience after running into repeated blockage and bloody urine episodes with an otherwise healthy young male who had just bred his first girl. If these symptoms occur in a breeding male, there may be a different problem than the more common issues of urinary crystals, stones or inflammatory plugs, and you may very well end up at the emergency vet, just as I did.

After my cat had been examined and tested, the vet told me that the X-rays showed an enlarged prostate. She recommended an emergency neuter, because the prostate had increased in size so it was pinching the poor boy's urethra. However, first the cat had to be stabilized for any surgery.

Understanding the Role of the Prostate

Although it is not involved in sperm production, the prostate gland is essential to successful breeding because it provides the major part of the fluid in the ejaculate and is important in nourishing the sperm cells and increasing their movement.¹ This gland is located within the pelvis and behind the bladder,¹ on the top and sides of the urethra, the tube that carries urine from the bladder to the outside of the body. Because the urethra travels under the prostate after leaving the bladder, an enlarged prostate can impact the urine flow.

Enlargement of the prostate can be broken into two categories. The first category is the hormonal enlargement of the prostate, called Benign Prostatic Hyperplasia (BPH). This may be caused by hormonal imbalances.³ It is an enlargement of the prostate gland that occurs more frequently in older cats,³ male cats that have not been neutered or sexually active cats. Such enlargement of the prostate gland is common in intact male dogs, but less common in cats and other pets.⁴

The second category is prostatitis, or inflammation of the prostate, and is usually due to bacterial infection. Abscesses, cysts, and tumors can also occur within the prostate.¹ Complete urethral obstruction may occur with prostatic disease.⁵

While prostatic diseases are not common in cats, intact males are significantly more likely to develop them than neutered males.¹ Which make sense since intact males have raging hormones/sex drive but most neutered males are quite happy being couch potatoes. (Of course, we all know of some who still think they are the man and try to breed the girls.) In addition, diabetes, renal disease, and urinary tract infections can all contribute to the development of prostate issues in cats.³

Symptoms of Prostate Problems

Some of the symptoms of prostate issues are similar to those found in a cat that has a blockage or urinary tract infection.

Symptoms of hormonal enlargement of the prostate or BPH include straining to urinate and blood in the urine.³ If the prostate is large enough, it can obstruct the urethra, and cats with prostate enlargement are also more likely to strain to defecate.²

Symptoms of prostatitis are somewhat similar to those of BPH and include straining when defecating, blood in the urine, repeated urinary tract infections, and pain. However, with prostatitis there may be additional signs, such as fever, malaise, poor appetite, stiffness, and pain in the belly, often due to bacterial infections or tumors.¹ Severe prostatitis may lead to abscesses within the urinary tract. If an abscess leaks or ruptures, urinary fluids mix into the bloodstream. This scenario leads to blood poisoning (sepsis), which can be fatal.⁶

Diagnosis and Treatment

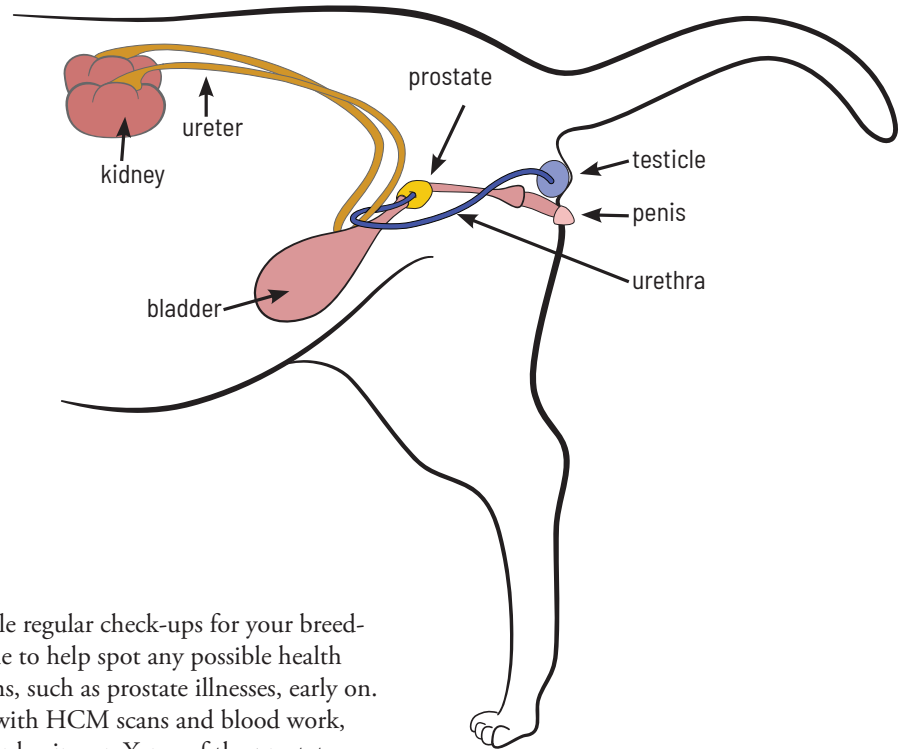
Because of the significant lack of noted prostate disease in the cats, diagnosing the type and severity can be challenging.⁵ Typically, it is accomplished through a comprehensive physical examination which may involve rectal examination, X-rays, ultrasonography, and blood and semen tests. The vet may perform other tests, such as culturing the cat's urine to determine if there is a bacterial infection, microscopic examination of the cells in the urine, microscopic examination of the cells in prostatic fluid or in the prostate, complete blood count (CBC) to look for systemic inflammation or infection, a biochemical panel to look for abnormalities in other organ systems¹ and urinalysis.³

Treatment and outlook vary depending on the type of disorder and the underlying condition generating the symptoms.^{1,3} It may take several trips to the vet/emergency hospital before the enlarged prostate is found, since a number of the symptoms are similar to those for cats experiencing a blockage or urinary tract infection. Once it is found, there is no standard treatment, due to the rarity of the condition. Surgery other than castration has been used in a few rare cases. Long-term anti-inflammatory medications used in dogs are not recommended for use in cats due to the risk of sudden onset of kidney failure and death.⁵ Other treatment options may include antibiotics, castration, surgery, painkillers, anti-inflammatories and treatment of underlying conditions.⁶ If your cat has BPH, recommendations may be neutering or hormone therapy to reduce the prostate gland and improve symptoms³. Dietary or lifestyle adjustments may also be recommended to assist the cat in controlling the symptoms of prostate diseases, such as boosting water intake or lowering stress.

Prevention Tips

While there is no guaranteed way to prevent the enlargement of a cat's prostate gland, there are certain things you can do to lower the risk. Neutering male cats at a young age can dramatically lower the incidence of prostate diseases later in life.³ However, this is not an option for a male that you want for breeding. While artificial insemination has become fairly routine in the dog world, it is still in its infancy when it comes to felines, as the female cat's reproductive system presents challenges that are extremely difficult to work with.

If neutering is not an option, try to keep your whole males healthy by feeding a well-balanced diet and providing plenty of fresh water to help keep them hydrated. This will help to lower the risk of urinary tract infections and other associated illnesses. Look for ways to help your cat reduce stress and boost overall wellness, such as regular interaction play sessions and allowing for space and time to exercise freely.



Schedule regular check-ups for your breeding male to help spot any possible health concerns, such as prostate illnesses, early on. Along with HCM scans and blood work, consider having an X-ray of the prostate gland on a regular basis once the male becomes sexually active. If the cat does become blocked and then partially unblocks without intervention, which blood on the hind legs may indicate, consider asking the vet to have an X-ray of the prostate gland. If the cat has additional blockages over the next couple of months after that, definitely have the prostate X-rayed/checked.

Check to see if your pet insurance covers blockages, prostate issues, etc., because it does not take long for the treatment costs to add up. Investigate veterinary specialists in your area before you actually need them, and be ready to contact them if prostate issues arise. Experienced vets may be able to offer more treatment options than neutering.

If you are faced with an emergency neuter for the well-being of the cat, as I was, hopefully the cat will have a fathered a litter and you will have the next generation to carry on your lines. In my case, the cat had sired several litters. Going forward, one of his sons will hopefully be able to carry on his legacy while I continue to carefully monitor both his and his son's litter box habits and water intake!

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Feline Mast Cell Tumors

What Owners Need to Know

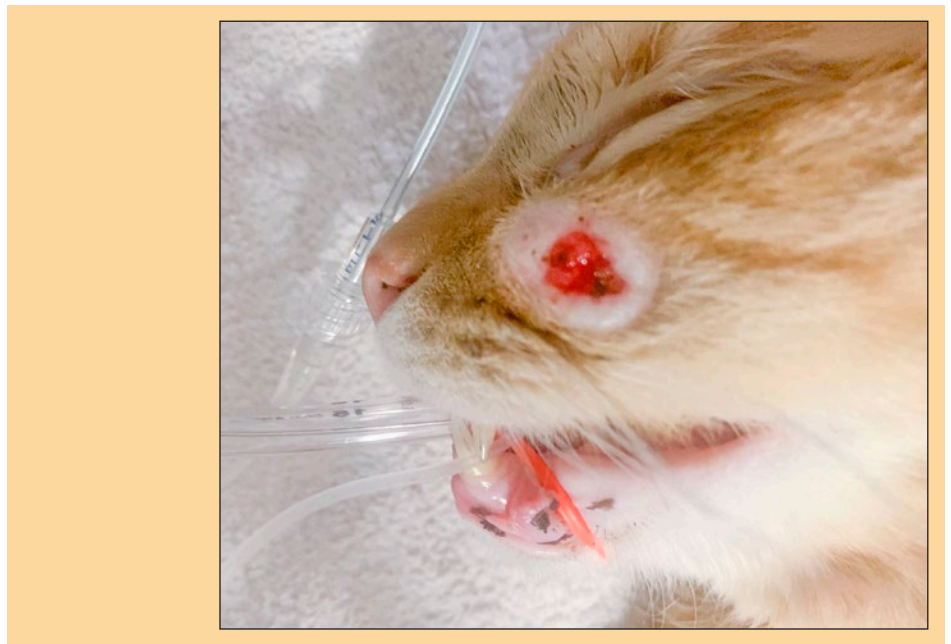
Andrea Dorn

Lando Calrissian was one of six kittens born in 1980 amidst the peak of the Star Wars frenzy. Ten years later, while brushing the brown tabby Maine Coon-look-alike, I noticed that the whiskers on one side of his face pointed forward more than usual. On closer examination, I realized that a small lump on his lip was pushing his whiskers forward. Later that day, I found two more lumps behind his ear. His veterinarian removed all three lumps and submitted them to the diagnostic lab at Iowa State University. The biopsy revealed a cluster of mature mast cells typical of a mast cell tumor.

Two Common Forms of Feline Cancer

Mast cells normally occur throughout the body and are involved in hypersensitivity reactions such as allergies or parasitic infestation. They also play a part in the initial reaction of the body to an injury. A mast cell tumor (MCT) forms when mast cells begin to grow and multiply abnormally. Mastocytosis is the term used to describe the two forms of MCTs: cutaneous (on the skin, CMCT) and visceral (involving the abdominal organs).

CMCTs are the second most common tumor of the skin in cats.¹⁰ They usually occur in cats 10 years of age or older, although some breeds (Siamese, Burmese, Russian Blue, Ragdoll, and Havana Brown)^{3,10} are prone to a rare form of atypical CMCT. These tumors may appear at one year of age or younger, usually on the head, and may recede without treatment. One paper reported that CMCTs were more likely to be found on or around the head in cats aged seven or older, whereas older cats, those aged eight or over, were more likely to have CMCTs on the body³.



“But MCTs could appear on any cat,” says John Gonzalez, DVM, Medical Director at Your Pets Vets in Houston. Gonzalez’s practice is about 40% cats, and he sees a few (5-6) feline MCT cases every year. While feline CMCTs are usually benign, if you find more than one on a single cat, it could indicate a more serious condition. “They usually appear as light-tan bumps,” according to Gonzalez, “but may be red or look like some other growth. Darier’s sign—a key indication—is when the bumps appear red and enlarged and change in size to small and pale-colored.”

CMCTs are usually single, well-differentiated, and benign (non-spreading) tumors, but they can grow rapidly in size. Your veterinarian may consider any small lump on your cat’s skin as a possible CMCT. Many individual tumors can appear on the same cat. The occurrence of a single CMCT does not necessarily mean it will lead to further disease. In many cases, the small, tan lump is removed, and no further lumps appear.

Watchful Owners Should Take Prompt Action

“Usually, it’s the owner who finds the mast cell tumor,” Gonzalez says. “Veterinarians try to be thorough in their physical examinations, but the owner is more familiar with their own cat, and handles the cat more. Still, the physical exam is vital, as are thorough home exams.”

If you find a lump or any abnormal mass on your cat, your veterinarian may either take a fine-needle aspirate, or sampling, from the lump and examine the stained cells under a microscope. Alternatively, your veterinarian could surgically remove the mass entirely and submit it to a diagnostic laboratory for pathology exam, or biopsy.

In the meantime, watch your cat for more serious symptoms such as decreased appetite, depression, weight loss, or vomiting. Of course, there are many other conditions that produce similar signs. If your cat does show these symptoms in combination with a suspected CMCT, your veterinarian will run a normal bloodwork panel and look for any abnormal cells in the blood. It is important to take these lumps seriously and have them removed as soon as possible. Mast cell tumors can grow quickly. However, the overall prognosis for cats with only CMCT is good, and most of the time you won’t see any more tumors.⁴

Possible Complications of CMCTs

When multiple CMCTs occur in the same cat, the disease could progress to the systemic mastocytosis. If the disease affects the viscera, or abdominal organs, you will likely be referred to a veterinary oncologist for further tests and treatments.



“We don’t normally see cats with mast cell tumors unless they have progressed to the organs,” says Margaret Musser, Diplomate ACVM (Oncology), Associate Professor of Veterinary Clinical Sciences, Hixson-Lied Small Animal Hospital, College of Veterinary Medicine, Iowa State University. “With an ultrasound we will locate the affected organ(s) and obtain a fine-needle aspirate for biopsy. Then, if we find abnormal MCTs, we’d use a chemotherapy agent, such as Palladia, Lomustine (CCNU), or Vinblastin.”

According to Musser, any of these medications may have serious side effects like vomiting, anorexia, lethargy, and diarrhea. Some can even cause liver or kidney problems, much like any other chemotherapy agent, so your cat’s blood will be checked regularly to monitor its organ function.

The systemic MCTs will often appear on the spleen. Mastocytosis of the spleen is considered the second most common disease of the spleen, while that of the intestines is the third most common intestinal tumor. In many cases, the cat’s spleen is removed and no further problems arise. However, mastocytosis of the viscera may become malignant, spreading to other organs such as the liver, lymph nodes, bone marrow, pancreas, and intestines. If your cat develops any of the serious symptoms mentioned above, prognosis is dependent on the location of the tumors⁸. You must decide if your cat’s quality of life is affected.

Because mast cells contain substances including histamine and heparin, the breakdown, or degranulation, of mast cells during manipulation of CMCTs may cause life-threatening side effects such as stomach ulcers and blood-clotting abnormalities, according to Dr. Musser. This is also the reason radiation therapy (stereotactic radiation treatment) is not used for MCTs. Even with chemotherapy, your veterinarian or oncologist will likely prescribe medications to help prevent or control any histamine release⁸, gastrointestinal or blood-clotting complications.

Cats with only the cutaneous form may live a normal, healthy lifespan, but you must constantly monitor your cat for future lumps and have them removed and biopsied as soon as possible. Your veterinarian will likely recommend periodic blood screening for abnormal mast cells, even if there are no more lumps visible. If removal of the affected spleen is necessary, cats can live for many years after the splenectomy. Intestinal mastocytosis is more aggressive and not as amenable to treatment.

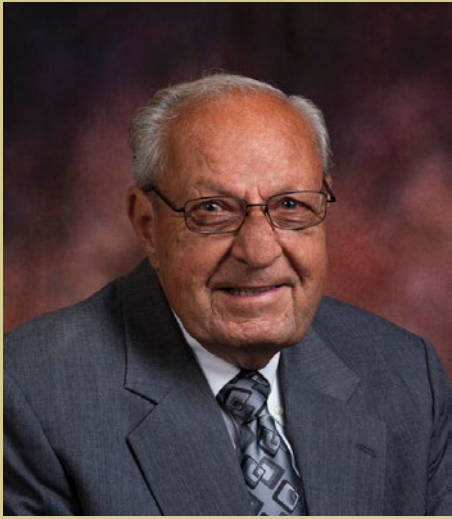
Work together with your veterinarian to closely monitor your cat’s condition and side effects from the tumors or the medications. Complications from both the disease state itself and the treatment may include the spread of disease to other organs, anemia (chemotherapy agent), development of diabetes mellitus (prednisolone), and lung involvement.

As noted previously, Lando’s first MCT appeared when he was 10 ½ years old. He went on to develop at least six more CMCTs. Several were on his face and neck, but one appeared at the base of his tail, and at least two were around his midsection. Interestingly, Lando’s brother, Zeit Geist, also had one CMCT removed but did not develop any others. Five years after Lando’s first tumor was removed, he progressed to the systemic form which affected his liver, pancreas, and spleen. After removal of Lando’s spleen, we placed him on chemotherapy and monitored his blood every two to four weeks for abnormal mast cells.

Most of us cringe when we hear the word “cancer,” but with early diagnosis and proper, timely medical treatment, you can still give your cat a very good chance for a longer, happier life. Following Lando’s splenectomy, he had a good quality of life for over three more years, although he did develop diabetes mellitus as a complication of taking prednisolone. Even though the second half of his life was involved with MCTs, Lando nevertheless enjoyed a long and happy life. He died quietly at home just shy of his nineteenth birthday.

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UP CLOSE AND *Purr-sonal*

Elizabeth Jennings

DON WILLIAMS CFA ALLBREED JUDGE AND FORMER CFA PRESIDENT

Life in the cat fancy began for Don Williams in 1954, when his first wife expressed her desire to acquire a cat. “I didn’t know what I was getting into,” said Williams, formerly President of CFA for 14 years and who has been an allbreed judge for 61 years. “I told her we didn’t need a cat because we didn’t have a barn. Until then, my only association with cats was at the farm when we were milking cows.”

It All Started with a White Persian

Williams’ wife showed him a picture of a blue-eyed white Persian in a *Women’s Day* magazine. “I told her if she ever found one like that, I would buy it for her,” Williams recalled. “Wouldn’t you know it, she found someone selling white Persian kittens. We went to look at them. I liked one of them, but was told that one was not for sale, and they wanted to sell me the ugly brother. At that time, I didn’t know what a Persian was supposed to look like. I just knew I liked the one and not the other. After much talking, we ended up with the one I liked, and paid the tremendous price of \$35. The kitten came with all the CFA registration papers, and I found out later that the breeder was very well known.”

Williams was serving in the Air Force in Mississippi at that time. Not long after the acquisition of the white Persian kitten, he was transferred to Long Island, New York. There, he purchased an odd-eyed white male Persian kitten. This step in Williams’ evolution as a cat fancier led to the predictable outcome: “We produced kittens. When we advertised them for sale,” Williams continued, “we were contacted by an interested

couple who asked why we didn’t show our mother cat. I didn’t know what they were talking about, because I had never heard of a cat show. However, the couple belonged to an ACA (American Cat Association) Club on Long Island, and I was invited to join.” Soon after that, in 1956, he attended a cat show with his cat, and came home with “scores of ribbons.” This sealed his fate for a lifelong journey into cat showing and the cat fancy.

The Evolution of a Judge

A decade before Williams’ epiphany, back in 1946, *Cats* magazine had established the All-American awards, for all breeds of cats recognized by all associations, of which there were only three¹ These awards were considered just as prestigious as the individual associations’ top awards, possibly even more so. However, back then, just as it is today, not all associations recognized all breeds, so only certain breeds were eligible for the All-Americans. Competition was fierce. “I was helping put on shows for the club and going to as many shows as I could,” Williams recalled. “Back then, with only three associations, nearly everyone entered all of them.”

In 1956, Williams took the next step and became an ACA allbreed judge; shortly after, he was elected to the ACA Board of Directors. “My dealings with them were not the best. I was trying to get them to organize a judging school, which I thought they needed more than anything,” Williams explained. “While judging a show in upstate New York, I took out a cat in the Smoke Persian class and I could not believe it was

even entered in the show. I withheld all awards, at which point I was confronted by this very loud voice saying ‘Did you know you just withheld all awards on the All-American Blue Smoke?’”

“I told her it didn’t look like Skyway’s Paulette, the All-American blue smoke Persian that I owned,” Williams said. “After I finished judging, I watched the other judges’ finals. The judge in the next ring awarded Best Cat to the cat I had withheld on! I couldn’t get home fast enough to write my letter of resignation from the ACA Board and judging list.”

This event, however, did not decouple Williams from the joyride of extraordinary cats. In 1962, Williams applied to the CFA judging program, and became a CFA Allbreed judge. Moving further along, he and his second wife, Leta, who was also a CFA Allbreed judge, showed a wide variety of breeds under the cattery name of Squire. These included Persians, Exotics, Abyssinians, American Shorthairs, Burmese, Cornish Rex, Devon Rex, Siamese, Singapuras, and Sphynx,* with which they acquired numerous regional and national wins. One notable cat of Williams’ breeding was awarded International Cat of the Year in Finland, and one of his Exotic males was sire of an Exotic that achieved Second Best Cat in CFA.*

Don’s Tenure as President

For 14 years as CFA President and 27 continuous years as a CFA Board of Directors member, Williams employed as deft a touch with people as with cats: He maintained an excellent relationship with corporate sponsors and vendors. The result was successfully

producing large shows that were almost completely funded, including the CFA Iams shows and the original CFA-Purina Invitational, which evolved into the CFA International Show.

During his term as CFA president, Williams completed many key projects:

- Guided CFA's growth from a domestic U.S. association to a worldwide organization
- Established the International Division
- Was involved in the development of the Legislative Committee
- Also engaged in the Cattery Inspection

Program, including the Cattery of Excellence designation

- Assisted with CFA's Disaster Relief Program
- Served as a founder of the Cat Fanciers Foundation, for which he currently serves as President
- Is a co-founder of the World Cat Congress, which brings multiple cat associations together to address common-ground issues

Williams has judged worldwide, including in Argentina, Australia, Brazil, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, New Zealand, Norway, Russia, Sweden, and many Asian nations, just to cite a few. He

has long club associations, too, and is an honorary member of Garden State Cat Club and Buffalo Cat Fanciers, secretary of Ocala Cat Club and a member of Cat Club of the Palm Beaches.

Today, in Ocala, Florida, Williams has finally acquired a barn, which houses one horse and two donkeys. He recently turned 90 years old and once again, he shares his home with just one cat, but still no barn cats. We can imagine, though, that the spirits of those long-ago barn cats hover there, watching over his long reign as one of CFA's most distinguished allbreed judges.

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The Cat's Meow

How Cats Evolved from the Savanna to Your Sofa

by Jonathan Losos
review by Ann Stropole

Read the subtitle of this book and there's no doubt about what the reader will find in its pages.

The *Cat's Meow*, in a very readable storytelling style, presents a wealth of information, thoroughly documented and researched, that traces the evolution of cats from their roots in Africa to the domestic cat of today. As the reader progresses through the book, it is clear that the author is both a scientist and a cat lover.

The book's author, Jonathan Losos, is an evolutionary biologist, currently a professor at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri. He sets the stage and the tone of the

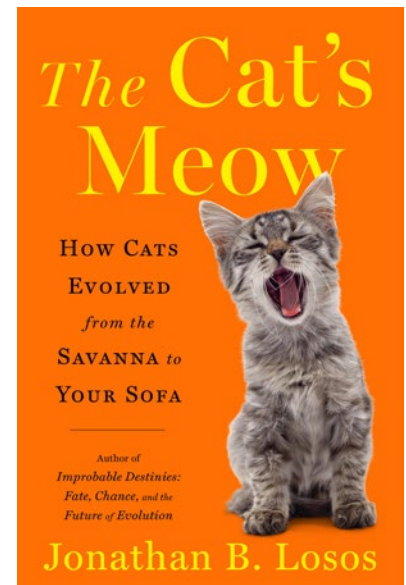
book in this tongue-in-cheek first paragraph of *The Cat's Meow*, where he writes,

"It's a good thing cats aren't the size of large dogs since an old joke, because if they were, they'd eat their owners. As a cat-loving scientist my first reaction was to laugh, quickly followed by the thought "How can I research this idea?" Sadly, even science has its limits. Until we're able to produce seventy-five-pound house cats we'll never get a definite answer."

And that's just the start of an entertaining exploration into the whys and hows of the evolutionary path that led from the wild cats to the domestic cats we call our pets.

I spoke with Professor Losos in preparation for this review of *The Cat's Meow*. This comment was one of many that made it clear that Losos is passionate about evolutionary biology, about research, about writing, and about cats and cat people of all descriptions:

"One thing I tell people about this book is there is just so much amazing material about cats—they do so many interesting things—and about the people who work with them, who breed them, and the people who study them. There are such great stories, that if this book is not just a fun, fascinating read, it is entirely my fault because the material is there. There's just great stuff and this was my goal: to write an entertaining book that talks about the past, the present and the future of cats: where they came from, why they are like they are today, what the future may hold, and the science underlying all of that."



In addition to the in-depth research in the book's 20 chapters, an extensive chapter-by-chapter Notes on Sources offers the reader additional paths to follow to more research and studies on each chapter's content.

Throughout the book the author cites experts and examples of the ways in which the domestic cats of today are in many ways still the "wild cats" from whom they evolved. With a few exceptions, breeders and/or exhibitors of CFA registered cats won't find many specific references to their breeds but that's not what this book is about. It's a journey through the millions of years of evolution that gifted us with the species *felis catus*, that cat lovers call domestic cats, house cats, pedigreed cats and most of all, pets.

Is Your Cat Show Ready to Accommodate Children?



In this new era of social media, our target cat show guests (women aged 25-49) may be accompanied by children who are more excited than their parents to see the cats. With today's families highly focused on catering to their children's needs and interests, clubs that can find ways to attract and accommodate these children may very well see it translate into a larger audience and a healthier bottom line.

A Warm and Fuzzy Alternative to Electronics

In the past, children played outside and did their own activities often without much parental oversight. These days, parents are much more involved in their kids' daily activities and often struggle to pull them away from electronic devices and the current virtual world. Activities that are geared toward both parents and children are increasingly popular, so if you want to attract families, you must cater to both parents and children.

Younger people will respond to advertisements highlighting interesting and engaging activities and especially interactive attractions. We have learned that typically, more

than 50% of cat show guests come in asking for these events; so today, we promote our shows using buzz words that will attract families and emphasize activities that draw them in.

At the same time, we have heard complaints about how bigger gates also draw in more children and that they can be loud. Since children are not a necessary evil but the future of our hobby, we should strive to engage them in a positive way. That does not just mean contests. Those only go on for a short amount of time, and family schedules do not always allow the visit to the show to coincide with contests.

We need engaging and exciting events at the show that will create a family-friendly atmosphere, no matter what time the guests arrive. Today's cageless shows with the dark screens make it much harder to see the cats, and walking through aisles of cats you cannot see or touch is not a lot of fun. Also, watching cats being judged can be boring for those who do not understand what is happening. Not all judges can make it fun, and big, busy shows may preclude the time to make it fun. Many young adults have told me that watching cats being judged is like watching "paint dry." The finals can be more interesting, but they do not take place often enough to provide sufficient excitement. There are some proven ways to engage spectators, old and young alike.

Suggestions for Outreach

Let your vendors know you are working on making the show more "kid-friendly" and ask them about providing something "extra" for the kids. This might be offering children's cat books or clip-on cat ears for sale, having a dish of candy or snacks available, or perhaps several vendors could collaborate to provide popcorn, interactive toys, even face painting. The primary responsibility for connecting with the young people, though, belongs to the club. At a minimum, the club should provide CFA coloring books and some type of interactive event for children, such as a stuffed animal contest or a coloring contest. Shows that have the space can put together Children's Activity Centers or at least a couple of tables with crayons and coloring book pages with cats to color.

The exhibitors, especially the ones benched near the front entrance, should be welcoming and comfortable dealing with children, willing to let young people see, touch, and engage with the cats—a consideration when doing your benching.

Passing out spectator guides will help. Having signs about expected behavior in a show hall is better than some stranger yelling at youngsters if they get excited and move too fast. We try to prepare visitors with social media, advertising what—and what not—to expect, but we all know people, especially busy parents, do not read everything.

This is a FAMILY FRIENDLY event, fun for all ages

**CAT COSTUME CONTEST and STUFFED ANIMAL CONTEST
WATCH cats and kittens compete for Best in Show
DAILY IN EACH JUDGING RING!**

**FREE cat coloring books for the first 100 children each day!
SHOPPING for cats and people with vendors selling many cat-related items!
PET-ME CATS to meet up close and personal!**

Look for opportunities to educate children about cats in a way that is fun. Encourage them to learn about breeds, about responsible ownership, and about cats in general. If you begin from their own perspective, for example, asking them if they have ever had a cat and if so, what is its name, etc., you will find most attendees are delighted to tell you all about their experiences, show you pictures, etc. You can help make sure they leave with something positive—a takeaway from the show—and hopefully, the best takeaway will be the fun experience.

Young adults and their children are our future. They are a legacy we can embrace or ignore, depending on how invested your club is in the future of our hobby. We hope that the impact of our actions can continue long after we and our cats are gone from the show bench.



What's In a Name?

A Look Behind Cattery Names

Coordinated by Nancy Kerr

In 2013, Cat Talk ran a series of articles exploring the stories behind breeders' cattery names. There were SO many great stories and some very clever names.

Well, it's been 10 years and new catteries have been registered in the meantime, so we decided to revisit this topic. And the stories are still just as interesting! Do you have a cattery registered since 2014 (or did you miss the series the first time around)?

We'd love to hear about it!

Please send it to Nancy Kerr at nakerr68@outlook.com. We can't wait to read your stories!

LaMar

*Marge Ramal
registered 2019*

Marge Ramal lives in Coeur D'Alene, Idaho and breeds solid and bicolor Persians. Her cattery is named after hall of fame poultry judge, movie star, rodeo star, 6th fastest draw in the world, race-horse breeder, Appaloosa breeder hall of fame, ranch owner and her daddy.

Suzimbo

*Susan Deikman
registered 2021*

A combination of Susan's name and her son's name—which happens to be Zimran, but they called him "Zimbo" as a child. Susan breeds European Burmese.

La Traviata

*Joke Otterspeer
registered in 1980*

Joke started with Himalayans and now breeds Exotics and Persians. He chose the name after seeing the opera broadcast on television, and the first male he produced and kept for breeding was named Giuseppe, after composer Guiseppe Verdi.

Saynday

*Teri Kennedy
registered 1995*

Saynday reflects the name of a mischievous character from the folklore of the Kiowa Native American tribe. Terri thought it was a fitting name for her Abyssinians since they can be quite mischievous. She lives in Arizona and is very interested in Native American culture. Many of her early Abys had Native American names.

Tigerflower

*Molly Ball
registered 1985*

Another Abyssinian cattery dating back to a book party Molly attended in London for Fleur Cowles, world-renowned author, editor and founder of *Flair* magazine. Molly owns and treasures several of Cowles' charming books and thought this would be a lovely way to salute an author she greatly admired. ("Fleur" is French for "flower.")

Grandstand

GrandStand Submissions

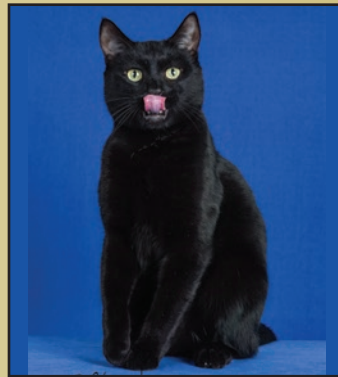
For \$15 per submission, you can take advantage of an opportunity to see your cat's name and image in print! Send your photo submissions to SBorawski@cfa.org. Payment must be made at <http://catalog.cfa.org/photos.html> prior to photo submission to make it into the next issue! Cat Talk also includes Household Pet photos in a Household Pet Parade for the same fee. You can send a photo and payment by U.S. Mail to: Cat Talk Photos, 260 East Main Street, Alliance, OH, 44601. Photos are subject to approval from the Editorial Board.



GH, HRW AXEL
White & Black Companion Cat Neuter
Ow: Kristin Onger



GC BLUE VELVET SKY DESIREE
Tortie Point Persian Female
S: Blue Velvet Sky Boomerang
D: Crazy Life Camelia
Br: Francesca Piconese
Ow: Dolores Cayalues Cayadas



GH, HRW BUTTDAY
Black & White Companion Cat Neuter
Ow: Dawn Tenhoeve



GP, DW CHATOUBLIE RAMY
Ruddy Somali Spay
S: Skeemen Miguel of Chatoublie
D: Chatoublie Bok Nam
Br: Ji Hyun Kim
Ow: Hwi Seok Jun



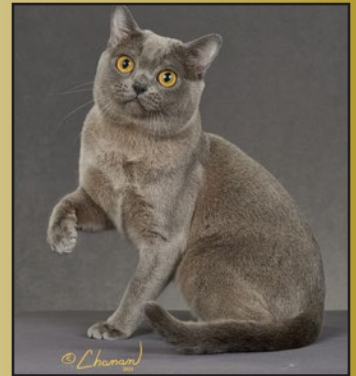
GC DOUBLE TAKE COMANDANTE
Black Persian Male
S: GC Suavere's Veni Vedi Vici, DM
D: Double Take Molinard Habanita, DM
Br: Vitaly Oreshkin
Ow: Vita Motolese-Vitaly Oreshkin



GC FOR-REAL BLUE ANGEL
Blue Lynx Point-White Ragdoll Male
S: Siempreamar Abraham of For-Real
D: For-Real Carolines Cristiana
Br/Ow: Mary Riddell



GP, RW FROM OLIVIA'S ANIKI
Champagne Burmese Neuter
S: GC, RW Evita's Percy of From Olivia
D: Lyuboburm Olivia of From Olivia
Br/Ow: Mai Sugi



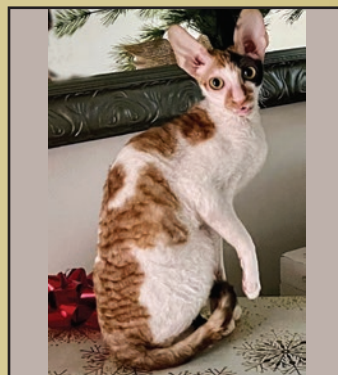
GC, RW FROM OLIVIA'S GABRIEL
Blue Burmese Male
S: CH Lyuboburm Emile of From Olivia
D: Lyuboburm Olivia of From Olivia
Br/Ow: Mai Sugi



GC, RW FROM OLIVIA'S TADAO
Sable Burmese Male
S: GC, RW Evita's Percy of From Olivia
Dam: Lyuboburm Olivia of From Olivia, DM
Br/Ow: Mai Sugi



GC FURQUEEN GABONG OF NANGKAO
Cream-White Scottish Fold Longhair Male
S: Small House's Chang
D: Sundemorning Pa-Nang of Furqueen
Br: Warangkana S.-Nirun T.-Atcha Y.
Ow: Uraivan Duangmala-Soonthorn Udompol



GC GODSPEED SASSY SUNFLOWER
Calico Cornish Rex Female
S: Ruzlin Dandelion of Godspeed
D: GC Godspeed Sweet Magnolia
Br: Roberta Strohaker-Linda Ruslin
Ow: MJ Lanni



GC, GP, NW GOLIADA MARY MARY
Blue-Cream Persian Spay
S: GC, RW Topknot's Summer Games of Goliada, DM
D: GC Just So Pattycake of Goliada
Br/Ow: Nancy Petersen



GC, RW GOLIADA PINK FLOYD
 Cream Persian Male
 S: GC, RW Goliada Slater
 D: GC, GP, RW Goliada Mary Mary
 Br/Ow: Nancy Petersen



GP GRAND LOVER SIMBA
 Seal Lynx Point Exotic Longhair Neuter
 S: CH Deverest Samba of Mui Mui
 D: Blue-Velvet Sky Cleo
 Br: Connie Yee Mui Wong
 Ow: Rosa Lau



GC, DW GUGUSHOU ASURA
 Silver Patched Classic Tabby Maine Coon Cat Female
 S: Woland Iridis Line
 D: Windinwillows Gaea
 Br/Ow: Zhang Lei



GP KOOZA CHEESY BEEFCAKE
 Silver Classic Tabby-White American Shorthair Neuter
 S: CH Rainbowhouse's Snow Walker of Kooza
 D: CH Carocats Aysel of Kooza
 Br: Muhammad Sufiyan
 Ow: Audrey Peck Ching Pon



GP KOOZA RYOU KENJI
 Silver Classic Tabby American Shorthair Neuter
 S: CH Rainbowhouse's Snow Walker of Kooza
 D: PR Royal Road Vanessa of Kooza
 Br: Muhammad Sufiyan
 Ow: Nurazman Abdul Rahman



GC LE-VELL TEXAS ROUNDUP
 Blue Point Persian Male
 S: CH Purrstar Solar Storm of Le-Vell
 D: CH Le-Vell Fabulous Lady
 Br: Kimberly Lee
 Ow: Kimberly Lee-Nancy Campbell



GP LOSTWOODS COLORADO CREEDE V ASHWOOD
 Brown Classic Tabby-White Norwegian Forest Cat Neuter
 S: CH Sevenstreams Caleb of Angelforest
 D: GC Lostwoods You Are My Sunshine, DM
 Br: Lisa Vasa-Leah-Dwight Dow (Lessee)
 Ow: Robert-Donna Staton



GC, RW MAYONAKA'S AKEMI
 Lilac-Cream European Burmese Female
 S: GC, RW Alba Regia Leo of Mayonaka
 D: GC, RW Mayonaka's Xochie
 Br: Allene Keating
 Ow: Allene Keating-Michelle Gebel



GC, RW MELODYGARDEN IRISH BUTTERCUP
 Brown Ptchd Clsc Tby-White American Shorthair Female
 S: PR Melodygarden Prince's Plume
 D: CH Melodygarden Orange Blossom
 Br/Ow: Jennifer McNinch-Carol W. Johnson



GC, DW NUDE'S I M PHOENIX
 Van Black-White Sphynx Male
 S: Lady Q Strangerundermyskin of Nude
 D: Szekeci Moyim of Nude
 Br/Ow: Gary Tsang-Moss Chau



GC, DW NUDE'S MOYIM JR.
 Calico Sphynx Female
 S: Lady Q Strangerundermyskin of Nude
 D: Szekeci Cleopatraof Nude
 Br: Gary Tsang-Moss Chau
 Ow: Gary Tsang Ka Wing-Moss Chau Yat Hung



GC PAJEAN'S MISS TWILIGHT
 Silver Ptchd Mac Tby Persian Female
 S: GC Kintcouthure Red Hot Jazz of Pajean
 D: CH Pajean's Tiffany, DM
 Br/Ow: Pamela J. Bassett



GP, RW PATTNCHAT NUTELLA COCO CUPCAKE
 Chocolate Devon Rex Spay
 S: GC, RW Pattnchat Talk-Of-The-Town, DM
 D: CH Pattnchat Talkin Smack
 Br: Debbie Van Patten
 Ow: Jacky Andersen



GH, HRW PURRCILLA
 Tortie Companion Cat Spay
 Ow: Jacky Andersen



GP QUAILS NEST CONFETTI CAKE
 Brown Ptchd Spd Tabby-White Cornish Rex Spay
 S: CH Mon Sasti Vincent, DM
 D: Quails Nest Abby's Corn Maze
 Br: Barbara Lucy Morrow
 Ow: Constance Stamas



GP QUAILS NEST PRINCE CASSIUS MIRO
 Black Smoke Cornish Rex Neuter
 S: CH Quails Nest Black Sea
 D: GC Quails Nest Moon Pie
 Br: William-Barbara Morrow
 Ow: Constance Stamas



GP RUZLIN'S KATIE KITTY
 Cream-White Cornish Rex Spay
 S: Rex Angels Endless Passion
 D: Ch Ruzlin's Cracklin' Rose
 Br: Linda Rusin
 Ow: Karen Hanser



GC SEREBRO SIBIRI KNYAZ ISTISLAV
 Seal Silver Lynx Point-White Siberian Male
 S: Potap Lesnaya Skazka
 D: Vlastilina Serebro Sibiri
 Br: S. Kulesh
 Ow: Inna McLoughlin



GC STJUDE TEO OF ARISTOPOINTS
 Flame Lynx Point Persian Male
 S: StJude Beltrand
 D: Vikers Beauty of StJude
 Br: Fabio Giannini-Paolo Gori
 Ow: Dolores Cayuelas



GC, RW SUNCOON MARGARITA OF PURRTIGERS
 Brown Patched Classic Tabby-White Maine Coon Cat Female
 S: Suncoon Stryker
 D: CH Coonskin Lovely Rita of Suncoon
 Br: Cindy Rogers-Wayne Wiekhorst
 Ow: Becky Galloway



GP SUPERSWEET ELMO
 Champagne Mink Tonkinese Neuter
 S: GC Supersweet Tony
 D: GC Supersweet Taromi
 Br: Hisano Yamashita
 Ow: Wakako Shimizu



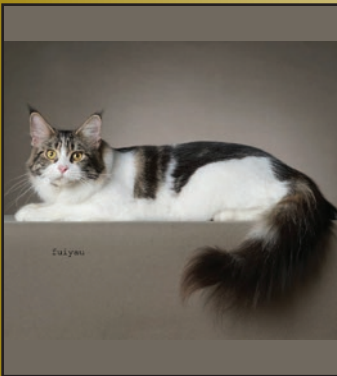
GC THURINGEN'S MISTY ROSE OF GOLIADA
 Blue Persian Female
 S: Yellicle's Misty Blue of Thuringen
 D: Thuringen's Rosalie
 Br: Kathrin Kobe
 Ow: Nancy Petersen



GC TY-TY'S DREAM COME TRUE OF PAJEAN
 Calico Smoke Persian Female
 S: CH AC Cottontop Cowgirl's Dream! of Ty-Ty
 D: CH Pajeau's Silver Threads
 Br: Emily Conaway-Darlene Adkins
 Ow: Pamela J. Bassett



GC, RW VALNIKA'S VERONA
 Russian Blue Female
 S: Cynful's Cold Cash of Valnika
 D: Starblue's Venus
 Br: Willy-Valarie Williamson
 Ow: Valarie J. Williamson-Willy Williamson



GC VENIZIA ISABELLE OF TABBYPLACE
 Brown Classic Tabby-White Maine Coon Cat Female
 S: GC, NW Venizia Jupiter
 D: King Coon Maple of Venizia
 Br: Chuleeporn Namsiriwatt
 Ow: Hannah Lyana-Chuleeporn Namsiriwatt



GP, RW VIOLETA WISTERIA
 Seal Lynx Point-White Ragdoll Spay
 S: GC Violeta Rock Tonight
 D: GC Fieldmoon Shiny Girl of Violeta, DM
 Br: Menglei Deng
 Ow: Xuan Xu



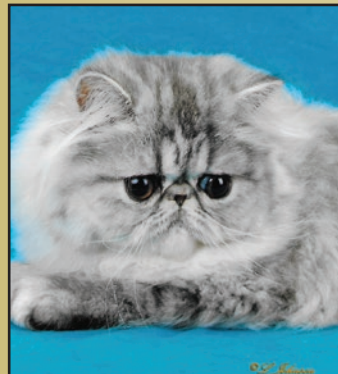
GC, RW WESTGLOW HERE COMES THE SUN
 Havana Brown Female
 S: GC, BWR NW Havacat California Dreamin
 D: GC Hecat's Windy Welsh Teamaker
 Br: D. Welsh-M. Anderson-K. Rogers
 Ow: Doug Welsh-Morgan Anderson



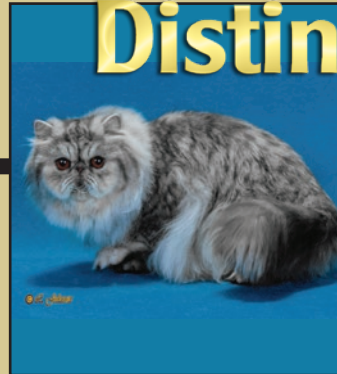
GC YANG XIAOMI LUCKY BAO
 Blue British Shorthair Male
 S: She Li Cat Nine Chen
 D: Yang Xiaomi Cheese
 Br: Yang Juan
 Ow: Budi Sari Rezeki



ALI'I KATS LILINOE OF KHALEESI KAT, DM
 Br Patched Tabby & White Straight Ear Scottish Fold SH Female
 S: Ali'i Kats Churchill
 D: Ali'i Kats Little Miss Sunshine
 Br: Honey Leinani Justman
 Ow: Carita Inoue



CH PAJEAN'S TIFFANY, DM
 Silver Patched Mink Tabby Persian
 S: GC Pajeau's Take It To The Limit, DM
 D: CH, PR Pajeau's Twilight of Sur Mist, DM
 Br/Ow: Pamela J. Bassett



GC PAJEAN'S TAKE IT TO THE LIMIT, DM
 Silver Mac Tabby Persian Male
 S: GC, NW Pajeau's To Sir-With Love, DM
 D: CH, PR Pajeau's Twilight of Sur Mist, DM
 Br: Jean C. Bassett
 Ow: Pamela J. Bassett

Distinguished Merit

The Calendar Says Cosy

Heidi Crabtree

Another autumn arrives. The air outdoors is crisp, and our minds are focusing more on indoor activities. Whether it's knitting a new sweater for a sweet Sphynx or trying once again to get a lively litter of kittens into a holiday card photo, the season of captivating books and warm lap cats blows in.

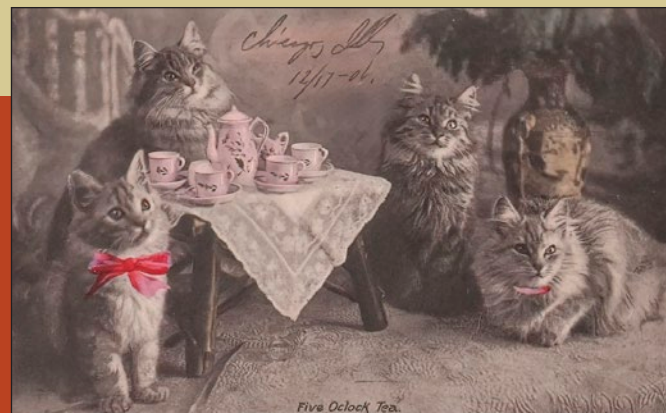
A hot beverage beckons, but before you jump for joy or roll your eyes at the first pumpkin spice ad of the year, consider a cat cozy along with your cozy cat. Wait a minute. . . what's a cat cozy? Well, it goes with tea, if you are using the word "tea" in the sense of a traditional light meal, typically served around 4 p.m.

These days, since a cup of tea is no longer exclusively black leaves with cream and sugar, more and more people are starting to make a habit out of both the drink (sometimes even with lemon!) and the meal. South African Rooibos tea, green tea, herbal, fruit, and flower teas are all alternative choices and easy to find. Of course, "tea" can also refer to a delicious mix of simmered soups, light ladyfingers, tempting tarts, and warm scones awaiting the addition of creams, curds and jam. However, the focal point is a brewed hot beverage and that's where the cozy comes in. Quite simply, a cozy is an insulating cover for a teapot that is used to keep the tea warm for a longer period of time. Whether crocheted at home or purchased, examples of cozies are widespread and designs featuring cats abound, both today and in past times when afternoon tea was the rule rather than the delightful exception it is now.

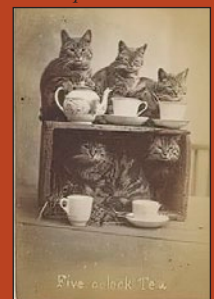


Collectors Can "Invite" Cats to Tea

In the past, felines played a frequent artistic role in advertising "a cuppa." Cat collectors can find many whimsical antiques for their kitchens. Louis Wain tea set pieces can be found on various auction sites, and usually command Louis Wain prices. More affordable décor includes Victorian "fairings," which are quintessentially British statues given away as prizes at fairs. A popular fairing was made by several companies, each slightly different but all based on a photo from Harry Pointer's acclaimed series from the 1870s, "The Brighton Cats." Pointer posed cats doing human things, like the contemporary artist Shag and much like the poses Wain would



below: Pointer photograph which started the fascination with cats taking tea.
far left: fair prize
center: postcard



colorfully depict years later. “Five O’Clock Tea,” the name of one particular photograph, can still be found in a porcelain version at many antique shops and online.

For the antique shopper who enjoys a good hunt, a very rare tea tin labeled “Flying Cat” is most sought after, despite almost nothing being known about it. There are plenty of other adorable old tea tins featuring felines at play and mischief, waiting to be rehomed from antique malls.

Oh, and you don’t have to drink tea at a tea! Coffee lovers can get creative using old photos of another trendy theme, kittens in coffee mugs, to decorate their beverage buffet.

Teatime with Children

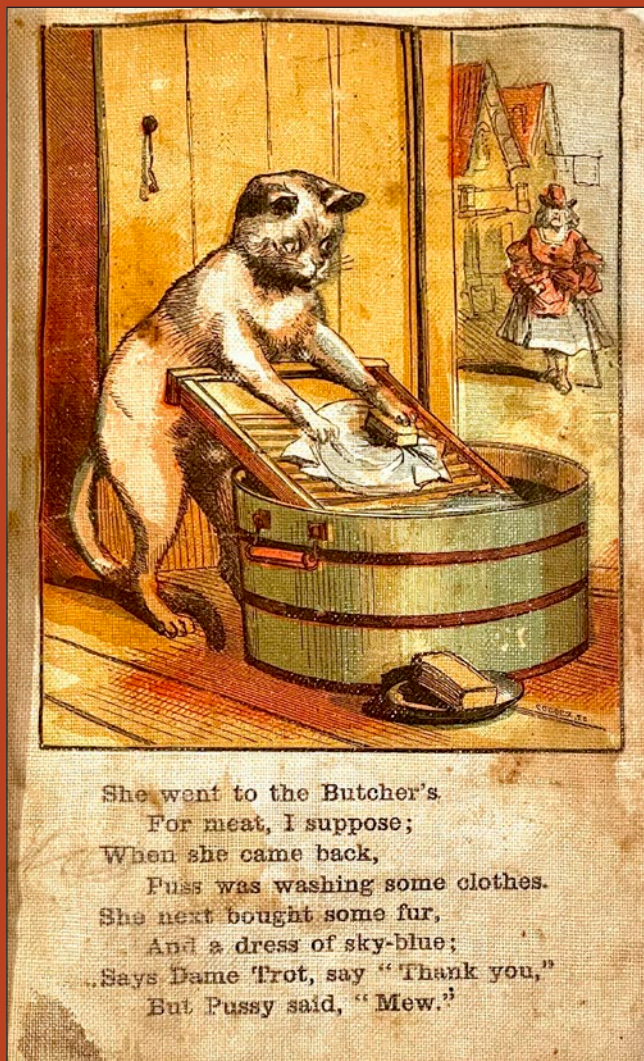
Teatime with children has been a classic theme for writers and artists for generations -- think: the treasured, slightly mad tea party in Alice in Wonderland. And little girls and miniature tea sets go together like ribbon and braids. Should you wish to host an autumn tea for small children, consider reading a classic literary treat to the young ones while the cozy-covered pot awaits, and little faces light up at miniature scones. Two short stories from the 19th century can sprinkle a trifle of vintage zest on the occasion. Dame Wiggins and her Seven Wonderful Cats. was written circa 1803 and is a revelation to many children. Reprinted later that century with added verses by art critic John Ruskin, who enjoyed the story as a child himself, the humanized cats are sent to school by the good Dame.¹

The (cats’) Master soon wrote
That they all of them knew
How to read the word “milk”
And how to spell the word “mew.”
And they all washed their faces
Before they took tea:
‘Were there ever such dears!’
Said Dame Wiggins of Lee.

Her thoroughly schooled seven kitties also mend her carpet and rescue a sick lamb!

Predating Dame Wiggins by possibly one hundred years were Dame Trot and HER cats, as well as illustrations used later for Dame Wiggins. My own copy of *Dame Trot and Her Comical Cats* is a cloth book, published in 1869, and has rare color illustrations on the cloth pages. (at upper right)

below: Louis Wain tea set
far right: Flying Cat tea tin



And of course, to engage and puzzle young minds as they enjoy their tea, there is the classic old nursery riddle, going back to c. 1730:

As I was going to St. Ives,
I met a man with seven wives,
Each wife had seven sacks,
Each sack had seven cats,
Each cat had seven kits:
Kits, cats, sacks, and wives,
How many were there going to St. Ives?

A richness of tales, a cozy teapot, and perhaps a lucky kitten close by will make autumn soon vanish like the Cheshire cat’s smile. So why not enjoy your own hunt for vintage comical kitties and create your own warm and whiskery themed afternoon tea? That pumpkin spiced latte will be hanging around until peppermint season!

1. Ruskin, John. *Dame Wiggins and her Seven Wonderful Cats*. George Allen, Sunnyside, Orpington, Kent. 1885.

Life With Patrick

Travel Critic

Jacqui Bennett

Patrick: Hey, Momma ... what'cha doin'?

Me: Hey, fuzz butt! I'm packing.

Patrick: Why?

Me: What do you mean why? You see me do this all the time. I'm going to a cat show.

Patrick: Nope!

Me: Excuse me? Nope? What do you mean?

Patrick: You just got home from a cat show. That was two meatie treaties ago. That means there are at least another four meatie treaties before you leave again.

Me: You measure time in breakfasts?

Patrick: Well, duh! And I know it is never less than one paw of meatie treaties. ... and that's not the point ... So, what do you think you are doing?

Me: I told you ... I'm packing for a cat show.

Patrick: Did we not just go through this?

Me: Patrick ... my love ... my most favorite Maine Coon in the whole entire world ...

Patrick: You're sucking up...

Me: You can interpret it however you like. Regardless, I am flying out this evening to go to Malaysia and will be on planes or in airports for almost 40 hours, counting layovers.

Patrick: 40?

Me: Think of it as one and a half to two meatie treaties.

Patrick: And then what happens?

Me: Then I spend three meatie treaties with the cats in Malaysia and then I come back home.

Patrick: And that is?

Me: Another one and a half to two meatie treaties?

Patrick: So that's more than a whole paw of breakfast. Nope that doesn't work!

Me: Why?

Patrick: Because if Daddy is the only one feeding me, he might remember he fed me, and I might miss second breakfast!

Me: Really? Well, that's too bad.

Patrick: And who is in Malaysia anyway?

Me: Well, lots of people. You even know one, and are related to several others.

Patrick: Huh?

Me: Remember Auntie Adilah?



Patrick is a floppy-eared Maine Coon Cat who shares his home with his humans Jacqui and David, and (reluctantly) with his canine companions Dexter (a husky), Bo (a shelter rescue), Mosie (an elderly basset hound), and Lucy (a not-so-miniature pinscher), and Ginger (a miniature Australian shepard). He has opinions about most things, and is not afraid to express them.

Patrick: She called me a Norwegian Forest Cat mixed with a Scottish Fold.

Me: She didn't mean it.

Patrick: She did too!

Me: Well, you do have a somewhat straight profile

Patrick: NOT THE POINT!

Me: And you do have some nieces and nephews there ...

Patrick: Will you see them?

Me: No idea. Probably not.

Patrick: So let me get this straight...

Me: Lay it out for me fuzz butt.

Patrick: Even though you JUST got home...

Me: Sunday.

Patrick: And it is ONLY meatie treatie number 2...

Me: Tuesday.

Patrick: You are abandoning me to starve...

Me: Leaving you in the supervision of your favorite human.

Patrick: To gallivant around the world!

Me: Spend almost 40 hours in airports and planes and get 11 hours out of sync.

Patrick: And you are doing this because?

Me: Judging cat shows is glamorous ...

Patrick: If you say so, Momma. Speaking of meatie treaties ... I think that today's is just a bit behind schedule.

Me: Patrick, my dear, if nothing else you do show consistency with your life's priorities.

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✓ Dystocia	✓ Liver Failure
✓ Pyometra	



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3. When you are ready to purchase, click on Checkout to complete enrollment

Questions or need assistance?

We're happy to help! Call 1-866-FELIX-09 (1-866-335-4909).

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*Available for cats residing in the 50 U.S. states or Washington D.C.; coverage is subject to state availability. Terms and conditions apply.

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