



Witty Kitties, Inc. Newsletter

A Special-Needs Shelter for Cats & Critters * Volume IX, Issue 3 * Autumn 2012

Sergio

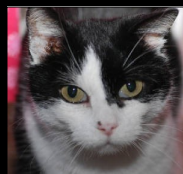
Lillian

Beau

Angelina Ballerina

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Ellington



WITTY KITTIES MISSION STATEMENT

Founded in 2000, Witty Kitties provides quality care and shelter to cats with specific chronic medical needs within the five-state area we serve. Our organization is committed to collaborating with local humane organizations in rescue work and low-cost spay-neuter services. We provide rescue, care and appropriate housing for a variety of reptiles, as well.

As part of our overall service to the community, Witty Kitties works to educate the public regarding proper care of these companion animals and, ideally, to find permanent, quality homes for them.

Website URL: WittyKitties.org

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Jenni Doll, DVM
Torben Platt, Reptile Guy
Kathleen Schoon, Volunteer Coordinator
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REMINDER

You could see this issue in living color if you subscribed to an email copy of the newsletter! Let us know your wishes by emailing staff@wittykitties.org



FEATURED WITTY KITTY

Butters is a sweet, laidback guy who lets everyone come up to him and pet him. He doesn't mind being carried around, although he's quite an armful! There's really nothing not to like about this Butters-ball...

CHARLIE

by Jenni Doll, DVM

It is interesting how quickly a quiet Sunday can be turned completely around with the minor suggestion of an animal in need.

Several weeks ago I received an email from Jan Erceg that she had rounded up about half a dozen people to catch an injured goose on a local golf course. It had been injured since late spring, and had an obviously broken wing. According to Dennis, the owner of the golf course, this goose had co-raised 3 goslings that spring despite the bad wing. He had asked for Jan's help after not getting help from the local authorities who are SUPPOSED to take on these cases -- they will not be mentioned for fear of reprisal.

Jan then asked if I would take it in and see if I could help it. I, of course, replied that I would. If caught, they would bring the goose over after 4:00.

A bit later, after his Sunday jog (miles and miles, I tell you), I mentioned to Torben the goose would be coming. He asked where it was. I told him. And he said, "Why don't we just go get it now?"

Wondering how the heck the two of us (and Kirsten) would get it when no one had been able to catch it all summer, I simply said "Okay."

Completely forgetting Jan had mentioned a golf tournament going on at the course, and not considering that we should call the place first, I gathered up some blankets and we set off.

The staff was very nice and loaned us a cart and told us where to find the goose.

Now, despite knowing plenty of people who have golfed, some of whom quit due to the addictive nature, I felt absolutely out of place dressed in torn jeans and t-shirt hanging around with all the more conservative, clean, and expensively-dressed folks -- not inferior, just different. Torben still had his sweaty shorts and shirt on. Kirsten just looked cute, as usual. We went down the path to the large pond, and we quickly spotted the goose, as it was alone. The wing dragged and seemed to slow it down. But that was only when on land.

Shortly after we got out of the cart and chased him a bit, he went into the water where he proved his feet were fine. At this point Torben just took off his shirt and shoes and waded in. Mind you, it wasn't an unseasonably warm day, though not bitter cold, I know the water must have been very cold.

I had no idea that a golf course pond could be so big AND deep! Torben couldn't touch bottom shortly after going out towards the middle. For the longest time he just swam around, lurking, following the goose, looking like a crocodile closing in on its prey. The biggest difference was the fact that the goose was completely aware he was there, and Torben was not submerging for an underwater surprise attack. Wimp.

(continued on page 2)

For what seemed like a long time of walking back and forth along the bank, thinking how lame we must look, Torben called for me to move the cart, for whatever reason. Having never driven one, I freaked out when I turned the key and it did nothing. I tried and tried, before putting my foot on the “gas” pedal. I was out of my comfort zone. I finally figured it out and drove it to the end of the pond where the goose was heading.

Just then the goose finally did us the favor of getting out of the pond. The bank was steep, causing me to think the goose was not going to be able to get far fast. Wrong! He flopped his way up and ran, very fast, down the long length of dark green golf grass that has a name I do not know (fairway? lane? runway?). I sprinted faster than I had since high school, THREE decades ago, chasing it finally into some trees, only to stumble through things the goose was able to duck under. Just before he was to the edge of the trees, on his way out to clear space again, he stumbled, too. That was when I was able to grab him.

On my way back towards the pond I could hear Kirsten laugh and laugh and laugh. I was just thankful there were no golfers in the near thingy/hole/lane -- whatever I had run on minutes before. Feeling pleased with the job, we wrapped the goose up in a sheet and drove back to the clubhouse. As we passed a teeing(?) spot, we stopped and turned off the cart so a guy could take his turn. We then started up and drove off, hearing, “Hey! We’re teeing off here!” At first we thought he was a jerk, mad because we didn’t wait for him despite the fact he hadn’t even put his tee in the ground. But after thinking about it, I think we weren’t supposed to drive along the big long, dark-green length of grass they were hitting the ball down.

We got Charlie home. He was mad as heck, pecking and flapping. His wing was obviously broken high on the humorous. The firm swelling and looseness of the site indicated it had tried to heal without success. The following Wednesday I took him to Bright Eyes and Bushy Tails for radiographs. We quickly found he had a multiple-fragment fracture of the humorous, spanning most of the bone. Some of the pieces had healed together at an odd angle at the ends of the bones, but many were still “lying around”. I sent the rads to the vet specialists in this area who said there was little (some, but not much) hope of him being repaired well enough to be released.

The following Sunday, only a week after he came, we anesthetized him and removed his wing. I was very stressed because birds are very tricky when it comes to anesthesia. And pulling the feathers out of a live bird isn’t as easy as it seems. Tearing the skin is easy. I did an okay job of removing the wing, but scolded myself for not taking more feathers off, leaving the area cleaner for later on.

However, once up and about he was much more agile, and quick. I think he had been hurting more than I thought.

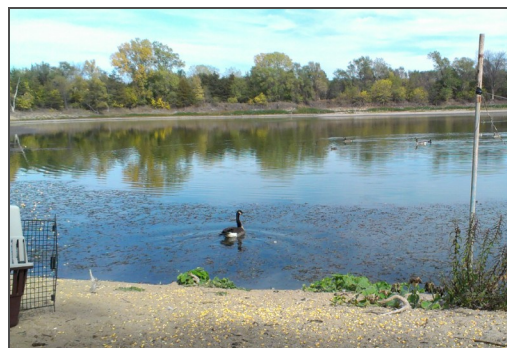
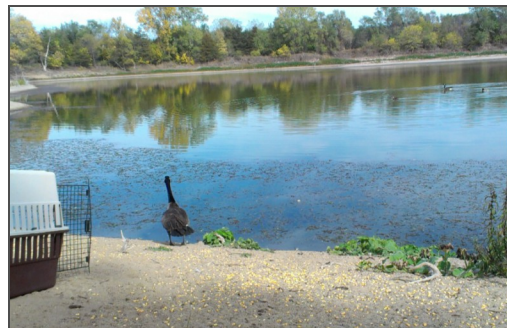
Thanks to Linda Nebbe, a rehabilitator from Blackhawk Animal Rehab in Cedar Falls, I was hooked up with Linda Fobian. She had an ideal site. She and her husband own several acres with a pond surrounded by trees just outside of Cedar Falls. They keep the pond aerated to prevent freezing. They have several flightless ducks and geese they care for.

So, only two weeks after the adventure began, I was driving up to Cedar Falls with Charlie. He was still wild, not wanting anything to do with me, totally unappreciative. When we arrived at the property, I was thrilled. It is the type of place I would like for us, out away from other houses, hidden. Linda and her husband were very nice. We walked down to the beach where the birds are fed. She called them and tossed corn out. A half dozen or more geese, many with names, swam over from a small island or sand bar from the middle of the pond. It was at this point I opened Charlie’s crate. He quickly walked out, stood and stared at the others a while, then swam out towards them. Linda predicted he would suddenly start bathing him-

self vigorously. He did, dunking over and over. There was a little bit of a scuffle before they all went back together to be part of the flock. I could keep an eye on Charlie easily because his bright white feathers that would otherwise be covered by his wing were visible. I was thrilled, and

was sure to get some photos of his new home which you can see in this issue.

But alas, I couldn’t stay long. I had to get back home to meet the newest patient being dropped off at our place, Nigel the Pelican. Unlike Charlie, Nigel’s personality is completely different than Charlie’s. That is another story.



EXOTIC CORNER

by Torben Platt

Greetings from The Exotic Corner!



All the critters that need to be moved in for the winter have been (reptiles). Some of them will snooze away the season hibernating, but most of them will remain active because they are from tropical regions where the seasons are simply wet or dry. Now compared to our reptiles, the cats are comparatively "high maintenance", they need to be fed, watered, and their areas cleaned twice a day, every day. In addition, of course, there are those that need medicine or specific care off and on. Our farm animals, the bear, coyotes, emus, etc., also need daily care. Reptiles, however, are different. Since their metabolisms are much simpler than a bird or mammal, they don't require as much food, and, therefore, don't expel as much waste. A snake may not eat for 6 months and still feel no ill effects. Turtles, lizards, and alligators need to eat much more often, but not like a cat or dog. This may lead one to believe it is much "easier" to care for the reptiles at Witty Kitties, and I would agree that, on a day to day basis, that's true. However, the reptile chores are much like the reptiles themselves -- long periods of a fairly simple routine: feeding, spot cleaning, etc. taking maybe 15 to 20 minutes a day, interspersed with the occasional complete disaster. I don't have to think back very far to find an example of one such disaster, in fact, how about yesterday?

As usual, I woke up at 5:00 am and went to work. Jenni texted me during the day to inform me a snake had escaped, but no big deal, she found it after having to move half the cages in the garage. She also cleaned a couple of the filters in the Caiman and small alligator tanks. When I got home, I checked on things and fed a few animals. Other than the fact that our big alligator, Lex, had filthy water, everything looked okay. I had drained his pool on Sunday and refilled it with clean water, so I was annoyed that it was dirty already. In an effort to have him drop a few pounds, I hadn't fed him in a week (believe me, he could stand to lose some weight), and so I couldn't figure out how it had gotten so dirty. I resigned myself to doing it all over again over the weekend. Then it was off to Kirsten's first basketball practice (I'm a coach). By the time that was over, I was feeling a trifle, er, exhausted. I thought I would check on the reptiles and turn off the lights before I took a shower and went to bed. I entered the garage and found.....disaster! The top to our small alligator's tank containing Lois was askew and she was nowhere to be found. Lex's water was now pitch black and I couldn't see him, either. I thought maybe Lois had escaped into Lex's pool and was now being swal-

lowed. I screamed for Jenni to come help me, and she quickly came out to the garage, with Kirsten in tow, sobbing (she was tired too). We found Lois, safe, and put her back in her tank. At that time, Lex came to the surface of his pool, did a few death rolls, and sank under the surface of his opaque pool again. It appeared he was tangled in the hose and cord for the now obliterated filter. Thinking he might be unable to breathe, I took off my clothes and jumped in his pool. Jenni unscrewed the plug to the pool to drain it, which means the garage door had to be opened to let the water out. The hay on the floor also had to be raked up to allow the water to drain. At this time, Sully (giant tortoise), who spends the winter in the garage, woke up and decided to check out the commotion. Please allow me set the scene. I am wading in the pool, cursing the entire crocodilian tribe and Lex in particular while trying to pull his 400 lbs. to the surface. Jenni is trying to push the water flooding the floor of the garage outside with a snow shovel, Kirsten is perched on top of Sully, crying, while he follows Jenni around hoping for a treat. Finally, I got Lex to the surface to find he had the outflow hose to the filter in his jaws. Alligators have the strongest bite force in the animal kingdom, so it wasn't something we could just pull out of his mouth, but after about ten minutes of prodding, begging, pulling, and swearing, he eventually let go. I picked up the broken pieces to the pump and filter and put them in a pile outside, Jenni and Kirsten walked back into the house, and Sully retired into his doghouse. Then I waited for the remaining water to drain out so I could close the garage door. Before I turned off the lights, I saw my clothes in a sodden pile on the floor and picked them up, cell phone and wallet in the pockets.

The next day, while at work, I got a voice mail from Jenni. The horses, llamas, and donkey had escaped while she was getting Kirsten ready for school. She was trying to herd them back in while Kirsten stood in the doorway half clothed, crying. The several kids watching this while waiting for the school bus were, apparently, highly entertained. Ah, the joys of having your very own animal shelter!

Torben



Witty Kitties sends a BIG thank you to Dennis and Susan Blome, the owners of the golf course where Charlie was living, for putting up with us while we rescued him. Thanks, too, for your donation!

DONATE TO WITTY KITTIES WITHOUT OPENING YOUR WALLET!

By Trish Wasek

Sounds too good to be true, right? But it's not!

Opinions4Good (Op4G) is an online market research company with a twist. Op4G pays its members for completing surveys, but members must agree to donate at least 25% of their earnings to their favorite non-profit (Witty Kitties, of course!).



Based on the demographic information you provide when you join, Op4G will send you an email whenever there is a survey available for you to take. The email explains what the survey is about, how long it will take to complete, and how much you will be paid. There is absolutely no requirement to do the survey – based on the email description, you decide if you want to take that particular survey or not.

All surveys are anonymous, the database is secure, joining is free, and you can quit at any time. When you join, you decide what percentage of your earnings you want to donate to Witty Kitties. You must donate at least 25%, but you can choose to donate 50%, 75%, or even 100% of your earnings. Better yet, no matter how much you decide to donate, we'll get the total amount that you choose — there are no administrative fees.

Now, in truth, the payouts are not large. John and I have joined, and most surveys pay \$1-2 and take 5-10 minutes to complete. But if dozens, or even hundreds, of Witty Kitties supporters join Op4G, we could raise lots of “free” money. Anyone can join, so spread the word on your Facebook page!

John and I are getting two or three Op4G emails per week. The surveys have been about everything from margarine to mattresses. It's easy to log on right from the email and spend a few extra minutes doing a survey when you're already at your computer.

But wait! There's more! Most surveys have a few initial screening questions, so you won't always qualify. But even if you get screened out of a survey, Witty Kitties *still* has a chance to earn extra money. *For each survey you attempt to complete but are screened out of, Op4G will enter Witty Kitties in a monthly drawing for \$500!*

To join, go to www.op4g.com/membership/join. Select Witty Kitties, Inc. from the drop-down box, create a user name and password, and complete the demographic questionnaire. Then sit back and wait for the survey emails to start rolling in. That's it!

This is an **amazing** opportunity to raise money for the kitties – a win-win for everyone! Check it out and spread the word! We'll keep you posted in each issue on how many Op4G members have chosen Witty Kitties, and how much we've earned!



For their Bronze Award Project this past summer, Girl Scouts Karlee Colby, Payton Brophy, Jessica Hamel, and Luz Guerrero created two fabulous posters for us to take to Witty Kitties events – one about the kitties and one about the reptiles. The girls are members of Troop 8106 from Taft Middle School in Cedar Rapids. Thanks girls!

I'M NOT SPECIAL-NEEDS ANYMORE; I'M JUST SPECIAL!

by Susie Q

Hi,
My name is Susie Q and let me tell you, my life was pretty sad for a while, but not anymore! Here's my story.

My mom was a stray in Cedar Rapids. When I was little, we moved around from place to place looking for food, water, and a warm place to sleep. Even though last winter wasn't that bad, it was still pretty cold for a little kitten!

Somehow we survived that first winter, but then my luck changed. I don't remember exactly how (maybe that's a good thing), but in the spring, I hurt my back leg so badly that my foot got twisted backwards. Oh man, did it hurt at first! My paw pad was on the top of my foot – how could that be? Eventually, thank goodness, I couldn't feel my foot any more, but I still had to walk on it, even though it was upside down! It got pretty raw and bloody – not a pretty sight. And then, to add insult to injury (so to speak), I got pregnant. Whoa! Actually, I don't remember if I got pregnant first, and then hurt my leg, or vice versa. But what does it matter? I was so weak and hungry, limping around on my bum leg. And now I had to find food for me and my kittens.

Then a miracle happened – I found Mike and Sue's back yard. They were really nice, and put out food and water for me. They could see that I was hurt and wanted to help me, but I was scared, and, oh, so tired. After a couple weeks, I was so weak that I just had to take a chance on Mike and Sue. There was a box with a cozy, warm blanket in their garage, and it felt so good that I just wanted to lie down and sleep forever. That night I lost the kittens I had been carrying. I guess my body just didn't have the strength to nourish both them and me, and something had to give.

The next morning, Mike and Sue brought me to this place called Witty Kitties. A nice doctor named Jenni gently touched my foot and figured out pretty quick that I couldn't feel a thing. Next thing I knew, I woke up with a toilet paper tube wrapped around my leg where the foot used to be! They said the tube was to keep me from hurting myself if I tried to stand up, but it was only temporary – after I got a little stronger, my whole leg was going to be amputated! And that was okay with me. Ever since I hurt my foot, that darn leg had been nothing but trouble.

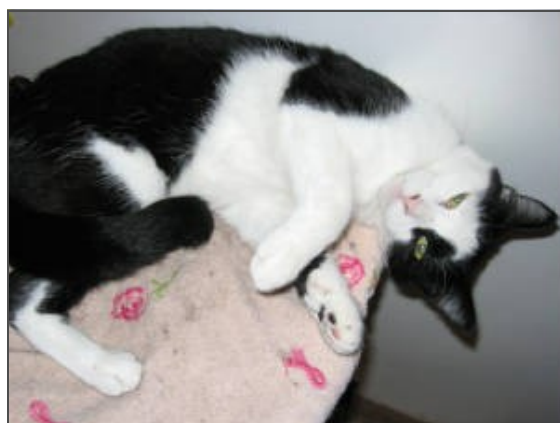
But when I tried to stand up, I couldn't! My back legs were partially paralyzed. Jenni did something called micro-current therapy on my legs twice a day. She even had to help me pee. And did I mention the physical therapy, walking up a canvas ramp? That was hard! I've never had so much TLC in my life! But it all paid off. I was finally strong enough for my amputation, and it took only a day or two to figure out the balance thing with only three legs. What a relief!

And guess what? Slowly but surely I'm beginning to believe that you humans aren't so bad after all. Every morning people come and give us really good food. And I've learned that getting petted actually feels pretty good! You can even pick me up if it means you'll hold me in your lap for a while. I've overheard people say that I've got the softest fur! They even



say I'm pretty – imagine that! And, since I'm all better now, I really don't belong here – ***I'm not special-needs any more, I'm just special!!***

I hope you can see how far I've come in these before and after photos – if not, you can see more photos and videos



of me at www.wittykitties.org. So that's my story as best I can remember it. Thanks for everything you did for me, Witty Kitties and Mike and Sue – I love you! Now keep your fingers crossed I find my new home soon!



SCENES FROM THE 2012 FUR FEST

It was an afternoon of fun -- and educational, too!

Thanks to all who attended and made our latest fundraiser a success!



Witty Kitties own Kirsten Platt, fresh from the face painting table!



VOLUNTEER CORNER: MUSINGS OF A CAT-A-HOLIC

By Lora Hesseltine



Hi, I'm Lora, and I'm a cat-a-holic. I've been a cat-a-holic my entire life and have no plans to "recover." My father says that I am part cat. He may be right, since I feel my best and most at peace when covered in warm furry kitties with purrs filling my ears. I even love the sandpaper tongues, needle-sharp claws, and the occasional dinner garnished with cat hair.

I grew up with two very special felines, a Siamese named Felix, and a Balinese named Oscar. We bonded in the most meaningful of ways, and now I wear their shadows as a tattoo on my ankle. They both passed on during my high school years and left a gaping hole in my life, but it wasn't until two years ago that I brought home another feline companion, a gigantic Tabby/Persian named Walter.

My house is also home to two miniature Dachshunds- also known as "prey" to Walter. Often, he stalks the poor dogs and pounces upon them with great gusto. They are not appreciative, but as Walter is by far the heavyweight in that ring, the dogs can do nothing but yelp and run away as fast as their short little legs can carry them. In addition, Walter feels that the fish, dwarf hamster, and box turtle in our home are some sort of highly suspicious terrorist threats that require careful surveillance. Cats are by far the dominant and superior race. If you doubt it, ask Walter.



Walter

I started volunteering at the Iowa City shelter a couple of years ago and learned about Dr. Doll and the work she does there, and eventually, someone mentioned Witty Kitties. I was curious since it is so specific in its feline population. One of the cats from my childhood died of feline leukemia, so it piqued my interest in that way, too. I'm also a reptile fan and a lover of all creatures great and small, so the menagerie at Witty Kitties is the perfect place for me.

Volunteering at Witty Kitties provides a great opportunity to nurture my cat-spirit. I look forward to the work involved because, for some reason, cats clawing their way into my lap and up over my back as I scoop copious amounts of litter and scrub away bodily fluids is my idea of "fun," I guess. Kathleen says I only enjoy it so much because I'm in my "honeymoon" phase of volunteering at Witty Kitties! She laughs at this as she and I are filling our nasal passages with sawdust...

MEMORIALS & HONORARIUMS

In memory of **Helen Axline** by Jo and Roger Rayborn

In memory of my mother, **Eleanor Louise**, by David Crombie

In honor of **Barb Satkamp's** September 15 birthday, by Gail Glark
[Editor's Note: Barb and her husband are a HUGE help, especially at fundraisers!]

In honor of **Dona Pearce**, by Norm & Bernice Friedman, La Mesa, CA. They said, "We donate in honor of our wonderful friend Dona, the hardest working gal we know"

In honor of my beautiful new granddaughter, **Ava Nicole Pearce**, born October 12, 2012 in Halethorpe, MD, by Dona Pearce, proud grandma, Muscatine, IA

In honor of the birth of **Charley Bobb Shope**, on October 19, first granddaughter of Patricia and Richard Shope, Poway, CA, by Dona Pearce, Muscatine, IA

In honor of Torben's little sister, **Kirsten Platt**, who turned 50 in August, by Borg, Nancy, Lu, & Thor Klein, Greenbrae, CA

In honor of my brother **Ulvar's** 50th birthday, by Borg Klein & family, Greenbrae, CA

In honor of **Miss Vivian Shield's** 6th birthday, from Kalea Seaton & family

In honor of **Zoe & Lizzie Ceynar**, who took good care of my kitty, by Marie Huff, Cedar Rapids

In honor of **Sadie**, our former princess who now lives at Witty Kitties, by Bett Weiss, Ft. Worth, TX

In memory of pretty, sweet **Vivian**, by Gary & Karen Schroeder, Brooklyn, IA

In memory of **Champ** -- he was a great kitty and he will be missed. Love, Izzy, Biskit, Lucy, & Xena Weinberg

In memory of **Kelly**, a beautiful little kitty who came from Virginia and loved to chase butterflies, by her sponsor Kim McCullough, Oceanside, CA

In memory of **Foscars**, beloved cat of Joan Benson, by Kathleen Janz & Nancy Reinke. They say, "Foscars had a long and loving life with Joan. Joan was the perfect cat companion"

In memory of **Elsie**, beloved cat of Jerry and Devon McDermott, by Paul and Connie Bischoff, Burnsville, MN

In memory of **Dink**, our first kitty, by Sharon & Mark Butterworth

In memory of **Fievel, the Best Creamsicle Kitty**, by Anya Doll, Mike Johnson, & Hannah Doll-Schmitz

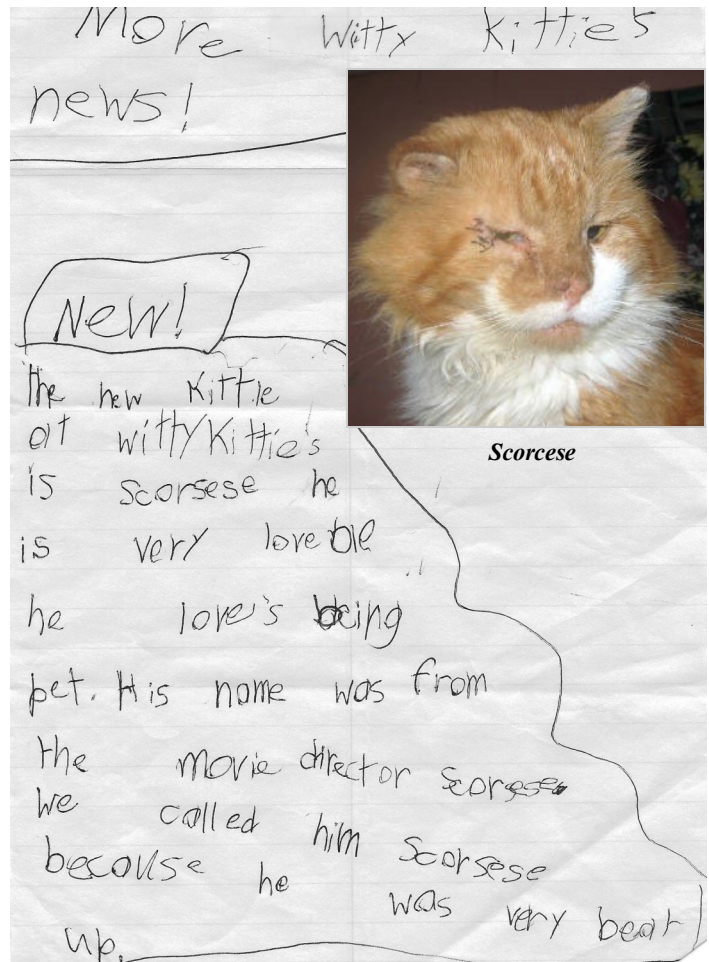
In memory of **Hudji**, beloved cat of Jan and Brian (Bo) Allen, by Veronica & Dennis Wieland, and Margaret & Douglas McGowan

In memory of Witty Kitties beloved **Morris**. You can guess how Morris got his name, can't you? Remember Morris, the 9-Lives TV commercial cat? Witty Kitties thinks our Morris was handsome enough to be a TV star, too! He was soft and cuddly, and loved people. Morris, everyone at Witty Kitties will miss your handsome face.
Rest in peace, dear boy.



KIRSTEN'S CORNER

by Kirsten Platt



Witty Kitties, Inc.
3133 Roberts Ferry Rd.
Solon, IA 52333

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Gifts, Memorials and Honorariums

Want to honor or memorialize a family member, friend or beloved pet? Want to give a monetary gift to Witty Kitties? Just fill out the information below and send your check in the envelope provided in this issue. **Your donation is tax deductible, and we'll publish your memorial or honorarium in a future issue. We'll also send a complimentary copy of the newsletter to the person you honor or the family of the person or pet you memorialize.** Just provide the necessary information below and then send this form back to us in the envelope enclosed in this issue (don't forget to add a stamp!). No stamp? No problem! **Now, you can also give online — check out our website (www.wittykitties.org).**

Gift: \$ _____

Memorial for: (name) _____
 Person Pet

Honorarium for: (name) _____
 Person Pet

Send notification to: (name) _____

 (please provide city, state and zip)

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Autumn