



# Witty Kitties, Inc. Newsletter

A Shelter for Special Needs Cats & Exotic Reptiles \* Vol. XII, Issue 2 \* Spring 2015



Cinnamon Toast

Snickers

Beau

Cassy

Hank

Jazzy

## WITTY KITTIES, INC. 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.

## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Jenni Doll, DVM, President  
Torben Platt, the Reptile Guy  
Kathleen Schoon, Volunteer Coordinator  
Trish Wasek, Webmaster  
John McLaughlin, Infrastructure  
Amy Holcomb, Facebook Coordinator  
Maggy Tomova, eBay Sales Manager



Hi. I'm Valentine, and I do not have FIV or FeLV! I used to have litter box problems, but I think I'm better now. I'm declawed and the litter sometimes hurts my paws. Would you please just give me a try? If it doesn't work out, I can come back to Witty Kitties!

## *No good deed goes unpunished (or almost)*

by Jenni Doll, DVM

As you will recall I had a run-in with an injured crow last November, leading to my putting myself, daughter, dog (and the crow) in danger, and many many bites to the fingers. For crow lovers out there, the guy (or gal) ended up doing great. He lived in the abandoned house's bathroom while getting stronger and recovering from what wasn't a permanent injury to the wing.

Pictures of him hopping, then later flying around, look straight out of Edgar Allen Poe, since we had recently decorated the bathroom for Kirsten's annual Halloween party. We had splashed and smeared ketchup all over the walls, doing a great job at creating a real bloody scene. The crow looks sinister up on the shower rod with the bloodbath beneath.

Eventually he was flying well enough that I knew he could get up into the lower tree branches. If not the higher, he could hop to the higher ones. Thanks to the ducks, there was always food for him should he stay. So I simply fed and watered him one last official time and left, knowing the lack of windows in the house (I had removed them in days following his arrival, preparing for the demolition) provided an easy escape.

I like to think he is doing well, and is utterly grateful to me.

I think I also mentioned the fact that not all the wildlife we've released onto our property show gratitude. Seems we have raccoons that have no problem climbing a six-foot fence to kill my backyard chickens. I'd call their rehabilitation a great success, assuming they are the same naughty raccoons we cared for so long ago.

But bunnies are weird.

Well one in particular, that is.

Last week, I was driving into work. As a routine, I get Kirsten onto the bus, and then I have exactly 18 minutes to get to work on time. Kirsten inevitably calls to talk while I'm driving and reassure herself I am OK. I promise her that I'm going to text her in between surgeries, and that I will

be safe, and for her not to worry about me (she still is a bit anxious about my well-being). Some days her calls stress me out, but I chat anyway, because she somehow thinks it is necessary.

This particular Monday I was already a bit stressed due to a very sick Witty Kitty (Apollo). I had him with me for a procedure to be done at IHA. So, I was worried about him, talking to Kirsten, and driving on Hwy 965, when I saw a small “teen-aged” rabbit lying on the road. It wasn’t moving so I planned to drive past it. Just as I went by it moved. I saw in my rear-view mirror it was running in circles. So, still talking to Kirsten, I pulled over, waited for cars to pass, and made a u-turn. By now I was distracted and Kirsten could tell.

“Why do you sound so weird Mommy?”

“Oh, I’m just trying to speak clearly and slowly so you can hear me” I said. I knew she was using speaker phone and the bus is always so noisy, I figured it was a legit thing to say.

“You don’t have to” she replied.

By now I had put the phone down and switched to Bluetooth.

Then I was standing on the side of the road, waiting for cars to pass, so I could get the rabbit who continued to run in circles, stop, and then start running again. Physically it looked fine. More and more cars kept coming. I was so annoyed people weren’t stopping. Some slowed down and drove over it, with the rabbit going between the tires, but no one was willing to stop.

Finally, I just ran out and grabbed him, clutching him to my belly. It was at this point I realized Kirsten had been calling me: “Mommy! Mommy! Why aren’t you answering!?”

I dashed to the car, closed the door and nonchalantly said, “Oh, I was losing you there. You must not have heard me.”

“But I heard cars” she said.

“Oh, you were fading in and out, and my window was open.”

Satisfied, she resumed her chat, while I tucked the bunny into the canvas bag I always have with me. It was kicking up a storm. I made another u-turn and headed back towards work.

Once I had answered Kirsten’s daily ritual verbal questionnaire, I signed off with her, parked, and got me, the bunny, and Apollo into IHA at exactly 8 am. I am sure I complained and spewed on about my already stressful day, but the work routine set in pretty quickly.

At about 4 pm, I took the bunny (who had been in a cage under towels all day) outside. I couldn’t find anything wrong with it, and it was very strong. Stacy, who was outside with Mary, suggested I let it go in the chain-link pen, just in case I had to catch it again. Well, that rabbit sped off, bounced off the fence, repeated, then made its way through the chain-link and into the woods in a straight line without looking back. Satisfied I had somehow made the universe a better place, I went back inside.

Oddly, the next day, Stacy saw a teen-aged rabbit that came right up to her while she was outside. And the next day she saw two of “his friends.” Three times today I saw a bunny. What’s funny is that I hadn’t seen *any* rabbits in the IHA yard all year, until now.

I am sure one of them is my bunny. Has to be. But I don’t know if he is hanging out to show his gratitude, or if he’s just coming over to ask us, “How the heck do I get home from here?”



## The End of the Raven



by Edgar Allen Poe's Cat

On a night quite unenchanted,  
when the rain was downward slanting,  
I awakened to the ranting  
of the man I catch mice for.

Tipsy and a bit unshaven,  
in a tone I found quite craven,  
Poe was talking to a Raven  
perched above the chamber door.



"Raven's very tasty," thought I,  
as I tiptoed o'er the floor,  
"There is nothing I like more."

Soft upon the rug I treaded,  
calm and careful as I headed  
towards his roost atop that dreaded  
bust of Pallas I deplore.

While the bard and birdie chattered,  
I made sure that nothing clattered,  
creaked, or snapped, or fell, or shattered,  
as I crossed the corridor —

for his house is crammed with trinkets,  
curios and weird décor,  
bric-a-brac and junk galore.



Still the Raven never fluttered,  
standing stock-still as he uttered,  
in a voice that shrieked and sputtered,  
his two cents' worth — "Nevermore."

While this dirge the birdbrain kept up,  
oh, so silently I crept up.  
Then I crouched and quickly leapt up,  
pouncing on the feathered bore.

Soon he was a heap of plumage,  
and a little blood and gore —  
only this and not much more.



"Oooo!" my pickled poet cried out,  
"Pussycat, it's time I dried out!  
Never sat I in my hideout  
talking to a bird before.

How I've wallowed in self-pity,  
while my gallant, valiant kitty  
put an end to that damned ditty."  
Then I heard him start to snore.

Back atop the door I clambered,  
eyed that statue I abhor,  
jumped - and smashed it on the floor.



from Poetry for Cats, by Henry Beard, © 1994

## HEAR YE! HEAR YE!

by Jenni Doll, DVM  
Iowa Director of The Paw Project  
www.pawproject.org



Putting a call out to any animal-loving lawyers (and others!) who want to see a ban on declawing happen in Iowa City (and eventually everywhere).

Eight cities in California, including LA and San Francisco, have banned the declawing of cats. Oregon and New York have hearings on two new bills in the works as well.

Considering how difficult it is to get ANYTHING done in government, I have the hopes of first starting a bigger push from the people towards their veterinarians.

If you have not seen The Paw Project, please watch it on Netflix. If you do not have Netflix, we can get a DVD out to you (email [staff@wittykitties.org](mailto:staff@wittykitties.org)).

The film discusses a frustrating fact: Though veterinarians are obliged to "do no harm," they are in fact mutilating cats

by declawing them. Also, veterinarians are required to tell you what a declaw is, and counsel you on the possible side effects of declawing. More often than not, cat owners considering declawing do NOT know that it is an amputation of the digit at the last joint, causing the toes to curl in, thus making the cat walk on the tip of the remaining bone.

The belief that declawing gets cats into homes is a fallacy. In fact, declawing leads to more relinquishment of cats than scratching does. Because of the pain, many cats are not comfortable using the litter box and begin urinating and defecating out of the box. Also, without claws the cat learns to defend itself with its teeth, leading to a higher risk of biting injuries. (Any vet tech can tell you a declawed cat is more likely to bite you than a feral cat.)

So, if you have an issue with a declawed cat and feel your vet did not inform you appropriately, let that be known. And, hey, I don't believe in ambulance chasing, but I do think that a sure fire way to get the vets' attention is via the pocket book or a lawsuit.

I'm just sayin'...



# WHERE ARE THEY NOW?

by Colleen Bowers

[Ed Note: Snuggles arrived at Witty Kitties in May, 2012, after her first mom had to move into an apartment and couldn't take all her cats with her. She was adopted by Colleen Bowers, of Oxford, six months later. Colleen and her kids fell in love with Snuggles the first time they saw her. This is Snuggles take on her new life.]

Hello there, my name is Snuggles and I was adopted from Witty Kitties in November, 2012. If you



Snuggles at Witty Kitties

don't remember me, I was the 16 year old girl who had to have my right eye removed while at Witty Kitties because it was ruptured and might get infected. I now live in Oxford with my family, who I love dearly, and my kitty roommate Laney (a senior cat who my mom rescued several years ago, before she found me). We live in mom's bedroom — I know where everything is so I don't get lost or bump into things. It's a perfect size room for me!

A lot has happened to me in the two and a half years I've been with my new family. I developed

kidney problems, but after being put on a prescription diet, all of my kidney issues went away. Also, my remaining eye developed glaucoma and I had to have it removed only a couple days before my mom went on vacation to Europe! Good thing my grandma was able to take care of me, because I required a lot of extra care to get over such a difficult surgery at my age. But now I am in perfect health for a girl who will be 19 years old in January!



Snoozing at home

Every night I snuggle up with my mom or with one of my human sisters. Most nights my mom doesn't get the best rest because I love sleeping right by her



Doing what she does best!

face or waking her up by rubbing my fang on her. Let's just say that I definitely live up to my name!

I just want to say a special thank you to Witty Kitties for taking me in so that I could find my forever family!



## 9th Annual Witty Kitties Fall Fur Fest

Saturday, September 12, 4-7 pm  
At Witty Kitties  
(see website for directions)  
Meet and greet all the critters!

- \* Silent Auction \* Music \* Tours \*
- \* Snacks & Beverages \* Free Will Donation \*



## Roll out those Lazy-Dazy, Crazy Cats of Room 3...

by Amy Holcomb



Have you fallen in love with a cat lately? If not, come to Witty Kitties, and I guarantee you will fall in love with a cat or two (or a lot). All of our cats came to us because they had nowhere else to go and all but a few have either feline leukemia virus (FeLV) or feline immunodeficiency virus (FIV). We also have a few with just three legs, some with just one eye, one with diabetes, an elderly cat with kidney disease, a couple we can't touch, and one who wobbles and stumbles when he walks. They might not be the prettiest bunch of cats, but we are madly in love with each and every one of them.



I suggest you start your visit at Witty Kitties in Room 3, which has cats with FeLV. As you walk into the room, Smokey, a handsome gray cat, will zoom past you into the main room. Don't feel bad, though, because even the best

cat wrangler can't keep Smokey in that room! He has perfected the "run out of the room" move like no other cat at Witty Kitties. When you pick him up to take him back to his room, you will forgive him for his bad behavior. He is a sweet loving cat who loves to be held and cuddle. He will purr for you and let you give him lots of kisses. Smokey came to us in 2010 after showing up on someone's farm. He is a four paw declaw cat, and it's hard to think about him being left to fend for himself with no claws for protection.

As you bring Smokey back into his room, you will meet Diesel, who will greet you by using your leg as



a scratching post. Diesel is a beautiful Siamese mix who is as lovable as can be. He became sick a

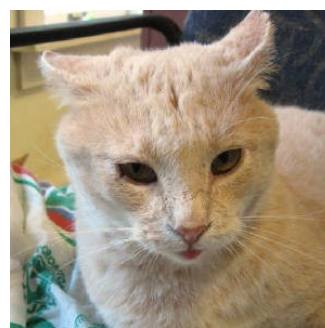
couple months after he arrived this past January, and we waited anxiously to see if antibiotics would help him, or if he would be a casualty of his awful virus. We begged him to eat at every meal as we gave him special food to entice his appetite. We watched as he lost weight and lost his playfulness. Then one Saturday I was thrilled to see him eat his breakfast, chase a string, and play with his friends. The last time we weighed him, he had gained a pound! We celebrated his recovery, and we make sure we give him plenty of love.



we had ever seen. He was in a haven, sadly meowing at anyone who walked by. He

and the haven were covered with his diarrhea. He was skinny, filthy, had mites and a bad eye. His fur was a dull dark brown instead of black. We didn't think he would be with us very long. He has both FeLV and FIV, a double whammy. We fed him and cleaned him up, and Dr. Doll treated him. His eye improved, he gained weight, his fur became black and sleek, and his diarrhea improved. Despite his poor condition when he arrived, Jack has always been a sweet loveable guy who begs for attention. He loves to be petted. We are certain that Witty Kitties was his last chance at survival. We treasure every day that we have with him.

The next cat you will probably notice is Jack Skellington. When Jack arrived at Witty Kitties in July 2014, he was the most pathetic cat



If you decide to sit down on the couch, you will immediately be greeted by CJ, who will probably already be on the couch. He is a handsome buff cat who loves to be petted and held.



He will stretch his leg out to you or just come right on over and sit on your lap. He will purr and purr as you pet him and tell him how wonderful he is. He came to us in July 2010 and has been very healthy.

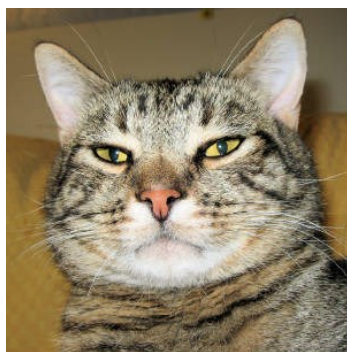


As you sit and pet CJ, you will notice a black cat with just one eye zooming around the room playing with toys or with another cat. This is Tuerto, who arrived a year ago. His eye was ruptured when he was a kitten,

and it wasn't healing so it was removed. He was initially quite scared of us and didn't want to be petted. Tuerto was very attached to his litter-mate brother, but sadly Noche succumbed to the virus shortly after arriving. We worried whether he'd recover from Noche's death, since they were so close, but CJ stepped in and they have become BFFs! Tuerto now enjoys being petted as long as you don't try to pick him up. We enjoy watching him play, and boy, does he like to play!

We also have two good looking brown and black striped tabby cats in Room 3, Harry and South Paw. You often have to look closely to see which is which.

You may notice Harry right away though, as he is another escape artist. I think he and Smokey have a competition going to see who can escape from the room the most! Harry is a friendly guy who arrived in March 2013. He enjoys being petted and when he isn't escaping from the room you will probably find him snoozing in the hammock in the outdoor enclosure with his friend Tuerto.



South Paw is easy to identify if you see him walk. His right front leg had to be removed due to it being broken and useless to him. He arrived in May of 2012. South Paw likes to keep to himself. You will

probably see him slinking along the perimeter of the room, sleeping in a corner, or enjoying the outdoors during nice weather. He'll tolerate a few pets if you approach him slowly.



As you sit on the couch and enjoy a lap full of cats (CJ, Smokey, Jack, and Diesel), you will probably think you have met them all. However, if you look closely, you might find Ale, a white and orange cat who will most likely be sleeping on the top shelf, on the cat tree, or on the haven. He will not reach out to you or ask for attention, and he probably won't move if you approach him.



Ale came to us in January of this year from the Kansas City area. He was in pretty bad shape when he arrived, and he seemed terrified and depressed. He was an outdoor cat who had been diagnosed with both viruses. He was in a lot of pain from dental disease. He spent his first several weeks in his haven to help him acclimate. He rarely moved. He didn't mind being petted but he also didn't seem to enjoy it. We were glad to see that he was at least eating, and when he was healthy enough, Dr. Doll began treating his dental disease. We finally decided to let him out of his haven, and he is gradually adjusting. We celebrate any bit of progress that Ale makes, such as when he stretches out to relax, when he lifts his chin for a little scratch, and when he moves from one spot to another. Smokey has taken him on as a special project, spending lots of quality time with Ale, trying to convince him to come out of his shell. Ale continues to mostly lay in one spot while we're there, but he is moving around more and more, particularly at night, when no one is there. It's always a surprise to find him in a new location in the mornings — and we cheer his bravery! We have even spotted him outside (in his enclosure) at night on several occasions!

As I have mentioned, there are several very friendly cats in this room who love attention so it is a great room for people to visit. However, the best thing about this room is the relationships among the cats. These cats truly love one another, and they are the best of friends. Smokey especially loves to cuddle with the others, particularly Diesel, Harry, and Ale. He will lay on them, knead them, lick them, and snuggle with them, and they enjoy it (usually). He especially likes to snuggle with Ale. We have seen him groom Ale, and Ale responds by stretching out so Smokey can get just the right spot. Ale needed a friend and Smokey has made it his priority to be Ale's friend. We will often see a pile of cats on the couch, many of them snuggling together. They also like to wrestle and play with each other. CJ is often involved in the wrestling matches. He has the best moves – he can land a punch and deflect a swat. These wrestling matches are always in good fun. We have never seen one turn ugly. It's just great play time for our very special Room 3 boys.



**Ale & Smokey**

Whether it's your first visit to Witty Kitties or you come all the time, the cats in Room 3 will bring a smile to your face, and you will forget all your worries as you spend time with them. We are so glad to have them here with us. We have given them all a comfortable home where they have medical care, a warm place to sleep, yummy meals, companionship, and lots of love. Please visit often. The cats will be glad to see you, and a visit to Witty Kitties will be the best part of your day!



**Couch Potatoes: CJ (top), Diesel, Smokey, Jack, and Ale**

## Memorials and Honorariums

*In memory of witty kitty **Sylvia and Packer**, by Deb Heath, Iowa City*

*In memory of my mother, **Eleanor Louise Brown**, and in honor of my cat **Mildred**, aka Millie the Magnificent (former witty kitty **Susie Q**), by Margalea Warner, Coralville*

*In memory of our **Josie**, by Jo & Roger Rayborn, Cedar Rapids*

*In memory of **Josie**, beloved 17-year-old rescue cat of Jo & Roger Rayborn, by Peg & Jim Kubczak, Mt Vernon*

*In memory of **Alberta Akers**, by friends and family of Witty Kitties' volunteers Darrell & Judy Akers, Marion*

*In memory of **Tanner**, by John & Kaylene Kroul, Mt Vernon*

*In honor of **Joe & Linda Skvor** on their 25th wedding anniversary, by Wayne & Darlene Schilling, Cedar Rapids*



*In memory of **Socks** (former witty kitty **Graham Cracker Krumm**) — he won over so many hearts and is so terribly missed, by Joe and Courtney McKibbin, Cedar Rapids*

*In memory of my mother, **Eleanor Louise**, and in honor of **Taffy**, by David Crombie, Arlington, VA*

*In honor of **Rachel & Matt Harney** for adopting Tater Tot (Tate), by Janelle Frederick, Chaska, MN*

*In honor of the **Vincent Decker family** for rescuing Angelina Ballerina (Angela), by Janelle Frederick, Chaska, MN*

*In loving memory of **Neko, April, and Apollo**, witty kitties who have gone over the rainbow bridge since the last newsletter, by the Witty Kitties' volunteers*

*Neko, 10/10-02/15    April, 06/12-05/15    Apollo, 04/07-05/15*



Every little bit helps. Visit [wittykitties.org](http://wittykitties.org) to donate via PayPal.



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

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

NO GOOD DEED GOES UNPUNISHED ..... 1  
THE END OF THE RAVEN.....3  
HEAR YE! HEAR YE! .....3



WHERE ARE THEY NOW? ..... 4  
ROLL OUT THOSE LAZY-DAZY, CRAZY CATS.....5  
MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS ..... 7

### *Donating to Witty Kitties*

Want to honor or memorialize a family member, friend, or beloved pet? You will help support the work we do at Witty Kitties! Just complete this form and mail your check to Witty Kitties, Inc., 3133 Roberts Ferry Rd, Solon, IA 52333.

**Your donation is tax deductible.** We'll publish your memorial or honorarium in the next issue and send a copy of the newsletter to the person or family you are honoring or memorializing.

No stamp? No problem! Give via PayPal—just click on the PayPal icon on our home page, wittykitties.org.

Gift: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Memorial for: \_\_\_\_\_ Is this a  Person or a  Pet?

Honorarium for: \_\_\_\_\_ Is this a  Person or a  Pet?

Send newsletter to: \_\_\_\_\_

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_



SPRING, 2015