

CAT TAILS

Cambusa's Story of Recovery

It had been a terrible night for Cambusa. He arrived home barely putting any pressure on his left hind leg with wounds to his tail and tummy. In pain and with a fever, he was seen at the emergency clinic.

X-rays failed to show internal injuries or fractures so his wounds were clipped, cleaned and bandaged. He was started on antibiotics and pain relief. He had either been hit by a car (with tissue dragged off of him) or attacked by a larger animal.

When I saw him the next morning to assess him and change his bandages, the damage to his tail and leg was extensive. Most of the skin had been pulled off of the last third of his tail, exposing not only muscle, but ligaments too. On his leg, there were two areas without skin, one in which the damage was so deep, that the bone was barely covered. Despite the narcotic pain relief he had received, he screamed when his tail was touched, even with the bandage on!



continued on page 2 Cambusa on the mend

Up and Running Once Again!

To the Entire Team at Cats Only
We wanted to say a huge *Thank You* to all of you who acted as a part in the care of getting our tabby Cambusa back up and running again. It has been a very long haul with an operation, many bandage changes, sleepless nights and of course the loudest kitty screams that your clinic may have heard in a long time.

Every time that we brought Cambusa in we were greeted with a smile and genuine concern for how we were all doing. I felt that no matter what the healing looked like on his paw — all of you gave us hope that our little friend was going to get better, and get better he did!

I want to remind you all that your team is absolutely exceptional and is different then any veterinary clinic I have ever come across. You **all** are very compassionate, loving, caring and optimistic. I have never encountered a clinic that not only looks after the patients but the families as well...I cannot tell you enough how much that meant to Frank and I.

Last night, as Cambusa was on my lap, he snuggled in close purring loudly. He looked as though he had not a care in the world and it was one of the sweetest sights I have ever seen. I am so very grateful

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RECOVERY...

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It became apparent that the weight of his damaged, and it turns out, dislocated, tail was the cause of a lot of his pain. It also became clear that there was a point beyond which the tail was dead, so it was prudent to amputate two-thirds of it. For the first few daily changes, his distress and pain necessitated sedation; he was SO upset! His people were with him every step of the way. With the problem tail removed, he was less agitated but still screamed pathetically.

Over the next five weeks, he had to have his bandages changed, gently cleansing the healing tissue under them, a total of 16 visits! He uses his very handsome, if shorter, tail expressively and has regained full use of his leg. Bravo Cambusa, Teresa and Frank! 🌿

UP AND RUNNING...

continued from page 1

that my handsome orange buddy is happy once again.

I will pass on the good word about your cat care hospital to everyone. Thank you for loving Cambusa through this process even when he tested your eardrums. Good luck to each and every one of you and again... THANK YOU!

Sincerely,
Theresa, Frank, and of course...



Cat Allergies, But Not The Kind You Think

It's an all-too-common tale: human meets cat, a bond is formed, but then allergies threaten to separate the happy family.

But in the case of Babs the cat, this familiar story has an unusual twist.

Babs, a resident of Tabby's Place: a Cat Sanctuary — has a severe allergy, to humans. While too many people solve the dilemma of allergies by giving away their pet, giving up her people was not an option for Babs. That's because Babs, like all of the cats at Tabby's Place, was rescued from a hopeless situation. Babs was on the euthanasia list at a public shelter.

While too many people solve the dilemma of allergies by giving away their pet, giving up her people was not an option for Babs.

Constant exposure to humans and their irritating dander was causing Babs to experience fur loss and skin irritation. Fortunately for Babs, Tabby's Place is devoted to the physical and emotional well-being of each cat it rescues, so they made a diligent exploration of all options for this rather unusual cat. Patient work revealed that a regimen of allergy shots makes Babs' daily contact with humans more tolerable. Now, Babs no longer experiences dermatological distress from the people who keep her sunny suite clean, well-stocked with toys, blankets and tasty food.

Tabby's Place is a cage-free sanctuary dedicated to saving cats from desperate circumstances and placing them in loving homes. At the facility, cats are provided with first-class care, freedom and respect in a one-of-a-kind environment.

While the majority of the 100 Tabby's Place cats are healthy, the sanctuary is committed to providing a haven for those cats, such as Babs, with medical and behavioral problems (such as cranky personalities, paraplegia and diabetes) that might elsewhere render them likely candidates for euthanasia. Whether or not they are adopted, Babs and the other Tabby's Place cats have a home for life at this unique sanctuary.

Today, Babs' spunky spirit tells all who meet her that she is grateful she didn't have to give up her humans.

Tabby's Place is located at 1100 US Highway 202, Ringoes, NJ 08551. For more information, please visit: www.tabbysplace.org/index.html or contact at: info@tabbysplace.org or 908-237-5300. Angela Townsend 🌿



Cats Only Online!

Please visit our brand new website! www.catsonlyvet.ca We welcome any and all of your suggestions. What do YOU want to see? It's a work in progress so you can expect updates and changes frequently. Our newsletters are archived, so if you want, feel free to send them to your friends! In order to save trees, we are switching our newsletter to an all-electronic format. For this, we need your email address. Please send it to info@catsonlyvet.ca, give it to us the next time you are in the clinic, call us (604-734-2287), or fax us (604-734-8011). Lots of choices. 🌿

AGE COMPARISONS

Your Cat's Age	Relative Human Age
6	40
7	44
8	48
9	52
10	56
11	60
12	64
13	68
14	72
15	76
16	80
17	84
18	88
19	92
20	96

SENIOR

GERIATRIC

Adapted from Metzger FL, Senior and Geriatric Care Programs for Veterinarians in Vet Clin Small Anim 35 (2005) 743 – 753.

Burrard at 19

Burrard enters his 20th year this spring. We are not sure exactly when.

He was found in downtown Vancouver by our son Luc on August 9, 1989. This little domestic shorthair ball of fur was in bad shape. He was bleeding from the nose, had trouble breathing and the pads of his paws were raw and pus-infected. Dr. Parker of West Vancouver gave him a free assessment and shots, and estimated his age at 4 – 6 months.

When no-one approached the SPCA, Hotel Vancouver or Hyatt about a missing cat, we realized we had acquired a shy and wary house trained grey tabby with a beautiful coat displaying white markings. Luc named him Burrard — where they had first met.



Burrard at 19

As Burrard tells the story, he was surrounded by a tight group of onlookers as he cowered, frightened, near the busy intersection with West Georgia. Someone tried gingerly to pick him up but he scratched her and she dropped him back on the sidewalk. Luc pushed through the crowd and gathered him up with a powerful sweep of his right arm, and Burrard knew he'd found a lifelong friend.

As Burrard grew, Luc went off to UBC, Marc became the main provider before he too went to UBC, and Denise and I eventually moved to Point Grey and got to know Dr. Margie and her wonderful team when Burrard was six. In 2003 we retired to Halfmoon Bay on the Sunshine Coast. *Cats Only* has kindly kept us on the newsletter mailing list and we still buy supplies from the clinic when we are in Vancouver.

Anecdotes about Burrard? There are a good few — but I'll tell you just one. Still being very fit, he enjoys roaming around our waterfront property and sitting on the deck watching the boat traffic in Welcome Pass. last winter, I heard the deep guttural growl and hiss he issues when affronted, and looked out to see him crouching at the top of the steps challenging a large, bemused raccoon trying to make its way onto the deck. Burrard will fearlessly protect his domain against any four-legged intruder, no matter how large, imposing or dangerous. I broke up the fight before anyone got hurt. That night we sat in front of the roaring fire, rocking and singing the refrain from the Village People's song, 'Macho Man.'

So with a good appetite, keen hearing and eyesight, and still easily able to jump up onto the high sleigh bed for a good night's sleep curled up under the protective arm which he occasionally licks to let you know he really does care, Burrard enters his 20th year. Good health, my friend. *Submitted by Ron Dinsdale* 🐾

How to Tell the Weather If the dog is at the door and he is wet, *it's probably raining*. But if the dog is soaking wet, *it's probably raining really hard*. If the dog's fur look's like it's been rubbed the wrong way, *it's probably windy*. If the dog has snow on his back, *it's probably snowing*. To tell the weather like this you must leave the dog outside all the time—*especially in bad weather*. *The Cat* 🐾

Arkansas Feline Down to Seven Lives After Surviving Tornado and Fire

AP Clinton, Ark. – Charlie Brown is down to seven lives. Donna and Danny Pistole's black-and-white cat survived a February tornado that destroyed the family's mobile home, coming out of nearby woods skittish but no worse for wear. However, the cat took up refuge in a large pile of debris from the storm that the Pistoles set alight last Sunday while cleaning up their property.

Thursday, Donna followed Charlie Brown's weak meows and found him stuck in briars.

His paws and nose were scorched, his eyes matted shut and his coat singed a dingy yellow — but he was alive.

That night, Charlie Brown underwent an exam by veterinarian Doug Mays, who says he smells like an old, scorched wool blanket, but expects him to be okay. 🐾

Cat Survives Wayward Travels

AP Palm Beach Gardens, FA – Some kitty math: How many lives did little tabby Gracie Mae use up when she crawled into her owner's suitcase, went through an airport X-ray machine, got loaded onto a plane, thrown onto a baggage belt and mistakenly picked up by a stranger far from home.

Gracie Mae, a 10-month-old tabby, stowed away in her owner's suitcase for a plane trip from Florida to Texas. Once there, a stranger mistakenly picked up the suitcase and brought it home to find the cat inside.

"She's got to be at four or five now," Seth Levy said after his 10-month-old pet was returned Sunday night by a kind stranger who went home to Fort Worth, Texas, with the wrong bag and Gracie inside to boot.

The last time Levy's wife, Kelly, saw Gracie was before she took her husband to the airport. The 24-year-old went back to her house in Palm Beach Gardens late Friday to find the bottom step, where Gracie would usually be waiting, empty.

She tore the house apart looking for the cat, who had been spayed just days before. She and her dad took out bathroom tiles and part of a cabinet to check a crawl space and papered the neighborhood with 'lost cat' signs.

Then she got a phone call.

"Hi, you're not going to believe this, but I am calling from Fort Worth, Texas, and I accidentally picked up your husband's luggage. And when I opened the luggage, a cat jumped out," Kelly Levy quoted the caller saying.

Rob Carter said he made it home with the suitcase before realizing it wasn't his, and there was a big surprise inside.

Interesting and informative websites to purrruse at your leisure

www.catsonlyvet.ca
Our website is now online. Please visit us. We welcome your comments and suggestions

www.felinevideos.vet.cornell.edu
Order cat health videos from Cornell Feline Health Centre. Topics include: giving your cat medication, brushing her teeth, caring for the diabetic cat and more.

www.healthycatsforlife.com/documents/Checklist.pdf
Checklist for a healthy kitty.

www.pereducation.com/article.cfm?cis=1387&article=611
Physical changes in the aging cat.

www.youtube.com/watch?v=SEEGSS5paxI
Watch this one first... and then

www.youtube.com/watch?v=1JynBEX_kg8
... the translation.

www.neatorama.com/2007/12/31/2007-the-year-in-cats/
Funny cat photographs.

www.thehumanesociety.org/wp-content/paw-talk-summer-07.pdf
Link to Hide, Perch & Go video.

Be careful about reading health books...you may die of a misprint.
Mark Twain

"I went to unpack and saw some of the clothes and saw it wasn't my suitcase," he said. "I was going to close it, and a kitten jumped out and ran under the bed. I screamed like a little girl."

Carter said that he eventually was able to get the cat to come out from under the bed.

"In the morning, I got close enough to see its collar and the phone number on it," he said. "So I called the number and got a hold of the crying wife of the traveler."

The tabby made the 1,300-mile trip home on an \$80 plane ticket. Carter said he considered keeping the cat before he knew she had a home.

"We were going to name it Suitcase," he said. *Rhonda Vanover* 🐾

As soon as they are
out of your sight,
you are out of their mind.

Walter de la Mare



While not elderly or decrepit at 8 years of age, a kitty is about 48 human years old. (see *Age Comparisons page 3*) And we know what that means for us! Already at 40, we are having additional screening tests run, for prostate, breast cancer, and then triglycerides, etc., as we head towards our 50s. Kitties are also predisposed to developing certain problems as they (ahem) 'mature' We screen them for their age-associated conditions, namely a decline in kidney function (renal insufficiency), hyperthyroidism, hypertension, diabetes. Because cats are so good at hiding illness in its early stages it is especially important to have them checked twice a year as they get older. Take advantage of a \$50 discount off Mature Cat Program in May and June. Here's to Good Health and Long Life!

Pssst. We'll also give you a free Hide Perch & Go box!

Bravo, Dr. Michael

Dr. Michael has purchased the rights to the SPCA's Hide, Perch & Go box. We are very excited about this because this is a tool, which will enrich the life of cats, your cat, as well as reducing the stress of bringing them in to the clinic. The Hide, Perch & Go (HPG) box, developed by the BC SPCA's Nadine Gourkow, is a durable, combination top loading cardboard carrier and kitty furniture. It assembles into two parts: a hiding box with two openings and a perch that sits atop the box. These latch securely together and, when unlatched, the perch slips into the hiding portion, making a secure carrier.

The benefits are numerous. First: your kitty has two options for lying around at home that only he/she can use. He doesn't have to share them with you! Some cats prefer to hide (or hide their toys) while others prefer to observe from the perch. In



Hide, Perch & Go

both cases, when the box is assembled, it carries on it the reassuring smells of home and security. This makes the trip and visit to the vet clinic a little less frightening. And, the box can be disassembled into its perch and hiding components for use within the kennel, if kitty is being hospitalized or is boarding! How great is that?

We have two displayed and in use at the clinic. Hawk prefers the hide... others prefer the perch. Dr. Margie's cats Nimitz and Mr. Will both like to perch, so she has several HPGs at home. (To see it in action, check out the SPCA website: www.sPCA.bc.ca/hideperchgo/HidePerchGo.asp)

We know that the stress of coming to the clinic starts at home. We all have kitties, too. Having a HPG box can reduce the distress by making the carrier less frightening. We can't do anything about the car ride, other than to suggest that an empty stomach might benefit some cats who experience car sickness (whether or not they vomit). If you think of it, bring your kitty in to the clinic for non vet visits, just for a body weight check or just to say hello! Cats learn very quickly. If every car ride and vet visit is equated to handling, then they learn fear; if you bring kitty in 'just because' or go for a short car ride and the end result is positive attention and a treat, kitty will soon learn that the experience isn't as horrible as they once thought. And it won't cause you to feel so much guilt, either!

Why all of this attention to getting kitty to the clinic? Cats hide their illness extremely well. In fact, there is a website devoted to the 'Ten Subtle Signs of Sickness' that cats hide (healthycatsforlife.com). While we are not giving as many vaccines to cats as we did in the past, we still strongly recommend seeing kitties once, or even twice, a year. As wonderfully observant as you are, a heart murmur or a change in blood pressure, bad teeth or even weight loss/gain aren't evident to most of us at home. Let us help you keep kitty healthy. Let's keep them healthy for life! 🌱

What's She Up To Now?

Margie's Mews

Let's see... this year Dr. Margie has been to: Portland Maine (lovely), Orlando, Palm Springs (not as nice as I had thought it would be), Vegas, Columbus, OH, San Antonio, Victoria and Nanaimo. April: Hawaii (holidays 2 weeks with Jim), Kamloops, Atlanta, Chicago, Halifax; then in May: Savannah and Orlando. June takes her to San Antonio again and Myrtle Beach, sc. In August she'll visit Boston, Houston, and Dublin, Ireland. September proves to be crazy, (and if she doesn't become jet-lagged from this itinerary, she never will!): Ghent, Belgium, Ede, Holland, Helsinki, Finland, Edinburgh and London, UK. A quick jaunt to Lima (Peru) starts October off, followed by venues closer to home including Seattle, Phoenix, Toronto and San Diego. November features Virginia Beach and Richmond VA, San Francisco, Toronto, Orillia, Ottawa and Calgary (November), Williamsburg, VA (December). So really, the question should be, where hasn't she been?

Between teaching at meetings, she continues editing the *Journal of Feline Medicine and Surgery*, consulting and teaching on-line with the Veterinary Information Network (VIN), and with VIN will be taking on a more active role in developing forms of continuing education for veterinarians and veterinary staff. The prospect of working with and developing new forms of teaching materials is very exciting!

Her work with the American Association of Feline Medicine (www.catvets.org) and affiliate organizations is expanding. The AAFP is the central group in such programs as Healthy Cats for Life (www.healthycatsforlife.com), as well as KnowHeartworms (www.knowheartworms.com) and the exciting CATalyst campaign (www.catalystsummit.org). We continue to look for ways to partner with international groups, especially our sister organization, the European Society of Feline Medicine, which is part of a larger group, the Feline Advisory Bureau. Check them out at www.fabcats.org! They are doing some amazing things and are celebrating their 50th year!



Better in the Dark Now Than Before

Keeping an Eye on You

Cashew, my 14-year-old yellow Lab, is blind and deaf. Her best friend is Libby, 7, her seeing-eye cat. Libby steers Cashew away from obstacles and leads her to her food. Every night she sleeps next to her. The only time they're apart is when we take Cashew out for a walk. Without this cat, we know Cashew would be lost and very, very lonely indeed. It's amazing but true: this is one animal who knows what needs to be done and does it day in and day out for her friend. *Terry Burns, Middleburg, PA*



Cashew and Libby