

# The Scratching Post



SABCCI Newsletter - Autumn 2016

[www.sabcci.com](http://www.sabcci.com)

Show  
Competition Inside  
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# The Scratching Post

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### SABCCI Committee

Ronnie Brooks, Dionne Dixon, Sonia Early, Hugh Gibney,  
Gloria Hehir, Aedamair Kiely, Karen Sluiters, Jim Stephens, Lorna Taylor  
Membership Secretary - Betty Dobbs



### You Know You Are A Cat Person When.....

- ◇ You have more cat toys than any other thing.
- ◇ People corner you in the pet food aisle in the grocery store and ask you what kind of food you recommend.
- ◇ Your vet wants to be reincarnated as one of your cats.
- ◇ You leave the TV on the Animal Planet all day while you are at work so the cats can watch their programs.
- ◇ You don't even move when your cat is sleeping on you - even if you have to go to the bathroom.
- ◇ You spend more money on your cat's food and health care than you do on your own.

'Deer & Cat Crossing' sign - Bass Harbor, Maine

## Editorial

Welcome to our Autumn 2016 issue of The Scratching Post.

So if you're ready, sit back with a Macchiato and enjoy the newsletter!

Karen and Gloria ^..^

Do you have any photos or articles for the newsletter? Please send them to karen@sabcci.com or gloria@sabcci.com



### The Dublin Championship Cat Show - 16th of October - RDS

SABCCI & The GCCFI are holding a '2 in 1' show joining The Pet Expo in RDS Simonscourt. under the name of The Dublin Championship Cat Show.



The Pet Expo will be on Saturday and Sunday, the 15th & 16th of October. The cat show will be on Sunday, 16th October, however the 'show hall' will be set up on Friday. On Saturday members of SABCCI/GCCFI will be in the show hall with the show information table and club stalls to promote the show and the cat world in general. The show hall will also have stall holders opened for business on Saturday as well as Sunday.

As we are part of the Pet Expo the show is included in the Pet Expo ticket (there will be no cat show gate). Anyone wishing to pre book tickets for the Pet Expo/Cat Show can do so via a link on the SABCCI & GCCFI websites (sabcci.com and gccfi.com). There is also a link on the two Facebook pages. The proceeds of any tickets booked via this link will go to the cat show. Any booked elsewhere or on the day at the Expo, the proceeds will go to Pet Expo. So please book through our sites and tell your friends. There is no booking fee so no extra cost to the price of the ticket.

SABCCI & The GCCFI would like to thank Husse for their sponsorship and support to the show.



The Committee of The Royal Thai Cat Club in Australia and SABCCI voted to make both clubs honorary members of each other. This gives us a good opportunity to exchange ideas on the clubs and our shows. Readers may remember the two clubs exchanged rosettes/banners with each other for their 2015 shows. We would like to thank The Royal Thai for sending us cat and human goodies which we will make up an 'Australian Cat & Human Hamper' for the Pot Draw in October's show.



### Show Word Search Competition



Fred's Catnip Farm is running a competition on page 5. Just print it off and complete the Word Search puzzle. Bring it Fred's Catnip Farm's stall in the Cat Show Hall. The first 20 entries will receive a small bag of Fred's catnuts (toys with catnip) and the overall winner a cuddly cat toy plus Fred's goodies.

### Eurogroup - Protect Our Pets

Cats Protection UK is backing a European campaign to improve feline welfare across the EU by unifying pet microchip databases, making it easier to determine where an animal has come from.

Eurogroup for Animals launched the 'Protect Our Pets' initiative to tackle illegal pet trade and online sales. The campaign calls for steps to make cross-boarder movement of animals more transparent and safer by making it easier to trace owner's details.

Your Cat, December 2015

### Guidelines for Cats

**Games - King of the Hill** - This game must be played with at least one other cat. The more, the merrier! One or both of the sleeping humans is Hill 303 which must be defended at all costs from the other cat(s). Anything goes. This game allows for the development of unusual tactics as one must take the unstable playing theater into account.



**Warning:** Playing this game to excess will result in expulsion from the bed and possibly from the bedroom. Should the humans grow restless, immediately begin purring and cuddle up to them. This should buy you some time until they fall asleep again. If one happens to be on a human when this occurs, this cat wins the round of King of the Hill.

#### Paper Bags

Within paper bags dwell the bag mice. They are small and camouflaged to be the same color as the bag, so they are hard to see. But you can easily hear the crinkling noises they make as they scurry around the bag. Anything, up to and including shredding the bag, can be done to kill them. Note: any other cat you may find in a bag hunting for bag mice is fair game for a sneak attack, which will usually result in a great Tag Match.





## The Pedigree - The Toyger

In the 1980's a US breeder, Judy Sugden, noticed 2 spots of tabby marking on one of her cats. She felt these markings proved that the circular tiger face pattern could be possible in a domestic cat. A striped domestic short-hair and a Bengal were mated. Later, a street cat from Kashmir India, who had spots between its ears, was imported. Other breeders contributed to the breeding program. The name Toyger is a combination of 'toy' and 'tiger'.

Toygers are medium sized cats, muscular with big bones, high shoulders and a long body. Their pattern of stripes is broken, or branched, is unique. The face has the circular pattern. Their dark markings are on a vivid orange background. The belly is white. There is a gold glitter scattered over the body.

On average, Toygers live 13 years or more and weigh 7 to 15 pounds. Grooming is minimal.

Toygers are friendly, alert, playful, easy going and gets along with other pets and children. Intelligent cats, they are easy to train. They will fetch and are interested in other interactive games.

The GCCF have accepted the Toyger recently and can now be registered with them.

## Feeding System Lets Indoor Cats Hunt For Their Food



Inside every lazy indoor cat beats the heart of a hunter. That's why Liz Bales, a Philadelphia-based veterinarian, created the NoBowl Feeding System, the Daily Mail reports. Instead of feeding your kitty with a bowl, the NoBowl comes with five rodent-shaped pods that you fill with dry food and hide around your house. That way, your cat can hone its natural mousing instincts - and get a workout in the process.

Bales invented the NoBowl because 'in my practice, so many of the most common problems that I see in cats are born of wellness and lifestyle issues. Cats become obese, lazy, anxious and even destructive or sick in the absence of the ability to hunt and interact with their food.'

To find a solution, Bales consulted with feline veterinarians, nutritionists, and behaviourists. She then collaborated with a team of inventors and designers, who helped Bales create the NoBowl's rodent capsules, egg-shaped food trays, covered in removable mice 'skins.'

The rodent capsules are equal part toy and meal dispenser, Bales says. Once a kitty discovers a food-filled mouse, they can eat the meal inside-or have a little fun with the fuzzy animal. 'The NoBowl Feeding System is designed with a soft skin to simulate its prey. Cats love to pick it up and use their claws to enhance the experience,' the NoBowl System's website states. 'Its shape is designed to roll and move in the way a mouse or bird would. Cats are exhilarated without being scared by an unpredictable movement.'

After more than 20 years of research and testing, the NoBowl is currently in production and available for pre-order, thanks to successful fundraisers on Kickstarter and Indiegogo. You can order the NoBowl online, starting at \$38, or visit the system's website for more information.

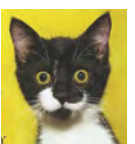
DailMail April, 2016 mentalfloos.com

**No amount of time can erase the memory of a good cat, and no amount of masking tape can ever totally remove his fur from your couch.** Leo Dwoeken



## Signs Your Cat Is Trying To Kill You

- \* You wake up to find a bird's head in your bed.
- \* You find a ball of yarn playfully tied into a hangman's noose.
- \* Takes attentive notes every time 'Itchy and Scratchy' are on.
- \* Instead of dead birds, leaves cartons of John Player Blue on your doorstep.
- \* Seems mighty chummy with the dog all of a sudden.
- \* He actually **does** have your tongue.



cats.alpha.pl



## Show Competition

Pick up your winning prize at The Dublin Championship Cat Show at The Pet Expo in the RDS, Simmoncourt on the 16th of October.

Fred's Catnip Farm will be giving the winner a cuddly realistic cat toy plus Fred's Catnip Farm goodies. The first 20 entries presented to the stall will receive a small bag of Fred's Catnuts (knitted toys with catnip inside).

Just print off and complete the Word Search below. Bring it to Fred's Catnip Farm's stall in the Cat Show hall and collect your goodies.



# Word Search

Missing Word

- Sabcci
- Catnip
- Petexpo
- October
- Toys
- Gccfi
- Freds
- Flowers
- Leaves
- Irish
- Happy
- Purring
- Rolling
- Playing
- Dublin
- Championship
- Catshow
- Kitten
- Scratch
- Farm

C V P L A Y I N G E M X Z J  
Q H A P P Y P F F R E D S O  
D S A R O L L I N G R S C K  
U A K M E G J A S E T A A L  
B B I R P E T E X P O B T O  
L C T L B I R I S H Q C N C  
I C T E Z S O F S A R C I T  
N I E U E H G N B I N I P O  
A S N V I N R T S M R A F B  
D M A F I E W A N H L R E E  
Q E L R S H O W S C I Y U R  
L U R C G C C F I W E P R T  
Q U S C R A T C H R T O Y S  
P U R R I N F L O W E R S D

BONUS  
Double Word

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Contact Details: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Rainbow Bridge



Just this side of heaven is a place called Rainbow Bridge. When an animal dies that has been especially close to someone here, that pet goes to Rainbow Bridge. There are meadows and hills for all of our special friends so they can run and play together. There is plenty of food, water and sunshine, and our friends are warm and comfortable. All the animals who had been ill and old are restored to health and vigour; those who were hurt or maimed are made whole and strong again, just as we remember them.

When our time comes they will be waiting for us and then we will cross the Rainbow Bridge together.

### Simba - 1999 to 2016

We adopted Simba when he was 11 and entered him in his first Cat Show at age 13. He did very well and we continued to enter him until the GCCFI Show in May 2015 when he had just turned 16. At that show he was awarded Best Shorthair Non-Pedigree which was amazing for a 16 year old!

Apart from showing and his contented home life with us, his Mama and Dada, Simba had another life. He was known and very much loved all over the world on Facebook in spite of not even having a page of his own - he just took over mine, and he was and will remain part of the gang on a page called Willow's Treehouse. The outpouring of love and tributes for him has been extraordinary.

Grace & Liam Hughes



A note from Grace - There was a beautiful hour-long Tribute to him on a page called Pippin's Party Place last Monday and this included an very moving video tribute to him which can be seen on You Tube at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m27DVTppWw0>

No Heaven will not ever Heaven be - Unless my cats are there to welcome me



## The World's Oldest Cat Officially Revealed



The world's oldest cat has been officially revealed as a 30 year old from Texas - making him 137 in feline years. Siamese cat Scooter is celebrating his newfound fame as the Guinness World Records have given him the coveted title.

Born March 26, 1986, Scooter lives with his owner Gail Floyd, who he has lived with all his life. But although the playful puss has racked up three decades of life, Gail says he's still as playful as a kitten. He wakes Gail up every morning at 6am, 'talking' and jumping around, and is always waiting by the door when she arrives home from work, according to Guinness World Records. Gail has credited Scooter's social nature in helping to keep him

young, adding: 'He likes to see new places and he likes people.'

Scooter has travelled to 45 of the 50 US states with Gail and often pays visits to the nursing home where Gail's mom lives. But although he's living life to the full, Gail believes he may have taken some of his nine feline lives off throughout his 30 years, particularly in October 2014, when he broke his leg. He has been undergoing medical testing and treatment ever since.

Despite his struggles though, his veterinarians say, 'Scooter is quite an amazing cat, with a strong will to live.' He enjoys getting blow dried after a bath and his favourite snack is chicken - which he's treated to every other day.

The record-breaking feline claims the title from previous record holder 26-year-old Corduroy, but the pair fall short of the oldest cat ever recorded - Crème Puff of Austin, Texas, who lived 38 years and three days. *Mirror.co.uk*, May 2016

**Editors Note:** Unfortunately an announcement of Scooter's death came a few days after the release of his Guinness World Record title and this article.

## News Flash - Clapham Common Station Taken Over By Cats

A London Underground station has been taken over by cats - with all advertisements replaced with pictures of the furry felines. Almost 700 people helped the Citizens Advertising Takeover Service (Cats) raise £23,000 to buy the advertising space at Clapham Common station. The cats will appear on advertising boards for two weeks. The aim is to provide a "relaxing, fun and light-hearted" space free from commercial adverts, Cats said.

September 2016 . [bbc.com/news](http://bbc.com/news)

## Spanish Town Grants Cats & Dogs Rights As 'Non-Human Neighbours'



Trigueros del Valle, a town of 300 inhabitants in the province of Valladolid, has approved a declaration which seeks to 'dignify the lives of dogs and cats, animals which have shared with man thousands and thousands of years and have been a great help to him.'

The initiative is an attempt to protect those animals from cruelty and abuse, as well as acknowledging their importance in the town, which is situated in an agricultural area. Besides the symbolism of the decree, it also means the town hall will take responsibility for any abandoned cats and dogs and it will rebuke owners who mistreat their animals.

'It seems to me a very important, historic declaration, like, for example, the day that children's rights were enshrined for the first time,' Mercedes Cano, an animal rights

campaigner who was involved in the move, told Cope radio. 'Trigueros del Valle is a place where people love animals, they have lots of dogs and cats,' she said. 'People coexist with them and often work with them.' But she added that despite the overall respect that animals enjoy in the town, they still suffer occasional abuse. 'We're not saying you have to love cats and dogs, but you have to respect them,' said Ms Cano. 'If you respect them, then you'll respect the other [human] neighbours as well.'

Spanish animal rights campaigners complain that this time of year is a particularly cruel one, due to the many local fiestas that take place. Just 30 miles away is Tordesillas, where every summer locals chase a bull through the town and gradually spear it to death. In 2002, the northern town of Manganeses de la Polvorosa ended a yearly tradition of throwing a goat off the top of its church tower.

Guy Hedgecoe, Madrid, telegraph.co.uk

## Cat Lovers, You'll Never Have to Drink Alone Again

Now there's wine for your feline! Bizarre new drink (with varieties including 'Pinot Meow' and 'MosCATo') goes on sale.

It sounds like the pipe dream of a crazy cat woman. But sharing a glass of red wine with your favourite feline is now a real life possibility thanks to one US winemaker. Apollo Peak, from Denver, Colorado, are the creators of cat wine, 'a non-alcoholic catnip based feline snack', that comes in two varieties - Pinot Meow and MosCATo.

What started as a joke among friends has since turned into an incredibly serious and successful business venture for Brandon Zavala, a cat lover and the founder of Apollo Peak. 'I originally thought of the idea as a joke with some friends and I just slapped a label of this "Pinot Meow" onto a wine bottle and from that got the idea to actually start something for cats,' Mr Zavala said. 'I'd heard something about it before, but cat wine wasn't available in the US or in fact anywhere at that stage.'



The wine is made using three ingredients - natural cat nip, water and beets - which are all sourced locally from farmers in Colorado. Mr Zavala began producing the first bottle of cat wine in November last year and as his business began to grow was joined in the Apollo Peak venture by two close friends. Together they have seen the product go from only being sold in Denver to being shipped across the world as demand booms through their online store. 'I started putting a brew together on my own and it took about six months to get it to keep its colour, consistency and look like a wine,' Mr Zavala said. 'I worked in pet foods before this and I always understood the pet market and it just seemed the right time to launch a cat wine. 'We began selling it locally in Denver and then lately its blown up.'

While so far the wines have been tailored towards felines, dog lovers shouldn't despair - your pooch too will be able to get its hands on the good stuff soon enough. Two new products are currently in the pipeline and Mr Zavala said if the reaction of cat owners was anything to go by, Apollo Peak would soon be a household name for dog lovers too.

'The response with the cat wine has been awesome - we got a little bit of word out about it and its been crazy ever since,' he said.

Mailonline.com ,J. Hanrahan for Daily Mail Australia., June 2016

## Signs Your Cat Has Learned Your Internet Password - You Find.....



Little kitty carpal-tunnel braces near the scratching post.

E-mail flames from some guy named 'Fluffy.'

Traces of kitty litter are on your keyboard.

You find hate mail messages to Apple Computer Corp. about their release of 'CyberDog.'

Your new ergonomic keyboard has a strange territorial scent to it.



# Stress In Cats

Stress is a common trigger for behavioural and veterinary problems in cats. It is known to lower the immune system and thereby influence the health of your cat. Obviously all cats suffer some short term stress whilst negotiating every day life and the coping measures help regulate these short term stressors. However, acute (intense but short lasting) or chronic (longterm and/or ongoing) stress is very worrying for the cat owner. Individual environments, lack of socialisation and genetic background can influence how an individual reacts to the various stressors in the environment.

A change of the environment by the owner (new make up of the household eg new boyfriend, student leaving, death of family member) new cat, furniture and furnishings or new pet moving into the home or new cats in the neighbourhood can all cause major stress to the existing cat.

## Signs of Acute stress

Acute stress may be caused by an unexpected incident or threat and is relatively easy to recognize in cats.

Many of the following signs may be evident:

Immobility

Body – crouched directly on top of all fours, shaking

Belly – not exposed, rapid breathing

Legs – bent

Tail – close to the body

Head – lower than the body, motionless

Eyes – fully open

Pupils – fully dilated

Ears – fully flattened back on the head

Whiskers – back

Vocalisation – plaintive miaow, yowling, growling or silent

Hissing, growling, shaking, drooling

Involuntary urination, defecation

Aggression if approached



## Chronic stress

Chronic stress is more difficult to recognise as it can develop over a long period of time and the signs may be more subtle; it is more likely to affect patterns of behaviour and routines, such as:

Inhibition of feeding, grooming, urination & defecation or over-eating (dependent on personality type)

Increased resting or 'feigned' sleep

Hiding

Increased dependency or social withdrawal (dependent on personality type)

Defensive aggression towards people/cats

Extreme vigilance and heightened startle response (jumping at the slightest noise)

Lack of play activity

Changes in general patterns of behaviour e.g. spending significantly more time indoors, irrespective of normal seasonal changes

Inappropriate urination or defecation

Urine spraying indoors

Over-grooming, pica (wool eating)

Increased facial rubbing, scratching on surfaces

Displacement activity (repetitive out-of-context behaviour)

Redirected aggression (onto a target that is not the original source of threat)

Ambivalent behaviour (approach/withdraw, conflicting signals occurring almost simultaneously)

## Treatment and prevention

If at all possible try and identify and remove the stressor (a bit more difficult if you like your boyfriend!). Cats, being responsible for their own survival, are constantly risk assessing, looking for the presence of threat and danger in every new location or social encounter. They are therefore reassured greatly if their lives consist of familiar routines and a degree of predictability as they know, historically, that these are safe. Being predictable in your behaviour and creating daily routines is a great stress buster.

The number of cats you keep should be considered carefully, particularly if the local area already has a significant resident cat population as this can represent additional pressure.

Getting the relationship with your cat right is always a challenge, and being sympathetic to its particular emotional requirements as an individual is the key to stress-free living. A confident, social cat will always want more attention than a timid one, or one who didn't have the appropriate socialization as a kitten. Allowing your cat to initiate contact between you is probably the easiest way to establish the quality and quantity of affection that is wanted.

*Continued on next page*



*Stress (contd)*

If your cat is allowed outside then, if possible, the timing of any excursions should be left to the cat rather than you. If the territory is being 'time-shared' by a number of cats then there may be very specific times during the day when your cat will feel safe and others when the garden is a much more dangerous place. Cats have a complicated communication system using scent that relays a message about the timings when certain individuals are in the area and, on that basis, your cat will be the best judge of when it's appropriate to have some fresh air! If your cat is kept exclusively indoors, a dynamic and challenging environment will provide exercise and entertainment, guarding against boredom and frustration. Cats need to behave like cats for emotional and physical health, so providing your cat with a setting that simulates a natural habitat, with objects to climb for example, will be essential.

Jim Stephens MS.CABC, Companion Animal Behaviour Counsellor, [www.petsbehave.com](http://www.petsbehave.com)

Come and talk to Jim at the Pet Expo

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## Health - Therapeutic Laser Helps Healing Pets

Many sick and injured dogs and cats are recovering more rapidly and regaining quality of life thanks to veterinarians' growing use of low-level laser therapy.

In the Bar Harbor village of Town Hill Maine, Your Pet's Next Best Friend Veterinary Clinic's Dr. Kathleen Prunier has had great success using LiteCure's Class IV Companion Therapy Laser to treat many of her canine and feline patients for afflictions ranging from a bladder infection and prolapsed rectum to periodontal problems and a deep wound caused by a coyote bite. 'The light stimulates at the cellular level,' Prunier recently explained. 'It releases endorphins and stimulates each skin cell to produce more energy and better function.' The veterinarian, though, cautions that therapeutic laser is not used to treat pets afflicted with cancer or ocular injuries.

For 20 years, low-level laser therapy has been a widely used to reduce pain and inflammation and hasten healing from injuries in the sports world. The device emits a beam of light that travels at a certain frequency, producing heat and penetrating deep tissue.

In recent years, laser therapy has gained acceptance among veterinarians across the nation and worldwide as a non-invasive and effective tool to treat pets for burns, wounds, inflammation, arthritis, tendonitis, muscular and skeletal pain and other conditions.

Dr. Christine Zink, a practicing veterinarian and professor of molecular and comparative pathobiology at the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine in Baltimore, Md., notes humans have been treated with lasers for a long time and now dogs, cats and other animals increasingly are benefiting from the technology. 'Laser therapy has many benefits in both humans and pets. These range from speeding the healing of skin wounds to helping heal strains and sprains and reducing the pain of arthritis,' Zink, the former director of the Johns Hopkins University School of Medicine's department of molecular and comparative pathobiology said 'Both human and animal rehabilitation therapists have been using lasers for years, but their use is definitely increasing. There are thousands of published studies showing the benefits of laser therapy so their use is very evidence-based.'

Before opening her practice in Bar Harbor, Prunier discovered therapeutic laser's value while working at a veterinary clinic in the Maine town of York. At the time, she herself suffered chronic pain arising from a back injury and related surgery. Initially sceptical, but at her colleagues' urging, she applied the laser's wand and experienced relief in less than a week. 'They told me it would work,' recalled the vet whose muscle spasms and pain ceased. 'I didn't believe them.'

Now years later, laser therapy has become an integral part of Your Pet's Next Best Friend's veterinary services. All the clinic's patients undergo a thorough examination and diagnosis before any one treatment is prescribed and carried out. If therapeutic laser can relieve or cure the affliction, Prunier and staff then set the LiteCure device according to the animal's body type, weight and hair color.

The low-level or 'cold' laser - which does not burn or harm the animal - is then pointed at the affected area. The length of one treatment can vary from one to six minutes. Prunier and other vets say the animals being treated usually experience a warm sensation and don't seem to mind - even like - the laser therapy.

[ellsworthamerica.com](http://ellsworthamerica.com), July 2016, by L. Baldwin. Photo by L. Baldwin



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## Cat Personalities -



**Cuddle Bug:** Loves to be attached to your body. Sleeps under the covers or curled on your pillow against your face. Materializes into your lap the moment you sit down. Purrs a lot.

**Green-eyed Monster:** Jealous, jealous, jealous. No-one else had better try to get in your lap or get petted when this one is around.

**Lover:** Usually a male. Adores you. Stares lovingly into your eyes. Jumps into your lap and leans against you, staring up at your face. Gives hugs. Will wrap his front legs around your neck, your arm, your thighs, whatever is available. Rubs his head against you. Will try to crawl under your shirt to get closer to your skin. Is usually smart and considerate, knows when you're too busy to give him attention and waits fairly patiently until you're free.

# The Catwalk



**Eiley -**

Waiting for the birds to arrive at the bird feeder.

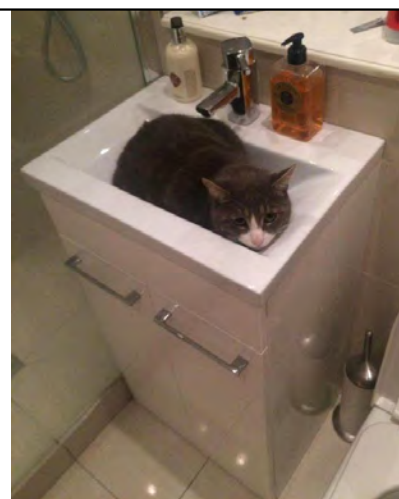
M. Crossley, Dublin



**Amber -**

Let me in, let me in!

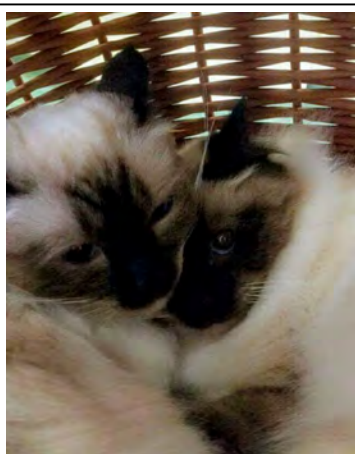
M. Mackey, Rathdrum



**Terry -**

Wash & blow dry then out on the tiles.

S. Mackey, Dublin



**Poppy & Figaro -**

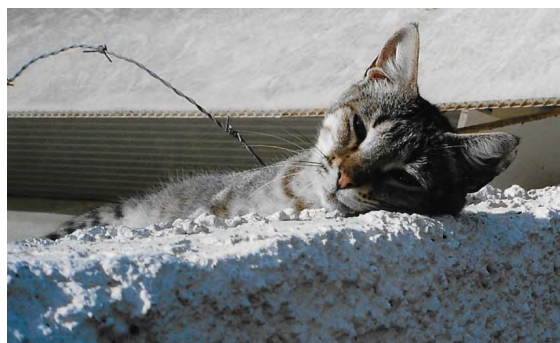
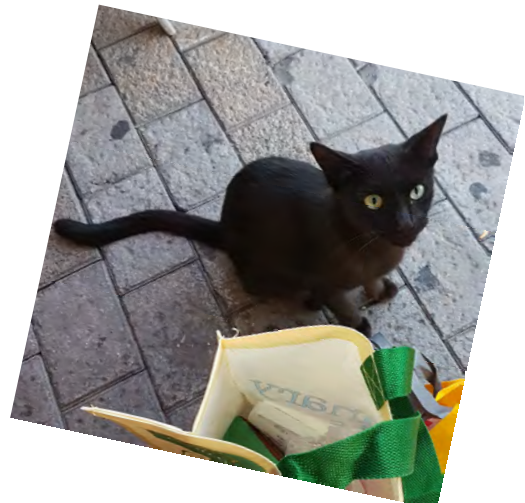
We really, really Love each other...

A. Kiely, Dublin



# The Catwalk

Cats of the Canary Islands  
This is the life - sea, sand & sun, especially sun!





## Killer Didn't Have A Snowballs Chance

When it comes to four-legged crime fighters, dogs hog the spotlight and the headlines. But 16 years ago, a cat not only caught a killer, but she made history.

On Oct. 3, 1994, Shirley Duguay, a 32-year-old mother of five who lived on Prince Edward Island, vanished. Four days later, her car turned up a few miles from her home.

Samples of blood spattered in the car's interior were sent off to the forensics labs of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. Tests showed that the blood came from the missing woman. There was one likely suspect from the start, Duguay's common-law husband, Douglas Beamish. His 12-year relationship with Duguay had been a stormy one. Beamish had a prison record and unsavory reputation with the ladies. More than one of his squeezes reported being slapped around.

On the night Duguay vanished, neighbors said, they heard the couple having a screaming argument. But during an interview at his parents' home, where he had lived since he and Duguay had split about two years earlier, Beamish insisted he had no idea where she might have gone. Despite their suspicions, investigators had nothing to link him to her disappearance.



Three days into a massive search of the island, a clue turned up in the woods, a bag containing a pair of sneakers and a leather jacket, both stained with Duguay's blood. The shoes were Beamish's size, and the soles had been worn in a way that was consistent with his walk. But it was not enough for an arrest. Investigators also found 20 white hairs embedded in the jacket lining. A lab test revealed they were from a cat.

This evidence might have been overlooked, had it not been for an observation by Constable Roger Savoie. During an earlier interview with Beamish, Savoie noticed a white cat wandering around the house, Snowball, the family pet.

If the hair on the jacket came from Snowball, Savoie reasoned, it might provide the link between Beamish and the bloody jacket.

Using DNA in murder investigations was a relatively new science, with the first genetic fingerprint conviction just seven years earlier in Britain. Animal DNA had never been entered into evidence in a murder trial.

Savoie had a hard time convincing anyone that his interest in testing cat hairs was worth more than a chuckle. Phone calls to scientists all over the world yielded polite refusals, until he found Stephen O'Brien, a geneticist with the U.S. National Cancer Institute. O'Brien was also among the world's foremost authorities on feline DNA. In his book 'Tears of the Cheetah,' O'Brien writes that Savoie called him the last hope. O'Brien said, 'I thought to myself, Now this is really interesting!'

As O'Brien assembled a lab team, Savoie got a subpoena to draw a blood sample from Snowball. With one canister containing the white cat hairs and another containing the blood, the constable hopped on a flight to personally hand over the evidence to the geneticist. He was taking no chances that anything could corrupt the chain of evidence.

One of the hairs had a tiny amount of flesh attached to the roots and yielded the DNA to conduct the tests. Snowball's blood had the same genetic paw print, O'Brien recalled. He estimated that the chance of another cat having that same profile was about 45 million to one.

Analysis of Snowball's DNA was completed before the most important piece of evidence came to light. On May 6, 1995, a trout fisherman found a shallow grave about 10 miles from where the car was found. It held Duguay's body. Her hands had been tied behind her back and she had been beaten about the head with such force that a tooth was propelled into one lung.

Police arrested Beamish and charged him with first-degree murder. Evidence at his eight-week-long trial included a letter in which Beamish had threatened to kill Duguay, with his signature apparently written in blood, and testimony from an old girlfriend, who described a horrible beating at the hands of the defendant.

But Snowball was the star witness. Beamish's attorney, borrowing a page from the O.J. Simpson trial book of poetry, said, 'Without the cat, the case falls flat.' O'Brien's data proved convincing, and the jury found Beamish guilty. He was sentenced to 18 years to life on July 19, 1996.

The case did not receive much attention until April the following year, when O'Brien and colleagues Victor David and Marilyn Menotti-Raymond published a brief description of their work in the scientific journal *Nature*. O'Brien recalled that press punsters went wild - 'Purr-fect Match,' 'CAT-astrophe for Criminals,' 'Fur-ensic Evidence.'

Catty headlines aside, the case set a legal precedent - the first time nonhuman DNA had been used as evidence in a murder trial. Snowball ushered in the era when pets can, silently and unwittingly, rat on their owners. Hair, blood and even urine from dogs and cats have helped solve several violent crimes in Canada and the U.S. Britain and the U.S. now have cat and dog DNA databases.

Continued on next page

Most recently, Britain, for the first time, had a case strengthened by a shedding pet.

As for Beamish, he came up for parole the same month, but since he demonstrated “low reintegration potential,” the prison system will keep its claws on him.

nydailynews.com, M. Bovsun 2014

## Art With A Purrr-pose: Cats Take Over The Worcester Art Museum

Worcester, Mass, USA - Do you ever get the feeling cats are secretly plotting to take over the world? Their bid to win our hearts and minds via pop culture is clearly succeeding with all those silly memes and videos of felines going viral on the internet. Now it seems cats are setting their sights on high art.

The Worcester Art Museum's new project is titled, 'Meow, Meow' explores our age-old fascination with these furry creatures using a trove of works (many that are rarely on-view) from the museum's encyclopaedic, permanent collection. And, as it turns out, this project is even playing a role in finding homes for rescue cats.

Jon Seydl, head of curatorial affairs at the museum, admits even he's been wary. 'One risk this project has is that it's too cute,' he said, smiling. That's why it was critical for Seydl and the curatorial team to get beneath that layer of cuteness to connect with people's profound love and fear of felines. 'I will be the first to confess I'm a dog person; I'm not a cat person,' Seydl said, 'but I deeply, deeply respect the love of cats. And it's something you never, ever want to fool around with.'

This project actually started as an homage to dogs. Adam Rozan, director of audience engagement, recalls how he and the staff initially set out to honor the museum's canine mascot, Helmutt. 'We started looking at the collection,' he explained, 'and all of a sudden noticed while we're not rich in dog art, we're really rich in cats.'

The team dug deep into the museum's collection of 35,000 objects to unearth and better understand cat imagery through the ages. 'That's something we're always trying to do here,' Seydl explained, 'to think about ways to take this collection that goes from antiquity to present day - and covers nearly every corner of the globe - and tell a story that can bring all of those aspects together.'



In a play on the number of lives cats supposedly have, the team devised nine parts for the museum's project. One is a self-guided tour for visitors called the 'Cat Walk.' It's a map-driven quest to find 17 cat-themed objects around the museum. There are cats from Egypt, but also pieces from China, France, Japan, Greece and Italy. A work that Seydl passes every day is the huge, ornate mosaic embedded in the grand Renaissance Court's floor simply called the 'Worcester Hunt Floor Mosaic.' 'This is one of the most important things in the entire museum,' Seydl said. 'It was excavated in Antioch - ancient Roman Syria. It dates to about 500, came to us in the 1930s and is the centerpiece of the entire museum.'

For Seydl, one of the valuable things about the 'Meow' project is that it encouraged his staff to look at the museum's collection in a new way. He says before now he hadn't

seriously considered the cats in the mosaic and what we all could learn from them. They're not tabbies, though. They're Caspian tigers. 'One of the most touching parts of the entire mosaic is the hunter who's stolen a tiger cub and the mother and two tiger cubs are chasing after him,' Seydl mused. 'It's really a sort of tragic element of this mosaic.'

There's also a gallery exhibition titled 'The Captivating Cat,' featuring about 70 kitty-driven artworks, including drawings, photographs, paintings and prints. Some are downright adorable. Others are pretty creepy, like the 1975 lithograph of a cat with bat wings terrorizing a bunch of mice. It's by artist Robert Nelson.

Later this summer a contemporary installation by a New York-based artist will bring live felines into the museum's education wing. It's known as the 'Cats-in-Residence' program where rescue animals will be able to hangout in an enclosed space with creative cubbies and pretty perches. Humans are encouraged to go inside, too. And they can even adopt the residents brought in by a local animal shelter. That's the hope, according to Seydl. 'Always with an exhibition I'm hoping that people take something that is maybe familiar to them and think about it in a whole new way and rethink their own relationship with animals. I mean - maybe leading to an adoption - or at least thinking about how art might play a role in changing people's lives.'

Rhonda Lieberman, the artist behind the Cats-in-Residence program, calls it part purrr-formance piece, part social sculpture. This is her fourth iteration of the enclosure and the first at a museum. Lieberman, who's also a contributing editor to Artforum magazine, says past versions of her installation have helped 55 cats find new homes. 'They are just pieces that create a situation where people can enjoy the cats,' she explained, 'and it shows the value of rescue cats in a way that might not be the usual way people see them. We actually help them with their agenda - which is basically to live - so it's using art as a rescue vehicle - literally.' Lieberman wants to make sure people know the cats are participants, not objects. 'There might be some people who will have some naysay against having animals as part of an exhibition - almost like a zoo or something of that nature - but there is a true difference. These animals are in need of homes. They are not just being kept there to be observed. They are up for adoption.'

Rescue League staff will take care of the cats during their stay at the museum. For Tellier, the whole "Meow" project speaks to the enduring links between felines and humans. 'It really does show what a beautiful bond people have with their pets - especially cats - and what the cats mean to people,' she said.

## Cats In The News - Cat Heroes

Dogs are traditionally known as man's best friend. But despite their aloof reputation, cats can be just as devoted and brave. As one moggy is honoured for rescuing her owners from a house fire, BBC News takes a look at some other heroic felines.

BBC new online, August 2016



### Missy

Missy, a tabby from Newcastle, has something of a medical bent.

When she sensed there was something amiss with her owner - if cats can ever said to be 'owned' - Missy alerted her by refusing to stop pawing at her chest. Angela Tinning says it first happened in 2013.

"Her behaviour was so unusual I got checked out and it was found I had pre-cancerous cells. Three years later it happened again. 'I felt fine and I honestly don't think I would have bothered if she hadn't drawn my attention to it. If it weren't for her, my story could be very different today. She is my little hero.'

### Simon

Simon, a black and white ship's cat, was awarded the Dickin Medal - the animal equivalent of the Victoria Cross - for helping to save the lives of Royal Navy officers during the Chinese civil war in 1949.



He protected food stores from an infestation of rats on board the HMS Amethyst during a siege.

The brave chap suffered severe shrapnel wounds and was given a hero's welcome when his ship returned to dock in Plymouth.

Simon, who was also given the rank of Able Seaman, lived long enough to get back to England, but he died in quarantine three weeks after he arrived home.

He was buried in Ilford, Essex, with full military honours.

Other recipients of the Dickin medal include messenger pigeons, horses and dogs - Simon is the only cat.

### Crimean Tom

Crimean Tom, also known as Sevastopol Tom, saved British and French troops from starvation during the Crimean war in 1854.



The regiments were occupying the Russian town of Sevastopol and could not find food. Tom could. He led them to hidden caches of food stored by Russian soldiers and civilians. Tom was taken back to England with the soldiers when the war was over.

After his death in 1856, he was stuffed and preserved and is a permanent part of the National Army Museum in London.

### Cleo

Cleo overcame her fear of strangers to become a prize-winning heroine. The timid tortoiseshell, from Chessington in Surrey, was named charity Cats Protection's hero cat of the year 2014 after she raised the alarm her owner was ill.



Not only did her agitation alert Pauline Jenkins that husband Richard was having a heart attack, but Cleo clambered onto the bed and insisted on sitting with him while paramedics performed emergency treatment. That's despite the fact she would usually run away whenever someone she didn't know approached.

On Mr Jenkins' return from hospital, Cleo stayed with him around the clock until he was back on his feet.

The judge said they selected Cleo as the charity's poster puss for her bravery. 'Cleo overcame her own fear of strangers to help her beloved owner. It was just that one factor that pushed it for me.'

### Smudge

Smudge, from Thorne in South Yorkshire, became the complete guard cat when he chased away a couple of lads who were hassling the two young human brothers he lived with.

Owner Sarah Fenton saw a group of boys push her then five-year-old son to the ground. 'Within seconds, Smudge shot out from the bushes, hissed and jumped up at one of the bullies, prompting them to beat a hasty retreat.' Which just goes to show - never mess with a cat.



### Prince Smokey

Prince Smokey, from Lichfield in Staffordshire, is another puss with diagnostic skills. When his owner Tina Teasdale started having chest pains, she assumed it was indigestion. The Prince knew better.

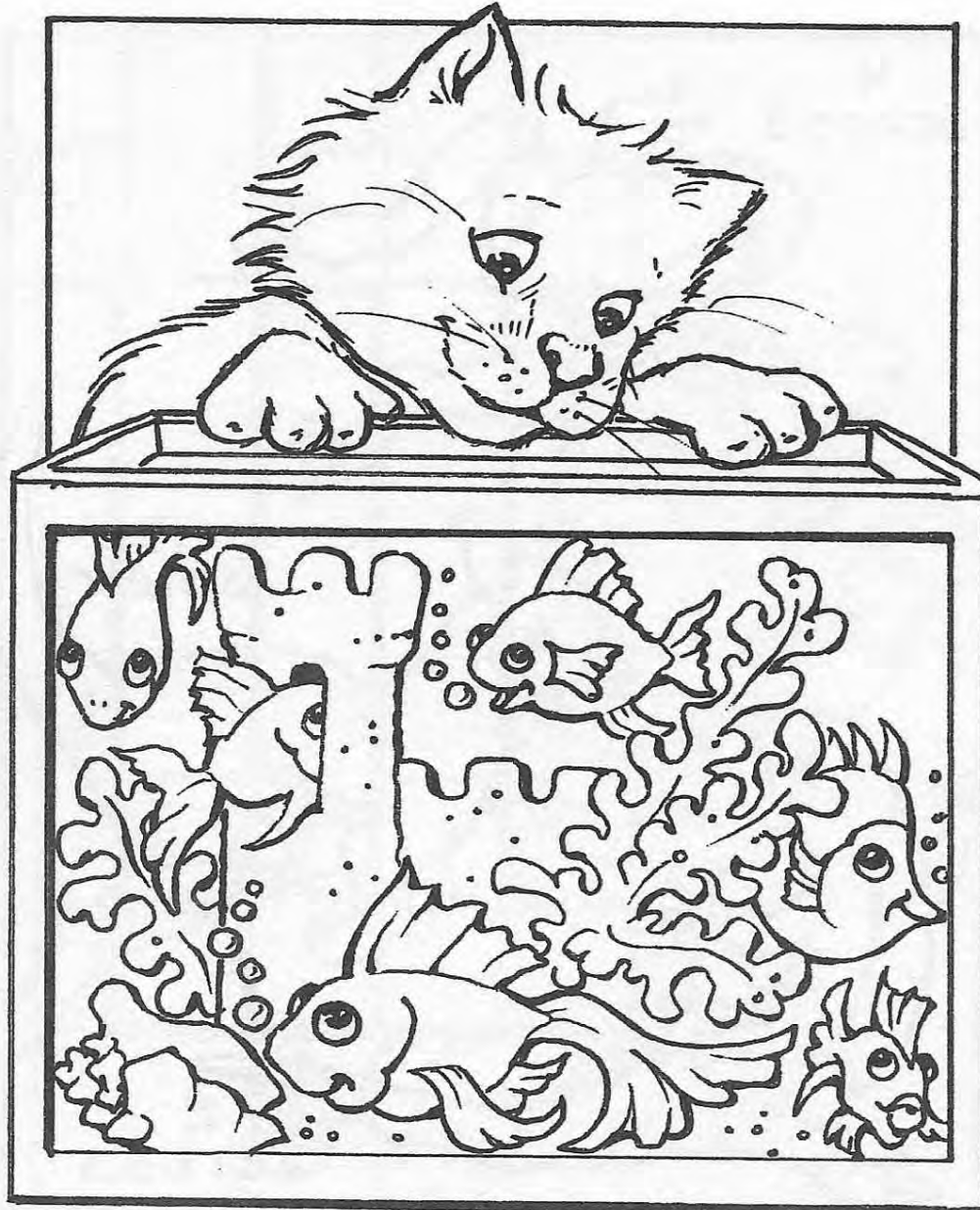
Ms Teasdale said the cat had always seemed to sense when she was ill, so when he became so worked up and kept pouncing at her, she made an appointment to see her GP.

Tests revealed she needed heart surgery. 'Had I not had treatment it could eventually have led to a heart attack. Without his unusual behaviour I wouldn't have followed it up with the doctor and who knows what could have happened.'





## KIT'S KORNER



**Cats can stare for hours at a fish tank. Find all 6 fish in this tank and colour them in.**

## The Final Miaow

As you can see we have come to the last page of our newsletter and we hope you found it interesting and enjoyable. Many thanks to everyone who sent us material and photos for the CATWALK. We can always do with more photographs and stories, so please keep sending them in.  
Karen & Gloria ^..^

## Cat Toys Cats Find In The House

An average household is full of other toys, which seem to be much more suitable for the purposes of cat entertainment.

**Soap** - you may push it down the floor to the living room.

**Toilet** - you may pull the lever and listen to the bubbling noise.

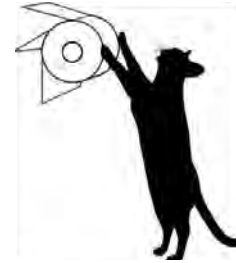
**Toilet Tissue** - you may check how much is left.

**Broom** - you may always eat the brush.

**Vacuum Cleaner** - you may empty the bag and watch the dust spread.

**Pillows** - you may carry them to another room.

**Oven** - an excellent place to sleep in.

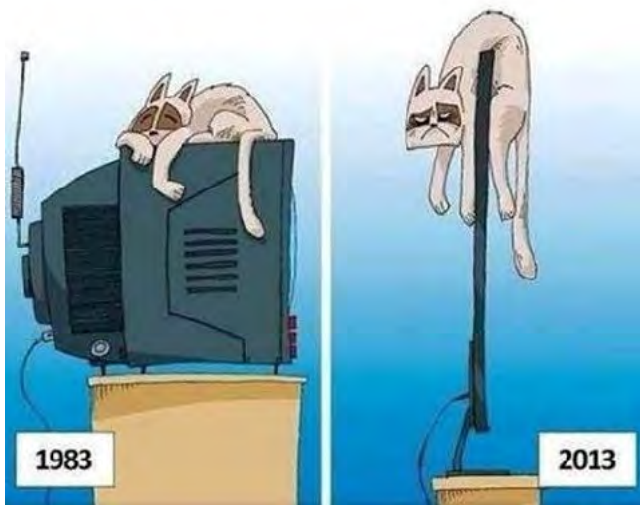


## Cat Jokes

What do cat actors say on stage? *Tabby or not tabby!*

What did the cat do when he swallowed some cheese?  
*He waited by the mouse hole with baited breath!*

If there are ten cats on a boat and one jumps off, how many cats are left on the boat? *None! They were copy cats.*



**A** cat is more intelligent than people believe, and can be taught any crime.

Mark Twain

## Protect Pets From Passive Smoking

The British Veterinary Association (BVA) and British Small Animal Veterinary Association (BSAVA) are encouraging pet owners to avoid smoking for their pets' benefit as well.

The devastating effects of passive smoking on humans is well documented, but vets are concerned that many animal owners may be inadvertently harming their beloved pets by lighting up when they are together in an enclosed space.

Sean Wensley, President of BVA and companion animal vet, said: 'Most smokers understand that lighting up around children is harmful, but fewer people are aware of the impact passive smoking can have on their pets. Sadly this health impact, as in people, may be cancer and owners are often understandably distressed when they realise that their pet's cancer may be the result of secondary tobacco smoking.'

A study from leading oncologist Clare Knottenbelt of Glasgow University Veterinary School, clearly demonstrated a correlation between the levels of nicotine in a dog's fur and its exposure to cigarette smoke in the home.

Ross Allan, of the British Small Animal Veterinary Association, said: 'Many owners who smoke have never thought about the effects of their habit on their pets, but there is evidence that tobacco smoke increases the risks of lung and nasal cancers in dogs and of lymphoma in cats. As veterinary surgeons we champion the prevention of illness and disease, and many owners might be more likely to give up tobacco for the sake of their pet if they realised the consequence of their smoking.'

The study, funded by the BSAVA's PetSavers charity, demonstrated that dogs are inhaling and probably ingesting cigarette smoke and that this is known to increase the incidence of cancer in your pet.

Professor Knottenbelt added: 'While veterinary medicine is advancing all the time and we have the ability to treat some cancers in pets, it is expensive and provides no guarantees of long-term survival. The best way of avoiding damage to your pet's health is to not smoke around them – or better still give up. It would be good for your own health, too.'

Dogs in non-smoking households were shown to have very low levels of nicotine incorporated into their fur compared with animals owned by regular smokers. A third group of pets owned by smokers who only smoke outside the house had intermediate levels of nicotine in their coat.