

# The Scratching Post



**SABCCI Newsletter - Spring 2016**

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

# 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



wordhistories.com

## Word Derivations - Not Enough Room to Swing A Cat

There is not total agreement where the expression came from but the most popular one is from the 16th Century when a frail-like whip, known as the cat-o'-nine-tails, was used to punish sailors. It is said there was not enough room below deck, 'not enough room to swing a cat', therefore the punishment had to be done on the deck.



## Editorial

Welcome to our Spring 2016 issue of The Scratching Post.

So if you're ready, sit back with a glass of 43 on ice and enjoy the newsletter!

Karen and Gloria ^..^

Do you have any photos or articles for the newsletter? Please send them to [karen@sabcci.com](mailto:karen@sabcci.com) or [gloria@sabcci.com](mailto:gloria@sabcci.com)



### SABCCI News - Congratulations to - Heather Craig

Heather Craig has been awarded the SABCCI 'Points Trophy' for being the exhibitor with the most points accumulated at the SABCCI show in October. The award was announced at the SABCCI AGM in February.

### SABCCI Goes To The Pet Expo & Midland's Show

The GCCFI had the 'Cat World' stall at the Pet Expo in the RDS Dublin last November. Gloria from SABCCI and Norman & Anita O'Galligan from The Midlands Cat Club manned the stall. A thank you to Mirela Kusmierz, Caroline Wren, Norman and Anita O'Galligan for bringing some of their cats to exhibit at the Expo. And of course not to forget the silent cat in the end pen with it's BOV and Tara rosettes.

In a continuing effort to raise funds for the club, SABCCI had a stall selling various cat toys and supplies at the Expo and last February SABCCI had a stall at the Midland Cat Club show in Nenagh.



At The Pet Expo



Gloria & Karen manning the stall at the Midland

### Cats See Things That Are Invisible To Humans



It's a device we've seen in films, nobody can see the ghost, but the cat somehow sees the spirit energy, hisses and runs out of frame. Is this idea of cats seeing forms or light and energy that we humans can't see based in any truth or science?

Well, there actually is something scientific to that kind of movie scenario. According to an article shared by our favorite helmsman on the Star Ship Enterprise George Takei, by HigherPerspective.com, cats and other sensitive animals like dogs or deer, can see certain kinds of light, such as UV light that we humans simply can't see. This means that more sensitive animals are seeing a lot of things in the world that we aren't, like patterns on flowers and in the fur of other animals. These patterns, visible through UV light are completely invisible to the human eye which does not see ultraviolet rays.

A human might have trouble seeing a polar bear in the snow, while these other more sensitive animals would have no trouble spotting a big white bear in the snow no matter how still it might be. Why? Sixth sense? No. These animals are actually able to see a polar bear in the snow because they see ultraviolet light, which would reflect off the snow, while the white fur of a polar bear would absorb the UV light. This is what makes an animal like a polar bear visible to a deer or your house cat, and now we are learning that this kind of animal super vision might be more common than science had realized.

So next time your cat reacts as if it sees something in the room while you see nothing there, you might want to consider that your cat is picking up on real things that are invisible to your human eyes. CatTime.com April 2016

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

- Start blinking slowly at people instead of smiling.
- Sign your cat's name to all holiday cards/gifts sent to your family and friends.
- When your cat sits and stares intently at you, you know you have to get the paper towels and go see what he graciously has yakked up for you.
- Have guests come over to your house and ask you "why do you have empty cardboard boxes on your kitchen floor?"
- Colour coordinate your clothes to match your cats' fur.



## The Pedigree - Cymric

Manx cat breeders in the US discovered some longhaired kittens appearing in their litters in the 1960's. Two breeders decided to develop the variety as a separate breed. This breed was named Cymric, the Welsh word for 'Welsh', as Wales is the country closest to The Isle of Man where the Manx came from.

Cymric are a compact medium to large sized cat. The entirely tailless cat has an arched back that ends up in a rounded rump. Their eyes are large and rounded, the hind legs are longer than the front which gives them a 'hopping' gate. The head is rounded with high and widely spaced ears. The paws are neat and rounded with tufts between their toes and pads.

Their double silky medium length coat is longer at the rump and belly. The Cymric breed has many colours including solids, tortoiseshell and tabby.


Cymric are intelligent, fun loving and get along with other pets. A happy and playful cat, are highly people orientated and enjoy spending time with their owners. Cymric can learn tricks easily. Like the Manx they are fascinated by water.



## What Cats Shouldn't Eat - Part 2


**Candy and Gum** - Candy, gum, toothpaste, baked goods, and some diet foods are sweetened with xylitol. Xylitol can cause an increase in the insulin circulating through your cat's body, which will cause the cat's blood sugar to drop. Xylitol can also lead to liver failure. Initial symptoms include vomiting, lethargy, and loss of coordination. The cat may have seizures soon after ingesting the xylitol, and liver failure can occur within just a few days.



 **Chocolate** - Chocolate can be lethal for cats. Although most cats won't eat it on their own, they can be coaxed to eat it by owners and others who think they are giving the cat a treat. The toxic agent in chocolate is theobromine. It's in all kinds of chocolate, even white chocolate. The most dangerous kinds, though, are dark chocolate and unsweetened baking chocolate. Eating chocolate can cause abnormal heart rhythm, tremors, seizures, and death.

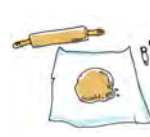
**Fat Trimmings and Bones** - Table scraps often contain fat trimmed off of meat and bones. Both fat and bones may be dangerous for cats. Fat, both cooked and uncooked, can cause intestinal upset, with vomiting and diarrhea. And a cat can choke on a bone. Bones can also splinter and cause an obstruction or lacerations of your cat's digestive system.



 **Liver** - Small amounts of liver are okay, but eating too much liver can cause vitamin A toxicity. This is a serious condition that can affect your cat's bones. Symptoms include deformed bones, bone growths on the elbows and spine, and osteoporosis. Vitamin A toxicity can also cause death.


**Too Many Treats** - Eating too much too often can do the same thing to cats that it does to humans. It can lead to obesity and even diabetes.



 **Yeast Dough** - Before it's baked, bread dough needs to rise. And, that's exactly what it would do in your cat's stomach if your cat ate it. As it swells inside, the dough can stretch the abdomen and cause severe pain. In addition, when the yeast ferments the dough to make it rise, it produces alcohol that can lead to alcohol poisoning.

**Your Medicine** - Ingesting a drug prescribed for humans is one of the most common causes of poisoning in cats. Just as you would do for your children, put all medicines where your cat can't get to them. And never give your cat any over-the-counter medicine unless advised to do so by your vet. Ingredients such as acetaminophen or ibuprofen are common in pain relievers and cold medicine. And they can be deadly for your cat.



 **Kitchen Pantry: No Cats Allowed** - Many other items commonly found on kitchen shelves can harm your cat. Keeping food items where your cat can't get to them and keeping pantry and cupboard doors closed will help protect your cat from serious food-related illness.

Medicinenet.com

## A Few Tit Bits On Cats

- According to tradition, the Manx Cat was the last animal to enter Noah's Ark. The pair insisted on having one last mousing trip before they went aboard. As the rains began to fall more heavily, they rushed to the Ark, but their tails were caught and cut off as Noah shut the doors behind them. That is why Manx cats to this day have no tail.

- The cat flap came into being in the seventeenth century - Sir Isaac Newton invented it for his cat and kittens.

- British Prime Minister Winston Churchill adopted a stray black cat that turned up, on the doorstep of No. 10 Downing Street, thinking it was a sign of good luck. He christened it Margate, having just returned from delivering an important



## The Quiz

1 - Outdoor-only cats live, on average, about:

- A) 3-5 years
- B) 7-10 years
- C) 12-15 years

2 - A cat named Towser was an expert mouser. (True story!) How many mice did this famous cat reportedly catch in her lifetime?

- A) 899
- B) 8,899
- C) 18,899
- D) 28,899

3 - What's the total number of claws that most house cats have?

- A) 16
- B) 18
- C) 20
- D) None of the above

4 - Cats stay pregnant for about how long?

- A) Just over 2 months
- B) Just over 4 months
- C) Just over 9 months

5 - What is a cat's extra toe called?

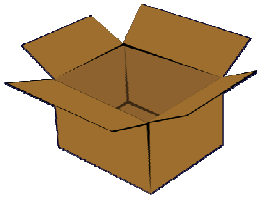
- A) Biped
- B) Monoped
- C) Polydactyl
- D) Polyprdal



Petsadvisor.com

Answers on page 16

## How to Annoy Your Human



### The Box Game

The day will come when your human mom or dad will bring home a new toy for you. Pretend a great deal of anticipation and interest when she sets the box containing the toy on the floor. When she brings out the toy from the box, treat it with catly scorn (you know how), and focus your entire attention on the box it came in. The more lively your box play, the more fun this game can be. (You can always secretly inspect the toy when your human isn't looking.)

pawnation.com



## Recipe - Catnip Biscuits

Preheat oven to 180 c

### Ingredients

1 1/2 cups wheat or white flour  
1 1/2 teaspoons catnip  
1/3 cup powdered milk  
1/2 cup milk

2 tablespoons butter softened  
1 tablespoon honey  
1 egg

### Instructions

Stir dry ingredients together in a large bowl. Mix in wet ingredients to form a soft dough. Add more flour if dough is too sticky. Turn out dough onto a non-stick baking sheet and roll out. Cut the dough into bite-sized squares.

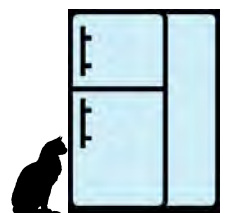
Bake for approximately 20 minutes until golden brown.

Remove biscuits from the tray making sure to break them apart. Let them cool on a baking rack. Store in an airtight container or freeze and thaw as needed.



## Law of Cat Refrigerator Observation

If a cat watches a refrigerator long enough, someone will come along and take out something good to eat.



## The Rainbow Bridge

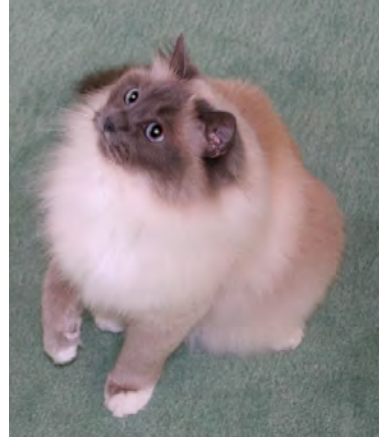


Just this side of heaven is a place called Rainbow Bridge. When an animal dies that has been especially close to someone here, that pet goes to Rainbow Bridge. There are meadows and hills for all of our special friends so they can run and play together. There is plenty of food, water and sunshine, and 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.

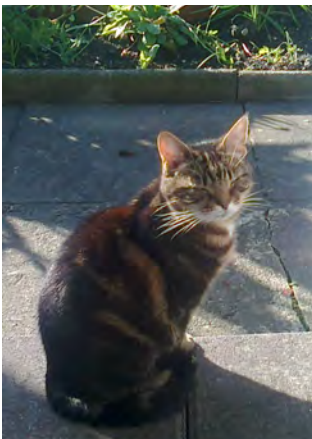
### Pushkin - December 1999 - April 2015

Pushkin my best friend and furry companion  
you are always loved and deeply missed.  
Rest in peace my beautiful and brave darling.

Aedamair Kiely



### Louisa - October 1998 - November 2015



When tomorrow starts without me,  
Don't think we're far apart,  
For every time you think of me,  
I'm right inside your heart.

The Mackey Family

Editors note: Louisa appeared many times on our 'Catwalk' pages. We would like to thank Sean and his family for sharing Louisa with us.

### Truffle - June 1998 - January 2016



Truffle with Amber

Truffle my Asian Variant came to live with us in October 1998 along with Fudge a lilac Burmese kitten. Truffle & Fudge were inseparable until Fudge's demise in 2009 due to kidney failure. Truffle had certain characteristics; he loved to drape himself across your shoulders and would spring vertically with claws extended onto your back in order to reach his perch. Shrieks could often be heard following a surprise launch by Truffle onto the back of an unsuspecting target. Indeed one friend who is not a "cat person" called to the house one day and got this same treatment, much to her shock and horror – Truffle did not discriminate! From that day on visitors were welcomed with words of caution "watch your back".

Despite Truffle's noble ancestry, he was somewhat of an alley cat and on occasions was found head down in the rubbish bin trying to retrieve some "tasty" morsels. The years passed and Truffle did become more stately, he was no longer able to climb or jump without a lot of effort, he liked to just sit and watch you with adoring eyes. In 2011, he accepted a new Burmese kitten Amber to the household. He and Amber became great pals and Truffle would quietly watch with some derision as Amber burnt up her kitten energy tearing around the house. Alas, Truffle's

health declined and on 22nd January, 2016 he went to Rainbow Bridge. While, Truffle is greatly missed, I know he had a long, happy and very comfortable life and left a lot of happy memories behind him. Joyce Hammond

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

Anonymous



# Hunting Behaviour In Cats

## Hunting Behaviour

Cats are obligate carnivores which means that they cannot survive on a vegetarian diet and must consume meat as a source of taurine and other amino acids which, unlike dogs, they cannot manufacture. Cats normally catch small prey which are around 1% of their body weight and one study showed that almost 80% of prey caught weighed less than 50g. Another study showed that small mammals accounted for 52% of all kills whilst birds accounted for a further 23%. However, the same study showed that the overall success rate in terms of killing predatory targets was around 13%. This shows that cats have a distinct preference for targets and are tolerant of a high failure rate. Cats will also hunt and consume insects. Evidence for the specific nutritional contribution of insects to the diet of the cat is limited. However, insects, particularly spiders, are rich in taurine, an essential amino acid for cats. depending upon prey size cats can often have between 10 and 20 small “meals” per day. Since each “meal” is small and can only feed one cat and given that hunting is a solitary pursuit, “mealtimes” do not exist as a social activity for cats.



## Hunger Games

You would think that hunger is the motivator for hunting. However, the motivation to hunt is separate from hunger. Hunger will change the predatory target, in that a hungry cat will target larger and potentially more dangerous prey and the speed of killing behaviour increases whilst play activity with the food decreases. Satiated cats play with their food for longer. One study, done in the 70s when such practices were allowed, found that a cat already eating a bowl of food would leave the food in order to kill a live rat introduced into the area, drag the body back to near the food bowl and then continue to eat the provided food and not be interested in consuming the prey. It seems that various stimuli such as movement, odour and size of prey stimulate hunting behaviour and that these are unrelated to feeding or hunger.

## Feral v Pet

Are there differences between your pampered pet and the feral cats outside? Not surprisingly feral cats spend twice as much time hunting, up to 12 hours per day, than the pet cat and this difference can sometime lead to pet cats exhibiting behaviour “problems” such as stalking and predating on their owners because they do not have the opportunity to “hunt” in the home environment. Cats appear to regularly use specific hunting locations where they have experienced a higher probability of encountering vulnerable prey. They move speedily between these locations, rarely deviating to take up unanticipated hunting opportunities. This implies that during an active period of hunting, cats prioritise their already established strategies for catching prey, rather than the discovery of new hunting sites or opportunistic exploitation of unexpected hunting opportunities. Hunting opportunities are time sensitive, due to the activity patterns of prey, but information about potential future hunting sites is available all the time.

## How do cats hunt ?

The short answer is by stealth, either by stalking their prey or sitting and waiting near the prey’s den and then ambushing the unsuspecting creature. Obviously the method depends on the prey: small mammals have dens from which they appear to forage or urinate and the cat, using its sense of smell and acute hearing in the ultra high frequency (which allows the cat to hear noises, scratching, digging etc) can precisely locate its prey. It will then sit and wait for the prey to emerge into open space away from its den. Whilst waiting the cat will tend to keep low in profile and to “paddle” its rear feet which is thought to prepare the muscles ready to rush and pounce. As previously noted the success rate of attacks is quite low and if this is the case the cat will either return to cover or explore another site within its hunting area. Only if no other hunting opportunities arise will the cat vacate this hunting area for another one.

For more mobile prey such as birds which have no real shelter or hide locations the cat must hunt by stalking, using the cover of vegetation to move closer to their prey.

## Problems

A cat which has restricted opportunities to hunt, for example by being kept indoors, can develop “problem” behaviours. These “problems” can include stalking and attacking owners or the mad dash around the room and curtains which are inevitably problems for the owner (not the cat). The need to hone and maintain hunting skills must have an outlet and the domestic cat in the home requires that the owner provide these by the use of toys (fishing rod toys, laser lights if used correctly etc) to simulate hunting. A good use of empty cardboard tubes is to place a small piece of meat into them and to then drag them around for the cat to pounce, kill and consume.

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



lowly, with a look of intense concentration, he got up and advanced on me...put out a front paw, and stroked my cheek as I used to stroke his chops. A human caress from a cat. I felt very meagre and ill-educated that I could not purr.

Sylvia Townsend Warner







## The Siamese and All Breeds Cat Club 62nd Show

Knocklyon Community Centre - 18th October 2015



The annual SABCCI Show was held at our usual venue of Knocklyon and we seem to have got used to the maze of the new school car park which was to be negotiated to get to the hall. Still everyone managed to find the way. Our judges this year were Mr George Gow from Scotland, Mrs Rosemary Fisher, Mrs Val Anderson-Drew and Mrs Sarah Johnson our international FIFe judge.

Our entries were down a little on last year, achieving a modest 95 cats – never mind the numbers the quality was of the very highest with some stunning exhibits entered.

Our Best in Show winner this year was Heather Craig's stunning cream cameo exotic Sunlit George; year after year I get comments from judges on the very high quality of the exotics in Ireland and as 3 of our judges have bred them surely there is no greater compliment

Every year we invite the public to vote for their favourite pedigree and non pedigree exhibit; this years winners are:

**Public's Choice Pedigree** - Ms Berazina's EBIARSH DARTH VADER (British CP kitten)

**Public's Choice Non-Pedigree** - Mr K Creavan's RUA (Ginger & White kitten)

### BEST IN SHOW 2015

*Best of Variety results may be seen on the club web site*

**Persian** - Mrs H Craig's SUNLIT GEORGE (Exotic) Adult

**Semi-Longhair** - Mirela Kusmierz's SOTORP BRUTUS (Siberian) Adult

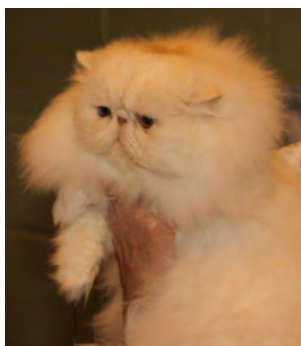
**British** - Joy Frizelle's GR PR REYSDESELVA BENNY (C P) Neuter

**Foreign** - Erika Lastauskiene's CELTICELFES RIHANNA (Devon Rex) Kitten

**Burmese** - Colm Noonan's SUPGR PR POPPYLOVE MARBLED ORCHID (Blue Tortie ) FN

**Oriental** - Teresa Monahan's ILANG-ILANG 24 KARATA\*RUS (Oriental Black MN)

**Siamese** - Beatrice Aird'O'Hanlon's SIAWYE QUEEN OF SPADES (SP) F



### OVERALL BEST IN SHOW

Mrs H Craig's SUNLIT GEORGE (Exotic) Adult

### RESERVE BEST IN SHOW

Colm Noonan's SUPGR PR POPPYLOVE MARBLED ORCHID (Blue Tortie ) FN

### NON PED BEST IN SHOW

Ms Cleary's MYSTERY (Tabby LH)

As usual the Show stands or falls on the help given so generously by the committee and other stalwarts and if I've missed anyone out I apologise in advance; huge thanks go to Betty for organising the vetting in in her usual calm quiet way, our vets Mark Heffernan and Aiofe Caulfield who give up their Sunday mornings voluntarily year after year; Lorna running the Pot Draw, organising the rota of workers on the gate then announcing Best in Show; Betty going on to man the information table and counting up the votes for the Publics Favourites; Caroline and her team for the calm smooth running of the Top Table, Karen who did all the publicity, Dorothy Jack who once more took over the catering, supplying a wonderful lunch for judges and workers, ably helped by Klaus and Jim; Hugh who dealt with the cups and trophies, plus the array of rosettes and banners donated by the Australian Cat Fancy; all the committee who did all the other bits and bobs, but mostly Gloria who runs the 'Dublin' end of the show as well as acting as Hall Manager then sorted the Best in Show. On top of acting as temporary treasurer! You're a star, Gloria. Most of all of course most grateful thanks to the people who really matter – you the exhibitors and your wonderful cats THANK YOU ALL!!

*Ronnie Brooks, Show Manager*



## Should've gone.....

About a month ago my partner and I went on a lovely couple of days to Killarney. Before going I had everything in place. We looked after the cats on the day we went and then the next day Ellen our friend would come in to look after them. I am very lucky to have Ellen. She adores the little furries and is very good with them.

The next day around 9.30 AM, we had just returned from our breakfast in the hotel, my mobile went and a most upset Ellen answered. 'There is a dead cat here!' She cried. 'It has not moved and I threw a towel over it'. I tried to calm her and asked the questions and she seem to be right. The only thing I could think of was the older cat Chan who had been loosing some weight but otherwise ate, drank purred and played and was perfectly healthy when we left. Maybe she had a heart attack? What to do? If there was a dead cat in the living room it could not stay there.

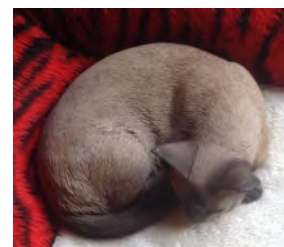
So I suggested first to get help via my brother-in-law but Ellen said she could handle it. So I suggested to get another old towel put it on the cat and put all in a plastic bag and leave it in the cool passage between garage and house, which is closed off.

Ellen did this and we kept thinking about the cat but we were only going back the next day. We planned to visit Kenmare, which is a lovely place with nice shops and I decided to buy a little present for poor Ellen. I soon found a lovely mug with a Celtic cat on it and I bought it telling the shop girl about Chan, who I thought, had been found dead by Ellen and that the mug was for her. The shop girl commiserated with me feeling very sorry, she even wrapped up the mug for me.

Next day it was time to go home. I could not keep on thinking about poor Ellen, feeling awful about that this had happened while she looked after our cats. Returned home I ran into the house and opened the door to the kitchen and there were the cats, including Chan, happily looking up on me. I then looked around the corner at our settee and noticed the artificial cat, I had bought for fun to put in the garden but had left on the settee was no longer there. This cat looks exactly like Chan.

Poor Ellen.....should've gone to.....Specsavers

Karen Sluiters



## Zarathustra In Art -

Russian artist Svetlana Petrova has added her ginger tabby Zarathustra into masterpieces including the Mona Lisa.

They are classic works of art that have stood the test of centuries... but for Svetlana Petrova there was just one thing missing from these masterpieces: her large ginger tabby Zarathustra. So, with the help of nifty photography and cunning computer manipulation, the Russian artist has inserted her pet into a series of the artworks.

Now he nestles contentedly in the lap of Mona Lisa, plays a hand against one of Cezanne's card players and lazily stretches out on top of the tank containing Damien Hirst's shark. (Mona Lisa with other artists below)

With her work collected in a new book called Fat Cat Art, Petrova said: 'Zarathustra has such a sensitive personality. He decided to become a model and adores posing for photos – he makes such brilliant poses and clever faces.'

[dailymail.co.uk](http://dailymail.co.uk) December 2015, photos Caters News Agency



Claude Monet - Over A Pond Of Water Lilies



Salvatore Dali - The Persistence Of Memory



Leonardo Da Vinci - Mona Lisa

## How To Annoy Your Cat....

**Cheating With a New Pet:** Bringing a new pet (especially another cat) into the house turns up the hiss-teria. How would you feel if asked to share your potty, dinner plate, toys, bed and love-of-your-life human with a stranger off the street?

To the cat, the interloper looks funny, smells scary and disrupts the all-important routine. It can take weeks or months for cats to accept newcomers as family members.

[pawnation.com](http://pawnation.com)



# The Catwalk

## Bacchus -

What did you say...?

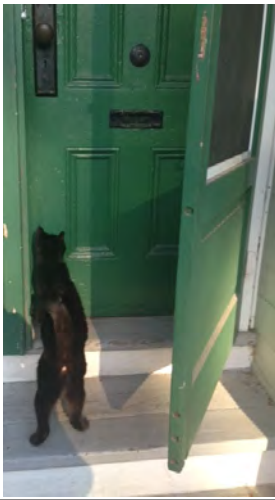
J. Overton, Australia



## Lulu -

Can Bella come out to play?

S. Hopkins, Dublin



## Amico -

Will I ever get the hang of this?

S. Teti, USA



## Samson -

Don't worry Amico, in time you will develop your own technique.

A. O'Reagan, Cork



# The Catwalk

## Dief -

Put your left paw in,  
your right paw out  
and pee all about...

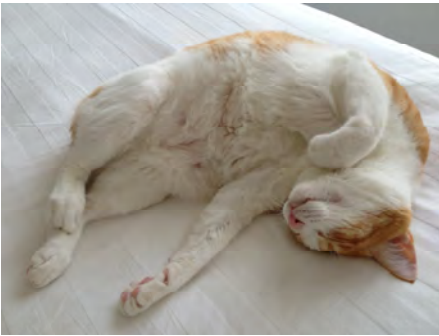
K. Sluiters, Dublin



## Rory -

Rory at his most energetic

L. Bannon, China



## Joanna -

The sleeping bug got me.....

W. Brennan, Dublin



## MooGoo -

The Tsetse fly got all of us!

M. Hehir, Dublin





### Ten Year Old Burmese Alan Gets A Stent

A cat's life was saved by an innovative operation that has only before been carried on human heart patients. Ten-year-old Burmese Alan was fitted with a metal stent after he was rushed to the vets with life-threatening breathing problems. Veterinary surgeons re-opened Alan's collapsed windpipe in a £4,000 operation that is regularly carried on humans to open up blocked arteries.

The pet was rushed from his home in Skipton, North Yorkshire, all the way to surgeons at Dick White Referrals in Cambridge, Cambs. Despite the high cost of the operation, Alan's owner, Ian Mills, said he was delighted with the outcome.

Mr Mills added: "We are so glad that we were referred to a centre able to offer this technique. "It cost around £4,000 but, given the expertise and equipment used, and the outcome achieved, we feel that it was money very well spent. We are delighted to have Alan back home with us."

Alan was diagnosed with tracheal stenosis (narrowing), described by the vets as "an uncommon condition". It left the poor moggy barely able to get oxygen through his windpipe - which had narrowed to just 2mm in some sections - to his lungs. Alan could have undergone surgery which may have left him with scar tissue causing further narrowing of the trachea, so vets tried a less invasive procedure used for some time in humans.

Vets used interventional radiology (IR), which uses imaging techniques to guide a mechanically woven stent (a wire mesh tube) made of a "memory-metal" alloy into the cat's windpipe. The nickel/titanium alloy can be formed into a variety of medically useful shapes for use in the body. Jon Wray, who performed the procedure, said: "The trickiest part, and the time of greatest jeopardy for Alan, was the moment that we had to pass the catheter through this very narrow gap in his windpipe. Not only was the tiny hole, surrounded by scarring, very difficult to manoeuvre but the windpipe had narrowed to the same size as the collapsed stent. Therefore, as soon as it was in place and until the stent was opened, we were completely blocking the airway. That's when 'cool-heads' are essential for all involved and it is fair to say that Alan wasn't the only one breathing more easily once the stent was open and his oxygen saturation, which had plummeted to life-threatening levels, rapidly climbed again."

The stent took just seconds to insert although Alan was on the operating table for around 30 minutes. Now he is recovering back at home and the cat should suffer from no further problems but he is on medication to reduce coughing associated with the stent. This technique has not been reported in cats elsewhere in the UK and the specialists at Dick White Referrals have been innovative in its application.

R. Bishop, [mirror.co.uk/news](http://mirror.co.uk/news) , March 2016



### Venus The Split Face Cat

The five-year-old tabby has taken the Internet by storm thanks to her unique face, which is black on one side and orange on the other. Her eyes are different too - her black side has a yellow one while her orange side has a blue one.

Venus boasts 913,000 likes on her Facebook page, is featured in dozens of YouTube videos and even has her own website selling Venus-related merchandise. She has also appeared in National Geographic magazine and starred on numerous US TV shows.

Venus's owners Christina and Chris got her from a dairy farm in North Carolina in 2009, where she was a stray. They fell in love with her at first sight because she looked like a mixture of their other two cats, an orange tabby and a black tuxedo. They brought Venus to the home they share with their three children in Florida, and were astonished that the line down her face was so distinct.

Quite how Venus looks the way she does has been the source of some speculation. - Leslie Lyons, a professor at the University of California, Davis, has said that Venus is 'extremely, extremely rare', but her appearance could be explained. Professor Lyons, who studies cat genetics, said her theory was that black coloration was randomly activated in all the cells on one side of her face while she was developing. The orange colouration was activated on the other and they met in the middle of her body while she was in the womb. The professor said she would like to carry out DNA testing with samples of skin from both sides of the cat. If her theory is right then Venus will have different DNA on the black side to the orange side.

Other geneticists have speculated that Venus was the product of two embryos. - Virginia Papaioannou, a Columbia University Professor of Genetics and Development, has said that this would result in irregular genetic combinations. Venus's eyes are different colours because of a white spotting gene, which is also responsible for the white patches on her coat and her paws. According to Professor Papaioannou, the gene affects Venus' eyes differently and has left the blue one with no pigment.

Dailymail.co.uk December 2015 & photo



### Is Your Cat Obese?



Obesity in cats is a direct result of owner over-indulgence, biologically inappropriate diets, and lack of adequate exercise. Sadly, obesity in pets causes many of the same painful, debilitating, and life-shortening diseases overweight humans suffer from, including diabetes, arthritis, kidney disease, and diminished quality of life. It is possible to help your cat get fit. Below are two tips for getting couch-potato cats up and moving.

The first thing you should do for your chunkster is evaluate the food she's consuming. A balanced, portion-controlled, species-appropriate diet will not only help your cat lose weight, it will improve her overall health and well-being for the long haul.

Additional recommendations for getting your cat more active include investing in a cat tree or tower and a few interactive toys; engaging your cat with low-tech amusements like ping-pong balls; thinking of ways to add exercise into everyday routines like mealtime; and getting your cat involved in feline agility, even if it's right in your own home.

Dr Becker, Mercola.com, August 2014

### 10 Things Even Owners May Not know About Cats

- 1. Cats are constructed a bit like ragdolls** - The pelvis and shoulders are only loosely attached to your cat's spine, which is part of what makes cats so flexible and able to squeeze into tight spaces.
- 2. Cats really do land on their feet (but not always)** - It's called the "righting reflex." When a cat is falling, he is able to orient himself in mid-air so that he lands on his feet. The fall has to be at least a foot in height, but some cats have survived falls off 7-story buildings. This could be because they tend to spread their bodies out to increase drag. This doesn't mean your cat can't be hurt in a fall.
- 3. Cats are only awake one-third of the day** - The average cat sleeps about 16 hours a day. That's because as an obligate carnivore, your cat is designed for intense, brief bursts of energy to catch prey, followed by a meal, followed by a long period of rest to prepare for the next hunt.
- 4. Cats spend one-third of their awake-time grooming themselves** - Cats spend about 30 percent of their waking hours in grooming activities.
- 5. Cats use their mouths to smell things** - When a cat smells an odor, opens her mouth slightly, crinkles her nose and pulls back her upper lip, she is doing something called a "flehming" response. She's drawing in air, capturing the scent, and moving it to her vomeronasal organ or Jacobson's organ, which is a small sac located high up in the roof of the mouth. The vomeronasal organ traps the odor molecules and sends info to the cat's brain regarding the scent.
- 6. Cats are sharp-tongued** - Cats' tongues are actually covered with tiny, rear-facing barbs. These little protrusions have several jobs to do, including helping your cat lap up water and pull food into her mouth. Another thing those tiny tongue barbs do is help your cat groom herself efficiently by scraping away loose fur and debris on the skin.
- 7. The eyes have it** - Cats have the largest eyes relative to their size of any mammal. In addition, their pupils can grow bigger, smaller, and change size faster than the pupils of many other mammals. This allows your cat to see well in varying levels of light, and especially in the dark.
- 8. Whiskers, whiskers everywhere** - You may think cats have whiskers only on their cheeks, but they can also have them on their chins, eyebrows, and front legs. A cat's whiskers are sensitive touch receptors that help orient her body in space, and let her know when, and when not to try to squeeze through an impossibly small opening. It's important never to cut your cat's whiskers as she can become disoriented and less able to navigate her environment.
- 9. Healthy cat kidneys are remarkable organs** - Cats are designed to get most of their water requirement from their food, and their kidneys – when healthy – help out by producing highly concentrated urine. It's extremely important to feed your cat a high quality (human grade), species-appropriate, moisture-dense diet (not kibble) so that his kidneys remain healthy throughout his life.



#### 10. Cats walk on their toes

Also, when they walk or run, rather than a left-right or right-left movement, they move both left legs, then both right legs.

Dr Becker, Mercola.com, May 2015



## Working Cats Over the Years

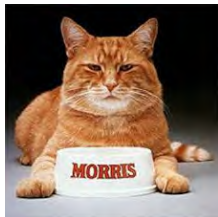


You may not expect your cat to earn its keep, but many cats are kept as working animals and some of them have even been put on official payroll. Undoubtedly, the greatest and most popular job for a cat is chief mouser. Nini, a large white tomcat, became a great friend of regulars at a coffee shop in Venice in the 1890s. Moonlighting from his day job as a mouser at the café, Nini would regularly make the short journey to the Venetian State Achieve, where he would take a nap and act as a deterrent to stop mice nibbling the papers. He also regularly call in at the Frari Church and so gained a reputation for both being devout and learned. A visitor's book, kept by the church and signed by his admirers, included entries by a pope, a czar, a king and queen of Italy, and most famously, the composer Giuseppe Verdi who even added a few notes from his opera La Traviata.

Achieve and library work has been a popular occupation for cats for thousands of years. There are records of their participation going back as far as the earliest Christian monasteries and the temples of the Far East, where precious scrolls needed protection from the ravages of mice. More recently, between 1908 and 1929, scholars from all over the world met Mike, the museum cat in the British Library. Mike was introduced to the museum as a kitten, by the resident reading-room cat, Mr Jack. Who one day dropped him at the feet of the Keeper of Egyptian Antiquities. As Mike grew up he began to share the duties of the museum's gatekeeper. Taking himself and his job very seriously, he would allow only the gatekeeper and the Egyptologist to stroke or pet him - maintaining the utmost professionalism with the other members of staff. Apart from moussing, Mike entrapped the pigeons that fouled the museum grounds. He would catch one and take it, wings flapping, to the museum staff, who would give him a titbit and let the pigeon go. Sadly there is no cat currently employed there today.



Traditionally, post offices have also been common places to find working cats. Tommy, of Hartford Connecticut, was an American post office cat. He extended his skills by learning tricks, which he preformed for an enthusiastic audience at a benefit concert in order to raise money for mailmen. Another cat, Fang, a heavyweight white long hair, served the community of Grand Prairie Texas as the official police cat and had his own ID, complete with photo.



Some cats are drawn to preform in the world of arts. In the US Morris, a large ginger tom, started life modestly in a Chicago animal shelter and went on to visit the White House and star in a Hollywood, movie. However the highlight of his career came when he won a special 'Patsy' - the animal version of an Oscar for his work in commercials. More famous even than Morris was another ginger cat called Orangey, who twice won a Patsy - first for his role in Rhubarb in 1951 and then for appearing in Breakfast at Tiffney's ten years later. He also regularly appeared on television.



Orangey in Breakfast At Tiffney's



Said to be Mourka

On a more serious note, the incredible occupation of a cat called Mourka during World War II was far removed from Hollywood luxury, although no less exciting and perhaps for more admirable. During the battle of Stalingrad, Mouka risked life and limb in order to carry messages regarding enemy positions from a group of Russian scouts back to their headquarters. Other felines may have an easier life but dedication to duty, such as that shown by Mourka, is the hallmark of the working cat.

99 Lives, Howard Loxton

Photos - Nini, Mike, Mourka - pur-n-fur.org.uk , Morris - buzzfeed.com & Orangey - everythingaudrey.com

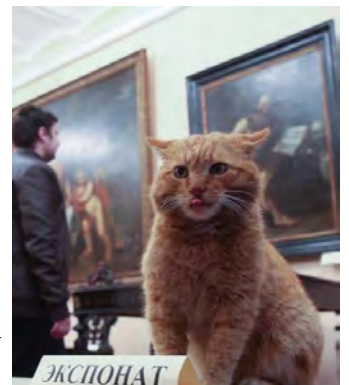
**Related to the article above; this has just come in from the press.....**

### Museum's Prank Went Wrong

In 2014 Maray started hanging around the Serpukhov Museum of History and Art in Serpukhov Russia. He was taken in by staff and named Anna Maraeva, the cat loving ex-owner of the museum's building. For the last couple of years he as acted a official greeter to the visitors.

Last month, the staff of the museum thought it'd be funny to use Maray as an April Fool's day joke. They wrote his job application letter and sent a press release to local media saying they had accepted his application.

Unfortunately the media took the press release seriously and began contacting the museum for information about the employed cat. So staff decided to make the appointment real, and declared him their official doorman. Maray works from 9 to 5 each day with a break for lunch and a springtime walk. He even has a tent to sleep in at night.



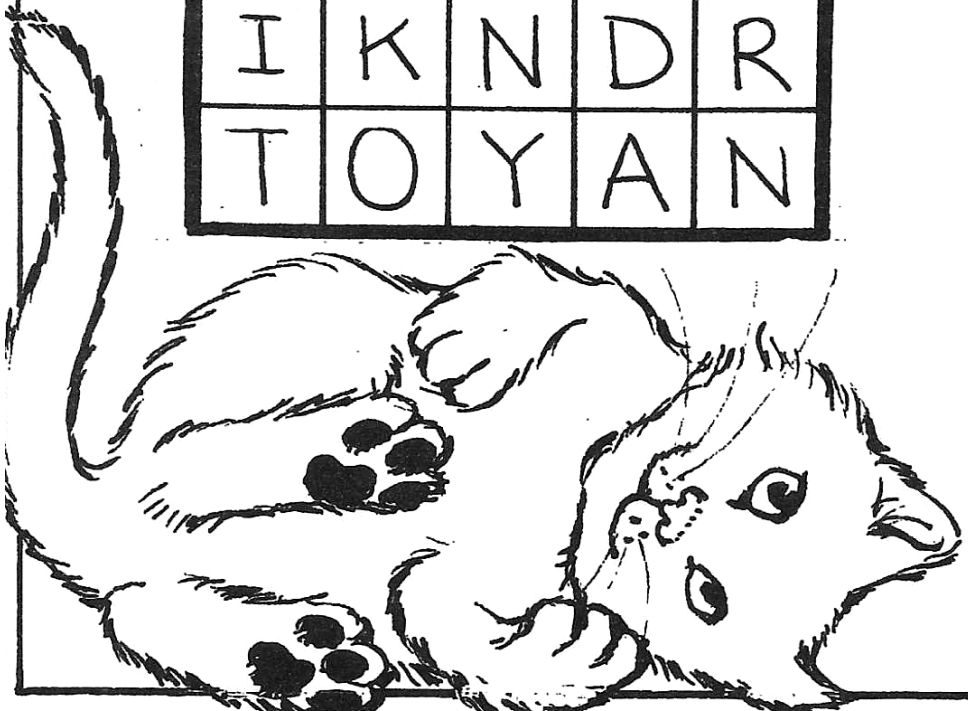
www.buzzfeed.com April 2016

see page 16 for another Russian cat in the news



## KIT'S KORNER

B	P	C	T	N
U	C	A	B	Y
G	S	T	F	A
I	K	N	D	R
T	O	Y	A	N



Find and circle the name of three of the kitty's favourite things.  
Also circle the type of animal kitty is.

## 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 Has 90% Of The Vote To Be Russian City Major

Tired of the dog-eat-dog politics in their Russian city, the residents of Barnaul say they want a cat to be their next mayor. The Siberian city of 650,000 people, which lies 1,800 miles east of Moscow, is to get a new mayor next week when a commission comprising the city council and the regional governor choose from among six candidates. But none of the six appear to spark much affection among Barnaul's residents. An informal online poll asking residents to express their preferences among the six and a

Siamese cat named Barsik showed the feline nabbing more than 90% of the vote.

Barsik has attracted much amused attention in the Russian news media. Still, some local politicians understand there's a more serious message coming from the people of Barnaul, which like many Russian cities has been riddled with alleged corruption. "Through the image of Barsik the cat, our people are sending definite wishes to the future head of Barnaul," regional Gov. Alexander Karlin says. "The conclusion has been made that there's absolutely no trust among voters for any of the candidates," says local Communist Party official Ivan Karpov.

Newser Editors & Wire Services December 2015

## Little Known Cat Ailments

Having conquered cat flu, triumphed over tapeworm and braved behavioural quirks, it is time to focus attention on some oft-observed, but little-documented, afflictions of cats.

### Bed Hogging

**Symptoms:** The cat spreads to take up all available free bed space at night. It then expands a bit more until any human occupants occupy the smallest possible area of bed. It may do this on top or underneath the covers or on the pillow. It is highly contagious - any other cats on the bed will also develop symptoms of bed-hogging.

**Treatment:** The most obvious solution is to evict the cat from the bed. If this is morally unfeasible, train yourself not to give way as the cat expands. Buying a bigger bed is probably pointless as most affected cats can easily expand to fill standard, queen-sized and king-sized beds. Otherwise, simply train yourself to sleep while hanging precariously off the side of the bed. Attacks of bed-hogging have been known to last up to 23 hours (in one case a 3-day attack was noted by a cat-owner who was confined to bed with flu; the cat thoughtfully kept her company during this time).



## A Poem - Two Little Kittens

Two little kittens, one stormy night,  
Began to quarrel, and then to fight;  
One had a mouse, the other had none,  
And that's the way the quarrel begun.

'I'll have that mouse,' said the biggest cat;  
'You'll have mouse?' We'll see about that!'  
'I will have that mouse,' said the eldest son;  
'You shan't have that mouse,' said the little one.

I told you before 'twas a stormy night  
When these two little kittens began to fight;  
The old woman seized her sweeping broom,  
And swept the two kittens right out of the room.

The ground was covered with frost and snow,  
And the two little kittens had nowhere to go;  
So they laid them down on the mat at the door,  
While the old woman finished sweeping the floor.

Then they crept in, as quiet as mice,  
All wet with snow, and as cold as ice,  
For they found it was better, that stormy night,  
To lie down and sleep than to quarrel and fight.

Anonymous (C. 1879)



Answers from page 15

Answers from page 5

Bug, cat, toy, yarn

1 - A, 3-5 years (contrast this with around 15 years for indoor cats?)

3 - B, 18 (five in the front paws and four in the rear = 18)

4 - A, just over 2 months

5 - C

### From "A Cat's Little Instruction Book" - No 145

Try to avoid sitting around with your tongue sticking halfway out of your mouth; it tends to make you look slightly loopy.