

# The Scratching Post



**SABCCI Newsletter - Autumn 2010**

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



# The Scratching Post

## Autumn 2010 - Contents

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### SABCCI Committee

Chairman – Tony Forshaw  
Vice Chairman – Karen Sluiters  
Secretary – Gloria Hehir  
Treasurer – Alison Kinsella  
Ronnie Brooks, Elizabeth Flood, Alice Forshaw, Hugh Gibney,  
Aedamair Kiely, Sue Middleton, Annie Murphy    Membership Secretary - Betty Dobbs



### Catnip - Did You Know



The catnip plant contains an oil called heptalactone which does for cats what marijuana does to some people. Not every cat gets "high" from catnip. Whether or not a cat responds to it depends upon a recessive gene: no gene, no joy.

Catnip can affect lions and tigers as well as house cats. It excites them because it contains a chemical that resembles an excretion of the dominant female's urine.

## Editorial

Welcome to the Autumn 2010 issue of The Scratching Post.

The Scratching Post is on the SABCCI website **www.sabcci.com** in colour, under the menu heading 'News Plus'. Please let us know if you would prefer to read The Scratching Post on the website instead of by receiving it by post.

Breffni House Pets in Dundrum once again has given us sponsorship so many thanks to them.

So if you're ready, sit back, have a double espresso with a hint of cinnamon and ENJOY! Karen and Gloria ^..^

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

### SABCCI Show Reminder

The 57th SABCCI Championship Show will be held on the 17th of October in Knocklyon Community Centre, Knocklyon.

There will be a Speakers Corner in the afternoon, interesting stalls, a Tombola (see bottom of page), and most of all Cats of all breeds!

Doors open to the public at 12:00 and Best In Show judging starting from 4:00pm

See you there!



### SABCCI at Pet Expo 2010 - 'Cat World'



SABCCI exhibited at the Pet Expo's 'Cat World' on the first day of the Expo last June. A special thank you to the cats on show who gave up their time - Pushkin, Muriel, Robbi, Chan, Chikara, Mocho and to the humans - Karen Sluiters (who organized all), Georgina Goodison, Aedamair Kiely, Peter Unger for bringing their feline stars and Gloria Hehir who manned the SABCCI information table.

### 2010 SABCCI Show Tombola

We really need to raise funds for the Club to help keep costs for exhibitors and everybody as low as possible, and Betty Dobbs has kindly agreed to look after a show tombola for us this year. If anybody has any nice unwanted gifts or similar, could they please drop them into Betty or any committee member well in advance of the show. Many thanks for your co-operation and support.

## Stress In Cats

Cats in their natural habitat will seek to avoid or evade sources of stress. However, when living with humans as part of a household, cats are compromised by owner perceptions, which can lead to stress and associated health and behavioural problems.

Common owner imposed compromises include forcing cats to share in unrelated groups and to share important resources such as feeding stations, toilet areas, access and resting places. Humans also tend to deny cats the opportunity to hide or retreat from sources of stress. As a ground living species it is also stressful for cats to be lifted up and restrained. Lifting up repeatedly will deny the cat the opportunity to implement the flight and defence mechanisms normally employed and many will respond with aggression in order to be released.

So what are the consequences of stress on the cat? You probably are aware of the acute signs of stress but often the signs of chronic stress are overlooked. There can be physiological changes associated with chronic stress, e.g. Hair loss and FIC (Feline Idiopathic Cystitis). Although FIC is also associated with food and certain long haired breeds the correlation with stress should not be forgotten nor the interaction between these factors. Stress leads to chemical changes within the cat e.g. increased cortisol levels, and these chemical changes can lead to bladder problems and gastrointestinal conditions. Disease can also be an indicator of stress, as stress lowers the immune system, which results in repeated ill health. Often the recurrent ill health not only requires veterinary intervention but also a behavioural consultation to identify the social and environmental stressors within the home and neighbourhood environment. One example is Glossodynia (burning mouth syndrome) which is prevalent in Burmese cats, which although raising the question of a hereditary susceptibility, is also related to stress in multi cat households.

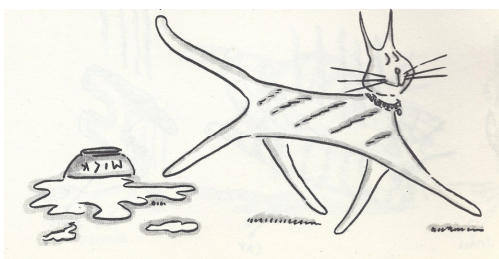
Chronic stress can lead to welfare as well as clinical concerns. In general the cat population can be divided into 2 categories with regard to stress: active and passive responders. Active responders are those cats which respond to stress by marking behaviours, increasing their activity levels and increased inter-cat tensions with associated vocalisations and aggressive displays. This again can lead to infectious disease and injuries through fighting.

The passive responders often go unnoticed. In passive responders there is a decrease in activity and an increase in sleep. These cats are often withdrawn socially and physically which can lead to obesity. FHS or feline hyperaesthesia (rippling skin syndrome) is an inherited tendency for mania precipitated by stress. Certain oriental breeds are more susceptible to FHS and its expression does seem to be stress-linked. Passive responders deal with stress with what can be considered obsessive/compulsive behaviours: excessive grooming which can also lead to hair loss, hiding, the ease at which the cat startles and wariness of other cats are also indicators of chronic stress. The boldness trait has shown to be inherited and it may be that certain breeds may have lower levels of "boldness" which leaves them predisposed to become passive responders to stress.

Look carefully at the cats in your household. Do they avoid looking at the other cats in the room? Such cats are likely to be stressed by this situation.

Owners can often miss the telltale signs because the management of resources especially food requires the cats to congregate in one area. Cats appear to be Ok because they eat together. However, food is extremely important and the cats are tolerating such proximity in order to eat. Cats are solitary eaters but often owners provide communal feeding areas or worse shared double bowls forcing the cats into unwanted proximity. Multi-cat households do not operate as one group of many cats but consist of many groups and/or solitary cats, which can be determined by watching affiliative behaviour patterns such as allogrooming and alorubbing. The number of groups should then determine the number of resources available. Owners that attempt to force affiliative behaviour by feeding will only cause chronic stress in some or all of the cats.

Jim Stephens - MSc. CAB (Companion Animal Behaviour Counsellor), [www.petsbehave.com](http://www.petsbehave.com) [info@petsbehave.com](mailto:info@petsbehave.com) 01-4949 800  
See Jim at the SABCCI Show in the Speakers Corner



### Law of Cat Dignity

**All cats maintain the maximum of grace & dignity -  
no matter what their situation**

## The Household Pet -

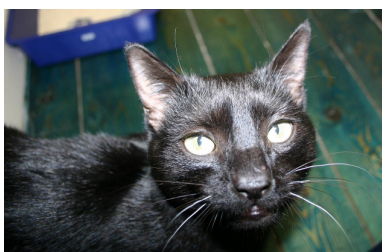


### A Multi Cat Household of Just Plain Ordinary Moggies – Our Experience

Meet our four cats and two dogs, Tigger, Jack, Taj, Neo (The Cats) Sam and Shep (The Dogs). All adopted from the Dublin SPCA except for Neo who was rescued on our way home from the pub one night when he was thrown from a car.

We would like to say we are feline crazy people. It all started when I met Larry and realised a shared passion for cats. Our growing family live quite happily together and although it can be costly and challenging at times, we wouldn't have it any other way.

Tigger was adopted with her brother Spider just over 6 years ago but sadly we lost Spider when he was hit by a car on our busy road. I swore I would never get another pet again as the pain of losing a pet was so great but then on a visit to the DSPCA it was hard to resist little Jack and Taj. They were the last of two litters. Tigger was not too impressed when we brought home two little kittens and after just a short time we realised Tigger and Taj were just never going to see eye to eye. Taj is a tiny cat and shy's away from everything. She feels comfortable with Jack.

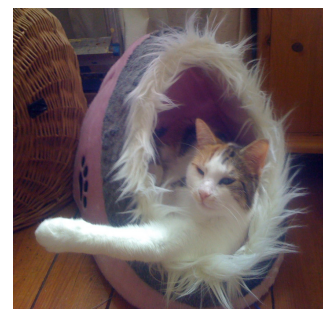


To make life easier for all our cats and with their safety in mind we built an outdoor run. Tigger has always enjoyed freedom to come and go from the house and to travel around our neighbourhood. She is well able for outdoor life and has a lot of road sense. Jack and Taj enjoy the best of both worlds spending time outdoors in our safe run and tucked up in our bedroom at night. Sometimes they love to spend the odd summer night out in their run catching flies and listening to all the night sounds.

Shortly after adopting Jack our vet found that he had a very serious heart condition. There is no cure for his condition and it will shorten his life. He is on long term medication, five tablets a day. The outdoor run provides the perfect safe environment he needs.

Having many cats in the house is not the easiest but over the years we have learned how to deal with difficult situations. Tigger doesn't get on with all the other cats, while Neo and Jack have a good relationship. Taj only enjoys Jack's company so it often means playing musical rooms and keeping doors shut. They all have their own areas they can hide away in and sleep. It's not always easy to keep peace but they have all learned to live with each other.

It's really important to keep a good food and water source for each animal in their area so they won't feel they have to compete for food. We have lots of litter trays in each room as well. We find keeping scratching posts in all the rooms helps too.



When it comes to booking kennels we have to make sure to book 3 separate kennels so there won't be any fights. Going on holidays has to be well planned in advance so that we can make sure they all have a secure kennel. Thankfully we have wonderful kennels who will look after our pets like their own and make sure they get all their medications.

Our two German Shepherds make great friends for our cats and really it's a lovely sight to see them all sleeping in their beds at night. I won't lie it takes a lot of work, love and huge commitment but the rewards are great. The DSPCA are inundated with cats and kittens at the moment so please consider rescuing a little moggie or

two. They make wonderful companions. You can visit the DSPCA at [www.dspca.ie](http://www.dspca.ie).

Audrey Whelan 🐾





## Sleeping with your Cat

Cats are warm and cuddly and generally fun to snuggle with. You probably know that already. You probably also know that even though they are warm and cuddly, sometimes they are not fun to sleep with. That is because they are nocturnal animals and like to wait until you are on the verge of sleep before starting to clean themselves, and race around trying to catch their tails and dragging dead cigarette butts and other little surprises into bed to bury under the sheets.

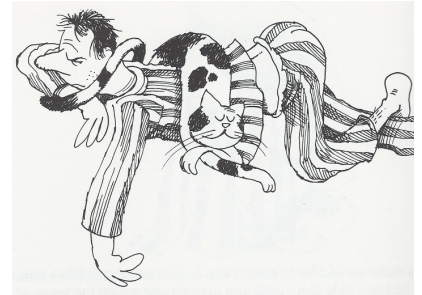
And every time you wake up and try to catch them so you can throw them through the window, they race under the bed and hide there until you give up and are on the verge of sleep again, then race out and begin all over.

When the hairy little beggar finally does settle down (usually about the first light), it decides to do it in the exact middle of the bed so you cannot stretch your legs, or on your pillow so every time you roll over, you get a mouth full of hair.

Let's take it one problem at a time. Your first is getting your cat to settle down.

**Getting Your Cat to Settle Down:** Of course, the easy way out is to put sleeping pills into your cat's midnight snack. In fact, short of wrapping your cat in a size 11 black sock, this is the only way out. Do it. But don't let your cat have a nightcap. It could be dangerous.

**Positioning Your Cat:** Once your cat has settled down, you have to decide where to put it in the bed. In the middle is no good and on the pillow is no good, both for reasons already mentioned. Under the pillow might be okay, except if the sleeping pill wears off before you wake up, the cat will think it is an Edgar Allen Poe story and go bananas, probably clawing your face down to your brains trying to escape. You do not want this to happen. Under the covers is no good for the same.



The only solution really, is to buy a dog basket and put a soft pad in it and sleep in there and let the cat sleep wherever it wants.

Source: Games to Play With Your



## Keeping Your Cat Safe At Christmas

Before we know it Christmas will be upon us. It is an exciting time for all. However it can be a dangerous time for you cat. See some tips below to help to ensure your cat is safe over the Christmas period.



**Trees** - Real Christmas tree are more dangerous than the plastic ones. The needles can puncture internal organs if eaten. They can also be toxic to cats. Always ensure the tree has a solid base and won't be easily knocked over by the cat. Also try not to have the tree next to shelves the cats would have been use to jumping on to.

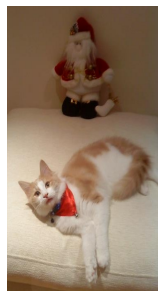
### Decorations/Wrappings -

- Tinsel can be very dangerous to your cat. If eaten, the tinsel can move down to the intestines and cause a blockage.
- Artificial snow is toxic to cats.
- Wrapping and Ribbons - The same as tinsel.



**Food** - Chocolate contains caffeine and theobromine both of which is toxic. If you suspect the cat has eaten chocolate look for signs of restlessness and vomiting.  
- Do not give your cat turkey or chicken bones as bones can splinter and get lodges in the cats mouth.

**Plants** - Holly and Mistletoe are popular plants at Christmas time. As these are toxic to cats, they should be placed where it can not be got to by the cat. Poinsettias were taken off the list some time ago however better to be safe than sorry.



## Cats In The News -



### Irish Expert Fits Cat's Bionic Paws

Oscar the 'bionic' cat has regained a spring in his step following ground-breaking surgery to fit him with a pair of prosthetic paws. The two-and-a-half-year-old lost eight of his nine lives after his rear paws were amputated by a combine harvester as he basked in the sunshine.

Thanks to bioengineering work by Surrey-based neuro-orthopaedic surgeon Noel Fitzpatrick, originally from Mountmellick, Co Laois, he has gained new feet in a world-first operation. The revolutionary design of the feet uses custom-made implants to "peg" the ankle to the foot and mimics the way in

which deer antler bone grows through skin.

Oscar's road to recovery began after his local vet from St Saviour in Jersey referred his owners, Kate and Mike Nolan, to Fitzpatrick Referrals in Eashing, south of London. Following his accident last October, Oscar's life-threatening injuries had to be treated first and a course of antibiotics administered before surgery could be contemplated.

Working with a team from University College London, Dr Fitzpatrick pioneered the use of the weight-bearing prosthetic implants, combining engineering mechanics with biology. Dr Fitzpatrick's bioengineering work has earned him plaudits across the world and seen him fit an artificial knee to a cat named Missy who was mown down by a hit-and-run driver. The work of Dr Fitzpatrick will feature as part of a six-part BBC One documentary series, *The Bionic Vet*.

Source - [hnews@herald.ie](mailto:hnews@herald.ie)

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## Purrfect Solution for DART Cat

The country's most adventurous tabby cat has just been issued with her very own DART travel smartcard -- just in case she strays again.

Cat commuter Lilou, who caused a sensation after sneaking on board a DART train only to travel half way across the capital, has now been issued with her own official 'licence' to wander.

Last time, railway officials let her off with a warning over the unpaid fare, but next time they'll expect the six-month-old cat to be fully paid up on account of having her own smartcard depicting a slightly startled moggy.

Word quickly spread on the internet that an adventurous cat had snuck on to the train in Malahide and was found in Pearse Station on Wednesday.

She was joyfully reunited with her owner -- Malahide based restaurant manager Eric Bieci -- who revealed the young cat was now happily sleeping at home after her exhausting travels.

Irish Rail spokesman Barry Kenny revealed it was highly unusual to find a cat venturing on to the DART, but their canine compadres often proved far more adventurous.

"The odd time you might see a dog run on to the DART but it is just not a cat thing to do," he said. "The cat just sauntered on to the DART at Malahide and was sitting up on the seat. "She seemed to befriend passengers on the journey and a woman handed her over to staff at Pearse Station."

Source – Irish Independent.ie - August 28 2010



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## Did You Know -

The inspiration for the poem *Rainbow Bridge*, is generally acknowledged to come from an ancient Norse legend. Bifroast, the rainbow bridge was a bridge the gods used to travel to and from earth, and where worthy Norse warriors crossed into Valhalla.





## The 20th Supreme Show



The 20<sup>th</sup> Supreme Show was held on 25<sup>th</sup> April 2010 at Roadstone Group Social Club, Kingswood. We had a respectable entry of 99 cats with a wide range of breeds represented.

The Supreme always involves more work than Club Shows as it is all done 'by hand' rather than using a computer firm, but this year presented more challenges than usual; a week before the Show we had a volcano eruption and as all flights in and out of the country were cancelled I had no judges! Two of our judges offered to put themselves to tremendous trouble to get over by ferry – Mr Trotter being prepared to travel by train from the other side of England and Mrs Prowse prepared to make a 5 hour car journey to the ferry; together with the judges living in Ireland we had a 'plan B', which mean, we could have held a partial Show although certain breeds could not be covered. So up till the Tuesday I had no idea which plan I would be following. I was a bit surprised at how little re-action I got from the exhibitors, perhaps they didn't realise the judges flew in but I was most relieved as life was pretty hectic at the time.

Just to keep the adrenaline going, at 8am Show morning my husband rang to say one of my girls had gone into labour early and as she'd had problems last time, he was pretty upset at the timing. Luckily we had a surfit of Show Managers at the Show so once the judging started I flew home to play midwife.

Apart from that everything went pretty smoothly, including the introduction of a 'Speakers Corner' which was very popular, run by Karen Sluiters. We had Maura Lenihan giving a grooming demonstration, behavioural specialist Jim Stephens and a talk on holistic treatments by Mary Gallagher; the gate was down but there was a golf tournament on as well at the venue, which affected us.

I'd like to give all my thanks to the many people who help to make any show a success but won't name names as I'd hate to miss anyone out; having said which I have to say a very special thanks to Betty and Gloria who stayed to the bitter end to help me take down the Show – you're stars! And Tony, who fell while taking down the outside notices – hope you're back on your feet (literally)

Ronnie Brooks, Show Manager

PS Next year will be the 21<sup>st</sup> Supreme, so any ideas on ways to celebrate this special occasion would be most Welcome.







## The 20th Supreme Show



### The Overall Best in Show

was judged by Mr George Gow and was won by:  
John Archer's beautiful Singapura INT GR CH SHADANZA TANZANITE

### Best in Show Non-Ped

Hayde's Cream Tabby BAILEY

### Best of Varieties

#### Persian

**Adult** – Craig & Bell's Exotic SHEERBLISS DREAMCATCHER

**Kitten** – McCarthy's Exotic SHEERBLISS HAYLEYS COMET

**Neuter** – Gueyden's Exotic HINCHKITZ MICHELLE

#### Semi-Long Hair

**Adult** – Saville's COOONTASTIC TANGERINE DREAM

**Kitten** – Neretti & Gibbons' Ragdoll POPPYLOVE SCORPION KING

**Neuter** – Callan & Russell's Maine Coon SUP GR PR &INT PR ISHCUS RED DEVIL

#### British

**Adult** – O'Sullivan's British Cream CH SLIABH NASTY NIC

**Neuter** – Callan & Russell's Silver Tabby GR PR &INT PR GRAYGEES MR SIMPSON

#### Foreign

**Adult** – Archer's Singapura INT GR CH SHADANZATANZANITE

**Kitten** – Dunne's Usual Abyssinian MYABYGEM BABIANA

**Neuter** – Dmtriyeva's Bengal DOBSHANGRILA DICE

#### Burmese

**Adult** – Sluiters' Cream TEAROHA ALDEBIZ ROBBEDOES

**Kitten** – Lenihan's Tortie COOMAKISTA PORTRAITOFA GIRL

**Neuter** – Sluiters' Lilac TARA GR CH ALDEBIZ GINCHIKARA

#### Oriental

**Kitten** – Shannon's Foreign White ITIHAT CHRISTIANNE

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**Derivations of Words - Pedigree** - One school of thought: When a genealogist drew up a family tree, the ancestral lines of descent were marked by an arrow-like symbol. To some this looked like the foot of a crane, which in Old French was rendered *pie de gru*. In time the spelling was altered and the word was absorbed into the English language where it came to refer to the family tree.

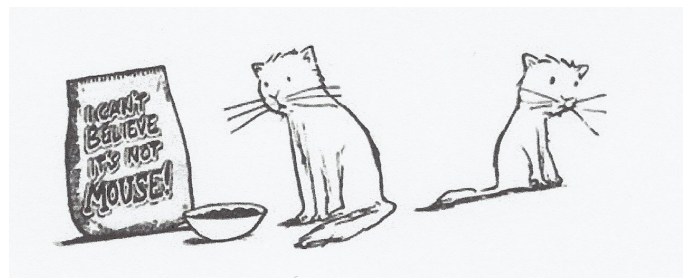
From: Lock, Stock and Barrel Familiar Sayings and Their Meanings.

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**If** the claws didn't retract,  
Cats would be like Velcro.

Bruce Fogle

9



# The Catwalk

Bella -



Really, the lengths a girl has to go to just to get a drink!!

S. Middleton, Dublin

Gizmo -

Hey dude, just hanging in here



R. Butler, Dublin

Surya -

And what are **you** looking at?



G. Hehir, Dublin

# The Catwalk

**Puck -**



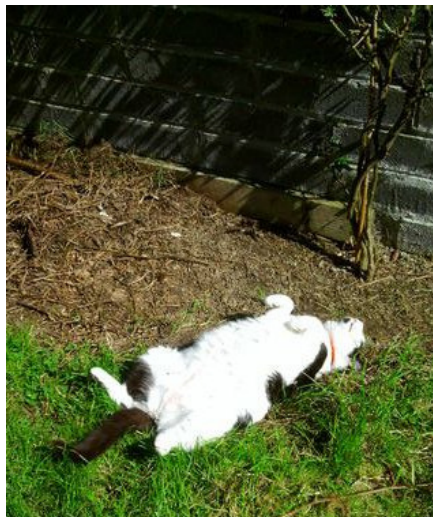
It's a bird,  
it's a plane,  
no it's Super  
Puck!!

S. Teti, USA

**Sophie -**

I love this weather

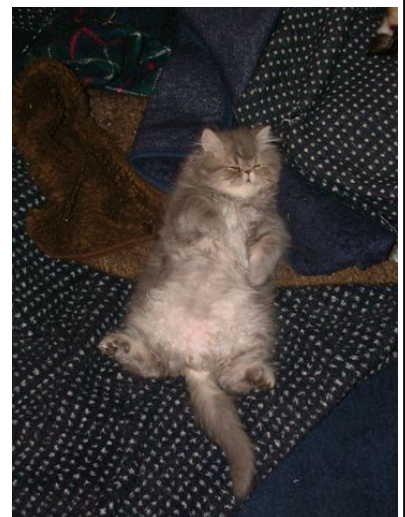
E. Flood, Wicklow



**MoJo -**

C'est la vie!

L. Leech, Dublin





## Quiz



1. What is a cat's normal body temperature?
  - A) 98.6 F
  - B) 100 F
  - C) 101.5 F
  - D) 103 F
2. What can a lion do that a bobcat cannot?
  - A) Swim
  - B) Jump
  - C) Roar
  - D) Sprint
3. Which variety of cat is naturally tailless?
  - A) Maine Coon
  - B) Devon Rex
  - C) Abyssinian
  - D) Manx
4. Where in history were death sentences given to anyone who killed a cat?
  - A) Egypt
  - B) France
  - C) Italy
  - D) China
5. What is the Latin name of the domestic cat?
  - A) Feline Catus
  - B) Felis Catus
  - C) Felix Catus
  - D) Canis Felinus

answers page 13

### News Flash - Coventry Woman Now Charged In Relation to Cat Bin Dumping CCTV

A woman from Coventry who was filmed dumping a cat in a wheelie bin has been charged with animal cruelty offences. Mary Bale, of St Michael's Road, has been charged with causing unnecessary suffering to a cat and of not providing the animal with a suitable environment.

The incident happened in August and the RSPCA said it was taking the 45-year-old to court under the Animal Welfare Act of 2006.

She is due to appear before Coventry Magistrates Court on 19 October. The RSPCA said it had served Ms Bale with a court summons on Sunday BBC news online 20 September 2010.



### Does Your Cat Own You?



- Do you climb out of bed over the headboard or footboard, so you won't disturb the sleeping cat?
- Do you give your cat presents and a stocking at Christmas?
- Do you put off making the bed until the cat gets up?
- Do you have more than four opened but rejected cans of cat food in the refrigerator?
- Do you have pictures of your cat in your wallet? Do you bring them out when your friends share pictures of their children?

### From Pet Section in the Philly Inquirer, USA Aug '10

Kittens; cute,adorable \$60 each

Maine Coon kittens; CFA, Big & Fuffy \$600

CFA, vet checked, microchipped, \$400

Ragdoll; beautiful guaranteed. Home raised \$500

Siamese kittens; male &female, TICA, vet checked, 1st shot, \$500

**A** dog will sit beside you while you work. A cat will sit on the work.

Pam Brown



# Alzheimer's Disease in Cats

Ageing cats can develop a feline form of Alzheimer's disease, a new study reveals. Scientists at the Universities of Edinburgh, St Andrews, Bristol and California have identified a key protein which can build up in the nerve cells of a cat's brain and cause mental deterioration.

In humans with Alzheimer's disease, this protein creates 'tangles' inside the nerve cells which inhibit messages being processed by the brain. The team says that the presence of this protein in cats is proof that they too can develop this type of disease.

By carrying out post-mortem examination of cats which have succumbed naturally to the disease, scientists may now be able to uncover vital clues about how the condition develops. This may eventually help scientists to come up with possible treatments.

Scientists already thought that cats were susceptible to dementia because previous research had identified thick, gritty plaques on the outside of elderly cats' brain cells which are similar to those found in humans. But, by pinpointing this second key marker, the Edinburgh lead team says we can be sure that cats can suffer from a feline form of Alzheimer's.

Dr Danielle Gunn-Moore, at the University of Edinburgh's Royal Scotland (DICK) School of Veterinary Studies, said: 'This newly discovered protein is crucial to our understanding of the aging process in cats. We've known for a long time that cats develop dementia, but this study tells us that the cat's neural system is being compromised in a similar fashion to that we see in human Alzheimer's sufferers. The gritty plaques had only hinted that might be the case – now we know.'

'The shorter life-span of a cat, compared to humans, allows researchers to more rapidly assess the effects of the diet, high blood pressure, and prescribed drugs on the course of the disease. However, we also need to understand more about our geriatric cats for their own benefit, so we can slow down the degeneration the disease brings and keep them as happy cats for as long as possible.'

As with humans, the life expectancy of cats is increasing and with this longer life runs, the greater chance of developing dementia. Recent studies suggest that 28% of pet cats aged 11 to 14 years develop at least one old-age related behaviour problem and this increases to more than 50% for cats over the age of 15'

Experts suggest that good diet, mental stimulation and companionship can reduce the risk of dementia in both humans and cats. Dr Gunn-Moore explained; 'If humans and their cats live in a poor environment with little company and stimulation, they are both at higher risk of dementia. However, if the owner plays with the cat, it is good for both human and cat. A good diet enriched with antioxidants is also helpful in warding off dementia, so a cat owner sharing healthy meals like chicken and fish will benefit them both.'

Dr Frank Gunn-Moore, at the School of Biology, University of St Andrews, said; 'This work relied on a team effort with different skills and expertise from our different institutions. It has given us an insight into the molecular changes that are occurring in the degenerating brain. From this knowledge we are now currently trying to develop new and novel treatments which will be able to help both cats and humans'. December 2006.

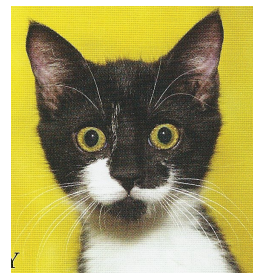
The findings of the study are published in an edition of the Journal of Feline Medicine. Source FAB (Feline Advisory Bureau) news – July 2010

## From "A Cat's Little Instruction Book" Lesson No 191

**Always enter a room with poise and confidence. If you accidentally slip or stumble, stop immediately and start licking yourself rigorously - it distracts would-be hecklers.**

### Answers to Quiz P.12

- 5 - B
- 4 - A
- 3 - D
- 2 - C
- 1 - C - 101, 5 to 102 F



## 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.

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### Tara Grand Premier Saralou Music Maker (Figaro)

16.10.1994 - 24.05.2010



Figaro was one of the last litter bred by Dorothy Halliday, and was certainly the last Saralou to win show titles. I called him after the famous opera character in deference to his registered name which suggested something with a musical connection, but not least because of his magnificent voice. I and a friend went to Ballinasloe to collect him in March 1995. Dorothy's bungalow had been recently carpeted and the hallway was covered with protective plastic. Figaro took one shocked look at us and tried to bury himself under the plastic. I realised then I had yet another Siamese with what I call 'the shy gene'.

For a number of years I had been keeping two boys as companions for each other while I was out at work. I already had Gr. Pr. Saralou Maestro (Robin) when his step-nephew Figaro came to live with us. They quickly accepted each other, and when I eventually lost the beloved Robin I looked for another little friend for Figaro. I bought a beautiful red-point from Kay and Ray Simpson in north-east England - Flutterby Dancing Flame, who sadly has also featured in *The Rainbow Bridge* since.

It may have been the different bloodlines, but they took a good three months to get used to each other. In time they ate together, slept together and generally looked out for each other. Being gentle natured (Flame was even shyer than Figaro) they never raised a paw to one another, but it was at times an uneasy friendship, demonstrated in a regular quaint little ritual. Figaro would take Flame by the scruff and stand over him, holding him down on his tummy.

Flame would then slowly turn over on his back in submission, seize Figaro's ear and lick it until it was shining wet. There was never any obvious provocation for this 'I-was-here-first' attitude, and it was done without any roughness, but I believe it showed a sign of stress in Figaro. About this time he developed irritable bowel which was to affect him for the rest of his life and would not respond to any treatments - steroids, homeopathy or whatever. On his brief sojourns for tests at the Cat Hospital in Glanmire he was always reported to be a perfect gentleman.

His final show appearance was in 2003 when he came out of retirement for SABCCI's 50th anniversary. He was runner-up in the special class for Golden Oldies.

After Flame's death from a suspected tumour, Figaro mourned him - searching all the rooms in the house, wailing and repeatedly coming back to me. I did not get another kitten, figuring it would stress him further rather than comfort him. Of course, he slept on my bed! Burrowed under the duvet, I would put out my hand on to his silky fur and hear instantly the deep-throated purr in response.

He started kidney failure some time in 2009, and although daily medication kept him happy for quite a while and bought him extra time, his deterioration in only two weeks became noticeable. I took him to the Cat Hospital with a heavy heart. We discussed the (very limited) options but it was obvious there could be no good outcome, and so his life was gently ended. My sincere thanks to vet Clare and nurse Lesley for their sensitive and understanding treatment of him (and of me!) Adieu sweet Figaro, I loved having your company. Margaret Baker

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





## KIT'S KORNER



It's too rainy for little Fluffy to go outside. But six of her friends are hidden in the picture. Find and Colour them all.

### Answers

Snail, rabbit, dog, squirrel, fish, snake

### **The Final Miaow**

As you can see we have come to the end 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. A very special thanks to Margret Baker for her continued support of the newsletter. We can always do with more photographs and stories, so please keep sending them in.

Many thanks to our sponsor **Breffni House Pets** who has supported SABCCI over the years

## **For All Your Pet Needs**

### **Breffni House Pets**



See you at the SABCCI show on the 17th of October

To all the Exhibitors, Best of Luck on Show Day!

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