



**TOUCHED BY AN ANIMAL  
CATS-ARE-PURRSONS-TOO**  
P.O. Box 59067  
Chicago, IL 60659  
www.touchedbyananimal.org



**OUR AUTUMN NEWSLETTER FOR YOU  
PURRSONALLY WITH LOVE, WITH THANKSGIVING.**



**Peekaboo – I see you!  
We're happy here at  
CATS-ARE-PURRSONS-TOO  
While we're waiting for  
ever-loving YOU!  
Want to come hear us mew?**



**AUTUMN** brings a **BURST** of **BEAUTY** and **GRATITUDE!**  
Our **CATS** are **BEAUTIFUL** and to **YOU**, we are **GRATEFUL.**

I am at the Chicago Botanic Garden musing about thoughts to share in this Mewsletter. Some of the trees are beginning to change leaf colors always a beautiful, captivating sight. And gardens are ablaze with deep hues of **reds, purple, orange, burgundy, and yellow.** Adding a pet to your family **changes the colors** of your life, your family, your heart. **What are the colors of empathy, of companionship, of unconditional love your purring friend brings you?**

**HEADLINE:** Chicago Tribune 9/02/21  
**"FURRY FRIENDS CHANGING CONCEPT OF 'FAMILY'"**  
 By Alejandra Canales, Dallas Morning News, quoting the 2021 published work of Sociologist, Andrea Laurent-Simpson and from the UCLA HEALTH BULLETIN, June 2021:  
**"During the isolating pandemic, companion animals certainly helped the elderly stave off the silent killer: Loneliness."**



For children and teenagers, pets are essential confidants, secret-holders, playmates, instilling confidence and responsibility, building a changing **kaleidoscope** of **personal colors.**



I see the exquisite changing colors of **Autumn**, and recall with great joy the heartening notes and photos our thoughtful adopters send to share the delights of surprising changes their adoptive cats bring. And I am **GRATEFUL** to all who work to make this happen – caring **STAFF, VOLUNTEERS, FOSTERS,** dedicated **RESCUERS,** skilled **VETERINARIANS,** loyal **SUPPORTERS, DONORS, ADOPTERS, FRIENDS.**

Did someone say, "It takes a village...?"  
 We have room in ours if you would like to join us in **TOUCHED BY AN ANIMAL'S MISSION.**



We want so very much to **THANK YOU** in person. **AT THIS TIME** we are **TENTATIVELY PLANNING,** Our Thanksgiving Brunch on Sunday, November 21, 2021. We hope you will **SAVE OUR DATE JOIN US TO CELEBRATE** We **HAVE SO MUCH TO APPRECIATE!** Covid & Variants we will **NOT TOLERATE!** Watch our Website and Facebook for **UPDATE** per CDC and IL Dept. of Health recommendations.





# AUTUMN NEWSLETTER



Autumn is my favorite season because of its abundance of life stored in the depth of colors and fertile earth, rampaging waterfalls and full waterbodies (sadly not so much in 2021—but providing a warning if humans are wise enough to heed it), animals, and wildlife scurrying to build or find protective winter homes.

I revel in the vibrant colors of the late summer landscape—quite different from that of early spring blossoms and mid-summer delicate beauty. Now it is flush with rich purples outlined with ermine white—colors of royalty cause me to THANK GOD for our little PRINCE and PRINCESS kittens, born this year and destined to live, and to give, regal lives after their rescue, pampering, and schooling at CATS-ARE-PURRSONS-TOO.



# ROYALTY IS IN FELINE DNA

*Gentle the Earth*

Here are some of the wise **Queens** and **Kings** who rule our **CATS-ARE-PURRSONS-TOO** palace. Some hold court for visitors, hoping to choose an adoptive servant-family, while others prefer to reign over our home as **lifetime** residents. Kittens are taught early by their mothers that cats were once worshipped as **Egyptian gods**; they must not let their humans forget that! (Fun fact: mother cats are called **QUEENS** by breeders).



**Aspen**



**Jimmy**



**Hattie**



**Paisley**



**Matzo**



**Max**



**Peanut**



**Paddy McGee**



**Jingle Bell**



**Carmella**



## Treasured Staff & Board of Directors

The bronzed yellow and russet orange flowers inspire MOST GRATEFUL THOUGHTS of our small daily staff who works nonstop through golden days of exhilarating joys and successes, gaining frightened cats' trust, medicating and soothing very sick felines, driving to our veterinarian, patiently working with inexperienced adopters, comforting older friends whose pet has died, meeting emergencies and even dangerous rescue situations, sometimes way after hours or on weekends. Many readers of our Spring-Summer Mewsletter expressed delight in "virtually meeting" our 7-person super-dedicated staff. They, and our dedicated Board members have the Midas touch that brings out the GOLD in our cats, kittens, and works of our Mission.

### Staff



**Marijon:** Founder 38 years ago, and continuing CEO, CFO, working from offsite office with communications, strategic planning, scheduling, mewsletter, P.R. writing and coordination of Mission tasks.



**Sue:** COO, House Needs Manager, Event Coordinator, General Assistant to staff and cats. 2021 is Sue's 26<sup>th</sup> anniversary of faithful service with Cats-Are-Purrsons-Too & Touched By An Animal. Couldn't do without you, Sue!



**Melanee:** Administrative Assistant, Chief of Staff, Adoption Counselor, Volunteer Coordinator, Surrogate Kitten Mom when needed. We gratefully celebrate Melanee's 6 years with us!



**Scott:** Offsite grant writer, researcher, archiver, graphics designer. Began working with TBA in 2017 as a house and cat caregiver.



**Mireya & Amanda:** Our hard working cat caregivers and house cleaners who keep our home, cages, and catio meticulously clean and welcoming for felines and visitors.



**Corinne:** Astute Vet Assistant who checks each feline resident weekly, notes changes, and advises as needed.

### Board Members

Our Mission-Focused Touched By An Animal Board of Directors and their professional advisory expertise:

- Andy Lukavsky** – Board Chairman, Systems Integration & Technology Specialist
- Julia Van Vliet** – Board Secretary, Banking Vice President, seeks and networks with new donors, mentors young Sunday volunteers.
- Jim Hill** – 15 years TBA accountant & financial advisor
- Dr. Ashley Rossman, DVM** – Provides wonderful medical care to our felines, specializing in holistic as well as traditional treatments.
- Cathie Hilton** – Board Treasurer, maintains files of incoming cats, adoptions, volunteers.
- Melanee Schoendorff** – Executive Director – Links us with day-to-day activities
- Sue Buzzo** – Chief Operating Officer
- Marijon Binder** – President, Founder, Historian

From the Gardens' prairie I look across the bridge and am fascinated by the shimmering silver leaves of trees which line the river bank. I reflect with **GRATITUDE** on how, through 38 years, our organization's dedicated workers and supporters have mined, refined, and polished to a lustrous silver the unique **MISSION, CORE VALUES,** and **CARING** pursuit of helping **PRECIOUS PETS** and their **BEAUTIFUL PEOPLE.**

**TOUCHED BY AN ANIMAL'S PRIMARY MISSION**  
*Helping people to keep their beloved pets in their homes, derives from our*

**CORE VALUES**  
*of respecting, valuing ALL living beings, and affirming the mutual love and healing benefits that humans and companion animals give each other by enabling people to keep their pets through health and financial challenges.*



**HOW DO WE CARRY OUT OUR MISSION?**

- We have pet food, litter, supplies, sent to people who need help.
- We will board cats (and arrange for foster care for dogs, birds) for people who must be hospitalized or in nursing/rehab facilities, or in transition from homelessness.
- For those in long-term facilities or hospice, we have volunteers take their beloved pet to visit the person or arrange for FaceTime visits.
- We do not ask for any payment from those in hardship, as they should not have to choose between care or relinquishment.
- We accept rescued abandoned cats and kittens as our space, finances, and help allow, providing all vet care, nurturing, and adoption counseling.

*Gentle the Earth*

**Our 38 Year History**  
 TOUCHED BY AN ANIMAL has grown from a grassroots neighbor-helping-neighbor group to a solid 501(c)(3) organization, continuing and expanding its unique Mission of helping people, especially the elderly and homeless, keep their companion animals, and caring for rescued cats in our home, where **CATS-ARE-PURRSONS-TOO.**

**“What does love look like? It has the hands to help others. It has the feet to hasten to the poor and needy. It has eyes to see misery and want. It has the ears to hear the sighs and sorrows of suffering. That is what love looks like.”**  
 -Augustine of Hippo, Africa, 4<sup>th</sup> C.

# THANK YOU

## VOLUNTEERS!



As I stroll through the flourishing gardens, rich crimson red flowers pop up, sometimes standing strong in solo positions amongst more common floral clusters and foliage.

I REFLECT WITH GRATITUDE on our wonderful stand-out volunteers. Each has an individual lifestory, accomplishments, talents, and is propelled by a huge heart filled with LOVE for animals and kind people.

You bring fresh enthusiasm to staff each day, and transfuse calming trust into newly-arrived shy cats, some with "blocked arteries" from years of neglect, abuse, fear. You are the LIFE-BLOOD of our organization, and we love you!

**FOSTERS** are very special volunteers who take an individual-needs cat or kittens into their homes to prepare for the challenge of living in our free-roaming multi-cat household. Sometimes this is an older cat, one who is grieving the death of its person, a declawed cat feeling threatened, or one who needs a specialized diet, meds, and observation. Orphan kittens need round-the-clock 4 hr. bottle feeding and cuddling. Fosters also give us the cage or small room space to accept another rescue or boarder. Of course, TBA continues all financial responsibility.

**Maurice:** is a new volunteer. He recently lost his 16 year old cat and feels heartbroken. His visits here are therapeutic for him and our cats!



*"The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others."*  
-Mahatma Gandhi

**Avarie:** came to us to adopt a cat. While waiting to bring home her new Kitty, she enjoyed socializing the kittens and now has become a volunteer.



**Cassie:** has been helping us faithfully with cleaning twice a week for 7 years. She does an awesome job with windows, surfaces, and litter boxes!



**Sarah, Nathan, & Jacob:** visited TBA because they were looking for an opportunity to interact with kitties. Many shelters will not allow children to volunteer. These and other young people have been coming all summer and giving our kitties a lot of love and plenty of playtime!



You are the lifeblood of our organization that courses through our veins keeping us going and generating new life to our staff our cats and our organization.

**Sarah:** makes time in her busy schedule to visit our kitties several times a week, often during her lunch hour or in between meetings.



**Eva:** is devoted to our Mission. She comes weekly to visit/socialize with the cats. It's not uncommon for her to sit and have half a dozen of our beauties on her lap. She has a knack for taking photos with the cats and has provided wonderful pictures for our newsletters. Eva also is fostering one of our special-needs cats in her home.



**Bill and Rhoda:** are both long-term volunteers. They are amazing with the cats—especially with the older, shyer, special-needs kitties!



**Carol:** visits weekly and gives special attention to both our older kitties and younger ones. She kindly takes cats to and from the vet as needed — which is often!



**Chris:** volunteers with us two days a week. He is a big animal lover. Since he is retired, he spends a couple of days with our kitties, petting/socializing them. On other days he walks dogs for another shelter.



# DEDICATED RESCUERS

I next visited Chicago Botanic Garden's wonderful greenhouses where specialty gardeners patiently tend to delicate plants and flowers such as orchids. These workers dedicate themselves to studying and providing the best conditions and nurturing care for each precious plant, patiently coaxing it to thrive and bloom.

While admiring such meticulous — sometimes painstaking — labor of love, I think about ANIMAL RESCUERS who find a cat or dog outside its optimal environment, or even in imminent danger. These great-hearted people find ways to help, to gain its trust, to provide better living conditions for the little animal. They RESOLVE to save it and are TENACIOUS in finding a place where it can heal and feel wanted, protected, and loved. These ordinary folks are not professionally trained, but single mindedly RESOURCEFUL and DETERMINED, focused through a sharpened lens of EMPATHY.

I have been PRIVELEGED to meet many of these heroes over the 38 years of our RESCUE-HOME and am always amazed to hear their stories — each different, problematic, suspenseful, and all ADMIRABLE, AWESOME. I picture in my mind some of the individual cats whose lives have been so saved, now with loving adoptive families, and I feel a RUSH OF GRATITUDE, of AWE for their PERSEVERING RESCUERS — friends of animals, friends of ours.



Maria's South Side neighborhood had an overpopulation of strays. She was trying hard to feed them, spay or neuter them and find foster homes. Her husband has been ill. Although it has been exhausting caring for him and all the kitties, Maria would not rest until the last mother and baby were caught and brought to us. Each time she drove over an hour to bring them here. First, she caught one baby, then the mother, 3 kittens, and then finally the last two are now here, safe with us. We hope Maria's husband's health improves with her loving, attentive care.

Rose Marie saw a small kitty outside and desperately wanted to help it. She was able to pet her although the kitty was very scared. She called several places in the suburban area where she lives, but they would only spay the kitty and then release her back outside. Rose Marie knew that this kitty was so sweet and gentle, she deserved a loving home. We took Sweetie in and our wonderful volunteers hold and pet Sweetie daily so she can overcome her shyness and find a loving home.

Rose Marie has been a friend of Touched by an Animal for many years, even though she lives far away. Another longtime supporter, Laurel, kindly brought her and Sweetie here.



Carol: Retired Lt. Col Carol Stegall, U.S. Air Force Reserve for 28 years, served as a flight nurse in Desert Storm, where she observed the importance of human - animal bonding during wartime. While overseas Carol rescued many animals and reunited pets with families in Omar and Saudi Arabia. Between assigned duties she helped some soldiers get their partner dogs home, arranging sensitive international transport on commercial flights since dogs are not allowed on military planes.

*Gentle the Earth*



Carol rescued and brought home to Chicago her own special cat named Radiac, who became an emissary with a mission, accompanying Carol as she spoke publicly about human—animal bonding during wartime.

For many years Carol and Radiac worked with the Unity Church Pet Ministry where Cats-are-Purrsons-Too sometimes brought our cats for adoption — 20+ years ago.

Carol now devotes her retirement years to helping people rescue cats and dogs, — even occasionally wildlife — getting them vet care, especially spay/neuter and treatment of injuries, and permanent homes in safe, well-cared-for feral colonies. As might be expected, Carol has her own bonded pets, rotating fosters, and feral backyard colony.

We are THANKFUL and BLESSED to have Carol as one of our longtime most valued friends. We call on her for difficult rescues, sometimes far away, or even requiring repeated trips to the site. Recently we asked Carol to lure a terrified cat out of a caller's automobile wheel well. Carol always perseveres through every challenge a frightened cat or situation presents until *mission accomplished*.



**Saving one purrrson/person will not change the world but the whole world changes forever for that one purrrson/person.**

## Suzanne Rescues Gustav

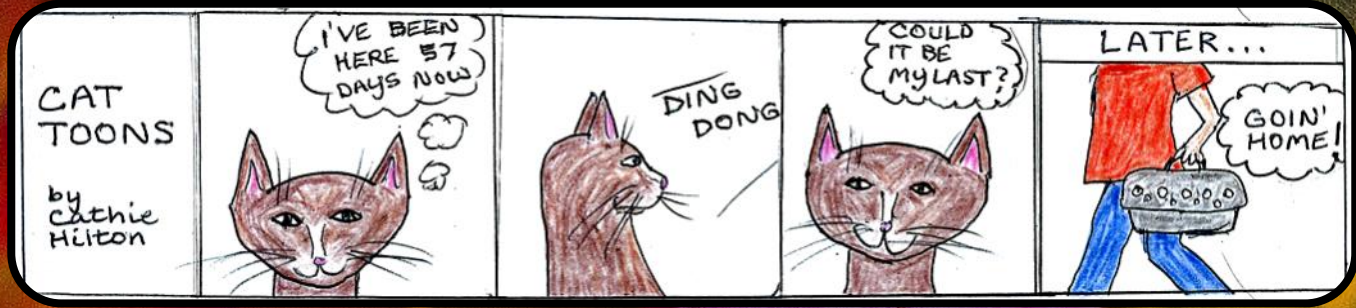


While at a client's home, I saw a skinny cat scratching at a storm door, trying to dig it open. The next day I brought cat food and a water bowl in case he should reappear. We spotted him under a bush and called, showing him food. He came running to devour the meal, then purred as I picked him up, seeming to beg me to take him with me. I couldn't because I have several cats — and besides, what if he belongs to a neighbor? After a few days of watching for "Lost Cat" notices and talking to neighbors, I brought him to the home of TOUCHED BY AN ANIMAL, from which we had adopted our cats.

My husband and I visited Gustav about a week later, after he had been vetted, and were delighted to see him enjoying the free range of the house, playing with feline companions. He let us cuddle and brush him. We're pleased to know that Gustav has now been adopted by a delighted family — mom, dad, two boys, and a little girl.

Thank you, TOUCHED BY AN ANIMAL friends, for caring for Gustav, and THANK YOU to the family for making Gustav part of theirs. May you have many happy years together.

"We're going to our new homes after completing Summer Camp at CATS-ARE-PURRSONS-TOO!"



**Meow Messages From Our Cats' Hearts**



Hello Autumn



**Our Resident Cats:** about 30 percent of our precious felines have special medical or behavioral needs or are elderly cats. These animals have little chance of finding a loving family, so they have a lifetime home with us, receiving the love and care needed to live a happy, healthy life. We greatly appreciate our dedicated volunteers spending their time caring for our residents enriching each others' lives.

**Mohammed, Nassima, Children, & Silver:** Mohammed and his wife Nassima called TBA hoping to find a suitable pet for their family. They have 3 children. One struggles with ADHD, one has Autism, and another is very young. They hoped to find a kitty that would bond with their children and after a time visiting our feline family, they decided on Silver, one of our gentle kittens. Mohammed said he felt a connection immediately. After bringing Silver home, Mohammed emailed us that Silver has brought joy and nurturing comfort to his family. The children are over the moon! They play, cuddle, and read to him every day!



Autumn



May



Stella



Mickey

**Justin, Simone, & Simon:** Justin, an out-of-work pandemic musician and DJ, first adopted Simone, then later came back for a Kitty companion, and adopted Simon as well. He sends us delightful pictures of the three of them. He says "his kids" bring him bright welcomes to each day, and respond to his music, coloring with fun and joy the long dark pandemic days.



**Sandy & Mouse:** Mouse, an eight-year-old cat, was found abandoned and starving in an alley, nearly ready to give birth. A week after entry to our home, her labor could not progress, and she needed extra help. Her first little one became stuck in the birth canal, and our vet tech rushed Mouse to MedVet. Her three other kittens survived, and Mouse is now a very loving mamma. She took several other orphan kittens as her own, often nursing, watching over them, and helping with grooming. Mouse recently went to a lovely lady, Sandy, in whose home she continues thriving. Her kittens were adopted too.



**Michael, Catelynn, & Ralphie:** Ralphie, a TBA alumna, came back to us. He is genuinely a great cat and very affectionate but very dominating and feisty over other cats. We found him a new loving family where he thrives as the king of the household with no other pets. One of our main objectives is to ensure each cat goes to a loving home that is a good fit for the animal and family.



The Home of Cats-Are-Purrsons-Too



**Evelyn & Magnolia:** Evelyn wrote to ask if we might consider her as an adopter since she is elderly, disabled, lives alone, and on a very low fixed income. She lives in a retirement complex where others frequently talk about their pets. We chose for her a cat who seemed depressed since her loving person died. We brought Magnolia to Evelyn, with all the needed supplies and chatted for a bit, promising to provide future vet care, food and litter as needed. Magnolia explored her new place, then jumped onto Evelyn's lap, purring her *THANKS*, as if to signal that we could leave now. We keep in touch, and the two are doing a world of good for each other!

**Crackle and Scott:** Crackle, a TBA alumnus, with special medical needs, needed a temporary placement with us while his dedicated owner, Scott, had surgery. Our staff took care of Crackle for two weeks, giving him his medication and nutritional supplements, and of course, much love. TBA helps the elderly, disabled, those hospitalized, and others at times of immediate crisis. "Thank you, Marijon, Sue, Melanee, and volunteers for caring for my precious friend when I could not. You guys are angels!" -Scott



Marijon & Crackle





Peter Deimel



Golden Family Volunteers



Mary Ann & Joe



Fire Eater Entertainment



Our future is bright because of caring friends! Thank you, Peter Deimel, for hosting a FUNDRAISER for the future of Touched by an Animal at your beautiful Chicago riverfront restaurant, Azul Mariscos.

We celebrate 38 years of saving thousands of cats and helping them find their loving homes! And we look forward to counting many future years.



Peter, Eddy, & Friend



Tom & Melanee



Ursula & Friends



Julia & Friends



Cathie



Carol & Friend



Jeanette & John



Andy & Holly

**Great making new friends and renewing long-term friendships!**



**GREEN-the color of HOPE, of LIFE,**

offers year-round shade, protection, shelter, nutrients, under the strong arms and mighty trunks of EVERGREEN CONIFER TREES.

As I walk amongst the varied Conifers on my Mewsletter prep day at the inspiring Chicago Botanic Garden, I think, **OUR DONORS** are **OUR CONIFERS** - - assuring our cats, our Mission, and those who will ask for help in the coming winter, shelter and protection from the whipping winds and food scarcity.

While dazzling Autumn leaves catch seasonal attention, it is the standing-tall Conifer trees that provide **EVERGREEN STRENGTH**, nutrients, **HOPE** throughout winter.

A tree in isolation may live for only a short while, half of its life expectancy, but if surrounded by other trees with whose community of roots, branches, and ground cover it shares strength, nutrients, and symbiotic wildlife associations, some can live for hundreds, even thousands of years.

We are looking to **OUR CONIFERS**, whose branches and roots create networks, communities,

whose cones provide seeds and winged pollen,

and whose very dark waxed needles contain antifreeze to protect against winter cold,

whose strong trunks are upright and grow around **BIG SOLID HEART CENTERS**.

We know that many cats and people—likely more than in other years, will seek shelter, food and strength from **TBA** resources this winter.

**WILL YOU HELP US KEEP THEIR WORLD EVERGREEN** with provisions, **HOPE**, and literally **LIFE?**

Will you **CONNECT TBA** to your friends, associates, social media community of **CARING, BIG HEARTED** people who would like to **NETWORK** and strengthen our lifesaving Mission?

There is no snooze button on a cat who wants breakfast.



But our cats have a donate button.



**HOW** can we **GIVE** to help **TOUCHED BY AN ANIMAL?**

- 🐾 Enclosed Mewsletter envelope
- 🐾 Securely online via TBA website
- 🐾 Auto WD/ACH, especially monthly
- 🐾 Request TBA's calendar with monthly envelopes
- 🐾 Request employer - match donations
- 🐾 Donor Advised Fund
- 🐾 QCD from IRA
- 🐾 Will/Estate Plan
- 🐾 Order on-line delivery from our Amazon Smiles WISH LIST
- 🐾 Gift to honor or memorialize a person or pet. We will send card.

**The Chicago Botanic Garden's historic carillon chimes the end of my beautiful day,** and it is time to move on to planning for tomorrow's tasks and challenges. I know my two companion cats, Love Bug and Milkshake, are waiting just inside the door to welcome me with eager meows as they hear the key turn.



I hope you have enjoyed and appreciated with us my Autumn reflections on the extraordinary Blessings of dedicated people—*staff, volunteers, rescuers, adopters, donors, friends*—who have been TOUCHED BY AN ANIMAL and believe that CATS-ARE-PURRSONS-TOO deserving of respect and care.



I pause under the embracing arms of a Weeping Willow tree to answer a cellphone call. It is Melanee, available even on Labor Day, to ask if one of our devoted foster moms can take a cat in her care to an emergency vet. La De Da is a dear older cat, found, named, and brought to us by neighborhood children in April, very thin and with many health problems - - heart, thyroid, liver, and suspected

cancer our Vet informed us sadly. Kindhearted Inara offered to foster this very sweet cat, hopefully to wellness, then possibly to adopt.

After calling the 24 hour veterinary hospital to approved whatever charges may incur, I note that, perhaps appropriately, I am ending my days' reflections under a **Weeping Willow tree** as my thoughts drift to so many of the wonderful cats and people over whose too-short lives we have wept, whose presence, short and long, comforted us, taught us, gave us immense pleasure and grateful memories.

Surprisingly, the lifespan of a Weeping Willow tree is only about 30 years - - too short for the amazing strength and beauty it confers upon us who seek its embrace and shade. And every cat, pet, or person's life we lose seems too short.

On another Sunday, when I was just beginning to collect happy stories for this newsletter, our weekend worker called to tell me the sad news that Lily had died peacefully overnight, in her favorite bed, sometime after he cuddled and fed her favorite chicken baby food. After many trips to the vet this was not unexpected, but always heartbreaking, and we all mourn each cat's loss.

This passing, although foreseen, was especially sad because I needed to call Tom, Lily's best human friend, to inform him before he came to visit her and his other beloved cat, Queenie, that afternoon. Even sadder, my phone call found Tom in a hospital ER, awaiting urgent surgery.



Tom is a special friend who is boarding his kitties with us while he waits for an opening of an affordable senior apartment. To help Tom come and visit his feline friends, and pet ours as well, we bought him a bus pass and welcome him as a "Mutual Rescuer."

Why do I share these sad stories with you? Because they are an inevitable, and special, part of TBA MISSION of CARING for animals and their people. Appreciating the BEAUTY of every life makes up the GARDEN LANDSCAPE of our organization.

With heavy heart I leave the symbolic darkened shade of the Weeping Willow tree to notice a group of visitors gathering around Milkweed in the Natural Landscape Garden. They are enthralled by the multitude of beautiful orange Monarch Butterflies, resting here while on their early Autumn migration to warm California and Mexico.

Butterflies are a happy sign of NEW LIFE emerging from what seemed to be the death of the caterpillar. Just when the caterpillar thinks its life and strength are over, it emerges as a glorious butterfly, destined to fly over 3,000 miles and give birth to NEW LIFE, undeterred by earthly-crawling constraints of distance and physical forms.

La De Da and Lily and all of our loved ones will always inspire AWED DELIGHT in our Memory Garden of Love.