

Cats Are More Than Friends

Written by admin

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by Richard L. Provencher



My dictionary defines a cat as: a small flesh-eating animal, often kept as a household pet. I prefer the definition of friend: person bound to another by affection, esteem, and intimacy. In this case, my wife and I believe our cat could easily be used in place of person.

J.C., a member of our family for almost eighteen years, easily lived those words. She was a dear black and white, loved to chat, sharing affection, esteem, and intimacy. It was so difficult letting her go when her health gave up. I am sure she is happily roaming a field of green, this moment, chasing butterflies and sniffing the boundaries of her new domain.

From the age of eight, I discovered how useful cats were. My father had a winter's load of mine wood delivered for a modest price. However, accompanying this furnace-burning material was a harvest of mice. They scurried around our basement in plentiful supply. Somebody do something. Please, my mother intoned.

I noticed an army of stray cats in our neighborhood. One at a time, they were introduced to the vagaries of our home's basement. Six cats enjoyed a joyous visit with their scurrying victims. After the crescendo of noise abated, I opened a window and allowed a flight of fur into the full view of day. That was the end of our mice problem. And no further mine wood was purchased.

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Whiskers, a one-fanged abandoned cat hung around our home for a few days before he adopted our family. He was a brute in the evening hours, but allowed my youngest sister, six years old at the time, to dress him in doll clothes. Susan chatted happily, pushing the terror of the neighborhood around in her baby carriage. He never disagreed with anything she had to say.

As I grew older I discovered the love these felines had for humans.

Louise, my white cat with charcoal streaks, helped this bachelor take better notice of a lovely lady, Esther, who later became my wife. She was not really fond of furry cats at first. But, obviously made an impression, receiving the gift of four padded feet jumping onto her lap.

After a tragic accident with a car fan belt, where she perched one cold evening, Louise departed from this world. I am sure a special place was reserved for such an affectionate friend.

Months later, Fluffy joined our family after our visit to the SPCA. Her angora fur, and calico colors made it easy to name her. She followed us everywhere in our walks around the neighborhood. That little bundle of fur had the habit of chasing the largest dogs seemingly amused by her audacity, and patiently tolerated her.

She loved to lie tightly against my side each night, fearing to let me out of her sight. As she approached ten years of living with us, her health began to fail. It was decided to get her a sister, a kitten as a companion, to help her feel young again.

Another visit to the SPCA brought us into contact with J.C, who repeatedly pawed at the cage door. She sensed her allotted time in care had run out, and had to latch onto someone to take her to a new home. We named her J.C, after the Jayco trailer my wife and I purchased the same day.

Fluffy and J.C thoroughly enjoyed each other's company, even as they accompanied us in our long move from Wyoming, Ontario to Pictou, Nova Scotia. They enjoyed the comfort of their back passenger seats, pulled down to accommodate water, food and sleeping quarters comprised of a cuddly blanket.

Unfortunately, Fluffy passed away a short time after our arrival. We believe she was overcome by the excitement of the moving. Her remains were laid to rest in the red soil of Nova Scotia.

Yet, our family cat adventures continued.

We did not have undue luck with our feline creatures, but experienced life through their temporary days of days on this earth. Due to the strangeness of living in a new neighborhood, J.C was lost for several days shortly after arrival in our new apartment in Pictou, Nova Scotia. But her remarkable cat-chatter earned overnight attention from a couple nearby, until we found her.

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Several months later, when we settled in our country home near Truro, J.C. was in her glory. Three acres of woods were explored, trees scratched and a rich vein of mice available in our earthen basement kept her in prime chasing condition.

Then, Diane, our niece surprised us with a Christmas gift. Boots was really a friend for J.C, she said. He was a one-year gray and the first male we ever had. Both cats became inseparable. They played as mother and child. One day, J.C came crying to the house and led us back to where Boots was 30 feet high in a tree, fearfully swaying in the wind. We rescued her. Unfortunately Boots was run over by a car one weekend.

It was a sad time for everyone, but more so for J.C. She often lay on top of Boot's grave, located between two huge maples in our back yard. She truly lamented the loss of her adopted child. Years later it was also disheartening when it came time for J.C to also go to sleep. Our feline friend lived with our family for almost twenty years.

We had shared so much in the great adventure of our growing older together. And even today, we still miss JC's friendly cat-chatter.

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A 2011 Richard & Esther Provencher

Any messages for Richard or Esther can be sent directly to: richardprov2@gmail.com. They enjoy reading comments on their work. They also welcome you to their website at: www.wsprog.com/rp/ where free downloads are available. They live in Truro, Nova Scotia, Canada. Blessings on your loved ones.