

The Cat Report: May 2004

Phantom

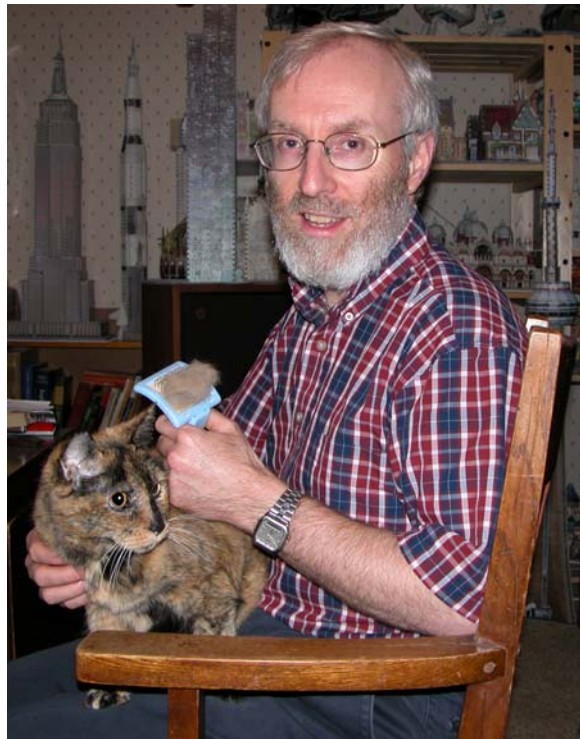
Phantom is our oldest cat. We're not sure how old, but pretty old: certainly she's seen better days ☺.

Several months ago I heard on CBC Radio about this lady in Nova Scotia that sold marijuana oil for pets called "Medipaws". It was supposed to cure a variety of ailments in older cats. So, what the heck we called her up and ordered a bottle. We had to give it to Phantom via an eye dropper. It was a two person job: one to hold her with her mouth open and the other to squirt in a few drops. Everyone agreed she seemed better for it. Typically her climbs up the stairs one at a time, but while she was on it she often could go right up like a normal cat. But like so many other things, it was a pain to catch her and "drug" her up so we stopped after a while. It is clear now we should try again.

It should be noted that Liz herself has tried some of the same type of stuff, (made for people of course) with mixed results. It has not increased her munchies, so that was good.

Phantom's biggest claim to fame nowadays is her shedding. Her favourite thing to do, beside sleeping, is jumping onto my lap while I'm at the computer in the basement for some loves. So while she's on my lap I get the cat brush and brush and brush and brush. I get huge big handfuls of hair each time. I swear she loses a pound each time. Eventually she must get cold or annoyed with me and will hiss at me and jump down to retire to her favourite chair nearby.

Her second claim to fame, which one of these days, according to Liz will get her put down, is her howling. She can make this ungodly noise: as if someone is strangling the cat so to speak. She will only make the noise when she is alone. But what happens is that she will limp upstairs, get on Scottie's bed and up on his comforter and there she will kneed it and make this dreadful noise. Liz takes it as a cry of sheer agony and wants to "cure it": permanently so to speak. I'm not so sure that's what it is. I just think maybe the cat's just nuts.



Oscar

Oscar is now a bit more than a year and half old: a full grown cat.

He used to be quite the “talker” and would “meow” for everything. He still will at times, but not so much. When he was young, whenever he was out and you hollered for him he’d answer you and then come running. That was a great thing as it helped us find him when he got himself trapped under the neighbor’s deck. You see there was this dog next door to the deck, Oscar would be over in the area and the dog would bark. That frightened Oscar so bad he’d hide, safe under the deck. The dog was not able to get out of his own yard, but Oscar couldn’t tell this and so would remain under the deck: for hours sometimes. We’d coax him out, but if we picked him up he’d be so scared he’d shred us: both Liz and I got some nasty scars to prove it!

In any he was always very timid. He still is and acts VERY wild outside. Inside he’s not great with strangers, except for some reason with uncle Neil. Neil was over the other weekend and Oscar went over and jumped right up on Neil for some loves. Heck he never even does that with me any more!



About the only interaction I have with Oscar these days is our morning ritual shoulder carry. We’ve done this since his first days here. I get up early, before Liz and after my shower, he’ll wait patiently on the end of the bed while I get dressed. Then he’ll jump onto my shoulder and I carry him down into the kitchen. There I offer him some food, but more often than not he just frigs off and goes outside!

Now sometimes, especially if it’s a bit cold or wet outside Oscar will go out for a quick run, then back inside and onto my morning newspaper. There he will lay down on the paper so I can’t turn the page and he’ll roll over and make me rub his tummy. He loves that. I wouldn’t mind so much if he didn’t get those wet paw prints all over the table and paper.

He also loves Liz's crafts: especially beading:



Outside he's a great mouser and fly catcher. This spring when Alex and I mowed the lawn I found about 4 dead mouse bodies scattered about the yard.

Oh yes, and then there was the time this spring when he brought in the live mouse! As he ran inside Liz noticed something in his mouth. It was a mouse! I went to retrieve it and throw it out, but as I caught Oscar and he let it go, it ran off! IT WAS ALIVE, and in the living room!!! Liz and I and Oscar searched in vain for some time, until finally I spotted in behind some furniture. We got the cat out of the way, and as I held the flashlight Liz made to catch it. It got away though a gap of no more than 1/8 of an inch I swear. (It was a very small mouse.) After than we never found it again. So we went to bed hoping it had got outside somehow.

At one that morning we were awakened by a terrible ruckus behind Liz's night table in our bedroom upstairs. Oscar was searching for something. Cripes it must be that mouse! We moved things to give Oscar better access, but couldn't be bothered at that time to do more.

The next morning the chase was STILL on. This time Oscar got it downstairs in amongst Liz's school books. I moved then aside and as went to scoop up the now ALMOST dead mouse, but Oscar, quicker than in the blink of an eye, had it. I cannot really describe it. It truly was an amazing thing. The speed of the cat was awesome. I was watching the mouse. I never took my eyes off it, yet one instance it was there and the next Oscar was three feet down the hall with it in his mouth. At first I could not believe he had it: I had not seen the actual capture, even though I was looking right at it! Anyway I grabbed the cat and mouse and hustled them both outside. I found the mouse, finally dead, several days later. Cruel, but natural.

Felix

Felix is now about 10 months old. He's the kitten of the lot, but not so much a kitten really.

Compared to that sickly little "fading kitten" that we had last August, he has done remarkably well. He had the nicest, softest fur. And everything is grey: his whiskers, nose all his fur: everything "except his pink asshole" as Liz puts it.



Even though he is very timid and wild outside and with all strangers, he is very loving at night with us. He will come to bed with us and curl up on the bed or floor beneath. He will sometimes sleep in the headboard itself with his tail hanging in our faces. Then, when we roll over or stir in the slightest, about 2am, he'll be all over us licking our noses or kneading the covers with his sharp claws coming through to our skin. He wants loves. He will also go "Meow": a sharp very loud cry, about two inches from your face, in

the dead of night. Liz often just gives him a chuck off the bed. I'll often just hide my nose a little deeper under the covers: that raspy little stinky cat tongue on your nose at 2 am it a bit more than I can handle. But then other times we just give in and give him what he wants: loves and rubs. He soaks it right in. He has the loudest purr of any cat I have ever known. It is a joy to hear. He purrs and purrs and you can't go to sleep with it's going. So you rub and rub and if you falter he'll dig his nose under your hand and you keep going. Eventually he will "wind down" and we all get back to sleep. But then if we turn over, it's "Who wound up the cat this time?" and the cycle repeats and THE PURR starts again ☺

Phantom purrs, but unless you put your ear against her body you can't hear it. Both Duo (rest his soul) and Oscar purr, but softly and not often. I said I wanted a cat that really purred: Be careful what you wish for: I go my prayers answered, but in the early morning I'm not sure it was the wisest request!

Here's Felix in his favourite spot outside



And that was the cat report for this spring.

28 May 2004