



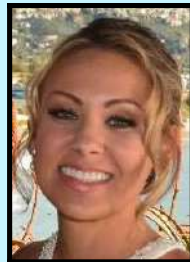
the Blue Bell
FOUNDATION FOR CATS
ENSURING YOUR CAT'S FUTURE

Blue Bell
MEWS

SUMMER 2022

Letter from the Assistant Director

Jenna Genovese-Mikula
Assistant Director



Dear Supporters,

Thank you all for your continued support of Blue Bell and our unique mission. In our last newsletter, I was featured as a recipient of one of the Cat Awards given out at our annual fundraiser, the Cat's Meow Champagne Brunch. This was an incredible honor for me because our vision and caring for the cats entrusted to us are my passions. Serving in many different roles at Blue Bell has been one of the great joys in my life.

Every one of our cats has a special story, and I would like to share one story with you to demonstrate how our team goes above and beyond to ensure every cat has the best possible quality of life at Blue Bell.

When Jambo arrived in October 2020, he was untouchable. This handsome Bengal had many admirers among staff and volunteers but would snap at anyone who attempted to pet him. He was also extremely overweight, weighing in at just over 24 pounds.

One day in March 2021, I arrived for my usual shift and began feeding lunch to the cats. Jambo was always one of the first in line, but on this day, he was tucked up in one of the cat trees. He meowed at me but would not get down and did not even look at the plate of food I put next to him. He also seemed to be having some difficulty with his paw. I picked him up and placed him on the ground to try to get a sense of how serious the problem was. As soon as I did that, it became obvious that there was a BIG problem. He could not put any weight at all on his left front leg and was therefore unable to walk. Our veterinarian saw him that day and their examination revealed dislocation of his wrist and fractures in the bones of his paw.

We reviewed the video footage from our cameras and discovered earlier that morning, Jambo had decided to leap from the highest catwalk down to the floor. The height of this jump combined with his long-term obesity and associated orthopedic problems were too much stress on his bones and joints. Bengal cats are known for their high activity level, but we do not know what prompted him to jump that morning. No one had observed this behavior from him prior to that incident. No one had ever seen him on the catwalks.

No other cat had ever broken a bone while at Blue Bell, so this was a completely unprecedented injury for our team to manage. There were casts and weekly checks, consults with an orthopedic surgeon and surgery. Then more casts and consults with a physical therapist. Jambo was far from a model patient. He behaved aggressively toward the veterinary team. He insisted on soiling his fresh casts with poop as soon as possible, sometimes using the soiled cast as a "paintbrush". He fought with all his strength against our staff's attempts at giving him medications.

Some people would have given up on him, but not Blue Bell. That was never an option for us because Jambo never gave up on himself. He slowly came to trust our staff. He let us sit with him. He let us change his soiled bandages. He let us pet him. We put him on a diet and are happy to report that he is now a much healthier 17 pounds. His mobility has increased and improved tremendously. He looks forward to excursions into the gardens on a harness. He looks forward to snuggling time with staff and volunteers. Yes, "Jambo the Untouchable" has become "Jambo the Lap Cat". He still snaps at us sometimes, but now it's only half-hearted and it's accompanied by purrs and head butts.

I love Jambo's story because it is a testament to the incredible love and care the Blue Bell cats receive. And it is a reminder that life is full of unexpected turns and silver linings. These are the kind of stories your support enables. Jambo and I thank you from the bottom of our hearts!



L-R: While Jambo was recuperating with his cast, staff & volunteers took him for walks through the garden in a stroller to alleviate his boredom. He loved watching the garden wildlife and flowers up close. It had a healing effect as now he is able to walk the paths himself. He perks up at the sight of his harness, knowing it's his "jungle cat time"!

NEW RESIDENTS

Clarence, estimated age 12-15 came to us through our Community Cat Fund via the Laguna Beach Animal Shelter on November 24. He was a stray cat. He is a classic gray tabby who settled in the lower house very quickly. He did so well there he is now in the MAIN house. He enjoys sauntering around inside as well as prancing around the patio. Clarence is a cool cat. He's mild-mannered so enjoys a lap, but this spry senior also loves to play! He "plays well with others" and doesn't mind sharing his space with the other cats.



Matt the Cat, estimated age 17-20

Matt's owner passed away and he was placed with us by a friend of his former owner. He was an indoor/outdoor kitty before coming to us but is adjusting well to the safety of indoors and loves the enclosed catios to get that outdoor feeling. He is a sweet and affectionate gentleman with a very distinctive meow that sounds almost like a howl! He still has some spunk for his age—playing and biting his toys. He loves catnip, brushing and can be found in the strangest sleeping positions!



Honey & Sugar, both 16 arrived on November 21. Their owner is going into assisted living but she will be able to visit them with her son and granddaughter who brought them. Sugar is a gorgeous white flame-point with a



big poofy tail and blue eyes. She is very friendly with the cutest meow and loves enclosed spaces. Honey is an orange tabby, also a female, which is fairly rare as 80% of ginger cats are male, due to the "ginger gene" being on the "X" chromosome. Females need 2, whereas males only need one. Honey is also very active and personable. She will jump right up in your lap and snuggle on your chest. She loves to chase the laser pen toy. They were sequestered a couple weeks but are now out and about in the main house.

DJ, 12 came to us January 15 after his owner died. On his first day he came right out of his carrier, head and tail held high, ready for his new adventure. He loved his private catio when he was sequestered and acclimating, which didn't take long—he quickly joined the community outside his enclosure. He was affectionate and curious right away. DJ loves lapsits, being brushed and petted. He is very talkative, has the loudest purr that sounds like a pigeon cooing, and a snore like a lumberjack that you can hear the minute you enter the lower house!



Julian & Bleys, both 12 1/2 came March 9 having traveled all the way from Arizona. Their owner is going into assisted living and is unable to care for them. The littermates look very similar, even though they



are different colors. Julian (black and white) is a bit shy—he hid in his cubby for a few days although he is now very accepting and coming around with a bit of gentle coaxing. Bleys (orange and white) came right out of her cozy and welcomes attention and head scratches. After an initial sequestration, they are now co-mingling beautifully with the other cats since we opened their apartment door.

Jaxie-Grace, 12 is a pretty medium-haired black kitty. Her devoted former owner provided Jaxie with her forever home after having lived in many foster homes. She had been boarded about a month while this owner fell ill and was hospitalized. She kept daily tabs on her, making sure she had her favorite purple and pink sweaters. Sadly, the owner never recovered and passed away. She had pre-arranged for Jaxie-Grace to come to us. Jaxie is outgoing with people, she came out of her carrier right away, but is still acclimating and observing the other cats from the comfort and safety of her private suite. She enjoys her catio and welcomes visits from staff and volunteers.



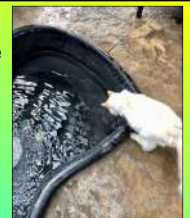
Gideon, 11 This handsome Snowshoe mix with Siamese-looking blue eyes came to us on April 15 because his owner passed away. He walked out of his carrier immediately upon arrival and is known to be a lap cat. He is quickly

becoming a favorite with staff and volunteers. Despite his small stature, Gideon has an enormous appetite. He often cleans his second plate and asks for a third at meal time! We love his cute little half mustache and his squeaky meows. And did we mention how SOFT he is?

A VERY SAD FOOTNOTE: In reference to **Sugar** featured above. In January she had been diagnosed with cancer and a mediastinal tumor. In addition to kidney failure and high blood pressure, the prognosis was not good. With medications she did remarkably well and lived longer than this diagnosis' average life expectancy. She recently became an office cat, snacking and sleeping throughout the day. She had been doing well up until Easter Sunday. She ate well in the morning, but started to decline in the afternoon. Susan and Dr. Hamil came down late that night to examine her. Monday morning, April 18, she continued to decline, and there was nothing more we could do for her. We said our goodbyes, we brought her sister Honey into the office to say goodbye and they shared a head-to-head snuggle. Joyce took her to Canyon in her favorite cubby bed. She told her we would miss her beautiful blue eyes, her big poofy tail, her cute raspy greeting, and promised her we would take good care of Honey. She got lots of love and chin scratches and kisses, and she passed peacefully



over the Rainbow Bridge. Honey didn't eat dinner and wanted in the office again that night and walked around as if looking for Sugar. They were independent but still very bonded, often sleeping in adjoining beds, and she misses her. Though her time with us was short-lived, it was a happy one full of love, attention, treats, exploration, and activity, which surely contributed to lengthening her life. She loved the staff and volunteers. Honey is getting extra love and attention.



MEMORIALS

Buttercup, 22

We lost our lovely Buttercup on Friday, November 12. Buttercup arrived in 2014. Her owners had taken her to our



vet to be euthanized for peeing outside the litterbox. Our vet convinced them to relinquish her to spare her this death sentence, and we agreed to accept her via our Community Cat Fund. She never once peed outside the litterbox. She had asthma, early kidney failure, high blood pressure, and stomatitis (painful gum inflammation), so we syringe-fed her and gave her pain meds until her teeth were removed. The disease is very hard to treat so extraction allows complete resolution of symptoms. It was a success and she never missed a meal. Eventually she developed cancer. As it progressed she had difficulty breathing and it continued to worsen. Nothing could be done so the decision was made to let her go before it became an emergency. Jenna and volunteers said their goodbyes with love and kisses. Caregiver Joyce took her to our vet who gave her a sedative to calm her. Joyce played calming cat music on her phone as she cradled Buttercup and told her she was loved and we would miss her, and there was chicken and catnip waiting for her as she peacefully crossed over the Rainbow Bridge. Buttercup had the sweetest disposition. Overall she was comfortable, happy, and loved being petted and brushed. Her 21st birthday celebration was featured in the Summer 21 Mews. We are going to miss that sweet blue-eyed/cross-eyed girl, with the softest fur and the loudest purr, and we are happy to have given her those 7 more years she may not have had.

Hunter, 20 1/2

Handsome Hunter came to us in 2019 with his sister Scarlett who passed in 2020. Hunter lived in the lower house and made special friends with Adam. Shortly after arriving, he was diagnosed with high blood pressure. He also had severe stomatitis, advancing kidney disease, and a biopsy revealed a mast cell tumor in February 2021. Despite all of this, he was relatively stable until October when he began to lose weight. We added new medications, and he bounced back and was feeling better. Two weeks prior to his passing his appetite decreased significantly. He turned away from the chicken he used to enjoy. His weight was stable, but he became quieter. On Tuesday morning, November 23, Jenna noticed Adam sitting almost on top of Hunter in a bed—as if he was trying to keep his buddy warm or get in one last snuggle. By Tuesday afternoon, Hunter was very weak and volunteer Terri noticed he was having difficulty drinking and then laid down in a litter box. Jenna took him to our vet who saw fluid in his chest and abdomen. His limbs were also swollen with fluid. Given the fluid buildup, his multiple other health issues, and his rapid decline, we decided it was his time. Jenna held him and kissed his head gently as he slowly drifted off into his final slumber. She told him how much everyone loved him since there wasn't much time for others to say goodbye. He is now with his sister Scarlett and owner who passed before him. He had a loud "goat-like" meow. Excerpts from the note that arrived with him describe Hunter perfectly: *"He enjoys a sunny window with fresh air. He enjoys poultry. He will continue meowing until I feed him. He is a sweet boy who enjoys being close to people."*



Cody, 18

Cody came to us in 2009. His siblings Penny and Grumpy, who predeceased him, came first by the executors of their owner's estate. Cody was taken to the shelter he was originally adopted from in the hopes he would be adopted. After 30 days he wasn't, so the executors then placed him with us. Caregiver Rima followed Cody here, as she had volunteered at same shelter and loved him. Several years ago Cody was diagnosed with lymphoma. With medication, he thrived. In the last year, he'd had a few serious bouts but rallied. Then his appetite waned and was having trouble breathing. Friday, March 18, Jenna, Rima, Joyce, and the vet decided to let him go. Jenna took him out into the gardens and he laid in his bed and got some fresh air and sunshine. Joyce was with him as he peacefully passed. Cody would use his paws to scoop food from his bowl without even getting up! He was our "mascot" at fundraising events. Everyone took his passing very hard. He now joins his siblings, his owner, and a few "BFF's" he made at Blue Bell. His most recent BFF was **Diamond**. They even appeared together in the March/April '21 Catster magazine that featured us.



Cody, center front, surrounded by many of his friends. Cody loved people & cats and vice-versa.



In November/December, Laguna Beach holds the **Winter Fantasy**, a festive 5-weekend event on the **Sawdust Festival** grounds that is converted into a winter wonderland with shimmering lights, decorations, and even falling "snow". It showcases the works of artists as well as live music, activities, and performances.

This year we participated in the Tree Decorating contest. There were 16 spectacular trees, so we are proud and honored to say **we won 3rd place!**

The tree decorators were Asst. Director **Jenna**, Volunteers **Pamela Knudsen**, & **Terri McCoy-Karman**. We had handmade photo ornaments with pictures of our wonderful cats. Also in attendance were Blue Bell volunteers, **Matt Powers** & **Cheryl Arrieta**, and Jenna's husband **Mario**. An additional treat was that it "snowed" on our tree!





the Blue Bell
FOUNDATION FOR CATS

ENSURING YOUR CAT'S FUTURE

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The Blue Bell Foundation for Cats offers loving and compassionate lifetime care for senior cats whose owners can no longer care for them.

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YOUR DONATIONS AT WORK
Cats are sponsored to ensure their continuing lifetime care. However, costs are rising dramatically and cash donations help augment our budget toward expenses immensely. These includes veterinary medicine, staffing, food, equipment, supplies, medications, fluid treatments, dental care, facility maintenance and improvements.
Donations received from the newsletter (including Gifts of Love) go specifically to the "Community Cat Fund". Please refer to our website for information on the "Campaign for Blue Bell" and a detailed description of all giving opportunities. You may arrange for your donation to be applied toward one of them.
*A huge **thank you** to all our compassionate supporters who understand our mission and the need for our existence.*

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