

July 7th 2008

Charlie Girl

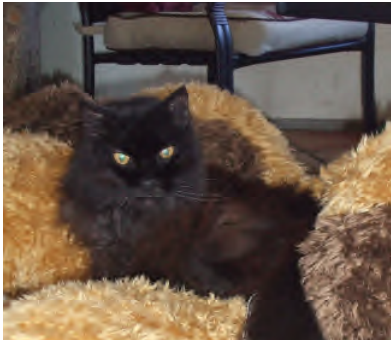


This gorgeous girl arrived here in April of 2004, mourning the death of her beloved person. Subsequently, her human “uncle” had taken her, along with sister “Honey” to a vet hospital – one girl tucked under each arm, dumped them unceremoniously down, and requested euthanasia. Thank goodness for our kind friend Sally, who contacted us, so that both Honey and Chewy could continue their lives at BrightHaven.



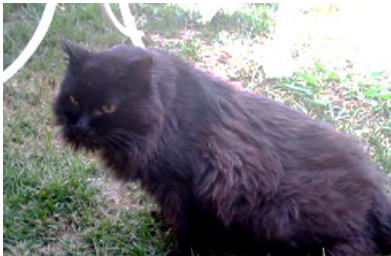
The 18 year old Chewy was fearful, resigned, cat aggressive, angry and dealing also with the indignity of having her beautiful, but matted coat shaved off – all but head, tail and feet. She really did look like Chewbacca, for whom she had clearly, and somewhat appropriately, been named!

Charlie came to us with a diagnosis of hyperthyroidism, chronic renal failure, elevated liver enzymes, as well as with evidence of inflammatory bowel disease! She was obviously feeling none too wonderful.



I gave her the pretty new name of Charlie-girl, and made her cozy in a huge cage bank of interconnecting “houses”. This gave her lots of space to be private, lick her proverbial wounds and get used to her new life and friends.

Charlie loved her new natural raw meat diet and her coat began to grow back in – with lots of long and luxurious black fur. This girl had clearly been exquisite in her heyday. In the early days Charlie was lucky to be accepted as a patient of the renowned Dr. Christina Chambreau and soon began to blossom under her new regimen of natural diet, classical veterinary homeopathy and the BrightHaven balance of immune support and lots of love! Charlie showed us her strong need for security, refusing to leave her safe house, but clearly loving her interaction with us friendly humans! We would find her perched on the bed, with paws hanging over the edge, staring expectantly at my bedroom door, waiting for her dinner to arrive.

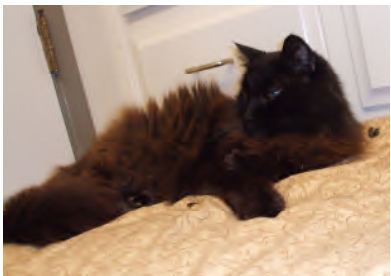


Charlie always bore a look of wonderment in her eyes – and was communicative in ways both good and bad (!!)

She was very much her own person and hated to be fussed with! Grooming has never been on her agenda, although these days I swear she actually enjoys it at last!!



Gradually the recipe for healing took over and Charlie began to blossom....however it was not until almost two years later that Charlie left the safe haven of my bedroom to join her very large family. She made it clear from the start that other cats, as well as the dreaded dogs were not to be a part of her agenda for life, and hissed and growled at all who came near to say hi or, perish the thought – try to make friends in any way! Charlie had accepted, and even grown to love the humans caring for her, but was still a loner and not about to change for anyone.



She lived happily in her own private world hidden by the mask behind which she hid herself from view - never again to be hurt by man nor beast.

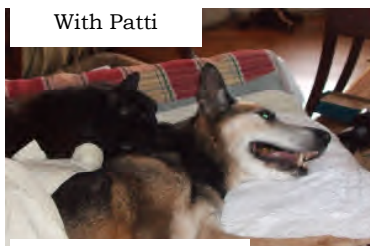
Imagine our surprise one happy morning, when Charlie stomped forth to the center of the house, claimed a cute and cozy bed to call her own, and proceeded to chase a toy mouse across the floor. This is the kind of thing that does your heart good and gives us all the more reason to continue our mission to care for these sweet beings.



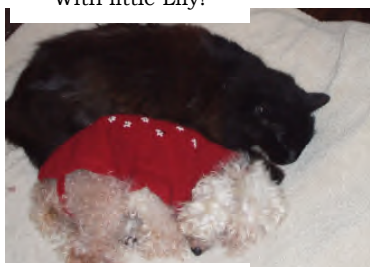
Beau, Charlie, Barney, Ollie



With Furbee



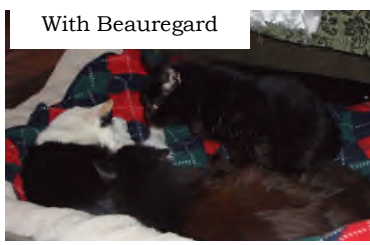
With Patti



With little Lily!



DafAnn, Joey, Gingi, Barney & Charlie



With Beauregard



Here Charlie is actually holding Ollie's paw with her own. Barney in the background

By now the amazing Dr Adriana Sagrera had been enlisted to continue in the care of Charlie's health and this girl was truly blossoming. We were not however prepared for the changes we were to witness in this quiet lady's character – perhaps the very reason for which she was born!

It seems that, hidden beneath the reserved and reclusive nature was the enduring love of a mother just waiting to surface and, over time Charlie has allowed us to be privy to the most special moments of her life as she has lovingly cared for many of those BrightHaven animals now departed, in their final days, hours and moments. They say that pictures speak louder than words, and so I will allow some of those treasured photographs that chronicle her journey, speak volumes to you of the love of one special cat for her fellow beings.

For a very long time Charlie has seemed to be approaching the end of her life and I have oft felt impelled to begin her wonderful story.....but.....just not quite yet.....I never could, as she went on from strength to strength – barely able to stand and walk by herself, and then caring for yet another, and then another.

I have neither the space nor time to chronicle all her loving relationships, but will simply mention some old and very familiar names of those she has helped through times of illness or death: Gingi, Bentley, Oscar, Barney, Beauregard, Ollie, Lily-dog, Sushi and Patti (dog).

Charlie responds in a wonderful fashion to homeopathic medicine, and her journey with Dr Adriana has been miraculous to say the very least. Over and over she has bounced back from certain death and we have acknowledged with love, that this girl will choose her very own way and time to leave us. It is not for us to guess!

Two short days ago Charlie started to have serious seizures and, although responding well to remedies, I feel the time has finally come when I need to share the beautiful story of her BrightHaven journey with others so that you, in turn, can experience the magic of how animals care for, and can help each other through transition and the beauty of the end of life.

Today Charlie is a little spacey and has had two large seizures, but she is often bright and happy too, and eating very, very well, as has been her pattern for many months. She is back once more in her favorite spot – that of dear old Ollie's bed. (Ollie was our 23 year old Dachshund who died surrounded in cats, several months ago, as you may recall!)

The BH crystals still adorn the bed and Charlie spends long hours gazing at them or lying contentedly with paws or head on the healing stones.



PS: As I write to you this morning, Charlie is astonishing us by playing with Blanca – and batting playfully at her hair.

The sweet and dainty Dafne-Ann is with her much of the time - I will be writing very soon of dear Daf's own journey.