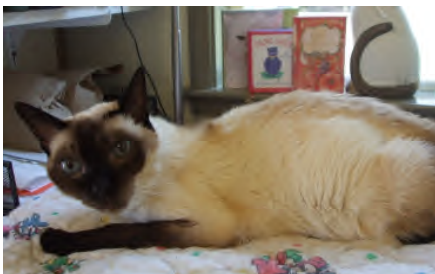


“Dafne-Ann’s story”

Born: 1990

Came to BH: November 2004

Date written: 7th September 2008



I have resisted writing this story for fear of jinxing her time here, but now I want to share with you the story of Dafne-Ann, one of the most delightful royal ladies to tread this earth.

Dafne-Ann has lived in our house for almost four short years.

Daf, Daffage, Daffy duck or a million of the other silly names I have for her, came to us after the demise of her much loved lady. Thankfully, her son Rick felt impelled to do the right thing for his Mum and find the purrrfect place for her girl to renew, refresh and live out the little time left to her.

I say little time, as fifteen year old Daf brought with her a list of medical issues and surgical procedures, so long as to prove daunting to even the strongest of readers. In a nutshell – she had unsuccessful surgeries to try to find and resolve abdominal issues, to identify an esophageal flap in her throat that threatened to choke her, as well as identify deep seated feline asthma, which had attempted to halt her breathing with great regularity since a young girl!!

To cap it all this tiny princess who looked as though a mere puff of wind could blow her over, was found to be filled with love and gratitude and more than ready for the next chapter of her life.

By now you will be familiar with the name of the great Dr Jeff Levy and it was, Dr Jeff who heartily agreed to take Daf on for us, and try to help her find new balance. We had been surprised to see this royal lady actually agree to eat her new and naturally raw diet. She had already improved and with the careful and talented care of Dr Jeff, our Dafne-Ann started to blossom and captivate her newfound audience.

We almost feared to pick up and cuddle her in case we crushed her tiny frame and yet Daf loved to be held and caressed – still does! Those who have not had their face stroked lightly and gently by Daf’s slender velvet paw have not lived – I assure you!!

As the years rolled by, Dafne had crisis after crisis, mostly asthma related. Happily she took everything in her stride, even those dark days when she could barely breathe. She trusted that all would be well and she just had to sit still and wait.

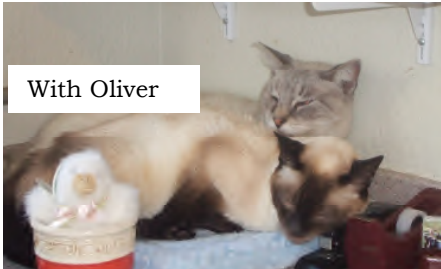
I guess those beings who spend a lifetime struggling for air, are forced to learn the art of sitting still and quiet, in meditation to await that time when air will surely flow. Happily this, and some well chosen homeopathic remedies have always worked for Daf – despite my often frantic fluttering around her!!!

With Furbee



As time marched by, other animals came to realize, and seek the sweetness that was Dafne's and some of the photos you see here will show her deep and lasting friendship's with Woody, Oliver, Joey, Gingi, Eric, Blue, Charlie and Ollie. She is a well known figure in the last days of an animal's life, as she snuggles close in love and friendship.

With Oliver



As many of us older people struggle to keep their teeth, so did Daf, and finally a few months ago we realized the only way for her to continue to eat, would be to put her "under" and remove an offending tooth. A daunting task for a healthy older lady, but scary to say the least for Dafne with all her breathing troubles and fragility. She gave us no choice and with Jeff's blessing we went ahead.

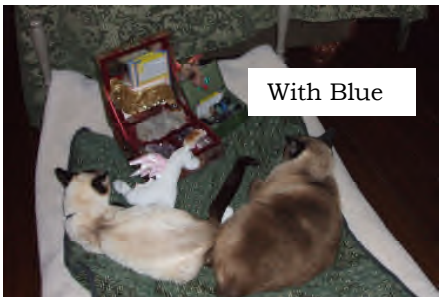
With Ollie



A difficult day lay ahead, for, as we peeked finally inside that dainty mouth we were shocked to find a nasty mass, growing deep and strong at the very back of this sweet throat – well hidden from normal view. No wonder she had shown distress!

It seemed that Mother Nature was finding yet another way to try to stop this sweet girl's breathing. Non plussed as always Jeff came to the rescue and Daf again responded to the magic that is homeopathy.

With Blue



Lately Daf is tired. Sweet, but tired. Eating, but tired. She is as slim now as a reed and still smiling. When I pick her up to cuddle her – she smiles gently as she turns, purring to stroke my face with her paw. Grown men have been known to cry at less.

I am not sure for how long this gentle lady will be able to sustain life in her elderly body, but I felt strongly that everyone should know her sweetness and share in the delight of her life.

With Gingi and Joey



September 7th 2008

See Dafne on my lap for our family booklet photo-shoot

With Mr. Woody



Those who wonder about the spelling of Daf's name will be interested to read of its origin:

The story of Apollo falling in love with the eponymous nymph, Dafne, Jacopo Peri wrote Dafne for an elite circle of humanists in Florence, the Florentine Camerata, between 1594 and 1597, with the support, and possibly the collaboration, of the composer and patron Jacopo Corsi. It was probably first performed in either 1597 or 1598 at the Palazzo Corsi. An attempt to revive Greek drama, according to modern scholarship, it was a long way off from something the ancient Greeks would have recognized, but instead it spawned a whole new art form that would last for the next 400 years.



“Daf-Ann’s story,

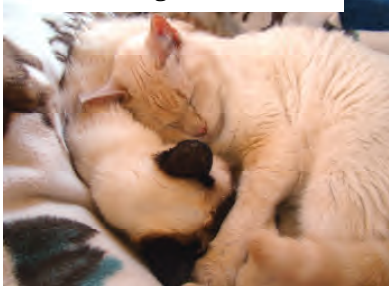
continued 10th November 2008



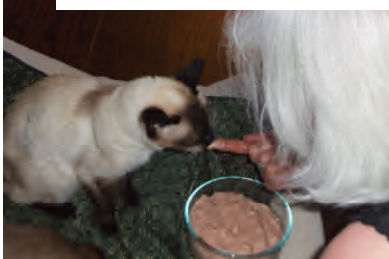
On occasion Daf accorded one a special stroke



Cuddling with Furbee



Time for another meal..



When I wrote Daf’s story back in early September, I really did not think she had long to live. It seems I was wrong, and I am writing today to let her many friends and loved ones know that this dear and most gracious royal lady left on her final voyage from this earthly realm, shortly after 5am today.

With royal grace, Daf-Ann announced her plans to leave around 6 months ago. She then settled back into a life of joy and bliss, filled with the contented company of loved ones - feline, canine and human too! You will recall that Mr. Woody then became her constant companion until his death three weeks ago, after which Dafne began the business of planning her journey and, with fare passage booked, she turned attention to affairs at home, quickly relocating to the BH breakfast room.

She soon gathered a loyal and loving team to be her aides and entourage. They took turns, both alone and in groups, but dear Dafage, or Daffy Duck as I called her most often, was never left alone.

Again we noted how animals most often seek out dear brain damaged Furbee in their time of need, and one of our dearest sights of all was that of Daffy often cuddled tight in bed with Furbs, who always held her close, with arm lightly stretched across her back or head.

At night the blow up bed was the busiest perhaps ever seen, as everyone gathered close through the long night hours. There was darling Mother Lucy of course, always at the helm, with Blue and Vancouver at her side. Stefanie, Sammi and Oliver cuddled close, along with Joey and SuzyQ too.

In those last weeks Dafne found herself needing to eat more and more frequently – from a finger held up high. You may recall this from her last story. Loving fingers were never short, as friends came from far and wide to queue for just the privilege of that sweet smile.

Sunday, the day of our Rose Ceremony in honor of dear Woody, (Eric and others too) Daf was failing fast. I called her very own Dr. Jeff, who prescribed a homeopathic remedy to help her journey, whether it be soon to leave, or stay with us throughout the day.....

Well, the ceremony was beautiful, but paled in comparison to the sweetness and beauty of our royal lady as she lay peacefully, content and bright-eyed in bed, propped comfortably on a royal cushion (well actually, a hot water bottle needed for her frail and tiny body.) Perhaps she was being beckoned softly by her many friends returned for the ceremony?



Comfort from handsome Blue



A snuggle with Oliver



It's Lucy's turn again



Joey is always ready to help out with a groom..



Woody makes the BEST hot water bottle!



Now it's Lucy's turn to groom

As I settled down in bed last night we all had a sense it was to be her last. The blow up bed was packed, with barely an inch to spare as we began our vigil. At midnight Daf awoke to the call of Mother Nature, and then eagerly ate a bite or two, before sinking deeply asleep once more.

At three she was again disturbed by Mother Nature. I proffered food, but this time was refused, as Daf sank into deeper slumber. We almost had to hold our breath to hear the whisper of her breathing. The time was drawing close and I silently wished for a camera to record the magical moments as her friends came to bid their loved one farewell.

Lucy lay with arm stretched right across Daf's tiny chest – her face pressed close. Blue leaned down from his position on the pillow to give her head a lick, as Vancouver shifted a little to lay his head gently on her back. Stef stood to peek over my shoulder, whilst Oliver and SuzyQ came close. Joey was left to squeeze into a tiny space, just right for him, and there we waited as the moments sped softly by.

Four o'clock chimed and, as is our way, I called for Richard, who roused Fray to come and join our group in last farewells, and soon it was time. Dafne-Ann took one more little breath, a soft gasp and, as she leaned right back in my arms – she left her body forever.

This morning the candles are burning brightly in the breakfast room and the house is quiet. Soon our day will be filled with people and the noise of everyday, but that special quiet peace we feel right now will remain I know – for that is the legacy left behind her by our princess filled with grace.

“
*I do not understand
the mystery of grace –
only that it meets us where we are,
but does not leave us
where it found us*
”

Anne LaMott

