

A Pawsitive Ending by Lyn T. Garson, CVT

## The Cat That Love Built

It happened every day. The old, emaciated, black cat appeared from behind a dumpster, then slowly made his way to the front entrance of a Bloomfield gym. People dressed in brightly colored workout clothing were kind enough to pull a morsel of food from their duffle bags and toss it to him. People, young and old, came and went from the building where they dedicated themselves to being healthy, while each passing day the cat became weaker with sickness and starvation. Despite their food offerings, no one took that extra step to help the decrepit cat. He was using up his nine lives – fast.

Angie, a dedicated volunteer with Our Companions, happened to be at the gym with friends one blistering hot August morning, when she discovered the cat. He was skin and bones, covered in fleas and oozing scabs, and had large patches of missing fur. Always prepared, Angie produced a plastic cat carrier and some canned food from her car, planning to coax the cat out from the bushes. Angie was met with a surprise. “He just walked right up to me and hopped right in the carrier,” Angie said. “He was a very grateful little guy.”

Right away Angie named him Wilford – German for desires peace – and even gave him the nickname Willie. Angie rushed Willie to the veterinary hospital. He was treated for severe dehydration, flea anemia, and was found to be hyperthyroid – all of which are life-threatening conditions without proper medical intervention.

Angie took Willie into her home and devoted her free time nursing him back to health. “Willie was very friendly, very affectionate,” Angie said. “He was always purring and he would paw my face if I wasn’t paying enough attention to him.” Angie was sure Willie once lived in a good home but was then abandoned by his owner. Sadly, this is the truth for numerous pets, particularly cats, who many people mistakenly believe can survive if left on their own.

Willie continued to thrive under Angie’s care, but her work was far from over—Willie needed a forever home. His photo, and story, were posted on Our Companions’ Web site. Karin Snow, clicked on the Web site to introduce Our Companions to a colleague, encouraging her toward adoption rather than purchasing a pet—and there was Willie.

With several cats of their own, Karin and Bob Snow weren’t planning to adopt another but Willie called to their hearts in a special way. “We felt there was some divine intervention that brought me to that Web site when Willie was being featured,” Karin said. “Willie’s story is a duplicate story to Spookie, a beloved black cat we rescued in 1994, who came to us in very rough shape. We called him the cat that love built.”

Karin and Bob drove across Connecticut on a cold rainy October morning to meet Willie. “We already knew in our hearts he was ours, and that whatever medical or physical challenges he had we would take them on without question,” Karin said.

Angie was elated. It's not often a senior-aged cat requiring daily medication finds a forever home so quickly. But Karin and Bob appreciate the special gift older cats bring. "People could miss out on an opportunity to have a superb friend and pet if they dismiss an older pet as less valuable than a young kitten or puppy. These animals need us too and can be the most devoted, best companions we could ever hope for. That is what Willie is for us," Karen said.

Willie has brought so much to our lives – he reminds us every day about the miracle of a caring intervention and how much we as humans can do to create and maintain a safe and happy environment for an animal in need."

Karin and Bob hope to raise and direct charitable contributions to Our Companions. "Our Companions is a most responsible and caring organization. We are especially impressed with the policies and pledges that Our Companions puts forth regarding adoption. We highly recommend Our Companions as a wonderful organization to use if considering adoption and also a wonderful organization to support."

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