

I moved to Idaho from Brazil in December of 2007 to serve an international project of the U.S. National Science Foundation as a graduate research assistant and to pursue an M.A. in History at Idaho State University. In 2009, while I was writing the first chapters of my thesis, a beautiful black cat showed up at our home. This cat was like no other cat. He politely waited by our living room's door, standing still, like a true gentleman. He would only get inside after we gave him permission to do so: "It is you! You are here! Please come in," I would shout! For this reason, we gave him the title of mister and named him Mr. Black Cat.



Mr. Black Cat was an outdoor cat. He came to our home only to eat, drink, and relax –sometimes to spend the night when the weather was too cold. We became attached to him. We felt sad when he did not visit us.



In the Summer of 2010, we stopped receiving visits from Mr. Black Cat. He had disappeared. We felt very sad and started asking ourselves many questions: “is he okay?” and “will he ever come back?” We started looking for him in our area and beyond. We printed many flyers. We called the local animal shelter everyday to find out if he was there. However, there were no signs of him. A few months later, thankfully, Mr. Black Cat returned to us, and we were no longer sad.

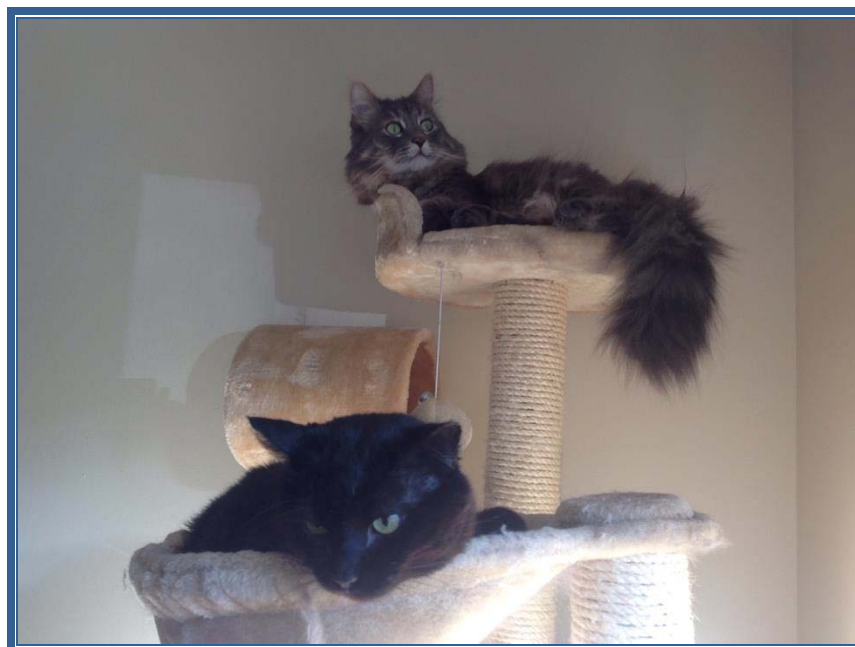


By the time that he returned, we had spoken with many people in our area and we felt that he did not have an owner. Thus, we decided to adopt him. We took him to the Alpine Animal Hospital and, once there, we learned that he had FIV. FIV cats must remain inside at all times to not infect other cats. Mr. Black Cat did not like the

idea of becoming an indoor cat; however, as time progressed, he was able to adapt to his new life.

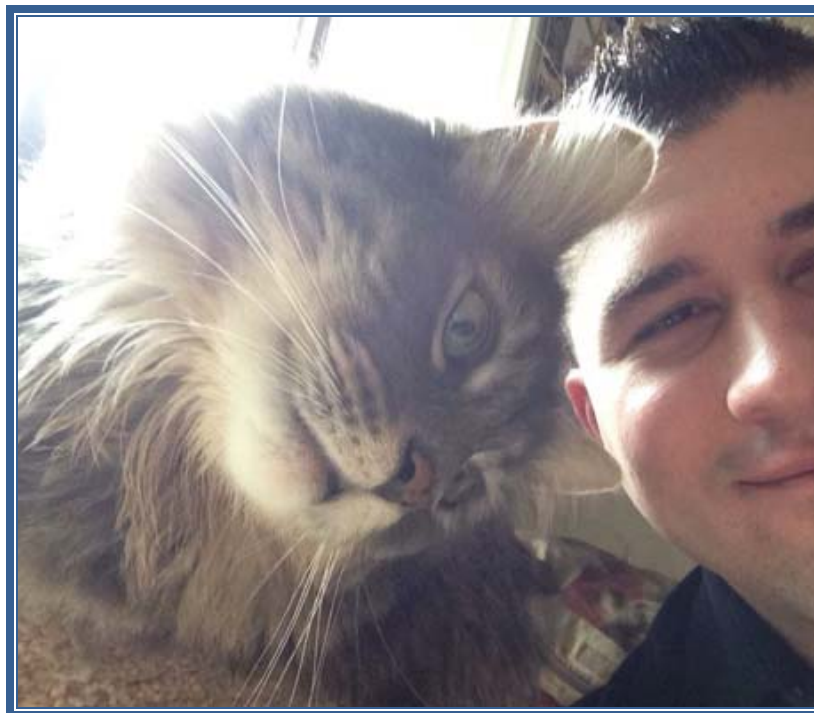


In 2011, we received a call from Dr. Haymore, Mr. Black Cat's doctor. He asked if we had room for another FIV cat and our answer was yes! By that time, Mr. Black Cat was no longer Mr. Black Cat; he went by Mr. B, and the new cat, Zach, a gray longhaired cat, came to our home to become Mr. B's pal and best friend. Mr. B and Zach lived in Pocatello, Idaho; Vancouver, British Columbia, Canada; as well as many other places.





Regrettably, cats do not live forever. Mr. B was diagnosed with cancer last Winter. He passed away last December and we spent a long time mourning his loss. Because Mr. B was so special and brought so much joy to our lives, we decided that we should adopt a cat from Pocatello -the place where our lives started. Mr. B, a Pocatellan cat, was a very special cat: he taught us to treat cats much like we treat humans.



We wanted Zach to have a new friend. Originally, we wanted to adopt a new black cat. I started following the “Bannock Humane Society” on Facebook. Then I learned about the story of Cha Cha, a cat with FIV. As a cat, Cha Cha was in the same position as our beloved cat Zach in 2011. I was busy teaching a course at the University of Washington, but it was Memorial Day Weekend. I could easily fly to Pocatello to go get Cha Cha ~ and so I did.



Cha Cha now goes by Chad. He is a friendly and kind cat. He had a tough life, but now he has a place to relax and heal. I hired him as my assistant. He assists me with my writing. We don't know much about his past. All we know is that two people who were trying to learn how to dance Cha Cha found him. Chad teaches us something new everyday and we learn from him everyday.



We still want to adopt a black cat from Pocatello. Sadly, we are not in the position of doing it now (we only have room for 2 cats), but adopting a black cat from Pocatello is something we want to do within the next 5 or 10 years. If you like cats and if this story has touched you, we do have a request: **PLEASE BE KIND TO BLACK CATS!**