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The Purr Machine. Remembering Bob Dole.

Tue, 2013-09-03 09:57 — Robin Olson

I told myself I wouldn't write about how Bob died on the second anniversary of his passing. I wouldn't try to remember that last year, which was filled with one Vet visit after another, one more hit on the credit card, one more wish that maybe we'd find a way back to health, but it was not meant to be. I wanted to remember just the happy moments we shared and be positive, but I struggle with being able to do that.



©2013 Robin A.F. Olson. Bob's shrine, featuring the precious "BOB"blehead that was made of him by [Royal Bobbles](#) [1].

What I hate about death is there is no second chance. You don't get to, at least, see the person once a year on the anniversary of the day they died. It would be so wonderful, wouldn't it? You could have that time to catch up, tell them how much you miss them, love them. As the sun set, they'd go back to the great beyond for another year, but you'd have something to keep you going. The pain of loss wouldn't be able to carve a hole into your heart.



©2009 Robin A.F. Olson. So many Vet visits. Bob was always such a good boy no matter what they did to him.

No. You can't have any more time with them, as desperate as you may feel, as much as you tried to be a good person, hoping maybe the rules didn't apply to you if you were a good girl or boy. That bottomless well of despair can never be healed. With time, perhaps it may take longer to reach that familiar place, but once arriving, that pain is still as sharp as ever, the longing just as fresh as it was when you first had to say goodbye.



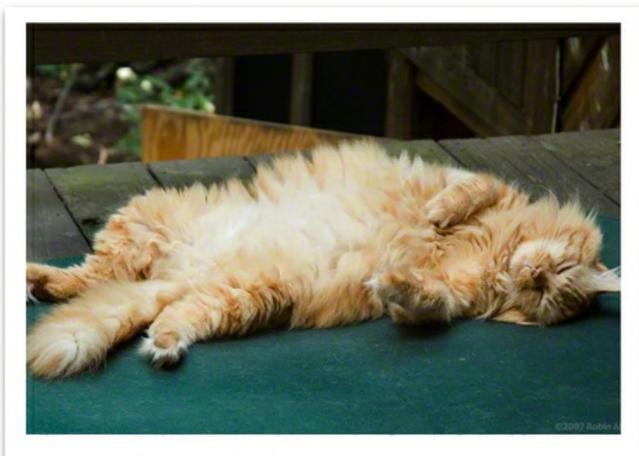
©2007 Robin A.F. Olson. *Bob by the fire.*

Bob wasn't just an ordinary cat. He was a human in an orange striped long-haired coat. He had a quality about him that was almost unsettling. When he looked at you with those brilliant green eyes, it was really into your soul. If he suddenly spoke to you, it might not even be that surprising. You just knew he understood what you were saying. He could relate to people so effortlessly. **Everyone loved Bob.**



©2009 Robin A.F. Olson. *Yes, this is how excited Bob got about chasing after wildlife.*

Bob had a huge personality. He was "the boss" to the other cats and had a firm paw, but it was rarely used. He constantly purred, loudly. I called it "burbling." I don't know how to describe the sound. It was musical, bubbly, with a million tones blending into one. Even a few hours before he died, he purred. That was Bob: *the purring machine.*



©2007 Robin A.F. Olson. *In his full glory and on favorite place, his blankee on the deck.*

Bob loved to be outside. After my mother died in 2006, I brought Bob home to live with me. It wasn't planned to be his forever home because I thought I was at my limit with six cats, but over time I realized, Bob would never get good enough care anywhere else and his being outside (*and intact for many years until I had a fight with my mother about it and got him neutered*), lead to him contracting FIV. I couldn't let him roam freely outside any more. It was dangerous when he lived with my mom, but it is far worse here because the back yard of our home is a state forest.



©2009 Robin A.F. Olson. *Incorrigible-Bob.*

So Bob wouldn't be miserable, I set up a space for him on our deck. It's almost 17 feet off the ground and Bob, as well as Spencer and Nicky, could sleep on cushions or nibble on the plants and I didn't have to worry about them running off. They watched the birds flit back and forth to the feeders, but they didn't bother with them at all.



©2007 Robin A.F. Olson. *Bob and new BFF-Nora.*

Bob would go outside every day from the first warm day in spring and continue to go out every nice day until winter. As he grew sicker and weaker, I made sure he could still spend the days in the sun, some times carrying him or adding steps so he could get onto the lounge chair. I knew our days were numbered when a big crow landed on the deck, cawing excitedly at Bob. Bob barely moved and I knew this bird saw what I was trying to not see...Bob was going to be gone soon and there was no way in Hell I was going to let him become crow-food so that was the last time he went outside.

I just realized that we don't go on the deck any more. Not the cats. Not us. I guess it doesn't feel right without Bob.



©2010 Robin A.F. Olson. *With Blitzen.*

I'd never had an orange cat before Bob, but I admit I have a very soft spot for them now. If you know me even a

little bit, you know I've rescued a lot of orange tabbies in his honor. It's something I'll keep doing because in some way it's like keeping Bob alive. They can never replace him, but I admit to looking at each one and wondering if maybe one of them will look back at me in the same way Bob did. **If I can't see him once a year, it won't stop me from looking for him every time I meet an orange cat.**



I'll remember you always.

There are some things even the best writer can't do justice to by using words and one of them is in describing how amazing Bob was. I tried to give you an idea, at least, and maybe I'll find the right words next year when I sit down to think about him on this sad anniversary.

I hope to see you again one day, my dear Bob.

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Comments

Tue, 2013-09-03 11:19 — [Marlene \(not verified\)](#) ^[9]

Orange Tabbies ^[10]

Robin,

Thank you for sharing the story of Bob. I, too, have a male orange tabby. He is a special cat also. Of my four cats, he is my greeter. He is the first one to greet anyone who comes in the door. The others go hide until they decide that it is okay to come out. Kolbi Jac and I have a bond that is different from the bond that I have with the others. There must be something about orange tabbies.

I do enjoy your blogs. You have a way of presenting a story in a very clear, unique way that involves the reader. Thank you for that.

Tue, 2013-09-03 12:04 — kelsey kruse (not verified)

This was a wonderful post. ^[11]

This was a wonderful post.

Tue, 2013-09-03 13:40 — Brandyj. (not verified)

Those orange boys have a way ^[12]

Those orange boys have a way of taking over your heart. Your post was a beautiful testament to your love of Bob.

Tue, 2013-09-03 14:19 — jmuwj (not verified)

RE: BOB ^[13]

That sure was a wonderful post, Robin. I'd never thought about what you expressed so eloquently -- being able to reunite on

anniversaries -- because my belief system tells me we will be reunited with all of our loved ones, of all species, in due time. What you wrote really touched a chord in me -- how amazing it would be if we COULD be with our loved ones on anniversaries! Bob was a very handsome, and amazing, catman. Thank you for sharing his photos and your wonderful memories with us. And thank you more for rescuing others in the very best tribute to him.

Tue, 2013-09-03 14:56 — [Angel Abby \(not verified\)](#) [14]

Bob [15]

Just a few short weeks ago Robin I would tell you how sorry I was about Bob, and truly mean it. Because I followed along with his story and sad heartbroken with tears streaming down my face when he passed. But now, with just a little over 3 weeks since I lost the love of my life, I get it. Oh how I get it. Today I was just thinking God if I could just hold Abby again, just one more time, please. Let me hold her again...ok cue my tears now...I thought I could handle it. But you know what I also thought? IF I were granted that wish, it would only start my pain over again. I would be counting days and weeks and soon months without my girl, and you without your boy. I too look at tuxies searching for Abby, like you do at Orange tabbies. The week after she passed I went to a shelter just to visit, and went the girl asked me if I wanted to adopt I said I had just lost my kitty, and she remarked you are looking for your cat. I thought yeah I was but I didn't know that at that moment. It's a long long long journey, one we will be on the rest of our days. There is no getting over it, it will just live inside of us until we no longer walk this earth. I guess it gets "easier" but I think it just gets quieter. Even now just a few weeks out time has worn away the roughest edges of my grief and now I'm just left with softly worn down cries and loneliness. Even though I have four other cats living with me, they are not Abby, nor could they ever be Abby. I just now know that this experience has changed the way I respond to those who live with or who are going to live with losing their most beloved cat. It's humbling and crushing and I surely do not wish it on anyone, but it is a life long process that will never go away. Again I am so sorry about Bob, he was an extraordinary cat and I do so remember all the things you wrote about and I will say a prayer with you and Bob tonight.

Wed, 2013-09-04 16:43 — [Robin Olson](#) [16]

I'm so sorry for your loss. [17]

I would rather we share something like having silly cats or cats that fetch than being bound together by grief, but this is our sisterhood of crazy cat ladies..crazy in love..crazy without them. I'm very sorry for your loss, but I'm glad Abby knew profound love in her life. Many cats aren't so lucky. Hugs to you! Robin
Wed, 2013-09-04 13:11 — [Doreen \(not verified\)](#)

Bob Dole (Pineapple!) [18]

Hi Robin,
Bob sure was a sweet guy. Pineapple just followed Dole when I first read his name! I enjoyed looking at his photos on Flickr, I love when kitties lay down flat on their chin. Who was his pal in some of them? Thanks for sharing all of your cats and kittens.

~ Doreen

Wed, 2013-09-04 21:02 — [Maria Romano \(not verified\)](#)

Bob [19]

I too had a big, plush red-haired tabby cat named Pumpkin. He lived to be sixteen and his fur was so plush, I used to just like smelling it after he licked himself clean. He will always remain my favorite cat, but since it has now been six years since he has been gone, my all black male cat Earle takes away a lot of the pain I had losing Pumpkin.

Wed, 2014-09-03 20:52 — [Rachel Shubin \(not verified\)](#) [20]

Bob Dole [21]

Bob was lucky to live his life with you after your mom passed. He was gorgeous. Always in your heart. Love the locket with his pictures.

<3

Thu, 2015-09-03 19:37 — [Pamela Wheelock \(not verified\)](#) [22]

Bob [23]

Your story really touches my heart. We helped our 19 y/o pass over to spirit on Tuesday. He died of liver failure. We never left him and used our charge card with ease, in the end none of that mattered. It is surreal not to have him in our life. Fledder was just a really nice guy-- it seems like Bob Dole. I have tried to understand why we love them so much when they will someday leave us. It seems so unfair. Loving and caring are darned hard work and then.... to say goodbye seems almost impossible. I so enjoyed reading your thoughts. I can offer very little except that love is a powerful mystery. I do believe Bob Dole is out there, somewhere, caring the mark of your love on his spirit. I hope he comes back to you in some form.

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