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The Re-Birth of Bob Dole.

Fri, 2012-06-01 08:56 — Robin Olson

It's been almost eight months to the day that my beloved cat Bob Dole passed away. His death came slowly, from lymphoma and the return of a hepatic cancer that I thought had been surgically removed right after Christmas of 2010.

Bob's last year was bittersweet. His once magnificent coat was reduced to tattered ruin since he could not fight off a fungal infection because he also had FIV+ and his immune system was compromised. He grew thinner and weaker. The once boss of the household grew quieter and let others rule the roost. He ate less and less and even after months of chemo and other treatments, I had to syringe feed him. I knew nothing could save him, but I never stopped trying to give him another day... another good day. [You can read about Bob's last days-though it's a TISSUE WARNING multipart post, [HERE](#) ^[1], [HERE](#) ^[2], [HERE](#) ^[3], [HERE](#) ^[4] and [HERE](#) ^[5]]



©2007 Robin A.F. Olson. My most beautiful Bob at 16 pounds of pure pouffy perfection.

When Bob passed away I lost a dear companion and part of my heart, even though we'd only spent five years together. Bob used to be my Mother's cat. **After she died in 2006, I took Bob in and his presence was so grand that even now it feels empty in the house without him.**



©2009 Robin A.F. Olson. After a "lion cut" he looked so CUTE!

Bob was the greeter, the peacekeeper, the big love muffin and had the best purr I've ever heard. He had just the right amount of sass that just made everyone love him all the more. **Whenever I said his name aloud, people's eyes would light up and they'd laugh.** They asked funny questions about if Bob Dole, the cat, referred to himself in the third person as Bob Dole the former Vice President of the United States did (*the answer was of course, yes*).



©2007 Robin A.F. Olson. Welcome to mah belleh.

Even now it's very difficult for me to write about Bob, to look at photos of him, without crying. **There will never be a new photo of Bob, his dazzling orange coat and lime green eyes sparkling with that "Puss in Boots" expression he gave me when he wanted a treat.** Now his ashes lay inside a tin box I have in my living room. It sits next to some framed photos atop a glass shelf. **When I can, I have a candle burning, too, in his honor, as if there was a chance I might forget him.** He meant more to me than any cat I've known and will probably ever know again.

Shortly after Bob died, my friend and client, Warren Royal, contacted me. I've written about Warren and his wife Terri. These people have the biggest hearts and deepest love for cats. **They've saved the lives of countless cats and taken a few of them into their home. They will stop at nothing to help a cat.** You can read about them [HERE](#) ^[6] and [HERE](#) ^[7].



Warren's company is called Royal Bobbles, ^[8] a premium bobblehead manufacturing company specializing in exquisite historic figures. I've designed a few of their other cartons for Alfred Hitchcock, Mark Twain, Smokey Bear and the cast of American Pickers. **They also create custom bobbleheads ^[9] to celebrate weddings or birthdays or to use as fundraisers.**

Can you see where this story is going? I sure didn't-at first.



©Royal Bobbles, Inc. Bob the bear?

Warren asked me if I'd like them to create a BOBBlehead and of course I accepted right away. The process might take some time, he warned. They'd never done the likeness of a cat and said it would be tough to do, but they wanted to try. I was delighted to have a chance to memorialize my dear cat.



©Royal Bobbles, Inc. Bob looking more cat like.

And so, over the past eight months, we've been working to get it right.

There was a sculptor in China who began working on a form. It was sad to realize that cats aren't pets in China and I don't want to write about what they do to them there. **Memorializing a cat was certainly out of the norm so it took many trials and refinements, but eventually it got sorted out.**



©Royal Bobbles, Inc. Okay, clearly something is lost in translation. Is that a BOOB next to BOB?

I began to realize how difficult it would be to capture the sad-eyed look of Bob regardless of how many photos I sent for reference. Even though I had to ask for changes, I was impressed with the dedication Warren and his team had in making every detail just right. I didn't want to think about how much all of these revisions were costing him to get done and though **I tried to love everything they did, even Warren would often write and say he didn't love it either and wanted to push back for more edits.**



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. Say hello to Bob the Bobblehead.

A few weeks ago after Warren hired another artist to repaint our little BOBBlehead, who did an outstanding job. **We all agreed that Bob was finally done and a few days ago my BOBBlehead arrived.** When I opened the box I held my breath as I carefully unwrapped the base, then the bowl, then finally Bob. I held him in my hand and his little head jiggled back and forth. I looked at his face and though it would never be Bob, somehow his "Bobness" had been captured. I smiled as tears ran down my cheeks. **If I couldn't have the real Bob, this would be a lovely way to memorialize him.**



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. Nice pouffy tail there! (Bob is sitting on his flannel blantee)

I rearranged my shrine to Bob to make space for the new addition. I wondered what Bob, the cat would have thought about all this fuss. **He probably would have said not to bother and that we're just being silly humans.** That may be the case, but it's comforting to have the little guy here.

I know it took a lot of work and patience to get this done and I'm extremely grateful to Warren and his crew for their efforts. I just love my BOBBlehead!



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. The shrine complete, with Bob's ashes in the blue tin to the right and the Maneki Neko candle my friend Irene made for me from her own bee's wax.

The sun just rose on another day. My fingers are cold from typing with the windows open. It's another day without Bob, yet in a way, Bob has returned. I hope this Bob will be with me always as a reminder of one very special cat, gone too soon.



©2012 Robin A.F. Olson. Good night, Bob. Rest in Peace.

*This may be a bit odd, but I know there are some of you who have followed Bob's life story for many years and who have come to love him as I do. Though it was NEVER my intention to profit from this experience, I'd like you to know that **if you'd like your own BOBBlehead, to contact me at info@coveredincathair.com** ^[10] . Depending on how many orders we get will drive the per unit cost of the piece. The more orders, the lower the price. I will put everyone on a list and let you know in a week or so how much they would be and if you want to order one we'll figure something out.*

If you want your very own Bobblehead of your cat, dog, friends, family or one of yourself, please DO visit Royal Bobbles and fill out a [contact form](#) ^[9] and let them know Robin sent you! They do GREAT work and their prices are very reasonable.

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Comments

Fri, 2012-06-01 10:08 — [Sally \(not verified\)](#) [24]

BOB [25]

Very, very sweet! Tissue alert indeed. He was magnificent.

Fri, 2012-06-01 13:15 — [Catnonymouse \(not verified\)](#)

"Even now it's very difficult" [26]

"Even now it's very difficult for me to write about Bob, to look at photos of him, without crying."

My darling Finzi died in 1999, and I was in tears as I wrote something about her earlier this week.

They are all waiting at the Bridge for us - what a joyful reunion that will be!

Fri, 2012-06-01 13:31 — [Marilia \(not verified\)](#) [27]

tribute [28]

OMG! So cute Bob. The good memories are those that must remain! Kisses!

Sat, 2012-06-02 00:40 — [Liz | natural c... \(not verified\)](#) [29]

Beautiful [30]

This sculpture of Bob Dole has soul. I believe his spirit is purring loudly about this even if he knows humans are a bit silly. What a wonderful cat.

Sat, 2012-06-02 09:34 — [Deb Barnes - Ze... \(not verified\)](#) [31]

The memories always stay in our heart... [32]

Robin - I think those of us that have pets, all have the one that touched our heart just a bit more than all the others. It is impossible to get over the loss of a pet and we just do the best we can to remember them with love. I remember the day you lost Bob - I was outside gardening and something compelled me to come into the house to read up on Bob's progress. He had passed and somehow I just felt it from afar. I am happy you have such a lovely tribute spot for him and your BOBBlehead is just priceless!

Sat, 2012-06-02 17:18 — [Teresa \(not verified\)](#)

BOB [33]

Your Bob looks very much like my own sweet Mojo did. I had to have Mojo euthenized a couple months ago, he was 15 years old and I had him since he was 10 weeks. It is so hard losing them.

Mon, 2012-06-04 13:40 — [Catnonymouse \(not verified\)](#)

Re-birth of bob doyle [34]

Hi Robin,

At least you could afford to have him cremated, have his ashes near you have a shrine. I didn't have the means to cremate my gangsta a kidney cat that everyone deemed to looked like some bad gangsta until I petted him the first time and he was sooooo happy. I nursed him for 3 years of more, he passed away nov30 2011. He was buried at a pot of land near my house, as it was public I did not dare to plant any flowers or put anything near it. My dad do not approve of me keeping cats. I only have his memories with me. So, don't be too sad. Hugs.

CICH @ [Google+](#)
Robin @ [Google+](#)

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