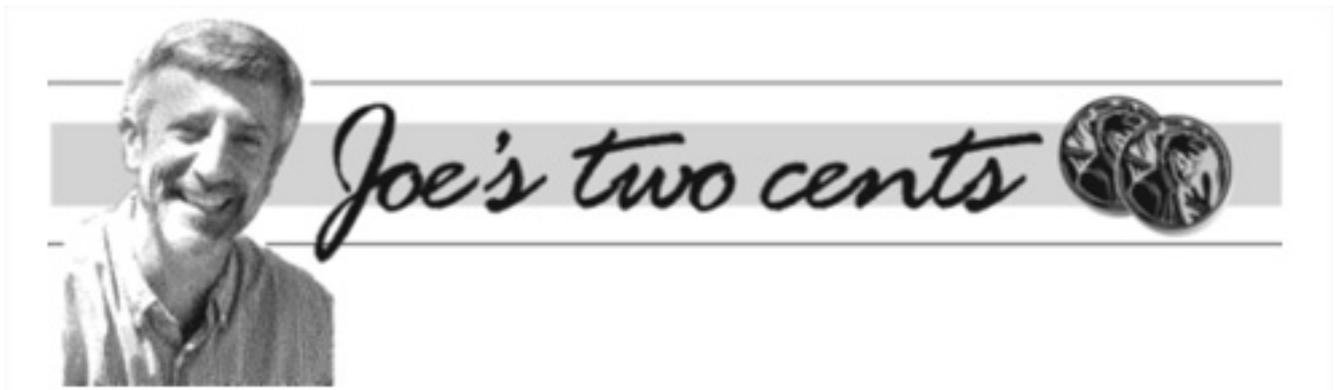


08/28/12 - Herding Cats



I sat on the couch, quiet as a mouse, with the bottle of medicine clutched tightly in my hand. She rounded the corner, took a long suspicious look at me (she always has a suspicious look for males ? even this one, whom she's known for 12 years), then somewhat reluctantly, jumped up next to me.

That's when I pounced.

I held the cat firmly against the couch, while my wife, coming out of nowhere, grabbed the medicine and plopped four drops in her left ear. Then I released my grip. And Hazel shot out of that room, like a jalepino pepper through a guy with loose bowels. I'm talkin' fast.

We didn't see her for two days.

Gradually, she'd come around for the treats that we give both of our cats every morning and afternoon. But she'd stay in the next room and I'd have to leave her treats in the doorway so she could retrieve them at her own pace. Which was fine for her ? as long as she got them before Max, our other cat and her much larger brother, scarfed them up. He won half the time, as fat as he is. She wasn't about to expose herself to another human pouncing...

Now this medication is supposed to be inserted in Hazel's ear twice daily to cure an ear infection ? to then be flushed with another medication that rinses the ear canal. When my wife told me those instructions from the vet, I knew we were in for a long recovery. Cats don't take well to medication. They can smell it a mile away. And they sense when you're looking to give it to them. Especially if they are as naturally suspicious as Hazel.

After a week of only a single success at giving her this medication, she started to hop back on our bed again at night. Both cats like to try to smother us while we sleep. It's what cats do. She seemed to be more trusting at night, when we couldn't see her. After an hour of lying still in bed, we again sprang into action. I held her down while my wife administered the drops. Then Hazel again dropped into jalepino mode. And we didn't see her for another two days. Limping, of course. Why not add one malady to another?

We tried several other attempts that week. I'd pretend to be lying on the living room floor and when she came up to sniff what, I'm sure, she hoped was my cold, dead body, and pounced again. She easily eluded me. We enticed her to the bathroom sink (she loves to drink from the faucet) and I gently closed the door and went to hold her down on the sink. She darted off, actually opened the door with her frantic clawing, and ran for the basement.

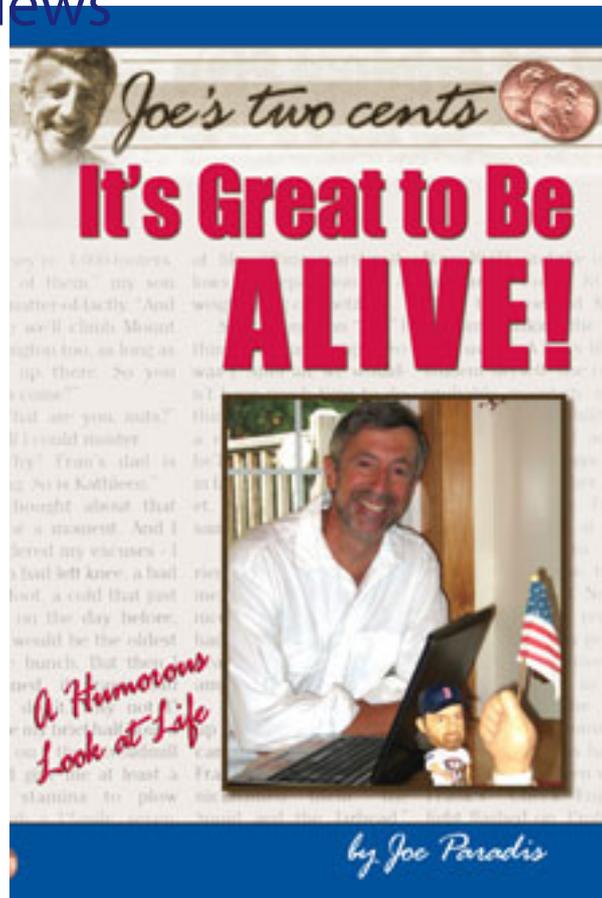
Another two days before we saw her.

This has gone on for two weeks now. And we have succeeded only four times in giving her this daily medication ? never mind the stupid flush. My wife had told the vet this was going to be difficult. And the vet said, "Well, if you can't do it, bring her in and we'll do it." I don't think he thought about the fact that we'd have to catch her to bring her in to them too... That's been the problem!

So I think Hazel's recovery from this ear infection will be a slow one ? although it does seem to be getting a little better. And she'll probably continue to limp from her many daring escapes, as we too recover from multiple scratches and contusions, suffered in the line of duty.

The term "it's like herding cats" is certainly a truism. Thank God we only have two of them ? and only one fast enough to get away when it's time for medicine...

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