



## Pearl Hoppes

May 1, 2011 - April 7, 2018

It was in the spring of 2011 that I first saw Pearl and her 2 brothers crawling out from underneath a neighbor's old shed. Just tiny kittens, they were adorable with beautiful black fur that glistened in the sun. I then saw their kitty mom as she carefully watched them played. Mom Ebbie(as I named her) was a true feral cat. She was extremely protective of her kittens, never letting them out of her sight. I would watch the kittens from afar since Ebbie would not allow me near her kittens for any reason! I continued to admire the family at a distance but was able to leave food and water. Then one day, I noticed Ebbie within inches of me, meowing. I followed her as she led me to her precious kittens! I felt so honored that Ebbie trusted me enough to allow me entrance into their lives. I named the kittens CoCo, Lily (later changed to Leo), and my beloved Pearl. Remembering that this was a feral family, I carefully and gradually introduced myself. My husband and I converted our garage into their condo with all the comforts they enjoyed. The kittens quickly adopted me as well-mom Ebby remained close by to monitor the activity of all. Pearl was the smallest of the family. She was fearless and most curious always looking for adventure. Pearl would at times run into the house and once she had enough of indoor life, would leave only to find mom Ebby waiting to discipline her. Ebby passed away in the summer of 2013. Pearl and Leo remained. Pearl still would occasionally come inside the house but was not yet ready to call it her home. Then in December 2013, Pearl ran inside, up the stairs, and onto our bed! She had enough of the outdoor life!

There are so many amazing memories I have of my sweet Pearl. She was my shadow, my sunshine girl. We were together almost constantly and she was literally the heartbeat at my feet. Pearl slept with me every night, expecting a much needed belly rub (she always let me know with a special meow when I stopped too soon).

In March 2018, my precious Pearl was diagnosed with inoperable, terminal brain cancer. I was devastated and felt helpless knowing there was nothing that could be done to save her. On April 7th, 2018 I had to say good-bye to my baby Pearl.

As I now walk through my home, I expect to see Pearl run around the corner carrying her favorite white ball. I expect to see Pearl lying in one of her favorite napping areas. I expect to see Pearl at my feet. I expect to reach over and rub Pearl's tummy at bedtime.

Pearl, I miss you more than words can express. You and I had a very special bond, one death cannot break. I will forever remember the wonderful times we shared during your very brief time on this earth. Until we meet again, my beloved sunshine girl.