LAMORINDA WEEKLY



Published September 3, 2008

# Moraga Assisted Living Resident Brings Home a New Cat

*By Jean Follmer*

Bobbi Goodman holds Chachi Photo Andy Scheck

Moraga resident Bobbi Goodman recently welcomed her new cat, Chachi, to her home at the Moraga Royale Retirement Community. Although she was in the market for an orange tabby, the big gray and white cat won her heart. Chachi weighs 15 pounds and Bobbi said "He weighs more than my sister-in-law's chihuahua!" Bobbi said Chachi gives her quite a laugh when he climbs into the sink and sits there for no apparent reason. Earlier this summer, Bobbi lost her beloved 21-year-old cat named Ming. Ming and her sister Ling went to live with Bobbi and her late husband in their Montclair Village home in 1987. Bobbi's son, Moraga resident Jeff Goodman, said "Ming took to my mom from day one and figured out that she was not her owner, but her mother. She instantly became a one-person kitty and loved to climb up my mom's arm and stand on her chest." Ling died in 1995, but Ming was with Mr. and Mrs. Goodman when they left their Montclair home for Rossmoor in 2004. Jeff said "Ming comforted my parents when my dad was slowly losing his three year fight with lung cancer." Ming also comforted Bobbi when she had a stroke in 2005. Jeff believes that Ming's presence helped his mom recuperate a lot quicker. After Mr. Goodman died, Bobbi was alone at Rossmoor except for the visiting caregiver she had hired. She was lonely so decided to move to an assisted living residence that would offer more opportunities for socializing. In December, 2006, Bobbi and Ming moved to the Moraga Royale Retirement Community. It was vitally important to Bobbi that she be allowed to keep her long-time companion. She said "I couldn't have moved here without Ming." Jeff pointed out that even though the residents have opportunities for socialization throughout the day, they still return to their apartments alone each night. Having a pet waiting at home can be helpful. Moraga Royale Executive Director Dianne Wilson said they currently have one dog, three cats and one bird residing in the facility. Wilson said, "It's great for them to have their pets until they can no longer take care of them." As the residents have more trouble taking care of the pets, she said the staff has often helped walk dogs and clean litter boxes. Dianne said she learned the importance of being able to keep your pet from a former resident named Max. Max was scared of moving to the facility without his dog and offered the parallel that it gave him the same feelings as the first time he went to summer camp. While he was excited about the possibilities, his heart sank when his parents actually drove away. Unlike Ming, Chachi really spreads the love around. Bobbi said that while "Ming tolerated other people; she was a one person cat." Chachi hasn't met a person he doesn't like. Based on her past history with feline longevity and Chachi's youth, it would seem that Bobbi will be in good company 24 hours a day for a long time to come.

Reach the reporter at: jean@lamorindaweekly.com



Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA