

## Love for Stray Cat Inspires Book

**Meet Vic Rescovic, author of “A Cat Named Squeeky.”**

*By Stacy N. Hackett*

Vic Rescovic holds Squeeky, the inspiration for his first novel. 1. What was the inspiration behind the book?

Quite simply, our love for Squeeky, a stray cat that wandered first into our neighborhood, then into the lives of my wife and myself, is the ultimate motivation for the book.

Over the course of approximately 19 years, which was the time we had Squeeky, she became as much a part of our family as any human member. The intensity of our affection for her was matched only by the grief we felt when we finally lost her.

In the book, I wanted to illustrate and recreate both situations, because I think the basis for our response was one and the same. The greater the emotional gain from a given subject — in this case animal companionship — the greater the impact of loss when the relationship finally ends. I also began to think about other people who've lost a beloved pet, and thought if I could find the right words, and tell the story well enough, those folks might benefit in some way from the book's realizations and conclusions.

2. What was the most difficult part of writing the book?

Two things were difficult. First, I wrote this story in a fictionalized format using a creative style and treatment to make reading Squeeky's story a rewarding and moving experience. I believe a story told using fictional techniques of scene, dialogue and imagery, if told well enough, is much more engrossing than straight narrative. That was a tough job. I couldn't tell you how many times I rewrote passages and chapters to get something the way I thought it should read.

The other hard part was writing the last 10-20 pages. It brought back memories of what for us was a tough time.

3. What was the most rewarding part of writing the book?

Reliving the events, picturing the scenes and recalling the details of what were good and wonderful times. Now that the book is done, I hope I have created not only a worthwhile reading experience, but also a work that may serve to create additional awareness of the need for proper animal care, the rewards of animal companionship and the extent of the size of our current stray and feral feline population.

4. What type of feedback have you received so far?

Lots of positive comments. One reader said she purchased seven additional copies to give away to friends who have pets. Several veterinary hospitals stock and sell the book, and one Siamese cat rescue organization sells the book as a fund-raising vehicle on their website. A reader review on Amazon.com gives the book a 5-star rating, calling the book both funny and moving.

5. What is your writing/editing process?

Slow. Too slow. The perfectionist in me wants to hit literary home runs with every sentence, each paragraph and chapter. Of course, writing doesn't work that way. Creative writing should consist of an uninterrupted flow of words, followed by the rewriting/editing process, where words are changed or omitted, and larger sections are reconfigured. If you edit as you write, it'll take you forever. Writing takes me forever.

6. Do you have any other books? Please list them here.

I don't have any other books published at this time, but I do have several ideas in my head, none of which deal with animals.

7. Do you currently own a cat or other pets? Tell us a little bit about them.

My wife Cindy and I have another cat. His name is Sammy. Sammy is a former feral cat who lived with several other cats in a colony in the Santa Cruz Mountains in Northern California.

After Sammy was trapped and neutered, he needed a foster home for only a short time. We agreed to take him for what was supposed to be 4 to 6 weeks. Six months later, we asked the question, "Why is Sammy still here?" Nine months later we asked the question again. Later still, we stopped asking the question. We knew another cat had found us.

8. Do your pets influence your writing?

Yes, in two ways. Often when I'm writing, Sammy will jump up on the desk and walk across the keyboard, creating an interesting array of letters on the computer monitor. I always look closely at what his paws have produced. You never know.

The other thing Sammy does when I'm writing is to walk up to me and sit down on the floor beside me, which is a signal that he would like to share the chair. I then scoot forward and he jumps into the space behind my backside and curls up and goes into catnap mode. So if I'm going to continue to write, I have to sit up straight with no back support — which I do, because I like having Sammy back there. It reminds me of another time and another cat, and that's all right with me.

Stacy N. Hackett is a contributing editor to CatChannel.com who lives in Southern California with her husband James, children Kayla and Parker, and two adorable Cornish Rex cats, Evita and Carson.