

LEFT UNEDITED – I’ve looked at cats from both sides now

www.villagerpublishing.com/89549/opinion/left-unedited-ive-looked-at-cats-from-both-sides-now/



Becky Osterwald, our managing editor, insists she does not like cats.

Personally, I like them. I have two of them—two classic unlucky Halloween cats—and their marvelous self-absorption is at the root of all great humor surrounding the feline species.

You know that feeling you get on Sundays when you realize you have to go back to work the next day?

Never happens to a cat.

The thing is, Becky is a dog person and really doesn't know cats at all. But since she is also a big Judy Collins fan (having recently driven to Salina, Kan. to see Collins and Stephen Stills, missing all three Colorado dates for reasons only she can explain), I have written an additional verse to "Both Sides Now," just for Becky.



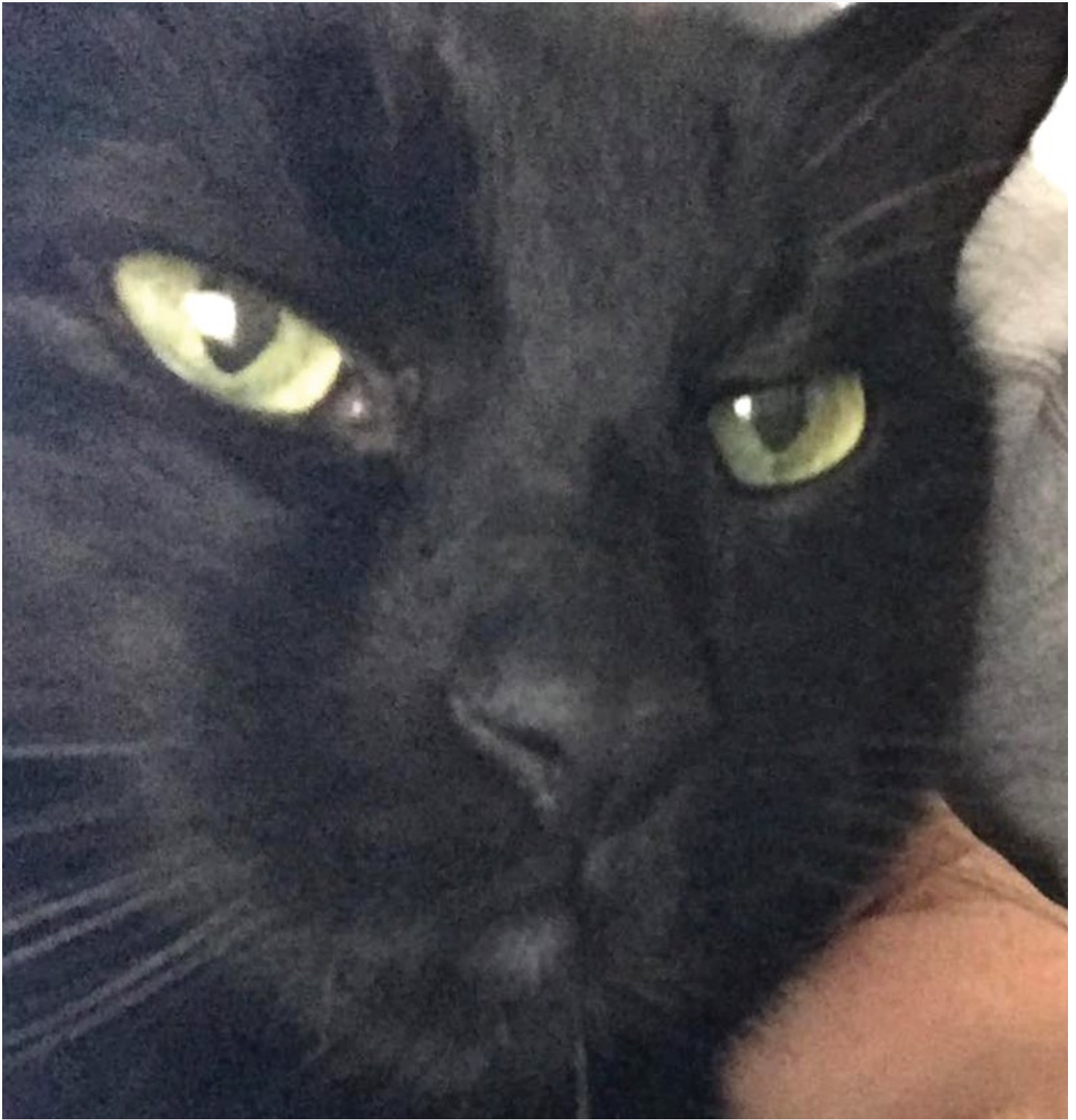


Fair, balanced, both sides: Judy Collins performs Aug. 1 at Denver Botanic Gardens. Photo by Peter Jones

My apologies to songwriter Joni Mitchell.

*Smiles in miles of kitten fur and magic in that gentle purr,
A friendship never ends with her,
I've looked at cats that way.
But now they only stink the house,
They think they don't—and can't catch a mouse.
And what's that upchuck on your blouse?
They won't even sit or stay.
I've looked at cats from both sides now,
From smell and swell, and still somehow,
It's cats' illusions, I recall.
I really don't know cats at all.*

The point is, if you've never had a cat, you just don't know.



Jasper, Peter Jones's cat, is on the lookout for feline haters.

I never liked cats myself until I got one. But even after careful scrutiny in song, one is left with the inevitable realization that cats are beyond our simple comprehension, just like clouds, life and love.

Journalists are supposed to look at both sides, right?

I saw Judy perform this song earlier this month at Denver Botanic Gardens, near her long-ago haunt of East High School, having interviewed her a year or two earlier. Inexplicably, she was not accepting additional verses.

Think of the possibilities—donuts, reruns, dirt, even sex.

Meow!

peter@villagermediagroup.com