

# HALO ACRES

## The Story of Halo – by Jenni Johnson

The ladies at the vet’s said it was a shame to call such a sweet cat “Biter.” This was the appointed name of the feral cat that sort of joined our family after my daughter, Jacki, tempted her with cans of tuna fish left secretly on the patio. She was never a cat you could hold and snuggle. In fact, she was only good for two pets – after a third she would turn to bite the offending hand. That’s how she earned her name.



All things considered, we thought it might help her attitude if we changed ours, so we christened her “Halo.” She was a pretty tabby with faint traces of calico that showed up beautifully in her unexpected litters of kittens.

The first litter arrived when I was traveling in France with my grown-up daughters. Three-year-old Bonnie stayed behind with her dad and the cat. None of us were aware of what was coming, but I got a troubled phone call letting me know that there were kittens and Bonnie had already seen them!



I wasn’t savvy enough to know when to get a cat fixed, so more than once she ended up pregnant very soon after her kittens were weaned. I painted a sandwich-board sign with a cute cat face and *Free Kittens* on it and stood it on the street corner when necessary. Because the kittens were so cute and came in assorted colors, it only took a day or two to find them new homes.

Finally, I got the timing right for a little cat surgery and our kitten days were over. Halo continued to patrol our property and was content with small bowls of cat food and water. She wasn’t at all interested in coming inside, and she couldn’t anyway because I have a pretty serious cat allergy.

All of this took place in a busy neighborhood in Utah, but eventually we were ready to make a move to

southern Idaho. We had two acres of property there and were sure that Halo would love roaming the countryside. But getting her there would be a different matter. My husband made a DIY cat carrier and we showed it to her and talked about the move to see what she would think. Whatever happened, it would have to be her decision because nobody wanted to risk the dangers involved in putting her in the carrier.

### Here Comes the Miracle!

When moving day came, we told Halo this was it. It was time for her to decide her future. She listened intently and examined the carrier, but then turned and took off toward the back fence. Bonnie immediately started to cry, loudly, and Halo stopped in her tracks. She came back, jumped up into my arms, and let me put her in the carrier. This was totally out of character for her, so we knew she meant business. She was going to Idaho with Bonnie.

Cats in general had a hard time staying alive in our new country neighborhood, but Halo was street smart and managed to live many years. She disappeared once for eight months, but then reappeared as mysteriously as she left.

One of her favorite antics was waiting for her dad to come up our long driveway in his truck. Right before he reached his parking spot Halo would make a dramatic dash across the road, right in front of the truck, as if she barely escaped death at the hands of this ruthless driver. This frustrated him in a big way, and he would give her a good talking to, but she kept doing it anyway.

By the time we moved to northern Idaho, Halo had made her last disappearance after a long and eventful life. We never saw another trace of her, but we named our five acres up north *Halo Acres* in her honor. Eventually, we came back to southern Idaho and found ourselves in need of another property name. Even though it’s only one acre, we decided to call this place *Halo Acres*, too. She’s a cat to remember.

