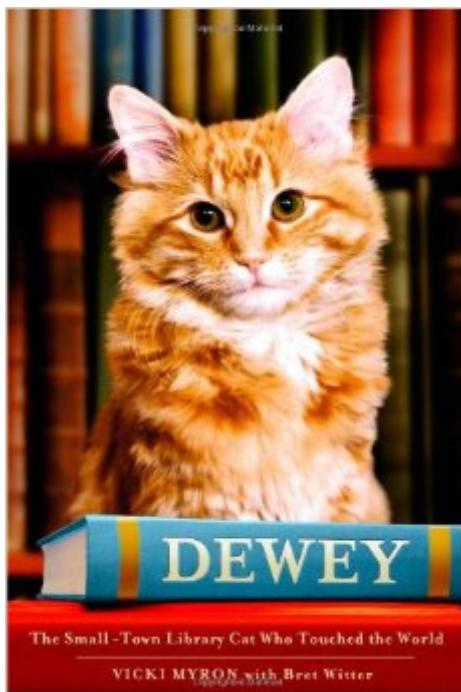


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# Dewey: The Small-Town Library Cat Who Touched The World



## Synopsis

How much of an impact can an animal have? How many lives can one cat touch? How is it possible for an abandoned kitten to transform a small library, save a classic American town, and eventually become famous around the world? You can't even begin to answer those questions until you hear the charming story of Dewey Readmore Books, the beloved library cat of Spencer, Iowa. Dewey's story starts in the worst possible way. Only a few weeks old, on the coldest night of the year, he was stuffed into the returned book slot at the Spencer Public Library. He was found the next morning by library director, Vicki Myron, a single mother who had survived the loss of her family farm, a breast cancer scare, and an alcoholic husband. Dewey won her heart, and the hearts of the staff, by pulling himself up and hobbling on frostbitten feet to nudge each of them in a gesture of thanks and love. For the next nineteen years, he never stopped charming the people of Spencer with his enthusiasm, warmth, humility, (for a cat) and, above all, his sixth sense about who needed him most. As his fame grew from town to town, then state to state, and finally, amazingly, worldwide, Dewey became more than just a friend; he became a source of pride for an extraordinary Heartland farming town pulling its way slowly back from the greatest crisis in its long history.

## Book Information

Hardcover: 277 pages

Publisher: Grand Central Publishing; 1st edition (September 24, 2008)

Language: English

ISBN-10: 0446407410

ISBN-13: 978-0446407410

Product Dimensions: 5.8 x 1 x 8.5 inches

Shipping Weight: 1.2 pounds (View shipping rates and policies)

Average Customer Review: 4.5 out of 5 starsÂ  See all reviewsÂ  (1,273 customer reviews)

Best Sellers Rank: #80,703 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #24 inÂ  Books > Biographies & Memoirs > Regional U.S. > Midwest #87 inÂ  Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Pets & Animal Care > Essays #118 inÂ  Books > Crafts, Hobbies & Home > Pets & Animal Care > Cats

## Customer Reviews

Dog lovers who are also readers have had some good books to get through in the past couple of years, like Marley and Me or From Baghdad with Love. If they really wanted to read a classic, there was always My Dog Skip. Cat people may now rejoice, as may anyone who has an interest in pets, or how people get along with pets, or just in a good story. Dewey: The Small-Town Library

Cat Who Touched the World\_ (Grand Central Publishing) is a lovely, loving story written by Vicki Myron (with Bret Witter), the former librarian of the little town of Spencer, Iowa. Dewey was a remarkable cat, since cats are not generally known for their outgoing natures, and some of the stories about him seem, well, too good to be true. But there is documentation! A whole town got to know this cat, not just library staff; reporters came in to tell his story, as did documentary film makers. As remarkable as Dewey was, the librarians and other citizens who came to love him are revealed to be just as remarkable; this is a perfect story of how pets are good for people and vice versa. Dewey became a library cat in the most fitting of ways. He came into the Spencer Public Library via the book return slot. He didn't volunteer - he was far too small a kitten on that cold January morning of 1988. Someone thought it would be a good idea to shove a kitten in there. The poor cold cat could hardly stand, and it was grey with dirt; only cleaning it up revealed it to be a long-haired orange tabby. His paws were frostbitten, but he hobbled to each of the librarians as if to thank them for the rescue. It was the sort of thing he would continue to do for nineteen years, welcoming anyone who came into the library's front doors, attending meetings, sitting in laps, posing for photos, and generally being agreeable. Dewey turned out not to be just popular with the townsfolk, who, if they did not meet him at the library, heard about him from those who did, or from the local papers. People from small towns in adjoining counties would come by just to meet Dewey. When the *Des Moines Register*, though, the paper of the state capital, printed a story about Dewey, then other papers ran stories, and news crews came to the library. He was in a documentary made by a Japanese crew, and if a "magazine had *cat* in the title, Dewey was probably in it." People from out of state who happened to be visiting "nearby" (perhaps a four hour drive) would make the trip to see him. His own needs were simple: "All Dewey ever wanted was a warm place to nap, a fresh can of food, and love and attention from every person who ever stepped foot in the Spencer Public Library." Dewey lived to a ripe old age, slowing down gradually but always paying attention to his library friends. When his death came (I dare anyone to read the final chapters of this sweet book without a lump in the throat), his ashes were of course buried in the library's garden. His cremation had been donated by the crematorium, and his memorial stone was donated by the local funeral home. Myron got thousands of e-mails and condolence letters, because the obituary ran in over 270 newspapers worldwide. Myron herself seems like a tough survivor, but her book makes clear that her friendship with this ingratiating cat was the most successful of her relationships, so it was good Dewey was there for her, as well as good for the library and good for the town. Of course, she has lessons from Dewey she wants us to take away from this book, and they are good ones: "Find your place. Be happy with what you have. Treat everyone well. Live a

good life. It isn't about material things; it's about love. And you can never anticipate love."

Who placed the kitten in the library book drop? To this day, that question remains unanswered in Spencer, Iowa. No doubt the person felt that whoever discovered the kitten would find it a good home. It certainly was a lucky day for the scrawny, half-frozen, bedraggled-looking kitty when librarian Vicki Myron found him tucked in a corner of the book drop. Vicki carefully warmed, cleaned up, and fed the little stowaway. The kitten showed no fear of people --- in fact, he responded to their kindness with sincere affection and trust. The library board reluctantly agreed to allow him to take up residence at the library. The little orange and white kitten was soon dubbed Dewey Readmore Books, Dewey for short. Dewey had the run of the library and as much attention and affection as any kitten could ever want. He attended staff meetings when he felt like it, and story hour, where he befriended the special needs children; walked among the shelves of books and napped where and when he chose; looked for welcoming laps and usually found them; and showed up daily in the lunchroom to get a few licks of yogurt and some attention. Dewey was both lucky and spoiled. After the library staff left each evening, Dewey had the whole place to himself. He must have had quite a time of it, locating cozy spots to hide, seeking out rubber bands --- which he loved to eat --- doing whatever struck his fancy. Each morning he was at the front door waiting for Vicki, who took him home on weekends and holidays when the library was closed. During one three-week period when the library was being remodeled, Dewey spent the entire time at Vicki's. He loved the open windows, the fresh air, and the sound of birds so much that when he returned to his post at the library he sneaked out while the evening janitor was working. Everyone hunted frantically for him. A few worrisome days later he finally showed up, dirty and ragged, and very glad to be back home. That was his first and only solo adventure outside. Dewey loved the camera and enjoyed posing for photographs. He was such a handsome cat that his picture graced cat calendars and often won photo contests. Magazines and newspapers near and far carried stories about him, and his fame spread quickly. People drove hundreds of miles just to come to Spencer, Iowa, and meet the famous library cat. Documentaries were made about Dewey. Even people in Japan had read about him. Dewey lived out his life, all 19 years of it, at the library in Spencer. He was a goodwill ambassador and a furry friend to all who needed a bit of cheering up or affection. There are other library cats, to be sure, but it is unlikely that any of them are as well known or loved as Dewey Readmore Books.

As an adult, you may have read the grown up version of Dewey. Dewey: The Small-Town Library

Cat Who Touched the World. This child's version is even more charming! Dewey kind of brings out the child in one and here is a book to share with your children of the intrepid cat who becomes the Spencer Library cat. The author, Vicki Myron, finds Dewey in the library drop box and after nursing him back to health decides he will become a library cat. My grandchildren liked the story of Dewey and liked sharing his thoughts as he rambles through the library, hits story time and generally charms the hearts of all he encounters.

This is an adorable book about a kitten who is found in a library's book return and is adopted by the librarian as the "Library Cat" and is named "Dewey Readmore Books". The story is very heartwarming and funny. My 5-year-old twins (as well as myself) laughed out loud several times. The artwork is also very impressive--it looks very lifelike. A great purchase.

Because I enjoyed the first book about Dewey, I wanted to see how much of the story would be included in the children's book. As it turned out, it was just right. This is one of the cutest cats I have ever seen and the illustrations are wonderful. I have six cats that I adore and I would gladly add a cat like Dewey any day. He is truly a cat who made a difference and touched the lives of many - both young and old. He could also be named Dewey - a Cat of Peace. I am taking this book as a gift to our local library where I volunteer and I cannot wait to see the children's faces when they check in the book. I highly recommend this book and thank you, , for letting me know that it was coming on the market.

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