



# STREET TAILS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE FERAL CAT COALITION OF OREGON

April 2005

Issue No. 13

## President's Corner

by Brenda Smith, DVM

Spring has come early to Oregon. You can see it as trees and plants awoken with the sunny, warm weather. People are more active gardening or enjoying their favorite outdoor sport or activity much sooner than usual. To feral cats, it means breeding season will likely also start sooner and we will see kittens sooner than usual. You know what we'll be doing!



Brenda Smith, DVM

For eight consecutive years, FCCO has participated in Spay Day USA by holding a special clinic in honor of the special day. This year, we held a midweek clinic on the actual Spay Day, February 22, and we spayed/neutered 61 cats, surpassing our goal of 50 cats. The clinic was held at the Cat Adoption Team in Sherwood. We extend a warm thank you to Evan Kalik for the use of their wonderful facility.

What made this clinic additionally significant is that it was focused on specific colonies of cats. Twenty-seven of the cats came from a colony of twenty-eight, with the one cat remaining neutered at the next FCCO clinic. Another caregiver with a colony of 20 cats brought us 15 and is working on trapping those remaining, and a caregiver with

seven cats trapped their full colony for the clinic. None of these colonies will experience kittens this warm and early spring.

Sadly, not all colonies are as fortunate as those we helped on Spay Day. Demand for our services is stronger than our capacity to help all the cats in need. In response, the FCCO Board of Directors formed a Task Force of a small group of board members and staff to research the possible expansion of our program. The Spay Day clinic gave us a chance to test what midweek clinics might look like. Since our weekend schedule is filled every year, and our clinics are already at maximum efficiency, one logical way to expand will be through midweek clinics in Portland.

Of course, funding the expansion is a primary concern as we already operate on a tight budget. A location is another top concern, and we are searching for warehouse space in the Portland area that might be donated for our use. We plan to use volunteer veterinarians and technicians, but will need to hire an additional part-time Certified Veterinary Technician to help with the increased number of clinics. Let us know if you have space, know someone who does, or know of a technician we should contact.

Another result of our Task Force is the idea that we would like to start focusing on spaying/neutering entire colonies at one time. This approach is more effi-

cient for all involved and more effective in reducing future offspring within the colony. We will then track many of these colonies to provide valuable insight into the success of trap-neuter-return in colony management.

FCCO has always been focused on being a high-volume spay/neuter program. We have tried to help with the 'trap' and 'return' parts of 'trap-neuter-return' as well, but need to concentrate on doing what we do best. In other areas, New York City for example, a separate group (Neighborhood Cats) concentrates on trapping and caregiver support. Once they have a colony ready for trapping and the caregivers and trappers trained, the SPCA van is called in for the surgery day. This division of labor allows for each group to focus on their part. As we look towards growing and expanding our program, we feel that we need to continue to focus on our part in order to do the best we can for the cats.

We are always happy to offer help and ideas to others so that they may help more feral cats locally and afar. On April 22-24, a No More Homeless Pets conference, sponsored by Best Friends Animal Society, is taking place in Portland. FCCO is honored to have been asked to present at the conference and to showcase our mobile hospital. Thank you for donating to FCCO so that we can help cats and also help others help cats.



# Story From The Streets

## ***Spay Day Colony Follow-up***

My children are the fifth generation of our family to live on our dairy farm south of

Hillsboro. I have lived here for 30 years, since marrying into the farming way of life. Before that, I was a “city kid” whose closest animal friends were

cats. Even though I was allergic to them, I loved them so much that I slept with my favorite one – enduring the swollen eyes and runny nose just to be close to her.

Not surprisingly, when I arrived on the farm, I was happy to see all the barn cats contributing to the balance of nature by helping to eliminate some of the unwanted rodents scurrying under and around the barns and fields. In addition to the culinary treasures which abound on a dairy farm, they were rewarded with fresh milk twice a day in the calf barn, as well as a scoop of cat food for the less wary ones. Up until a few years ago, Mother Nature kept our barn cats in balance. Recently, however, our cat population experienced an overabundance of healthy litters of kittens. Friends and neighbors took the sociable kittens; however, there seemed to be more and more extremely wild litters.

Desperate for a solution, I began asking around for help. My daughter happened upon an FCCO pamphlet one day, and brought it home. It was the answer to my prayers! Through the efforts of your organization, plus a

trapping volunteer who went above and beyond in her hard work, we were able to trap and spay or neuter 28 cats. I knew there were a lot around the farm, but even I was surprised by that number! Since their release, most of them have stayed out of sight, but the friendlier ones don't seem any the worse for their experience.

Thank you for all you are doing to help reduce the population of feral cats. We could not have done this without your expertise in handling these wild creatures.

*Sandra Twigg*



*After the cat recovered from surgery at an FCCO clinic, Sandra returns him to the colony.*

## ***In Memory of Momcat***

Today I make this gift in loving memory of “Momcat” who slipped quietly out of life on Saturday. I hope this donation helps you carry on the good work that you do.

Momcat was a feral cat living under the neighbor's house when I moved into my house 15 years ago. If I'd known we would become such great friends, I'd have given her a better name!

She was very small – something around 5 pounds – but she was mighty. She was more suspicious and cautious than afraid, and I had only to look in her face to see the intelligence shining through.

Her main squeeze was a tomcat I named Punkin'. He was a real sweet kitty who was probably lost or abandoned. He moved into my porch right away when he found that I was putting food out daily. Momcat followed him, watching carefully for any signs of danger. In those first weeks, I didn't get within 15 ft. of her. I got Punkin'

neutered right away and over the next few months, Momcat moved closer and closer to me.

When I realized Momcat was pregnant again, I trapped her and took her in to be spayed. The vet called me after surgery to tell me she was fine and that she'd been carrying eight kittens! If she had survived the birth, they probably would not have.

When I picked her up in the morning, she was alert and ready to go. I put the carrier in the yard and opened the door, fully expecting her to dash out and hide from me for a couple of weeks. Instead, she walked slowly out of the carrier and sat down next to me. She looked around the yard as if she hadn't expected to see this place again and was amazed to find herself home. She looked at me with an understanding of what I had done for her and I understood I had a friend for life.

From that day, our relationship grew exponentially. I remember the day she learned to sit on my lap and allow me to pet her. And I remember the first time I heard her purr.

She fought the good fight for something around 16 years and left this life as she had lived it – on her own terms. Her friendship, love and trust were a blessing in my life and the world is a little bleaker without her.

*Anne Collins*

## **Cars for Kitties**

Occasionally donors contact us and ask if they can donate their car to FCCO. The answer is, Yes! We are thrilled when people think about helping feral cats by making such a generous donation. If you have a car that you no longer want or need, please consider donating it to FCCO. At this time we can only accept cars that run. Please call us at 503-797-2606, if you are looking to free up space in your garage or driveway!



## Volunteer in 2005

by Devon Jahn

It is a safe bet that everyone reading this newsletter gives of him/herself regularly, either as a volunteer, donor, or as someone who cares for a feral kitty or two. For most people these acts of kindness are personal and for many they are private. Now might be a good time to change that guardedness.

April 17<sup>th</sup> to 23<sup>rd</sup> is National Volunteer Week. The theme this year is "Inspire by Example" which is a great reminder of the power of suggestion. As you are going out the door to volunteer at an FCCO clinic, explain to your child that many people are coming together to improve the lives of feral cats. When planning a party, give it meaning by "decorating" the room with facts about feral cats or encourage well-wishers to make donations in honor of your special occasion. Before trapping feral cats, take the opportunity to explain to neighbors what you are doing and, most importantly, why. However you are involved, take a moment to reflect on the significance of your actions and think about who you might encourage to also get involved. Your involvement is greatly appreciated!

Four women have recently taken on leadership roles within FCCO and their willingness to help truly is inspiring. Betty Emerson and Karen Scott stepped up to the plate to coordinate the spay/neuter clinics in Salem. Blanche France agreed to coordinate the lay volunteers for the Portland clinics and Liz Collinson is the afternoon On-site Coordinator for the Portland clinics. A special thanks to them for taking on these challenging roles.

If you would like to know about positions still available please contact Devon Jahn at 503-353-0281 or [volunteer@feralcats.com](mailto:volunteer@feralcats.com).

## FURBALL - FELINE GROOVY



There's never been a better time for "Feline Groovy" and never a better time to attend the FCCO Furball! The Seventh Annual Furball is just around the corner. If you haven't already bought your tickets, there is still time to be part of this very special event.

**Saturday, May 7, 2005**

World Forestry Center, Portland

**Honorary Chair: Portland City Commissioner Sam Adams**

Tickets: \$75 in advance or \$90 at the door

Join Sam Adams and 250 of his closest friends for a black-tie optional night on the town filled with light fare from Elephants Delicatessen, wine from Sokol Blosser Winery and martinis from Hood River Distillers. From one-of-a-kind cat-related items to artwork, jewelry and fabulous travel destinations, there is something for everyone on our silent and live auctions.

Wait, there's more. This year's raffle is for a \$1,500 prepaid Visa card! Tickets are \$5 each or 5 for \$20. The winner will be drawn at the Furball, but need not be present to win. So, if you can't make the event, at least buy a raffle ticket or two. Imagine what you can do with \$1,500. Shop 'til you drop, go on vacation, pay off bills, or splurge on that "gotta have" item.

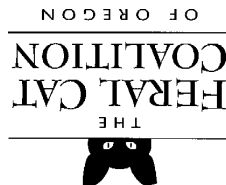
The Furball is the largest annual fundraiser for FCCO, with the funds raised supporting our statewide spay/neuter services. Please support the cats through this very important event. We hope to see you there.

For more information, please go to [www.feralcats.com](http://www.feralcats.com) or call Karen Kraus at 503-797-2606.

### FCCO Wish List Items

- Large storage bins • Postage stamps • Paper towels •
- Masking tape • Bottled water • Laundry detergent •
- Photos of feral cats

*To donate items from the wish list, please call 503-797-2606.*



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## Clinic Schedule

Clinic dates are subject to change. For a list of the clinics through the end of the year, you can find a copy of our full schedule on our web page at [www.feralcats.com](http://www.feralcats.com).

4/17/05	Portland	503-797-2606
5/1/05	Corvallis	503-797-2606
5/7/05	Furball	503-797-2606
5/15/05	Portland	503-797-2606
5/22/05	Bend	541-382-3537
6/12/05	Eugene	541-607-4282
6/19/05	Portland	503-797-2606
6/26/05	Salem	503-585-1522
7/10/05	Longview, WA	360-578-0454
7/17/05	Portland	503-797-2606
7/27/05	Sweet Home	541-367-3184

**General Message Line**  
**503-797-2606**  
**[www.feralcats.com](http://www.feralcats.com)**

## Coalition Contacts

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