

# StreetTAILS



Spring  
2008

official newsletter of the feral cat coalition of oregon

## Story from the Streets

### *Our Retirement with Feral Cats*

Dear Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon, I just learned about your program. It is wonderful to know what you do and the support you give. I have rescued a colony of feral kitties and have never known anyone else who has done this....you have no idea what you mean to me.

My husband and I live in Jacksonville, Oregon, with three housecats and



a colony of nine feral cats. Six years ago we rescued a colony of 21 feral cats, from which these nine remain.

A week after we moved to Jacksonville, I walked past an abandoned house with the hungry, thirsty, sad cats. I knocked on some doors and found angry neighbors who told me the people at the "feral cat abandoned home" had lost their home. Apparently, they had been feeding the strays (not knowing to neuter or spay them). None of the neighbors would help.

We called the Animal Shelter, Humane Society, and Committed

## It's Good for Cats and It's Good for Wildlife Campaign

*by Karen Kraus*

The Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon and the Portland Audubon Society have teamed up on a Public Service Announcement (PSA) campaign encouraging people to keep their housecats indoors, in an outdoor enclosure, or on a leash. This non-traditional partnership of a bird advocacy group and feral cat program is very rare. According to the Humane Society of the United States, this is just the third such pairing in the country.

As a supporter of FCCO, you know that cat overpopulation is a serious problem. Since free-roaming cats are the leading source of feral cats, and the leading source of wildlife intakes at Audubon is also from free-roaming cats, it makes sense that our two groups work together on a solution that helps cats and wildlife.

This campaign is not targeting feral cats, but rather encouraging the community to be a part of the solution by preventing future generations of feral cats and in helping reduce predation on local wildlife.

The 15-second PSAs began running on March 30, 2008 on KGW/Channel 8 and will air through May. Keep an eye out for them, or visit our website for more information about the campaign and to view the PSA.



---

*It's not about birds  
versus cats; it's  
about protecting  
birds **and** cats.*

---

## New FCCO Video

The Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon is proud to announce our new video: **Trap-Neuter-Return: The Human/e Solution to Feral Cat Populations**. We are most fortunate that acclaimed local film producer Brian Lindstrom donated his talents to create this new video with assistance from Cheryl Strayed, his novelist wife. The video showcases several caregivers who have used our program, the services we provide, and how vital our program is for cats, for people, and for the community. We will have copies available for sale in May. Watch our website at [www.feralcats.com](http://www.feralcats.com) for more information.

*Story continued page 3*



## President's Corner *by Kris Ellingsen, DVM*



*Dr. Ellingsen*

I stumbled upon FCCO seven years ago as a cat veterinarian, temporarily on a different career path, in search of a means to keep my

surgical skills in tune. Where better to practice spaying and neutering cats, not to mention network with other vets, than at an FCCO clinic? Little did I know how much I would enjoy my four hours of camaraderie, and the feeling of accomplishment and usefulness after completing a shift. Then there's the break from a three-year-old (of the human variety)...

Evidently I hung around enough to prompt Executive Director Karen Kraus into asking me to consider being on FCCO's Board of Directors. That was in 2003, and I've been on the Board in the capacity of Vice President since then. Assuming the role as Board President in April seemed a natural step in my continued involvement and awareness of the feral cat issues in our communities and nationwide. I am grateful for Karen and Operations Director Leah Kennon, CVT, who have both been with our organization for 10 years. They are the dedicated and competent framework on which FCCO has relied upon to keep us working toward all of our goals.

I want to thank FCCO founding member Dr. Marla McGeorge for the past two years of her board membership and stepping into the Presidency so willingly when Dr. Brenda Smith moved out of state. FCCO has grown tremendously under her tenure, and exciting times are on the horizon. Ahead of us lie big decisions – how to grow? How do we serve more cats and caregivers? How do we ensure the best care for these cats? How do we better serve Oregon communities by preventing feral cats? I am looking forward to my participation as Board President in this upcoming growth of the program.

While I don't personally feed feral cats, and just learned last year how to use a live-trap to catch the ferals behind the clinic where I work, I truly believe cats are a special species. My favorite pets growing up – and there were many – were the cats. Once I became independent after my college years, I had to have a cat, or two, in my life! So it was natural that my veterinary school preferences revolved around the feline species and led me to pursue feline practice. From there my understanding of cat overpopulation developed into my strong feelings for spay/neuter as a major part of the solution to rampant euthanasia of unwanted cats. FCCO allows me to easily blend my vocation and avocation – thank you for giving me the opportunity to serve these cats.

## Ever Wonder How to Trap a Feral Cat?

As you know, the community looks to us for spaying and neutering feral cats, and as you might have guessed, most people need some guidance on how to trap the cats they are feeding. Our experienced volunteers have shared directions and tips for years, and we have written instructions that walk a novice through the trapping process.

Now we also have several short videos from ExpertVillage.com on our website that show the basics of how to trap a cat, and offer some great tips for cats that are hard to trap. You will find the videos on the Resources page of our website ([www.feralcats.com](http://www.feralcats.com)). Please be sure to check them out!



## WISH LIST

- Table top copy machine
- Copy paper
- AA batteries
- 1-inch masking tape
- Paper towels
- 30-gal. garbage bags
- Postage stamps
- Feral cat stories and photos

Your donation offsets our need to purchase these products so we can direct more funds to spaying and neutering cats. See something you'd like to help us with? Please call FCCO at 503-797-2606, email us at [info@feralcats.com](mailto:info@feralcats.com), or bring the items to the next clinic in your area.



## Story *continued from page 1*

Alliance to Strays (C.A.T.S.) in Medford. They all asked if the cats were friendly and adoptable. The answer was simple. “No, they are scared and have been chased and yelled at by every person in the neighborhood, *friendly* will not fit on their list right now.” It was suggested we feed them for a month and see if we could tame them.

In one month, we checked back with the animal resources we had called earlier and explained our progress. They told us, “Okay then, they are feral cats.” They recommended we bring them in to be euthanized. We replied, “They all have names, personalities and feel emotions, we could never do that to them. They show one another affection,



communicate with each other, and look out for one another.” We hung up and felt abandoned ourselves. It was a lonely feeling.

I took food and water to them daily for three months. I tried to tame them, and they would come to my car, but any slight movement and they scattered. I learned about humane traps from C.A.T.S. and local veterinarians told me to bring in the cats whenever I trapped one.

After realizing no one would be able to adopt these kitties, we found five acres and immediately built a heated, lighted, 10 ft. by 12 ft. mini-barn with window, loft and cubbies, with a nice vinyl floor (easy to keep clean). We then attached a roofed kennel with kennel fencing – escape-proof and safe. Next we got them settled, and *then* finally built our retirement home.

After the kitties were used to their new home and used to us caring for them, we were able to let them out all day, and entice them back in to be locked up safely for the night – amazing the magic of canned food.

We are a middle-class retired couple, never thinking we would be guardians to all these kitty souls. Our feral kitties are loved, remembered, admired, and treasured for their extraordinary lives. They are grieved and missed exactly the same as our socialized kitties. Never forgotten, loved forever. Of the nine who are still living with us, they all know their names, seven of the nine come to us for backrubs and sweet talks. One held out until just this year, then came and looked into our eyes as if to say, “You can pet me now, you have proven yourselves.” It was an unexpected gift which brought us tears. In a heartbeat we would tell anyone who asked that we would do this all over again. We are so happy they found us!!!

*Pam & Jerry Gersich*

## 10 FABULOUS FURBALLS

To say the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our annual Furball fundraiser was like none other is an understatement. We celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Furball on Saturday night, April 19, 2008 at Staver Locomotive in Portland in grand fashion. The Cabaret-themed event came alive as a collection of cat-related songs assembled by our Honorary Co-Chair, Thomas Lauderdale (Pink Martini’s bandleader), filled the air. The 298 guests in attendance enjoyed wonderful food from Elephants Delicatessen, perusing the 102 beautifully arranged silent auction packages and 15 live auction items, and one-of-a-kind entertainment.

Many thanks go out to our Emcee, Les Sarnoff, of KINK FM, and our Honorary Chairs, Paige Powell and Thomas Lauderdale, for lending their time, talents and hearts to this special evening. We raised over \$100,000 to help spay/neuter feral cats and to fund purchasing equipment for a free-standing surgery suite. Then we raised the roof with performances by Thomas Lauderdale and friends, capped-off by the exhilarating MarchFourth Marching Band.

We raise a paw of gratitude to everyone who was part of this spectacular 10<sup>th</sup> Celebration. From our amazing sponsors to each guest in attendance, to all of the in-kind donors and incredible Furball Committee members and event volunteers, this event was possible because you care and because you generously shared your compassion to help cats in need.



*MarchFourth Band Member*

*A very special thanks to Etta Wilkins-Foster and Jeff Foster for designing and illustrating all 10 years of our Furball graphics.*



Nonprofit Org  
US Postage  
Paid  
Portland OR  
Permit No. 383

## TNR Clinic & Event Schedule

Please visit our website for the full 2008 schedule and for more info about the clinics and upcoming events. The clinics listed below are our Sunday TNR (trap-neuter-return) clinics. In addition, FCCO currently holds 2 Friday clinics per month in Portland.

4/27/08	Longview, WA	360-673-7300
5/3/08	Pet Day at OSU Vet School	
5/4/08	Corvallis	541-754-8381
5/18/08	Portland	503-797-2606
6/8/08	Salem	503-585-1522
6/22/08	Portland	503-797-2606
6/29/08	Roseburg	541-464-4313
7/13/08	Coquille	541-396-4439
7/20/08	Portland	503-797-2606

*Clinic dates are subject to change.*

**General Message Line: 503-797-2606**  
www.feralcats.com

## Coalition Contacts

### Board Officers

President ..... *Kris Ellingsen, DVM*  
 Vice-President ..... *Alison Lord, DVM*  
 Treasurer ..... *Kimberly Dauphin, DVM*  
 Secretary ..... *Roz Simon*

**Counsel** (pro bono) ..... *Ron Adams*  
*Black Helterline, LLP*

### Staff

Executive Director ..... *Karen Kraus*  
 Operations Director ..... *Leah Kennon, CVT*  
 FCCO Technicians ..... *Jani Johnston, CVT*  
*Melissa Guila*  
 Development Coordinator ..... *Devon Jahn*

Newsletter Editor ..... *Karen Kraus*

**Moving?** Remember to send us your new address when you move!

Volume 4 Issue 9