

# StreetTAILS

Winter  
2008

official newsletter of the feral cat coalition of oregon

## We Resolve to Help More Cats

by Karen Kraus

For many of us the New Year is a time of reflection - on the past year's accomplishments and on the upcoming year's goals and resolutions. FCCO is no exception. As you may recall, we neutered our landmark 30,000<sup>th</sup> cat in September. It was also another record-setting year for surgeries. We held 46 clinics where we spayed/neutered 3,336 cats. This is more clinics and more cats than ever before. And yet, demand continues to grow for our services.

Our Portland phone line is one barometer of the increase in demand. In October of last year, we received phone calls for 752 cats. This past October we received phone calls for 1,255 cats. Our New Year's resolution is to help more cats. We

will spay/neuter 4,000 cats this coming year - a 20% increase - and plan to reach 5,000 cats the following year. By 2012 our goal is to be spaying/neutering 10,000 cats per year. To accomplish this, we will hold more clinics in Portland where we are more efficient and the clinics are most cost effective.

To meet this increased clinic load in Portland, we need to find a new location - if you have a building or connections, please let us know. We need approximately 2,000 sf of clinic space and 1,500 sf of office space. Within the new location we want to add a surgery suite and prep area. This space will allow us to increase our capacity per clinic without having to rely solely on the mobile hospital.

*Resolution continued page 2*

## Story from the Streets

### Our New "Garage" Colony

Several months ago, our next-door neighbors sold their house, packed up, moved away and abandoned a dozen cats to fend for themselves.



For the previous several years, this colony of semi-feral cats was being fed and cared for by said neighbor. When confronted, this neighbor denied the cats were his,

stating "they are feral and not mine."

With our former neighbors no longer feeding them, this colony was literally starving - through no fault of their own, and due entirely to the callousness and indifference of these humans.

Despite repeated calls to West Linn's Animal Control Officer, which were never returned, and a call to Clackamas County, nothing had been done regarding this cat colony. Evidently, there are no facilities in Clackamas County to help abandoned cats, unlike the huge effort to re-home abandoned and surrendered dogs.

My husband and I began feeding this colony and contacted the Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon for help. FCCO gave us instruction on how to trap the cats, lent us traps, and scheduled us to bring all 12 cats to the November Trap-Neuter-Return clinic in Portland.

*Story continued page 2*

## Celebrate Spring with a Spay (or neuter)

SPAY DAY



U\*S\*A

Every cat we spay/neuter this spring means fewer kittens this summer and beyond. That's the main reason Spay Day USA is held in February. Spay Day USA is America's first and only annual campaign to inspire people to save animal lives by spaying or neutering. The 14th annual Spay Day USA is February 26, 2008, but events and activities take place throughout the month of February.

FCCO celebrates Spay Day USA each year by holding a special spay/neuter clinic. Our clinic this year will be on February 24 in Portland with the goal of spaying/neutering 100 feral cats. With this special clinic we will double our surgery capacity in Portland in February - helping us to get a head start on preventing countless future generations of homeless kittens. Celebrate spring with us - celebrate spaying and neutering and spread the word.



## President's Corner *by Marla McGeorge, DVM*



*Dr. McGeorge*

Today as I trudged through the rain to feed the colony, I was met by one of the cats. He walked me across the bridge, then flopped on the wet ground and rolled back and forth. I love that feline greeting. It's a universal cat behavior, but the feral cats I feed use it far more consistently than my own cats. It's very flattering to be greeted as a friend by a feral cat.

Seeing my little group today caused me to reflect on the nature of the relationship between these independent cats and their caregivers. In my own group, the cats like to meet me and they enjoy being petted on the way to the food bowls. But their rules are clear. They do not want to be approached anywhere except at the food bowls.

Wariness and trust coexist in these cats in their attitudes toward the people who feed them. The cats

set the boundaries of the relationship. They never entirely forget that we are large and potentially dangerous. The feeding routine feels safe to the cats. They learn that people show up at a certain time and follow a certain pattern of providing food. As long as the routine doesn't vary, they feel safe enough to engage in some friendly greeting and petting.

Anything new or different is perceived as a potential threat. The cats expect me to give each one his or her bowl in the same place and then pour the kibble in a communal bowl. If I forget the kibble, give the cats their bowls and then come back, they all run away. I give them a lot of credit for this. In their minds, I'm acting differently and there is no telling what that portends.

I'm glad that the feral cats retain their wariness and extreme caution around us. It helps keep them safe. At the same time, I am so grateful for their trust in me, limited as it may be. When they allow me to pet them and roll around at my feet, it makes my day.

## Resolution *continued from page 1*

Additionally, we plan to hire our first staff veterinarian. This is a new part-time position that will be integral in increasing our clinic efficiency, level of care, and help us grow the program to reach more cats each year. We will continue to rely on volunteer veterinarians, but the frequency of clinics and the volume of cats will make it difficult to continue to rely solely on the goodwill of volunteers.

It continues to be inspiring to see so many people caring so deeply for feral cats and their welfare. You will read later in the newsletter about a new donor to our program, Roger James; our successful annual appeal letter; our incredible showing in the Willamette Week Give!Guide; and our upcoming Furball fundraiser. With a growing program, there are new expenses making your continued support more important than ever. Please help us achieve our resolutions along with maybe a few of your own. With your support and involvement throughout the year, we know it will be a very Happy New Year!

## Help for Colonies in Salem

The Karen M. Schroth Charitable Foundation for Animals has generously underwritten the spaying/neutering of 450 feral cats living in colonies in the Salem area. Their \$13,715 grant represents the fourth consecutive year the Foundation has supported FCCO and our work in Salem. This year we celebrate a decade of helping feral cats in Salem by holding 5 clinics – one more than last year – and it is the Foundation's support (and the support of our amazing volunteers) that makes so many Salem clinics possible.

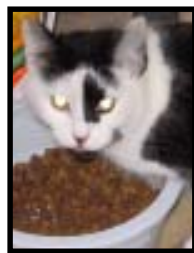
## Story *continued from page 1*

It was easier than we'd expected to trap the cats – under an hour to trap all 12 cats. The whole process went really well.

I want to thank FCCO for their help and guidance. I also want to let my current neighbors know that, yes, the Dodgson's will probably now be known as the "Cat House on 16th Street," but we did what was right to help these cats.

*The Dodgsons*

P.S. Thank you again FCCO for guiding us through this process. With



your help, 12 lives have been saved. Most of the female cats (minus one) and one male are currently living in our garage now (once we returned them, they chose not

to leave). I have installed another litter box and we continue to feed our new "Garage" colony. They are entertaining and dutifully await their meals. Most are still semi-feral and will probably always be that way, but they are safe, warm, dry, and fed, and that is what is most important.



## A Match Made by You

We were obviously excited when the owner of Universal Cycles generously offered to donate a matching \$10,000 if we could raise that much from our Annual Appeal letter. Another donor, who asked to remain anonymous, upped the goal by adding a \$5,000 match. You, our compassionate and generous donors, responded to the challenge by donating \$25,540! We send a heartfelt thank you to one and all who donated to make these matching gifts possible.



## Give!Guide Record Success

FCCO was part of the Willamette Week Give!Guide again this year. From mid-November to the end of the year, the Give!Guide encouraged donors to support selected nonprofits. This year's effort far exceeded their wildest expectations (and ours.) When it ended on December 31, more than \$500,000 was raised for the 49 participating nonprofits. Our donors played a huge role in this success.

Willamette Week didn't have the final results at newsletter deadline, but it looks like we placed second in overall donations raised!! FCCO receives a \$500 gift from Willamette Week for this accomplishment. Not only did our dedicated donors generously give, but of the 308 gifts received, 126 were from brand-new donors to FCCO. As a way to acknowledge and thank everyone who participated, an anonymous donor donated a dollar for every person who donated. Words don't come close to expressing how grateful we are, and how honored we were to see feral cat welfare receive such a loud voice of support from the community. Thank you.

## Making our Vision a Reality

A substantial and unexpected gift has given FCCO the opportunity to be sustainable for the long term. A kind and generous man, Roger James, has spent a lifetime reaching out to animals in need, especially feral cats. Soon after learning about our program this fall, he donated \$300,000. Before the year ended, he donated a second time – this time his gift was \$109,000. Our vision of a day when no cat suffers or dies due to overpopulation is a long-term goal and with support from donors like Roger, FCCO will be here to see this vision become a reality.



After careful consideration of the best use of the funds, the FCCO Board of Directors and Finance Committee agreed that to help feral cats over the long term, the program and any future growth must be sustainable. To achieve this, the funds have been placed in a restricted fund where it will generate an annual income stream that will be used to help grow the program and provide new services in the future. While it might be tempting to spend the money on the plethora of items we need today, or rapidly grow the program to help even more cats as quickly as possible, this would create a program we can't sustain. Instead, Roger's donations, combined with our other fundraising efforts, will allow us to steadily and safely expand our program.

Roger loves cats and at 87 years old, he still makes a daily trip across town to feed a colony of feral cats. The world would be a better place if it were filled with more people like Roger. His gift has and will make a difference for feral cats for years to come.

## Furball Celebrates 10 years

The landmark 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Furball is rapidly approaching and you won't want to miss it. The cabaret-style event will be held on **Saturday, April 19, 2008** at Staver Locomotive in NW Portland.

Paige Powell and Thomas Lauderdale, of Pink Martini, are the honorary chairs for this very special Furball celebration. Thomas *and friends* will perform a special selection of music you won't see anywhere else in town.

The event is a few weeks earlier than usual so **mark your calendars right away and save the date - April 19!** Space is limited. To purchase a table in advance for you and your friends, or for questions, please call Karen Kraus at 503-797-2606.

## WISH LIST

*Our biggest Wish List item is a clinic and office space in close-in Portland*

- Cross-cut shredder
- Table top copy machine
- Copy paper
- Fleece scraps or yardage
- Laundry detergent
- 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.



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## 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.

1/20/08	Salem	503-585-1522
1/27/08	Corvallis	541-754-8381
2/3/08	St. Helens	503-319-7114
2/10/08	Portland	503-797-2606
2/24/08	Spay Day USA Clinic	503-797-2606
3/2/08	Salem	503-585-1522
3/9/08	Longview, WA	360-673-7300
3/16/08	Coquille	541-396-4439
3/30/08	Portland	503-797-2606
4/13/08	Salem	503-585-1522
4/19/08	FURBALL	503-797-2606

*Clinic dates are subject to change.*

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

## Coalition Contacts

### Board Officers

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Newsletter Editor ..... *Karen Kraus*

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

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