

Street TAILS

Summer
2006

official newsletter of the feral cat coalition of oregon

Story From The Streets

Feral Cats at Interstate Yard

The Portland Water Bureau's Interstate yard is a typical maintenance facility in an industrial area, with a fleet of heavy equipment, dump trucks, and racks of parts for the city's water system. Like many other industrial yards, it is also home to a colony of feral cats, although many employees are unaware of these year-round residents. Feral cats are a common problem nationwide, as people fail to spay or neuter their pets, while others simply abandon cats that they do not want or cannot care for.

For about 4 years, I have been caring for the cats at Interstate, making sure they get fed every day, and have clean water as well as a sheltered place to eat. With a generous discount from my veterinarian's office, I have trapped a number of adult cats and gotten them spayed/neutered and vaccinated against disease. Also, approximately 10 kittens or young cats have been caught and adopted into permanent homes.

For the past 2 years, I have been lucky enough to have the help of 2 other dedicated employees, first Debbie Swisher and later Tim Bracy, who help feed and otherwise care for the cats.

Besides easing the animals' hard lives, our goal is to have a healthy, non-reproducing, stable population here at Interstate. With Debbie's organizational skills, and Tim's invaluable assistance, the three of us were able to stage a major trap/spay/neuter campaign for the cats in conjunction with FCCO. (In spite of my own efforts, the females were always a step ahead of my ability

to trap them and get them fixed.) We were able to have 9 cats spayed/neutered and checked out by licensed veterinarians, who volunteer their time to the clinic. As a result, we assured that there would be no more litters of unwanted kittens among the resident cats here at the Interstate yard.

Unfortunately, we are at the mercy of anyone who dumps another un-neutered cat in the area, but that is one risk involved in this work.

I have found my work with the feral cats to be tremendously rewarding. My co-workers and I have watched the animals grow healthy and strong with good food and a little basic medical care. We have gotten to know each animal as an individual, named them, and know their family tree. And, while



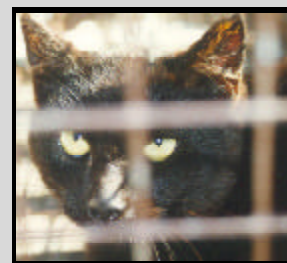
Debbie Swisher

Socks, a neutered male, at the feeding station.

HSUS Supports Trap-Neuter-Return

by Kris Ellingsen, DVM

The Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon would like to bring attention



to the position statement on Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) that has recently been issued by the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS). By their definition, feral cats are "unsocialized cats that may be one or more generations removed from a home environment and may live in a group, or colony, of similar cats." These cats are a "community-generated problem," "victims of abandonment, accidental loss, and failure by owners to sterilize their pets."

HSUS advocates TNR programs in conjunction with continued responsible management of feral cat colonies as "the most viable, long-term approach available at this time to reduce feral cat populations." The goal of any program should be to maximize quality of life of the cats in the colony and for the eventual elimination of the colony over time through attrition.

Interstate continued page 3

TNR continued page 2



Donors in Action!

President's Corner *by Marla McGeorge, DVM*



Marla McGeorge, DVM

Once again, the Furball was a big success. Karin Hansen was present to lend a little glamour. She even brought her husband,

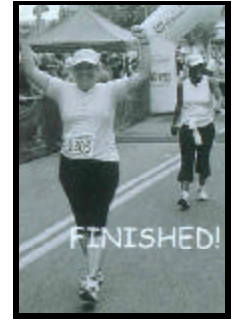
Portland Mayor Tom Potter. A BIG, BIG thank you is in order for those who worked tirelessly on the event including the Furball Hosts: Cindy Chavigny, Linda Holy, Andrea Keaton, Karen Kraus, Karen McGill, and Harold Rains; and the Furball Committee: Lori Boshears, Jeff Foster & Etta Wilkins-Foster, Devon Jahn, Mickey Lee, Anna Mueller, Sally Needham and Roz Simon. Where would we – and all the feral cats – be without such dedicated people?

A fabulous video, created by Mickey Lee, was shown at the Furball that had a very important message. For any Star Trek fans out there, this will be familiar. The theme of the video was a variation on the Prime Directive. The Prime Directive

prohibited interference of any kind, even beneficial, in alien cultures, due to the possibility of unintended consequences. Feral cats are, of course, not aliens. And human beings are responsible for creating the feral cat population in the first place. So I would argue that the Prime Directive does not prohibit us from helping the cats. It should, however, make us think about the nature of our help and possible unintended consequences.

This was the message of the video and FCCO will use it as an educational tool. People start feeding feral and stray cats with the best of intentions. But the consequences of feeding without neutering quickly result in a population explosion. So it is important for all of us who work for the ferals to spread the word that intervening for the welfare of the cats is a good thing, as long as it is done responsibly. That means neutering all of the cats being fed. It is important to remember that our goal is to reduce cat overpopulation. Without a reduction in numbers, we can never hope to improve the lives of these admirable cats.

On May 21, 2006, Kathleen O'Brien ran the half-marathon in Olympia, Washington. She crossed the finish line in just under 2½ hours, placing her #775 out of 916 runners. To FCCO, she is #1. In honor of this challenging event, Kathleen raised pledges for FCCO. She raised an incredible \$1,200! As noted in her thank you letter, this money will spay/neuter 48 cats.



On June 17, 2006, Carol Gardner held a "Cocktails for Kitties" party at her home. Carol was celebrating her new portrait with her three cats, painted by LeslieAnn Butler. In honor of this event, she asked her friends to make a donation to FCCO. Carol's party not only raised \$176, but it also helped spread the message about feral cats and FCCO's services.

Most recently, on June 28, 2006, POUR Wine Bar & Bistro held a 50% night for FCCO and raised \$775. Half of the proceeds from all food and beverage purchases that night were donated to FCCO by owner, Robert Volz. Fun was had by all.

If you are planning an event or party, consider including FCCO – it is a fun and easy way to help feral cats. For questions or more information, contact us at info@feralcats.com.

Cat Stats

Clinic stats for the first 6 months of 2006:

- Number of clinics – 18
- Number of cities served - 8
- Total cats spayed/neutered – 1,573
- Males – 766
- Females – 807

TNR *continued from page 1*

It is emphasized that any TNR effort must be cooperative community-wide to be successful, and to involve not only resources for sterilization of ferals, but must include other support, such as "public education and outreach, adoption resources, dedicated colony caregivers, and cooperation among various interest groups."

For 11 years FCCO, with the help of an all-volunteer veterinarian base, has been aiding communities throughout

Oregon in this non-lethal approach to feral cat management, and we are encouraged that more organizations are recognizing and working together to address this issue.

We thank HSUS for their commitment to helping feral cats. For the complete position statement and other resources please refer to www.hsus.org/feralcats. For information on FCCO's programs and resources, visit our website at www.feralcats.com.



Furball Glitz & Glamour

The 8th Annual Furball was the cat's pajamas! More than 250 guests attended the Furball and many really got into the Roaring Twenties theme. We heard over and over again that this was the best Furball yet. Helping to make this event a roaring success were our Honorary Chair, Karin Hansen, our wonderful sponsors, all the companies and individuals who donated, and the guests who attended and gave generously. We extend a heartfelt thank you to all.

The Furball raffle, led by Anna Mueller, was also very successful, reaching our \$10,000 goal. Many thanks to Anna and every volunteer who sold tickets. The winner of the Visa card was M. Mecks and the winner of the iPod was Cathy Phillips. Congratulations to them both.

To see more Furball photos, please visit our website at www.feralcats.com.



Karin Hansen &
Mayor Tom Potter.

Feeding a Feral?

We want to hear from you if you feed feral or stray cats. We are seeking stories about how trap-neuter-return has benefited your colony. If you are a person who traps cats for caregivers and have stories to share, we welcome hearing from you as well. Some things to consider in your story:

- How many cats do you feed?
- What got you involved?
- How long have you been feeding cats?
- Where do you feed them?
- How often do you feed them?
- How many are neutered?
- How long ago did you practice TNR?
- What results have you seen?



Send us your stories and a photo or two of your cats. National Feral Cat Day is October 16, 2006. In honor of this day we will be raising awareness in our community about trap-neuter-return as the humane approach to feral cat overpopulation. If we use your story, you could win an FCCO T-shirt!

Interstate

continued from page 1

these cats are not "tame," most of them know who feeds them and come running at mealtimes. But these cats still lead a very difficult life, living outdoors with minimal shelter. The cats do earn some of their keep by controlling (virtually wiping out) the Interstate yard's rodent population, which in past years has been quite noticeable, due in part to our location near the grain elevators and the Willamette River. I would also like to mention how grateful I am to the employees of Interstate who have given contributions of money or food to help care for the cats – these people are simply awesome.

If any other city facilities – or any citizen – is caring for feral cats and needs help or information, I would encourage them to contact FCCO. Anyone who wishes to support the work of caring for abandoned and feral animals can contact them to find out about donating money or volunteer time - both are essential to continuing their good work!

by Leah Passell

A Special Wish

Most often we seek your help with wish list items that we need in abundance like paper towels, garbage bags and postage (which we always need). This time we have a special need. FCCO is seeking a new place to call home. We need a space where we can hold our Portland clinics, store the mobile hospital and supplies, and have meetings and trainings. If you or someone you know has a building or contacts to help us, please email Karen Kraus at kkraus@feralcats.com.

EBAY FOR THE KITTIES!

Mark your calendar for FCCO's third eBay auction, which will begin on **July 24th** and run for 7 days. This time around we'll be offering an assortment of jewelry, home décor, and other fun things you really shouldn't have to live without any longer! Bidding on items is easy, and 100% of the proceeds benefit the cats. If you don't already have an eBay account, you'll find registration instructions on their web page under the "Events" heading, along with a list of the items being auctioned.

Even at times when there isn't a special FCCO eBay auction happening, you can still often find items that have been donated with a percentage of the sale price directed to FCCO. Simply go to www.ebay.com and type "FCCO" in the search box. **Ready, set, BID!**



TNR Clinic & Event Schedule

Clinic dates are subject to change. The full 2006 schedule is on our website, and it has the most current information. Please visit our website at www.feralcats.com for more info about the clinics or upcoming events.

7/30/06	Salem	503-585-1522
8/6/06	Eugene	541-607-4282
8/13/06	Portland	503-797-2606
8/27/06	Bend	541-617-1010
9/10/06	Coquille	541-396-4439
9/17/06	Portland	503-797-2606
9/24/06	Salem	503-585-1522
10/1/06	Eugene	541-607-4282
10/8/06	Portland	503-797-2606
10/16/06	National Feral Cat Day	503-797-2606
10/22/06	Corvallis	541-754-8381
11/4/06	FCCO Bowling Ball	503-797-2606

General Message Line: 503-797-2606

www.feralcats.com

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

Coalition Contacts

Board Officers

President	<i>Marla McGeorge, DVM</i>
Vice-President	<i>Kris Ellingsen, DVM</i>
Treasurer	<i>Diane Rogers</i>
Secretary	<i>Roz Simon</i>

Board Members	<i>Linda Holy</i>
	<i>Alison Lord, DVM</i>
	<i>Kristin Sulis, DVM</i>

Counsel (pro bono)	<i>Ron Adams</i>
	<i>Black Helterline, LLP</i>

Staff

Executive Director	<i>Karen Kraus</i>
Operations Director	<i>Leah Kennon, CVT</i>
Volunteer Manager	<i>Devon Jahn</i>
FCCO Technicians	<i>Kerri Blaney, CVT</i>
	<i>Corrie McTigue</i>

Newsletter Editor	<i>Karen Kraus</i>
-------------------------	--------------------

Volume 4 Issue 2
