

StreetTAILS

Fall
2009

official newsletter of the feral cat coalition of oregon

Building Our Coalition

by Karen Kraus

With the term “coalition” in our name, it makes sense that we work with many groups to help feral cats. Over the years we have collaborated with humane societies, cat rescue groups, city councils, and most recently we have partnered with the Animal Shelter Alliance of Portland (ASAP) and the Audubon Society of Portland.



Unwanted kittens fill shelters and stress their services

An exciting new partnership is now developing between FCCO and Multnomah County Animal Services (MCAS). MCAS sees the results of cat overpopulation firsthand every day. During “kitten season” they receive an average of 22 cats/kittens per day, seven days per week. The vast majority are free-roaming cats brought in as strays – by citizens

thinking they are doing the right thing by getting kitty off the streets. But this isn't the case for feral cats. They don't belong in the shelter as they aren't adoptable and therefore face certain death.

Tame cats who can handle the stress of being left at the shelter, and are healthy, are placed for adoption. But of the 5,063 cats taken in at MCAS last year, 513 were transferred to other shelters, 345 were returned to owners, and 837 were adopted. Do the math and see that far, far too many cats don't find homes. No one likes these sad facts.

Change is on the way. The county is exploring ways to responsibly reduce the number of cats entering their facility. Keeping feral cats out of the shelter

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Story from the Streets

A real success story

About a year and a half ago I saw a very pathetic little cat slinking around our cul-de-sac. We were all alarmed to see how bad he looked. His eyes were crusty, he had a cough, his hair was falling out in clumps, and he was quite small. No one could get near him since he was terrified of everything.



"Little Kitty," a big success!

Late at night, when I always give my two neighbor cats treats, he started coming closer. I started throwing treats until he finally came up. He ate so much and appeared so hungry I bought him a small bag of food. Every night he ate a full bowl. He quickly started to grow and to talk to me all the time. If I called out to him I always heard a loud "meow." The next bag of food was 18 pounds!

My little kitty had a rough winter during those horrible storms out here in Troutdale. In the spring his fur was very matted and I felt he needed some help. Then I saw a write-up about FCCO's

Story *continued page 3*

The No-Labor Day Celebration



Our first No-Labor Day Celebration was a resounding success! No one actually came to this event, but 150 people donated a total of \$9,077.54 to help FCCO prevent the labor, and thus unwanted kittens, of many, many cats. We are grateful to everyone who took part in this celebration, with special thanks to The Country Cat Dinnerhouse and Bar for their unique role.



President's Corner *by Kris Ellingsen, DVM*



Photo by Kathi Lamm

Dr. Kris Ellingsen

At FCCO we have a mission to prevent future generations of feral cats with spay and neuter services and education. As a veterinarian who enjoys spending time volunteering at FCCO spay/neuter clinics performing surgeries, I feel that I sometimes overlook the other aspects of what our mission entails. However, as the Board President, I am often reminded that FCCO is more than just clinics.

I am proud to acknowledge that over 700 wonderful volunteers aid FCCO at clinics, as well as many other less visible areas: fundraising events, office and clerical, assisting and scheduling caregivers with cats over the phone, training and assisting with trapping feral cats for clinics, scheduling volunteers, clean-up, providing food at clinics, providing computer or building service and maintenance, and I know there are many other areas I have neglected. There truly is a place for anyone who wishes to help FCCO and feral cats! In fact, there is probably a way FCCO could use YOUR expertise – are you “connected” in

the community to be a voice for FCCO’s mission? Do you have a human resources background, or a gift for fundraising? Do you excel as an educator? Think about it... and let us know how you’d like to help.

This past year we have focused our efforts on helping grow the Portland clinics to reach more feral cats with our new facility – and it is working! As with most growth, there is need for new systems and processes. Most pressing are our cat scheduling and tracking systems. With that in mind, FCCO is actively working to implement a better screening, scheduling and assisting process through online and web-based services. In the interim we have a new online scheduling application found on our website under the Program Services tab.

As new systems become established there will be growing pains and a learning curve. We hope all of our dedicated staff and volunteers will be understanding and patient as we embark on this necessary step – it will eventually make the work of getting cats to clinics more streamlined. This big step in the growth of FCCO toward our mission will also require donations, so please be thinking of that as you consider a monetary gift to help the cats.

Fall Feral Fix

FCCO is holding a *Fall Feral Fix* the entire month of October. All qualified feral cats will be spayed or neutered for only \$15 (half the regular suggested donation amount). This special event is in celebration of **National Feral Cat Day on October 16th** and is made possible through the generous support of the Portland International Beerfest, a summer benefit event where drinking beer really does help cats.

The special applies to all clinics held in Portland, which are now available on Thursdays, as well as Fridays, and one Sunday each month. These clinics are open to all qualified cats; caregivers able to transport cats from other areas are always welcome. For more information, visit our website at www.feralcats.com or call 503-797-2606.



WISH LIST

- 1-inch masking tape
- 32-gallon stainless steel garbage can
- 6-foot plastic folding table
- 8-foot plastic folding tables (2)
- Avery mailing labels - model 5960
- Distilled water
- HP LaserJet 49A ink cartridges
- Ikea store gift card
- Newspaper (used for lining cat traps)
- Postage stamps

Special request: We’ve been in our new facility for one year and need a cleaning service (one-time or regularly), window washing, and tile stripping and waxing.

Please call 503-797-2606, email us at info@feralcats.com, or bring items to a clinic in your area if you can help.

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is an important first step. MCAS is working with us to help train their staff on how to talk to citizens about feral cats and about trap-neuter-return (TNR) as a viable alternative to bringing the cats to the shelter. From cruelty investigators to front desk workers, the staff is learning new ways to help feral cats. For people who choose TNR, FCCO will provide the spay/neuter services. Working together we will get

our message out to a greater number of people and help more feral cats.

We need your help, too. What can you do? Continue to support TNR and spread the word in your neighborhood and the community. And please remember MCAS or your local shelter next time you are considering adding a cat to your family. It is inspirational to see what can be done when we work together to save lives.



Story *continued from page 1*

services and quickly arranged to bring him to a clinic. Of course, the “little” kitty had gotten so large he backed out of the first trap and I had to borrow a larger trap. When we got him to the clinic the volunteers referred to him as my “big” cat. I had forgotten to ask them to help with the matted hair, so when I went to pick him up I was surprised when they referred to him as the “shaved” cat! He looked so funny I had to laugh. His sides were all shaved to the skin, but a streak down his back of long hair remained. I told people he had white side walls and a mohawk.

Two months after being neutered he started becoming very friendly. He now loves to be petted, even by people he only knows a little. On July 4th I actually got to pick him up and hold him for a while as he was terrified of all the noise. He stays home all the time and lives on our covered front porch, which now looks like kittyland. Twice he has come in the house to peek around with his two best friend cats from next door that he just loves.

It has been very satisfying to me to see how far he has come. His coat is very shiny and beautiful now. Hopefully, by next summer he will be running around the house and sitting on my lap.

Thanks for all that you have done for me and my “Little Kitty.”

C. Baumgartner, Troutdale



A Young Girl with a Very Grown-Up Heart



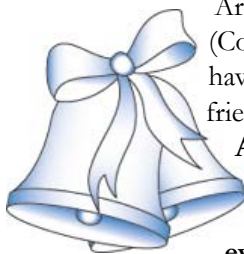
Perizat Foster stands next to the tower of paper towel rolls that she received at her 11th birthday party

There aren't many kids who, when asked what they want for their birthday, would say, “paper towels for FCCO spay/neuter clinics.” But when Perizat Foster asked friends to her 11th birthday party in July, her invitation specifically requested paper towels in lieu of a gift so she could donate them to her “favorite cat place.” Perizat, who just started fifth grade, was motivated to help because of her love for all cats. “They are so friendly, so fluffy, and cute,” she said. An excellent art student, she loves to draw cats.

Perizat shares her home with two cats, two guinea pigs, and one feathered friend, a mitred conure, as well as her sister and parents.

Seven kids came to Perizat's birthday party and brought a total of 26 rolls of paper towels, which are always needed at clinics and were very much appreciated. She did also receive other birthday gifts. Her favorite: “a really cool shirt from my parents.”

THINKING OUTSIDE THE BOX Four Unique Ways to Support FCCO



Are you engaged? (Congratulations!) Or have a family member or friend getting married?

A modern option for wedding gifts for those who “have everything” is by registering with the I Do

Foundation. From honeymoons to invitations to wedding gifts to charitable wedding favors, the I Do Foundation allows couples and their guests to make wedding-related purchases that generate donations for charity. Also, their Donation Registry service makes it easy for guests to make donations in lieu of gifts. All of these services are

available free of cost. Check out IDoFoundation.org today, and be sure to suggest the Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon as the beneficiary of your charitable wedding.

Idea #2: were you considering “cash for clunkers” this past summer? **If you missed that opportunity, “cash for kitties” might be your answer!** FCCO's vehicle donation program is an easy way to support the cats while clearing out your driveway. A full FAQ is on our website at www.feralcats.com, or call 503-797-2606.

Idea #3: when thinking of your loved ones this holiday season, also think of the kitties left outside. **Shop online through igive.com and goodshop.com** - at all your favorite stores - and select FCCO to benefit from a portion of your purchases.

Idea #4: remember to **set your default web search engine to goodsearch.com**. It's powered by Yahoo and works like any other browser except that FCCO gets a penny per search - and it all adds up!



Celebrate the Fall Feral Fix!

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TNR Clinic & Event Schedule

October 1, 2, 9, 11, 15, 16, 23, 29, 30 - Portland: 503-797-2606

October 16 - National Feral Cat Day (see page 2)

October 4 - Coquille: 541-396-4439

October 25 - Corvallis: 541-754-8381

November 1, 5, 6, 12, 13, 15, 19, 20 - Portland: 503-797-2606

November 8 - Longview: 360-673-7300

December 3, 4, 6, 11, 13, 17, 18 - Portland: 503-797-2606

January 7, 8, 10, 14, 15, 21, 22, 29, 31 - Portland: 503-797-2606

January 17 - Salem: 503-585-1522

SAVE THE DATE! The 12th Annual Furball is May 1, 2010 at the World Forestry Center. Plan now to join us for this year's "Wizard of Pawz" event - it's sure to be over the rainbow!

General Message Line: 503-797-2606

www.feralcats.com

To help save resources and have the newsletter delivered to your email inbox, plus receive our monthly *WebTails* with current events, send an email to djahn@feralcats.com.

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Volume 4 Issue 15

Printed on Green Seal certified, 30% post-consumer paper with vegetable-based ink

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