



# STREET TAILS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE FERAL CAT COALITION OF OREGON

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## Our Impact on Feral Cat Populations

by Karen Kraus

A common question for our organization is, "Are you making an impact?" Most nonprofits are asked this question, and trap-neuter-return (TNR) programs like ours are asked it as people seek ways to reduce cat overpopulation. The answer is: It depends on what you are measuring.



In ten years FCCO has spayed/neutered more than 24,000 cats, and we had an impact on every one of these cats. This impact is significantly greater when you factor in all the kitten births we have prevented.

The stress from continual breeding is tough on both the male and female cats. Male cats fight for breeding privileges while inflicting and receiving bite and scratch wounds along with the possible transmission of diseases. Female cats' bodies are drained, often to a heart-wrenching extreme, as they produce up to three litters per year, nurse their kittens and try to provide for them. The female cats who come to our clinics toward the end of the year are typically very thin and have dull and dirty coats. Caregivers comment to us frequently on how much healthier their cats look after they have been spayed or neutered. We have clearly improved the life of each cat we have touched, while also giving their caregivers peace of mind that their cats are healthier and there will be no future kittens.

Another way to show our program is having an impact is at the colony level. Cats congregating together are called a colony. They typically form around a food source, or begin as offspring of a feral female. By focusing on spaying and neutering entire colonies, we have a success metric that can be tracked and measured. Toward this end, FCCO has received a grant from the Karen M. Schroth Charitable Foundation for Animals to target cat colonies living in trailer parks in Salem. We will focus on one trailer park at a time until we have reached the whole colony. We plan to spay/neuter 240 cats in this year-long pilot program, and six facilities have already agreed to participate.



This is a tremendous opportunity to help cats, gather statistical information on targeted populations, and track the success of TNR on managed colonies. FCCO is making a difference, and this project will give us valuable tools and information to support our mission into the New Year and beyond.

## Story From The Streets

### *Vicki Kitty*

This is the happy ending story of a lone feral cat who was living near the receiving dock of the industrial area building where I work. We first discovered the little grey and white cat living under a large dumpster that was emptied several times a week. This was a terribly dangerous location, as she could easily have been injured or trapped behind the dumpster, and there were semi-trucks coming and going all day.

After some of my co-workers discovered her, one of them, Jan, took on the job of feeding her twice daily. When he was on vacation, I was his backup. Jan's retirement was approaching and he decided to trap the cat and take her home. He put her in a spare room, which he had prepared with litter boxes, puppy pads and newspapers. He confirmed she was a female and named her Vicki.

Vicki would go to the bathroom everywhere but on the items he had put out for her. She was very frightened and Jan couldn't get near her. This went on for several weeks, until his vet recommended he put her in a very large wire cage with a litter box and food in it.

Jan moved the cage from room to room, so that she could get used to her new surroundings and the other

*Vicki continued page 2*



## President's Corner *by Brenda Smith, DVM*



*Brenda Smith, DVM*

As the year ends, we like to reflect on the successes and challenges of the past 12 months. We had a few clinic challenges where we had to cancel a clinic due to weather for the first time, and one of the cities we served cancelled both of their clinics at the last-minute. Taking those into consideration, we were right on target with our cat numbers, spaying/neutering 2,873 cats through our clinics last year.

Our biggest change this year was the leasing of a warehouse space in Portland to enable us to hold more clinics. We had a great crew for our workday, building walls and doors, and installing our heater. Thanks go to Andrew Kraus for leading our construction project. The space we chose works well for clinics and is inexpensive. Unfortunately, the warehouse has also presented challenges with heating and water leakage. We will likely need to find a different space before next winter.

We are always striving to increase our ability to help more cats. Looking into the year ahead, we plan to hold more weekday Flex clinics, and we plan to continue to concentrate on the feral cats, as we are the group best organized to provide care for this segment of our cat population.

This past year was a hard one for other areas of the world with the tsunami and hurricanes. We were very concerned that with so many donations being sent for aid, that we would have trouble meeting our budget. We definitely saw our donations decrease in the months surrounding these events, but many, many thanks to all our donors for supporting feral cats during these challenging times.

## Matching Gifts

FCCO was afforded two exceptional gift-matching opportunities at the end of last year. As you may recall, an amazing donor offered to match \$10,000 if we could raise that much from our annual appeal letter. Thanks to all of you who care deeply about our mission to help feral cats, we reached this goal in December. Your donations went twice as far!

Willamette Week, a Portland-based newspaper, included FCCO in their annual Give! Guide. For this guide, they assembled a group of nonprofit organizations they respect,

designed ads to showcase our strengths, and set up a website to facilitate donations. The top three groups who had the most number of donations, not the total amount of donations, could win matching grants of \$500 or \$1,000. At time of this printing, we were in the running to win, but do not have the results to print. We will email the news as soon as we hear. Just knowing we are close is reason to celebrate. This was a first-time event for FCCO and we are most appreciative and impressed with every donor who contributed.

Thank you one and all!

## Vicki *continued from page 1*

two household cats. She was also able to observe the other cats playing with toys and using their litter box. When Jan put food in the cage, she started to come up to him to be petted. After two weeks in the cage, she escaped from it and hid under a bed for a week, coming out only to eat and use the litter box.



*Tigger and Vicki.*

It's now been over a year since she's been in her new home and Jan couldn't be happier with her. She and her new cat siblings, Tigger and Mary, all get along well. Vicki and Tigger are now best of friends, eating and sleeping together. Several times an outside door has been left open and she hasn't tried to get out.

Her right ear is tipped, so at some point she was spayed – maybe she's been through one of our clinics. Vicki has gone from a bad situation to becoming a happy loving member of her new family. What an improvement over her life behind a warehouse with semi-trucks driving through all day. Sometimes good things do happen!

*Suzanne Tate*

## Remembering Charles Marshall

*Charles was one of our very first volunteers. In our early years, he volunteered at each clinic and loved to help transport the cats from surgery to post-op. In later years he staffed tables at street fairs and helped with our mailings. Charles passed away in December at 92 years of age. He will be missed.*



## DO YOU MEW?

If you don't, make 2006 the year you start!

Through MEW (Monthly Electronic Withdrawal) donors contribute monthly through an automatic withdrawal from their checking account. Donating through MEW is easy, efficient and the funds quickly add up. This steady income is very beneficial, and we hope that you will consider joining MEW. Please check the box on the enclosed envelope to receive more information, or you can sign up online on our web site at [www.feralcats.com](http://www.feralcats.com).

# MEW

## Tom Cat Clinic for Spay Day USA

As the saying goes, "a stitch in time saves nine," but in the case of cats, a stitch in time will save lives. This year, to celebrate Spay Day USA, FCCO is holding a "Tom Cat Clinic" on February 26, with a goal of neutering 200 male cats. We are participating in the Tom & Mom Cat Special created by several Portland-based animal welfare programs including Indigo Rescue, POPPA, Spay Today, Salem Friends of Felines and Friends of Shelter Animals.

You might ask, "Why just male cats when it is the females who get pregnant?" We decided to focus on Tom cats for several important reasons: A female cat can have only one litter at a time, while a male cat can impregnate innumerable cats in that same time period; neuter surgeries take less time, allowing us to help more cats in a shorter amount of time; and it will allow us to educate the community on the importance of getting male cats neutered as well as females. All too often the male cats are overlooked because they are not the ones having kittens.

Sponsored by the Doris Day Animal Foundation, Spay Day USA has two main functions – to promote subsidized and free spay/neuter surgeries at clinics all over the country for pets living in low-income families, and to educate pet owners as to why this routine surgery is so vitally important. Our Tom Cat Clinic supports both of these functions. For more information on how you can support Spay Day USA, check out the enclosed envelope.

SPAY DAY



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## New Clinics and New Names

Throughout the past year, we have been experimenting with smaller clinics held during the week and have committed to holding more of them in 2006. These clinics are called "Flex Clinics" and average between 20 and 30 cats. They may be held during the week or on a Sunday when it doesn't conflict with another clinic. Flex refers to the scheduling of the clinics, and to the types of cats invited. While our focus remains on helping feral cats, the Flex Clinics give us the flexibility to help targeted colonies or populations, tame strays, rescue cats, or special case cats from humane societies and animal control agencies.



Our regular large Sunday spay/neuter clinics are now known as "TNR Clinics." This is to differentiate them from the smaller Flex Clinics, and to place the emphasis on TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return). The focus of our large clinics will continue to be for feral cats who are outside breeding and not in a foster or shelter care situation. As you know, TNR is the most humane and effective solution to feral cat overpopulation, and we remain committed to providing care to these cats who have no other options available.

## FURBALL

The 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Furball is  
May 13, 2006.

Save the Date!

## Job Opportunity

If you are a licensed technician or will be one soon, we want to hear from you! Or, if you know someone who might be interested, please have them contact us. We plan to hire a part-time Certified Veterinary Technician to work 1-2 TNR clinics and 1-2 Flex clinics per month, drive our mobile hospital, and assist with clinic readiness. For more information about the position, please visit our website at [www.feralcats.com](http://www.feralcats.com) or send your resume and cover letter to Karen Kraus at [info@feralcats.com](mailto:info@feralcats.com).

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## TNR Clinic Schedule

Clinic dates are subject to change. Our full 2006 schedule is available on our website, and it will have the most current clinic information. Please visit our website at [www.feralcats.com](http://www.feralcats.com).

1/15/06	Portland	503-797-2606
1/22/06	Corvallis	541-754-8381
1/29/06	Salem	503-585-1522
2/5/06	Eugene	541-607-4282
2/12/06	St. Helens	503-397-3333
2/19/06	Portland	503-797-2606
2/26/06	Portland - Tom Cat Clinic	503-797-2606
3/12/06	Longview, WA	360-578-0454
3/19/06	Portland	503-797-2606
3/26/06	Coquille	541-396-4439
4/2/06	Eugene	541-607-4282
4/23/06	Portland	503-797-2606

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

## Coalition Contacts

### Board Officers

President ..... *Brenda Smith, DVM*  
Vice-President ..... *Kris Ellingsen, DVM*  
Treasurer ..... *Diane Rogers*  
Secretary ..... *Roz Simon*

**Board Members** ..... *Linda Holy*  
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*Kristin Sulis, DVM*

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

### Staff

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Operations Director ..... *Leah Kennon, CVT*  
Volunteer Manager ..... *Devon Jahn*  
FCCO Technician ..... *Kerri Blaney, CVT*  
Newsletter Editor ..... *Karen Kraus*

## Moving?

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

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