



STREET TAILS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE FERAL CAT COALITION OF OREGON

October 2004

Issue No. 11

President's Corner

by Brenda Smith, DVM



Brenda Smith, DVM

Each time I volunteer at a clinic, I feel a sense of accomplishment—like I have really helped all the cats that have come through. Sometimes a cat comes through whose quality of life is measurably improved instantly. That was the case at the August St. Helens clinic. As I stepped onto the truck, Leah Kennon, our Operations Director, immediately requested that I look at a kitten. He only weighed one pound, and had four large infected swellings on his side and abdomen. They were cuterebra larvae, commonly called warbles or bots. A fly had laid eggs on or near him, and the larvae had burrowed under his skin. The huge swellings each had a small opening for the larva to breathe. Since he was so tiny, we used a mask to induce anesthesia. The holes were enlarged, the larvae removed and the wounds flushed and cleaned. He was too young for vaccines, but was able to be neutered and ear tipped so he would not have to go through another anesthetic procedure. He recovered very nicely, and was able to return to his caregiver as a much healthier kitten. All the volunteers were quite impressed (and disgusted) with the size of the cuterebra larvae!

We recently altered our 20,000th cat, and a celebration was held in honor of this achievement. The board was pleased to be able to share this important milestone with our donors and volunteers. This special little kitten was far too cute to put anywhere but on the front page of the newsletter! Please read more about this special kitten and the event further in this issue.

Our next event is the Annual Meeting on October 9, from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. We have a few new board members who will be starting their term at that time, and the setting provides a great opportunity for all the board members, volunteers, and donors to meet each other. Bios on the new board members will be published in the next newsletter so all those who are unable to attend the meeting will have an opportunity to become a bit familiar with them. A fun and interesting program is planned, and I hope to see all of you there!

The following week in October, three of us will represent FCCO at the National Feral Cat Conference in New York City. Thanks to the generosity of a few sponsors,



Operations Director Leah Kennon and Executive Director Karen Kraus will be accompanying me. We are very excited to gather information from other feral cat groups and exchange ideas on improving our programs. We are especially interested to see how the focus of each group has changed over time, and perhaps come back with the start of a new plan to have an even more effective program.

As always, thank you so much for caring and supporting the cats through our program.

Annual Meeting

by Karen Kraus

You are invited to attend the FCCO Annual Meeting and Volunteer Appreciation party on Saturday, October 9. The event will be held from 1:00 to 3:00 pm at the Keizer Heritage Community Center located at 980 Chemawa Road NE, Keizer, Oregon.

This year we have a very special guest. Dulcy Mahar, gardening expert and columnist for the Homes & Gardens section of the Oregonian, will be presenting "Adventures with Critters in the Garden." Join us for her presentation, enjoy lunch, hear the latest FCCO news, meet the new board members and help us recognize the Clinic Coordinators for their dedication to organizing and managing the spay/neuter clinics. For directions to the meeting, please see our web page at www.feralcats.com. We hope you will join us.



Story From The Streets

Mama Kitty

I have always had a soft spot for animals. So, when I first saw Mama Kitty three years ago, pregnant and searching for food in the dumpsters around buildings where I work, my heart went out to her.

She had that litter and I adopted one of the babies. I knew she would get pregnant again and I really didn't want that to happen. I felt powerless because I couldn't really afford to have her spayed on my own.

Then a serendipitous event occurred. I stumbled upon the Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon at a booth at The Bite of Salem and I signed her up for the next Salem spay/neuter clinic. A couple of weeks before the clinic, Mama began to show obvious signs of pregnancy.

I followed all the trapping advice given by the Coalition and Mama showed up every night as expected, until the very night before I planned to trap her, she was a no show. I couldn't believe she would choose this time to disappear and spoil what seemed to be a very fortuitous opportunity.

Thankfully, she showed up right on cue on Saturday night. I felt like a complete heel for not only trapping her but also having to deny her a meal, as a twelve-hour fast is required prior to surgery. Little did I fully appreciate at the time why she kicked up such a fuss as I transported her off in my car.

When I went back to the FCCO clinic to pick her up, I was told that Leah, the vet tech who manages the clinics, wanted to speak with me. I feared the worst. She assured me that Mama Kitty was doing perfectly well. It was then I got the shocking news. She informed me that Mama Kitty had

delivered a litter of kittens within the last 24 hours. Suddenly I realized where she had run off to on Friday night and why she was so upset when I hauled her off in a trap. She must have been crying "my babies!" the whole time.

Leah related the odds of the kittens' survival. At their age, they require sustenance at least every four hours and now 36 hours had passed. I felt like a murderer. She did hold out some slim hope recommending I

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search the area around where I trapped her, listening for any tiny cries that might disclose their hiding place. To my immense relief, I did in fact discover the kittens within minutes of initiating my search.

I carefully extracted four teeny tiny kittens – soaking wet and muddy from the previous night's rain – from an old piece of concrete pipe. They cried their little lungs out as I wrapped them in a blanket and rushed home to reunite them with their mother.

Unfortunately, Mama would have nothing to do with them. Recovering from the anesthesia and in a strange environment, all she wanted was to be left alone. The kittens, however, could not wait. So I fed them, cleaned them and put them near Mama Kitty.

Soon after, Mama assumed full control over nurturing her babies. Sadly, one did not survive the ordeal. The remaining three are doing very well.

My plan is to find homes for the kittens once they are weaned and then reintroduce Mama to her wild home where I will continue to care for her as I did in the past. Now she can live a life free from the burden of constant pregnancy.

I will always be deeply grateful to the Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon and support their objectives wholeheartedly.

Tim Ritter

There is more to Mama Kitty's story. You can find it on our web page.

20,000th Cat Open House

by Karen Kraus

The 20,000th cat altered by FCCO was a young barn kitten named Chocolate Chip. He and his littermates were neutered at the August 15 clinic in Portland. He was the center of attention throughout the day as all the volunteers joined in the excitement of this landmark achievement.

We wanted to share this significant milestone with our donors and volunteers so we celebrated by holding an Open House Clinic on August 20, at Noah's Arf in Northwest Portland. Nearly 100 people attended the event, which included a small spay/neuter clinic for 20 cats. Guests enjoyed seeing the inner workings of our clinics, gift bags with goodies from Petco, wonderful refreshments and a presentation.



Congressman David Wu (left), Karen Kraus, Dr. Sheri Speede and Sam Adams.

Our very special guest for the event was Congressman David Wu. During the presentation he shared a story about human spirit and how we enrich our communities when we help others. He was impressed with the selflessness and dedication we all have shown in working to improve lives for feral cats.

Dr. Sheri Speede, one of our founding veterinarians, shared what it was like to form this program in 1995 and how truly proud we can all be for helping so many cats. Sam Adams,

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20,000th Cat *continued*

former chief of staff for Portland's Mayor Vera Katz, spoke about how FCCO's services are not provided by any other city or county programs, and how much our services are needed.

$$\text{Cat} + \sum_{j=1}^{10} 4(4)^{j-1} = 1 + 4 \left[\frac{1-4^{10}}{1-4} \right] = 1,398,101$$

This calculation is based on one unaltered cat and all offspring having a litter of four each over a ten-year period—and it just begins to show the impact our program is having.

20,000 cats! Hard to imagine the impact of this. We do know that each cat's life was improved and that calculating the total number of prevented kitten births is a lot tougher than neutering the 20,000 cats was! So we put one of our Eugene volunteers on the task – she happens to be a math professor. She ran the numbers both by hand and by using calculus and came up with the equation above. Even though she had been volunteering with FCCO and understands exponential growth, she was moved by the impact our program is having and is now even more dedicated to the cause.

It was a wonderful event and we'd like to thank our major underwriter, Petco Foundation, along with our sponsors: Canidae Pet Food; Greta, Gracie and Ignatz; Healthy Pet; Linda Holy; Phyllis & George Johanson; O'Connor's Restaurant & Catering, Petco, Piece of Cake, Veli Catering and Vino. We also extend a special thank you to our host, Noah's Arf Doggie Day Care and Boarding (they board cats too!), for sharing their facility with us and for being such gracious hosts.

Interestingly, on August 15, 1999 we neutered our 5,000th cat. In just five years our program has helped 15,000 cats! We have the skills to help the cats, but you have given us the resources. Together we are changing the lives of cats. Thank you!



ALLEY CATS STRIKE BACK!

Save the date and get ready to have some fun – the 3rd Annual FCCO Bowling "Ball" is rolling into town on November 6! **You don't have to be a bowler to enjoy this event** – you only have to want to have a good time and help the cats!

Saturday, November 6, 2004

AMF Pro 300 Lanes

3031 SE Powell, Portland

3:00 to 6:30 pm

Registration is \$25 per person – the cost of spaying or neutering a cat at one of our clinics – and covers bowling and shoe rental.

Call some friends and form a team (or two), or come on your own and make some new friends that day! The afternoon's events include a fabulous silent auction with many great items (just in time for holiday shopping), and a chance to win trophies for your bowling expertise (or lack thereof). Sign up now and help ensure another great fundraiser for the cats! You can find the registration form online at www.feralcats.com. If you have any questions, please contact Linda Holy at 503-249-8861. We look forward to seeing you there!

??@where.com

We have heard from many people that they would like to receive e-mail contact from us between newsletters, and some would even prefer to receive their newsletter via e-mail (we are working on that).

E-mail is a very efficient and cost-effective way for us to keep you involved and informed. If we already have your e-mail address, we will be sending you a special e-mail soon. If we don't have your e-mail address or it has changed, please don't be left out! Contact us at feralcats_oregon@yahoo.com or fill in the donation envelope included with this newsletter. We send out quarterly newsletters, but a lot happens in between. This is a great way for us to share updates and news with you. Look for an e-mail from us soon!



FCCO Wish List Items




- Postage stamps • Copy machine
- Large garbage bags • Duct tape •
- Paper towels • "D" batteries •
- Laundry detergent • Bottled water •
- Feral cat photos and stories

To donate items from the wish list, please call 503-797-2606.

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Clinic Schedule

Clinic dates are subject to change. For a list of the clinics through the end of the year, you can find a copy of our schedule on our web page, www.feralcats.com.

10/3/04	Eugene	541-607-4282
10/9/04	Annual Meeting	503-797-2606
10/17/04	Portland	503-797-2606
10/24/04	Fall Feral Fix – Corvallis	541-753-8943
11/7/04	Longview, WA	360-578-0454
11/14/04	Portland	503-797-2606
11/21/04	Salem	503-588-2364
12/5/04	Eugene	541-607-4282
12/12/04	Portland	503-797-2606

New FCCO T-shirts!

Fabulous T-shirts, size Large, with the equation of what happens when cats multiply, are available for \$12 each plus \$3 for s/h. (see page 3 inside for the equation) Mail a check or order your shirt online today.

www.feralcats.com

Coalition Contacts

Board Officers

President ————— *Brenda Smith, DVM*
Vice-President ————— *Kris Ellingsen, DVM*
Treasurer ————— *Michael Remsing*
Secretary ————— *Linda Holy*

Board Members

Leanne Eggert, DVM
Diane Hofmann
Roz Simon

Staff

Executive Director ————— *Karen Kraus*
Operations Director ————— *Leah Kennon, CVT*
Veterinary Technician ————— *Caitlin Bennett, CVT*
Newsletter Editor ————— *Karen Kraus*

General Message Line
503-797-2606

We value your privacy, so we do not trade, sell or lend any names on our mailing list.