

StreetTAILS

Fall
2011

official newsletter of the feral cat coalition of oregon

Story from the Streets

Four years ago I started feeding a tattered-looking stray cat that my neighbors all referred to as "Rat". I eventually had to move across town, but made sure that the new resident in my old place would feed Rat. This arrangement worked fine until the new resident was forced to leave. I immediately started feeding Rat again even though it was a long commute.

For many months I tried to trap Rat to bring him to an FCCO clinic but he always eluded the trap. Recently, when another new resident moved in I went to talk with her and explain Rat's situation. While we were chatting I caught sight of him and immediately put out a trap. To my astonishment, as we continued our conversation Rat went in the trap!

I took him to an FCCO clinic and
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FCCO Chosen for the Give!Guide

FCCO is very excited to be included in the 2011 *Willamette Week* Give!Guide. Created in 2004 to hook their readers on the giving habit, the Give!Guide has proven to be an incredible outreach tool for FCCO. In addition, people who contribute through the Give!Guide can receive gifts, which encourages new donors, which in turn raises much needed funds for our services. A win-win!

The Give!Guide is due out early November – be sure to watch for it!

FCCO HELPS 50,000 CATS! "Oscar" Exemplifies Need for TNR



Photo credit: Michael Saitis

*"Oscar" is FCCO's 50,000th cat helped!
See a video featuring him at www.feralcats.com*

The Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon neutered our 50,000th cat on September 23, 2011, in Portland. The landmark cat was a five-month old grey and white kitten from Kelso, WA, named "Oscar."

Oscar was born to a stray cat who appeared outside his caregivers' home last fall. His caregivers, Mike and Tedi S., were smoking salmon in their backyard when two kittens appeared. This spring "Missy," one of those two kittens, gave birth

to three kittens, including Oscar, under their carport.

Mike and Tedi, who now feed 13 cats, realized how rapidly a cat colony can grow and contacted FCCO for help. Missy was spayed earlier this summer and Oscar and his two siblings were neutered at the September clinic. Their other nine cats have also all been spayed/neutered.

The special attention that comes with being a milestone cat is not new to Oscar. When he was still very young he had an eye infection that required regular medical treatment. This forced interaction with his caregivers helped tame Oscar. While his littermates and mother remain fearful, Oscar has become friendly and even likes his caregivers' dogs. In fact, when it was his turn to be brought to the FCCO clinic, Mike and Tedi used a laser pointer to get Oscar to run into a carrier!



Photo credit: www.facebook.com/pictures.com

"Oscar" showing off his new ear-tip

To grasp the significance of this huge milestone for FCCO, consider this: if 50,000 cats had just one litter of four kittens each, there would be 200,000 kittens. That is a lot of kittens prevented — kittens not born on the streets, NOT suffering, and not struggling for survival.





President's Corner *by Kris Ellingsen, DVM*



Dr. Kris Ellingsen

FCCO has just neutered our 50,000th cat! This great milestone, 16 years after FCCO's inception, couldn't happen at a more fitting

time with National Feral Cat Day on the horizon on October 16th.

I am reminded of my first experience with an FCCO clinic: I came to a Spay Day clinic in 2001 to observe what FCCO does before committing to volunteer. I was very impressed at the efficiency and the work that so many volunteers were doing. I could see how appreciative the caregivers were to have such a burden removed from them – no new mouths to feed and care for! That was all it took for me to sign up, and I've been hooked ever since. As I attended more clinics and events over the years, I have had many conversations with other participants, from surgeons and veterinary technicians, to clinic volunteers, donors, and caregivers. The commonality is always the passion of these individuals to care for the feral and abandoned cats in

our communities.

At FCCO's first annual Climb for Cats on September 17, a well-organized and successful new event, I encountered some participants who told me this was their first knowledge of FCCO and some who were there to support FCCO, as they know how it helps the community. After touring the mobile hospital, one woman mentioned that she knew a neighbor who could really benefit from FCCO's services and, with brochure in hand, was planning on starting the conversation when she returned home. That drove home to me how important it is that we continue outreach beyond where we expect to find caregivers of feral cats. So, in honor of National Feral Cat Day, let's all remember to listen closely when people talk about their cats... they may also mention feeding a stray or know of a neighborhood "cat lady" who could use help. Or how about being sure your veterinary hospital has FCCO information to relay or hand out when their front office staff receives calls for help with feral or stray cats? People want to do the right thing by helping feral cats – let's help them to do the next step and make sure they are spayed and neutered.

Happy National Feral Cat Day!

FCCO's Services - a Feral's Spa Day

We ask that you help spread the word about FCCO's services, so here's a reminder of what we provide: in addition to the spay or neuter, each cat receives FVRCP (distemper) and rabies vaccines; flea treatment; ear cleaning; his or her right ear tipped for future identification as a spayed or neutered cat; and, if necessary, ear mite treatment, fluids, and treatment for minor medical conditions. And always some basic TLC.

Story

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returned him to a confined area in my home with the hope of making him an indoor cat after being neutered.

Convincing a feral cat to move indoors may seem like an uphill battle, but I am completely committed to this



"Rat" shows evidence of a hard life outdoors, even with a caregiver consistently providing food. In this photo, taken at the FCCO clinic, he is still sedated after surgery and treatment of his many wounds.

WISH LIST

What follows is FCCO's Wish List. When you donate these needed items we can put more money into helping the cats. If you can contribute anything from the Wish List, please bring it to a clinic, call 503-797-2606, or email us at info@feralcats.com with any questions.

Thank you for helping us keep the focus on the cats!

Items Needed:

- 1-gallon Ziploc bags
- 13-gallon kitchen garbage bags
- 33-gallon heavy-duty garbage bags
- AA Batteries
- Kitten food (canned)
- Office supply store gift card
- Paper plates
- Paper towels (rolls)
- Postage stamps

change. When I first started feeding Rat his coat looked unhealthy so I found food that, although expensive, seemed to help. In researching food for him, I learned about my own diet, changed my eating habits, and consequently feel much healthier. I completely credit him with this positive change in my life and as thanks will do my best to give him a new, healthier life, too.

A. Fercak, Sherwood



National Feral Cat Day

October 16 is National Feral Cat Day – a day for us to think about the outdoor cats in our neighborhood. We often see these cats ducking behind buildings, darting into bushes, or hiding under porches. Many people reach out and feed them. But who are these cats, and how did they get here?

Feral and outdoor stray cats exist in every community. These cats are the same species as domestic cats, but are not socialized to humans and can't be adopted into homes.

The most humane way to help a feral cat is through a program called Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR). TNR makes feral cats healthier and ends the breeding cycle, which means no more kittens. It also reduces common negative behaviors associated with intact cats. Yowling, fighting and spraying – all of these are mating behaviors that typically stop once a cat is neutered.

This information may seem obvious to you, a supporter of FCCO, but ask your co-workers, friends, family, and neighbors – you might be surprised.

In honor of National Feral Cat Day, we encourage you to ask five people what they know about feral cats. Are they feeding feral or outdoor stray cats (this too may surprise you!)? Have they ever heard of FCCO or TNR? Information for caregivers is on our website at www.feralcats.com or call 503-797-2606.

Just think: if your outreach effort gets one cat spayed/neutered you could prevent a litter of kittens, who might then go on to have kittens of their own. Ending that cycle seems like a perfect way to honor National Feral Cat Day.

Another way to celebrate this special day is to eat at (or take-out from) **California Pizza Kitchen – they will be donating 20% of your bill!** See the calendar on back for more details.

No-Labor or Climb? FCCO had an Event to Please Your Inner Kitty



Is your idea of the perfect fundraising event one where you get to do nothing but sit back and relax? No fancy dresses or tuxedos to wear? No babysitters to book or parking to find? FCCO recently “held” our third annual **No-Labor Day Celebration** with much success. Over 100 people supported the event

that they didn't attend and together raised almost \$7,000. Many thanks to everyone who contributed – FCCO will now be able to help 227 more feral and stray cats!

Many people did sit back and relax while completing our word puzzle. If you missed the fun you can still check it out at www.feralcats.com.

Perhaps you would rather get out and climb for cats. The first annual **Climb for Cats** toured eight outdoor public stairways on September 17, going up 169 steps and down 364 steps in beautiful Northwest Portland. We had 102 registrants signed up for the tour of these often hidden stairways.



Although it rained a bit that day, that didn't stop the fun. Laura O. Foster, author of *The Portland Stairs Book*, led the sold-out guided tour, which highlighted amazing architecture and some fascinating history of the stairways and neighborhoods. Most importantly, though, lots of awareness for the need for spaying/neutering feral cats was raised as many of the registrants learned about the event

before knowing much about FCCO. Our mobile hospital was on site for people to tour, and volunteers did a wonderful job explaining our services.

Many thanks go out to all of the event participants and donors, as well as the many local companies that provided amazing food, beverages, and goodies.

We are thrilled that Laura has offered to lead a guided tour again next year. Be sure to watch for details and sign up early as her tours are always very popular!



Laura O. Foster led the Climb for Cats guided tour

Nonprofit Org
US Postage
Paid
Portland OR
Permit No. 383

Address Service Requested
FERAL CAT
COALITION
OF OREGON
PO Box 82734
Portland, Oregon 97282

Clinic & Event Schedule

Portland: 503-797-2606 or feralcats.com/caregiverinfo.html

Clinics are held most Thursdays & Fridays and one Sunday per month for qualified cats. A current schedule and caregiver application are available on our website at www.feralcats.com.

Coquille: 541-396-4439

October 2 - Call for Coquille clinic information.

Salem: 503-585-1522

January 29 - Call for Salem clinic information.

Sunday, October 16: National Feral Cat Day

In honor of this special day, **California Pizza Kitchen will donate 20% of your check** for either dine-in or take out! Choose either the *Bridgeport Village* or *Clackamas Town Center* location but **for FCCO to get the donation you must present the flyer** found on our website (www.feralcats.com).

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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