



The Feral Cat Times

A publication of the Feral Cat Spay/Neuter Project • Serving the Puget Sound • February 2006

As of 02/20/06
total cats
helped:
22067

We altered nearly
8000 cats in 2005!

Altering feral
cats improves
their lifespan and
quality of life while
preventing the births
of thousands of
homeless kittens.

Fewer homeless
kittens means
fewer cats living a
feral lifestyle and
increased chances
of adoption for cats
and kittens in area
shelters.

Check website or
phoneline for clinic
updates.

www.feralcatproject.org
206-528-8125
11331 Roosevelt Way NE
Seattle 98125

We Far Exceeded Our 2005 Goal!

We're still too busy to get the final tally, but we approached 8000 surgeries in 2005, a 30% increase from 2004. Our goal of 6000 surgeries for 2005 was blown away!

Your support through donations, supplies, time, coin can monitoring, boothing, spreading the word and caring for those cats is what makes this success possible. We could never help so many cats without YOU joining in the work.

Every dollar gets stretched to make it count the most for the cats. As you know, we have only one mission - to provide access to spay/neuter for ALL cats in order to end feline homelessness and end euthanasia of adoptable cats in shelters.

Your donations work effectively to improve the lives of free roaming cats in our communities. You've invested in preventing homelessness through spay/neuter. And you've helped us perform more feline spay/neuter surgeries than any other organization in Washington State in 2004 AND in 2005!

Thank you for believing in us and continuing to show your support through your generous donations!



Thanks To You, We Met Our Match!

Thanks to the overwhelmingly generous response to Muriel Van Housen's \$10K offer and another \$3K offer from an anonymous donor - we met the end-of-year, matching gift challenge of \$13,000!

We want to offer gratitude and solace to Muriel Van Housen, an amazing and generous woman. In her time of deep sorrow at the loss of beloved Lucy, Muriel turned her memories of Lucy into hope for thousands of cats through the FCSNP. After an era of friendship, Lucy's absence will be sorely felt at home. Lucy bravely fought the odds with her health problems for several years. Fortunately, Muriel's love and dedication to Lucy's care offered her the sunset years that she wouldn't have enjoyed otherwise. Knowing the heartache of this great loss makes us ever more appreciative that Muriel directed her memories to help other cats live better lives.

And thank you to our other matching gift challenger who wishes to remain anonymous. We appreciate your unwavering, long-term support of our vital mission.

We owe a huge thank you to all of our devoted supporters for continuing to help us help the cats!

**We're a small organization
doing BIG work!**

The **Feral Cat Spay/Neuter Project** is a non-profit, 501(c)(3) organization dedicated to reducing the number of homeless cats and ending euthanasia of homeless cats in shelters in the Puget Sound area by providing safe and humane spay/neuter services free of charge.

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From the E.D

Have you noticed that TNR is suddenly becoming trendy? Why now this sudden shift toward accepting TNR? It may be because of publicity of successful TNR programs across the country, the willingness of public officials to try alternative programs or because of more education and awareness about spaying and neutering. I believe it is probably a combination of all of these factors and the realization that as good stewards of our community, we have a desire to care for the homeless cats. Our 2006 is off to a great start and will undoubtedly be another banner year for Feral Cat Spay/Neuter Project. We want all of you to continue being part of it. Not only is TNR gaining momentum and recognition throughout Puget Sound, but also, FCSNP is leading the way! We're forming exciting partnerships that will potentially make large impacts for our community's cats. Watch our website for more information on these partnerships as they become public.

As a society, we may have let down these homeless cats by leaving them behind or allowing them to be brought into this world through unaltered pets. As a community, we can make a difference in their lives. And thanks to each of you, we are. Every cat that comes through our clinic leaves with a better life. As we approach the year's busiest season, I ask each of you to share with your friends, families and co-workers the information about FCSNP and the impact we make in your community. Only through education and support will we reduce the number of homeless cats and be able to leave behind our legacy of making a difference.



Julie White



“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.” Margaret Mead



**Dispel the Myth:
420,000 Cats?!**

The urban legend that one female cat can produce 420,000 kittens in just 7 years is unbelievable and baseless, yet no one seems to question it. But think about it. If feline reproduction were really that successful, then wouldn't we be covered in cats like those old movies with locust clouds invading the African plains?

Why we aren't buried in cats is the same reason that a female turtle lays 400-500 eggs each year. Not all babies survive to reproductive age, and not all adults successfully reproduce. Species with high newborn mortality produce more offspring in order to increase the odds of one individual surviving to maintain the species. Fish lay hundreds of eggs. Birds lay dozens. Mammals bear fewer offspring but still give birth to "extras". It's Mother Nature's strategy. Litters of cubs - cougars, cheetahs, lions, leopards - increase the odds that one cub will survive to perpetuate the species. In the wild or in homes, newborns often don't survive - an unpleasant fact of life, but fact all the same.

According to the studies of wildlife biologist Dr. Michael Stoskopf and his students, the reproductive and offspring mortality rates of feral cats are similar to wild carnivores. In North Carolina feral cat colonies, Dr. Stoskopf documented the birth rate of one female to average six kittens per year and the kitten mortality rate of about 75% before reproductive age.

Dr. Stoskopf's data clearly refutes years of historical exaggeration. Look at it this way. To create 420,000 kittens from one female and her offspring would require one female to give birth to twelve kittens per year with only a 20% kitten mortality rate (9.6 surviving kittens/year per female). Compare this to what Dr. Stoskopf documented in actual colonies: six kittens per year with a 75% kitten mortality rate (1.5 surviving kittens/year per female).

Unfortunately, gross exaggeration of cat reproduction works against TNR advocates. TNR opponents quote the "420,000 kittens in 7 years" projection to illustrate the potentially devastating result from just one elusive female in a managed colony. But that figure is simply not realistic.

With Dr. Stoskopf's scientifically gathered data in mind, Dr.Wilford contacted expert mathematicians in a quest to dispel the myth and instead, develop a more realistic projection to share with TNR and feral cat advocates. (See "So, How Many Kittens in Seven Years?" on page 4.)

Regardless of the seven year total, the fact remains that thousands of free roaming cats never have homes and that thousands of friendly cats die in shelters each year awaiting adoption. The fact is that spay/neuter is prevention that saves lives.

Dispel the myth and spread the facts.



FCSNP performed more spay/neuter surgeries in 2🐾5 with less money than any group in Washington state.

Great Cattitudes

donations made to celebrate a person or their efforts

Head Butts & Cheek Rubs go to:

Ross and Lila Ensley
from their daughter Teri

Lea Lucky & Jim Yount
Kay & Bryan

Gillian Seiy
Cloyd & Alma Benedict

For the less fortunate kitties,
Felines Clifford & Geoffrey donated their holiday money.

Linda Dennis
James O'Donnell

Dr. E. B. Okrasinski
Bothell Pet Hospital

Dave & Holly Jenkins
Mary Wills

Bremerton Animal Hospital, thank you to for refusing to do any more cat declaws and for doing what is best for the cats. The kitties think you are great, and we do too!
Linda & Ted Dennis

Grandma & Grandpa Hildebrandt
Angela Castillo

Carole Mizumori
Michelle Mizumori

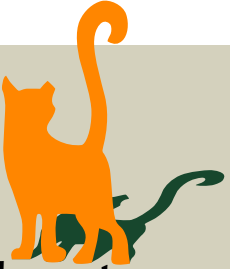
Judy Sasges
Robin Hall

The Thons
Jeannie Sieler

The Suttons
Jeannie Sieler

Linda Dennis
Carlene Easterwood

If you would like to highlight someone special with a donation, send us their name along with your donation & look for them in the next issue!





Post op: 3 hrs. This blue eyed beauty is part of Feral Cat Prevention: Low cost spay/neuter prior to adoption for kittens and cats of area rescuers.

Changes On The Way

We can hardly believe it. June will mark the end of three years in our freestanding clinic. We’ve pinched pennies in order to put donation dollars toward surgery for as many cats as possible even though it has often meant sacrificing improvements for our clinic. But now, one grant is allowing us to spruce up and create a better clinic environment for ourselves and for the cats.

A generous grant from the Handsel Foundation for equipment and clinic improvements means that you’ll see and feel significant changes very soon. These are purchases that we’d just never consider making from the general donations, so this grant is ever so much appreciated.

Now, instead of relying on space heaters, we’ll have central heating and ventilation. No more 44 degree winter mornings or stuffy, 97 degree summer afternoons! We’ll be able to cover our ceiling and apply fresh paint to the walls. Insulating cellular shades will replace those dreary curtains. We’ve bought some new surgical equipment to increase our efficiency and longevity of our surgical instruments. And our list continues. At last, we’ve been given the funding for some long overdue purchases to improve the clinic while we work hard to improve the lives of thousands of cats.

When you come by the clinic over the next few months, you’ll see the changes appear. And you’ll probably see even bigger smiles on our faces. We are very lucky to have the confidence and support of the Handsel Foundation. Thank You for helping us help the cats!

How Many Kittens in Seven Years?

Those of us working on behalf of feral cats and their caretakers have enough issues to combat without needing to defend ourselves against falsehoods. If the old quote that one female cat and her offspring can produce 420,000 kittens in seven years is urban legend, then what is realistic?

FCSNP President, Dr. Christine Wilford, sought expert answers to this question and contacted the University of Washington’s Math Department. To calculate the reproductive potential of one female cat, she provided the professors with the scientifically collected data from Dr. Michael Stoskopf’s population studies of feral cat colonies in North Carolina.

Here are the assumptions used for the population projection: One female cat gives birth to six kittens per year. Kitten gender is 50% female, and only 25% of kittens survive to reproductive age. All surviving female kittens become adults and reproduce with the same birth and kitten mortality rates. If no adult cats ever die, how many cats/kittens would there be at the end of seven years?

Within 24 hours, five Math Department professors responded, including one who brought feral cats to FCSNP several years ago! The consensus of these experts based on these assumptions is this: one female cat and her offspring could produce between 100 and 400 cats by the end of seven years. This is astronomically lower than the old estimate of 420,000 and much more aligned with what we see in colonies that we’ve known.

Furthermore, take into consideration that this projection is based on an unrealistically high survival rate, 100% survival of all adult cats for all seven years. Thus, we’re still overestimating the potential offspring of one unaltered female cat in seven years but closer to reality than 420,000. We can put that urban legend to rest!

Thank you, UW Math Department!

Early Spaying: Breast Cancer Prevention

We’ve all met people that want to see their cat have just one litter of kittens, even after we explain about the thousands of homeless cats in shelters. So next time you lose the homeless-cats-in-shelters argument, tell these owners that breast cancer is almost completely prevented by getting their cat spayed before she’s six months old, that is, before her first litter! It won’t convince everyone, but it might change a few minds.

Here are a few facts to know: Breast cancer is not uncommon in female cats and is typically very aggressive. A recent retrospective study of over 700 pet cats that was published in the Journal of Veterinary Internal Medicine (July-August 2005 issue) revealed yet another advantage of early spay programs. Investigators found that the risk of feline breast cancer was reduced by 86% when cats were spayed before one year of age. Cats spayed before six months of age had a 91% reduced risk of breast cancer.

For years the cancer protective benefits of early spaying were well-documented in dogs. Now we know the same is true for cats.

Cooperation Brings an Amazing Reunion

Nancy Caldwell fed her feral colony for eight years at her Seattle home. Like many caretakers, Nancy named her cats, knew their personalities and loved them dearly. They were altered and ear tipped at FCSNP. When a move to Kansas became imminent, it seemed only natural for Nancy to move the cats with her. However, three female cats had other plans and avoided being trapped when moving day arrived. Sadly, Nancy left for Kansas with only five of her eight cats. After returning from helping her mother move, Cathie Caldwell was able to trap one more cat and ship her by plane to Kansas. But Cathie could just not catch the last two, wily females. Andrea, the new owner of Nancy’s home, agreed to feed the cats while efforts continued to trap them. At that point, Nancy called FCSNP looking for some expert help and a glimmer of hope. Phone volunteer and Board of Directors Secretary, Christine Heinrich, picked up the message and knew immediately who could help: veteran trapper, Pamela Staeheli. The two savvy holdouts were elusive and wise, but Pam persisted, caught the cats, took them to a vet, got their vaccines, exams and traveling papers and even drove the cats to the airport! Nancy’s devotion is testimony to the love we have for feral cats. The cumulative efforts of Nancy, Andrea, Christine, Cathie and Pam demonstrate what we can accomplish when we combine our efforts and talents toward a common goal. What an amazing reunion. We’re proud of all of you!



Spay/Neuter is the INVESTMENT that saves lives.

COIN CAN MONITORS Ellen Arnold Crissy Barger Mike Bellinghausen, DVM Reina Burnett Lorna Butterfield Cathy Darracott Linda Dennis Patty Eglin	Janet Fagan-Smith Vickie Farretta Susan Gann Sherri Hainje Sally Halela Teri Hall Batya Harlow Barb Horton Marianne Hudson	Linda Hughes Jenny Johnston Connie Keith-Kerns Cathy King Amy Lente David Loehndorf, DVM Lea Lucky Michelle Maroto Lena McCullough, DVM	Secrette Miller Maria Moody-Owen, DVM Mary Ann Owsley Elisabeth Perrin Tamar Pucket Catherine Roe Riana Roloff Jan Rowe Roxi Smith	Aimee Stambach Jo Testu-Rumsey Traci Tomlinson, DVM Nancy Tropple Julie White Christine Wilford, DVM Jerry Woodfield, DVM
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Thank You Coin Can Sponsors & Monitors! Your collective commitment gave us \$1000's to help more cats!

COIN CAN LOCATIONS: Affordable Living - Lynnwood All the Best Pet Care - Aurora All the Best Pet Care - Kirkland All the Best Pet Care – Lake City All the Best Pet Care – Madison Park All the Best Pet Care – Queen Anne All the Best Pet Care - Redmond All the Kings Flags – Ballard Animal Care Center – Mountlake Terrace Animal Hospital of Maple Valley Aurora Veterinary Hospital - Seattle Ballard Animal Hospital - Seattle The Family Pet - Ballard Bark Natural Pet Care – Ballard Bothell Pet Hospital Broadway Nutrition Center – Seattle Broadway Veterinary Hospital - Seattle Carkeek Park Veterinary Hospital – Seattle Carpets To Go – Lynnwood Cat Clinic of Seattle	Cats Exclusive Veterinary Center – Shoreline Civilized Nature - Sammamish Cook Road Shell - Burlington Country Pet Shop - Kingston Crown Hill Pet Supply – Seattle Dairy Queen - Bothell Elliott Bay Animal Hospital – Seattle Epilogue Books – Ballard Feed Bag Pet Provisions – Seattle Frank & Dunya – Fremont Inglemoor Animal Hospital - Kenmore Iron Horse Hay & Feed – Maple Valley Lande Feed – Maple Valley Meadows Cat Hospital – Issaquah Mud Bay Granary - Bellevue Mud Bay Granary – Canyon Park Mud Bay Granary – Broadway, Seattle Mud Bay Granary – Lake Forest Park Mud Bay Granary – Capital Hill Mud Bay Granary – Greenwood Mud Bay Granary – University Village	Mud Bay Granary - Kent Next to Nature – Edmonds Next to Nature - Tacoma Next to Nature – West Seattle Northcreek Pet Hospital - Bothell Northeast Veterinary Hospital - Seattle Northgate Veterinary Hospital - Seattle Pet Pros – Lake City Pet Pros – Lynnwood Pet Pros - Magnolia Pet-Pourri - Everett Phinney Ridge Animal Hospital - Seattle Queen Anne Animal Clinic - Seattle Redwood Animal Hospital – Redmond Ridlow’s Pet Store – Seattle Rocking E Feeds - Duvall Twice Sold Tales - Seattle West Seattle Animal Hospital West Seattle Veterinary Hospital Wheaton Way Veterinary Clinic - Bremerton Wilderness Veterinary Clinic – Maple Valley
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In Memory of

Beloved "Franz" Gregoire
From your friends at FCSNP , we are so sorry for your loss.

Terri Taylor
Mrs. Nixon Butt & Pauline McLemore

"Ray" Burdick, our sweet & handsome cousin
Mika, Zeb and Callie

John Lewis Owen
Carol Hannum

"Ray Ray" Burdick
Dr. Christine Wilford

John Owens
Glenette Olvera

Robert Larson
Ulla & Leland Williams

Robert Larson
Anna-Lisa Kovaka

In loving memory of the rich and beautiful lives of "Eubie" Moran, and "Ray Ray" Burdick.
Janet and Daniel Fagan-Smith

For Marianne Hudson's Grandfather, Ewing Von Axelson, Jr
David Hudson

"Lucy" Van Housen
Lea Lucky

"Princess"
Susan Hawes

"Mama Blackberry", who allowed us to share a little bit of her wild spirit.
Karen Stone, Vern, Nicodemus & 'Leo the Lion'

Muriel's precious & beloved "Lucy"
Julie White, Christine Wilford, Alex O'Neill,
Mary Ann Owsley & Christine Heinrich

Our very special "Courageous"
The Gann Family

"Sweet" Salsa, Courtney's cat
The Rowe Family

Vicki Weick
Wendy & Bryan Claypool

"Lucy" Van Housen
Jeffrey Clark

Muriel's precious "Lucy"
Jennifer Hillman

John Ankney's wife
Rhea Rath

Kelly 2
Avis & Allan Grandon

"Lion", a feral kitty cared for by Martin & Renee
Lise & Rob Lindfors

"Frankie" Fiori
His loving family

Muriel Van Housen's beloved cat, "Lucy"
Jannette Patterson

"Dusty", "Ms Pepper" & "Boots"
Nancy Gebert

Virginia Testu
Lea Lucky

"Sunshine", Debbie Livingstone's soul mate
Lea Lucky

The Feral Cats we've cared for who have died young from cars & disease

"Amelia" Goodyear
Cats Exclusive Veterinary Center

Estate Planning doesn't mean "Death Planning"... In fact, a well thought-out plan prepares us for our own retirement, provides for our loved ones and charities while we're alive and after we're gone, including the animal members of our families. Because there are so many options out there – simple bequests, trust accounts, generation skipping, etc. – everyone should seek the advice of an attorney & estate planner. A bequest to the Feral Cat Spay/Neuter Project will help insure that free spay/neuter services for feral and homeless cats remain available well into the future. Please include the work of FCS/NP in your estate planning.

A close-up photograph of a tabby cat with its eyes closed, resting its head on a colorful, patterned surface. The cat's fur is a mix of grey, black, and white stripes. Its ears are large and pointed, and its whiskers are prominent. The background is a vibrant, multi-colored fabric with red, yellow, and blue patterns.

A close-up photograph of a ginger cat's face. The cat has bright green eyes and a pink nose. Its fur is a mix of orange and white. The background is dark and out of focus.

A close-up photograph of a tabby cat's face. The cat has large, yellow eyes with black pupils, looking directly at the camera. Its fur is a mix of brown, black, and white stripes. The cat's nose is pinkish-brown, and its whiskers are white. The background is dark and out of focus.

A close-up photograph of a Siamese cat's face. The cat has dark brown fur on its face and ears, with lighter fur on its chest and paws. It has large, light-colored eyes and a pink nose. The cat is looking directly at the camera.

Until every cat has a home.

**FERAL CAT
SPAY/NEUTER
PROJECT**

11331 Roosevelt Way NE
Seattle, WA 98125-6227
www.feralcatproject.org



**Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage PAID
Lynnwood, WA
Permit #182**

Return Service Requested

The first free-standing clinic dedicated to free spay/neuter surgery for cats!

Collaborating With King County Animal Control

A big Thank You to King County Animal Control for including the new FCSNP brochures inside every trap that they loan out to the public. This simple practice informs people of a humane alternative to trapping and euthanasia of free roaming cats. Each brochure introduces TNR, describes FCSNP services and provides our contact information for anyone wanting free spay/neuter services for the free roaming cats in their neighborhoods. Because the public typically looks to animal control agencies for advice and options, we are thrilled that KCAC is partnering with us to help more cats.

Newsletter staff:
Christine Wilford, DVM, editor
Julie White, contributor

Got Plates?

Do you love your four-legged family? Then show it while you drive and at the same time, support spay/neuter in Washington state.

Here's how: Simply click this link www.dol.wa.gov/vs/specialtyplates/reqpets.htm. Then click on and print Special License Plate Application. Fill it out, select "We Love Our Pets" license plates and either mail it in or take it to a licensing office. They'll happily get you set up and your plates will arrive by mail at your house in just a couple of weeks.

If you don't have internet, simply go to any licensing office and they'll have the forms right there.

Don't put it off another moment. Do it today!

Our Mission to Save Cats

The **Feral Cat Spay/Neuter Project** is a non-profit, 501©3 organization dedicated to *reducing the number of homeless cats and ending euthanasia of homeless cats* in shelters in the Puget Sound area by providing safe and humane spay/neuter services free of charge.

FCSNP: Changing Lives by the Thousands

As Maragret Mead always said, "Never doubt that a small group of concerned citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."

FCSNP changes the futures for thousands of cats each year. Spay/neuter improves the lives of these free roaming cats and humanely reducing cat populations increases the adoption chances for cats awaiting homes in shelters.

FCSNP is changing our region and our world. Please continue to generously support FCSNP and continue to be part of great change.

We're a small organization doing BIG work!