

Catalyst for Cats

A Non-Profit Organization Dedicated to Altering the Future for Ferals

NEWSLETTER

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Our Mission:

As a feral cat organization our primary purpose is to spay and neuter feral and abandoned cats, and to socialize and find homes for rescued kittens. These services are designed to address the feline over-population problem and to prevent cruelty to animals by preventing the birth of unwanted and uncared for cat and kittens.

From the Founder

Today's miracles: TNR makes the difference

A few weeks ago, I arranged for a reunion with a couple of my childhood friends. We reminisced about our years together, growing up in Pearl River, a small town outside of New York City. Among a multitude of other things, we talked about spending holidays together, going to the double feature Sunday movie matinees, learning to swim (without lessons) in the local swimming hole, church activities and friends. Despite the Great Depression, it was a happy time for us, with simple pleasures and a time of innocence.

We also talked about our pets. None of us had ever heard of "fixing" a cat so it could no longer bear kittens. What a joyous thing that would have been.

I remembered Thumper, the dominant neighborhood male cat, sitting outside our window, covered with snow and ice, waiting for our momma cat to emerge.

Our small town did not have a veterinarian. We treated cats with abscesses with warm moist compresses. It was the days before penicillin, vaccines, litter boxes, plastic cat carriers, or heating pads (we used hot water bottles).

It was also before many conveniences we take for granted today such as good quality pet food, comfortable beds, and cat toys. The only medical care provided

for them was homespun, and cats were put out at night, rather than kept in for the night. It was undeniably brutal for our pets in those days.

While many of today's pets are pampered, it remains brutal for non-neutered feral cats today. They live a very similar kind of existence as they did those many years ago. Luckily, our method of trap, neuter and return (TNR) automatically improves their lives enormously.

All too soon, it seems, the year is coming to an end. I want to take this opportunity to thank all of you who helped us make a difference. The greatest need for our services remains in the Guadalupe and Santa Maria areas. As we develop an effective core

of volunteers in the North County, we look forward to the challenges ahead. With your support we can become increasingly effective in preventing unwanted kittens from being born, and continue to improve the lives of feral cats. You can be assured of our commitment and determination as we continue towards our goal of "every cat a wanted cat."

My best wishes for a warm and happy holiday season.

Randi Fairbrother



Two homeless kittens from Santa Ynez were fostered and adopted through Catalyst volunteer efforts.

In Appreciation

We are very grateful to those who participate in our goal of preventing feline overpopulation or in improving the lives of felines in whatever way they can. Some are mentioned, but the efforts of all are appreciated

ASAP – for being there for us when we need them for stray, friendly cats and also socialized kittens.

Belinda Burns – for her efforts in many areas of need in the Valley, and for her trapping expertise.

Barbara Hilaire – for her unwavering and generous support of our program.

Teresa Mitton – for her generosity with spay/neuter of dogs and cats in the North County.

Santa Ynez Valley Humane Society and the **Santa Maria Humane Society** – for their cooperation in scheduling spay/neuter days for *Catalyst for Cats*.

Kitten season seems to be winding down, finally.

Our sincere appreciation to (hopefully) the last fosters of the year.

Sandra and Mike Christeson

Nancy George

Monica and Lavi Gonzalas

Nancy Plude

Janelle Murman

I'm happy to say our team of volunteers continues to increase in the Santa Maria area. Thank you to Ernie Bevilacqua, Darla Downs, Patty France, Janelle Murman and Chuck Van der Veer, who assisted us recently in Santa Maria and Guadalupe.

I especially want to mention **Brenda Forsythe, DMV**, who has agreed to assist us to "fix" large numbers of cats in her newly opened Orcutt Veterinary Clinic. This is a huge breakthrough, and we look forward to working with her and her kind, helpful staff.

Tributes & Memorials

Honoring or remembering a special person or pet provides a means for the donor to recognize the richness and happiness brought to someone, and allows *Catalyst* to improve the lives of cats less fortunate. Donations have been made....

In Honor of:

Assistance with feral kitten neutering – by Jacque Sculteure

Guinness – by Amanda Clark

Lilly, Tulip, Precious and Darren – by Carolyn Amate

Randi Fairbrother, for all her hard work – by Eileen Carroll

Randi, thanks for all you do – by Mary Roscoe

Tom Snow, our white cat with nose cancer – by Sacotti Family

White Dog, a deaf pup we adopted from the Animal Shelter. We just love her – by Barbara Simpson

In Remembrance of:

My dearest, courageous **Blondie** and sweet, shy,

Daddy – by Jill Kent

Butchie – to my much-loved, great companion, who I miss very much – by Evelyn Alberts

Eva Bobak – I miss her smile and laughter; there was no meanness in her – by Russell Fairbrother

George, my furry friend – by Mary Roscoe

Virginia V. Fernandez Lipari – by Trudy J. Fernandez

Butterscotch – by Charles and Cherry Barney

Sam – by Barbara Calado

Bruce Schuette – by Brad Schuette

Thelma – by Bill and Elizabeth Douds

Dorothy Petter - by Dennis Dierenfield, DDS

Winterizing outdoor cat care

For a warm bed for outdoor cats line the bed with straw. Blankets and towels hold the moisture and therefore are unnecessarily cold. The bed also needs to be out of the wind and rain.

Valley Vet Supply carries a supply of items to make beds warm for outdoor pets. Just a few minutes in the microwave, Snuggle Safe will provide warmth for your furry friend(s) all night.

Valley Vet Supply

1118 Pony Express Hwy

Marysville, KS 66508

800-419-9524

In addition, remember to bang on the hood of the car before starting it on a winter's day, because cats may be hiding under the hood for warmth.

Catalyst's work recognized by local governments

County Supervisors and Carpinteria City Council both honor our efforts

Last fall, two local government organizations recognized *Catalyst for Cats* volunteers' hard work, steely resolve and commitment to bettering the lives for felines in Santa Barbara County.

On October 16, which happens to be National Feral Cat Day, the Santa Barbara County Board of Supervisors presented *Catalyst* president and founder Randi Fairbrother with a proclamation honoring and thanking the nonprofit's work toward the reduction of unwanted kittens using Trap-Neuter-Return methodology.

Presented by First District Supervisor Salud Carbajal, the proclamation specifically noted *Catalyst's* efforts to focus community attention on the humane solution of TNR. Also noted were the cooperation with other rescue groups such as ASAP, ResQcats, the Santa Ynez Humane Society and the Santa Maria Humane Society; and the spaying/neutering of 500 cats annually, which contributes substantially to reduced euthanasia rates at county facilities.

In her remarks to the Board of Supervisors, Fairbrother stressed both the challenges and the rewards of *Catalyst's* mission.

"In comparison to the overwhelming social and economic problems of the community, pet overpopulation is a fixable problem," said Fairbrother, "and fixing the

problem will actually save tax dollars."

Earlier in the month on October 8, the Carpinteria City Council paid tribute to the 17 years of *Catalyst for Cats* volunteer work.

In an interview before the Monday night meeting, Silvia Echeverria, code compliance supervisor for the City of Carpinteria, recalled making daily trips to the county animal shelter to drop off unwanted kittens in the early 1990s.

"In those days they were euthanized," Echeverria said. "With the work of Randi and *Catalyst* the trips became less and less, and now I couldn't even tell you

the last time we had to bring kittens to the shelter."

"The feral cat problem in Carpinteria was at crisis levels more than 15 years ago," Fairbrother told the council. "Our success is the result of a coordinated effort, by not only the citizens of Carpinteria, but in large part due to the support of your city's animal control department."

Though the South County is no longer permeated by large colonies of dozens of feral cats and kittens, Fairbrother noted, the

organization must stay vigilant because it only takes one female to begin a colony.

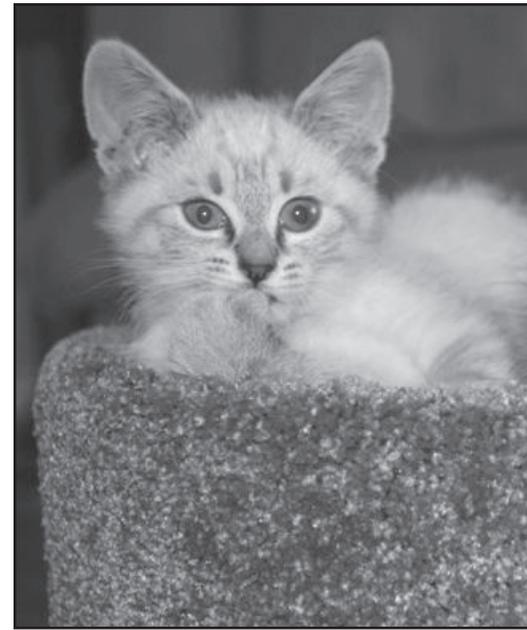
With attention focused on the North County, the organization aims for the same success there as it has in the south.



Honored: The extraordinary work accomplished by *Catalyst for Cats* volunteers is recognized at the October 8 Carpinteria City Council meeting with a proclamation from the city. Joining Randi Fairbrother, second from left, in receiving the accolade are, from left, longtime *Catalyst* activist Carpinterian David Morris, City of Carpinteria code compliance supervisor Silvia Echeverria and Carpinteria Mayor Michael Ledbetter.



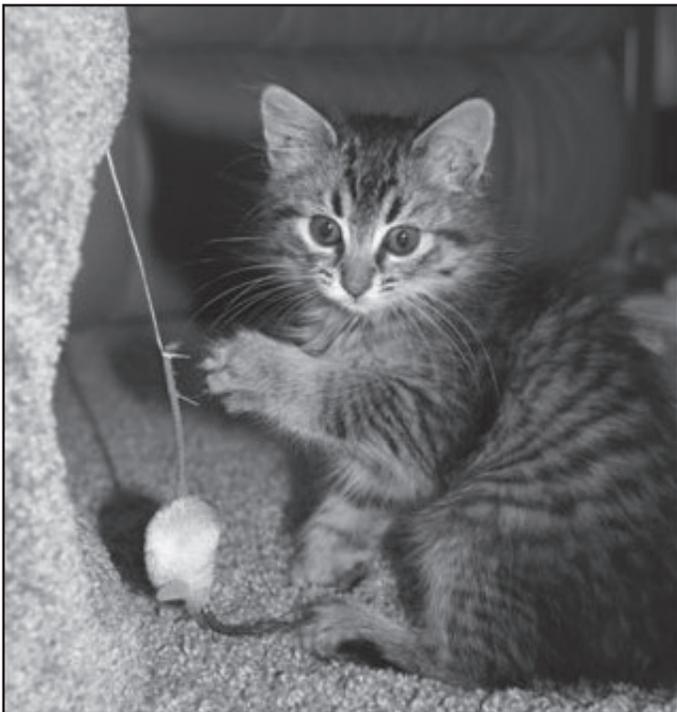
Picture Perfect: The newsletter covered Sophie's rescue from a dry Los Alamos creek bed in the previous issue ("No Need For a Trap"), but the picture space was mysteriously hijacked by a different cat. As reported, Sophie found a loving home in the north county, along with her sister who was caught two days later. This picture was instrumental in sealing the adoption.



Adored & Adopted: These cat cousins—their mother was rescued by Catalyst for Cats and have already been adopted and returned to familiar surroundings.

Paws for the

Warm wishes from Catalyst for Cats



Playtime: One of numerous cute kittens rescued in Santa Maria this year, this one was quick to be adopted in her home town.



Old Friends: Jack the Cat had been declawed by a previous owner and taken to ASAP as a candidate for adoption, where he tested positive for FIV. He succeeded, though, in winning the hearts of local cat lovers and quickly found his new home. That was seven years ago. Here is Jack the Cat and Henry the Golden Retriever today. Henry gets a clawless massage daily.



*...ms are sisters—were trapped in Santa Maria
...ted. Both moms were also trapped, spayed and*



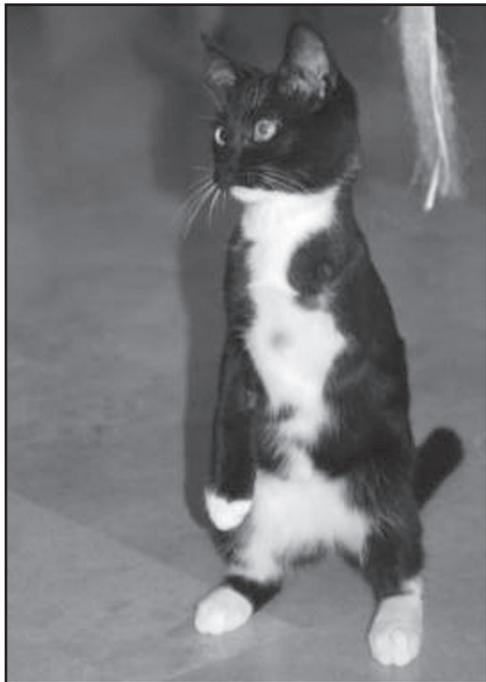
Not Finished Yet: Boots may be feral, but he is well fed and content in his Goleta colony.

...ne Holidays

...yst for Cats & its 'clients'



*...eventually
...FIV. He
...found a
...Golden*



Not disabled: Nikki has been adopted by her foster parents Nancy and Dan George, who say she has adjusted well to the loss of a leg.



Family Life: A mom and her four kittens from Goleta were all trapped, spayed/neutered, and returned to a happier life.

Santa Maria's 'Pied Piper'

Call her the Pied Piper of Santa Maria because on her daily outings she so often comes across animals in need. It's uncanny how often Lavi Gonzales comes across abandoned kittens, a mother cat with a litter, dogs, puppies, even rabbits.

Recently, while on a walk, Lavi came upon a box in a ditch with meows emanating from it. Upon investigating, she found a darling mother cat with three, four-week-old kittens. Monica, Lavi's daughter (who also seems to have this same innate Pied Piper gift), fostered them until they were ready for adoption. A few days later, Lavi saw a tiny five week old kitten in the middle of the street. Again, Monica cared for this orphan until she was ready for adoption.

As if finding abandoned families were not enough, several months ago someone dropped off a couple of very tame three-month-old kittens in Lavi's yard, one with a broken leg. This same kitten (which we named Lucy for "lucky"), was pictured in the last newsletter with a cast on her front leg. Unfortunately, the leg had to be amputated at a later date. Her fosters, Nancy and Dan George of George Construction, fell in love with Lucy, adopted her, and changed her name to Nikki.

Another time Lavi came upon a stray Pekingese dog



O Brave New World: These three kittens (above) and the pair below were photographed just hours after capture. They are being fostered and socialized for adoption by Lavi Gonzales's daughter Monica., Their mom and three half-sisters from a previous litter have all been spayed, stabilizing the colony.



Wish List

Catayst needs the following in order to carry on its charitable and educational goals. If you can help, please call 685-1563:

- Fosters for socializing kittens
- Trappers and transporters for Santa Ynez, Lompoc, and Santa Maria
- Feeders for Santa Barbara and Santa Ynez Valley areas
- Safe relocation sites for mousers. They will earn their keep. We often try and socialize our older kittens because we prefer they have loving homes. Also, some of them need to have medical care. After a lot of time, love, sweat, and tears we sometimes realize they must go to a relocation site more suitable to their temperament, such as a barn situation. With time they still have the potential to warm up to the feeders.
- Twin sheets for covering the traps after capture, which calms frightened cats down.
- Fairly heavy, washable material for trap covers and someone to sew them

wondering the streets. Thanks to DAWG. and after an extensive hernia repair, they were able to find it a loving home.

Then there is the story of Tarzan, the orange tabby kitten stranded up a tree. I'll let Monica tell that one in our next newsletter.

In previous newsletters, we told the story of the "Unwanted Kittens of Railroad Avenue" and "Abandoned Along Highway 166." Those tales touched on some of the remarkable rescue efforts of this one very special family in Santa Maria. Life would be a much better place if there were more people like the Lavi Gonzalas family.

Thanks to you and to your whole family, for your concern, caring and love extended to these creatures in need.

—Randi T. Faribrother

Updates: *Catalyst Action & Related Issues*

Santa Maria — Volunteers Needed

The new shelter in Santa Maria continues to be in need of volunteers. Stop by the shelter for a visit. For volunteer opportunities call Stacy at 934-6981, or for general information call the Santa Maria Shelter (934-6119). The opportunities to help are many and varied.

Opportunities to help

Catalyst also needs trappers, fosters and transporters, even places to hold cats for pre- and post-op surgery. Call 685-1563 if you can help in any capacity.

Note to Supporters

Catalyst for Cats wants its donors to know that we do not share our mailing list with anyone or group.

New Board Member

Marci Kladnik, born and raised in Santa Barbara, is a retired graphic designer and technical writer. During her 25-year career, she designed and wrote for

two publishers and two local medical device manufacturers. While raising a family in Wisconsin, she was on the masthead of the monthly *National Model Railroad Bulletin* before moving home to California in 1984.

As a concerned citizen and animal rights activist, she has accepted a position on our board as Outreach Education Coordinator.

In her spare time, Marci traps and fosters local feral cats and kittens. When not traveling around the world, she and her four cats and one dog live in Los Alamos. Welcome Marci, to our board, and to the world of trapping and feral cats.

New Year's Resolution Idea

The rallying cry is "Feed and Fix." Bring the subject up at your place of work, social events, gatherings, the laundry mat, over the dinner table, to the children, at church, etc.

Feed and Fix! Each of you can do your part by mentioning the importance of altering companion pets.

A cat that knows when to Come Back Little Sheba

We were so excited when Randi told us she had a special cat for us, and she was right. We picked her up at Christmastime in Santa

Maria where Monica was taking good care of her. She was the best Christmas present we could have hoped for.

The first order of business was to give her a name, as it seems she had lived five months without really having one. We almost named her Dixie, after the Dixie Chicks, or Bunny, because our little tailless manx is a gray "diluted torti," according to the vet, and really looks like a rabbit sometimes.

However, we finally settled on Sheba, and it seems to suit her, because she usually comes, or at least shows herself and scampers off—after all, she is a

cat—when you call her.

She loves to bat around her balls and mice, race madly through our little house, and eat. Eating should probably come first! She is most willing to put on her "harness" every day because that means she can go outside.

Her most outstanding personality trait, though, is her pure sweetness and affection.

We just adore our little adopted angel, and she seems to feel the same way.

—Marlene Struss and
Joe Bielecki



The Catalyst cat whose name became Sheba found a loving home around last Christmas with Marlene Struss and Joe Bielecki. Sheba's also a big hit with Joe's daughter Stefanie.



Catalyst supporters Linda and Don Fareed sent us a picture of their Manx, Tux, who was rescued by Catalyst last year.



Rescued in Santa Ynez: Snooky was one of a litter, bottle fed by Phoebe Aleziades. Because he was the runt and most vulnerable she adopted him.

Cats come with claws!

Never declaw a cat! Declawing often results in irreversible physical and psychological damage. An excellent scratching post is available from **Felix Company (206) 547-0042**. Ask for their catalog. The **#1** (large) is a good selection.

**Every litter adds to the problem
Every spay/neuter adds to the solution!**

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