



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 overpopulation problem and to prevent cruelty to animals by preventing the birth of unwanted and uncared for cats and kittens. Catalyst for Cats, PO Box 30331, Santa Barbara, CA 93130 is a free newsletter published four times a year by Catalyst for Cats, Inc.

From the Founder

We improve cats' lives – with your help

As I write this, Thanksgiving is nearly upon us—a day to reflect on our blessings. Many of us have much to be thankful for, but others are not so lucky. It's the same with our feral feline friends.

The more fortunate cats live in a home of warmth and love with plenty of food and companionship. Our feral friends are not so lucky, but that doesn't mean they cannot live a good life. Once they are freed from the hormonal urges that cause so much misery and hardship, their lives are transformed for the better. We are blessed with a dedicated team (even though small) that makes these transformations possible. As of this October, over 400 cats/kittens have been helped this year alone.

As a feral cat organization we use the proven and humane method of trap, neuter and return (TNR) to "fix" the animals, releasing them from the brutal breeding cycle.

This prevents unwanted kittens from being born and addresses the overpopulation problem raising havoc in some of our communities.

This year we dealt with service requests for colonies ranging in size from a few cats to over 30. We have stabilized many of the larger colonies this year.

The usual surgery fee is \$50 to \$60 for a female and \$35 for the male. In addition, they are given rabies and distemper vaccines, a flea treatment, a worming injection, and needed medical care.

It is not possible for everyone to absorb these costs, and for the most part we receive little or no reimbursement whatsoever in return for our help.

As we approach the holidays, the season of giving

begins. Requests from worthwhile causes seem endless at this time of year, and if one is fortunate enough to be in a position to give, we must pick and chose the ones that touch our heart.

For every spayed female 144 kittens are prevented from being born over a two-year period. I would venture to say few donations provide as much value for your dollar. I sincerely hope *Catalyst for Cats* will be on your "give to" list this season.

May you enjoy the goodwill of this holiday season with family and friends. We extend our best wishes for the coming New Year to each and every one of you..

Randi Fairbrother



Poster Boy: Rescued by Catalyst for Cats from near-fatal, flea-induced anemia by an emergency blood transfusion, Johnny Jump Ups (now Jedi) has become a healthy, happy cat in the loving home of Sandra Beisinger.

In Appreciation

We are very grateful to those who participate in our goal of preventing feline overpopulation. Unless you are “into” animal rescue no one understands the amount of time and effort our volunteers contribute. Our volunteers are the ones who make it happen. It is a true labor of love and often personal sacrifice, and we thank you all enormously. The reward is the satisfaction you get from helping the animals in whatever way you can. We rely on you, our volunteers, who give from the heart. Some are mentioned, but all are appreciated.

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

Marci Kladnik – For the second year in a row, board member Marci Kladnik has been honored by the Cat Writers’ Association with a Certificate of Excellence for her bi-weekly column on cats, which appears in the *Santa Maria Times*, the *Santa Ynez Valley News* and the *Lompoc Record*. Marci also received recognition for a photo taken last year of JD, the kitten suffering from megaesophagus. The photo, which is used on the cover of *Catalyst’s* outreach brochure, went on to win a Muse Medallion at the conference in November. All of Marci’s columns can be seen on our website. Our small but powerhouse team who fosters, traps

and feeds colonies in the north county: **Lavi** and **Monica Gonzales**, **Marci Kladnik**, **Debbie Merry**, **Melissa Muñoz**, **Tim Olivera**, **Rochelle Reed**, **Ann Marie Rose**, **Debbie Walker**, **Melinda Siebold**, **Rose Koller**, **Tina Hawkins**, **Deanna Koens** and all their **families** – for heroic fostering efforts.

Jeffyne Telson of **RESQCATS** – for helping us post our adoptable kittens and cats on Facebook and Pet-Finder.

Letty Obledo, DVM – for her continued help with after-hours emergencies.

We appreciate the opportunity to show our socialized kittens at **Montecito Pet Shop** on the Mesa, **Orcutt Veterinary Hospital** in Orcutt and **San Roque Pet Hospital** in Santa Barbara.

And we thank the dozens of feeders, who faithfully feed colonies throughout Santa Barbara County.

At year’s end we like to mention a few who work behind the scenes, but who play an important roll.

Lorraine Cestone – for compiling the mailing list.

Charles Clouse – for designing the newsletter.

Jim Giles – for computer help.

Lisa Hughie – for sending acknowledgments.

Gerry Place – *Catalyst’s* Treasurer

Allison Coleman – our CPA

Tributes & Memorials

Each one of these names represents a level of love and caring to those remaining. They each have their own story.

In Honor of:

All my pets – by Thelma Walker

Belinda Burns – by Ken Reed

Bosco Baby, thank you for all you do for our kitty cats. Merry Christmas by Charlyne Dennis

Caesar Cat – by Gloria Shepard

David – by Shirley Nelson

Goldie and her kittens – by Judy and Alver

Marie Gonzalez, for helping teach kitties to be friendly – by Ernest Pratt

Sue and Jim Higman, for your outstanding environmental and conservation efforts – by Randi Fairbrother

Lost and found Morris – by Mickey Wilson

Randi, my long time friend – by Ethel Barclay

In Remembrance of:

Buddie and **JoAnn Cason** – by Teresa Hall

Mother, Ruth Demms – by Susan Eselgroth

Freddie, my 15-year-old grey – by Barbara McCurry

Itty – by Wilma Titus

Lady Milford – by Diane Mazur

Mama Kitty, a feral mom whose luck ran out after years of crossing the street for breakfast every morning – by Rochelle Reid and Randi Fairbrother.

Millie – by Thelma Walker

Mousey – by Charles and Mary Stones

Nutmeg and **Princess** – by Rita Fleming

Sheila Pratt, a friend to ferals – by Ernest Pratt

Snow and **Kitty Kat** – by Richard Salotti and Family

Rory, a real ginger Tom, who had many adventures – by Keith Kinealy

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The Problem With Careless Feeding

When its time to relocate an ever-growing colony

By Randi Fairbrother

This summer we dealt with an ugly situation that had been going on for many years. The feeder insisted on leaving large amounts of food every two or three days. Consequently, she had no idea how many cats she was feeding, or even what she was feeding. Her reasoning: She didn't want the cats to "starve."

We had done our job of TNR-ing that group several years ago, but since the woman refused to feed properly, it was impossible to stabilize the colony. Frequently the left-over food would be wet and covered with ants.

The amount of ill will generated in the area had grown to explosive proportions, and we realized the cats had to be removed.

The neighbors complained for years, as did the on-site business, but she persisted. This summer the woman relocated to another state and asked one of our volunteers to take over the feeding. This was the chance we had been waiting for.

By this time the amount of ill will generated in the area had grown to explosive proportions, and we realized the cats had to be removed. If not, we were afraid disgruntled neighbors would trap them (or worse) and surrender them to the Santa Maria Shelter, which is not a safe place for feral cats.

Debbie Walker accepted the challenge. The first order of business was to establish a feeding pattern to determine the number of cats at the site. A few had tipped ears from our first attempt years ago, but most didn't. Next we needed a safe relocation site—not an easy task—before we could start the trapping phase. Debbie found a friend who agreed to accept nine of them at two separate barn locations. Since the group was to be split up, she now had the added challenge of figuring out which cats were bonded.

With guidance from Belinda Burns, our relocation expert, Debbie set up holding cages at both relocation sites and we began arranging for spay/neuter appointments. All were given a clean bill of health, rabies and

distemper vaccines, an ear tip, a worming injection, flea treatment and tested for FIV and leukemia, including the ones with a previous ear tip.

Before Debbie began, she approached the business on the site to explain our goal. The previous feeder had told the neighbors that this was a *Catalyst for Cats* feeding site, so we had to deal with a lot of mistrust and hostility. In fact, one evening a neighbor threatened one of our young volunteers and called the police. After a few volatile nights, Debbie calmed the waters and the removal process began.

The end result proved to be very satisfactory. We relocated nine cats to the two barn sites, and in addition we TNR'd a female neighbor cat with four kittens, which we adopted out. Belinda relocated one cat, and Debbie is fostering an older kitten, who we hope will be suitable for adoption soon. Anyone

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Feeding Stations 101

Setting up a feeding station properly is paramount for establishing and keeping a colony stable.

It's as simple as 1, 2, 3...

First, establish a consistent feeding time—daylight hours are preferred—and expect to spend about 10–15 minutes for the cats to eat.

Use this time to count heads and interact with the colony. It's fun to name the cats and talk to them.

Afterward, clean up all food and dishes, but leave fresh water daily in an inconspicuous spot.

The goal is to have the cats waiting when you show up with the food. That enables you to track the colony easily.

The cats will soon learn the sounds that announce mealtime—the opening of the patio door, the sound of your car, the shaking of the kibble, etc. As they assemble, take a quick census to check for any missing, injured, sick,

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Trapped, but never confined: remembering Mamo

By Carl Anderson

She was part of my colony of ten cats that I trapped with Randi's help years ago. Today, four cats remain in the colony. I named her Mamo.

Mamo disappeared for a while and then one day showed up with four tiny kittens, which she moved into the woodpile next to my shed. A few days later I lured her into a trap and rounded up her kittens. Randi was so pleased I caught them all together.

A few weeks later, Randi called and asked if I wanted to visit Mamo and her kittens. They were housed near Hope Ranch in a converted greenhouse specifically remodeled for cats with two story cages—perfect for Mamo and her little family. What an impressive

slept on her cushioned bed. Sometimes she would disappear for a few days, but eventually always returned.

Mamo never liked to be picked up, and she showed affection only with me. She kept her distance from everyone else. She was very much of a loner, even with the other cats in the Clan.

About a year ago I noticed a sore on her pink nose. I called a vet to come and take a look at her. The vet could get no closer than about 15 feet, but could tell me Mamo had cancer of the nose. Because of her wildness and mistrust of humans, we decided it would be best to let her live out her life on her own terms.

I babied her for nearly a year. She ate a vast variety of food: chicken, shrimp, salmon, tuna, beef and quality cat food. She only ate the best.

When she started to go, she went fast. The last three days of her life weren't good. Even at that point she was still unapproachable by strangers. On the last day, as she lay in her cozy bed, I eased myself down on the floor next to her with my head on her cushion facing her.

I looked into her green eyes and said, "The greatest thing you will ever know is to love and be loved. She reached out and petted my face with her paw as if she truly understood. That was our goodbye.

Then shortly after, in the classic form that was hers, she gave me this look—like, "OK, that's enough, you're starting to bug me." So, I got up and sat on my chair next to her. About an hour later, she started labored breathing and then peacefully she was gone.

I can hardly put into words the love that grew between us. This is truly one of the highlights and dearest experiences of my life, something I will always treasure. She was a fantastic creature, never visually sick a day in her life. She must have been about 19 years old. We would celebrate her birthday June 6. I am so grateful to have been a part of her life for over 17 years.

Thank you Randi for all that you did and do for all the cats like Mamo. They are truly fantastic creatures, each one with unique traits and personalities. Some, like her, are irreplaceable.



One of Catalyst's early TNR successes stories, Mamo gradually came to accept just one human, but it was a strong, meaningful bond.

facility with a large signed picture of "Cat Women" on the wall.

In the following few weeks all the kittens were adopted and Mamo was returned to me fixed and with her shots and a tipped ear. In the following years she usually showed up for breakfast. One morning as she ate, she turned and I petted her for the first time. It had taken five years.

Slowly she began to trust me more after that. In the tenth year, she really started to warm up to me and accepted petting. She came in and out of a cat door and

Happy Adoptions: Contented Families and Felines

Once everyone settles in, Catalyst clients are eager to express themselves



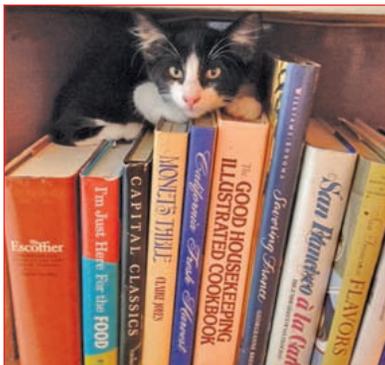
Rescued from life on the streets of Santa Maria by Catalyst volunteer **Debbie Merry**, this darling tabby has been socialized and adopted. He placed the stuffed animal in this photogenic position by himself.



"This thank you is definitely late, but I wanted to let you know how well **Jedi** is doing. We brought our little guy home on July 31st. We hoped that a kitten would help ease our 9-year-old cat's grief over the loss of his lifelong companion earlier in the summer. **Huck** (right) was showing physical symptoms of stress and was just plain miserable. No purr, no play, no interest in food. To our great joy, Jedi was the answer to our very sad situation.

After a short adjustment period, Huck began to accept the kitten into the family. Shortly after that, they began playing and snuggling and watching lizards together. Huck is his old happy self again."

—**Mary Hanson**



One of a litter of 11, **Francesco** finds a secure vantage point to observe life in the Dowling household.



The Girls in the Den. They're great! Growing like weeds. "The girls are getting into everything! **Plum** (left) is the funniest cat we've ever had. She thinks she's a dog! Follows us everywhere, fetches, talks constantly. **Pear** is less and less shy, holds her own with her more aggressive sister and is just a sweetheart."

—**Judy Kolars**



"Here is a picture of our new kitten from C4C with his new daddy. **Calla Lily** (Cali for short) is doing well and getting BIG. She gets along great with our 3-year-old cat, Tiger Lily. Thanks so much for providing such a sweet kitten!"

—**Shelley Takeuchi**

How to set up an effective feeding station

From Page 3

newcomers or kittens. Kittens need to be captured and removed as soon as possible in order to socialize them for adoption. And of course, the mom will need to be TNR'd.

Because a stabilized colony does not easily accept strange cats, newcomers tend to stay in the background. Once TNR'd they can be introduced into the colony slowly. Often a newcomer will be an intact male who is not hungry but rather looking for females. Once neutered, they tend to move on never to return.

I find it works well to feed each cat on a separate dish, such as cheap paper plates. If fed separately, newcomers are easily TNR'd and sick ones can be medicated. For medications ordered twice a day, the dosage can usually be safely and effectively doubled for once-a-day feeding.

Leaving food out for hours will result in an unstable colony as cats will come and go without your knowledge. Single felines will wander in and out and mothers will not bring their kittens to feed until after you are gone. Once you become aware of the little ones, they will be too old to remove and socialize for adoption. Eventually they, too, will need to be TNR'd.

It becomes increasingly expensive to feed an ever-growing number of mouths, and you will probably be feeding other creatures as well (skunks, opossums, raccoons and rodents). Too much food can actually create colony formations, and worst of all, the kittens

will never stop coming.

Please be as unobtrusive as possible, since the cats most likely are not wanted there in the first place. Remember to clean up after each feeding. Be courteous to the surrounding community to avoid ill will.

—Randi Fairbrother

Relocating an unstable colony

From Page 3

interested in adopting this last kitten, a tortie, please call our Adoption Co-ordinator Marci Kladnik at (805) 344-4663.

The very last cat we TNR'd was an intact large orange male who appeared friendly. He was probably seeking females in heat more than a free meal at the site since he did not return after neutering.

Debbie continued to check the feeding site for several days to be sure no more cats showed up. She also went to the relocation barns every day for three weeks to feed, clean the litter and check on the nine. After three weeks she released them from their cages and at last report they were all doing well. Mission Accomplished!

Since then, some of the neighbors have apologized for their aggressive behavior and even thanked us for our efforts. Debbie and her husband Jason, who assisted her in this project, met the challenge magnificently and deserve a big hand for a job well done.

Tributes and Memorials – In Remembrance of:

From Page 2

Rufus and Lily – by Baraba Calado

Shadow – by Mark and Diana Poudrier

John Tapit, my beloved brother and his **Gracee** – by Irene Kasper

Reggie, A small angel statue sits on top of Reggie's resting place among the roses, a warm and quiet spot visited by birds and butterflies all day long. Reggie was, we think, at least 15 years old. He lived with us for 14 years of his life. Last year he developed kidney failure. The vet tested him for FIV, and yes, he was still positive, but that wasn't what was making him ill. He had kidney disease.

His life of living with FIV should stand as a testimony

to all that giving a kitty a chance at life, along with good loving care, can prove there is life with FIV and it can be good.

We will always miss our little guy, and always be grateful to Randi and all the wonderful people who selflessly support and give their time for *Catalyst*. Their love and hard work have saved countless lives and made a major contribution to limit the suffering of our wonderful pets. RIP, Reggie, with love – by Jill and Richard Mosher.

We featured Reggie in past newsletters. He charmed his way into Jill Mosher's life when she fostered him many years ago. Thank you Jill and Richard for your years of care and kindness to Reggie.

Updates: Catalyst Action & Related Issues

Cat's Meow Raffle Results

Catalyst for Cats' annual Cat's Meow Raffle, held this year to celebrate National Feral Cat Day on Oct. 16 at The Coffee Cat in downtown Santa Barbara, raised \$4,155—all earmarked for the benefit of feral cats of Santa Barbara County.

Raffle prize winners were:

- **Mary Beth Kastan**—El Rancho Marketplace Lunch and Wine Picnic for 6 at a Santa Ynez Valley Winery
- **Denny Epperson**—Historic Upham Hotel Mid-week Getaway
- **Pat Coppejans**—Gigantic gift basket from Lemos Feed & Pet Supply
- **Diana Poudrier**—Cat House Hotel Gift Certificate
- **Loretta Redd**—Commissioned original cat portrait painted by Kay Neola McWilliams.

Catalyst would like to thank our generous supporters. The proceeds from the raffle will help fund our efforts to combat feline overpopulation countywide.



Catalyst Founder Randi Fairbrother and Melissa Muñoz, a dedicated 18-year-old foster and trapper, act "catty" at the annual Cat's Meow Raffle marking National Feral Cat Day.

Special support for special cats through the Tiny Tim Fund

When it comes to relieving suffering among sick or injured cats, *Catalyst* has a very good record of success. The rewards of caring for these felines are great, but so are the costs. We try to shepherd resources for this purpose into our Tiny Tim Fund, and we greatly appreciate the services of the Orcutt Veterinary Hospital staff, who assists us in this worthwhile endeavor.

Presently an older (eight to ten years), abandoned, spayed orange female with a broken leg is in foster. She'd been roaming the neighborhood and dumpsters looking for food for sometime. I saw her the day after Myra, the groomer at the Orcutt Vet Hospital brought her in. She was a sorry sight—matted and coated with grease from lying under cars, yet, when petted she purred. I vowed she would never hide under a car or go hungry again. She'll go to her new home soon.

Another cat, Michie, cared for and loved by ranch hands at a Santa Ynez Valley ranch disappeared for several days. She returned home with four severe wounds to the right rear leg, one of which was full of maggots. Belinda Burns, our Santa Ynez liaison tended to the wounds until we could get her transported to the Orcutt Vet Hospital for care. Fostered presently by

Marci Kladnik, her "sugar dressing," which promotes healing, needs changing every three to four days. She also has a good deal of ligament damage, which seems to be improving over time. Hopefully, soon she can go home.

These are just two of our rescues since our last newsletter. We deal with a host of health issues getting our kittens well enough for adoption. As you probably all know by now, most of our kittens come from feral moms who struggle to care for them and are usually not in the best of health themselves. Each one we TNR or rescue is a triumph and success, and each one matters to us.

We welcome donations to our Tiny Tim Fund.

—Randi Fairbrother

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.



Catalyst for Cats, Inc.
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**Every litter adds to the problem
Every spay/neuter adds to the solution!**

Wish List

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

- Santa Maria is in dire need of trappers, transporters and feeders.
- Cat food for the many, many colonies we monitor and maintain. We prefer meat flavors from Purina, Friskies, or Costco rather than fish flavors. Wet food is a treat.
- Sheets—we use them to cover the trap once the cat is caught. Covering the trap after capture calms the cat down.

No-hassle donating can now be done using **PayPal** or **credit card** using the Donation Form button on our website. Catalyst is also registered with **Cars for Causes**, also accessible through our website.



Lemos Feed and Pet Supply is offering customers a 20% discount (excluding food or sale items) on any purchases designated to a charity of your choice. Catalyst for Cats welcomes cat treats, pill pockets, toys, litter. All items will be delivered. Offer is good until Christmas. See any Lemos store or check their website for details.

Help Catalyst for Cats When You Shop Online

Every time a purchase is made through **AdoptAShelter.com** at any one of over 400 top name online stores, 100% of the amount displayed is donated to the animal organization or shelter chosen by the shopper. You can buy just about anything online and earn a donation, all without logging in or remembering a password.

Check us out at www.AdoptAShelter.com