

Newsletter

Volume II

Winter 2012

Forgotten Felines Rescue — A Year in Review

MISSION

Forgotten Felines Rescue provides spay/neuter services, food, shelter and adoption for homeless cats and kittens, along with providing public education on the critical cat overpopulation problem and the importance of spaying/neutering. The founders and its Denver-area volunteers are committed to improving the lives of feral and stray cats.

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Our third year has been exciting as we expanded the programs to help Denver's homeless cats and kittens. Our volunteer base has become more committed and grown in numbers to assist in the key areas of trapping and colony care, foster care and adoption. Our financial support has increased with individual donations, grants, and fundraising events to support the growing veterinary requirements of the cats and kittens that we have helped.

• **Cats helped** – From January-October 2011 the number of cats that we helped was 198. Between January-October of 2012 this number was 337, about a 70% increase over 2011.

Adoptions during this period totaled 31 in 2011 versus 116 in 2012, almost a 300% increase. This was made possible by the admirable efforts of many foster parents and counselors at adoption events who diligently worked to find the right homes for rescued cats and kittens.

• **Adoption events** – In addition to almost weekly adoption events at different Petco locations in Denver, Forgotten Felines also participated in several special adoption events during the year. These included the Best Pets 5th annual NW Denver Adopt-A-Thon on Tennyson St. (June); the Tagawa Gardens Grey Kitty Birthday event (July); the Denver Pet Expo event (August); and the Old South Pearl Street Pet Adoption Fair (September).



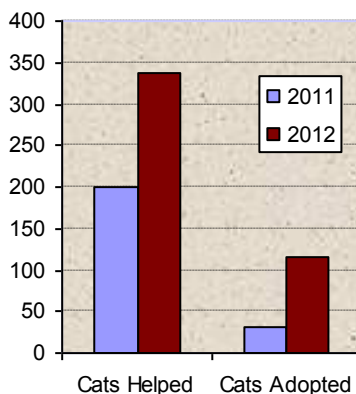
Hosts Linda & David Peters & Winnie

• **Fundraising** – Our 2nd annual Garden Party & Silent Auction was held again in the beautiful backyard of volunteers Linda & David Peters of Denver. The event, featuring a cat collection donated by Gina Zaro, was well-attended, and netted about \$2800 for Forgotten Felines.

We continue to make progress towards our goal of improving the lives of Denver's homeless cats. Our 2012 contributions have been significant, but **there are still so many, many more cats in the Denver area needing help.** (See p. 4 for how you can help).



Tagawa Gardens adoption event



As part of our TNR (trap/neuter/return) program, volunteers care for feral cat colonies throughout the Denver-metro area. TNR effectively addresses the extreme over-population of cats and improves the lives of the existing cats living on the street.



York St. cats enjoying their breakfast

Thanks to dedicated volunteer Bettie Cram for helping care for this colony!

MELODY MELCHIOR: CARETAKER EXTRAORDINAIRE



Melody Melchior, center, is flanked by her god-daughter Carla, nephew Dennis and Chihuahua Francis. Not pictured: the cat colony of 14 that this trio cares for.

"The Westwood neighborhood in Denver is full of abandoned cats", states Melody. "Folks just abandon cats and drop them off on the corner near our house. We had been feeding them, and one day a Forgotten Felines Rescue volunteer happened by and saw a bunch hanging out on the front porch".

"Kathy (FFR volunteer) offered to trap, spay and neuter them," says Melody. All the cats were

returned (except the 2 trapped skunks, which were released, and 14 kittens placed for adoption). So not only has the colony been kept to under 15, but FFR comes around periodically with cat food to help out.

"We enjoy taking care of these cats and know that they're going to get through the winter. I was raised on a farm in Illinois and have been a cat person all my life. When I called the city for help, they

said there's nothing they could do about the cats." But Forgotten Felines Rescue **is** doing something. "I'd advise anyone who cares about felines to get a hold of FFR and get them spayed/neutered."

"I just can't understand that people would get them [cats] and not want to take care of them. I'm just happy to know there won't be 10-15 more kittens here next spring," she concludes.

HOW THE RESCUE CYCLE WORKS...

Step 1: Contact

Forgotten Felines Rescue finds out about feral cats & kittens through emails from our web-site, phone calls to our help line, or word of mouth. A feeding schedule is established to make trapping more successful, appointments are made at The Feline Fix, a low-cost spay/neuter clinic, and a date to trap is set. Many times the people calling us have talked to many shelters and municipalities, but it's one small, grass-roots organization – *Forgotten Felines Rescue* – that turns out to be many folks' last resort. They are so grateful that we exist.

Step 2: Trapping – TNR

Trapping can take place either the day before or the morning of the spay/neuter appointment. (Volunteers are needed to help in this process. – Training is provided) Cats and kittens are taken to the clinic in the morn-

ing and picked up the same afternoon. They are kept either in the trap or a carrier overnight inside and fed the following morning prior to releasing them back to the colony. This process can happen over 2-3 days, weeks or months depending on the number of cats in the colony (and how smart they are!).

Step 3: Foster Kittens that are trapped and young enough to be socialized are placed in foster homes. One of our foster moms, Jessica McWilliams, states "I try really hard to make them happy and social kittens..... Most of all I make sure they're great cuddlers. Sometimes we take little cat naps together." Adult cats are also rewarding to foster as you see them blossom when they feel safe and learn to trust again.

Step 4: Adopt

All kittens and cats are tested for FeLV/FIV, spayed or neutered, vaccinated, and dewormed prior to being placed for adoption. After socialization it is off to one of our adoption displays. To know you've made a difference in just one cat or kitten's life is an unforgettable experience – you can experience this too by becoming a *Forgotten Felines* volunteer.

That sums up how we help people in our community help cats. The need is much greater than you can imagine. The ASPCA estimates the number of feral cats in the U.S. to be in the tens of millions, another source estimates it to be 60 million. You can become a part of this vital work – please call us at 303-532-5521 or email us info@forgottenfelinesdenver.org



Kathy Hill, here with foster kitten, Daisy, is a dedicated and involved volunteer. She helps care for cat colonies, including feeding and trapping cats, as well as fosters rescued cats and kittens, helps with fundraising and other activities.

Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) benefits the cats and the community. Cats are spayed or neutered, vaccinated, and eartipped (the universal symbol of a neutered and vaccinated cat), and then returned to their outdoor home. The colony's population stabilizes—no more kittens! Trap-Neuter-Return improves their lives and improves their relations with the community—the behaviors and stresses associated with mating stop.

Trap-Neuter-Return is the humane, effective approach for feral cats.



DR. SUSAN BARDEN ... A NEW VOICE

When Dr. Susan Barden sees a cat wandering the streets, she doesn't see a nuisance, as many Denver area citizens do. She sees a little being that's hurting. And she wants to do something about it.

That's always been the case for this Denver veterinarian, raised in Alaska close to animals. And now, as the newly-appointed president of the board at Forgotten Felines, she intends to lead the way for FFR to continue to address the feral cat problem here.

At VCA Park Hill, the clinic where she's worked for 6 years, she and the staff provide at-cost exams and medications for kittens and adult feral cats, testing them for illness. But

trapping, spaying and neutering (TNR) is in the realm of volunteers.

"I'm educating myself about the extent of the feral cat problem, and I'm surprised how big it is," she states. "There are scores of groups and individuals in the area who watch over feral cat colonies and try to get kittens born on the street socialized in homes through fostering or adoption. But there's little communication among them, she states, "and no city-wide policy or resources to make change on a large-scale basis."

She points to Colorado Springs, Fort Collins and Boulder as places where there is an aggressive system to deal with feral cats. It is her intent to

help Denver catch up with other Colorado cities. She was happy to see Doug Linhart, Denver's manager of environmental health, at a recent meeting for volunteers at the Denver Animal Shelter. They are now in communication, and it's this kind of connection that can change policy.

"Our organization is small, and the volunteers are devoted," she stresses. "But we're on our own." How do you reach underserved communities and educate them on the urgency of spaying/neutering their pets? How do you reduce the feral cat population? These constitute a huge task, but one that this energetic vet is taking on.



Susan Barden lives with her husband Mike in Park Hill. Her cat, Sophie, is Queen Bee of the house, even lording it over her 2 dogs, Macdougall and Mira, boxer and lab mix respectively.

HAPPY CAT TALES!

Inspiring testimonials from our adoption list

If a homeless cat could talk, it would probably say, "Give me shelter, food, companionship and love, and I will be yours for life!"

~ Susan Easterly (author of *The guide to handraising kittens*)



Bacall

Before



Bacall (L) & new best friend Danny

"We are still in love with Bacall. She is getting a tiny little belly from her spoiling lessons and likes to sleep right on top of me like I am Dinosaur Ridge. Her head marking is where she stores Danny's and my kisses. They sleep together and groom and play like two little rhinoceroses running through the house."

Holly W.—Denver

Bartok



Bartok (L) & new best friend Maggie

"I thought you might like to see a picture of Bartok and Maggie. They are becoming fast friends and are enjoying watching the birds together. Bartok is just a joy. I think they are going to make good companions for each other.

And thank you for providing a service that allows cats like Bartok a second chance at a great life".

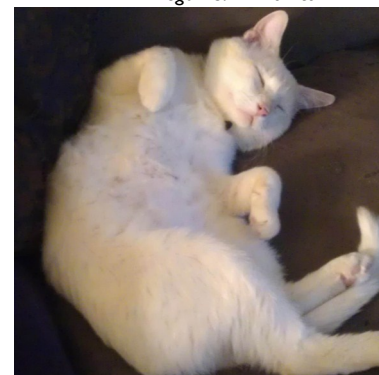
Amanda C.—Denver

(Bacall & Bartok, born on the street to a feral mom, were rescued as kittens, nursed back to health and socialized for adoption)

Aries

"Just wanted to let you know that Houdini is doing really well. He is happy and friendly and extremely playful. He is now friendly to anyone who comes to the door. Instead of running under the bed, he makes a beeline for the door to see who it is. He likes to sit on my lap and everyone else's as well. Thank you so much for bringing this wonderful amazing loving little guy into my life".

Megan S.—Thornton



Aries a.k.a. Houdini

(Aries was abandoned and found his way to a cat colony where he was befriended by colony caretaker, Mary Bishop)



A 501(c)3 non-profit organization

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We're on the Web!
forgottenfelinesdenver.org

Wish List

We are in urgent need of help in these 2 categories:

Volunteers

Colony caretaking
Fostering kittens or adult cats
Trapping (Trap/Neuter/Return)
Help with fundraising events

Donations

Cat & kitten food (dry & canned)
Sponsoring a food drive at work
CASH DONATIONS for
Humane traps
Spaying & neutering
Medical care
Gas gift cards for trapping
volunteers

*If you can help please
call us at 303-532-5521
or email at
info@forgottenfelinesdenver.org*

*Mailing address for cash donations:
3124 S. Parker Rd. Suite A2-607
Aurora, CO 80014*

As Our Third Year Draws to a Close...

Thanks to all our fabulous volunteers for their outstanding contributions this year.



Thanks to our loyal friends in the veterinary community who provide us reasonably priced veterinarian services.

Feline Fix/Divine Feline
Hampden Family Pet Hospital
Montclair Animal Clinic
Park Hill Veterinary Medical Ctr.
Planned Pethood Plus
VCA Park Hill Animal Hospital



Thanks to colony caretakers and the folks in our neighborhoods who help us identify problem situations and then help us to solve them.

Betsy the Rescued Kitten says...



***THANK YOU,
Forgotten Felines
friends!!***



Thanks to our donors and supporters who provide the necessary resources to carry out our mission.



Also thanks to:

Almost Home Adoptions
Colorado Beagle Rescue
Best Pets
Cat Care Society
Ciji's Natural Pet Supplies
Favor's Project
Law & equity Ltd
Old South Pearl Street (Denver)
Petco at Colorado Blvd & I-25
Petco at Belmar
Petco at Green Valley Ranch
Tagawa Gardens
The Whole Cat & Dogs, too!
Unleashed at 64th & Sheridan

Alice N. Jenkins Foundation
Animal Assistance Foundation
Bernice Barbour Foundation
Build-A-Bear Workshop
Bear Hugs Foundation
El Pomar Foundation
Levi Strauss Foundation
Lucille Allen Drinkwater Trust
On Shore Foundation
Petco Foundation