



# Friends of Feral Felines

# CAT'S TALE

Fall 2006



## HSC/FFF Spay/Neuter/Rabies Vaccination Program

We are pleased to announce our joint venture with the Humane Society of Charlotte. Their spay/neuter facility at CMPD (Charlotte-Mecklenburg Animal Control) will open its doors to two feral unowned cats on each Wednesday, Thursday, and Friday. The following services will be provided.

1. Feline Leukemia (FeLV) and FIV test
2. Spay/neuter (if test is negative)
3. Rabies vaccination
4. Left ear clip (1/8" - 1/4" straight across the top for identification)

The volunteer caretaker will be asked to sign a release stating that if the cat is positive for Feline Leukemia or FIV, or is too ill or injured to return to their territory, the cat will be humanely euthanized by lethal injection.

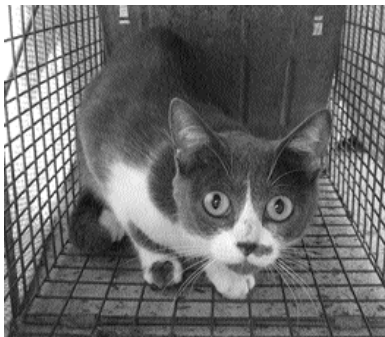
To be eligible for this program for unowned feral cats the following guidelines must be met:

- ♦ Call our hotline at 704-348-1578, and specifically ask for arranging this program through Ann or Lisa. Cats will be scheduled in the order the calls have been received.

- ♦ All cats must be trapped in a humane trap the day before the scheduled surgery. The cats must be held overnight in a protected well-ventilated area - a garage, basement, laundry room, or spare bathroom. Do not give the cats food or water after 10 pm.

- ♦ A prepayment of \$20 per cat must be made out to Friends of Feral Felines. The total cost to FFF for each cat is \$40. We will subsidize \$20 for each feral cat as long as our funds allow. If the caretaker does not need the subsidy, they may pay the \$40. We will gladly use the \$20 toward spay/neuter of other cats. If our treasury is unable to cover the subsidy, the caretaker will be informed when the appointment is made, and the cost will be \$40 per cat.

- ♦ Cats must arrive at 8 am at the front door of the CMPD Animal Control Facility at 8315 Byrum Drive in Charlotte. A representative from the Humane Society of Charlotte will meet you. All cats must have an appointment through Friends of Feral Felines and be prepaid.



*Feral cat at a previous FFF clinic*

- ♦ The Humane Society of Charlotte reserves the right to cancel appointments with short notice if their schedule with Animal Control is full. If this occurs, your payment will be refunded, or FFF can schedule an appointment with another vet in our low-cost network.

- ♦ All appointments are a firm commitment. **If you are unsuccessful in trapping, you must contact Kristi from the Humane Society** the evening before the scheduled surgery (a message can be left); otherwise, your advance payment will be forfeited. This courtesy is absolutely necessary so that the veterinarian and her team are not left hanging.

- ♦ All cats must be in a covered humane trap (cover can be a sheet or large towel). The cats will receive a shot of anesthesia while they are still in the trap. When they are asleep, they will be removed for testing and the surgery. A recovery carrier (medium dog sized carrier) prepared with clean newspaper and a light colored towel must be brought in at the same time so the cat can be placed in it after surgery while still under anesthesia. Friends of Feral Felines has the necessary equipment for loan.

- ♦ Equipment must be cleaned and returned to FFF as soon as possible. There is no charge for the equipment loan, but a fully refundable check is required as a deposit.

- ♦ Be prompt in picking up the cat at 3:30 pm. If the veterinarian is overwhelmed with surgeries, the cat's surgery may be delayed until the next day. A telephone call will be placed to the caretaker if this occurs. The cat will be taken care of during this holding period.

- ♦ If there are any questions, please call the FFF hotline and ask for Ann or Lisa, referencing HSC/FFF.

We look forward to this being a very successful venture. Our community, our caretakers, and the feral cats will all benefit from this joint effort, and the birth of many homeless kittens will be prevented.

## National Feral Cat Day - October 16

"The Truth About Feral Cats" was the theme of this year's National Feral Cat Day. Feral cat organizations throughout the country conducted events and activities to commemorate the day and encourage the public to endorse and practice TNR as the smart, ethical way to reduce feral cat populations. FFF supports this day to promote our ongoing efforts to raise awareness, educate the public, and take action to improve the lives of unowned feral cats in the community.

National Feral Cat Day was founded in 2001 by Alley Cat Allies, a national organization supporting feral cats.

# Letter From Ann Gross, Co-director of Friends of Feral Felines

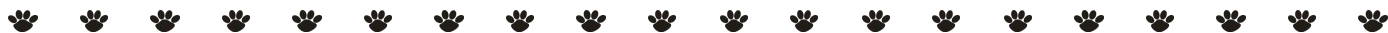


Dear Friends,

Friends of Feral Felines volunteers are the best! All who know and care for homeless feral community animals have hearts as big as the wide outdoors. Our participating veterinarians, vet techs, lay volunteers, caretakers, and supporters are all part of our efforts.

During the 8 ½ years Friends of Feral Felines has been in existence, we have grown stronger with the dedication, generosity and kindness of so many good people. Your indomitable spirit keeps us going. We help one another. That is what we are all about. These beautiful and innocent feral community cats (approximately 4,875 of which have been spayed or neutered through FFF) are living a healthier life, and our entire community reaps the benefits of sterilized, vaccinated feral cats.

Food, both dry and canned, is always welcome. Medium size dog carriers, used to recover the cats after surgery, are needed, as are towels and, of course, one of the most important items on our wish list...land or farms to which cats can be relocated. In addition to these items, we also need you!



## Volunteer Spotlight: Allison McLean

Have you received an e-mail regarding our fundraising events? If so, meet the sender, Allison McLean.

In her regular job, Allison works in a Project Support Office for Bank of America. As Volunteer Coordinator for FFF since 2005, Allison sends mass e-mails regarding fundraising events, such as beverage booths at city-sponsored festivals and events, holiday book wrap opportunities at local Barnes & Noble stores and area cat shows. She answers e-mails from our website,

[www.friendsofferalfelines.org](http://www.friendsofferalfelines.org), as a backup, works at our fundraisers, assists at our Feral Angel Cat Clinics, and is a member of our board of directors.

Allison attended and graduated from Presbyterian College and lives in Charlotte with her 3 cats. This is a favorite time of year for Allison, who is an avid

Allison McLean, FFF Volunteer Coordinator, with Nadia



Telephone calls, teaching trap/neuter/return, actual trapping, transporting cats to the vet, Feral Angel clinics, newsletters, donations, volunteer time at Barnes & Noble during the holidays, and other fundraisers are just a few examples of the help our volunteers have given.

Once more, we need to RAISE THE CALL - Volunteers are needed and welcome. We are asking each and every one who has benefited from Friends of Feral Felines in some way to STEP FORWARD and help our humane efforts. TOGETHER, WE GROW STRONG! Consider your own talents and how you would like to volunteer. Our volunteer needs are listed in this newsletter. SPREAD THE WORD - so more and more of these innocent animals can be helped.

As always, we are grateful for your support, generosity and efforts on behalf of the unowned feral cats in our community. Thank you for your kindness to them.



## Feral Update

Since 1998, 4,875 cats  
sterilized and vaccinated



Panthers and Falcons fan, as well as a big NASCAR fan. Every Monday night during football season, she attends "Panther's Talk" in downtown Charlotte, where she has her picture taken and autographs signed by many of the Panthers. If she isn't volunteering with FFF or AARF you can find her at a football game or at a country music concert.

Allison's "busy" season is fast approaching - there are book wrap sessions in December and cat shows from December through April to coordinate. Please contact her at [fffvolunteer@excite.com](mailto:fffvolunteer@excite.com) to be added to our email list if you are not already on it. Be sure to check out the Volunteer site that Allison set up as well for updates: [www.geocities.com/fffvolunteer](http://www.geocities.com/fffvolunteer). This is where Allison posts updated schedules of all upcoming events.

Allison does a great job keeping everyone informed about our events and we appreciate all she does for us...and, of course, the cats! Thanks, Allison!

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For newsletter submissions, mailing address changes, or to be removed from the FFF mailing list, please email [feralnews@yahoo.com](mailto:feralnews@yahoo.com)

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Ann Gross, Terri McGirt, Michelle Nedopak

# All About Volunteering

We would like to address some of the Friends of Feral Felines volunteer needs in this newsletter. Many of you who receive our newsletter have contacted our hotline, asked us for our assistance and put one or more cats through our TNR program. Now we are asking you for help.

We have grown significantly since our group was organized in 1998. We have met or exceeded our goal of the number of cats we TNR for the past 3 years. We have Feral Angel Cat Clinics to organize, our mailing list has grown and calls to our hotline have increased over 50% in the past 2 years. In other words, we're stretched to the max and need help!

Remember, everyone involved with Friends of Feral Felines is a volunteer. After the responsibilities of our jobs

and families, which may also include our feral cat colonies, we then begin work on our responsibilities for FFF. We find that we are experiencing growing pains and need to delegate some of what we do.

The board of directors and our Volunteer Coordinator, Allison McLean, have prioritized areas where we need your assistance the most. We hope you will take time to read this special insert and return the tear-off portion indicating how you can help. We have detailed each responsibility and welcome your calls to our hotline should you have any questions.

*There is nothing stronger than  
the heart of a volunteer*  
Lt. Col. James Doolittle

Remember to check our volunteer website, [www.geocities.com/fffvolunteer](http://www.geocities.com/fffvolunteer), for further information and the most updated details about our current volunteer opportunities.



## Friends of Feral Felines Volunteer Needs

### ✧ TELEPHONE COVERAGE

As mentioned, phone calls to our hotline have increased significantly. In peak "kitten season" there have been up to twenty-one calls in one day waiting to be returned about TNR concerns! We currently have only 2 people answering calls on the hotline and would like to add at least 1 or 2 more volunteers to cover one week per month. We will provide you with in-depth training which will help you deal with the many diversified questions asked.

### ✧ E-MAIL COVERAGE

Volunteers are needed to answer e-mails regarding general questions about feral cats and what our group does, as well as refer specific requests for assistance to the appropriate volunteers within our organization. Good knowledge of feral cats and TNR is needed, and additional training will be provided.

### ✧ TRAPPING

Trapping is easy, but we have caretakers and callers on our hotline who are unable to trap for certain reasons and need help. We will provide you with the equipment and instructions for trapping. Locations are throughout the greater Charlotte area.

We also need help trapping at UNCC. We were recently notified that several new cats and kittens have appeared. Trapping assistance is also needed in many other areas of Charlotte and the surrounding areas. Also, mass trapping needs to be done at several locations. We need volunteers to coordinate this, as well as volunteers to do the trapping.

### ✧ TRANSPORTING AND RECOVERY

Some caretakers are unable to transport cats due to work or other commitments, or they have nowhere to keep the cats for recovery. Assistance is needed to transport cats in traps to vet offices and to recover them for

one or two nights, then return them to their original location.

### ✧ FEEDING

There are several locations where we know of feral cat colonies for which feeders are needed. Also, feeders are needed to fill in for caretakers if they are sick or on vacation. Let us know the areas where you would be willing to feed cats.

### ✧ SHELTERS AND FEEDING STATIONS

Help build simple shelters for the cats. Involve your Scout, school or church group in this worthwhile activity. We can provide instructions on this easy project, and we would be happy to recognize the group in our newsletter.

### ✧ FERAL ANGEL CAT CLINICS

We currently have six clinics per year and need volunteers for the following: registration and check in of the cats; contacting caretakers by phone when cats are ready for pick-up; ear cleaning/flea treatment after surgeries; assisting with lunch and/or breakfast; relieving the "check-in" crew (midway through the clinic); laundering towels; cleaning up after surgeries are completed. We would also greatly appreciate donations by businesses of breakfast or lunch for our volunteers and veterinary professionals.

### ✧ GRANT WRITING

Research and write grant applications for our feral cat program.

### ✧ FUNDRAISING

Help us find ways to raise money, especially during the summer time, which is our "slow" season. Research, plan, and coordinate fundraising events in and around the Charlotte area. If you know of an upcoming event that could serve as a fundraiser, please look into it and let us know the details.

# Friends of Feral Felines Volunteer Needs

## ✧ NEWSLETTER

Volunteers are needed to apply labels to donation envelopes enclosed in our newsletters and to the envelopes used in the holiday mailing (2 envelopes and 4 labels). We also need someone to print seasonal return address and Post Office permit labels, fold our holiday letter and enclose a donation envelope in a large mailing envelope. Labels should be printed a few days before the letters are mailed and applied at that time. All labels and envelopes are provided.

Join us at a mailing party for our quarterly newsletter. Volunteers meet to address newsletters and sort them for mailing. A volunteer is also needed to take newsletters to the post office bulk mail facility.

Articles are needed for the newsletter. Write about your feral cat or colonies for our Feral Feature. Research information and write a learning article about feral cat related topics.

## ✧ PHOTOCOPYING OR PRINTING

Make photocopies or print informational materials we use as handouts for new and existing caretakers, and at cat shows and pet related events.

## ✧ PROFESSIONAL PRINTING SERVICES

Printing of our quarterly newsletter and holiday letter. Let us know if you, or someone you know, would like to donate these services to our organization to reduce our costs. If you can donate any other type of professional services to help our organization, we would also welcome them.

## ✧ BARNES & NOBLE BOOK WRAPPING

From Thanksgiving until Christmas, we will be wrapping books at various Barnes & Noble locations. No experience is necessary, just enthusiastic volunteers to wrap books for donations.

## ✧ BAKED GOODS AND CAT-RELATED ITEMS FOR AREA CAT SHOWS

Bake your favorite brownies, cookies, cake, etc., to sell at the cat shows in December, February and April. Items must be wrapped individually in bags or plastic wrap and priced. Coordinate getting the food to the person "on duty" the Friday night before the show and/or at the show itself. We also need cat-related items to sell at

the cat shows. Items should be clean and in good condition. Coordinate receiving and pricing items and getting them to the show or to one of the people volunteering at the show Saturday or Sunday morning. Volunteer to man the table at events.

## ✧ SPECIAL EVENTS

In the past, we have operated alcohol or concession booths at local festivals as fundraisers. As additional events are scheduled, volunteers will be needed.

## ✧ PUBLIC RELATIONS AND/OR MARKETING

Although we have many people on our mailing list, there are still many more who do not know Friends of Feral Felines even exists! We need someone to write press releases pertaining to upcoming events for newspapers (Charlotte Observer, Rhinoceros Times, etc.) and other media, and also to contact radio and TV stations for interviews to talk about feral cats.

## ✧ CAT FOOD DONATIONS / CAT FOOD DRIVES

Canned and dry food is always needed for area feral colonies. Hold a cat food drive, or coordinate obtaining and distributing cat food donations. If you know of a donation source, such as a warehouse, approach them to request food donations.

## ✧ PET CARRIERS AND TOWELS

Medium size dog or cat carriers are needed to hold cats during recovery from spay/neuter surgery. Bath size towels are also needed.

## ✧ EBAY FUNDRAISER DONATIONS

Donate items of value for us to sell on eBay. Coordinate all aspects of eBay sales, including taking photos, listing the items, and shipping items to buyers.



These are many areas where immediate help is needed, but there are more! Please try to attend our public meetings, which are held every other month, and bring a friend or two! We always have a networking session after the meetings to offer assistance to those new to trapping and to cover basic questions about feral cats. The next meeting is Wednesday, December 6, at 6:30 PM at the Morrison Regional Library in South Park. Meeting dates can change, so check the website or call our hotline for confirmation.

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Return this portion to FFF at P.O. Box 473385, Charlotte, NC 28247, or email your information to [fffvolunteer@excite.com](mailto:fffvolunteer@excite.com). Do not call the FFF hotline to provide your information. Please print clearly.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Volunteer Interests: \_\_\_\_\_

## Prepare Feral Cats For Winter

With cold weather approaching, caretakers of feral cat colonies should take steps to winterize their colonies. Start with cleaning up the area and removing trash or debris. A clean area also promotes good relations with neighbors. Remove any branches or other obstacles that may make it hard to reach the feeding area if it should snow, and fill in any holes in the area.

Ensure that cats have access to a shelter with adequate bedding to stay warm. Blankets and towels should not be used, as they tend to hold moisture. Hay is a better choice for insulation, or look into other ideas such as specially designed heating pads that are safe for outdoor use around the cats.

It is important to provide fresh water for cats during cold weather when other water sources may freeze. Heaters for water dishes and microwaveable heating pads can also be found. Feeding only dry food is best during cold weather, since canned food freezes more easily.

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## FFF Volunteer Update

First, a BIG THANK YOU to all of the great Volunteers that stepped up and volunteered on short notice for the Blues, Brews & BBQ event on September 22 & 23, 2006. Special thanks to Colleen Crittenden for recruiting so many volunteers for the Friday and Saturday evening shifts. Everyone's great volunteer work helped raise over \$700 in tips alone. A total from the event has not been communicated to us yet. Again, thank you to each and every Blues, Brews & BBQ volunteer - you are truly lifesavers and the feral kitties appreciate it!

Now to new business...we are still accepting recipes from anyone who bakes for the cat shows. We are compiling a book of these recipes to sell at the upcoming cat shows.

The Dixieland Silver & Golden Fanciers Cat Show is December 9 and 10 at the Piedmont Kennel Club. More details will be emailed in November. We will need baked goods and cat related items to sell, as well as volunteers to staff the table. If you are interested in helping with any of these, please contact me.

Once again, FFF will be wrapping books at four Barnes and Noble stores: the Arboretum, South Park, Carolina Place Mall and Birkdale Village locations. Wrapping will begin Thanksgiving weekend and run through Christmas Eve. Dates and times will be communicated in November.

As always, please check our Volunteer website for schedules and upcoming events.

Thank you,

Allison Smith McLean,

Volunteer Coordinator

ffvolunteer@excite.com

<http://geocities.com/ffvolunteer>

## Feral Feature - Mr. G

By Carol Martin

Sometime in early spring of 2006, a black feral cat showed up in my yard. He was covered with fighting sores and one of his ears was scratched raw. He would show up every night to eat, and then he disappeared down the street.



Mr. G

A couple of months went by, and I hoped he would stay at his food source. I put a big doghouse under my magnolia tree, and he would lie on top of it.

As time went on, he started eating under the side patio. Next, he was sleeping in the swing. I soon named him Mr. G.

Mr. G still hissed at me and charged at me if I got too close. I trapped Mr. G. and through FFF, he was neutered, vaccinated for rabies, and ear-clipped for identification. His ear mites were so bad that a hematoma developed, and his ear collapsed and crinkled up.

Mr. G loves sleeping on my back porch. As I look out the door and see him looking back at me, I know love won out. Lots of food, cool water, and shelter are provided for him each day.

Yes, life is good for Mr. G.

## Register Your Feral Cats With FFF

Attention residents of Mecklenburg County: If you have not registered your feral cats with FFF, please contact our hotline at 704-348-1578 to register the cats as soon as possible.

We will not share your information with any other organizations. It will be used for our database only.

If one of your feral cats is missing, please contact FFF, as well as Charlotte-Mecklenburg Animal Control, to see if your cat was taken to Animal Control. You could be saving the cat's life!

## FFF Wish List

- ◆ **Urgent need** for landowners or farm owners willing to accept feral cats in need of relocation
- ◆ Volunteers for feral cat trapping teams at UNCC, as well as North, South, East, and West Charlotte
- ◆ Light colored towels for use at our clinics
- ◆ Medium to large pet carriers to be used for post-surgery recovery of feral cats
- ◆ Donations of dry or canned cat food
- ◆ Volunteers! See volunteer insert for details

## In Memory of Rachel Giblin

At our last clinic, we were blessed with many wonderful, dedicated volunteers - Drs.



Miller, DVM, and McGarry, DVM, our veterinary techs and lay volunteers. One special high school student joined our ranks for the first time - Rachel Giblin, a

Charlotte Country Day student.

She and Mary Ralston worked diligently cleaning ears and treating ear mites on our unowned community feral cats. Rachel was a lovely young woman with a beautiful smile who said she wanted to be a veterinarian. She was hard-working and treated each animal with tender care and kindness.

Rachel lost her life in a tragic biking accident while trying to raise money for the Multiple Sclerosis Society. Our prayers, thoughts and heartfelt sympathy go out to her parents, Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Giblin, and her brother, Tommy. We feel most fortunate to have had her at our side helping these innocent, homeless animals. Charlotte has lost one of its brightest stars. We are all poorer for this terrible loss.

### Colony Feeders Needed

Feeders are needed for two colonies in the Charlotte area:

- UNCC campus near WT Harris Blvd and North Tryon St.
- Poplar Tent Road near the Mecklenburg and Cabarrus County line

Non-profit  
Organization  
US Postage Paid  
Permit #3801  
Charlotte, NC

### A Cat's Tale

Friends of Feral Felines

P O Box 473385

Charlotte, NC 28247

704-348-1578

[www.friendsofferalfelines.org](http://www.friendsofferalfelines.org)



## In Memory Of



**A special remembrance of Rachel Giblin,** from her friends at FFF

**Rachel Giblin,** from Leesa and John Walker

**Rachel Giblin,** from Mary and Len Ralston

**Spirit,** most precious and beloved cat, from Annette and Alec Nicholson

**Rascal,** our special cat, and Terri McGirt's

pet, **Buster,** from Mary and Len Ralston

## In Honor Of



**In honor of her mamma,** from Laura Weaver

**If you care to have your loved ones honored, please consider making a donation to Friends of Feral Felines in honor of or in memory of their name.**

## Events Calendar



**Wednesday, Dec 6** - General

Meeting, 6:30 pm at Morrison

Regional Library, Colony Road

(South Park). New members welcome! Dates subject to change, depending on room availability. Call our hotline or check website to confirm.

**Currently** - FFF volunteers are selling car wash tickets for the Autobell car wash on S. Polk Street in Pineville as a fundraiser. Call the FFF hotline at 704-348-1578 or email our volunteer coordinator at [ffvvolunteer@excite.com](mailto:ffvvolunteer@excite.com) to purchase a ticket before they're gone!

**Select dates from Thanksgiving through**

**Christmas** - FFF volunteers will be wrapping books at Barnes & Noble locations in South Park, Arboretum, Carolina Place Mall, and Birkdale Village

**December 9-10** - Dixieland Silver & Golden Fanciers Cat Show at the Piedmont Kennel Club

**Please check our website or call our hotline for more details and confirmation of all event dates and locations.**