

A CAT'S



TALE

Friends of Feral Felines

Winter 2004

FELINE FEATURE



BABY NUB, T.J., BUDDIE AND THE TWINS by Frances Neal

I had been feeding Tip, a male feral cat that appeared outside my office window in the spring of 2000. In February 2002 six kittens showed up sharing Tip's food. They were all real skittish, as all feral are. Tip was very wary of people and he was injured, but he did not mind the kittens though. The day I tried to capture him, he ran off and I have not seen him since.

The kittens came each day to eat and were adorable to watch play and roll with each other. Coworkers made two houses with hay inside so they would have places to sleep and one even made a "cantina" (a covered shed) so their food wouldn't get wet. The winter of 2002 was bitterly cold and it was great to see the houses being used. When I pulled into my parking space, I would see all six heads looking at me. They'd run out of the houses to greet me and await their breakfast. I knew it wouldn't be long before they were old enough to multiply. That's when my cousin told me about Friends of Feral Felines. With help and instructions from FFF, I was successful in trapping five at different times. I haven't seen the sixth one since the day I had planned to trap him. The five were sterilized and returned to their habitat. Employees donated money to help me with the funding of this endeavor.

Most employees loved watching their antics. However, my supervisor informed me there had been a complaint about the cats hanging out in the walkway. We agreed to move their feeding station and houses to a location not in



direct view of employees and hoped the kitties would stay out of sight. Most of them did, but one became tame and loved to be around certain employees. Even though my husband is allergic to cats (we did have two for 17 and 19 years), he was concerned about their safety and suggested we bring Baby Nub home. By the way, all of these cats are Manx mix. Baby has

no tail, two have a tiny tails, one has three-quarters of a tail and the other a regular tail.

Once again FFF came to the rescue. I borrowed a wonderful cage from FFF and Lisa Steffy gave me instructions for relocating Baby Nub to our home. The relocation worked well, and we were tickled to have a cat in our lives again. She loves our yard and the barn next door.

Later we decided to relocate the other two females and leave the two male twins at work because the complaints had ceased. T.J. (Tip, Jr.) turned out to be a female and we changed to her name to Thelma Jean. The day I brought

T.J. home and put her in the cage. I could tell Baby was happy to see her even though she didn't want us to know. Baby was the leader of the colony at work and now she had one of her pack to share her new home with. T.J. escaped from her cage a week early, but she did not run off. I think she realized if Baby was there then everything must be okay.



Next came Buddie and it wasn't long before Baby and T.J. showed up to investigate. T.J. rubbed the cage, but Baby was aloof and uninterested. She didn't want them to know she was really thrilled to have another one from her



pack. Buddie couldn't wait to get out of the cage to play with Baby and T.J. She'd watch them playing and climbing trees in the yard. His release day finally came and it was total joy seeing the three of them run and chase each other.

They now love to come inside and get into a chair or sofa and fall asleep. It is the most peaceful sleep I've ever seen. They are so content it just thrills us that we have these wonderful animals in our lives and to remember how scared they once were of humans! They sound like a herd of horses when they run inside and they play hide and seek and then find their chair or sofa when they are worn out. We know they are lucky not to be living at my office because it is not a very conducive animal habitat. We feel we are the lucky ones to have them in our lives.

The twins, who are at my office, are doing well and have become friendlier and more vocal since the girls are gone. No one has said a word about them. However, in a year and a half, our office will be moving to another location, and I don't think it will be possible for me to relocate them. If anyone is interested in the twins, please let me know, but they must go as a pair. They are sweet and would make good pets. They are becoming quite tame.

Thanks to the wonderful work FFF is doing with feral cats; these five were rescued from a life of wandering, fighting and multiplying! They will now be able to live a healthy and happy life for years to come.

Relocation of feral cats is done by the caretaker as a last resort utilizing a specific protocol recommended by Alley Cat Allies, www.alleycatallies.org

LETTER FROM ANN GROSS CO-DIRECTOR OF FFF

Happy New Year to all! With all the strong support we are gathering, we look forward to a very successful 2004.



FFF welcomes two new veterinary clinics to our Veterinary Network – Archdale Animal Hospital and Waxhaw Animal Hospital. We are very grateful for their offer to work with our homeless feral cats.

We also welcome Sandra Synder as our new Volunteer Coordinator. Sandra will followup on each new volunteer. Please contact Sandra via our hotline (704-348-1578) and leave your name, phone number, and/or e-mail address and she will contact you regarding your help.

On November 19, a group of our volunteers attended the “Best Friend Forgotten” premiere at Ovens Auditorium. The film depicted the nationwide crisis of overpopulation of domestic cats and dogs in the US, the current approach of community animal control and the drastic need for aggressive spay/neuter, education, and implementation in our communities. This film will be shown on PBS this spring. Watch your local TV listings and our website for information. It is worth viewing.

FFF celebrated its fifth anniversary on December 2 at our general meeting. The party was enjoyed by all. Most of all we are very proud of our accomplishment of sterilizing over 2,300 cats.

Lisa Steffy, co-director, and I attended a student meeting at Myers Park High School on December 5. This meeting served to inform and teach students about homeless feral cats and the TNR approach to animal control. The students were most courteous, attentive and asked many intelligent questions. We also placed emphasis on the importance of sterilization and vaccination of home pets. We look forward to participating in more of these education sessions in our community.

The weekend of December 13 and 14, we had a booth at the Dixieland Silver and Golden Cat Club show at the Piedmont Kennel Club. Our baked goods and craft sales were a wonderful success. Our gratitude to our excellent bakers and the many kindhearted folks who donated items for our crafts table. Your efforts will help many homeless feral cats get to the vet for the first time for sterilization, vaccination and an ear clip.

Once again, a huge thank you to our dedicated veterinarians and staff, vet techs, caretakers, volunteers and our generous supporters. You have made a significant difference in improving the lives of these homeless innocent animals. You are an extraordinary part of this humane effort for nonlethal animal control in our community.

THE FFF VOLUNTEER EXPERIENCE

by Beverly Sammarco

At the beginning of last August, I found a very sick orange and white tabby kitten soaking wet and sitting in the curb where I feed a colony of cats. I literally scooped it up, wrapped it in paper napkins, placed it in my lap and headed home. I put it in a crate and headed to the emergency clinic. The poor little thing had a severe upper respiratory infection and had to breathe with its head so far back, practically touching its back, in order to clear its air passage.

The doctor examined the kitten, which weighed one half pound, and recommended he stay there until the medication they were administering took effect. I was very concerned he might not make it and went to visit him the next night just to hold and cuddle him. While I was there, the doctor told me he was a little female! I decided to name her Zoë Starr. I did the same the second night. On the third night, there was an FFF meeting at the Morrison Library. I was able to attend for just a short time because I needed to pick up Zoë Starr from the emergency clinic before it got too late. I saw a friend and volunteer at the meeting but wasn't able to talk, so I said we'd e-mail each other the next day. My e-mail was pretty lengthy as I relayed my saga to her. The first sentence of her reply prompted this article. She knew I had six cats at home and fed two other colonies and she wrote, “How do you do it?” I read her words and thought, “I don't know, I just do it.”

I started working with FFF about three years ago after reading an article in the newspaper. With the assistance of another volunteer, I spay/neutered six cats that lived around the building where I worked. I helped a few other people trap, and I offered to transport cats to one of our veterinarians during the week. With help from other volunteers, I have spay/neutered more than half of a colony that I feed. One day I realized what I did was snowballing. Pretty soon, I was baking, working at our clinics, wrapping books, heading up our annual yard sale, became treasurer, and volunteered to do grant writing.

I'm not the only volunteer with an agenda like this. Our volunteers are loyal, dedicated individuals, who have a desire to help these poor homeless cats. Some of our volunteer caretakers have 60 or more cats to feed every day. Some help elderly caretakers by buying food and trapping for them. Our co-directors share answering the numerous phone calls to our hotline and patiently arrange for folks to pick up traps, make appointments at one of our network vets, and give them specific instructions to follow. Our webmaster answers e-mails. For over two years, four volunteers trap, take cats to the vet for sterilization and return them and feed them at UNCC every week even though they live 45 minutes away. Others help at our Feral Angel Clinics. Fortunately, we have a new Volunteer Coordinator who has a challenging job ahead.

Can you fill in for a caretaker when they are out of town and/or share feeding duties for one of their many colonies? Are you handy with tools to help us build shelters for a few hours one weekend? Help us with the newsletter and Christmas letter mailings. We need volunteers to simply put on preprinted labels and sort them by specific zip codes. Our mailing list has grown to almost 900! Join one of our quarterly “mailing parties.” Do you

National Volunteer Week – April 18-24, 2004

I am only one.

I cannot do everything, but I can do something.

And the something I can do, I will do.

enjoy baking? Help us with our bake sale fund raisers at cat shows. Do you have special talents such as sewing or painting? We need ideas and items for our craft tables at cat shows. Become an FFF table attendant or a book wrapper for a few hours. It's a great way to learn how we educate the public regarding feral cats. You will meet a lot of interesting people and make new friends.

A new volunteer worked at our Feral Angel Clinic last year. She told me she had no idea how busy we were. She discovered how interesting and fulfilling it was observing the steps the cats go through before surgery and monitoring them after surgery! I know she will help out at our next clinic and work at the cat shows with us again this year.

We all know finding time to volunteer can be challenging. Volunteering for FFF is a great way to give back to our community. It makes you feel like part of the solution, gain knowledge, have fun, and make new friends. We need your time and talents to help a very worthwhile cause.

EVENTS CALENDAR

FFF General Meetings – Tues., Feb. 3 and Tues., Apr. 6, 6:30 pm, Morrison Regional Library, Colony Rd.
See our website or call our hotline for mtg. place confirmation

Piedmont Cat Show, Cabarrus Event Arena, Concord, NC., Feb. 14 (10 am-4 pm) & Feb. 15 (9 am-3 pm) • FFF will have an info/baked goods/craft table on 2/14 only

The Crafty Cat Cat Show at Freedom Hall, behind the Merchandise Mart • Apr. 3 (10 am-4 pm) & Apr. 4 (9 am-3 pm) FFF will have an info/baked goods/craft table on both days

Paws For A Cause, May 15, Union County (NC) Humane Society • FFF will have a booth • more details later.



THANK YOU VETS AND STAFF

FFF wishes to acknowledge the following veterinary clinics for working with us in helping the homeless feral cats in our community and surrounding areas. We are very grateful for our compassion and willingness to help us accomplish our goals each year.

Park Cedar Animal Hospital, Paw Creek Animal Hospital, Carolinas Veterinary Clinic, Freedom Animal Hospital, Mercy Animal Hospital, Pineville Animal Hospital, Carolina Place Animal Hospital, Monroe Road Animal Hospital, Matthew Animal Clinic, Eastridge Veterinary Hospital, Belmont Animal Hospital, Triangle Veterinary Clinic, and Gaffney Animal Hospital.

ALL WRAPPED UP

The Annual Christmas Bookwrap at area Barney and Noble bookstores is a terrific fund raiser for FFF. This past December was no exception. We want to thank the managers, the customers who gave contributions and our wrappers, who volunteered their time at such a busy time of the year.

Sharon Corners – Holly Weathersbee, Theresa Gahren, Sandra Snyder, Laurel Moretti, Jeannie Ballentine, Valerie Farlow, Victoria Crosland, Karen DeMart, Bill Laudati, Ann Gross, Michelle Nedopak, Beverly Sammarco, Lisa Steffy and Tamara Steffy

The Aboretum – Brindley and Ryan Hale, Johanne Woodall, Debbie Smith, Frances Neal, Bonnie Ingersoll, Al Rich, Bill Laudati, Ann Gross, Lisa Steffy, Michelle Nedopak, Cheryl Nedopak, Sandra Synder, and Beverly Sammarco

Birkdale - Barbara Bapst-Koch, Sue Logerwell and other volunteers - we apologize for not having your names

ANIMAL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS GREATER CHARLOTTE AREA

Animal Fund • 9117 Eakers Ct., Charlotte NC 28215
704-536-5583 • msloaniiii@aol.com

Animal League of Gaston County, PO Box 550655, Gastonia NC 704-718-4673 • info@algc.us

Animal Rescue Center • 801 Claremont Rd., Charlotte NC 28214
704-393-5988 • cats@peoplepc.com

Cabarrus Animal Protection Assn. • 3220 Old Salisbury Rd., Concord NC 28025 • 704-455-9562

Cabarrus Pet Society • 704-786-7729 • petpals@cabarruspets.com

Charlotte SPCA • 6319 Fair Valley Dr., Charlotte NC 28226

Charlotte/Mecklenburg Animal Control • 8315 Byrum Dr., Charlotte NC 28217 • 704-336-3786 • www.charmeck.nc.us/departments/animal+control

Gaston Humane Society • PO Box 2334, Gastonia NC 28053
704-824-8990 • info@gastonhumane.org

Humane Society of Charlotte • P.O. Box 221028, Charlotte, NC 28222 704-377-0534 • humanesocietyclt@mindspring.com

Humane Society of Concord & Greater Cabarrus County
P.O. Box 3104, Concord NC 28025 • 704-784-4434
vannoate@email.uncc.edu

Humane Society of Mecklenburg County • PO Box 30484, Charlotte NC 28230 • 704-533-0851 • info@humanesocietymeck.com

Humane Society of Union County • P.O. Box 101, Monroe NC 28111 • 704-283-9126 • hsuc@earthlink.net

Loving Pet Adoption & Rescue • 704-864-0607
lovingpetrescue@yahoo.com

North Mecklenburg Animal Rescue • PO Box 162, Paw Creek NC 28130 • fillows4@aol.com

Project: HALO (Helping Animals Live On) • 2500 Taimi Drive, PO Box 667924, Charlotte NC 28266 • 704-395-2995
projhalo@aol.com • www.projecthalo.petfinder.com

The Animal Connection • 6401 Mounting Rock Rd. Charlotte NC 28217 • 704-522-9094 • cbdoolittle@yahoo.com

Wolfs Paw Adoption Agency (all pets)
704-547-9646 • wolfspawrescue@lycos.com

SOUTH CAROLINA

Adopt-A-Pet of York County • 100 True Rd., McConnells SC, 29726 • 803-684-6534 • Adoptapal@aol.com

Animal Adoption League • P O Box 2453, Rock Hill SC 29732
803-324-8499 • mynextpet@yahoo.com

Animal Outreach • 1938 Oak Pond Rd., Rock Hill SC 29730
803-328-2793 • stormey@comprium.net

Chester County Animal Shelter • Chester SC • 803-385-6341
chestershelter@aol.com

Lancaster County Humane Society, Lancaster SC
803-283-1833

Operation: C.A.R.E., PO Box 10703, Rock Hill SC 29730
CARErescue@hotmail.com

Recycled Pets Inc. • 2354-A Ebenezer Road, Rock Hill SC 29731
803-981-5087 • RecycledPets@carolina.rr.com

Union County Animal Shelter • 803-429-1677

Union County Humane Society • PO Box 101, Union, SC 29379
864-427-1677

York County Animal Control • 803-628-3190

York County Humane Society • PO Box 10261, Rock Hill SC 29731 • 803-802-0902 • hsyc@comprium.net

See our website for additional listings for NC & SC

FERAL UPDATE

**AS OF 1998,
OVER 2,300 CATS
STERILIZED & VACCINATED
TO DATE**



DIXIELAND SILVER & GOLDEN CAT CLUB

We were once again invited to participate in the two-day DSGCC show held in December at the Piedmont Kennel Club. We thank our bakers, crafters and table attendants for their time and participation in making our efforts a success.

They were – Valerie Farlow, Michelle Nedopak, Kay Jones, Ann-Marie Gearhart, Toni West, Saundra Snyder, Gladys Dunlap, Ann Gross, Lisa Steffy, Cheryl Nedopak, Beverly Sammarco, Jeannie Ballentine, Samantha Merritt and Karen DeMart



In Memory Of

LeMew, beloved cat of Steve Morley from Linda Morley

Aki from your parents, Rhett and Michael Campbell

Bear from Race and Valerie Farlow

Marmalade, my red Persian girl, from Dan Richman

Max, Myers and Ugly from Max Maintenance



In Honor Of

Paulina Hansen, who loved and cared for cats and dogs her entire life, by William and Bonnie Ingersoll

Nancy Favor from Ruth Marple

CAT-RELATED MERCHANDISE

We would appreciate your donations of any cat-related items for FFF fund raising. Call our hotline now and leave a message.

ATTENTION CARETAKERS

Spring is coming. Make sure each cat in your colony is sterilized. Also rabies shots need to be repeated in 1 year and then again in 3 years.

FFF is looking for a new meeting place because of budgetary constraints. Call us if you know of any.

URGENT – CARETAKER NEEDED

An additional caretaker is needed to help elderly caretaker with a large colony in the Albemarle area. Help feed, trap, and/or transport cats to and from vet. Cat food is also needed.

FFF TO SELL ITEMS ON eBAY

FFF is in the process of setting up an account on the non-profit section on eBay!

Purchases will support our TNR program. We need quality items. If you have any items, call 704-752-0400 to discuss what you have to donate. We prefer small items that can be easily packed and shipped.

Donate your larger items for our yard sale.

As soon as the FFF eBay site is up and running, information will be posted on our website and in the newsletter.

FFF 3RD ANNUAL YARD SALE

We are waiting to confirm a date in May at a Charlotte location. It will be posted on our website and in the Spring newsletter.

Donations are being accepted now!
Call our Yard Sale Lady at 704-348-1578

Items should be in good, clean condition. Accepting cat-related items, home and office furniture, baby items, toys, CDs, tapes, office supplies/equipment, quality hardcover books, kitchen and household items, art/craft supplies, sports equipment, tools.

Not accepting clothing, shoes, paperback books, mattresses, window treatments or rods.

PUBLISHER'S CORNER

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