

A CAT'S



TALE

Friends of Feral Felines

Spring 2003

FELINE FEATURE



JACK by Bill Laudati

We met Jack the spring of 1997. Jack was only a few weeks old when he, his two sisters and two brothers showed up on our front porch. At the time there were woods across the street, and we guessed they were born in those woods. We never found his mother and never knew how those five very young kittens came to be on their own so early in life. My wife, Carolyn, immediately set out some food and water. Fortunately, they were old enough to eat on their own. This was our first experience with feral cats. Carolyn and I really didn't know what to do except feed them and try to make friends with them. We named them Jack, Jill, Pete, Repeat and Blossom.

Throughout the summer and early fall they grew into beautiful cats and we enjoyed watching them explore the neighborhood. We would feed them on our porch, once in the morning and again late at night. They would always show up at mealtime and be waiting for us even when we were late. One evening in late November, only Jack and Blossom came up to eat. Jack was hurt and was dragging his right front leg. We worried all night about Jack and the others that didn't show up. Jack and Blossom were there for breakfast. We wanted to help Jack, but he never let us touch him and now he seemed even more afraid of us.

It broke our hearts to see him limp so slowly across the porch dragging his front leg to nibble at the food and take small drinks of water. We tried everything we could think of from tuna fish to cat toys to get him to come close to us, but nothing worked. He seemed to be getting worse. After a few days it seemed he would not come up to eat unless he was alone on the porch. He was avoiding his sister and us. We thought, perhaps, he knew he was dying and wanted to be left alone.

After about a week, I was putting food out one evening. I felt a slight touch against my leg. I looked down and there was Jack. He seemed to be leaning against me. I didn't think about rabies, sharp claws, or teeth; I simply reached down and picked him up. Even though he was very weak and very frightened, he allowed me to hold him. It seemed as though he knew he needed our help.

Due to the late hour, my wife and I took him to the emergency animal clinic. They told us Jack showed signs of infection from a wound in his front leg and that the nerves in the leg had been severed. He would never be able to use that leg, and dragging it would only increase the damage and cause more infection. Because he was a



feral cat, they felt that he could not be released and that he should be euthanized.

My wife and I looked at each other with tears in our eyes. We asked if there was anything they could do for Jack that night because we would take him home and bring him to our veterinarian in the morning. The vet gave Jack some antibiotic, and we took him home. The next morning I called our veterinarian and she agreed to see him. After she examined Jack, she told us that he had been shot and confirmed what we had been told at the emergency clinic. She also told us she could amputate his leg at the shoulder, and cats usually adapted well to this kind of handicap. She said she had done this before, but we would have to keep him in the house.

We decided we could not have him euthanized and let the vet go ahead with the amputation. We were unsure if Jack could adapt to being an indoor cat.

Through the holidays Jack recovered. He was wrapped tightly in bandages and could hardly walk so we didn't have any trouble holding and loving him. We would place him in our laps for hours each night. He started off trembling but could not get away and after a while he overcame his fear of us and soon decided that it wasn't so bad to be a lap kitty.

When all the bandages and staples were finally removed, he could move around. It would break our hearts to see him limp slowly across the floor and try to use the leg he no longer had. As time passed, he healed and adapted to being a house cat enjoying warm sunny spots, looking out the windows at the world, and sleeping in our laps.

When Jack is running and playing with our other cats, it is easy for us to forget he has three legs. Sometimes I think he forgets too.

(cont. on p. 2)

LETTER FROM ANN GROSS CO-DIRECTOR OF FFF

Dear Friends,

Spring has arrived! Even though this season brings us blue skies and flowers, it also brings to our community numerous unowned/feral kittens.



This year has actively begun with the introduction of our high volume • low cost • all volunteer clinics held in January, February, May and an upcoming clinic on June 29. Unowned/feral community cats were sterilized and vaccinated for rabies and other diseases. All sterilized cats have their left ear clipped for identification. The cats also had their ears cleaned and were flea combed. Some cats tested positive for feline leukemia and/or feline aids and were humanely euthanized by injection to prevent the spread of feline disease.

These clinics are staffed with compassionate and professional volunteer veterinarians, vet techs and lay volunteers.

We also have the participation of our wonderful veterinary network, which offers low cost spay/neuter/vaccination and ear clip, Monday through Friday for unowned/feral cats. A subsidy is offered to those in financial need and is based on the honor system. However, you must contact FFF for detailed information regarding the low cost veterinary network.

The results of our combined efforts are:

- Reduction of unowned/feral cats in our community and the prevention of the birth of hundreds of homeless kitten.
- Assurance of a better quality of life for unowned/feral cats with caretakers attending to their daily needs.
- Reduction of feline communicable disease in our community.
- Reduction of nuisance calls and feline euthanasia at our city/county animal control shelter.

This non-lethal animal control is possible because of the continued support and encouragement of our generous contributors and our dedicated professional and lay volunteers. Our community benefits from our efforts to control the unowned/feral population. FFF thanks everyone who supports and encourages our work.

ATTENTION COLONY CARETAKERS NEW FFF DATABASE

FFF now has a database to track our colonies. Caretakers are requested to call the hotline so we can mail you a Colony Tracking Sheet to be filled out and returned. This information remains with FFF and is strictly confidential.

(cont. from p. 1)

We never saw Jill, Pete, or Repeat again We assume they were killed at the same time Jack was shot. Blossom disappeared about a year ago, but not before she blessed us with two litters of kittens, which formed the base of our feral cat colony. With the kind help of Friends of Feral Felines, we have vaccinated and spayed or neutered all of our feral cat colony members. They show up twice a day to be fed. We still name all of them.

Every so often Jack will sit at the window looking out at his relatives eating on the front porch, perhaps wondering where his brothers and sisters are or maybe just looking out at the world he left behind.

FRIENDS OF FERAL FELINES 2ND ANNUAL YARD AND BAKE SALE

SATURDAY, JUNE 21

PARK ROAD PARK - PAVILION #2

8 A.M. TO 1 P.M.

RAIN OR SHINE

The park is located off Park Road between Tyvola Road and Archdale Drive. There are two entrances to the park. Use the entrance closest to Tyvola Road then make the first left. You can't miss us! Signs will be posted around the area. Directions will be posted on our website, www.friendsofferalfelines.org

We will not be open for business until 8 a.m. even though you may arrive early.

We have many great things to sell including a microwave, color printers, furniture, some collectibles and numerous other items. Homebaked goodies for sale too!

Do you have yard sale items to contribute? Donations will be received until noon on Friday, June 20. Call our hotline at 704-348-1578 and leave a message for the Yard Sale Lady. We can arrange to have your donations picked up. For tax purposes, you will be given a receipt.

Would FFF volunteers like to bake some goodies? Call our hotline.

This is a large event and we need quite a few FFF volunteers to help set up and/or work at the sale. Volunteers need to be at the pavilion at 7 a.m. sharp.

You are helping the feral cats in our community.

VOLUNTEER TO WORK AT THE SALE!

HIGH VOLUME • LOW COST • ALL VOLUNTEER SPAY/NEUTER CLINICS

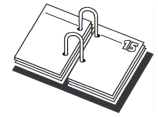
On February 28, we held another successful clinic with the help of volunteer veterinarians and volunteer staff members. Forty-six unowned/feral cats were brought to the clinic for sterilization, vaccination and ear clipping. Four cats were humanely euthanized by injection because of feline leukemia and/or aids and as a preventive for the spread of disease.

Our third clinic was held on May 3 and was another success with the help of other volunteer vets and their volunteer staff members. Thirty-three unowned/feral cats were brought in. Ten cats were humanely euthanized by injection because of feline disease.

We want to thank our lay volunteers, the volunteer vets and their staff members and volunteer vet techs. We also want to thank Brenda Thrasher (veteran Operation Cat Nip volunteer), who instructed us on cleaning the cats' ears and giving them a flea comb. Without their time and help, we would not have been able to do these clinics. FFF would like give a generous thank you to all our contributors who help make these clinics possible.



EVENTS CALENDAR



Tuesday, June 3, FFF General Meeting, 6:30 pm. at Morrison Regional Library, on Colony Road, Charlotte, NC. We will feature speakers from Human Society of Mecklenburg Co. We look forward to working together in the humane treatment of animals in our community. Go to www.friendsofferalfelines.org

FERAL UPDATE

AS OF 1998,
OVER 1830 CATS
STERILIZED & VACCINATED
TO DATE



ANIMAL SERVICE ORGANIZATIONS

CHARLOTTE AREA

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

Animal Rescue Center - 801 Claremont Rd., Charlotte NC 28214
Phone: 704-393-5988 • Email: CATS@peoplepc.com

Cabarrus Animal Protection Assoc. - 3220 Old Salisbury R
Concord, NC 28025-1546 • Phone: 704-455-9562

Charlotte S.P.C.A. - 6319 Fair Valley Drive, Charlotte, NC 28226

Charlotte/Mecklenburg Animal Control - 704-336-3786
www.charmeck.nc.us/departments/animal+control/

Margaret Hailey (feral) Cat Sanctuary - P.O. Box 196, Paw Creek, NC 28310
Phone: 704-591-1618 (visitors by appointment) • www.mhcat-sanctuary.org • KsCats28@hotmail.com

Gaston Humane Society - P.O. Box 2334, Gastonia, NC 28053-2334
Phone: 704-824-8990

Humane Society of Charlotte - P.O. Box 221028, Charlotte, NC 28222
Phone: 704-377-0534 • <http://www.clthumane.org/>

Humane Society of Concord & Greater Cabarrus County
P.O. Box 3104, Concord, NC 28025 • Phone: 704-784-4434
vannoate@email.uncc.edu • www.dogsaver.org/cabarrushumane/html

Humane Society of Mecklenburg County, PO Box 30484, Charlotte, NC • 28230 • Phone: 704-533-0851 • www.petfinder.org/shelters/NC190.html • E-mail rsimonshsmc@juno.com

Humane Society of Union County - P.O. Box 101, Monroe, NC 28111
Phone: 704-821-7291

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

The Animal Connection - 6401 Mounting Rock Rd., Charlotte NC 28217 • Phone: 704-522-9094 • Email: cbdoollittle@yahoo.com

Wolfs Paw Adoption Agency (all pets)
Email: WindSweptWolf@AOL.com
<http://www.anglefire.com/nc2/wolfspawrescue/index.html>

SOUTH CAROLINA

Adopt-A-Pet of York County - P.O. Box 1253, York County, SC 29745
Phone: 803-684-5353 • Fax: 803-325-2053 • Adoptapal@aol.com

Animal Adoption League - P O Box 2453, Rock Hill, SC 29732
Phone: 803-324-8499 • Email: mynextpet@yahoo.com
<http://www.geocities.com/Heartland/Prairie/2615/>

Animal Outreach of Rock Hill SC - 1938 Oak Pond Rd., Rock Hill, SC 29730 • Phone: 803-328-2793 • E-mail samd@cetlink.com
<http://www.members.tripod.com/annsoutreach/home.html>

Recycled Pets Inc. - 2354-A Ebenezer Road, Rock Hill, SC 29731
Phone: 803-981-5087 • 803-328-0217 • Email: bck@perigee.net
<http://www.recycledpetsonline.org/>

Union County Humane Society - P.O. Box 101, Union, SC 29379-0101
• Phone: 864-427-1594 • Fax: 864-427-3177

York County Humane Society - P.O. Box 10261, Rock Hill, SC 29731
Phone: 803-802-0902 • Fax: 803-779-0838

FRISKIES CAT SHOW

On April 5 and 6, FFF volunteers participated by providing information about our organization and practices. We also sold homemade baked goods.

Many people stopped by to talk with us. We appreciated their sincere and intelligent questions about our non-lethal approach for unowned/feral community cats.

We thank all who worked so hard to make this a success for us.



In Honor of...

Sandi Shimpa Chronister, who adored cats, dear friend of Lucy Nielsen.

Mrs. Doreen Morgan, loving and caring cat owner, from Judy Hager and Dr. Janet Gerardot Stipp of Mint Hill Animal Hospital in Charlotte.

Mr. William "Roger" Allen. Roger was a professional truck driver, collected antique rigs but most of all enjoyed caring for unwanted cats. If he saw a stray cat, he made sure it had a good meal. He kindly cared for the cats at Ace's repair shop. Before dying, he told his daughter that he was going on to another job – sit in an easy chair and pet all the cats in Heaven.

A donation was made in Roger's honor by his mother, Mrs. Edna Allen, and his coworkers at Ace Doran Hauling and Rigging - Lisa Mervine, Debbie Diamond, Bob & Karen Doran, Christopher Doran, Gary & Kathryn Stedman, Vince & Brenda Gollehon, Bruce Montgomery, Frank Newberry, Carl Stilwell and David Gilliland.

OUR ADDRESS HAS CHANGED AS OF 1-1-03

Friends of Feral Felines
P. O. Box 473385, Charlotte, NC 28247
FFF hotline remains the same at 704-348-1578

FFF GRACIOUSLY THANKS YOU

Friends of Feral Felines thanks you for your continued support through individual contributions, company matched contributions, those made at cat shows, and the time donated by our many new volunteers.

Friskies Cat Show volunteers/bakers – Lisa Steffy, Beverly Sammarco, Ann Gross, Karen DeMart, Michelle Nedopak & Cherly Nedopak, Toni West, Debbie Smith & Pat Poley, Ann Marie Gearhart, Ashley Davies, Al & Kathy Rich, and Judith and her mom, Kathy.

To Judy and Charles Webb of Re/Max Executive Realty for adding a link from their web site to the FFF website.

URGENT NEEDS/WISH LIST

Dry or canned cat food

Caretakers for feral cats needed for areas in Pineville

Medium-sized dog carriers

New or used bath towels in good condition (no holes) to wrap around cats after surgery at our clinics

Sponsors for our newsletter, A Cat's Tale.



KINDLY TAKE NOTE

- We accept matching contributions from businesses. Please ask your employer to participate.
- We accept contributions made in memory of pets and in honor of special people .
- Please place your contribution to FFF in the enclosed envelope



PUBLISHER'S CORNER

A Cat's Tale is a quarterly publication of Friends of Feral Felines

*Articles, comments, opinions and photographs welcome
Editors: Ann Gross, Michelle Nedopak & Karen DeMart
Graphic Design: Karen DeMart • kedemart@earthlink.net*

CAMPUS CATS AT UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA AT CHARLOTTE

For an extended period of time, UNCC and Friends of Feral Felines have worked together in TNR (Trap, Sterilize, Vaccination and Return) of unowned/feral campus cats.

We appreciate the compassion shown for the campus cats and the respect and cooperation shown to FFF volunteers by the administration, faculty and students of UNCC

It has been a successful operation and over 90 campus cats have been sterilized and vaccinated and ear-clipped for identification.

Our approach is:

- Trap, neuter, vaccinate and return of all adult campus cats and providing daily food and water.
- Testing for feline leukemia and feline aids when appropriate.
- Removal of young kittens (4 to 12 weeks of age) for socialization and future adoption by reputable adoption agencies.
- TNR and transfer of tame, unowned cats to reputable adoption agencies whenever possible.

We will be making posters for the campus advising students not to bring cats onto the campus for humane reasons. We will ask them to join our efforts in reducing the homeless cat population and also write an article for their student newspaper (Fall 2003). We are trying to enlist their assistance and volunteerism in helping FFF making the program a long term success.

We would like to thank all of the FFF volunteers and the vets and their staff in our volunteer veterinary network who have given their time and hard work in making this TNR program possible. Two of our volunteers, **Anne-Marie Gearhart** and **Bill Laudati** deserve special recognition for their long standing perseverance and dedication doing TNR. Their work has been outstanding and has made a significant difference in the population of cats at UNCC. FFF is very grateful for their true compassion for these innocent animals.

Currently, we need more FFF volunteers (especially folks who live in the area north of Charlotte) to continue our TNR program and daily care. We are very shorthanded and need help to continue our program at the UNCC campus. The continued TNR program/daily care will result in the reduction of cats and provide a better quality of life for the remaining cats.

CALL OUR HOTLINE AT 704-348-1578 TO VOLUNTEER

FOUND: 2 FERAL CATS WITH CLIPPED LEFT EARS

- Poppy Hills Lane (near Bevington Woods Lane) in south Charlotte
- 1800 block of Cavendish Court (near Providence Road)

Please call our hotline with the cat's description so you can reclaim the cat.

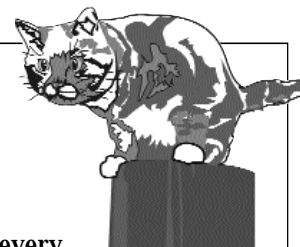
If you are missing your feral cat for more than 1 or 2 days, please call Charlotte Mecklenburg Animal Control at 704-336-8007 to see if it has been picked up. Tell Animal Control the cat has a clipped left ear and is a feral cat. You can reclaim the cat after paying the reclaim fees.

YOUR CALL MAY SAVE THEIR LIVES.

FERAL/UNOWED CATS IN NEED OF HOMES ON FARMS/RANCHES



FFF volunteer caretakers have several healthy, sterilized cats in desperate need of new outdoor homes. These cats are feral (semi-wild). They are good mousers in need of a farm/ranch/large land area homes. Veterinarian care has been given - sterilization, rabies, etc. Your responsibility would be to provide daily food and water, simple shelter and medical care if needed. They will help keep rodents away from grain and food storage areas, and you will enjoy watching them and having the satisfaction of providing them a much needed home.



YARD AND GARDEN REPELLENTS

Here are some helpful suggestions for anyone wanting to keep cats out of their yards and gardens. Give your neighbors a copy of this list.

NATURAL REPELLENTS

- Push wooden chopsticks sprayed with citrus oil or 10-inch plant stakes into flower beds every 8 inches in an uneven pattern.
- Cats dislike citrus smells. Scatter orange or lemon peels, or soak the peels in water and use as a spray.
- Use a spray of undiluted white vinegar where the cats spray in your beds, etc.
- Sprinkle cayenne pepper or spray citrus, eucalyptus, or lavender oil on your flower beds.
- Cover exposed flower beds with rough surface rocks, which are uncomfortable to the pads on cats' feet.
- Use an outdoor litter box with clumping litter or sand dumped on the ground (with a layer of baking soda underneath) in a remote location in your yard. Plant some catnip, calamint, or kitty grass near the box to attract cats to the box. Clean the box or sand every few days.
- Plant coleus canina lamiaceae (known as Scaredy Cat/Dog Gone)
This particular coleus seems to work very well because it emits an odor repugnant to cats. The plant tolerates dry conditions and does not need a lot of water (less water stronger odor), and grows 18-20 inches in height. (Very popular in the UK where folks refer to it as Pee-off.)
www.gunningruberherbs.com (609-698-1921)|
Available at (call to check on availability):
Roundtree Plantation in Charlotte, NC, New Hope Greenhouses in Gastonia, NC
Shagreen Nursery, Souther Gem Nursery and Shelby Nursery, Shelby, NC

CHEMICAL REPELLENTS

- Liquid Fence - www.kinsmangarden.com (800-733-4146) or www.homeharvest.com (800-348-4769).
- Reppers - www.drsofostersmith.com (800-381-7179)
www.petSMART.com, (surprisingly, Reppers is no longer available online; check your local PetSmart)
www.whateverworks.com/reppers_repellent.htm (800-499-6757, ext. 12).
Reppers is EPA approved and the plastic evaporators keep ingredients away from children and the weather. Creates a barrier up to 48 feet in length.
- Shake Away - www.critter-repellent.com (online ordering only).
- Bad Cat with wolf urine - www.hirts.com (800-860-hirt, ext. 7).

MOTION ACTIVATED SPRAYER

This sprayer is a battery-operated sensor that detects movement and body heat of unwanted visitors and releases a powerful oscillating jet of water for 3 seconds. Range can be set from 10 to 35 feet. Easily connects to a garden hose and requires a 9 volt battery. It is expensive (\$70-\$90), but worth the price if you are desperate.

Go to www.homeharvest.com (800-348-4769), www.medpest.com (732-469-5999), or try an internet search for motion-activated sprayers. Very positive feedback from users, especially gardeners.

ELECTRONIC DEVICE DETERRENT

This device emits an inaudible ultrasound. Detects activity 360 degrees and covers a 15 foot radius. It is weather-proof and can be wall, tree, or post mounted. Uses 4 "D" size batteries.

Available for \$69 at www.grfrequencies3.com (866-303-4880), or try an internet search for electronic animal deterrents. Expensive, but effective.

CHECK GARDEN SUPPLY CENTERS , NURSERIES AND HARDWARE STORES IN YOUR LOCALITY FOR AVAILABILITY OF PRODUCTS/PLANTS