A Star with Three Wishes (or, a Cat and Three Volunteers)

My name was unknown when a kind human “Thea” began feeding me, concerned because she could clearly see that I was going to have a litter of kittens any day now. She also searched for a foster mom who would be able to care for me and the newborn kittens while everyone worked on finding our forever homes. Before long, “Selene” responded to Thea’s call and sensing that I could trust Thea, I went right into my carrier as she closed the cage door, telling me all about my new home and how happy she was that I had a good foster home with Selene. I was just glad not to be living outside anymore. Selene named me “Star” because of a little patch of white on my chest, and she had noticed that, like most self-respecting felines, I love being the center of attention. I got along well with her two dogs, one of whom was also a foster. I felt safe.

The very next weekend I had my kittens while Selene was away helping out with an adoption event, and she moved us into a larger birthing crate so there was plenty of space to move around and take care of the babies. But suddenly two weeks later I got very sick, and Selene promptly took all of us to the vet’s, where we were diagnosed with feline distemper, or panleukopenia. This is a highly contagious virus from the parvovirus group, which also causes parvo disease in canines. Sadly, very few young kittens can survive it, and we learned that it would cost about $950 for treatment. Selene called Thea with the upsetting news, and soon they got hold of a volunteer from FFF named “Juno,” who was able to raise the funds through a couple of rescue groups and a wonderful private donor. Selene worked hard on bottle-feeding the kittens while I stayed in an isolation cage at the vets, fighting to beat the disease, and unaware that I would never see my kittens alive again. Thea stopped by every day to visit, but even with the fluids and medication I was so ill and weak that all I could do was let her hold me, my first human that I had trusted with my life. I felt loved.

A week went by and the vets told Selene they couldn’t persuade me to try eating, and it was time to get back on a solid food diet. She had observed that I liked freshly cooked ground beef, and in spite of the vet’s doubts, she brought some in. That got my attention! I began showing a healthy appetite, and by Day 10 I was ready for my vaccinations, microchip, and spay surgery—my left ear was tipped as a precaution, and I was ready to return to my foster home. Selene took me to all the adoption events, but it took more than a year to find my forever home. A man who had noticed me earlier brought his fiancée in, knowing that I looked just like a cat she once had. He explained to Selene they had vowed to keep any future cat indoors, since the cat who looked like me had been killed by coyotes, a hard lesson about the outdoors. I felt sad about leaving Selene, but my forever home is a dream come true.

THANK YOU to everyone who helped me along the way!
Calling All Cat Lovers and Cat Rescuers! [TNR Like You’ve Never Seen Before!]

A new joint TNR collaboration has been formed with the following members:

* Charlotte-Mecklenburg Animal Care & Control (CMACC);
* the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA);
* the Humane Society of Charlotte (HSC);
* Lake Norman Lucky Cats; and of course,
* Friends of Feral Felines.

Named Charlotte-Mecklenburg Community Cats (“CCC”), its main objective is to prevent euthanasia of our healthy community/feral cats: that is, proactive TNR (including vaccination, de-worming and left-ear tip) with all non-adoptable, healthy community cats that are in the CMACC shelter. As resources become available, help will be offered for relocating cats that cannot be returned to their original environments.

The goals of this collaboration are:

1. Reduction of euthanasia of community cats and the subsequent costs to CMACC
2. Prevention of homeless community kittens
3. Prevention of feline disease in our community
4. A more humane existence for community cats

VOLUNTEERS (from all zip codes in the area—no restrictions) are needed to help build this program to the status it deserves! Contact charlottecommunitycats@gmail.com, or call us at 704-348-1578.

The Cat Who Was Happy to be a Nurse (a True Story from Poland)

http://themeowpost.com/something-amazing-is-happening-at-this-polish-animal-shelter-all-because-of-one-nurse-cat/

Bydgoszcz [bid-gawshch], a city in northern Poland, is home to a veterinarian clinic with one very special staff member. Rescuers had brought in a homeless 2-month-old kitten, who was so sick with a bad respiratory infection that they feared he would have to be put down. The small black kitten purred all the time as the staff worked hard to save his life. A few weeks later, after having been lovingly restored to good health, “Radamenes” (named after a cat in a popular children’s TV series*) decided to become a nurse at the clinic. Animal patients who are recovering from surgery may receive a visit from him as he tries to comfort them and “purr” them back to health. He gently cuddles, warms, massages, and sometimes even cleans (if it’s okay with the vet) the other animals recuperating from their wounds or operations.

* In the Polish children’s TV series, a cat named Radamenes is the reincarnation of an ancient man from Egypt who grants seven wishes to a boy who saves him from thugs.
It’s Magical: Disneyland’s Special Feral Cat Colony

(Thanks to sources from the LA Times and Alley Cat Allies)

Mickey Mouse may have put Disneyland on the map 55 years ago, but today, a colony of feral cats helps keep the famous theme park rodent-free. The feral cats have made their home on Disneyland Resort’s grounds for at least twenty-five years, and likely since the park opened in 1955. Rather than try to evict them, Disneyland has set a humane example as a forward-thinking corporate giant, embracing the cats as an integral part of their everyday operations.

“It’s a symbiotic relationship with them,” explains Gina Mayberry, who oversees the Circle D Ranch where Disneyland’s animals are housed. The cats, whom she dubs “natural exterminators,” make sure that any rodent population is kept in check. The cats are free to come and go as they please, but don’t expect to spot one on your next visit—guests rarely see them, as they hide during the daytime. An estimated 200 cats join Disneyland Resort’s overnight maintenance team after the crowds have gone home, prowling the parks’ manicured greenery in search of mice. It was only about ten years ago that animal care staff at the park took it upon themselves to institute Trap-Neuter-Return practices. Aided by local organizations including FixNation, the resort developed a lasting protocol for the humane care of the cats.

“We make sure they get a wellness check and release them back into the population,” says Mayberry. Although Disneyland doesn’t monitor the total number of cats, she says the program has been quite successful at adopting out kittens and “maintaining a balance” between cat population and the Disneyland environment. After the neutered cats are returned to the park grounds, they receive continuing managed care. They dine at five discreet feeding stations throughout the resort, which are strategically placed to minimize interaction with cast members and resort guests. It’s refreshing to see such a high-profile park treating all its visitors and inhabitants humanely—not just the human ones.

Disneyland Resort’s TNR program proves that large, high-profile organizations and feral cat colonies can not only peacefully share the same property, but also strike up a mutually beneficial relationship that improves conditions for both parties. “I truly believe they benefit us as well we benefit them.”

Speaking of Humane-Minded Corporations: Pet Adoption Event Coming October 7, 2015

Every year (twice a year, in the spring and fall), Friends of Feral Felines and about 20 other local animal welfare groups attend the Pet Adoption Event organized by Bank of America volunteers in Founder’s Hall, at the Bank of America Corporate Center. It’s a perfect location for catching the public eye, and every year attracts more crowds of pet lovers. This fall it’s on Wednesday, October 7, from 11:00 am to 1:30 pm, convenient lunch hours. Stop by to say hello!

LATE BREAKING NEWS! On September 18-20, the Charlotte Humane Society sponsored the FIRST annual Mega 500 Adopt-a-Thon at the Metrolina Tradeshow Expo, with the ultimate goal of finding homes for 500 dogs, cats, puppies and kittens. Metrolina Tradeshow Expo donated space for this event, which we hope to see grow into the area’s biggest pet adoption event ever. For more details, please read http://www.mega500charlotte.org/.
Friends of Feral Felines (FFF) is committed to the effective and humane management of local community/feral cats through the use of TNR: Trap, Neuter/Spay/Vaccinate, and Return (to the original environment), and to educating the public about feral cats.

Donations Needed...
Without the generosity of caring individuals, FFF could not pay for medical care for the many homeless community/feral cats that we work with in the Charlotte area. Medical care includes spay/neuter, rabies vaccinations, and treatment of sick or injured cats. Friends of Feral Felines is a registered 501(c)(3) charity and an all volunteer organization. We always appreciate your support!

Please Come to the Friends of Feral Felines Meeting, on October 14

Wednesday, October 14, From 6:00 pm to 7:30 pm
Morrison Regional Library (meeting room)
7015 Morrison Boulevard
Charlotte, NC 28211-3584
704-416-5400 (library)

- Discuss celebration(s) of National Feral Cat Day.
- Learn more about the new CMPD/HSC/FFF Community Cat Program, which is a new collaboration (our current FFF TNR program will continue along as usual).
- Network with other cat rescue groups and individuals.
- Free cat treats will be distributed. Maybe some human treats, too.
- Visitors and new members are always welcome! SEE YOU THERE!!