



# Catalyst for Cats

A Non-Profit Organization Dedicated to Altering the Future for Ferals

## NEWSLETTER

PO Box 30331 • Santa Barbara, CA 93130 • Phone: (805) 685-1563 • Email: [catalyst4cats@cox.net](mailto:catalyst4cats@cox.net)

Volume 21, Number 1

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

March 2012

### Our Mission:

*As a feral cat organization our primary purpose is to spay and neuter feral and abandoned cats, and to socialize and find homes for rescued kittens. These services are designed to address the feline overpopulation problem and to prevent cruelty to animals by preventing the birth of unwanted and uncared for cats and kittens. Catalyst for Cats, PO Box 30331, Santa Barbara, CA 93130 is a free newsletter published four times a year by Catalyst for Cats, Inc.*

### From the Founder

## A Village Hard At Work on Animals' Behalf

As the old saying goes, "It takes a village..."

With all the avenues of communication available today from phones and web sites, emails, Twitter and Facebook, etc. many people approach us from a broad range of places asking for advice and help.

We answer questions on how to proceed or refer them to another agency, but sadly there are areas with limited or no help available. Fortunately, our community is very progressive in terms of compassion and concrete help to offer concerned citizens in regard to animals of all kinds. Yes, it takes a village and we are grateful for all the agencies, non-profits and individuals who do their part to make our community animal-friendly.

As difficult as the last few years have proven to be, we anticipate a better one this year. With many agencies working together now, more than ever, and the great emphasis given to spay and neuter, we expect fewer kittens as we approach the spring season. Possibly, the late rain and less of it may help in reducing the number as well as size of litters because of fewer rodents. Rodent populations thrive in wet years because it provides ample food, which translates into better hunting for pregnant cats who then produce larger litters.

The new year has started off well. Our last four rescued kittens (teenagers) were adopted and so far the average number of spay/neuters has been over a cat a day. This time of year the females draw in the males. Neutering the males discourages them from fighting over the females, thereby preventing the males from developing FIV (the feline form of HIV). For better or worse, our work is interconnected with nature, and we live within its dynamic cycles and limitations.

In this newsletter we include an essay from the *Sacramento Bee*, "The Cry of Spring, The Tragedy of Summer." Please feel free to copy this or cut it out and post it in laundromats, libraries, bulletin boards, etc. It might encourage some-

one to spay and neuter, thereby preventing unwanted litters from being born.

As we gear up for the inevitable kitten season, though, your financial support is vital to our success. We appreciate our donors as well as our dedicated volunteers who participate with the "hands on" approach to improve the lives of ferals. Each of you is a part of our goal of making "every cat a wanted cat."

*Randi Fairbrother*



*Thankful: Rescued from a precarious life on the streets of Santa Ynez Valley by Catalyst's Belinda Burns, this guy seems truly grateful as well as comfortable and amused.*

# In Appreciation

**W**e are very grateful to those who participate in our goal of preventing feline overpopulation. Unless you are “into” animal rescue no one understands the amount of time and effort our volunteers contribute. Our volunteers are the ones who make it happen. It is a true labor of love and often personal sacrifice, and we thank you all enormously. The reward is the satisfaction you get from helping the animals in whatever way you can. We rely on you, our volunteers, who give from the heart. Some are mentioned, but all are appreciated.

**Belinda Burns** – She made an extra effort to relocate a group of cats from a bad situation in Santa Maria.

**Suzanne Canas** – a faithful feeder of several colonies in Santa Maria.

**C.A.R.E.4 Paws and Buellton Veterinary Clinic** – for their very generous assistance with spay/neuter services in the Santa Ynez Valley.

**Rocky Garcia** – An Animal Control Officer with Santa Maria Animal Services, who made a house call to assist cats in distress. The citizen said Rocky was “awesome” and made a follow up call as well. We appreciate the co-operation of Animal Control.

**Barbara Hilaire** – for her unwavering and generous support of our program.

**Beth Rushing and ASAP (Animal Shelter Assistance Program)** – They have done a tremendous job dealing with the feral cat colonies in the South County.

**Debbie Merry** – Despite holding a job, she traps colony after colony in Santa Maria. Her efforts have contributed to the prevention of many unwanted litters of feral kittens this year alone and that is just the beginning of the advantages.

**David Morris** – for his generosity in donating cases of wet food as well as kibble for the many colonies we subsidize. Also for helping trap an injured cat. And to **Reisa** for nursing it during recuperation prior to release.

**RESQCATS** – for assisting with altering several tame cats for people of low income.

**Russell and Laure** of Riveredge Farm – for their generous assistance, support and kindness throughout the years.

**Christine Vargas** – for her faithfulness and persistence in trapping an extremely trap-shy calico mom,



*Catalyst Pin-up: Silver was adopted by Marianne Robins of Santa Barbara, who says she’s “as sweet as can be, very affectionate, a good eater and really fun to play with.”*

who had seen many litters of her kittens trapped, never to be seen again. She actually tried to keep her kittens away from the traps. When the kittens were surrendered to Animal Control they were all killed. Using our special handmade “Big gun” trap, our plan took about five to six weeks to implement, but thankfully, that sad scenario is now at a end. She and her calico daughter were TNR’d and are very happy and healthy, living the only kind of life they have ever known.

And finally, *Catalyst for Cats* would like to extend its sincere thanks to **Letty Obledo, DVM** – for offering her services free of charge to us under special circumstances. Recently she performed a barium X-ray on a kitten suspected of having megaesophagus (thankfully it was negative) and vaccinated it for rabies. She also adopted two kittens over the holidays and has expressed an interest in fostering bottle-feeders. We are very fortunate to have her on our team of volunteers.

# *Dually, the cat who hitched a ride, makes friends*

**D**ually, formerly dubbed PeePee Pants for his poor litter box habits, was on death row at the Santa Maria shelter last fall. Even though his coloring was not good for a barn situation, our Relocation Coordinator, Belinda Burns, wanted to give him a chance. She found a willing home for him at a farm in Buellton, a place that has taken many of our hard-to-place cats, and set him up in the old stables.

The cat became an instant hit with the staff as he would greet one and all by putting his forelegs around their necks and nuzzling them.

During the holidays PeePee Pants suddenly came up missing and everyone feared the worst as there were hungry



*Carefree: Rescued from death row in Santa Maria and his reputation for missing his litter box, this good-looking boy was first relocated to a barn situation in Buellton. And that's where his adventure began!*



*Home Sweet Home: It's been a long journey from a cage at the Santa Maria shelter to a warm hearth in Los Alamos—with several name changes included—but that's all past history now.*

coyotes lurking about. Belinda was called with the sad news.

Several days later a call came in to the Buellton farm from Billy Ruiz of Cowboy Flavor catering in Los Alamos, asking if they were missing a cat. Apparently, while Billy was visiting a friend at the farm, PeePee Pants climbed up into the dually truck for a nap and rode home with Billy.

No one knew the cat was there until the next morning, when howling was heard coming from Billy's truck.

Billy and his wife, Sue, brought the cat inside where he quickly made himself at home, worming his way into the Ruiz's hearts. When Billy called his friends at the farm, guessing they were missing a cat, he was told that PeePee Pants was just a barn cat, and they happily agreed to relinquish "ownership," if there is such a thing with a cat.

Since picking his forever home, PeePee Pants has not once missed the litter box. He has been renamed "Dually" aka "Hugs Alot" in honor of his escape method and greeting habits.

Another happy ending for a former death row inmate.

# Tributes & Memorials

Each one of these names represents a level of love and caring to those remaining. They each have their own story.

## In Honor of:

**Victoria Blunt**, for Christmas – by her sister, Michelle Garbarino,

**Catalyst** – by a friend

**Christine and Rodney Kurtz**, my cousin and cat lover – by Lorna White

**Lucia Nelson** – by Gary Peterson

**Sharon Priester**, Happy Birthday to my wonderful wife – by Nick Priester,

**Randi and all the dedicated team**, thank you – by C.A. Smith

**Rojo** – by Timothy D. Oliveria

**Beth Rushing** – by Jan and Bob Cibull. We truly are in awe of Randi, Beth and **all the volunteers** that work for cats all year around

**Jill Whiting**, my constant cohort in placing cats for relocation and for her years of support in assisting with follow up and their care – by Belinda Burns

## In Remembrance of:

**Bosco Baby** – by Charlyne Dennis

**Cats I have loved** – by Nancy Freeman

**Irene Carlson**, with good memories – by Randi T. Fairbrother

**George Evens** – by Patricia R. Massette

**Rose Marie “Rickey” Johnson** – Amy Orozco

**Paula Kinealy** – by John Kinealy

**Marmilade** – by Kenneth L. Clay

**My Mom** – by Barbara Evens

**No Name** (LH grey cat) – by Randi Fairbrother, Lavi and Monica Gonzales. Comforted as best they could

**Nutmeg and Princess** – by Rita Fleming

**Princess**, from the Elks Club – by Rita Fleming

**Sammy** – by Martin Thruston

**Berka Smock** – by Carol Donovan

**Tom Snow and Little JD** – by the Salotti Family

**Sweet Pea and Quatro** – by Lynne and Buddy Bordeire, Jr.

**Xena**, the Warrior Princess – by Peggy Greer

**Nancy Shiddell Yaqub**, many years she befriended a colony of cats on the Mesa. Finally, when only one cat remained, he decided to become not only an indoor cat, but a lap cat.



*Chat de sommeil: At ease on Santa Barbara's American Riviera, Bip preferred a real bed rather than one designated for "pets."*

## Bip – a French Cat

1990 - 2011

*By Annamarie Simes*

She was one of many kittens in a growing feral cat colony in the park-like grounds of the “Hopital de Bligny,” about 45 minutes southwest of Paris. Because there were too many cats, the hospital wanted to get rid of them. A group of women started a trap, neuter, release organization, and adopted out the kittens.

In 1990 we adopted Bip, along with another tabby kitten, who died around the age of seven from kidney trouble. We then adopted Shine, a black and white kitten from a French shelter, Bip and Shine emigrated to Santa Barbara with us in 2000.

Shine enjoyed many years of Santa Barbara sunshine, but died a few years ago of a cancerous tumor. Bip became blind due to high blood pressure a few years ago, and mostly enjoyed sleeping on or in our bed for her last few years.

*Editors note: The Simes Family has fostered for us throughout the years*

## Cats come with claws!

Never declaw a cat! Declawing often results in irreversible physical and psychological damage. An excellent scratching post is available from **Felix Company (206) 547-0042**. Ask for their catalog. The **#1** (large) is a good selection.

# Fond Feral Memories

Catalyst volunteer trappers, feeders, and caregivers reminisce about cats they've known and loved

## A Lover at Heart

By Rochelle Reid

**T**he most recent male I trapped and neutered— it was a couple of months ago— started out as a most aggressive, angry cat. It hissed and growled at anyone that came up or down my front steps. He'd slap at me even when I fed him, and he ate like a pig.

A few days ago, he let me pet him, and each day he becomes friendlier. Tonight he let me rub his belly. He is now the sweetest big lover, and I adore him!

*Rochelle feeds a colony of cats abandoned in her neighborhood many years ago. She has also tamed and foster several kittens from a very elusive mom (who we finally caught).*

## Babbette and Alex

By Janet Williams

**I**n 1994 Allison Coleman trapped a colony of 15-20 cats in Carpinteria. As time went on their individual personalities began to emerge. Alex became friendly, even mellow and liked to be petted— even to the point of being picked up. Babbette liked to be petted also, but it took much longer for her to reach that state of trust.

A short time after the colony was stabilized the feeders were no longer allowed to feed the cats at the original feeding site and we moved it outside the perimeter of the property.

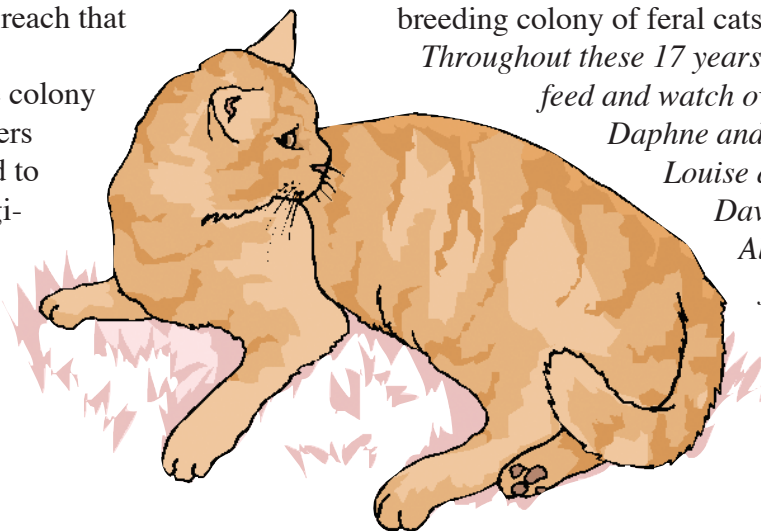
It appeared that Babbette did not adjust to the new feeding area and when she became thin and sick, I took her to Dr. Dalo. He discovered a bone chip in her sinus cavity, which he removed and Babbette recovered nicely. After the surgery, I brought her home where she had her own room with the freedom to wander down the hall and into the master suite. She love to be petted and if I sat on the floor, she became a lap cat. She never did become buddies with my other cats, but she never fought with them either. In July of 2009, Babbette suffered from complications of hyperthyroidism and was euthanized.

Alex, however is still thriving. After we moved the feeding station, Alex wandered over to join Daphne and Bill's cats Silky and Fluffy. He is a charmer. People like him and so do other cats.

At one point, Alex underwent surgery and spent recovery time in my home. A perfect patient, he was easy to medicate and never seemed to show stress. Eventually I introduced him to my other cats. It would have been easy to keep him, but his haven at Bill and Daphne's was waiting.

His friends Silky and Fluffy have both passed on, and Alex is almost deaf. After 17-plus years, he is still charming and the last survivor of a once large breeding colony of feral cats.

*Throughout these 17 years several people helped feed and watch over this colony: Allison, Daphne and Bill, David, Janet, Louise and others. Presently David checks on and feeds Alex everyday. He often finds Alex sunning himself, waiting for David's arrival.*



# The Cry of Spring, The Tragedy of Summer

*Before we head into kitten season, now is the time to think ahead and recognize the suffering that can be prevented through spaying and neutering. This timeless piece has appeared before in our Newsletter, but its message is still urgent.*

*Please share it wherever you can.*

*By Gina Spadafori*

The sound of caterwauling drifts eerily through my neighborhood these days, carried on the same spring breezes that scatter golden pollen and pink flower petals on the sidewalks.

In March, caterwauling means cats on the streets, heeding the call of an instinct they do not question. The urge to mate is primal, and over-powering, pulling tomcats from their homes, across busy roadways and into fights. In May, caterwauling gives way to gentle meowing, as the kittens burst into this world, soft, blind and helpless. Their arrival is witnessed by people who whisper reverently about the “miracle of life” and use the lovely sight of a mother cat with her kittens to teach lessons to their own.

In June, the kittens hit the shelters, and, shortly after, the euthanasia rooms. Far from the view of those responsible for the tragedy, out of view of the children who are protected from the sad part of the tale, the “miracle of life” ends, and the victims are stacked into barrels bound for the rendering plant.

Such is the true nature of even the loveliest spring. What’s so confounding, so disturbing about this black drama played out in towns and cities throughout the land is that it is completely preventable. Not one kitten or cat, or puppy or dog, needs to meet death in the euthanasia room for the crime of being “surplus.” Not one kitten or cat, or puppy or dog, needs to wander confused and hungry down a country lane until a motorist or farmer protecting his stock ends the suffering once and for all.

Not one. Not one in your neighborhood, not one

in your town, not one in your county, not one in your state.

If you shudder when you think of animals being euthanized at the shelter, and especially if you’ve ever dumped an animal on a country lane, convincing yourself that a kind farmer will give it a good home, it’s time for a little self-evaluation.

Are you part of the problem, or part of the solution?

Are your pets spayed and neutered? By, that, I mean all of them.

If you’re the kind-hearted type who puts out food for the neighborhood strays, take it a step further and spring for neutering.

When you choose your own pets, pick shelter animals or purebreds from a rescue network. Buying from ignorant or substandard breeders—whether individual or commercial—encourages the continued production of animals for sale. You can get almost anything “second hand” and better than “new,” even animals. In doing so, you’re giving an innocent pet a second chance at a happy life.

Let your feelings be known. Politely suggest to a friend or neighbor that spaying and neutering not only helps all animals, but helps each individual animal. Tell everyone you can how spaying and neutering eliminates the possibility of some cancers and will help keep pets close to home and off the roadways. Some behavior problems are also lessened or eliminated by the procedures.

Do what you can for animals, as often as you can, and maybe, someday, we animal lovers can spend the springtime sneezing instead of grieving as the tragedy unfolds.

---

*Reprinted with permission from THE SACRAMENTO BEE*

# Updates: Catalyst Action & Related Issues

## Grants

We are most appreciative and thankful for the following grants:

The Ronald and Phyllis M. Bruce Trust for the Protection of Animals has given us funds to be used for spay/neuter services. We are very grateful for their kindness.

Additionally, the Wendy P. McCaw Foundation has given us a generous grant for food and supplies, as well as funding for our Tiny Tim Fund for medical care. We give our ferals a distemper as well as a rabies vaccine, a worming injection, a flea treatment, and other medical care as needed.

We also subsidize food for many of our stabilized colonies. This grant has already proven helpful and we are very fortunate and honored to be a recipient.

## Project PetSafe

The Santa Maria branch of Project PetSafe sponsored a special “CatNips” spay/neuter event during the months of January and February this year. For the price of \$20 the first 100 “owned cats” brought to the shelter were spayed or neutered.

Not-yet-final numbers indicate that the mix of sexes was approximately half and half. That’s a lot of potential kittens that will never be born just this season alone. The results of this project are far reaching.

## Goleta’s Spay/Neuter Ordinance

The Goleta City Council’s Ordinance Committee voted on Feb. 9, 2012 to move forward with adopting a Responsible Pet Owner Ordinance similar to the one passed by Santa Barbara County in November 2009.

The law, often known as a “spay/neuter ordinance,” requires owners who want to keep their dog or cat intact to get a certificate from a veterinarian in order to buy an unaltered license. It also requires that owners of intact cats buy a license—something that has not been in place before.

The goal is to make it more burdensome for pet owners to keep their pets unaltered, while simultaneously directing them towards free and low cost services that make “fixing” their pet extremely easy.

The law, if passed, will give Animal Services an enforcement tool against owners who currently breed and sell kittens on Craigslist, for example, something

that has become increasingly frequent and for which currently there is no remedy.

Under the Responsible Pet Owner Ordinance, not only would such people have to get a certificate from the veterinarian and a license for the adult cat, but would have to use that license number in all ads for the kittens, and supply buyers with health records and legal information as well.

—Lee E. Heller Ph.D., J.D.

## Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Data Base

Catalyst for Cats is now included in PetSmart Charities’ low-cost spay/neuter data base.

## Microwavable Heating Disks for Pet Beds

As the temperature drops, your pets feel the cold just as we do despite fur coats. Cats love nothing more than a good meal and a nap in a warm place, especially, your outdoor kitties. There is a selection of marvelous microwavable pet bed warmers under \$30 that stay warm for 10-12 hours, even outside.

Search for them online at Amazon.com and choose the one that meets your pet’s needs. My front porch cat loves her new warm bed, and I’m happy to know she will be protected from the cold this winter.

—Randi Fairbrother

## Shelter From The Storm



*Luxury Condo: The relocation shed for the Main/Blosser kitties at the Clos Pepe Winery near Lompoc is more than basic shelter.*



*Catalyst for Cats, Inc.*  
Post Office Box 30331  
Santa Barbara, CA 93130

**Every litter adds to the problem  
Every spay/neuter adds to the solution!**

## Wish List

*Catalyst* needs the following in order to carry on its charitable and educational goals. If you can help, please call 685-1563:

- Transporters, feeders and trappers for the Santa Maria areas. We also need a coordinator for the Santa Maria Valley; someone to organize trapping and spay/neuter appointments.
- An assistant foster/adoption coordinator.
- Cat food for the many, many colonies we monitor and maintain. We prefer meat flavors from Purina, Friskies, or Costco rather than fish flavors. Wet food is a treat.
- Soft stuffed animals for the kittens and cats for snuggling and warmth.

## Help Catalyst for Cats When You Shop Online

Every time a purchase is made through **AdoptAShelter.com** at any one of over 400 top name online stores, 100% of the amount displayed is donated to the animal organization or shelter chosen by the shopper. You can buy just about anything online and earn a donation, all without logging in or remembering a password.

Check us out at [www.AdoptAShelter.com](http://www.AdoptAShelter.com)