



Catalyst for Cats

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

NEWSLETTER

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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

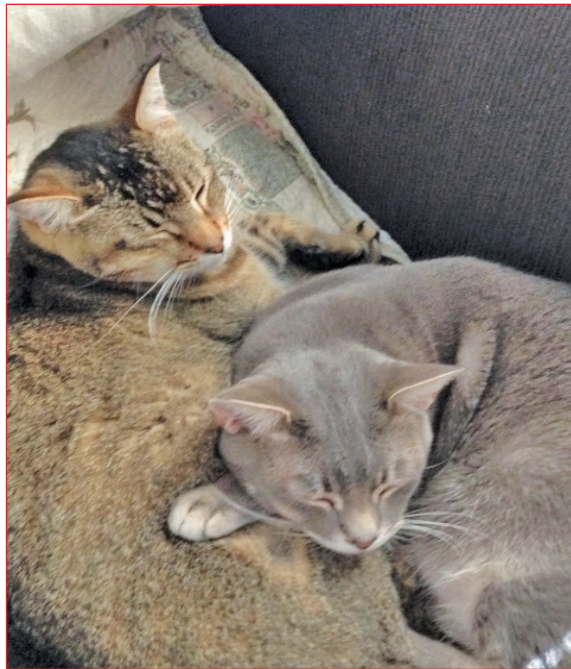
'Tis the season to rejoice in our successes

Astonishingly, the New Year is nearly upon us. Whatever else that may signify, it means we at Catalyst can enjoy the end of “kitten season”—our most difficult portion of the year. This year, as always, we have invested many hours and much expense getting our kittens socialized and ready for adoption.

Because of an extremely slow adoption rate this year and having to deal with many very large and difficult TNR jobs, we have called upon several adoption agencies within the county to assist us in finding homes for our rescued kittens. We appreciate their services, which allow us to do what we do best—employing our program of trap, neuter and return (TNR) to prevent unwanted kittens from being born. Statistics have shown that one female spay can prevent 144 kittens from being born over a two-year period. Dramatic results indeed!

Despite the sad part of animal rescue every group or individual is exposed to, we carry on because we care and what we do matters. We rejoice in our successes: stabilizing a breeding colony of cats, rescuing our kittens from a precarious life on the streets, and

providing relief from pain and suffering for felines in distress or in need of medical care. All these things, as well as kindness shown by individuals, lift our spirits so we can go on to the next job at hand.



Star Abby and Scout make life interesting for Anna and Colleen Sinclair in their forever home.

Your financial support allows us to provide each cat we spay or neuter with a distemper and rabies vaccine, flea treatment and worming. It also pays for other needed medical care to give them the best possible start as they begin life anew without the hormonal urges that makes their lives so difficult.

With increasing expenses for surgeries and supplies (medicines and vaccines) we ask for your financial support as the holidays approach. We address the feline overpopulation problem at its core level, thereby improving the lives of many in a most effective and humane manner. I ask that you be a part

of enabling us to do that.

And, of course, we extend our best wishes for the holiday season and a very happy New Year to each and everyone.

photo by Colleen Sinclair

Randi Fairbrother

In Appreciation

Our volunteers are the backbone of our organization. They are absolutely essential to our work and we applaud and thank them for the hours and time spent away from their families and personal sacrifice dedicated to *Catalyst for Cats*. It is indeed a labor of love.

Rene Akamine – for assisting Gerry Place with the raffle responses.

Jeanne Bello – for sewing transfer and trap covers and sustaining her colony of 18 cats.

Belinda Burns – for coordinating our Santa Ynez feeding stations and relocations.

Lavi and Monica Gonzalez – for organizing the food supplies for our assistance program for cat colonies in Santa Maria and for fostering.

Eliane Martin – our Adoption Coordinator.

Linda Murphy – for offering sorely needed office assistance.

Debbie Merry – for her trapping and fostering expertise. She's out there every day, before and after work feeding, trapping and overseeing sites.

Our Feeders: Our thanks to the dozens who feed colonies—not only on their own property, but those who faithfully leave home to be sure the waiting felines get their daily meal. Both parties look forward to the ritual.

Our Santa Ynez Group: **Kia Beckert**, trapper, substitute feeder and trapping coordinator for the Valley and **Joe Thomas**, feeder and builder of feeders for various colonies.

Our Fosters: **Monica and Lavi Gonzales**, the **Hawkins family**, **Marci Kladnik**, **Deanna Koens** (bottle feeder), **Rose Koller**, **Debbie Merry**, **Melinda Siebold**, and **Debbie Walker**.

Marci Kladnik, **Mark Poudrier**, **Anne Marie Rose**, and **Debbie Walker**, who all were called upon to TNR several colonies in their respective areas.

Those who graciously drop off food for our colonies: It helps a great deal. Please know you are appreciated.

At year's end I try to acknowledge a few who have helped us throughout the year in various ways:

Joanne Avelar – for preparing newspapers that line our traps. Because the winds in Santa Maria blow most of the time, the newspapers must be specially

prepared. They magically appear on my doorstep for distribution.

Lorraine Cestone – for maintaining the mailing list.

Charles Clouse – for typesetting our newsletter.

Animal Shelter Assistance Program (ASAP) – Our community is blessed with such an efficient and caring adoption agency working in conjunction with the county's animal shelter.

C.A.R.E. 4 Paws – for their generous assistance with spay/neuter services in the Santa Ynez Valley.

Vasanti Fithian – We surrendered a very sweet abandoned or lost tabby found in Los Alamos to ASAP. Not adoptable because of her advanced age and thyroid problems, Vasanti, an ASAP volunteer, offered to take her home and care for her the rest of her life. These are the kindness' that touch our hearts.

RESQCATS – for posting our adoptable kittens with great success and for a multitude of favors.

Beth Rushing – for a great job of taking over the trapping needs in Santa Barbara.

Santa Ynez Valley Humane Society – TNRing a medium to large colony requires coordinated planning and effort. The most efficient way is to complete the job on consecutive days. Their cooperation in doing up to 10 – 20 surgeries a day is most appreciated.

And finally, thank you to the adoption agencies and vet clinics countywide who assisted in finding homes for our rescued kittens: **Animal Shelter Assistance Program**, **Buellton Veterinary Clinic**, **RESQCATS**, **San Roque Animal Hospital**, **Santa Barbara Humane Society**, and **Santa Maria Humane Society**, and to all those not mentioned.



Photo by Amanda MacRae

Maverick: *Catalyst adoption named for a well-loved surf spot.*

There's More Than One Way

Evaluating Alternative Methods to Control Feral Cat Populations

You may have read an article recently in your local paper about a study comparing different approaches to eliminating feral cat colonies. The study, conducted at the Cummings School of Veterinary Medicine, Tufts University and reported in the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association*, evaluates three methods of controlling feral cat populations using a simulation model: Trap, Neuter, Release (TNR), Trap, Vasectomy, Hysterectomy, Release (TVHR) and Lethal Control (LC).

With TVHR the study finds a more rapid decline in the number of cats, but reproductive hormones and normal social behavior is maintained, resulting in “persistent undesirable male behaviors such as fighting, vocalization and urine marking, and in some situations, elimination of these behaviors is the main impetus for the control program itself. Fortunately, in most feral cat populations worldwide this is not the case.”

This quote is nonsense to me. I don't believe these behaviors *do not* present a problem worldwide. I venture to say feral cat populations are a worldwide problem and these behaviors do matter. Males fighting over females can result in injuries, pain, distress, disease and—without treatment— death.

Vasectomy, a more time-consuming and difficult surgery, requires more time under anesthesia, resulting in greater expense. Females with repeated cycles of estrus are more prone to developing cancers. Not incidentally, TVHR takes into account the shorter life span for these felines.

As for the TNR approach, the lead author of the

Tufts study, Dr. Robert J. McCarthey, DVM, noted that “while TNR is successful in small colonies and controlled environments, the data is lacking to support TNR's efficacy over large areas.”

I'm not sure what he means by “large areas,” but we do know that cat colonies congregate in small areas. They may permeate over several blocks, but not miles. And we are certain of TNR's effectiveness in small areas because we've used it successfully for decades to stabilize thousands of colonies, as have many groups in the United States and throughout the world.

We should also understand that the Tufts study is derived from a computer-based model and is designed to *predict* effectiveness. It's difficult for me to imagine where the financial resources and personnel would come from to implement a real world study and gather evidence of how it actually works in the field.

The predictive study's most “effective” method of dealing with feral cat overpopulation, TVHR, does not seem to care about the means to the desired result or about collateral effects. Do the results justify the means? I think not.

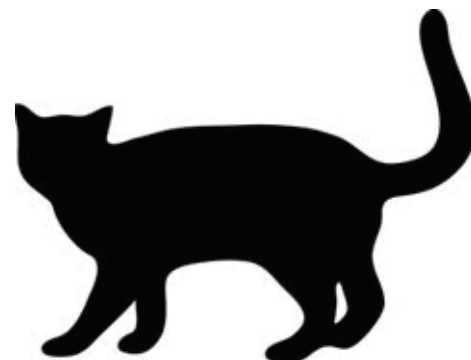
The researchers point out the popularity of TNR has been in part to a goal of maximizing feral cats' quality of life (e.g. extended life span, vaccinations, assessment of infectious disease) and reducing undesirable behaviors such as aggression and vocalization while still eliminating colonies over time.

They have that part right because we do indeed care about feline welfare. I'm just glad to say the study does not recommend LC.

—Randi T. Fairbrother

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MOUSERS

Coming To The Rescue

Stories of good citizens helping cats in need

They intervened when they saw a group of kids taunting a Siamese cat lying near the sidewalk in Santa Maria, by picking the cat up and bringing him to Debbie Merry, our well known trapper. Debbie then walked the neighborhood looking for the cat's caregiver, but to no avail.

She brought him to the Orcutt vet for an exam and fostered the friendly Siamese neutered male for a few weeks, giving him meds for his thick nasal discharge. In addition he suffered with bouts of nausea and vomiting.

Luckily, the caregivers listed him as lost at the Santa Maria Shelter and he was united with his family. At 20 years old, he spent most of his time indoors, occasionally venturing out to enjoy the sun. The caregivers did not realize when they left to do errands that he was outdoors. We hope they keep better tabs on him because he may not be so lucky next time.

Another very sweet young female cat was found wandering about at a Santa Barbara car dealership at closing time. Erica Smith called me on a Sunday night (she had previously adopted kittens from

us) and I kept the cat overnight, surrendering her to ASAP the next morning. She appeared to be in good shape, without fleas, but very hungry. Hopefully she will be reunited with her family.

And lastly, Diane and Johan Delson noticed a cat who appeared to be hunting in a field in Santa Barbara. They knew about us, having adopted a couple of kittens from us many years ago. After a few days Diane brought it some food and water. As it turned out the cat was completely tame and they just picked her up.

Covered in burrs and very hungry, the cat was taken to ASAP, where her picture was posted as a Found Cat. The caller who responded informed ASAP that the cat's caregivers had left town, but volunteered to be a temporary caregiver for this very elderly feline. Because of their concern, though, the Delson's decided to visit ASAP and ended up adopting the kitty as a companion for their cat. Reportedly, that union is going well.

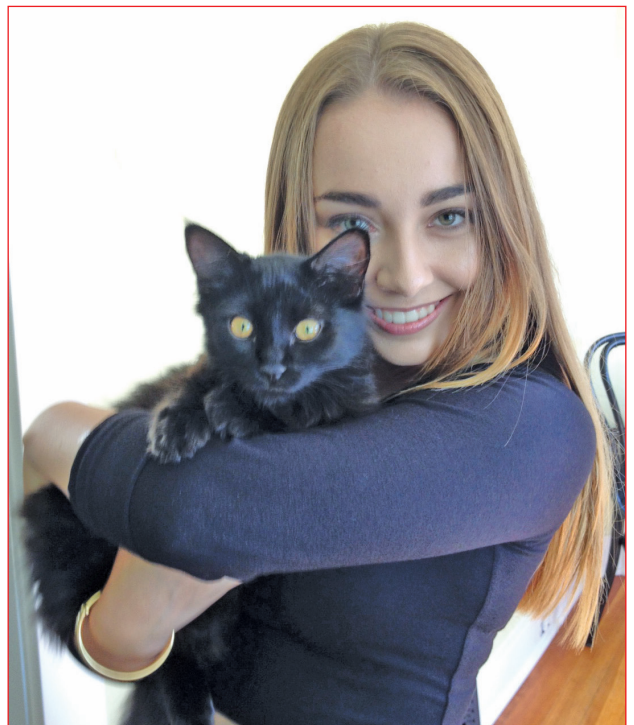
These three cats were saved because someone cared and stepped up to the plate.

Every Day is Wednesday!



Photos by Joan Garcia

Rescued by Catalyst, fostered to perfection by Melinda Siebold and named after Wednesday Addams of The Addams Family, this black beauty, pictured at Halloween, was a birthday present for 17-year old Indi Garcia (right). Wednesday also gets along well with the family's 145-lb. dog.



Updates: Catalyst Action & Related Issues

Raffle Winners

Catalyst for Cats honored National Feral Cat Day on October 16 with its annual Cat's Meow Raffle at the Coffee Cat in downtown Santa Barbara. The event raised \$3,037.

The lucky winners were:

Beth Rushing won a Mid-Week Getaway at the Historic Upham Hotel, Santa Barbara. The one night stay for two includes a fireplace in the room and breakfast.

Rikki Byers will enjoy a Day of Wine and Horses: Horse Farm Tours, wine tasting and gourmet lunch in the Santa Ynez Valley.

Stephanie Welch won a Beach Horseback Ride along romantic Padaro Beach in Summerland for two.

Mark and Diane Poudrier received a Lemos Feed and Supply Feline Fun Gift Basket.

Lyla Oyakawa won a \$100 Certificate for dinner at Far Western Tavern in Orcutt.

We extend our thanks to our donors who provided the prizes and to our supporters. All funds are earmarked for the benefit of community cats of Santa Barbara County.



Photo by Amy Orozco

Meow Mixer: Attending and facilitating the annual Catalyst raffle are (from l.) Lorraine Cestone, Amy Hall, Randi Fairbrother, Leiana Furlong, Connie Mitchell, and Larry Mitchell.

Scabies alert

Scabies, a skin ailment caused by a microscopic mite, appears to have surfaced in the Santa Maria and Guadalupe areas. We encountered our first case of scabies in Santa Maria about two years ago. With severe hair loss, especially about the head and shoulders, and one eye closed and the other half closed, the cat looked terrible. The caregiver had named him

Monstro. Since scabies is contagious, Monstro had to be isolated in a cage for three to four weeks during the treatment period.

In the last few months we encountered four more cases of scabies. As you can imagine scabies presents a problem with ferals because the cat must be captured, diagnosed, and isolated during the treatment period.

The diagnosis is usually made in the vet's office by a skin scraping placed under the microscope where the mite is viewed. It is contagious to people and other animals, but usually cannot live on a human host, although it can cause skin irritation and itching.

Please be aware of any signs of hair loss, itching and skin irritation on your cat. If you suspect scabies the cat needs a visit to the vet for treatment options.

More Awards for Marci

Catalyst board member and award-winning resident cat writer Marci Kladnik brought home three 1st place Muse Medallions this month from the Cat Writers' Association's 20th Annual Writers Conference held this year in Dallas, TX. One award was for her bi-weekly column, which appears in three county newspapers, another was for an opinion piece blasting back at cat hostile "bird people" (see our summer 2013 newsletter), and a third was for a photo of a hissing mother cat in that same newsletter.



Coyotes

Keep your pets in at night and don't leave food out. Coyote sightings have occurred in many areas.

Bumper Stickers

Included with this newsletter, a special Catalyst bumper sticker is our Christmas gift to you. Designed by Charles Romanus, we hope they will help get the word out around the county. If you're not interested please pass it on to someone who is. For a donation we will send you more.

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:

All the Catalyst volunteers for their dedication – by Ethel Barclay

Spud and all the cats that find me and their forever home – by Leslie Metzger

Ethel Barclay, December birthday greetings – from Randi T. Fairbrother

Boots, Cookie, and OJ, “Love my Bootsy,” rescued by *Catalyst* 1 1/2 years go – by Shirley Morrison

Byron Fairbrother, birthday greetings – from Marvin Drandell

Kobe and Lucy – by Jennifer Engmyr

Tresie, Junior, Kung Pao and Scruffy – by Sally Burns

Beth Rushing and Kitty Sammie – by Caroline Vassallo

Beth Rushing – by Susan Hamilton

Jill Whiting – by Belinda Burns and Randi T. Fairbrother

In Memory of

Mrs. Edda Bevilacqua (1939-2011) by Ernest L. Bevilacqua

Cole, our tuxedo cat that we loved and acting big brother to the rest of our cat clan – by Teressa Hall

Girl Cat, miss you every day – by Kelly, Leah and Byron Fairbrother

Guinness – by Amanda Frost

Jerry Garcia, gray tabby Tux, who lived 17 years with mysterious auto-immune disorder – by Susan Tova

Kitten – by Elizabeth Smoot

Mama Kitty, Buddy, and Baby – by Chicki Kitagawa

Matthilda, a dog who lived with many cats – by Marie Tripi

My sweet Ming – by Sharon Kantanen

Molly – by Jennifer Engmyr

Nutmeg and Princess – by Rita Fleming

Onyx – by Peter Mortensen

Sheila Pratt and Kimmie – by Ernest Pratt

My beloved Scooter, the last survivor of the litter you helped me trap 17 years ago. He became my dearest friend and everyone loved him. We were inseparable. I miss him everyday – by Jill Kent

Angie Scholtz – by Mr. & Mrs. Fausto Parisotto, Jenny Pauletto, and Mario and Maura Pezzan
Hal Steveson, my husband – by Sue Stevenson. (*Ed: The Stevensons assembled the Catalyst newsletter for us for many years.*)

Romeo – by Allison Coleman

Sam and Snow – by Richard Salotti and Family

Dan Sorg, who loved cats – by Lois Sorg

Inga Tangvall, my mother – by Sally Troscher

John Tapia, my dear brother and his **Gracie** – by Irene Kasper

Smitty, My “Lucky 17”

I first saw him in May of 1996, trying to nurse from his mother, who was hissing and batting him away in the weaning process. I guessed his age at seven to eight weeks and designated his birthday as St. Patrick’s Day, March 17th. I fed him his first wet food. Gangly and jet black I named him Smitty. I started to pet him and pick him up, the only one of ten in my colony that allowed me to do that.

As the years passed, he grew into a large and beautiful cat. I supplied food and water, but he had free range of the nearby forest and lagoon. I told him he lived the charmed, “Tom Sawyer life.”

When he was about 12 years old I slide him into a pillow case and weighed him with my fish scale. He weighed 17 pounds, 7 ounces. My radio number is 17.

It would take pages to write the many stories about him. I’ll tell a couple of my favorites. When very young, he and another small cat didn’t show up for breakfast. When I went looking for them I found them both together in a raccoon trap. Another time he disappeared for over a week and I thought that was it. Then I heard his voice, which was a deep “wow” instead of a “meow.” I was so very happy to see him. We had another 12 years together. He loved to run through the Olive and Cypress trees. I’d call him Coco Lemur— part monkey and part cat.

He’d greet me in the parking lot at the sound of my truck and start to roll around. Then I’d call him Squirmy Wormy and throw him on my shoulder for his free ride. He loved that and getting petted on my lap

Always healthy, he went to the vet twice in his life. The first visit when very young for his neutering and

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Smitty, the venerable companion

Tributes & Memorials *continued from page 6*

vaccines and at about age six for removal of a small bone in the roof of his mouth.

Near the end of the heat wave in late August of this year he began to yowl when he come up to his water bowl. I thought it was strange and decided to get him checked out. I called Dr. Lumsden, a mobile vet. She made a visit and gave him an exam, fluids and a blood draw. The next evening she called with the diagnosis of kidney failure. He received fluids for five days and had not eaten for as many days. I asked her to come and put him to sleep. He was miserable, and I didn't want him to disappear into the woods to suffer and die alone.

Even though I braced myself for the void his passing left in my realm, it was much larger then I had realized. It's been a couple of tough months without him, but life goes on in "The Saga of Life and Death."

I am so grateful for his company for over 17 years. in such a wild and unpredictable environment. We synergized and enhanced each other's lives in glorious ways. I will always cherish knowing Smitty, the Tom Sawyer of Cats, my Lucky 17.

Thank you Randi for all you do for those unique and remarkable creatures. Each one with traits and personalities that are so special and at truly irreplaceable.

– by Carl Anderson

(About a year ago Smitty's grandmother Mamo passed, and Carl wrote a moving memorial to her as well. Four cats remain in his colony.)



Photo by Carl Anderson

Smitty: 1996 – 2013



Photo by Monica Gonzalez

The Friendly Wanderer: At about 10 weeks old, Lily was found wandering in a Santa Maria parking lot. If you're interested in giving this total love bug a forever home, please call us.

Wish List

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

- Looking for a volunteer job that's challenging, rewarding, exciting, unusual and where it helps to think like a cat? Become a trapper in Santa Maria. We'll show you the ropes.
- Wanted: someone to help get some wonderful rescued kittens adopted! We have found that posting on Facebook, Craigslist and Petfinder reaches many more potential adopters in this age of the Internet. *Catalyst for Cats* would love to have you join our team and make a difference. We need someone who is available to post on all three venues and keep them updated. The rewards will touch your heart and you will know each time a kitty is posted as "adopted" that **you** helped find her a home.
- 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. Past donations have been very helpful.
- If you see a stray cat, or start to feed one it's best to call us within a couple of weeks. We will do our best to get to you as soon we possible. TNRing one cat is immeasurably easier than waiting until the kittens show up.



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!**

Our Holiday Gift to You Enclosed

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

No-hassle donating can now be done using **PayPal** or **credit card** using the Donation Form button on our website. Catalyst is also registered with **Cars for Causes**, also accessible through our website.



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.