



# ALLEY CAT RESCUE

AN ALLIANCE FOR CAT PROTECTION . . . . . [WWW.SAVEACAT.ORG](http://WWW.SAVEACAT.ORG)

## Care for the Golden Years

*What to expect and how to help your cat age gracefully*

By Maggie Funkhouser

Today, cats are living longer than ever before, thanks to improved nutrition, advances in veterinary medicine, and an increase in indoor living. It's no surprise to caretakers that cats are easily living into their teens and twenties. Just as humans age and we start the process of health screenings to check for particular conditions, it is important to schedule regular checkups for senior cats. It's also important to be sensitive and understanding to their changing lifestyle. By following a few simple steps, you can ensure your cat is comfortable and content in her golden years.

### *The Aging Process*

Most cats begin to exhibit changes in their health and behavior as they age. Many of these changes are part of the natural aging process, but some of these changes could also indicate a serious underlying condition (i.e. diabetes) and should be brought to your vet's attention. It is best to identify a condition as early as possible so proper measures can be taken, rather than finding an illness in an advanced stage. If you notice your cat experiencing any of the listed symptoms it is important to see a vet as soon as possible; do not simply chalk it up to "old age."



**SAVIOUR eats a special food formulated to help her maintain a healthy weight as she ages.**

### *Age-related changes*

- Decrease in activity level and mobility; increase in sleep
- Decrease in muscle tone and mass
- Change in appetite and weight, increased or decreased
- Change in coat condition; reduced grooming
- Impaired sight, hearing, sense of smell
- Urinary and bowel changes: incontinence, diarrhea, or constipation
- Decreased dental health: increased tartar buildup, inflamed gums, loose or missing teeth
- Geriatric conditions: arthritis, diabetes, hyperthyroidism, renal impairment
- Changes in behavior: increased/decreased dependency, aggression, senility, vocalization

*...continued on page 3*

## From the Desk of Louise Holton

# Leaving a Legacy of Love

Our companion animals are our family members. We want to make sure they are properly cared for their whole lives. One way to be sure they will be cared for is to set up a Pet Trust. So many cat caretakers have died recently and not left a Pet Trust. Family members often will take the animals to a local shelter, where their fate is not always a good one. By taking the time to think ahead and make a plan, you can guarantee your cat will always receive the care and love that she deserves.

### *Is a Pet Trust different to a Will?*

A Pet Trust is a legal document that provides cash immediately for the care of your animals in the event of disability or death. A Pet Trust can take effect either during a person's lifetime or after their death. You name a trustee who will then hold money in trust for your animals.

If something happens to you, the trustee will make payments on a regular basis to a designated caregiver. In some states, the trust may continue for the rest of the animal's life or for 21 years, whichever comes first.

*If you leave money to your animals in a will, it could take months or even years before the money becomes available.*

You can either set up a Pet Trust through your lawyer, or you can set up one on your own using the LegalZoom website. (LegalZoom refers to this agreement as a Pet Protection Plan.) This way it only costs around \$50 to \$80 and is quick and easy to set up, following step-by-step instructions.

If you choose to use this site, it gives you an option to leave a donation to a rescue group. We ask that you consider leaving a donation to Alley Cat Rescue if you love cats and care about what will happen to the stray and outdoor cat populations of the future. Thank you for your dedicated compassion for cats and for taking a moment to properly plan for your companion animals' future.

For more information on setting up a Pet Trust, please visit:  
<http://www.legalzoom.com/personal/estate-planning/pet-protection-agreement-overview.html>



**A PET TRUST will ensure that Jeffrey's needs are always met should his caretaker no longer be able to care for him.**



For the cats,



Louise Holton, President and Founder

*Help Us  
Save Lives!*

[www.SaveACat.org/donate](http://www.SaveACat.org/donate)



## Golden Years continued

Along with yearly checkups it is recommended that cats around seven or eight years old have a senior blood panel run, which includes a urinalysis, to check for age-related conditions like those mentioned above. Your cat's weight should also be measured regularly and vaccinations kept up-to-date, since a cat's immune system weakens with age.



**JUNIOR developed diabetes and digestive issues as he grew older. He now receives special care for both conditions.**

### Feeding Requirements

Along with ensuring your cat has a healthy blood and urine report, it's also important to speak to a vet about your cat's diet, including supplements or any medications. A variety of cat foods exist that address the health needs of senior cats. Older cats with mouth and teeth problems should be fed canned or moistened dry food, to reduce discomfort. Also monitor your cat's appetite for any changes. If your cat's sense of smell has decreased, which can lead to decreased appetite and weight loss, try warming the food to encourage eating. Always provide plenty of fresh water to keep the kidneys flushed and ensure your cat has easy access to her food and water bowls.

### Stick to a Schedule

Cats like predictability, so it's vital to stick to a set schedule to alleviate any undue stress. If you don't leave food out all the time, make sure mealtime occurs at the same time every day. And some older cats may become more dependent on human interactions, so make sure to include some scheduled snuggle time.

### Grooming

As cats age, they can have difficulty washing and grooming due to stiff joints, resulting in poor coat condition. You may need to brush your cat regularly, especially if she has long hair, to help maintain her coat and prevent any matting. Use gentle motions and be aware of sensitive areas of the cat's body. Gently clean the ears, and keep nails trimmed so they don't become thick and long and curl into the foot pads. (This also helps prevent nails from catching in soft fabrics.) Feel your cat's body for any lumps and bring them to your vet's attention; while most lumps are harmless, some can be cancerous, so it's best to have a vet check them.

### Senior Cat-Friendly Homes

There are a number of small changes you can make in your home that will have a big impact on your senior cat's quality of life. Here are a few steps you can take:

- Use large litter boxes with low sides. Put a litter box on each floor of the house.
- Provide lots of cozy beds, with extra blankets and add heating pads.
- Add ramps and pet steps to access favorite windowsills, chairs, and beds.
- Use scratch posts that are horizontal, lower to the ground, and have a softer texture.
- Gently encourage your cat to play by using wand toys that you can make slow motions with.
- Do not rearrange furniture and keep food/water bowls and litter boxes in the same place, to prevent disorientation and unnecessary stress.
- Turn on nightlights to aid cats with poor vision.
- Do not adopt a rambunctious kitten, who could cause stress and potentially injure an older cat.

Some cats age more gracefully than others. Either way, it is best to schedule regular vet checkups, with periodic blood and urine workups, and keep your cat's teeth clean and healthy. By providing your cat with the additional support she needs and watching for symptoms of disease -- along with plenty of love and snuggles -- she will live many healthy and happy years to come. For more detailed information on caring for elderly cats, be sure to visit our website.

### Did you know?

- The average lifespan of an indoor cat is 12-15 years, nearly doubling since the 1980s.
- Guinness World Records says the oldest living cat is a 30-year-old Siamese in Texas named Corduroy.

# Workshops Help Shelters Save More Lives

By Maggie Funkhouser

Alley Cat Rescue's new Alliance for Cat Protection program is building a network of support for shelters throughout the United States. Alliance shelters receive comprehensive training in humane programs for community cats, including staff and volunteer training and public workshops that save animals' lives. Our dedicated team visits each Alliance community to transform it from top to bottom through education and hands-on support, even holding a field training in which colonies of cats are trapped, neutered, and returned.

We invite all rescuers, volunteers, veterinarians, and caring community members to join us to learn how to get active for cats! When we visit a county shelter, the first day is spent in the classroom with a comprehensive training workshop covering the ins and outs of saving cats' lives. From establishing foster programs to TNR advocacy, we teach the community effective strategies to reduce the number of cats entering shelters, and how to implement solid programs to rehome cats who do.

The second day is when the fun happens! Attendees learn how to get active in the field, with a hands-on Trap-Neuter-Return workshop taught by Alley Cat Rescue's expert trappers. Complete with a field trip to a local colony, attendees gain practical information such as how to set a trap, the best places to set a trap, tips on trapping even the most savvy cats, along with detailed instructions on transporting trapped cats and how to properly maintain a colony.

Recently our team conducted workshops in Mercer County, West Virginia and Vance County, North Carolina. We wanted to work with the new executive staff of these shelters as they strive toward a progressive approach to helping animals. These

directors were excited to welcome our trainers and were open to learning the best practices of humanely managing community cats.

At both shelters, we received lots of wonderful feedback from the staff and community members, along with heartfelt appreciation and gratitude from the shelter directors. ACR's new Alliance for Cat Protection program is happy to provide shelters like these with the kick start they so desperately need to implement successful TNR programs. After giving them a little boost to show them it's not difficult to implement a TNR program for their community, these shelters are on their way to saving a lot more lives!

Every day, more cities across the country are supporting the humane management of community cats, making the cruel tradition of catch-and-kill a thing of the past. Alley Cat Rescue has been leading the way for TNR and feral cats for decades and we are proud to join forces with like-minded shelters that want to create a positive change and save more cats. If you're a shelter interested in holding a workshop in your town, please contact us at 301-277-5595 or [ACR@saveacat.org](mailto:ACR@saveacat.org).



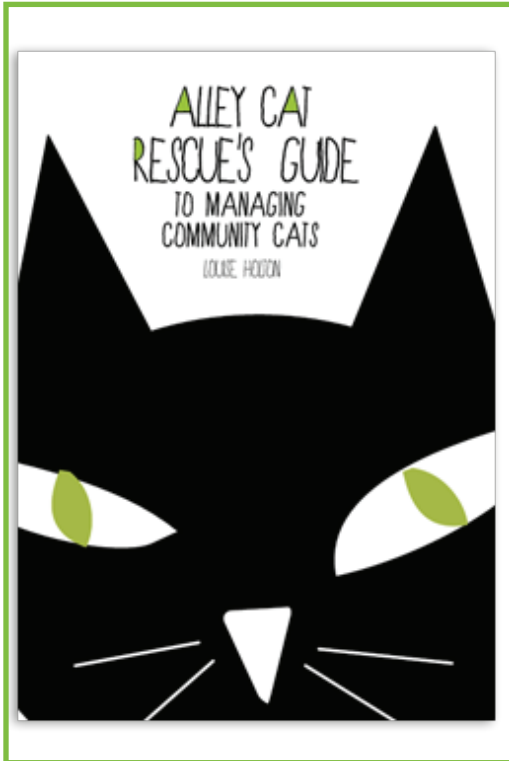
Top: At the Mercer County Animal Shelter. Bottom: With Vance County shelter staff.

*Support Our Workshops!*

[www.SaveACat.org/donate](http://www.SaveACat.org/donate)



# Call to Action: Build a Community of Compassionate Vets



Back in 2010, we launched Feral Cat Spay Day (FCSD) to encourage the veterinary community to offer free and low-cost Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) services to those who care for community cats. In the past five years, roughly 900 veterinary hospitals across the world have spayed or neutered over 9,500 community cats in honor of this day! In order to ramp up these efforts and aid more cats in need, this year we challenged veterinarians to provide affordable TNR services throughout the entire month; hence the *May Spay Challenge* was borne!

***Make a positive impact for cats in your community!***

**Buy our *Guide to Managing Community Cats* and donate it to vets, animal shelters, and policymakers in your area. Our guide has all the tips, tricks, and tools needed to help any compassionate person save more cats.**

This new campaign is a month-long initiative created to encourage veterinarians to provide free or low-cost sterilization for community cats, by pledging to spay or neuter at least one community cat each week for the month of May. Veterinarians were encouraged to work in collaboration with local animal rescuers to identify and assist cats in need of sterilization.

Over 1.4 million cats enter U.S. shelters each year, but tragically, only 3 in 10 will make it out alive. Springtime notoriously signals the start of kitten season and the month of May marks the highest intake of kittens for most shelters. The majority of kittens entering shelters are those found outdoors, born from unsterilized, free-roaming cats, therefore, we challenged veterinarians to help us 'fix' this annual kitten invasion.

Make a greater impact in your community! Simply fill out the form below and return it using the enclosed envelope. We'll take care of the rest!

Please send an invitation letter to my local veterinarian clinic to join the May Spay Challenge in 2017.

Vet clinic name: \_\_\_\_\_

Veterinarian's name: \_\_\_\_\_

Street address: \_\_\_\_\_

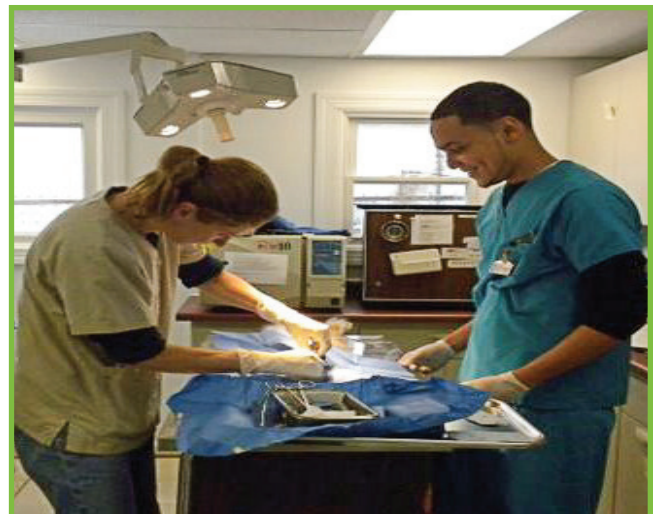
City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Website: \_\_\_\_\_

Does this clinic already provide TNR services to community cats?  Yes  No





Adam Jablonski, Associate Director of Communications

## Meet Our Team

### THE DEDICATED STAFF OF ALLEY CAT RESCUE

- Denise Hilton, *Director of Operations*
- Maggie Funkhouser, *Dir. of Communications & Development*
- Adam Jablonski, *Associate Director of Communications*
- Tom Ragusa, *Finance Associate*
- Cheryl Noll, *Volunteer Colony Caretaker*
- Arden Winner, *summer intern/communications*
- Jasmine Landaverde, *summer intern/member relations*
- Jen Reukauf, *summer intern/community outreach*

### BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- Louise Holton, *President*
- Pervaiz Manzoor, *DVM*
- Desiree Stapley, M.Ed., RD, *Treasurer*
- Peggy Hilden
- Virginia Messina, MPH, RD
- Claudia Delman

### ADVISORY BOARD MEMBERS

- Marsha Bolt, *Outlaw Kitties*
- Elizabeth Marshall Thomas
- Verne Smith, Esq.
- Roger Tabor, *CBiol, FSB, MPhil, FCFBA, FBNAhc*

## Mission Statement:

Alley Cat Rescue's (ACR) commitment is to help stray and outdoor community cats in the United States and around the world, by promoting humane nonlethal care to improve cats' lives. ACR works to reduce the number of feral cats living in colonies through a proven method called Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR).

## Support Our Work

### Planned Giving:

This will provide you with an opportunity to meet your personal financial goals and will strengthen our work to help cats in the future. Enjoy tax savings and turn appreciated assets into income for yourself and others. Charitable gift annuities allow you to make a gift of \$5,000, \$10,000, or more and receive fixed interest payments for life, as well as tax deductions. For more information, [request our planned giving brochure](#) by calling 301-277-5595, emailing us at [acr@saveacat.org](mailto:acr@saveacat.org), or by sending us a written correspondence to: P.O. Box 585, Mt. Rainier, MD 20712.

### Wills and Bequests:

Consider Alley Cat Rescue in your estate plans. This will ensure that your love and care for cats continues beyond your lifetime. Suggested bequest language: "I give (specific amount or property) to Alley Cat Rescue, Inc., having its principle office at 3906 Rhode Island Avenue Brentwood, MD 20722 or PO Box 585, Mt. Rainier, MD 20712 for its general purpose to help stray, abandoned, and feral cats. Tax ID: 52-2279100."



## Donate a car for cats!

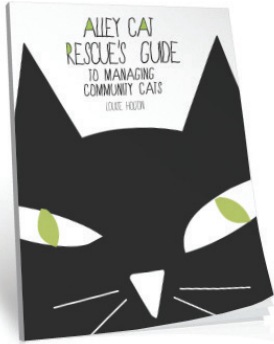
Trips to colonies each day, vet visits, and monthly drives to our Cheap Fix Cat Clinic are hard on the ACR fleet, and tend to send our cars to an early retirement. If you're ready to upgrade, donate your used car, truck, or van to Alley Cat Rescue! You'll get a tax deduction AND piece of mind that your old car has a second life helping to save cats' lives.

*Call 301-277-5595 for more information.*

# Advocate for community cats everywhere you go!

Spark great conversation while on-the-go with ACR gear!

Visit our online store at [SaveACat.org/shop](http://SaveACat.org/shop) for a complete list of merchandise. All sales benefit community cats.



## ACR's "How-To" Guide • \$10.99

*"This is the purrfect, comprehensive resource for anyone interested in helping homeless cats. I wish I'd had it when I started caring for my colony twenty-one years ago."* - Amazon Review



## Grocery Tote Bag • \$8

Save plastic & trees with our eco-friendly shopping bag.



## Metal Water Bottle • \$8

Save plastic & help birds when you order our reusable water bottle.



## Grey or White "Cat Face" T-shirt • \$16 each

Sizes: S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL. Show your support for cats!

## ORDER FORM

*cut along dotted line*

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Order Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

ITEM	PRICE	SIZE (S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL)	No. of Items	Total
<b>ACR's Guide to Managing Community Cats (book)</b>	\$10.99	N/A		\$
<b>Cat Face T-shirt (grey)</b>	\$16			\$
<b>Cat Face T-shirt (white)</b>	\$16			\$
<b>Grocery Bag (white)</b>	\$8	N/A		\$
<b>Water Bottle (teal)</b>	\$8	N/A		\$
			Sub total	\$
<i>*Maryland residents ONLY please remember to add the appropriate sales tax.</i>			Sales tax (6%)*	+ \$
<i>**There is a flat shipping rate of \$7.00 for ALL purchases.</i>			Shipping**	+ \$7.00
<i>All donations are tax-deductible.</i>			<b>Donation</b>	<b>+ \$</b>
<b>Please send checks made out to Alley Cat Rescue or provide your credit card information below.</b>			<b>Total</b>	<b>\$</b>

Visa    MasterCard    Discover    American Express

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_

Expiration Date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

**RETURN COMPLETED ORDER FORM TO ALLEY CAT RESCUE, PO BOX 585, MT RAINIER, MD 20712.**





## Cheap Fix Clinic Saves Lives

Each year 2.4 million healthy and adoptable animals are euthanized in shelters. Every 13 seconds, an animal who would have been a loving and loyal companion loses her life, often because the resources needed to care for her and find her a home simply aren't available.

On the first Tuesday of each month, Alley Cat Rescue takes the issue of pet overpopulation head-on by holding our Cheap Fix Cat Clinic. By offering low-cost services for community and pet cats, we reduce the number of adoptable kittens and cats needlessly killed in overcrowded shelters, as well as the number of cats living outdoors.

Since launching the Cheap Fix Cat Clinic in April, Alley Cat Rescue has provided these important services for 125 cats and kittens in our community, and we are eager to help more!

Over the last 20 years ACR has been spaying and neutering cats in the Washington, DC Metro area. During that time, we have sterilized around 40,000 cats. ***Please consider making a tax-deductible donation so that we can continue to offer these life-saving services and reach more cats in need.***



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Alley Cat Rescue  
PO Box 585  
Mt. Rainier, MD 20712  
301-277-5595

