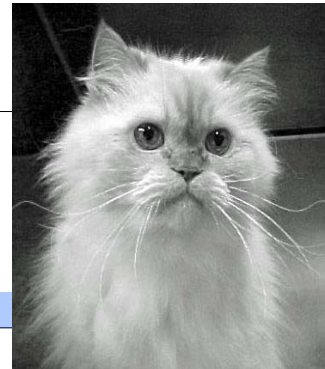


Alley Cat **mews**



Doc, the Brentwood Animal Hospital Cat

Vol. 07, Issue 1 · www.saveacat.org

TNR 101 -- BY LOUISE HOLTON

ACR considers non-lethal population control—trap-neuter-return—to be the most effective and humane way to deal with feral cats. The spaying and neutering of colonies:

- stabilizes the population at manageable levels
- eliminates behaviors associated with breeding, such as fighting and spraying toms, and noisy females in heat
- helps make the cats easier to deal with over the long term. Eventually, many caretakers are able to lure friendlier members of the colony into carriers for visits to the veterinarian for check-ups, dental cleanings and booster rabies shots
- TNR is more effective and less costly than repeated attempts at eradication.

There are three ways to deal with feral cats:

- Leave alone (do not spay or neuter)
- Trap and kill
- TNR-Trap-neuter-return—returning sterilized cats back to their supervised sites, with their caretakers

1) LEAVE THEM ALONE

Many animal control agencies choose to ignore feral cats unless they receive complaints from neighbors. When the cats are left alone, nature takes control. Kittens may suffer from diseases such as feline distemper or respiratory illnesses which, if not treated, can kill them. Many may die from parasite infestations, including roundworms and coccidia, and severe flea infestations, which can cause anemia. If the food supply is inadequate healthy cats are likely to move away in search of other sources, while very sick or old cats will suffer and die from malnutrition and weakened immune systems. When this occurs in neighborhoods, people get upset by the sight of sick cats and dying kittens. Most people would prefer to see the cats cared for in some way.

In his book, *Claws and Purrs*, British biologist and cat expert, Peter Neville writes about natural population control: “As with all wild animals, few of the young born to any mother will survive to

Continued on page 1



FEATURES	
Cover TNR 101	Page 3 Neonatal Kittens Get Second Chance
Page 1 Myths and Misinformation About TNR	Page 4 The Different Cat Breeds Cats and the Law
Page 2 ACR Attends Cat Writers' Conference	Page 6 International News Cat Action Teams

reach sexual maturity themselves. All animals overproduce to ensure the survival of the few and the rules of Mother Nature apply to the feral cat as much as any other creature. Much of the interest in city feral cats and concern for their welfare arise understandably from people who are unused to the sight of Mother Nature at work culling off so many kittens to ensure the survival of the fittest. The sight of sickly, helpless kittens in the undergrowth of the city park or railway embankment mewling for their mother is too much for us to bear and few can walk past without wanting to offer to help. Sadly, by then, such care is invariably too late as the kittens' eyes and respiratory systems are often filled with mucus and the only reason the kittens are so visible is because they have wandered away and are unaware of the dangers of being in the open. While

some can pull through with intensive veterinary care, many will die..."

2) TRAP AND KILL

This method, seen by some agencies to be a solution, is actually a short-term solution at best. Plus it is very unpopular and vehemently protested by cat lovers. As a result, authorities may go in at night to trap, when their actions are less likely to be observed. ACR and other humane activists believe this to be a highly unethical approach, placing cats in the category of "pests"—a category in which we may all agree that no animal belongs. In the last 35 years it has been demonstrated all over the world that small colonies of managed, sterilized cats who are cared for by their caretakers not only live healthy lives, but become less of an "annoyance" to their human neighbors.

Continued on page 3

MYTHS AND MISINFORMATION ABOUT TNR

Much misinformation stands in the way of implementing nonlethal control.

Some complain about a perceived health risk—a controlled and managed colony will have had rabies shots. The percentage of feral cats having Feline Leukemia and FIV is usually the same as in the owned cat population. Parasites can be controlled by putting deworming medication and flea meds such as Capstar in their food.

Cats messing up gardens by using them as litter boxes—build a large outdoor cat litter box for the ferals. Keep it full of clean playsand and scoop regularly.

Some call TNR "the dumping of cats"—outdoor feral cats are returned to the place they have lived for many years. Usually a caretaker already exists who feeds them daily, gives them fresh water, supplies them with shelter and cares for them. So they are definitely NOT "dumped".

New cats will be "dumped" in the colony by people who no longer want their cats—to this I reply: Rather let them be dumped here where kind caretakers will notice them and remove, sterilize them, and find them new homes if they are tame, or return them to the colony if they are feral. These people who dump, will dump their unwanted cats anyway. So, as I said, rather here than in the woods.

People who do TNR take tame cats out of shelters and put them in colonies—I have traveled extensively for 16 years to Europe, Britain, South Africa, and all across the U.S. visiting hundreds of colony caretakers and hundreds of colonies of cats. I have NEVER once met any feral cat caretaker who would do this. Some of us, including ACR, DO rescue cats from shelters—but we fix them and take them to PETS MART and PETCO weekend after weekend to find them homes. We also advertise on Petfinder.org and PETS911.org.

You should tame them all and put them in homes—MOST adult feral cats cannot be tamed. They are wild cats and would be very unhappy living in homes. Now there are exceptions. And when I lecture about feral cats someone always points out that they took a feral cat into their home and eventually the cat became tame. I know this. I too have had some luck with taming adult ferals. But I have been called many more times by someone who tells me that the feral has lived under the bed or couch for a year or more, and only comes out to eat when everyone is asleep. Some call and say the feral cat keeps trying to get out and tears up the blinds and curtains. Some call and say the feral cat is NOT eating and is losing weight—in this case the feral is usually so unhappy that he stops eating and this can be life-threatening. Most importantly there are still 6 million TAME cats killed in shelters each year in the U.S. and we cannot find homes for them. How are we going to find homes for millions of feral cats as well?

Wish List

The holidays have come and gone for most people, but Alley Cat Rescue and the cats are always in need. Here are few items we desperately need:

Van or SUV (working A/C please!)
Digital Camera (4+ Megapixals)
Washing machine & dryer
Electric heating pads
Traps (Tomahawk or ACES)
Cat beds
Cat toys
Blankets
Window perch
Kitten milk replacer (powder form)
Cat litter
White photocopy paper
Gift cards to PETsMART, Staples, Target, etc..



Saturday morning started with a panel on Feral Cat issues, which our own president and founder, Louise Holton, sat on, along with representatives from the Humane Society of the United States and several other feral cat groups. The discussion was intense, and many people commented that they had learned a great deal about feral cats and were

Continued on Page 3

Another consequence of lethal control that has never been explored is the effect that trap and kill has on the colonies' caretakers who have invested a lot of time and money in the colony. And, of course, they have usually developed an emotional bond with the cats and are naturally deeply hurt if their cats are harmed

TNR 101 continued

WHAT IS THE THE VACUUM EFFECT?

Neville goes on to say that "killing cats to solve the largely behavioral problems that most people complain about may work, but only temporarily. Nature abhors a vacuum and there are surely few mammals to beat the cat at filling an opportunity to occupy the niche left empty by those killed. This is why culling cats is a pointless exercise in most city situations. In my experience it takes no more than six months in London to repopulate the site with new cats."

After three decades of studying and working with feral colonies, Biologists Roger Tabor and Peter Neville both often discuss the "vacuum effect" that is created when whole populations of cats are removed. Especially in heavily populated urban areas, other cats will quickly move in to repopulate the area.

It is ironic that many in the environmental movement, who observe this occurrence in other animal populations, somehow refuse to see that the same effect occurs in feral cat populations. And to reiterate Peter Neville's observation: "few mammals beat the cat at filling the niche left empty by those killed."

Neville states: "In many cases the urban feral cat clearly warrants management on welfare grounds and requires the numbers have to be controlled if he is to live in reasonable harmony with his human neighbors."

ACR Attends Cat Writers' Conference

by Kylie Luik

On Wednesday, November 15th, Louise and I arrived in California for the 13th Annual Cat Writers' Association Conference and Awards. It was a whirlwind weekend, filled with meetings, lectures, food and fun. Of course, no matter where we go, feral cats follow us. There were local managed colonies of cats that lived right under a nearby underpass!

On Thursday evening we met with some of our members and supporters who live in the San Francisco area. We had a wonderful turnout, with almost 40 attendees. A lively discussion of Trap-Neuter-Return ensued, with many great ideas being bounced back and forth. It was nice to be able to meet some of the wonderful people whose support keeps ACR running.

Friday was spent in seminars from morning till evening, including lectures on how to have a successful book proposal and talk by Jim Edgar, author of "Bad Cat" on how to turn a website into a book.

[ACR attends Cat Writers' Conference continued](#)

inspired to write about them. There were also panels on the human/animal bond and the feline genome.

Later that day we attended the Cat Show at the San Mateo County Expo Center. There were over 40 different breeds of cats there. We especially enjoyed seeing the Somali and the Selkirk Rex. I even got to pet my first Sphynx cat (after using hand sanitizer). There were also some cat rescue groups there with beautiful "moggies" for adoption.

In 1871 the beginning of a renewed interest and compassion for the cat was initiated by the writer and artist Harrison Weir in London at the Crystal Palace. It was the first Cat Show ever. It was started by

Harrison for the purpose of changing "long ages of neglect, ill-treatment and absolute cruelty (towards cats)...with little or no kindness (shown)..." and this Cat Show has been credited as the beginning of a new era for cats and helping to improve the status of cats.

The Saturday dinner was accompanied by a speech from Niels C. Pedersen, DVM, professor at UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine and director of its Center for Companion Animal Health. Dr. Pedersen has discovered five infectious diseases of cats including FIV (feline immunodeficiency virus).

Following dinner was the awards banquet. There were many great writers there, and we were honored to be among them. Alley Cat Rescue was awarded a Certificate of Excellence for our newsletter. We are thrilled that our work is recognized by the Cat Writers' Association.



[Baby Kittens Get Second Chance](#)

By Caroline Harrison

Imagine relaxing after dinner when all of a sudden you get a frantic phone call about kittens in need! That's exactly what happened to Caroline Harrison and Susan Bloom of Alley Cat Rescue. A woman named Delray was calling from Baltimore. She immediately began telling the story of the pretty grey semi-feral she was feeding in her neighborhood and how the mom had given birth to 4 kittens about a week earlier. The momma never allowed the woman to touch her but would stand back and let Delray hold the newborn kittens. The mother showed incredible trust for a feral.

Now, Delray had arrived home to find the mother cat in the middle of the road dead, having been struck by a car sometime while she was at work. This meant 4 one-week-old abandoned babies with no mother to care for them. They would certainly die unless something could be done. Alley Cat Rescue immediately began putting a plan in action. We all believed these innocents deserved a chance. Susan Bloom quickly began getting KMR and bottles, heating pad, box etc to be ready when the babes arrived. Caroline and Delray coordinated the plan to meet that same evening so the kittens would not be left alone over the chilly night with no food or mother to keep them warm.

Finally they arrived, 3 grey and one black kitten all ready for some food! Susan jumped right in and became the mom. Waking up to feed, helping them go eliminate waste, everything a devoted mom should do. We were not sure if they would make it. All rescuers know keeping abandoned babies alive who are that tiny is not a certain fate. We are very fortunate and proud to report that 6 weeks later all 4 are thriving! They are learning new kitty tricks every day! It's been a thrill to see them get to this stage, happy, healthy and as adorable as ever! All 4 are boys and enjoy spending their time rough housing with each other and snoozing with the grown up kitties of the house.

This is part of what Alley Cat Rescue is all about, saving those in need and getting them to the point of being able to be adopted out to genuine loving homes. Unfortunately we can not help them all, nor can we help as many as we would like to. Funds are short and the need is great. We sincerely do need the support of people like you, our members, and others to help spread the word about these poor

[Baby Kittens get Second Chance continued](#)

cats and kittens. We are also in great need of financial support. Without you we could not do any of the work that we do. Vetting, food, litter, etc all costs money. You may read this and think “surely someone else out there will donate” but please know that every penny counts. No donation is too small (or too large!) when it comes to the animals. If you have any doubt just take a look at these 4 adorable faces!



[The Different Cat Breeds](#)

[By Louise Holton](#)

The basic cat is a tabby. The ancestor of the

domestic cat is the African Wildcat, *Felis lybica*, a grayish striped tabby. All cats have tabby markings, even the black cat. You can see the stripes especially in black kittens. British Biologist and cat expert describes it this way: “the ‘ghost’ of a tabby pattern still shows in certain light.” Over 90% of all cats in the world are “moggies.” Pedigreed cats form only a small percentage of cats.

Today the “Natural” cat breeds include the Maine Coon, the first feral cat in America, possibly brought over to the U.S. by the Vikings. The first Abyssinian was brought to England in 1868 following a military expedition to Abyssinia (now Ethiopia). The markings resemble those of the Jungle Cat, which could be one of its ancestors.

Today in Turkey, one can still find natural Angora longhaired cats living as feral or housecats. During the Ottoman Empire the beautiful white longhaired Angoras became the “darlings of the wealthy” according to Tabor. The returning crusaders and the Venetian traders brought them to Europe.

The Turkish Van cat is from Turkey, although the natural Van is all white, with odd eyes (one Blue and one green) or both eyes blue. In their natural environment, the cat is a swimmer and swims in the Mediterranean. Today’s highly bred Turkish Vans retain their love of water.

Illustrated manuscripts from 1351 to 1767, show pale seal point Siamese cats. Siamese cats were taken from Siam (Thailand) to various parts of the world. If you travel around the world like Roger Tabor did for the BBC series “The Rise of The Cat” you will see most of the pedigreed cats of today living in their natural state.



[Cats and the Law by Kylie Luik](#)

All across the United States, lawmakers have enacted many laws in regards to cats. Some states, including Maine, Maryland and Massachusetts have even adopted “state cats”. Maine’s is of course, the Maine Coon, Maryland’s state cat is the calico, and Massachusetts’s state cat is the tabby.

Of course, many state lawmakers are taking cat laws a lot more seriously than just adopting a state cat. The only state in the U.S. that requires the licensing of cats is Rhode Island (the issue is left up to municipalities in all other states). It is very important to find out if you must register your cat in your county or city to avoid fines. California seems to have the most comprehensive set of laws regarding cats, even though they do not have to be licensed on the state level. They do outline the minimum weaning time for kittens, yearly veterinary requirements and the holding period for impounded cats.

California also defines feral cats as “cats with temperaments that are completely unsocialized, although frightened or injured tame pet cats may appear to be feral” (31752.5.

Cat and the Law continued

Legislative findings and declarations). This statute also says that it is “cruel to keep feral cats caged for long periods of time” and that “some people care for or own feral cats”. The law also details what is to happen to feral cats brought into a shelter:

Notwithstanding Section 31752, if an apparently feral cat has not been reclaimed by its owner or caretaker within the first three days of the required holding period, shelter personnel qualified to verify the temperament of the animal shall verify whether it is feral or tame by using a standardized protocol. If the cat is determined to be docile or a frightened or difficult tame cat, the cat shall be held for the entire required holding period specified in Section 31752. If the cat is determined to be truly feral, the cat may be euthanized or relinquished to a nonprofit, as defined in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, animal adoption organization that agrees to the spaying or neutering of the cat if it has not already been spayed or neutered. In addition to any required spay or neuter deposit, the pound or shelter, at its discretion, may assess a fee, not to exceed the standard adoption fee, for the animal released.



Recently, a law in Wisconsin that would allow feral cats to be killed was abandoned. This measure entitled Question 62, would have allowed Wisconsinites to kill such domestic cats just as they can kill other “pest” mammals such as starlings or skunks. On May 25, 2005 at the regular meeting of the Natural Resources Board, representatives of the Conservation Congress told the Board that the Congress' Executive Committee has declined to pursue the issue.

Despite the appearance that all laws relating to feral cats are negative, some positive laws are appearing throughout the country. In Delaware, there is a law on the table that would establish a spay/neuter fund to provide low-cost spay/neuter services to persons

who are eligible for state assistance programs; individuals recognized by a county or municipal government or an authorized state, county or municipal animal control agency as being an abandoned, free-roaming, homeless, feral cat or stray dog keeper; or an organization which establishes proof of being a 501(c)(3) animal welfare, animal rescue and/or animal humane organization registered in the State of Delaware.

Illinois has recently enacted that laws that exempt feral cat caretakers from registering their cats, which means that “Any municipality or political subdivision allowing feral cat colonies and trap, sterilize, and return programs to help control cat overpopulation shall be immune from criminal liability and shall not be civilly liable, except for willful and wanton misconduct, for damages that may result from a feral cat” and “any veterinarian who sterilizes feral cats and any feral cat caretaker who traps cats for a trap, sterilize, and return program shall be immune from criminal liability and shall not, as a result of his or her acts or omissions, except for willful and wanton misconduct, be liable for civil damages” (510 ILCS 5/35).

Alley Cat Rescue puts out a call to action! Contact your local government and state representatives and find out what they are doing to help protect feral cats in your area. Visit your state website to find out who your representatives are, and then call, write, email or fax them. Tell them about the states that are enacting positive laws for cats.

Support ACR through Charitable Gift Annuities: Make a gift of \$5,000 or \$10,000 and receive fixed interest payments for life & tax deductions. The interest is usually more than a bank pays.

For more information call 301-277-5595 or email AlleyCatRescue@gmail.com

New Addition to the Alley Cat Rescue Team!

Elizabeth "Lizzie" Ellis is the most recent addition to the Alley Cat Rescue team. A resident of Baltimore, she braves traffic every day to do her part in helping underprivileged cats. Lizzie's first cats were a mother and two babies which her parents found in a closed box atop a trashcan. One of the cats, Friskey, lived for 21 years, and died when Lizzie was 20 years old. A few months later, Lizzie began working with feral cats in Baltimore city, and managed to domesticate a feral kitten who was living in a used car lot. In the past few years, she has added four other rescues to her household. Lizzie says she's thrilled to be working at Alley Cat Rescue -- an organization which shares her values and is making a difference in the lives of thousands of cats and kittens in the DC area.



INTERNATIONAL NEWS--NEW ANIMAL ADVOCACY PARTY IN UK

By Kylie Luik

"Animals Count," a new political party that will put animals at the top of the political agenda is launching in the United Kingdom. The party plans to encourage other parties to protect those who cannot protect themselves. The party encourages sustainable farming initiatives and other laws that will protect animals.

Attitudes about animals in the United Kingdom have been changing. Over three million people support animal charities, to a

tune of over 500 million pounds. That money has gone towards eliminating fox hunting, fur farming and testing cosmetics on animals. These bans were followed by the new UK and Scottish Animal Welfare Act of 2006 which includes statues regarding the care of animals, higher penalties for animal abuse, and extends the power of Inspectors to seize animals that are suffering or in danger of suffering.

DARREN SINGER & COMPANY
REAL ESTATE

Is Proud to Support

ALLEY CAT RESCUE
THE NATIONAL CAT PROTECTION ASSOCIATION

**Darren Singer & Company will donate 20% of our total commissions to Alley Cat Rescue when we represent you in the Sale or Purchase of your home. There is no limit to the amount of the donation! Just contact Felicia Singer at 818-407-0136 and mention ACR. It's that easy!*

DARREN SINGER & COMPANY provides you with:

- **PURR**fessional experience... over 20 years
- **PURR**sonalized service... full service real estate brokerage
- while supporting a **PURR**fect cause...



Darren Singer & Company-- Real Estate
Felicia Singer-- Broker, Associate
Residential Specialist
22271 Coral Bell Lane
Woodland Hills, CA 91367
FSinger@SingerRealEstate.net
www.SingerRealEstate.net

CAT ACTION TEAMS

Alley Cat Rescue is forming Cat Action Teams all across the world. If you would like to be part of one in your area, please email CatActionTeams@gmail.com. All you need is internet access, a telephone, and some free time to help those in your area that need help. People call ACR from all over the world, and we need volunteers to help those people not in our immediate area.

ACR Staff

Louise Holton-- Publisher
Kylie Luik-- Editor
Lizzie Ellis--
Admin Assistant

Board of Directors:

Dr. Pervaiz Manzoor
Desiré Stapley
Peggy Hilden
Ginny Messina
Louise Holton

How You Can Help

A: BY CHECK

Make check payable to *Alley Cat Rescue*

- \$10 \$15 \$20 \$25
 \$35 \$50 \$100 \$150
 Other \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Thank you needed: YES NO

E-Mail: _____

Please indicate which you would like to contribute to:

- Compassion Fund* *Spay-Neuter Fund*

B: BY CREDIT CARD

- Please charge my ONE TIME \$ _____
contribution to my card
 I wish to make a MONTHLY credit card donation
 \$6 \$9 \$12 \$15 \$20 \$25 \$ _____

MasterCard Visa

American Express Discover

Account Number _____

Expiration date _____

Signature _____

Credit Card donations will be credited to BRENTWOOD ANIMAL HOSPITAL, account of Alley Cat Rescue

www.saveacat.org

*Alley Cat Rescue The National Cat Protection Association is a non-profit 501(c)3 -
Donations are Tax Deductible - Alley Cat Rescue - P.O. Box 585 - Mt. Rainier, MD 20712*

Do you send a monthly donation through a check? Would you like ACR to send you payment coupons? Please check here if you would like payment coupons ____



Alley Cat Rescue
P.O. Box 585
Mount Rainier, MD 20712

Address Service Requested

NONPROFIT ORG
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
MERRIFIELD, VA
PERMIT No. 1679



**CFC #:
1803**