



# ALLEY CAT RESCUE

AN ALLIANCE FOR CAT PROTECTION ..... SAVEACAT.ORG

## Kittens 101

By Maggie Funkhouser

Spring is here again and that means “kitten season” has arrived. As the weather becomes warmer, neighborhoods will start to see tiny fuzz balls darting in and out of bushes and hiding under porches. Unfortunately, kitten mortality rates are usually very high. Many become sick from diseases that are treatable, such as upper respiratory infections (URIs), while others may become separated from their mother, giving them little chance of survival.

Alley Cat Rescue receives hundreds of calls every year regarding orphaned kittens, many of them bottle-babies. Thanks to our dedicated volunteers, foster families, and staff, most of the kittens who find their way to us eventually go on to find loving homes. Fostering kittens and hand-raising newborn babies can be an enjoyable and rewarding experience, and it also frees up valuable shelter space, so more cats can be assisted. Please consider becoming a foster parent using our tips below.



**ALONE AND HUNGRY, Dennis was dropped off at the Alley Cat Rescues office at just four days old.**

### *Caring for Orphaned and Newborn Kittens*

Young kittens should be kept in a box lined with absorbent paper towels or pee pads. It's very important to keep the kittens warm and dry; use a heating pad covered with a towel to keep the kittens between 80 and 90 degrees. You can also include a stuffed animal with the kittens, as the toy may help them feel more comfortable.

If kittens are under five weeks of age and unable to eat solid food, they will need to be bottle-fed with kitten formula every two to four hours. Kittens with difficulty suckling from a bottle can also be syringe-fed. Massage the belly to stimulate digestion, and use a moistened cotton ball or soft tissue to encourage elimination after each feeding. (Use formula or kitten milk replacer whenever possible. Homemade formula made with cow's or goat's milk should only be used in an emergency. Blend eight ounces of milk with three egg yolks, 1 tbsp. corn oil, and a pinch of salt, and heat until warm to the touch, but not too hot.\*)

The mother usually cleans the babies during the first few weeks, so you will have to take on this task. Once old enough, most kittens know instinctually to use a litter box; you can also encourage this behavior by placing each kitten in the center of a litter box and, using her paw, gently showing her how to dig at the litter.

Begin weaning around four weeks old. Mix canned kitten food with kitten formula and hand feed until the kittens are accustomed to eating on their own. Then, gradually change over completely to canned kitten food.

Kittens are susceptible to respiratory diseases such as feline herpes virus and calicivirus. Symptoms include sneezing, coughing, and nasal and eye discharge. A mild case can be treated by providing a warm environment, cleaning the eye and nose areas, and using a vaporizer. Antibiotics will not help treat URIs, which are viral infections, but are sometimes used to

\*Replacement milk formula adapted from Maddies Fund: <http://www.maddiesfund.org/orphaned-kitten-care-how-to.htm>

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## From the Desk of Louise Holton

# *Saving Kittens' Lives at Alley Cat Rescue*

Euthanasia rates at U.S. shelters are down and that is a good thing. The bad news is that hundreds of thousands of the felines who do lose their lives in shelters are tiny kittens.

Last October, 36 kittens were dropped off at the Alley Cat Rescue office. I also had five kittens dropped on me, plus a mama cat who had three kittens in a box behind a dumpster at one of our colonies.

There are some forward-thinking groups working with shelters to set up kitten nurseries. People do want to help. The kitten nursery in Los Angeles took in 1,800 feral kittens, but sadly this still left 6,200 kittens in the city shelters. Shelters are always overrun with cats, so caring for an influx of needy kittens is extremely challenging.

They require extra care, sometimes around the clock. My one baby was three days old, and he arrived at my door very cold and wet; not a good thing. He arrived with his baby brother and despite my best efforts to get them warmed up first and then fed, one sadly died overnight.

And the remaining kitten was a real handful, nursing from a bottle day and night, and literally screaming in between! He also developed diarrhea and I rushed him to the vet twice as I thought he was going to die. Fortunately, the diarrhea subsided within a week after we began mixing a special canned food (I/D diet) in with his formula.

Many people find feral kittens in their backyard and declare that the mother has run off, but sometimes this is not true. Often the mother has simply left in search of food, and will return if the kittens are left in a safe and secluded place. Removing them is how many feral kittens end up in shelters, where they are "put to sleep" because shelters do not have the resources to care for them.

Alley Cat Rescue wants to save more kittens... and we can with your help. We have many resources for shelters and individuals who want to help kittens and are prepared to take action.

If you cannot do the actual hands-on work yourself, you can donate to Alley Cat Rescue to ensure that we are able to help others carry out this life-saving work of caring for orphaned kittens.



Of course it goes without saying that PREVENTION is still the best remedy. We will be expanding our local spay/neuter program this year to sterilize more cats in our own community. Your continued support makes all of our efforts possible and we look forward to an exciting year of protecting and advocating for cats. **Thank you!**

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Louise".

Louise Holton, President and Founder



**FOUR KITTENS FOUND** by a professor at the University of Maryland, taken in and cared for by Alley Cat Rescue.

*Help Us  
Save Lives!*

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

combat secondary bacterial infections. Conjunctivitis of the eyes requires constant cleaning with moist, warm cotton balls and application of Terramycin or Chlorasone a few times per day directly in the eyes. If left untreated, upper respiratory infections can cause severe health problems, including pneumonia, blindness, or even death.



**FOUND UNDER A PORCH just a few hours before a major snowstorm, Marlin, a feral kitten, is socialized by ACR staff.**

If a kitten needs to be medicated, use liquid medicine in moist food, or crush tablets into baby food (meat flavor only, no garlic ingredients). Whole tablets should not be administered to a feral kitten because it may cause trauma and can undo the taming process. It also increases the risk of one being bitten.

Nearly all feral and stray kittens have internal parasites (worms), as well as external parasites (fleas, lice, mites). Parasites can cause loss of appetite, diarrhea, and anemia, and can be deadly for a kitten. Once kittens weigh about two pounds, they can be treated with a monthly topical flea and worm medication, such as Advantage Multi. At this weight, around eight weeks of age, kittens should also be spayed or neutered.

## *Taming Feral Kittens*

The critical socialization period of a feral kitten is from two to seven weeks of age. During this period the kitten should form bonds with humans and other animals. The process of taming kittens can take four to eight weeks depending on their age and degree of socialization to humans.

Any person attempting to socialize a feral kitten must be patient and totally committed. Do not take on too many kittens at one time, and always be cautious when working with feral kittens. Remember, they are unsocialized and will defend themselves if they feel cornered or threatened.

Feral kittens should be confined to a large cage in a spare room that has limited foot traffic. Adding a cat den or small box to the cage will help kittens feel safer. Line the cage with newspaper and provide a litter box, along with food and water. For the first day, do not attempt to handle the kittens. They must first learn to feel safe. Visit them frequently, talking softly so they get used to your voice. You can also turn on a radio or TV so they get used to human voices.

After you have given the kittens about two days to settle in, select the least aggressive kitten, place a towel firmly around her body (do not cover her head) and pick her up. Keep her wrapped securely in the towel and set her on your lap. If the kitten stays calm, pet her gently on the head from behind. Repeat this handling process a few times each day, until each kitten is comfortable with being picked up and petted.

Within about a week the kittens should have made considerable progress, although each kitten will develop at a different rate. As the kittens become more comfortable being around people, they should be allowed access to the entire room. Continue to make frequent visits to handle and play with the kittens. Use toys to encourage interaction and build trust and provide a variety of scratch posts to train them on appropriate scratching areas.

If there is another tame cat in the house who enjoys the company of kittens, this can help the taming process. Kittens are “copycats” and may follow a tame cat’s behavior; if the kittens see a tame cat purr when you pet her, they may be encouraged to trust you more. Remember to always use caution when introducing new cats and ensure that the adult cat is vaccinated.

Fostering kittens in a home environment requires commitment. Taking responsibility for an orphaned kitten’s well-being may mean late nights, early mornings, or an unplanned trip to the vet. However, it is a uniquely rewarding experience to guide a kitten from feral, to socialized, to a loving forever home.

## **PEDIATRIC SPAY/NEUTER** *Safe at 2 lbs*

### **Benefits:**

- quicker surgery, fewer complications
- quicker recovery, less stress
- can eliminate need for overnight stay at vet
- protects against reproductive organ cancers
- no accidental litters
- **NO KITTENS HAVING KITTENS!**

# Diagnosing and Treating Diabetic Cats

By Maggie Funkhouser

Does your cat's appetite seem more ravenous than usual yet she appears to be slimming down? Or maybe you've noticed her sitting at the water bowl more often and visiting the litter box more frequently? If you've taken note of these new habits, it could indicate your kitty is experiencing symptoms of diabetes, and a trip to the vet should be scheduled as soon as possible.

Diabetes mellitus is a complex but common disease where a cat's body either doesn't produce or doesn't properly use insulin. Insulin is a hormone produced in the pancreas and is responsible for regulating the flow of glucose (sugar) from the bloodstream into the cells. When insulin is deficient or ineffective, the cat's body starts to break down fat and protein, which is why cats will experience an increase in appetite yet continue to lose weight. They will also develop high levels of sugar in their bloodstream that is eliminated in the urine, leading to excessive thirst and urination.

There are two types of the disease in cats: insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (IDDM) and non-insulin-dependent diabetes mellitus (NIDDM). No matter which type a cat has, the majority of individuals will require insulin injections in order to control the disease. Your vet will diagnose diabetes based on the above clinical symptoms (increased eating, weight loss, increased drinking and urination), a physical examination, and lab tests, which will ultimately reveal abnormally high levels of sugar in the blood and urine.

Because each cat's condition is different, the proper type of insulin, dosage, and frequency of injection must be determined by your vet. Once a schedule has been established, injections can be easily administered at home, usually twice a day. Insulin injections use a very small needle and most cats are unaware that the injection is even being given, especially if they are distracted by mealtime.

Any cat can be affected by diabetes, but it most often occurs in older, obese cats. (Obesity is a major risk factor for the development of diabetes in cats.) Male cats also seem to suffer from the disease more than females. If left untreated, diabetes will shorten a cat's lifespan and can lead to dangerous and often fatal conditions such as ketoacidosis (liver disease). There is no cure for diabetes but with proper treatment -- which can include insulin injections, oral medication, and a change in diet -- most cats live long happy lives.



**Alley Cat Rescue provides permanent care to Junior and Nelly, two senior cats who have diabetes. Both eat prescription food and receive insulin injections twice daily. Diabetes hasn't slowed either down, and they remain active, engaged, and affectionate.**

*Support Our Resident Cats!*

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

# Call to Action:

## Ask Your Vet to Take the May Spay Challenge!



**THE MAJORITY OF KITTENS in U.S. shelters are born to free-roaming cats.**

Alley Cat Rescue launched Feral Cat Spay Day (FCSD) in 2010 to encourage the veterinary community to offer free and low-cost Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) services to those who care for community cats. To date, roughly 900 veterinary hospitals across the world have spayed or neutered over 9,500 community cats in honor of this day! This year we're asking veterinarians to go even bigger by offering these services throughout the entire month of May in order to increase awareness of and support for the cats in their communities. We are calling this bold, new initiative the May Spay Challenge.

**"The key to our success in reducing cat populations lies within the veterinary community. Rescuers rely on their partnerships with vets to Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) outdoor cats. TNR stops the breeding cycle, reduces free-roaming cat populations, and improves the health of community cats."**

-Louise Holton

Spring is known as "kitten season," and the month of May marks the highest intake of kittens for many shelters. The majority of kittens entering shelters are found outdoors, born from unsterilized, free-roaming cats. In order to get to the heart of the issue, Alley Cat Rescue is now asking veterinarians across the country to provide free or low-cost spay/neuter services for at least one outdoor cat each week in May.

Cats are the number one companion animal by population in the United States. However, over 1.4 million cats enter shelters every year, and sadly, only 3 in 10 will make it out alive. These heart-breaking statistics are unacceptable. The May Spay Challenge gives the veterinary community an opportunity to become more involved with community cat care, so that more innocent lives can be saved.

Veterinarians are encouraged to work in collaboration with local animal rescuers to identify and assist cats in need of sterilization. Please encourage your vet(s) to take the May Spay Challenge too! You can find more information about this new campaign, a sample letter asking your vet to participate, and an online registration form at

[www.saveacat.org/mayspaychallenge](http://www.saveacat.org/mayspaychallenge).

### Did you know?

- Pop. of community cats spayed/neutered: **2%**
- Pop. of pet cats spayed/neutered: **90%**
- **80%** of new kittens are born to community cats
- **70%** of cats in shelters are euthanized

\*source: "Pets by the Numbers." HSUS. Web. 03 Mar. 2016.





Liz Kurzawinski, *Community Outreach Coordinator*

## 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*  
Liz Kurzawinski, *Community Outreach Coordinator*  
Emily Patnode, *Member Relations Manager*  
Tom Ragusa, *Finance Associate*  
Cheryl Noll, *Volunteer Colony Caretaker*

### 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).

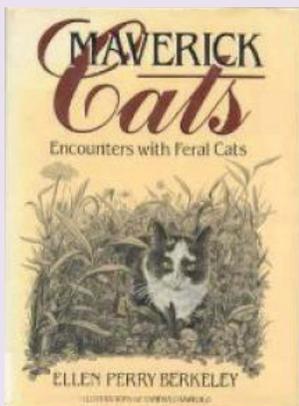
## Support Our Work

### 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@saveecat.org](mailto:acr@saveecat.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 insure 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."



Buy a copy of Ellen Perry Berkeley's book, "Maverick Cats: Encounters with Feral Cats," and she will donate \$3 to Alley Cat Rescue!

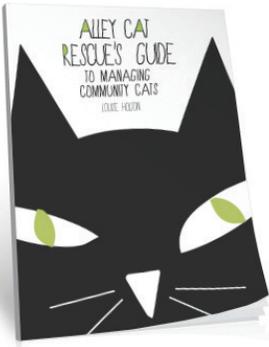
Send a check in the amount of \$11.95 payable to Ellen Perry Berkeley, along with your name, mailing address, and mention of this ad, to 265 Village Lane, Bennington, VT 05201.

*Order a Copy Today!*

# 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 • \$15.99

*"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<br>(S, M, L, XL, 2XL, 3XL) | No. of Items    | Total       |
|---|---------|---------------------------------|-----------------|-------------|
| ACR's Guide to Managing Community Cats (book)   | \$15.99 | N/A                             |                 | \$          |
| Cat Face T-shirt (grey)   | \$16    |                                 |                 | \$          |
| Cat Face T-shirt (white)  | \$16    |                                 |                 | \$          |
| Grocery Bag (white)   | \$8     | N/A                             |                 | \$          |
| Water Bottle (teal)   | \$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

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

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



## *Awesome Adult Cats*

Fuzzy kittens, with their tiny features and rambunctious antics, easily tug at our heart strings, especially this time of year when shelters are overflowing with them. But adopting one of these feisty fur balls can also mean lots of supervision and clean-up, not to mention the challenge of teaching a youngster to comply with house rules. (Get out of the plant -- that's not a litter box!)

On the other hand, when you adopt an adult cat, they're full-grown, more independent, and past the stage when wild, young energy can result in frayed couches and broken knickknacks. Their temperament is also fully developed, which is helpful in finding the right cat for your family's circumstances.

Adult cats have a much harder time finding homes than kittens do. The next time you're looking to expand your family, visit your local shelter and ask to meet the adult cats first. You just may find the perfectly cute companion you're looking for!

## *Now, open for cute kittens!*

**FORMER FERAL DENISE, now a friendly permanent resident of Alley Cat Rescue.**



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U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT NO. 1679  
MERRIFIELD, VA.

Alley Cat Rescue  
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