



MONROE ANIMAL LEAGUE

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www.monroe-animals.org

AN INDEPENDENT, ALL VOLUNTEER, NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION DEDICATED TO HELPING THE ANIMALS IN MONROE COUNTY SINCE 1943

NEWSLETTER

FALL 2004

OCTOBER 16, 2004 is NATIONAL FERAL CAT DAY A Little Tabby . . . Speaks for the feral cats of the world.

A true story By Marcelle Thompson

"Touch Me," she said. "It's so easy to leave me all alone with the memory of my days in the sun. If you touch me you'll understand (Words from the musical, Cats "Memory") I touched her. I understood. And it broke my heart!

Today she let me touch her. Her little body was trembling with fear but I could not miss the very soft purring underneath the thick coat of fur. The encounter was very quick and in no time she ran back, keeping a safe distance once again, watching me pour the fresh food and water into the bowls.

Step, step, step... her little feet kneading at the ground as if it was a wool blanket under her feet instead of the sandy dirt. My task done, I stopped to talk to her for a moment. She looked at me and meowed, her feet skill kneading at the ground. She was closed enough that I could hear her, still purring very softly.

A little tabby... kind of cute but so tiny, probably just out of kitten hood.

I was very ignorant of the problem of feral cats when I arrived at the premises several months earlier. I am a city woman. I was shocked to find about three dozen cats roaming around, looking for food after the place was quiet and all the customers were gone. I started to feed the cats, not really knowing how to deal with this overwhelming situation.

These animals obviously homeless, had no one to look after them. They were no one's responsibility. A nuisance according to humans around. Some looked healthy enough, others were in need of treatment. Different stage of growth, different colors! I began feeding them and leaving water for them at night before I left the premises. Some cats were friendly enough, most likely had been someone's pet at one time. I began the task of taming them, well enough to get them into a carrier and take them to be fixed.

The little tabby was special to me somehow. She had been quietly studying me at a distance for a long time, wanting to come closer but afraid to. I needed lots of patience with her before I could get her into a carrier.

We were almost there... when all of a sudden the cats disappeared. I came in one Monday morning and all the cats were gone. The place totally deserted! No feline in sight! The food dish hardly touched! I filled the bowl again that night and the food was still there when I came in Tuesday morning.

It was eerie! Even the old black and white cat that everybody talked to and petted was gone. He had been someone's pet, abandoned to fend for himself.

I asked around and someone said the cats had been shot over the weekend. "Population Control," he added.

I felt sick!

Wednesday morning, blood on the side of the water bowl! Someone was still alive and wounded.

The place was tense. I did my work, tears rolling down my face and anger in my heart. I wanted some answers! I wanted the truth! What happened? The thought of the little tabby kept coming to my mind. Where was she? Where were they all? Was she alive and too afraid to come out? Did they think that I betrayed them?

A few tense hours passed... Everyone was quiet and anxious at the office...

And then I heard it. I heard a very faint meow outside the door. I rushed out and there she was. The little tabby. She had her face in the bowl of food, as if trying to eat. When she heard me, she looked up and let out a very weak meow again.

I then saw her face. Part of her mouth had been blown away. She was barely alive. Her body had the smell of decaying flesh. It was a miracle that she made it to the bowl of food where she knew I would find her. It is as if she heard my prayers and wanted to give me the evidence I needed: Her little body riddled with bullets.

Rolled in a towel, I carried her to the nearest veterinarian and held her in my arms while she was gently put to sleep. I heard her last words... A very soft purr... No doubt she said: "Help us, please." Her heart stopped beating. She was gone. And I alone cried for the little tabby. The little tabby without a name, without a home. The little tabby deserted by society.

At my request, the veterinarian took x-rays, clearly showing the evidence. Bullet fragments from a .22 rifle! With this evidence, still in my closet today, the little tabby's prayers were answered. Feral cats arriving at the premises were never shot again as a way to control the population. A promise was made and kept.

Folks, this is America! These animals need your help! Trap, spay, neuter is the only humane answer to control the feral cat over-population. I have seen too much misery! These innocent animals need your compassion.

Some of you may think that the above is an isolated incident. IT IS NOT!!! This is a way of life in some rural and not so rural areas in America. Lots of people with the power to correct this know about it and turn their backs on these innocent animals. They are "only" feral cats and no one is there to speak for them.

Please spread the Little Tabby's message

The responsibility for the well-being of the feline population rests on our shoulders!

WHAT IS A FERAL CAT? A feral cat is either a domestic house cat who has been abandoned or gotten lost and returned to wild behavior, or the offspring of such a cat. Living without human contact for a long period of time, or without crucial socialization to humans as kittens, feral cats are extremely frightened and suspicious of humans.

HOW DOES A FERAL CAT LIVE? Not very well. Domestic cats may not have the properly honed hunting instincts necessary to fend for themselves, despite what many people think. They are opportunistic, scavenging scraps from dumpsters and accepting handouts of cat food where they find them. Feral cats are prone to picking up serious diseases such as feline leukemia and feline fiv from other unvaccinated cats they encounter, and of course they are always in danger of being hit by cars, shot, or poisoned. Female ferals are constantly pregnant or trying to nourish their kittens on a starvation diet, and males risk injury in violent catfights. The average feral cat only lives for three years.

WHAT IS A FERAL CAT COLONY? When several feral cats group together in an alley, the corner of a parking lot, or a grassy area of a college campus, they form a feral colony. A feral colony is a social group of cats that avoid human contact, and breed with each other to create a growing population of homeless cats.

WHAT IS TNR? Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) is the universally recognized humane method of controlling the growth of feral cat colonies. TNR entails the trapping of feral cats, spaying and neutering the cats to prevent population growth, and then returning the cats to their territory, enabling the cats to live out their lives in an environment that suits them best.

WHAT IS THE BEST THING I CAN DO FOR A FERAL CAT? Trap the cat, and take it to be spayed or neutered. By spaying or neutering a feral cat, you are ending the breeding cycle and preventing more cats from being born into the painful predicament of being unwanted and uncared for. In addition, spaying a female cat allows her to live without the drain of constant pregnancy and motherhood, and noisy fighting for territory with amenable to staying near the caretaker's food bowl and sometimes being tamed.

BENEFITS TO THE COMMUNITY Ensuring that your colony is spayed and neutered provides several benefits to you and your community. A pair of breeding cats can produce two or more litters per year, which can ultimately result in 400,000 cats over a seven-year period! A stabilized colony prevents competition for food, shelter and other resources, thus contributing to the overall survival rate of your colony. It also means you will have fewer mouths to feed and care for over the long term. Spaying and neutering ensures longer, healthier lives for cats. Females will no longer be at risk for pyometra (uterine infections) and feline diseases like FIV and leukemia will no longer be transmitted through breeding.

Finally, your neighbors will also enjoy many benefits of spaying and neutering. Altered cats roam less because they won't be in search of a mate. Also, neutered male cats won't spray foul smelling urine and spayed female cats won't howl because they will no longer go into "heat". The adage "out of sight, out of mind" cannot be more true for a sterilized feral cat colony. Cats will stay close to their food source and shelter and will be less of a nuisance to humans, in addition, keeping your feral cats close to home mitigates the risks of living outdoors, such as poisoning, being hit by a car, etc.

Some excerpts from Ambys



Ready, the orange & white cat on the right is a former feral who found his forever home. He was trapped and tamed by Camilla, a member of the League. His girlfriend Mindy is on the left. Pepperoni, a 3rd cat who is not in the photo, also lives with them.



Maggie the tortoiseshell is another former feral who has found her forever home. She was trapped on the evening of Saturday, April 3, 2004 and began giving birth to 5 beautiful kittens (who were pictured in our summer newsletter) at 2:30 am on Palm Sunday morning, April 4, 2004. All 5 of Maggie's kittens have also found loving homes.

Romeo the cat who was pictured in the summer edition, & 4 other kittens who were not pictured have also found homes.

Second Hand Cat

Give us a chance who are not brand new,
Who would love a home with someone like you.
We may have been around a bit,
Received many a blow and many a kick,

Starved and neglected most of our days,
Yet we are forgiving anyways.
But now's our chance to start anew,
A home with love that we never knew.

So, before a kitten you're tempted to pick,
Give us a look, but not too quick.
Look at the character in our face,
And our bodies, still full of grace.

Just think of us, day after day,
Watching people look and walk away.
But say the word "yes" and we will know –
Our bags are packed and we're ready to go.

- -Unknown author - -

ADOPT A SECOND HAND CAT OR KITTEN

Interested in adopting a cat or kitten?

The league maintains a list of homeless pets & those that need to find a new home in the very near future. If you can open your heart & home to a pet in need please phone 570-476-8444, 24 hours.

Do you need info on hand raising a baby kitten?

Phone 570-476-8444, 24 hours.

Feral Caretakers? If you want to become involved with ferals or would like more information about TNR and/or managing a feral colony, please phone 570-476-8444, 24 hours.

Are you able to foster a cat or kitten?

Phone 570-476-8444, 24 hours. Vet and home check a must.

DID YOU KNOW

A domestic cat can run at speeds up to 30 mph. Cats love high places. They share this love with leopards and jaguars, who sleep in trees.

Researchers have found that catnip extract is 10 times more effective at repelling mosquitoes than DEET, the most common active ingredient in insect repellents.

Catnip extract has also been shown to repel flies and two species of roaches. Dr. Joel Coats, the US Department of Agriculture entomologist who conducted the research, hailed catnip extract as an environmentally friendly alternative to traditional chemical repellents.

DO NOT USE KAOPECTATE FOR DOGS OR FOR CATS AT HOME

Kaopectate has been widely used to control diarrhea in cats. The manufacturer of Kaopectate have changed the active ingredient to bismuth subsalicylate. Salicylates (e.g. aspirin) should be administered to cats only under veterinary supervision. Some dogs are also sensitive to salicylates. It is no longer safe to use kaopectate for dogs or for cats at home.

July 6, 2004 – The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center continues to caution dog owners that raisins and grapes may be toxic to some dogs.

From April 2003 to April 2004, the Center manages 140 cases, each involving one or more dogs that ingested varying amounts of raisins or grapes. Of these cases, over 50 animals developed clinical signs ranging from vomiting to life-threatening kidney failure, and seven dogs died.

Much is still yet to be discovered about the toxic principle associated with grape and raisin ingestions, as well as the exact mechanism leading to kidney damage in some dogs. It is also not clear if only canines are susceptible to developing a toxicosis, and additionally if only certain dogs are affected, or if chronic, long

term ingestions can lead to the same effects as large, acute or single ingestions. As there are still many unknowns with the toxic potential of grapes and raisins, the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center advises not giving grapes or raisins to pets in any amount. The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center is the premier animal-oriented poison control center in North America so it's the best resource for any animal poison-related emergency, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Make the call that can make all the difference: (888) 426-4435. A \$50 consultation fee may be applied to credit card.

July 29, 2004 – ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center Alert Veterinary Staff and Pet Owners: Products Sweetened With Xylitol Can Be Toxic to Dogs

Since July 2003, the Center managed approximately 45 cases of dogs ingesting xylitol-containing products. The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center cautions animal owners that xylitol, a sweetener found in certain sugar-free chewing gums, candies and other products can potentially cause serious and even life-threatening problems for pets.

According to Dr. Eric Dunayer, Consulting Veterinarian in Clinical Toxicology for the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center, dogs ingesting significant amounts of gum or candies solely or largely sweetened with xylitol may develop a fairly sudden drop in blood sugar, resulting in depression, loss of coordination and seizures. "These signs can develop quite rapidly, at times less than 30 minutes after ingestion of the product. Therefore, it is important that pet owners seek veterinary treatment immediately." Dr. Dunayer also stated that some data appears to point to a possible link between xylitol ingestions and the development of liver failure in dogs. However, he cautions "as there is not yet enough solid information pertaining to the relationship between xylitol and liver failure, it would not be appropriate at this point to draw any firm conclusions."

The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center advises pet owners avoid offering their animals food meant for human consumption, and to be especially diligent in keeping candy, gum or other foods containing xylitol out of the reach of pets. "Typically the main concerns are with products that contain xylitol as one of the first ingredients," advises Dr. Dunayer. As with any potentially toxic substance, should accidental exposures occur, it is important to contact your local veterinarian or the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center for immediate assistance.

TEN GOOD REASONS TO ADOPT AN "OLDER" DOG

1. Older dogs are housetrained.
2. Older dogs are not teething puppies, and won't chew your shoes and furniture while growing up.
3. Older dogs can focus better because they're mellower. Therefore, they learn more quickly than puppies.
4. Older dogs have learned what "no" means. If they haven't learned it, they don't get to be "older" dogs.
5. Older dogs settle in more easily, because they've learned what it takes to get along with others and become part of a pack.
6. Older dogs are good at giving love, once they get into their new, loving home. They are grateful for the second chance they've been given.
7. What You See Is What You Get: Unlike puppies, older dogs have grown into their shape and personality. Puppies can grow up to be quite different from what they seemed at first.
8. Older dogs are instant companions – ready for hiking, car trips, and other things you like to do.
9. Older dogs leave you time for yourself, because they don't make the kinds of demands on your time and attention that puppies and young dogs do.
10. Older dogs let you get a good night's sleep because they're accustomed to human schedules and don't need nighttime feedings, comforting or bathroom breaks.

Dogs also need homes. To adopt or foster phone 570-476-8444, 24 hours and leave a message for Sherry.

IRRESPONSIBLE

This letter was written to all irresponsible pet owners.

Dear Dumpers:

I killed them today. Yes, I know you'll blame it on me... your fickle callous heart will find a way to blame me for what you did' find a way that *we* should have made space for your "problem". Do you even know when purrs when you rub her ear just the right way? Do you know he "talked" to me from his little metal cage, almost as if asking me to save him? Probably not. After all, that's why you dumped him in the first place. Was he that much of an inconvenience?

By the way, the old one, the one you dropped off, the one you were sure was peeing around the house just to spite you... he was probably diabetic, and it was his only way to tell you he was sick.

And your dog.. the one you bought as a cute little puppy 13 years ago.. why didn't you think of her *before* you decided to have children? What miracle is it that you think we can save her?

Oh.. and you there. You're moving, aren't you? Do you really believe in your excuse? Do you really think moving into a metal cage without you is LESS traumatic than moving into a new place where at least she can be with you? Don't you understand she wants nothing more than to be with you always? Why can't you see that?

But you see.. I took care of that problem for you. Yet I hear you talk about us like we don't care; hear you ask why I urge you not to do it. "My cat is too pretty to die here, she'll be adopted." Heh. You keep believing that."

Do you know I don't even ask anymore? I don't want to know from week to week which little furry angels didn't make it out.

So I helped them to the bridge today. I gave them the lethal dose, but you decided their fate ay before I. You see.. You gave up on them. All they wanted was your love, and you weren't willing to provide that.

With each one, I caught a glimpse of their eyes and had to fight the urge to take them home. That little red and white baby, he was so scared while he was here, perhaps I can add one more to my family? But I can't. There are way too many, and the reality – bitter though it is – is I can't save them all. All I can do is offer them love ..

Why couldn't you?

- - Stef Ravin - -

YARD SALE

Our yard sale was a huge success & we wish to extend our appreciation to all who helped in any way. THANK YOU to everyone who donated items for our sale, helped collect & price them, load & unload the truck, set up, worked in any capacity, & all who helped tear down & clean up after the sale. A VERY SPECIAL THANK YOU to Debbie & her Mom for use of their barn for storage & pricing of the donated items, U-Lock-It of Poconos for the use of their property & also their donation of a dumpster, & Grand Rental Station for their generous discount on our table rentals. We also thank everyone who patronized our sale.

SAVE your Dad's UPC symbols, S&H green stamps, and register receipts from Kinsley's and Mr. Z's.

WEST END FAIR

Aug. 22 – 28 ---- The Monroe Animal League will have our usual space at the fair again this year courtesy of Creature Comforts. We hope you will continue to show your support for the needy animals of Monroe County. Please take the time to stop by and patronize our booth.

Many free handouts & guides ---- We have an assortment of pamphlets covering all aspects of pet ownership. They will be available to all who stop by our booth.

Raffle Tickets ---- Try to win a gorgeous 9' x 8' handmade quilt, donated by Mountain Laurel Quilters. Tickets will be on sale every day of the fair right up to the last night of the fair when the winning ticket will be drawn. Tickets are sold at the price of \$1. each or you may prefer to receive our special rate by purchasing 5 tickets and getting 1 free. That's 6 tickets for the bargain price of \$5.00.

Enter our free annual dog bones contest. First place will go the one to guess the exact or closest number of bones. We also have 2nd & 3rd prize winners.

NEPA and Lehigh Valley Entertainment Books will be available for purchase at our booth & also by placing an order with the League at 570-476-8444, 24 hours.

MAL tee shirts & sweatshirts will also be offered for sale at our booth or by phoning the League at 570-476-8444, 24 hours.

As you can see, **there is something** at our booth **for all ages** to enjoy, so **don't delay, visit us first.**

COMING EVENTS

RABIES CLINIC – We need a veterinarian to volunteer their services in order to have the fall/winter clinic.

PET PHOTO WITH SANTA – A time & place have not been set at this time. We will have further details in our winter newsletter along with an ad in the local newspaper & flyers around town as to when and where this annual event will take place.

TRAVELIN' SANTA – December 1 to 22 – Santa and his elf photographer will be visiting all of the pampered pets in Monroe County once again this year, so they can be photographed with Santa in the comfort, convenience & stress free atmosphere of their own home. No pets? No problem! Santa will also visit children and adults who would like the pleasure of a photo taken by his elf along with a personal visit with Santa. And what could possibly be more fun than to have Santa and his elf take photos at your home or office Christmas party? No group too large or small. Minimum purchase requirement of 2 photos. You can also take your own. Don't get left out, be the first to call and schedule an appointment.

MEMORIALS

In Memory of: Ruth Kay Harrison, Steven R. Murden

PETS:

In Memory of: Liam an Irish Terrier Dog, Rafell the dog, Reggie (Sir Reginald) the dog, Beatrice the tiny tortoiseshell cat, Willow the cat.

Special Mention: Pets – Brandy, Ernie, Smokey & Sparky

PLEASE NOTE OUR ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE IS DUE ON JAN 1 & EXPIRES DEC 31.



National Feral Cat Day October 16, 2004



MONROE ANIMAL LEAGUE
2004 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION
(PLEASE PRINT)

NAME _____
MAILING ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

PHONE _____ DATE _____

NEW MEMBER RENEWAL

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP FEE	\$ 10.00
DONATION (optional)	\$
ENDOWMENT FUND (optional)	\$
TOTAL	\$

I AM INTERESTED IN BEING A VOLUNTEER _____

Please make checks payable to: MONROE ANIMAL LEAGUE
PO Box 23
Stroudsburg, PA 18360