



FERAL CAT FOCUS INC. COMMUNITY CAT NEWS

P.O. Box 404, East Aurora, NY 14052

1-888-902-9717 (toll free)

www.feralcatfocus.org

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PROVIDING FERAL & FREE-ROAMING CATS WITH FUNDAMENTAL COMMUNITY SERVICES

NOVEMBER 2017

HAPPY HOLIDAYS

In 2017, Feral Cat FOCUS continued to carry out its mission of humanely reducing the feral and free-roaming cat overpopulation in Western New York through the use of Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return. As of November 15, we have provided services for approximately 2,400 cats, a milestone we would not have been able to achieve without the help of loyal community members like you.

We thank you for being part of this important effort. We cannot underscore enough what your support means to the feral cats of Western New York. Your support also means a tremendous amount to people too. We have collectively created a resource and support network for each other.

Feral Cat FOCUS's programs are entirely volunteer-run and supported solely by the financial support of the community. Thanks to the generosity of our donors and the dedicated work of our volunteers, we can guarantee that we will make a difference in our community.

We rely on generous donors like you to provide the support the cats in our area need. As this year comes to a close, we ask you to take a moment to support our free-roaming and feral cats with a generous donation. Your gift will help us defray the cost of essential supplies, medications, and veterinary care for hundreds of cats that no one else wanted to care for. Any amount you decide to donate — no amount is too small — will be very much appreciated and will make a difference in the lives of the cats we serve.

Feral Cat FOCUS is there for others who have no idea how to care for feral cats they came across. Let's keep the momentum going for these cats and make a difference together in the upcoming year.

2017 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Every day Feral Cat FOCUS volunteers work hard to make sure that compassion triumphs over cruelty. Every day we reach out to feral caregivers and local communities to help make Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return a reality for the feral and free-roaming cats of WNY.

Feral Cat FOCUS has much more work to do. In some communities it is still common practice to catch & kill feral/free-roaming cats. We are making great strides in changing this and we won't stop until every cat in every community is safe.

- As of 11/15/17 Feral Cat FOCUS spayed/neutered and vaccinated 2,056 feral/free-roaming cats. We were able to accomplish this with the help of Operation PETS Spay/Neuter Clinic of WNY.

- Feral Cat FOCUS conducted a mass trapping TNVR project in a Southtowns mobile home community. Our volunteers worked for four days and trapped over 127 cats. This included rescuing kittens from under mobile homes and from the woods surrounding the mobile home park. Feral Cat FOCUS funded all the spay/neuter surgeries & vaccinations. The mobile home management realizes it will take a few years to get the cat overpopulation under control, but they are very supportive of Feral Cat FOCUS and TNVR. We still have nine darling kittens from this project available for adoption.

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- Feral Cat FOCUS is helping the Gowanda Correctional Facility with their ongoing feral cat problem. One of the correctional facility's compassionate employees is spearheading a big TNVR project and Feral Cat FOCUS is providing guidance and financial support.

- In 2014 the City of Buffalo approved a city ordinance encouraging residents to Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return feral and free-roaming cats and budgeted \$50,000 to fund TNVR for Buffalo cats. In 2017 Buffalo caregivers spayed/neutered 404 feral/free-roaming cats using this grant. The grant only pays for spay/neuter surgery so Feral Cat FOCUS pledged \$3,000 of our own funds to aide sick or injured cats supported by this grant. We paid for antibiotics, dental procedures, parasite control and emergency medical care for injured cats.

- The Niagara County SPCA called Feral Cat FOCUS to help with a severe hoarding case. This was by far the worst case Feral Cat FOCUS has ever been asked to help with. It was horrific conditions for our volunteers that entered the house and worse for the cats living in the house. There were 54 cats in the house (five were dead kittens). Most of the cats were semi-feral but a few were friendly. Feral Cat FOCUS trapped 46 cats out of this mess. We placed 33 in barn homes. The Niagara County SPCA took eight cats. Local rescue & adoption organizations helped us with the friendly cats. We could not have accomplished this overwhelming project without our dedicated volunteers, Operation PETS Spay /Neuter Clinic of WNY, Ten Lives Club, Pets Alive WNY, Second Chance Sheltering Network, Sally Merritt-Braciak, and Kelley Casale. This project was exhausting for our volunteers and very expensive for our organization. Our financial commitment to these cats and this project has been substantial and it is not over yet!

- Feral Cat FOCUS partnered with the SPCA Serving Erie County to help the SPCA with their unadoptable cats. We took several of their cats and placed them in our Barn/Working Cat Program. In return, the SPCA took our friendly cats & kittens trapped during TNVR projects and placed them in the SPCA adoption program. Great trade off!

- In 2017 we extended our outreach by working with more communities. We were invited to give a presentation to the Attica Town Board (Wyoming County). We have been invited to speak to the Olean Town Council (Cattaraugus County).

FERAL CAT FOCUS

WINTER TRAPPING POLICY

Feral Cat FOCUS does not support winter Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return (TNVR) in Western New York because our winters can be severe and temperatures can be in the teens (or below). We know that other areas of the country support winter TNVR, but their winters are not our winters with freezing temps and several feet of snow.

During winter you cannot safely trap and keep feral/free-roaming cats warm enough to heal properly after spay/neuter surgery. These cats are already struggling to stay alive and Feral Cat FOCUS will not put one more obstacle in their way.

We believe fall is the best time to do major TNVR trapping. The biggest reproduction time is over, there are fewer moms with kittens, there are fewer pregnant cats to be spayed, and spring and summer litters can be altered before mating. Some litters might get away from us, but what do we do? Sacrifice the health of the female to save kittens that might be born?

Think of it this way: A cat that just had surgery is put out in the freezing cold with an incision and shaved tummy with no fur to protect her from the cold. She is exposed to the elements. She may not have a warm dry shelter. She has to forge through a foot or more of snow to return to her colony. She has to find a food source in a snow storm. This would be cruel to do to a cat already struggling to survive a Western New York winter.

In the spring Feral Cat FOCUS will kick into high gear & begin spaying/neutering feral and free-roaming cats. We normally start scheduling surgery appointments mid-late March (depending on weather).

Never trap before you have a surgery appointment (you don't want to trap cats and then have nowhere to take them).

THESE ARE JUST A FEW OF THE FACES OF FERAL CAT FOCUS

On behalf of everyone at Feral Cat FOCUS, we wish you a joyous holiday season and a Happy New Year. We sincerely thank all you who have supported us over the years and have recognized the good work we do.



**BARN/WORKING
CAT SET-UP**



**FERAL KITTEN
SOCIALIZER**



**FERAL KITTEN
SOCIALIZER**



FUNDRAISING



PHONE CENTER



TNVR TRAPPING



FUNDRAISING



TNVR TRAPPING



**COMMUNICATION
SUPPORT**



FUNDRAISING

ARE YOU INTERESTED IN HELPING AN ORGANIZATION THAT IS MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN THE LIVES OF FERAL CATS?

Volunteers are the backbone of Feral Cat FOCUS. Our Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return program involves a range of tasks that call for a variety of skills and abilities (we will train new volunteers). Some of our most urgent needs include:

- Humane TNVR Volunteers help in Feral Cat FOCUS targeted areas. Often (but not always) the same volunteers transport cats to/from the spay/neuter clinic and return the cats to their trapping location after surgery. Some trapping volunteers work alone; some work with partners.
- Phone Volunteers work from their home to check our voicemail system for new messages. They return calls to provide information or refer message to the appropriate volunteer. They also help schedule spay/neuter surgery appointments for feral caregivers that call our phone line.
- Barn/Working Cat Program Volunteers deliver cats to their new home, provide guidance on the relocation process and how to acclimate cat/s to new home, set up temporary relocation cage used to help cat/s adapt to their new home.
- Foster/Socialize Volunteers work with feral kittens taken out of feral colonies during TNVR to help them become loving pets. The taming of feral kittens requires a daily commitment of frequent socialization sessions, patience and understanding that each kitten will come around at its own pace.

Visit www.feralcatfocus.org/volunteer to see more opportunities and our online application.

STOP FREEZING WATER **KEEP TAP ON IN WINTERTIME**

A common problem for caregivers in winter is preventing water from freezing. The cats need water on a regular, daily basis. This need is heightened when dry food is used as the staple diet, something that may become necessary when the moisture in canned food causes it to quickly freeze and become inedible. A number of solutions exist. Here are a few ideas:

STYROFOAM COOLER

Freezing can be delayed by placing the water bowl inside a small Styrofoam cooler. Cut a doorway in one of the short ends, leaving the bottom of the opening a few inches off the ground to prevent flooding. At the colony site, place the water bowl inside and close the lid. Weigh down with a brick or heavy rock. Be careful to use only a small Styrofoam container, one large enough to hold the water bowl and no more than one cat in a drinking position. You don't want the cats hanging around inside. If they use the "water station" as a shelter, they could get wet which would threaten their health in cold temperatures.

THE RIGHT KIND OF BOWL

The type of bowl you use can make a big difference in the speed at which water freezes. Containers with thick plastic walls, like Tupperware, are better than thin-walled bowls. Deeper bowls with narrower openings will delay freezing more than containers that are shallow and have relatively wide openings. Dark-colored bowls will absorb more heat from the sun than lighter ones.

TIRES AND ROCKS

Here's an old trick used by horse owners to keep buckets of water out in the pasture from freezing. Take an old black tire (that's off its rim) and fill it with rocks. Then tightly wedge a large bucket in the tire's hole and fill with water. During the day, the tire absorbs sunlight and heats the rocks stuffed inside. The rocks in turn radiate heat and keep the water from freezing.

WANTED: HUMAN TO LOVE

Must Like To Play

Must Like To Give Pets

Must Keep Food Bowl Full At All Times



Feral Cat FOCUS adoptable cats are friendly and socialized cats and kittens taken out of feral colonies during TNVR projects. Each has their own story to share. They are spayed/neutered/vaccinated.

Are you their purr-ever home?

Are those adoption PAPERS you're signing?

We know there is somewhere out there whose life will be better with one of these cats, someone that they'll make laugh every day and someone whose lap they'll keep warm.

We're really hoping to find that person!

Wouldn't you love to have someone to snuggle with? Visit www.feralcatfocus.org to meet a few of our available snugglers.

UNITED WAY WORKPLACE GIVING

Does your employer participate in the annual United Way Workplace Giving Campaign? Did you know that you can donate to Feral Cat FOCUS through the Workplace Giving Campaign? Consider choosing Feral Cat FOCUS as the recipient of your donations.

Feral Cat FOCUS United Way Organization
ID is "229624"

BUILDING WINTER SHELTERS **IS A FAMILY PROJECT**



Every fall Feral Cat FOCUS volunteers build winter shelters for feral cats. A group of volunteers got together on a hot day in September to build the shelters. It was a long day and work for these volunteers but their dedication is appreciated by everyone able to benefit from a shelter—especially the cats. Pictured above is volunteer Amanda with her husband and sons. Amanda and her family donated their time to help on “build a shelter day”. You can see from the stacks of totes behind them that it was a big project to complete all the shelters.

KITTY KICKER THE PURRFECTION GIFT



IS YOUR CAT CRAZY FOR CATNIP?

Our handmade kitty kickers are generously filled with lots of potent catnip (and polyfil). Cats love to kick & cuddle their kitty kicker.

Available at Lockwood's Garden Center
4484 Clark Street, Hamburg, NY
www.weknowplants.com

\$5.00 - Proceeds Benefit Feral Cat FOCUS

PREMIER DESIGNS JEWELRY ONLINE PARTY BENEFITS FERAL CAT FOCUS December 3-17, 2017



Want to get a jump on your holiday shopping – or perhaps treat yourself to a nice piece of jewelry? Comfortably shop at midnight while in your pajamas! No lines to wait in and you can do your shopping in minutes!

Bridget Gillman of Premier Designs Jewelry has generously offered to host an online fundraiser for Feral Cat FOCUS and will donate 40% of your orders to Feral Cat FOCUS.

Tell your family, tell your friends, tell your co-workers to join us for this fantastic fundraising opportunity to support Feral Cat FOCUS.

Here's how to participate in the online party:

1. Go to Bridget's website to browse the Premier Designs online catalog for many styles and types of beautiful jewelry:

www.premierdesigns.com/bridgetgillman

2. Add selections to your Shopping Bag

3. Checkout (see below)

You must answer **"YES"** and scroll down to select **"FCF Online Fundraiser"** on drop-down menu so that Feral Cat FOCUS gets a %

ARE YOU SHOPPING FOR EVENT/HOUSTESS?

☒ **YES** ☐ NO

FCF Online Fundraiser

4. Select Direct Shipping

STRAW - NOT HAY **FOR OUTDOOR CAT SHELTER**

An outdoor cat shelter filled with straw—not hay—will keep your cats warm and cozy during the winter.

The difference between straw and hay may seem mundane, but it can actually make a world of difference for cats. They look similar, but while straw makes excellent bedding for outdoor cat shelters, hay becomes a soggy mess.

Hay is typically used to feed animals. It soaks up moisture, making it cold and uncomfortable for cats—and has the potential to get moldy. And in the winter, a wet bed can even be dangerous, making cats more likely to get sick.

Straw, the dry leftover stalks from harvested crops, repels moisture, making it the best bedding for outdoor cat shelters. Loosely pack straw in shelter to the quarter or halfway point. Straw can last decades when stored properly—in a dry place and off the ground, such as a wood pallet.

Straw is a lot less expensive than hay. Straw is tough, thick, lightweight, and yellow or golden. Hay is usually heavy and green, but there are varieties, so if you aren't sure—ask!

DO NOT USE folded newspaper, blankets, towels, carpeting, or any material that holds moisture in shelters. Cats can only lie on top of these materials so they actually draw out body heat and defeat purpose by making the cat colder.

WINTER SHELTER FOR CATS

www.feralcatfocus.org/colony-management-shelters

www.alleycat.org/community-cat-care/providing-shelter

WINTER WEATHER TIPS

www.feralcatfocus.org/colony-management-winter-tips

www.alleycat.org/community-cat-care/winter-weather-tips

DURING THE WINTER **CAREGIVERS NEED TO...**

Provide Warm Dry Shelter

Feral cats typically build a protective coat for winter, but the effectiveness of their fur as insulation is greatly reduced if it becomes wet or frozen and can often times result in hypothermia. Feral cats can get frostbite on their ears, nose and paws. They can die from exposure if some protection from the elements is not available.

Provide Extra Food During & Fresh Water

A recent study found cats in cold climates eat approximately 15% more food during wintertime than in summer. This can be explained by the need in colder temperatures for their bodies to burn more calories to stay warm. To keep your colony cats at a healthy body weight when cold weather arrives, increase their portions by about 15%.

FERAL CATS ARE AT HOME OUTSIDE, BUT THEY CAN USE EXTRA HELP IN COLD WEATHER

In cold weather, shelter is actually more important for feral cats than food. Feral cats need warm, dry shelter to protect them.

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Provide enough shelters for everyone. Some cats like to mingle; some cats prefer to have their own space. Cats rely on body heat to stay warm, so keep your shelters small for only a few cats. For more populated colonies, go with multiple shelters or a larger size.

FERAL CAT FOCUS

PROVIDING FERAL CATS WITH FUNDAMENTAL COMMUNITY SERVICES



THIS HOLIDAY SEASON...REMEMBER THE CATS THAT ARE IN NEED



Not every cat has a warm, safe home.

Many cats are left to fend for themselves outdoors.

During the holiday season, we give thanks for the comforts of a warm home, hearty food, a roof over our heads...but feral cats struggle throughout the year to find food, fresh water, safe shelter and to just survive.

Feral and free-roaming cats who only know the outdoor life shouldn't be forgotten.

Please help us make 2018 a better year for the feral and free-roaming cats of Western New York.

Saving one cat may not change the world, but it certainly will change the world for that one animal. It is only through the generosity of people like you that Feral Cat FOCUS programs can continue. As the holidays approach, we ask that you remember Feral Cat FOCUS and consider supporting our work with a charitable donation.

Feral Cat FOCUS is committed to humanely reducing the feral and free-roaming cat population in Western New York through the use of Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return as fully understood, accepted and practiced in every Western New York community.

Please mail your donation to the address below or you can make an online credit card donation at www.feralcatfocus.org.

YES, I would like to donate \$_____ to Feral Cat FOCUS

_____ No Acknowledgement Needed

_____ I Would Like an Acknowledgement

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-Mail: _____

FERAL CAT FOCUS

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Feral Cat FOCUS is a registered nonprofit organization under Section 501(c)(3) of the IRS code. Contributions are tax-deductible as allowed by law. A copy of our latest annual report may be requested from us or from the Office of Attorney General, Charities Bureau, 120 Broadway, New York, NY 10271.

Nov 2017