



The *Advocat*

The Newsletter of Friends of Feral Felines

Spring-Summer 2009

HELP FOFF SAY, "YES, WE CAN!"

Make Your Contribution Today

One night in April, two FoFF volunteers patiently crouched on a busy Portland wharf waiting by a drop trap to snare two injured cats. They succeeded, with the help of a custom-made \$150 trap. This special trap has been a godsend to FoFF trappers because it can lure cats who are too wary for Havahart traps, and it folds up easily to fit into a car. Both cats who were rescued that night received veterinary care. FoFF's mission is not only to trap, neuter, and return cats to their colonies, but also to humanely manage feral colonies by feeding the member cats, monitoring their health, and intervening to provide medical care when necessary.

One cat required an X-ray (to rule out a fracture) and a long-lasting antibiotic injection to heal his abscessed wound. Both cats received rabies shots and parasite/deworming treatments.

Even with the nonprofit discounts that local veterinarians generously give FoFF, we really have to stretch to pay our medical bills, and we need your help.

Not everyone can trap, transport, or foster cats until they recuperate, or even help at fundraising tables. But almost anyone can give a monetary donation in some amount, no matter how large or small.

These are hard times, so it's not easy for any of us to give money to a cause. But if everyone who receives this newsletter gave only \$5, FoFF could pay or

neuter 50 strays to prevent thousands of unwanted kittens from being born in the next few years. If everyone gave \$10, we could fix twice as many cats or seed a major fundraising event that would turn a small amount of money into significant and ongoing support for FoFF's work.

When you give to FoFF, know that the vast majority of donated funds provide care directly to cats who need it badly.

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Sailor, a wharf kitty we feed at Gowan's Marine

SPRING/SUMMER CAT CALENDAR

FUNDRAISING EVENTS

Bottle Drive

May 9 • Saturday • 9am–1pm
Shaw's, North Gate, Portland
July 18 • Saturday • 9am–1pm
Shaw's, West Gate, Portland

Perennial Sale

May 16 • Saturday • 9am–3pm
102 Saco Street, Westbrook

Bake Sale

May 16 • Saturday • 11am–3pm
Shaws, Westbrook Crossing

Book Sale

June 20 • Saturday • 9am–1pm
Williston-West Church, Portland
June 25–27 • Thursday–Saturday • 10am–4pm
Greek Festival, Portland

Yard Sale

July 18 • Saturday • 8am–2pm
Location TBD

SALE AND INFO TABLING

Pet Quarters • Scarborough
Saturday/Sunday • 10am–4pm
May 2/3 June 6/7
July 11/12 August 8/9

Planet Dog • Portland
Sunday • 1–3pm
May 17 June 28
August 30 September 6

Kennel Shop • South Portland
Saturday • 10am–4pm
May 23 June 20
July 25 August 22

BOARD MEETINGS

Second Monday of each month at the FoFF office. Open to the public.

May 11 • June 8 • July 13 • August 10

HELP FOFF SAY, "YES" ...

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FoFF's largest expense is by far veterinary bills, but money is also needed for such items as traps to rescue injured cats and comfortable bedding and cat furniture for recuperation and taming.

This spring, we hope to convert part of our recuperation facility into tall pens, so that cats can climb high and look out windows rather than be confined in a kennel. This would be just one of the many ways we try to give feral cats the humane care and consideration they deserve.

More animal control officers from around the state are calling FoFF when they trap feral kitties, knowing that shelters are increasingly overcrowded and not set up to

accommodate unadoptable cats, so they are often forced to euthanize them.

The demand for FoFF to help ferals is greater than ever.

When you give \$10, \$25, \$50, or more, you're helping cats like the one on the wharf with the abscessed wound who might otherwise have succumbed to infection without FoFF's help. You're helping cats recuperate from spay or neuter surgery enjoy a sunny condo perch and window view rather than being cramped in a kennel.

Please help FoFF say "Yes" to many more cats — enclose as generous a contribution as you're able to make and mail it in the envelope you'll find in this newsletter. Thank you!

DESPERATELY SEEKING

Barns, garages, or other outbuildings to shelter feral cats

Could you use a top-notch, professional mouser or two?

FoFF is caring for a growing number of feral cats who we cannot trap and relocate until barns or other similar shelter become available.

These kitties are looking for work, and they'd love a job at your place — all they require is room and board!

These healthy cats are spayed/neutered and up to date on shots, but they are not domesticated and need to live at a farm, horse stable, barn, garage, or other sheltered outdoor location.

If you can give them a much-needed home, your only responsibility will be to provide daily food and water, protection from the elements, and long-term veterinary care. You can see a Barn Cat Adoption Agreement at www.feralfelines.net/Forms/BarnCat_AdoptAgree_Online.pdf.

After a short period of secure confinement, feral cats readily accept their

new homes, and they provide excellent rodent control to protect grain and food-storage areas.

If you own or manage property and can help with long-term placement of cats on it, please contact us. We'll help you while the cats settle in.

Please contact our office or our Barn Cat Coordinator, Jill Cournoyer at apfish255@gmail.com



Two kitties whose lives are better through FoFF — Bunny (from Gorham in 2008) and Winter (from Widgery Wharf in 2000) — have become best of buds.

RESCUE ROUNDUP

By Jill Cournoyer, FoFF Founder and Barn Cat Coordinator

Our trapping volunteers have been busy with the these projects, among others.

Paws Up especially go to **Tianna Higgins** for single-handedly working Old Orchard, and to **John Brune** and **Emery Patton** for taking on several projects in the Limerick-Standish area.

- ♦ Three males that Tianna trapped from the Birches condos in Old Orchard all now have new barns or homes.
- ♦ In Biddeford, a kindly man had provided a warm, homemade shelter and food to a stray, but she remained afraid of him. But after we trapped her, she showed her domesticated side, and she was successfully adopted.
- ♦ We received a call about a stray in an industrial park near the Westbrook/Portland line; it turned out to be a litter of kittens. Older cats from a previous litter also lived in frozen fields nearby. All were successfully rounded up. **Special Paws Up** to **John Searles** who tramped through the fields on a cold night until he could find and grab with his own hands the last scared kitten.
- ♦ When their feeder became seriously ill, we trapped and relocated to barns a number of ferals living at a Limington trailer park.
- ♦ We also took in several ferals from a terminally ill woman, and two now show potential as housecats.
- ♦ We are now trapping a large colony of ferals at Bay Haven near Buxton. They all need relocation and will be waiting for new barn homes.

Kitten Season is on its way, and our trappers will soon be busier than ever. If you think you can help in any way (trapping, fostering, transporting...), please let us know!

A big Paws Up thank you!

BE A LINK IN THE FOFF CHAIN: VOLUNTEER!

By Jill Cournoyer

On a Saturday night in April, fellow FoFF volunteer Beth and I crouched next to a car on Portland's Custom House Wharf as patrons streamed into the Comedy Club. We waited for a wharf cat with an injured paw to find his way into our nearby drop trap. The cat was soon snared, and we transferred him to a holding cage.

I began to drive away, feeling satisfied with the rescued kitty in the passenger seat, but Beth frantically waved at me through the window, exclaiming, "One of the black cats has a leg dangling!" We'd been trapping there for the past two nights, and all the cats had been fine, so this was clearly a sudden trauma.

We reset the trap and waited until the cat reappeared, his hind leg held in the air. When he limped into the trap and sat to eat, we yanked the trap rope, and we had him. We had to transfer him to the same cage the other cat was in. Tricky, but we pulled it off with the help of two passersby from Old Orchard. The cat had an abscess that could have been fatal, if Beth and I hadn't caught him.

I took the cats home while our long-time-treasurer-and-whatever-else-is-needed volunteer, Polly, faxed forms to the veterinarian. Lois, another long-time volunteer, transported both cats to the clinic. They were treated and within a week could be returned to the colony.

And more went on that month:

- ♦ Tianna transported two feral cats who I had been fostering to a barn in Arundel.

- ♦ Designated feeders fed the cats in various locations every night.
- ♦ Other volunteers staffed tables at the Kennel Shop, Pet Quarters and the Nauticats Cat Show in Lewiston to sell cat-related crafts to help pay our veterinary bills.
- ♦ In the office, the artistically inclined helped office manager WendyJo make signs for our thrift store and fundraising events.
- ♦ Others planned logistics for our annual book and plant sales.

And so it went. Each of us, a link in the FoFF chain, carried out our mission to help feral cats, which so many of us have done since our founding in 1992.

Volunteers come in all shapes and sizes, with all manner of interests, abilities, and personalities. FoFF has a place for everyone: shy people who like to putter for a few hours a month in the office; extroverts who like to get on the phone and line up volunteers and event sponsors; adventurous types who brave the elements to feed and trap; nurturers who love taking in a feral kitten and easing it into domesticity.

Sometimes the same person can take on many roles. Where might you fit in?

FoFF needs you for whatever time you can contribute — a few hours a week, month, or year — you decide. Be a link in the chain that literally saves cats' lives.

As we head into the height of kitten season, we need you now more than ever!

Please call WendyJo at 797-3014, to find out what needs to be done.

Become a link in the chain!

MEMORIALS

♥ In memory of old **Benjamin-The-Cat-Thank-You-Very-Much**, euthanized March 30, 2009. Saved from near a busy street as autumn approached in 2006, that old Tuxedo boy owned the ground he stood on, terrorized dogs, ate heartily, and loved his Megan and Deb. —Rita Lane

♥ A donation from **Shirley Edwards** in memory of **Sue FitzGerald** of Topsham, Maine, who recently passed away at a young age.

♥ Portland's stray cats lost a good friend when **Preston L. "Pat" Murphy** passed away in April 2009, after a long illness, at 72 years of age. Pat was the proprietor of Yes Books in Portland. An animal lover, he donated and bought many books at FoFF's annual book sale. In his will, he identified FoFF as one of two groups to receive donations in his name. Pat had a beloved black cat "Rags" who lived in his bookstore for years, and he owned many other rescued cats. He always helped injured animals, including a pigeon with a broken wing, who he rehabilitated in a cage in the back of his Congress Street store. He will be missed.

♥ **Katrina**, beloved cat of **Anne and Brien Hoyer**, was a backyard feral stray with a litter of kittens taken into the Hoyer household with the help of FoFF. It took a long while to get her in a trap, but she promptly got loose again. Anne patiently lured her into the room where her kittens were by propping a window open. While two of her kittens, Sylvie and Jack, grew more affectionate over time, Katrina remained proudly independent.

♥ Portland's wharf cats live a hard life and some, like **Abby**, have it even harder. Abby was first TNR'd at her home base of Free Range Fish about five years ago. Our feeders and the people at Free Range began to realize

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MEET OUR NEW FEEDERS

By Lois Thompson, Feeder Coordinator

FoFF began in the early nineties with a small group feeding, trapping, and neutering cats on the Portland waterfront. At that time, about 30 to 40 cats there were unneutered. Today, through natural attrition and FoFF's efforts to Trap-Neuter-Return and find homes for kittens and adoptable cats, we manage a relatively stable population of fewer than 20 wharf cats.

At the front line are our volunteer feeders. Each is committed to feeding on the same day every week or every other week. They are a stable and loyal group (some are veterans of more than 10 years), but last winter five had to move on, and five new feeders stepped up to join the team. We'd like to introduce them here, with a big Paws Up!

Krysta Capone's life is a bit too hectic right now to have cats of her own (she commutes to and from Auburn to work!), but she's looking forward to "adopting" our wharf residents.

Tori Strout works most nights right on Union Wharf (conveniently for the cats) and also one day a week at the Animal Refuge League. Tori is also studying in NH to be a vet tech.

Kristen Nadasdi had already "met" some of our cats before she started feeding them, because her boyfriend worked near Free Range Fish. Kristen has also worked at some of our tabling events.

Mary McColman came to us with experience feeding a feral colony in Readfield, ME. Mary is a dedicated walker and leash walks her big orange tabby, Sidney, around Portland's West End.

Kristen Eckman works at a natural health foods store, lives with her three cats in Portland, and is pictured here with her big boy, "Bean."



Kristen Eckman, with her big boy, Bean.

SO LONG TO A LONG-TIME FEEDER

By Lois Thompson

This summer FoFF volunteer Margaret Guthrie, who fed the FoFF waterfront cats for over 11 years, will move back to her home town of Brewer.

Maggie began feeding in the late '90s, shortly after we were incorporated, and she took good care of the Sunday night cats steadily for 11 years, until about a year ago when her schedule changed. Since then, she has been a backup feeder and feeder coordinator.

She remembers when there were many more cats to feed on Custom House Wharf, before the colonies were well managed. "New kittens would show up about every six weeks until winter," Maggie remembers.

Maggie fell for one of these kitties, a tiger and white kitten from the Becky's Restaurant colony on Commercial Street. "Beckett" has lived with Maggie and two other rescues ever since.

Growing up in Brewer, Maggie remembers that her house always had cats and that a great-aunt who lived nearby had her hands (and house) full with up to 20 cats. A good early lesson in the importance of colony management!

There is a life outside of cats for all of us, and in Maggie's case it has involved working as a computer operator at Maine Medical Center for the last 30 years and being an ardent bicyclist. She has biked extensively around Maine, is a member of two bicycle clubs, has done several 100-mile treks, biked the West Coast (California to Oregon), and dreams of biking cross-country.

Many of us downstate will miss Maggie and her easy good nature.

RECENT ADOPTIONS — HOORAY!

Baxter	Mimi
Brindlepuss	Mindy
Buster	Murphy
China	Noella
Emily	Nutmeg
Floyd	Peanut
Gabriel	Rex
George	Romeo
Gloria	Scooby
Handsome	Sergei
India	Simon
Maggie	Spooky
Me Too	Tanner
Milton	Teddy



Brindlepuss was rescued from an Old Orchard colony and able to be placed in a loving home

SHAW'S DONATIONS MUCH EASIER NOW

Shaw's is making fundraising for non-profit organizations, including FoFF, easier than ever.

Now, just by shopping with your Shaw's Rewards Card on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Thursday, you can help raise funds for FoFF. Shaw's keeps track of and automatically contributes a percentage of your purchases to FoFF.

This just requires a one-time registration online at the Shaw's Community Rewards program website. Please visit <http://www.albertsons.com/cp/shaws/>, then sign in with your Rewards Card ID and phone number, and then choose FoFF's Rewards ID# 49001018268.

This one-time registration is easy and convenient. No more saving and mailing receipts! (Due to this new program, FoFF no longer collects Shaw's receipts.)

Thank you to Shaw's for supporting local non-profits, and thank you for letting Shaw's know you support FoFF.

THRIFTY KITTY STORE OPENS

Following the success of other humane societies and charities, we have opened a small in-office store to sell books and FoFF merchandise, such as T-shirts, cat toys, handcrafted jewelry, and lots more.

Store hours are 10am to 2pm Monday through Friday when FoFF volunteers tend the store.

Our unique FoFF merchandise includes logo T-shirts, sweatshirts, mugs, spay/neuter car magnets, aprons, and patented Laurel Burch handbags. We also have assorted cat toys, donated handmade items, gift cards, etc.

PAWS UP



Many thanks to **Sunrise Printing and Graphics** in Windham for their generous courtesy printing of our notecards. This is a real help in our fundraising efforts!



Congratulations to the Maine Animal License Plate Team (MALT) for passing legislation! We'll all look forward to getting our license plates in October!

Friends of Feral Felines
PO Box 8137
Portland, ME 04104