



Animal Talk



Winter, 2015

Volunteer Services for Animals, Inc., 6017 Pine Ridge Road, #330, Naples, FL 34119 239 290-6274 www.vsarescue.org

Rethinking Feral Cats

Another episode of cat trapping caught our attention, this time, in Golden Gate. A homeowner was annoyed by cats entering his yard, allegedly scaring off wildlife and birds, and leaving paw prints on his car.

The homeowner had trapped 24 cats since December, taking them to Collier County's Domestic Animal Services (DAS). Several were turned over to the Naples Cat Alliance and owners, **but three were put down**. He kept a baited trap in his yard.

We ponder, why just feral cats? Raccoons, bobcats, deer, squirrels, rabbits, opossums, birds, bats, and ducks can be annoying. Bears and panthers are especially annoying to the folks in rural Collier County, even causing damage and killing livestock. They are rarely trapped and, if so, almost always relocated.

Why? That is what our law provides. **Feral cats are legal prey of humans because they are free roaming which violates the county code.** However, feral cats do not have homes. Nor do the species mentioned above. And they are defined by our county policy as a cat that is free roaming and exists in a wild or untamed state.



There is no evidence that feral cats threaten the health of humans. **Yet, some residents continue to insist that our government let them trap free roaming cats that, at worst, are an annoyance.**

Fortunately, Collier County has a trap, neuter and return program and a caring Domestic Animal Services staff. Cats with ears notched or tipped are turned over to the Naples Cat Alliance, a private partner with Collier County to reduce the feral cat population through spay and neuter surgery. **Based upon a scientific evidence, this is the best method to manage the feral cat population.** The fate of those not ear notched or ear tipped is bleak under our current law.

Unfortunately, we are reminded that some people still believe they matter more than animals. They think the penalty for being an annoyance should be death. **Is it time to reconsider the county policy that allows that? We think so.**



Puppy Love at VSA Clinic

VSA volunteer Marco Espinar comforts a puppy before it is vaccinated by volunteer veterinarian Dr. Michael Gordon at VSA's vaccination clinic in Golden Gate last fall.

VSA's Sixth Year In Immokalee

VSA just completed its sixth annual clinic in Immokalee. As is frequent, many dogs and cats attending got their first vaccinations and saw a veterinarian for the first time.

Dr. Jane Chetkowski and her staff conducted the clinic as volunteers, something Town and Country Hospital has volunteered for five to the six years. VSA is very appreciative of Dr. Chetkowski efforts as well as the volunteers. Juan brought Osa to the January clinic



Million Cat Challenge

Reforming Shelter Methods

The Inside Track

Sponsor a Pet--You now can sponsor VSA pets listed on Petfinder. Petfinder is a web site which lists rescue organization's adoptable pets. Here is how to sponsor:

1. Enter www.vsarescue@petfinder.com in your browser.
2. Click on our adoptable pet list at the top of the VSA Organizational Info page. This will bring up VSA's pets ready for adoption.
3. Click on the photo of the cat or kitten you wish to sponsor. You will then see two options, "Sponsor Me" or "Adopt Me." Click on "Sponsor Me."
4. The donation page will appear which provides options for your donation of \$25 to \$500 and instructions on how to donate.

Petfinder will send VSA the full donation and will assist VSA with the cost of its rescue, foster, and adoption program. **Thank you to future donors.**

We Have Birthday Coming Up--VSA will be 33 years old on May 11. VSA was formed in 1982 to assist with Collier County's first animal shelter at Orange Blossom Drive and Airport Road. Thanks to our founders and the hundreds of volunteers who have helped save and improve the lives of Collier County pets in those 33 years.

VSA's Golf Tournament Canceled--VSA's "Pars for Paws" golf tournament will not be held this year because of a scheduling conflict. We are hopeful for next year. **We know this will be a disappointment to many. We appreciate your past support and apologize.** We had a great time and raised a lot money for homeless pets.

We Are Excited!--Our "Let's Fix Them All" campaign to fix neighborhood cats is taking off. We have four enthusiastic clinic partners which are helping us promote the program. **We also have some wonderful donors who increased their donations to help fund the program.** VSA pays the full cost of spays, neuters and vaccination for neighborhood cats. **Animalife Veterinary Center, Golden Gate Animal Clinic, Mission Hills Veterinary Center, and Town and Country Animal Hospital are our partners.**

The idea came from efforts to reduce hospital deaths due to mistakes. **Hospital administrators were challenged to save 100,000 patient lives in 18 months by implementing one or more proven tactics.** The success of that challenge resulted in The Five Million Lives Campaign.

Why not do this in animal shelters, Dr. Kate Hurley wondered? Dr. Hurley is the director of the Koret Shelter Medicine Program at the University of California, Davis. She frequently speaks to shelter managers and staffs. She asked attendees if some life-saving ideas would reduce euthanasia? **The answer was yes, lives could be saved.**

Interest built and shelter managers were hungry for new opportunities to change their shelter practices for cats. **While euthanasia rates for dogs are plummeting in much of North America, rates for cats are not dropping at the same rate.**

The Million Cat Challenge was launched in January as a joint program of the University of California at Davis and the University of Florida Maddie's Shelter Medicine Program. Dr. Julie Levy directs the program in Gainesville. **The challenge is to save one million sheltered cats in five years.** These are the five suggested shelter strategies:

1. **Alternatives to intake.** Provide positive alternatives to keep cats in the home or community when admission to a shelter is not the best choice.
2. **Managed intake.** Schedule intake of cats to match the shelter's ability to assure humane care and safe movement throughout the shelter system for the appropriate outcome.
3. **Capacity for care.** Match the number of cats cared for at any one time with the capacity required to assure the Five Freedoms of Animal Welfare for all cats in a shelter, i.e. freedom from hunger, thirst, discomfort, pain, injury, disease, fear and distress. The last is freedom to express normal behavior.
4. **Removing adoption barriers.** Expand the pool of adopters by removing barriers to adoption such as cost.
5. **Return to the field.** Sterilize, vaccinate, and return the healthy un-owned shelter cats to the location of origin as an alternative to euthanasia.

More details can be found at the website, www.millioncatchallenge.org

Memorials and Honorary Donations

**In Memory of
Maudie Scibilia
by Richard and Sondra Rice**

**In Honor of
Derrick and Will
by Barbara DeVoe**

**In Honor of
Jeanne Castildini's Birthday
by The Heddericks**

**In Memory of
of
Jackie
by Ruth and Robert Sterling**

**In Memory of
Teeteroo's Loving Life
by Jan Thomas**

**In Memory of
Dewey
by Joan Hedderick**

**In Memory of
Bubblegum and Jack
by Jim and Nancy Gibson**

**In Memory of
Quincy
Beloved Standard Poodle of
Robert and Wendy Moser
By Helen Imo**

**In Memory
of Jim Stuber
Beloved Husband of Lori Stuber
by Phyllis and Brad Estes**

**In Memory of
Will
Beloved Cat of Barbara DeVoe
by Helen Imo**

**In Memory of Gus, my last dog,
and Tina, the first of many cats
by Carole L. Mendelsohn**

**In Memory of
Neil Bahr and Pretty Girl
By Anne Bahr**

**In Honor of
Whitey's 10th Birthday
by George and Meredith Dondero**

**In Memory of
Chloe, still miss you
by Pam Hughes**

**In Memory of
Our Below Cat, Winston
by
Lori and Jim Stuber**

**In Memory of
Mel Gibson Newland
Beloved Orange Cat for 16 Years
by
Kat and Denton Newland**



Yuliana With Her New Puppy at Immokalee Clinic

Volunteer Services for Animals

VSA is a not-for-profit organization founded in Collier County in 1982 to assist at the then new Collier County Animal Control shelter. VSA continues to work to bring about a time when there will be no more homeless pets. Our primary efforts are on two fronts, rescuing and adopting homeless cats and kittens and encouraging and assisting owners to sterilize their animals. VSA also has low-cost shot clinics, a feral cat sterilization program, and a pet food assistance program.

We have little administrative overhead. We do not maintain an office or have any paid staff. Rescued animals are housed in volunteer homes. Our work is supported entirely by donations and with grant funds. Become a part of this work of love by volunteering and/or donating.

VSA kittens and cats are available for adoption at PetSmart on Pine Ridge Road (next to Home Depot) seven days a week. VSA volunteers are at the adoption center on Saturdays and Sundays, 11:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m. Call 239 290-6274 for an appointment at other times.

Spay and neuter vouchers are available at the PetSmart adoption center each Sunday from 11 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Contact Information:

6017 Pine Ridge Road, #330

Naples, FL 34119

239 290-6274 239 261-4768 (fax)

E-mail: vsarescue@aol.com

Thank You Publix, KPG Accounting, and Amber Frederiksen photography

Publix Super Markets provide space for VSA to donation bins at the following locations:

Pine Ridge Crossing

Airport Road at Pine Ridge Road

Riverchase Shopping Center

U.S. 41 North at Immokalee Road

Freedom Square

U.S. East at Collier Boulevard (State Road 951)

VSA is grateful to **KPG Accounting Services, Inc.** for its assistance with our accounting. KPG specializes in condominium associations

Call Kevin Gaffney at 434-8866

Amber Frederiksen Photography photographs our adoptable cats and kittens. Amber specializes in travel, architectural interiors and exteriors and in lifestyle photography.

Contact Amber at www.amberfrederiksen.com



We Hear From Jennifer Every Year

On April 24, 2009, Jennifer Sanner flew to Fort Myers from Minneapolis to adopt two VSA-rescued kittens she had seen on Petfinder. We met her at the airport, and she took a return flight that same day. She had no connection with Naples, but knew that she and our kittens were meant to be together for life. She sends VSA a photo of Rocco and Basil every year who are "sweet as ever." Thank you Jennifer!

**In Memory of
Our Bella, 7/26/1992-6/21/14
By
Michael and Christina Ferrer**

**In Memory of
Our Loving Companions
Sheba, Shamus, and Casper
By Bob and Kathy Arakel**

**In Honor of
Sammy, My Pal for 18 Years
by
John Bayer**

**In Since Appreciation to
the Great Dedication of Dr. Mike
Gordon
by Martha and Kirby**

**In Honor of
Basil and Rocco
by
Dave and Jennifer**

**In Memory of
G. Rob't Gettman
by
Helen Imo**

**In Memory of Tinkerbelle
by
Leslie Hill**

**In Memory of
Dear Friend and Lover of All
Animals, Especially Cats
Gertrude "Trudy" Schmidt of
Vero Beach
by Ingrid Strickland**

**In Memory of
Segundo
We Love You!
Love Mama, Papa, Bianca and
Anthony**

**In Honor of Kathy Mullins
by
Helen Imo**

**In Memory of Will
by
Don and Susan DeVoe**

**In Memory of
Ronald Cooper
By
Helen Imo**

**In Memory of Lola
by
Jan De Jarnette**

**In Honor of Paula Gustafson and
Her Birthday by
Donald Bahash
Janice Floate Kott
Jeanne Case
Michael A. Orofino**

