

# feralfocus



A PUBLICATION OF SPAY AND STAY

WINTER 2008

## THREE GENERATIONS OF MEN HELP FERAL CATS

By Julie Wheeler

This past June, one of Spay and Stay's Board members, Julie Wheeler, found herself trekking to Round Lake Heights to help a feral colony caretaker named Jim. He wanted to continue reducing the feral and stray cat population in his neighborhood. At the time, he had put 20 cats through Spay and Stay's Trap-Neuter-Return program.

Jim gets around in a motorized wheelchair so maneuvering through yards and up and down the hills in his area is tricky. Jim needed Julie's help with a neighbor across the street who continued to allow her house cat to reproduce. She also let the resulting kittens roam outside to breed further and risk being killed in the street. Jim had talked to this

neighbor about the importance of spay and neuter, but she did not want her cats fixed.

In addition to these free-

was now roaming the neighborhood. Additionally, there were several feral cats living under two empty houses in the area. Jim was very concerned that the cats were suffering and becoming a problem for the neighborhood.

Julie arrived with twenty box-traps and one drop-trap for a mass trapping in the area. This time, Jim was determined to catch one very wily female named Mama who had avoided trapping in the past and now had 3-week old kittens living under a nearby house.

Jim had already secured the cooperation of three caring neighbors who would allow him to set up traps on their property. With guidance from these neighbors, Austin, Jim's 9-year old grandson and Julie set out distributing the traps on four

(Continued on page 5)

### SOME RECENT VISITORS TO OUR SPAY DAY



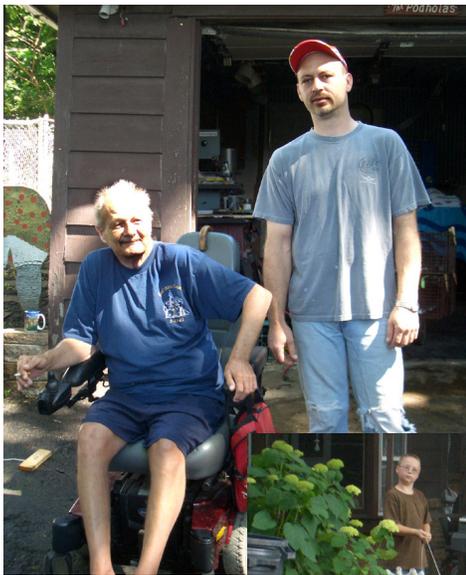
**EVERY CAT COUNTS!**  
2,500 sterilized so far!

### UPCOMING EVENTS

Whether it's gifts for special people or food to help celebrate the upcoming holidays, we've got you covered!

**HOLIDAY SHOP AND SHARE**  
See details on page 5.

**HOLIDAY BAZAAR**  
Saturday, November 15  
1:00—5:00 p.m.  
See details on page 6.



Jim and his son, Wayne (above), watch over Jim's grandson, Austin (right), who patiently waits for a cat to enter the drop trap.



roaming cats, another neighbor had moved and abandoned their very affectionate pet cat, which

## PRESIDENT’S MEWSINGS

In our Spring 2008 edition of *feralfocus*, I wrote about a project I began late last year where I set out to contact each of the eighteen townships within Lake County. The goal was to 1) inform the township trustees and citizens about our services and 2) request financial support for work we are doing in their area. I would like to bring you up to date on this project.

So far, I have made contact with ten of the eighteen townships in the county. Three have either provided funding to Spay and Stay or funding has been approved. Three townships consider applications in the 4<sup>th</sup> quarter, which we plan to submit. One township currently has us under consideration and three townships do not provide this type of funding or are funding other projects at this time. Overall, the townships have been receptive. They want to learn about our program and how we can help their communities. Some townships have put Spay and Stay brochures on display in their offices and we are working with others to get promotional space on their website or an informational article in their newsletter.

We are very grateful to the townships that have supported our work and are willing to help us create community awareness about the benefits of TNR.

Julie Haas  
President

## OUR MICROCHIP NETWORK CAN SAVE PET CATS TOO

Because Spay and Stay uses the *Home Again* microchip in all of its feral cats, we routinely receive notices of lost pet cats in the Lake County area. When this happens, we alert caretakers in the area where the cat was last seen so they can be on the lookout for a possible new-comer to their colony. We also take the notices to our monthly spay days, just in case one of the cats looks like the description of the lost pet. We love having a network of caretakers who can watch out for lost cats. The most recent notice regarding a lost pet cat was about a white and gray young male by the name of Alfred. He was last seen near the railroad tracks in downtown Grayslake. If you’ve seen Alfred, let us know so we can alert *Home Again* and help Alfred get back home.



## CARETAKER CORNER

Spay and Stay is proud to announce that Nancy Coolley, a caretaker in Lake Forest, has taken the reins as Spay and Stay’s Caretaker Coordinator. Nancy will be planning meetings, to be held four times a year, where caretakers can discuss their concerns such as predators, winter shelters, kitten socialization or whatever is on their mind.

On September 27, about 15 caretakers from around the county gathered at Mundelein High School to discuss feral cat care in winter, cat health items, as well as other issues. A video on mass trapping was also viewed. It was great to have so many people get connected and share their knowledge about what works with their ferals.

The next meeting is planned for some time in January. If you have topics you would like to hear more about, or would like a copy of the notes from the September meeting, please call Spay and Stay at 847-289-4557 or drop an email to [info@spayandstay.org](mailto:info@spayandstay.org). We’d love to hear about your success stories as well as your challenges.



Nancy Coolley (far left) and Gail Spencer (right) listen as another caretaker shares some feral colony management tips. Other attendees (below), add to the discussion.



## WINTER SHELTERS ADD FLAIR TO NEIGHBORHOODS

With fall already here and winter fast approaching, many feral cat caretakers have considered building or buying outdoor shelters for their managed colonies. Outdoor feral cat shelters can be constructed from simple designs using plastic storage containers or from more elaborate, multi-level plans. Whatever the design, outdoor shelters are a necessity for feral cats without access to warm dry areas during cold weather.

Before providing an outdoor shelter, caretakers need to be sure to note the following:

- Check your municipal ordinances for required permits and/or building restrictions. It may be that certain residential areas will not allow for the construction of a large, elaborate permanent structure without required permits. However, smaller, temporary structures may be allowed during the fall/winter seasons.
- Check with your neighbors. It is important that your neighbors understand your role as a feral cat caretaker. For those who are unfamiliar with managed feral cat colonies, building an outdoor shelter may seem like a welcoming mat for all strays and other potentially less desirable animals. It is your job to explain that as a caretaker, you are not the owner of the colony cats, but



are merely fulfilling your role as a feral colony manager. In providing the outdoor shelter, you are ensuring the cats access to a warm, dry area in addition to sterilizing, vaccinating, and monitoring the cats for disease.

- Obtain permission before placing an outdoor shelter on public or other non-owned property. Chances are, if you are managing a colony on an abandoned lot or another seemingly vacant private area, you have already discussed feral cat management with the property owner. For the reasons noted in (1) and (2) above, you must again speak with the property owner before providing an outdoor structure. Similarly, when feral cats have colonized in alleyways or public parks, you must seek permission from the municipality. Municipalities vary in their support and acceptance of TNR programs, but in

almost every instance municipal officials are willing to at least discuss the issues of caretaker colony management. If the municipality will not allow placement of a feral cat shelter on public land, a caretaker may consider approaching private owners located nearest to the public land for permission.

When in doubt, contact your municipality for reference to applicable statutes and for municipal policies on TNR and managed feral cat colonies.

Spay and Stay demonstrates how to build a simple winter shelter at:

[www.spayandstay.org/wintershelter.htm](http://www.spayandstay.org/wintershelter.htm).

For those of us who are not so skilled in building, shelters can be purchased from Feral Villas at: [www.feralvilla.com/](http://www.feralvilla.com/)

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*The two creative winter cat shelters shown above were built by the maintenance crew from the United States Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore, MD. They have a feral cat management program that's officially written into the yard's maintenance instructions!*

*Photo © Alley Cat Allies*

## GRANT HELPS MORE CATS GET STERILIZED

Thanks to a recent \$10,000 grant, Spay and Stay has been able to reduce its already low spay and neuter cost to \$15 per cat. Under the terms of this grant, 400 cats will be able

to take advantage of this special rate and

still get the highest quality service, including the sterilization surgery, vaccinations, micro-chipping, treatment for parasites and treatment for minor wounds.

Many of the caretakers who have brought in cats under this grant are choosing to pay the higher spay and neuter cost of \$25 per cat, knowing any additional funds Spay and

Stay can hold on to will help bring

spay and neuter services to more and more cats.

We are grateful to each and every caretaker who donated the additional funds.



## HEADBUTTS AND PURRS



Thanks to our generous donor and supporters, we have now sterilized **2,500 cats and kittens** here in Lake County! Here are the people and organizations who have expressed their faith in the work we do through their kind and generous donations.

### A PLACE FOR PURRING— Honoring special people and animals



In Memory of Dixie from *Richard Balz*  
In Loving Memory of Jolie from *Elizabeth Fischer*  
In Honor of Boots Sr. from *Tina Santopoalo*

### PURRFECT PARTNERS—In-kind donors

Dr. David and Kathy Luaces, *Care Animal Hospital*  
Dr. David McKenna, *Animal Hospital of West Lake Forest*  
Dr. Cindy Menke, *Green Bay Animal Hospital*  
Dr. Laurie Swanson, *Waukegan Pet Clinic*  
Elizabeth Fischer  
Julie Wheeler

### GREAT GRANTORS—

DAS Fund for the Preservation on Feline Animal Life  
PetCo Foundation  
PetSmart Charities

### KNEADED BUDDIES—Up to \$100

Elizabeth Adomaitis	Gina Elwell
Silvia Baumhardt	Kathleen Fabbri
April Beatty	Jennifer Felton
Sally Bender	Tom Flogel
Jim Brandt	Anna Galarza
Rhonda & Joseph Breuer	Adrienne Grade
Scott Case	Donald & Ingrid Haugh
Judith Day	Tim Henrichs
Nancy & Craig Decker	Dorothea Himmler
Harriet Del Dotto	John & Linda Hinde
Lori Del Negro	Barb & Arland Jones
Aileen Drugan	Sue Krapf
Alicia Elwell	John Kyle

### KNEADED BUDDIES—Up to \$100 *(continued)*

Nick Lauritsen	Patricia Ryan
Stuart & Julie Levy	Geraldine Server
Cynthia Mattia-Goldberg	Linda Sorrentino
Shirley Larson	Maxine Souza
Rita Mrozinski	JoAnn Whalen
Raymond O'Brien	Laura Wilson
Edward & Linda Phillips	Michelle Wright
Donald & Carrie Rogers	Mary Yanhzou
Beth Rozoff	

### KNEADED BUDDIES—\$101 to \$500

Marcia Cottle	Dorothy Haymes
Gretchen Gabriel	Jeff & Cindy Kukkola
Bette Grayson	Joy Lucarelli
Julie Haas	Susan Ziegler



## SENIORS HAVE SPECIAL WAY TO HELP OUR CATS

Congress has extended an excellent charitable planning opportunity for both 2008 and 2009. Seniors may continue to make qualified charitable distributions of up to \$100,000 per individual (\$200,000 for married couples, if both spouses qualify) per year from their traditional, rollover or Roth IRA and not have to pay income tax on the distribution.

To qualify for the tax benefit, donors must be 70 1/2 years of age or older at the time of the distribution, and contribute funds from a traditional, rollover, or Roth IRA. The charity, which must qualify as an eligible charitable organization, must receive the distribution by calendar year end and the funds must come directly from the donor's financial institution. *For more information, please contact your tax or financial advisor.*

## SPAY AND STAY HAS A NEW OFFICE

Spay and Stay has moved its office to downtown Grayslake. How exciting to be a part of this great community and to be so accessible to everyone in our county.

Next time you're in downtown Grayslake, plan to stop by and say hello. We're at 393 Center Street. We'd love to see you!

### MOVING WAS A GREAT TEAM EFFORT!

Our physical move went really well, thanks to the teamwork of: Donna Fedeli and Eric Gossger, Aaron Nash, Brad Petersen, Beth and Kauri Voss, and Julie Wheeler. Thanks also to Linda Petersen and Elizabeth Fischer for their great ideas on how to set up the new space, and finally to our great painters Cynthia Deen and Julie Wheeler.

## SPAY-USA CONFERENCE AN INSPIRATION

Members of Spay and Stay's Board of Directors and Advisory Board recently attended the third national SpayUSA Conference in Arlington Heights. The theme of this uplifting conference was "The Road Map—Mapping Lessons from the Past, Navigating the Future," and featured sessions all aimed at the common goal of ending pet homelessness. The conference was attended by animal welfare organizations from all over the country, and even from as far away as Australia. Information was shared on programs in place and being developed in the U.S. to increase spaying and neutering of pets, as well as feral cats, and eliminating euthanasia of healthy and adoptable animals.

New friends were made and knowledge was gained on topics such as fundraising, establishing collaboration between various governmental and private spay/neuter programs to increase the number of pets being sterilized, developing low cost spay/neuter programs for lower income pet owners, and increasing animal welfare groups' knowledge of feral cats to educate them on TNR and show them that it does work. We came away very inspired with new ideas to develop more programs to help caretakers and feral cats toward a day when Spay and Stay's mission to end feline homelessness becomes a reality.

## STRATEGIC PLANNING IN MOTION

On September 10, Spay and Stay hosted a community meeting to discuss the future direction of the organization and begin the development of a strategic plan. Over 40 individuals including county, municipal and township representatives, citizens, veterinarians, and members of local police forces, as well as members of many humane organizations from Chicago and Lake County were in attendance.

The goal of the meeting was to highlight the TNR work going on in the United States, followed by an analysis of the work done by Spay and Stay in Lake County in the last six years. Participants offered great ideas during lively break-out sessions. These ideas will become the basis for further study as Spay and Stay moves forward in the development of their strategic plan.

Happily, most of the participants agreed to continue sharing their energy and insight as Spay and Stay moves forward with this dynamic planning process. The organization also invites anyone with a genuine interest in the future of Spay and Stay to join in this exciting work.

## DECEMBER SHOP AND SHARE

Our final **Shop and Share** fundraiser of the year will take place on **December 15, 16, and 17**. To participate, all you need to do is download a coupon from our website ([www.spayandstay.org/news\\_events.htm](http://www.spayandstay.org/news_events.htm)) and then go to your local Jewel store to do your holiday shopping. Jewel will gather all the coupons and send Spay and Stay a check for 5% of all sales made on those three days by people who use our coupon. **Sounds like a great way for our kitties to get a little extra holiday cheer!**



*(Continued from page 1)*

different lots. Austin was a real trooper and a big help. After the traps were set, he pedaled his bike from trap to trap to check them a few times each day. Austin's dad, Wayne, would help move the cats from the drop-trap to the metal box-trap and then take them into the garage where they would be safe. Wayne said that he was going to make sure the kittens were caught so that they wouldn't contribute to the ongoing problem.

Little by little the cats came. Mama went for the drop-trap. Others were trapped up and down the street in the smaller box-traps, including a new cat that Jim had never seen before. Julie brought four cats home, including the abandoned friendly pet cat, to hold the night before spay day. Jim's wife, known by all as "Boots," brought the 5<sup>th</sup> cat that was trapped after Julie left, to the clinic on Sunday morning.

All of the cats came through surgery well and four of the five were returned to Jim's neighborhood to live much healthier lives. Mama went right back to nursing her kittens after her spay surgery. The abandoned friendly that Jim had named "Boots" went home with a Spay and Stay volunteer who could not stand the idea of her going back to the streets. So, in this one Round Lake Heights neighborhood, 25 cats are now living healthier lives because they were helped by three generations of men . . . and one woman named "Boots."



*Waking up from surgery in a strange place wasn't too bad for "Boots," as she's kept warm by the spay day volunteer who planned to become her new "mom."*



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**BE A PART  
OF THE SOLUTION**

Spay and neuter your pets.  
Keep your cats safe at home.  
Do not abandon your pets.

**Board of Directors**  
Juie Haas, President  
Donna Fedeli, Vice President  
Julie Wheeler, Secretary-Treasurer  
Elizabeth Fischer  
Sandra Kooper

**Advisory Board**  
Anna Morrison-Ricordati, Esq.  
Linda Petersen  
Richard Speck, DVM

Spay and Stay is a non profit organization working to end feline homelessness through spay and neuter.

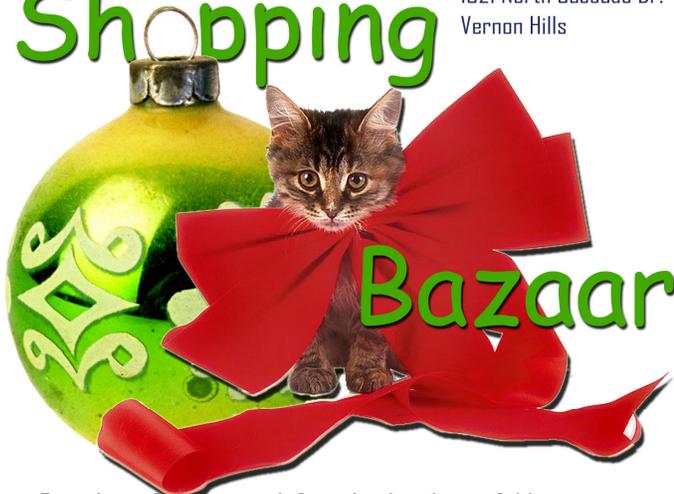
**Executive Director**  
Sandra Kooper

**Program Manager**  
Beth Voss

**SPAY/NEUTER WORKS**

# Spay and Stay's Holiday Shopping

OPEN HOUSE  
Saturday, November 15  
1:00 - 5:00 p.m.  
1821 North Cascade Dr.  
Vernon Hills



Spend an afternoon with friends. In a beautiful home setting. Buy some wonderful holiday gifts. Help raise funds for the cats.

For directions call: 847-624-8432

## SHOP AT OUR HOLIDAY BAZAAR AND HELP SAVE LIVES

When you do your holiday shopping at Spay and Stay's Holiday Bazaar, a percentage of your purchase benefits the cats.

### OUR EXPECTED VENDORS ARE:

- ◆ Pampered Chef
- ◆ Shaklee
- ◆ Avon
- ◆ Tastefully Simple
- ◆ Longaberger
- ◆ Tupperware
- ◆ Lia Sophia Jewelry
- ◆ Glass Menagerie Jewelry



For information: 847-289-4557