

The Feline Network

A Kindhearted Approach to Feline Overpopulation

P.O. Box 526, San Luis Obispo, CA 93406

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www.felinenetwork.org

Fall 2014

Community Cats

By Christine Collie

Almost every neighborhood has a cat or two that appears to be homeless. These stray cats are usually first noticed when they try to mooch food out of another cat's bowl. Eventually, one or two kindly neighbors will begin to feed the stray and continue to do so regularly. We always encourage people to feed stray cats, as it is not the cat's fault that it became lost or was abandoned.

The Feline Network is willing to spay and neuter stray cats and help with medical care, if needed. What we and other rescue groups don't want to see happen is for someone to corral the cat and take it to Animal Services where the odds of survival are not good, even if the cat is friendly, healthy and handsome. And if the cat is old, skittish or has a medical problem, it will be one of the first cats euthanized when new cats are brought in to Animal Services and the cat room is already at capacity.

Sometimes cats at Animal Services are relocated to rural properties as mousers or barn cats. At times this works out if the cat can be safely housed, but often the cat is picked off by a coyote or other predator that it did not have to contend with in the city. For this reason, we feel it is safer for a cat to remain in a familiar neighborhood with a caregiver or two willing to look after its needs. Cats are very resourceful and they will almost always find a food source and a warm, safe place to curl up for the night.


Camille, Honey and Amber were living with their mama under an empty house in a San Luis Obispo neighborhood on Buchon Street. A concerned neighbor called and alerted us to the situation. The kittens were eight weeks old and feral when we trapped them. We began socializing them immediately, and they went to our Saturday Adopt-a-Cats at PETCO within a couple of weeks. The mother cat was spayed and vaccinated and returned to the neighborhood. We thank the next door neighbor, who is willing to care for this community cat and put out food and water for her daily.

We are so grateful to have been called; otherwise, we would have had four breeding females living in the neighborhood. Yikes!



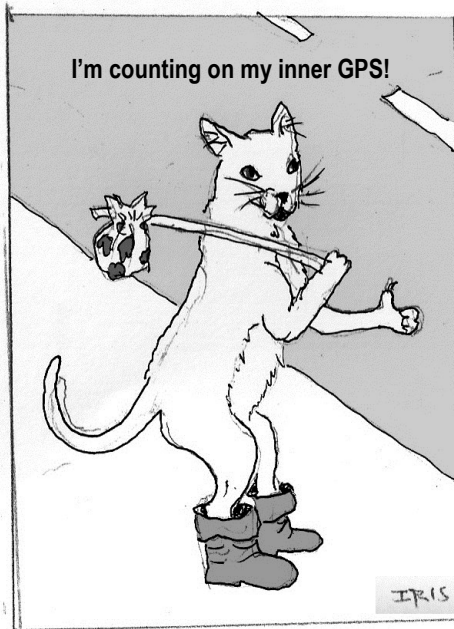
Camille, Honey and Amber found their forever homes at the Feline Network's Adopt-a-Pet at PETCO.

You might say to us, "Please take this cat and find it a home." We wish we could! In spite of all of our best efforts at spay/neuter, there are not enough homes for all the cats that are still being born. Our volunteers work countless hours during kitten season to find homes for all the kittens we rescue. People tend to choose kittens rather than adult cats for pets, so it can be extremely difficult if not impossible to place adult cats.

In closing, we would like to leave you with the concept of the "Community Cat." Please feed it, if you can, call us if you need help with medical care and spay/neuter, and please dissuade your neighbor, however well-intentioned, from taking the cat to Animal Services. Together we can make the lives of cats that cross our paths so much better. 

These Boots Are Made for Running....

"We tried in vain to catch her. She ran under parked cars, then across the busy 4th Street intersection in Pismo Beach, towards James Way. At rush hour! She crossed over the lone overpass on Highway 101. I ran frantically after her. I threw myself into the middle of 4th Street overpass, waving my



arms, stopping traffic. Fortunately, that little cat didn't get hit! And then I lost sight of her."

Karen Hastings was frantic. She ran back to the vet office where Boots had been spayed, crying. Boots had somehow managed to escape from a

carrier that was not secure, and everybody was upset. They had done everything they could to catch

her. "Well, at least she ran in the right direction," Karen said, trying to sound hopeful.

Karen and her husband Francis live about three miles from the vet office, but they looked for Boots every day, not knowing where she might be, calling her, just in case.

"After three nights, I got up one morning and just happened to look outside. I started crying. I thought I was seeing a ghost. There she was at the front door. I yelled, 'Bootsie.' My husband flung off his blankets and ran to her. 'Bootsie, Bootsie, do you want some cheese?' We were crying because we were so happy and amazed to have her home."

Boots is a feral cat born on the Hastings' property in rural Arroyo Grande along with three siblings to a feral mother that just "showed up" about a year ago. Karen gradually befriended Boots, as she was more trusting than her other siblings, but it still took months before Karen was able to touch her. "Not being able to hold this kitten, I didn't realize she was a girl until her tummy grew," Karen said. After Boots had kittens, Karen contacted the Feline Network for assistance with spaying and neutering all of the cats.

"I was amazed at the GPS system built into that cat," said Karen. "While she was lost, I fed her kittens and tried to handle them. When they saw their

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A+ The Excellent Cat A+

By Karen Smith

Here's a quick story about the cat that was living with us a few months ago. We called her Sam. Sam showed up in the fall, and we started to feed and love her. As cats go, she was excellent. Johnson (a large-breed dog) tolerated Sam, Sam tolerated Johnson.

One day about two months ago, Sam stopped showing up for her food and love. She was an excellent cat and I was sure someone had taken her in.

Yesterday, Sam was back in our yard. She had on a collar, bell and information tag. I called the number, thinking she had turned into an inside cat, then escaped. The gentleman who answered the phone asked if it was our cat. I said no. He then told me where Sam has been the last two months.

On their way to Oregon, they had discovered a stow-away cat. Sam spent the next two months in Oregon. Her fellow travelers thought she was an excellent cat.

They traveled back to California. Trying to reunite Sam with her owners, they put an I.D. tag on her and let her out, hoping the owners would call the number. They want to keep Sam. She really is an excellent cat. I asked if they wanted me to bring Sam to their home. As it turns out, they are our neighbors.

We will continue to love Sam when she visits us. There is another trip to Oregon for her in the future. She must travel well. 🐱

To Honor and Remember

In Loving Memory of:

Barbara Mori, by Judy Saltzman-Saveker

Marie Dickson, by Beverly Joy

Nicki, by Laura Price

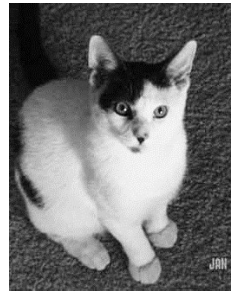
Mittens, “my amazingly entertaining, six-toed, solid black cat. ‘Thank you for being my best buddy for 18 years,’” by Stacy Axan

Bud, by Patricia K. O’Lear

Jiffy, “who recently used up the last of his nine lives and is missed greatly by his immediate and extended family and many, many friends. Megan and Dan Rivoire, Jiffy’s human caretakers, have a large hole that this furry family member left behind,” by Linda Fuller

SHY, by Robin & Richard White (see below)

VERA, a precious kitten who was gone too soon. Thanks to Julie Coleman for all her work with newborn kittens.



“SHY”



VERA

In Appreciation:

Fiona Fuzzalina, the fearless, the fair, the ferocious, says: “Thanks to Debby Holt and the Feline Network for my swell spay and neuter certificate. Bear Valley Animal Clinic did a great job and it’s like I never had ovaries or a uterus in the first place!” by Tom Meadows.

I wanted to thank you for the assistance in having “Grover” neutered; the little fellow has fully recovered from his procedure (aside from some lingering dirty glances towards me). It is very encouraging to have a resource like the Feline Network for population control. I would particularly like to thank Debby (Holt) for her help with this. Keep up the amazing work! by David Kendis (and Grover).

SHY By Robin & Richard White

In December 2003 we met Shy Shy and Gabby. It was love at first sight. Their foster mom Benita Smith had named the brother and sister for their personalities: Shy Shy because he was shy and Gabigale because she was a talker. They were five months old when they came home with us. Over the past 10 years, they have given us much joy and love.



Gabby and Shy

Shy Shy was shortened to Shy because he was actually the most vocal of the two. We nicknamed him “Speedbump” because he just flopped down in the middle of the floor for you to step over. He was a bruiser of a boy at 16 pounds who protected his property and his sister. But he was also a lover and the most compliant cat you could ask for. He was a purring machine and even purred when having unpleasant things done to him, such as clipping his nails or administering any kind of meds. Shy developed ocular herpes several years ago and in 2011 he had a

flare-up. Over the course of three months we tried numerous eye drops and contact lenses. At one point we gave him eye drops up to six times a day (a total of 25+ drops a day). I can’t imagine trying to do this with any other cat. He would patiently sit in our lap while we did whatever we had to do. Ultimately, a corneal flap surgery was the only recourse. He still had to have medication and drops twice a day. He was very routine oriented and would cry until he got his morning food, then hang around until he got his eye drops.

It turns out Gabby hasn’t lived up to her name because she’s just not all that vocal. Being a female, she’s not the lover that Shy was, but she is affectionate. She and Shy occasionally slept together and groomed one another.

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SHY (Continued from page 3)

Shy's death was very sudden and unexpected. One day recently while we were watching TV and Shy was sleeping and purring next to my husband on the couch, he had a seizure (as a result of what we now believe was a brain tumor). Despite our efforts to maintain him through the seizure, within less than two minutes he was gone. We miss him and all his loveable quirks more than words can say. Gabby has been grieving as well, although she has become much more affectionate than before. Although it was difficult to witness his death, we are thankful it didn't happen when he was out and about such that he just didn't come home one day and we'd never know what had happened to him. 🐾

Volunteers needed to help trap cats for our "Trap, Neuter and Return" program.
For SLO call 544-6138.
For South County call 556-0717.

These Boots Are Made for Running....

(Continued from page 2)

mom, they ran to her, purring. Seeing her reunite with her kittens was a Hallmark moment.

"Although Boots is a feral cat and lives outside, she brings a lot of joy into our lives. To have this little cat love us is special to both of us. The biggest tragedy of all is that people don't spay and neuter their cats." 🐾



Mama Bootsie

These 5-week-old cutie patooties will be ready for adoption in October. Fredrick, Elsie, Hunny Bunny and Cecilia.

