



A trap, spay/neuter and return program to humanely reduce the suffering of homeless cats.

Registered Charity – 100% Volunteer

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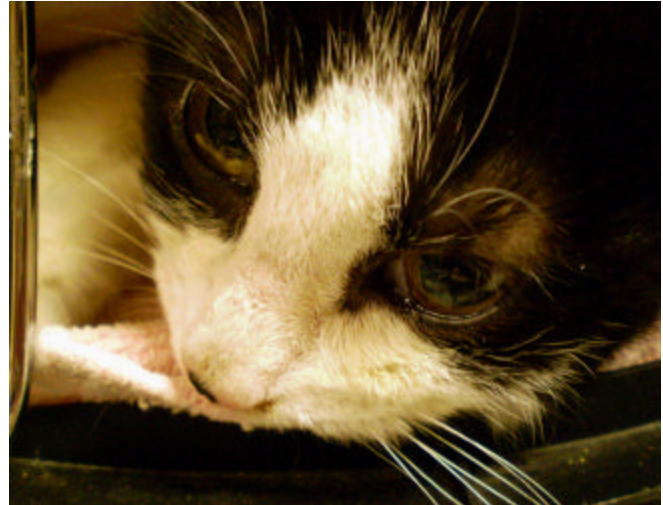
Kitten Season

By Cylia Wong

At this time of year we begin to notice an increase in kittens, but in reality, cats give birth all year long. During the fall and winter months, we are less inclined to stay outside. We expect life on the streets to slow down. This is not true.

Dave (past president) and I were called out one snowy day to handle a situation – a caregiver of long standing had discovered a batch of kittens on her back porch. Marion had been feeding stray cats in her neighborhood for quite some time and we had helped her on several occasions to ensure that all cats in her area were fixed. The act of feeding strays can attract new homeless cats into an area and this was what had happened.

When we arrived we quietly crept up the back stairs. Of course, before we could reach the porch, the mother cat leapt from the stairs and into the bushes. We could spy her lurking nearby, wary of these strangers so close to her babies. After hastily bundling the live kittens together (removing two frozen babies at the same time), we placed the three survivors at the back of a humane trap. They would serve as bait so we could capture the feral mom (she was very important to their



continued survival). The mewling soon brought mom back and we safely transported the whole batch to our bathroom in New Westminster.

For the next six weeks, I would be sharing use of the bathroom with feral mom and kittens. As I approached the door every morning, I could hear her scrambling out of the cardboard box (which served as their bed). She would hide behind the claw-foot bathtub. The kittens were marvelous little bundles. The original three had made it through their winter ordeal, including the runt. He was smaller and appeared less strong, and in this safe environment he had a good chance.

After a few days of settling in, I began picking up the kittens on a daily basis, touching each kitten individually, getting them used to human hands. Every week would be a

new discovery – their wee bodies changing shape, their eyes opening to reveal blue or amber, their ears going from flat to perky, their efforts to crawl, to walking shakily, to spilling out of the box.

On each occasion I could sense the mother hovering close by, ready to pounce on me if her babies gave a cry of alarm. She never did attack me and I was ever wary of her presence in the background. Time flew by so quickly and then it was time to separate the mom from her litter.

In nature, mothers will automatically start weaning their kittens after a few weeks -- to replenish their energies before looking for a mate and beginning the cycle again. That is why unspayed females can have up to four litters a year.



Announcements and Events

We expect to share space with VOKRA at the following events:

- Sunday, June 15 - Commercial Drive Car Free Day
- Tuesday, July 1- Canada Day @ Granville Island

How you can help?

There are many ways that individuals can help. Depending on your interests, one could organize a fundraiser on our behalf, donate Canadian Tire \$ to us, distribute our newsletters to various outlets, post notices on our behalf, report stray or feral cat

situations in your area, help us get free publicity in local newspapers, ask your cat-friendly friends about whether they have time to help us, if you can't.

Any help you can offer is appreciated and welcomed in our efforts to help curb the number of stray cats born outside. Even if you live beyond Vancouver or Burnaby, there are specific projects that can be handled through computer access, so please consider donating some of your valuable time to us. A volunteer application can be found on our website at: www.maverickcat.com

A Request for Your Feedback?

We would like to hear from you!

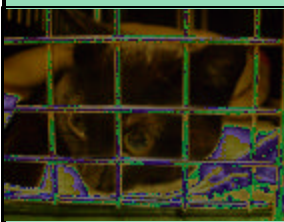
How are we doing?

What do you like reading in our newsletters?

Suggestions, comments, ideas?

Why do you donate to us?

Your comments are appreciated, so send us your feedback. Contact information can be found on the front page in the top left corner.



BC SPCA Spay/Neuter Day

By Jessica Hoopes

On March 9, 2008 the Vancouver branch of the BCSPCA opened its doors to rescue groups allowing for free spay/neuter and vaccination for feral cat rescue groups across the Lower Mainland. Last year over 70 feral and stray cats were spayed/neutered and vaccinated, an effort which appears to have significantly reduced the number of kittens born this year in the Greater Vancouver area. This year 15 cats and kittens from local colonies were brought to the SPCA.

Maverick Cat Coalition and Vancouver Orphan Kitten Rescue would like to extend their most sincere gratitude to the many volunteers, veterinarians and staff who participated in this year's spay/neuter event. Without contributions of time and energy from the community, our efforts to reduce the number of feral and stray cats in the Lower Mainland, would not be nearly as successful.

In order to properly understand the impact of such events, one must consider that the gestation period for a female cat is approximately 65 days, meaning that they can have up to four litters of kittens per year, with an average of 4 -6 kittens per litter. Thus spaying even a single female cat can reduce the number of kittens born in a given year by 12 -24 kittens. Similarly, each male feral cat has the potential to father dozens of litters of kittens per year.

For a rescue group, the average cost of spaying/neutering and providing basic vaccinations to a feral or stray cat is approximately \$50.00, so in addition to helping reduce the number of feral kittens born outside, these events are also significant in helping us stretch the generous donations of the public as far as possible.

Thanks again to everyone who helped out!

Message from the President

By Cylia Wong



One of our new volunteers recently asked me about the history of Maverick Cat Coalition. In 2002 after Dave and I had volunteered in various capacities at local cat rescue groups and shelters, we determined that there was a definite need for a group that strictly focused on feral and stray cats. Our research at that time revealed that there were many groups that dealt with pet cats and sheltered them but none that specialized in the Trap -Neuter-Return (TNR) program.

We had a very good idea as to what would be involved. By that time, we had served on boards, helped at fundraising events, groomed cats, created newsletters, fostered feral cats and kittens, and visited various shelters and rescues to get a better idea of how much time and effort would be needed.

In our first year, we dipped into our own pockets until Aid to Animals came to our rescue, funding our vet bills so we could spay even more cats. Once we gained charitable status, individuals began giving us money. Since then, we have slowly built up our loyal donor base. We are thankful to those who continue to believe in what we do.

Our policy has always been to do the best that we can, given the volunteers and funds that are available. This means that we have gone from "doing it all" (which burned out many of our key volunteers) to asking our caregivers to help with their own locations.

At this time, we are currently focused on recruiting and training new volunteers, and a public education campaign to create an even greater impact.

TNR works because it stops the cycle. Unfixed pet cats are often allowed outside. Then when they stray too far (and become lost) or are left behind by their "owners", they revert to being "wild" and join a colony to survive. Any time after puberty (four months) the females are capable of breeding and the cycle is started.

To ensure that a greater number of cats will be fixed, we have teamed up with Vancouver Orphan Kitten Rescue who also operates a TNR program. We also plan to continue to meet with other local cat rescue groups to discuss mutually beneficial ventures.

My hope is that one day all cats will be highly valued, the pet of choice, loved and adored, sheltered safely inside as the treasures that they truly are.

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Trapping Statistics

The following is a summary of statistics of cats and caregivers aided by Maverick Cat Coalition since its establishment. The continued support of our volunteers, members and contributors will allow us to improve the lives of many more cats in the future.

Location	2002-4		2005		2006		2007		2008		Total	
	Cats	Care-givers	Cats	Care-givers	Cats	Care-givers	Cats	Care-givers	Cats	Care-givers	Cats	Care-givers
Vancouver	194	46	39	22	3	3	41	13	35	13	312	97
Burnaby	111	29	27	10	16	7	15	10	5	2	174	58
Surrey	65	15	20	6	34	7	7	1	0	0	126	29
Coquitlam	31	5	8	6	9	2	0	0	0	0	48	13
New Westminster	14	6	11	2	0	0	1	1	1	1	27	10
Richmond	0	0	13	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	13	2
Total	415	101	118	48	62	19	64	25	41	16	700	209

Vancouver Orphan Kitten Rescue By Karen Duncan

As I put pen to paper, here's my quick rundown on VOKRA and our connection to Maverick Cat. In 2001 Maria Soroski and I saw the need for a group that concentrated mainly on newborn kittens who were constantly being dropped off at shelters and vet clinics. We both had volunteered for the SPCA and various other groups.

VOKRA was formed to take in bottle-feeding kittens to avoid exposing them to the main population in shelters where they'd be susceptible to upper respiratory and other potentially deadly conditions. They needed round-the-clock feeding and care that was not possible in a shelter. By learning care strategies from vets and other rescues including a huge input from Julie Anne Lee's homeopathic clinic, we saved and re-homed many kittens. As we grew, we developed a very supportive relationship with Arbutus West Animal Clinic in Kits that made it possible for great things to be accomplished.

We learned a lot from people who had been working with street cats for years and started trapping the moms and other cats in the colonies we came across. At first the ferals were turned over to shelters that worked with unsocialized cats, or they were kept in our foster homes for extended periods of time. Maria moved more into the trap/spay/release program and trapped over 300 street cats two years in a row. Although some of the found litters were turned in due to a mom cat dying or being lost, the majority was rescued in lanes, under buildings or in sheds where the mother cat had disappeared. If we were able to trap the mom, she was more than likely wild (feral) or a terrified young cat, who was just doing her best to find a safe place to have her kittens and keep them alive.

Each year we have learned new care protocols. We place each group into separate foster homes and supply formula, high quality food, safe litter and equipment. They receive care, socialization and training in preparation for adoption to their new homes. The feral nursing cats come in with their litters and are housed in large dog kennels, where they are treated gently, kept clean and fed as their kittens grow. All ferals are spayed or neutered, given snap tests and, if necessary, have dentals done and then returned to their colonies or where they were trapped. We had quickly realized that putting the very wild into shelters wasn't the answer because the numbers were too great. A managed colony will gradually get smaller if all new arrivals are brought in for care right away. If there isn't a safe place to send them back to, we find farms etc. that welcome some healthy non-breeding mousers!

Because the communication among trapping groups was non-existent, we arranged a meeting. As a result, Maria became a board member in the newly reconfigured Maverick Cat. We are now in touch with several other groups and individual trappers in many areas. When we get a trapping request, we can share the load especially in outer areas. We are seeing fewer bottle-feeders in Vancouver/Burnaby because people are calling in from the chronically bad areas as soon as they spot new arrivals.

All of us work to educate the public on the importance of altering by five months and ID-ing by tattoo or microchip. For the first time in years, I am optimistic that, if we continue this way, we will greatly ease the overpopulation and suffering of homeless cats. We will also witness a big shift in how people regard cats as companions and in the wild.

Corporate Sponsors and Donors

We are very grateful for the following locations that accepted our newsletter for hand out at their office:

Vancouver

Acadia Veterinary
Anderson Animal Hospital
Animal Emergency Clinic
Arbutus West Veterinary Clinic
Atlas Animal Hospital
Bosley's Pet Food Plus
- 41st and Collingwood
Cambie Animal Hospital
Canada West Veterinary Specialists
and Critical Care Hospital
Cats Only
Champlain Animal Hospital
Cypress St. Animal Hospital
Granville Island Veterinary Hospital
Kerrisdale Veterinary Hospital
Killarney Animal Hospital

Kitty in the Window Pet Services
Oak Animal Hospital
Pet Food'n More - Oak at 16th
Sweet Cherubim Restaurant
Tisol Pet Nutrition and Supply
- Arbutus and 11th
Vancouver Animal Wellness Hospital
Vancouver Feline
Vancouver Veterinary Hospital
West End Veterinary Clinic

Burnaby

Burnaby-Aberdeen Animal Hospital
Burnaby City Hall
Burnaby-New Westminster Central
Animal Hospital
Burnaby Veterinary Hospital

Central City Animal Hospital
Coast Cat Clinic
Hastings Street Animal Hospital
Kensington Animal Hospital
Kensington Pet Food Plus
King Ed Pet Centre
Metrotown Animal Hospital
North Burnaby Pet Hospital
Bill Siksay, MP
South Burnaby Veterinary Hospital
Tisol Pet Nutrition and Supply -
Gilley & Kingsway
Vancouver City Savings -North Road

New Westminster

Peter Julian, MP (Burnaby -New
Westminster)

New Westminster Public Library
Ole Ole Restaurant
Van Pet Centre

Organizations, businesses and
groups that continue to help
us:

Ministry of the Public Safety &
Solicitor General, Province of
British Columbia
Water-Spirit Web Services, Langley
Cat-alog Online Services, Langley
Kensington Foundation for Animals
in Crisis, Burnaby

About Our Organization...

Maverick Cat Coalition is a federally registered charitable organization dedicated to providing protection, care, comfort and shelter to wild (feral), stray domestic and companion cats. Utilizing a Trap, Neuter/Spay and Return (TNR) program, Maverick Cat Coalition works to alleviate the suffering of homeless cats and helps stabilize colonies to manageable levels.