



Community Cats News

Community Cats TNR
P. O. Box 384
Ludington, MI 49431

Winter 2014—2015

www.communitycatstnr.org

A humane Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program to reduce the number of homeless cats

Now it is 41,000 Fewer Kittens!

In our winter newsletter published last year, Community Cats TNR reported that we had TNRd 142 homeless cats in our first year of operation. Spaying the 74 females would have resulted in the birth of approximately 18,000 kittens during the following seven years.

Community support for trap-neuter-return as a positive means of reducing and controlling the free-roaming cat population has allowed us to TNR another 152 cats by mid-November, 2014. The 164 females could have produced 41,000 kittens in seven years!

As TNR begins its third year of operation, our volunteers have learned a lot more about cats—mostly from the cats!

We've learned that they have a strong determination to survive. They enjoy their freedom but need people for food, water and shelter.

They develop strong

family (colony) ties with other cats, and they know and understand the territory they inhabit.

Just a minority of free-roaming cats are truly feral. They are a mix of feral, abandoned, and owned cats roaming outdoors. But, because they are fearful, they need to be trapped to get them spayed or neutered.

They establish a bond and tentative level of trust with the caregivers who feed and shelter them. They are not aggressive or dangerous, only afraid.

After they have been spayed or neutered, there are many positive results for the cats and caregivers. The cats emerge from this TNR "adventure" with better health, stronger immune systems, better quality of life free of reproductive stresses, and they tend to become even more social and trusting of their caregivers.

Kittens that are handled



A young black and gray tabby male waits inside his trap prior to surgery.

and socialized at an early age are very adoptable. Even some feral cats can be socialized and adjusted to living inside.

Most cats living in a managed TNR colony (fed and cared for by a caring person) tend to stay closer to their food source and help to stabilize the number of cats in a neighborhood.

The cats living outdoors are amazingly healthy and no more subject to disease than pet cats living indoors.

*Enrich your own life—
adopt a cat—or two!*

What is TNR?

TNR is Trap-Neuter-Return

Free-roaming, abandoned, stray, feral cats are:

- Humanely trapped by trained caregivers and volunteers.
- Transported to veterinarian clinic
- Given a health check, parasite treatment and rabies shot
- Spayed or neutered
- Left ear tipped for identification
- Returned to colony
- Monitored by caregiver for new strays.
- Continue their better quality of lifestyle.

KEEP THEM DRY AND WARM

“If you are cold, so are they”



Volunteers Bud and Mona Johnson build the Alley Cat winter shelter shown above—it is the favorite of outdoor cats!

For a variety of plans and options for building your own winter cat shelter, visit www.alleycat.org or www.bestfriends.org or www.neighborhoodcats.org and www.communitycatstnr.org

We need volunteers to build, plus donations of 1/2” plywood, luan or paneling, 3 1/2”-4” hinges. Building scraps are perfect! PLEASE HELP!
Call 845-7888

Winter is brutal for homeless cats. They need help throughout the winter months to find shelter that provides them protection from cold and wet weather. Without a good shelter, cats may become ill, and may suffer from frostbite on their ears, nose and paws.

There are many ideas and designs available for winter cat shelters, but all good designs share two qualities: strong insulation and minimal air space. The insulation is needed to trap the cats’ body heat. Minimal air space is necessary so that cold air doesn’t fill the empty space and chill the cats. Straw is the best insulating material to use inside the shelter. Blankets or towels will become wet, will freeze and draw body heat away from the cats. Cats will cozy or burrow into straw and keep their body heat from escaping.

Community Cats TNR volunteers have been building the Alley Cat winter cat shelter shown in the photo. It is constructed of 1/2” plywood, has a 5” x 6” opening, double walls to allow for insulation between, a sloped and shingled roof, and a wind block just inside the entrance. Cats enter the shelter, go around the wind block, and cuddle into the straw interior. Volunteers have experimented and modified the design provided by Alley Cats to add roof insulation, an interior shelf, and a two-story design with compartments.

Another popular shelter can be assembled using a large and a small storage bin. Foam insulation or straw can be placed below, above and around the interior “box” which is lined with plenty of straw. Entrance holes approximately 5” x 6” can be cut on one end of the long side of the outer and inner storage bins so the entrances line up. Another option is to connect them with 6” circular drainage tubing.

Dog houses may be modified by making the opening smaller, and large dog houses may be modified to reduce air space by designing “compartments” inside.

Allowing cats an entrance into an outbuilding will provide excellent protection from the elements, especially if you also add one or more small corners of straw, perhaps in a wood or cardboard box, under a tarp, etc.

In addition to Dry and Warm

Keep them well fed with nutritious cat food to keep them healthy. Don’t forget to provide fresh water. They need more food in the winter to stay warm!

Upcoming events—Pizza Hut is sponsoring a fundraiser for Community Cats TNR from 4 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. on Monday, December 15, 2014. 10% of the proceeds from eat in, carry out and delivery will be donated to helping Community Cats. We will also offer homemade baked goods for sale.

Come to our next meeting: Sunday, January 11, 2015 at 2 p.m. at Ludington Library.

Learn more—Look for links to other websites to learn “everything” about cats by visiting www.communitycatstnr.org.

Thank you—to individuals and businesses for monetary donations during 2014 - Also to a foundation wishing to remain anonymous for a \$1,000 donation for veterinary services, to Great Lakes Energy People Fund for a \$400 grant for purchase of traps, to Bob Alexander for sponsoring a ready-made garage sale, to Author C.L. Rossman for profits from book sales, to Pizza Hut for a winter fundraiser, to Lowe’s for donation of a storage building, to Pierrot Hair Designs for a free haircut fundraiser, and to all who donated towels, sheets, blankets, building materials and cat food. Special thanks to the volunteers who helped trap and care for cats before and after surgery, built winter cat shelters, distributed flyers, and worked on fundraisers.

About Relocation

Dropping unwanted cats off in the country within site of a barn is cruel and inhumane and is also unlawful abandonment.

Cats are territorial. They may be part of a colony of related cats living outdoors, or they may consider your home their territory.

When a cat is being introduced to a new location, it is imperative that he/she be confined for a period of time and gradually introduced to other pets, new people and a new “territory” until a comfort level has been reached. They need to overcome fear and know this new location provides food and shelter, and hopefully, love.

Dropped off cats are frequently chased out of the territory by other cats, and they make every effort to return “home.” They no longer know where to find food, and they don’t know about new potential predators.

The best outcome for your cat is for you to seek a new, caring home, and to place siblings together if possible. Your cat’s life depends on you!

Do you have a friendly stray?

If you have a stray cat that you can handle, call 757-4470 and request a spay/neuter certificate from Fixing Furry Friends.

You can do so much to help reduce the overpopulation of stray cats by having your pet or friendly stray spayed or neutered—the certificate will help you with the cost.



Dr. Leslie Paxton, DVM and Veterinary Assistant, Nikki Baldwin begin surgery on the 200th cat TNRd by Community Cats

Our thanks to Drs. Steve and Leslie Paxton and staff of Animal Hospital of Ludington and Drs. Glenn Walquist, Laura Waldo, Rex Payne and Stacy Fournier and staff of Country Veterinary Clinic for making time in their busy surgical schedules for Community Cats.

The success of the Community Cats TNR program relies upon donations and memorial contributions. Please consider making a donation today! Make check payable to COMMUNITY CATS TNR and mail to P. O. Box 384, Ludington, MI 49431 **THANK YOU!**

YES—I CAN HELP!

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____

Comments _____

(Community Cats TNR is a 501c3 public charity. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.)

**BE A RESPONSIBLE
CAT OWNER**

NEUTER OR SPAY!



MURPHY Not The Typical TNR Cat

His name is now Murphy, but he has also been known as Cat-Man and Hoppy. Murphy found his way into a Community Cats TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) trap in the fall of 2013. He took a trip to a veterinarian clinic, had a health check, rabies shot, parasite treatment, was neutered, and returned to his trapping site sporting a clipped left ear tip.

Murphy, a large gold tabby, has a history in the City of Ludington. He has been fed by a number of caregivers on the north side. He was often seen “hopping” across Tinkham Avenue to visit even another feeding site or another amorous female feline.

Murphy has an old injury to his hind quarters that prevents him from walking normally. He “hops!” One theory is that he was hit by a car, another that somebody shot him. As it turns out, he is a tough survivor. He healed to a point and has been making his presence known in various neighborhoods.

But, Murphy is not the typical Trap-Neuter-Return cat. The vast majority of TNRd cats are fearful of people and need to be trapped in order to get them spayed or neutered. Murphy is, however, a free-roaming cat who has contributed significantly to the birth of a lot of kittens within the City during his “glory” days. Thanks to Community Cats TNR, he is no longer fathering kittens.

Today he is healthier, more content, and still visiting various neighborhoods. He has no forever home. He is a good cat and a free spirit. Although he has likely suffered at the hands of non-caring people, he still likes people. If he visits your porch, you may be able to scratch him behind his clipped left ear and offer him a special treat!

Please call Community Cats TNR at 845-7888 or 843-4641 if you see him!