

Community Cats News

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

Winter 2015—2016

www.communitycatstnr.org

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

Another Successful Year!

In our 2013 winter newsletter 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.

In our 2014 winter newsletter, we had added another 152 cats to our total, resulting in the birth of 41,000 fewer kittens.

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 143 cats by mid-November, 2015. The total of 252 females could have produced 63,000 kittens in seven years!

As TNR begins its fourth year of operation, our goal, with your help, is to continue to help the many caregivers reduce the number of unneutered strays, feral,

free-roaming cats in their neighborhoods.

Caregivers provide an invaluable service in their neighborhoods. They keep the cats healthy by providing food, water and sheltering locations. They call Community Cats TNR and ask for help getting the cats spayed/neutered so the population doesn't get out of hand.

These cats have been victimized originally by the owners who allowed unneutered cats to roam free. The cats 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.

Because they are fearful, they need to be trapped to get them spayed or neutered.

They establish a bond and tentative level of



A young gold and white male waits inside his trap prior to surgery.

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.

"Until one has loved an animal, part of their soul remains unawakened." (Unknown)

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”



Caregiver Terri Sexton accepts one of two cat shelters built by volunteers Mary Ann and Rick Randall.

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, insulation, and 50 and 33 gallon storage bins. Building scraps are perfect!

PLEASE HELP!

Call 845-7888

Once again, the Community Cats TNR newsletter stresses the need for winter cat shelters! 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.

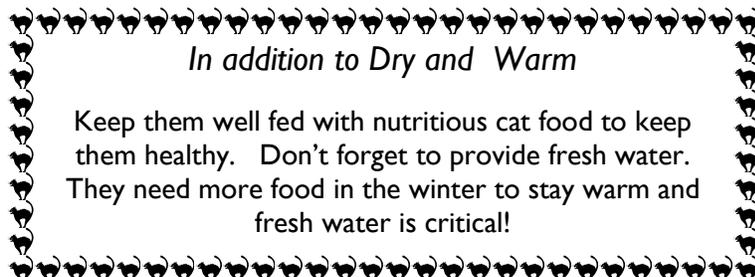
There are many ideas and designs available for winter cat shelters, but all good designs share two qualities: strong insulation and minimal air space. The insulation is needed to trap the cats' body heat. Minimal air space is necessary so that cold air doesn't fill the empty space and chill the cats. 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 or rubber 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, a base and higher entrance cut and an insulated floor.

Another popular shelter can be assembled using a large and a small storage bin. Blue board or fiberglass insulation can be placed below, above and around the interior "box" which is lined with plenty of straw. Entrance holes approximately 6" in diameter can be cut on one end of the long side of the outer and inner storage bins so the entrances line up. The two boxes can then be connected 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. We currently have a large donated dog house that needs repair and modification and is available to a caregiver who can make it work.

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 storage bin, wood or cardboard box, under a tarp, etc.



A Major Community Need!!!!

In every corner of Mason County, there are animals at risk, especially cats. In a perfect world, every friendly stray, unwanted pet, abused or abandoned pet would be guided into a new, caring home. Animal Control has limited space and limited time to allow for adoption before euthanasia becomes necessary.

Lakeshore Animal Friends is working hard to find foster and forever homes for the dogs and cats at Mason County Animal Control before their time runs out.

It is especially sad for the older cats that are at high risk of never being adopted. Please consider adopting an older cat from Animal Control!

Community Cats TNR is able to trap-neuter-and return free-roaming, feral cats back to their neighborhoods, but is not equipped to rescue or rehome cats that might be good candidates for adoption.

People who take in a stray in need are to be commended for their kindness and caring. They alone, by taking in one stray and getting it neutered, are responsible for population reduction of 100-400 cats during the next 7 years of that cat's life!

There is a huge need for an intake shelter and foster homes to move at-risk cats (and dogs) through the process of immediate food, water and shelter, veterinary treatment, safe temporary care, foster care, and adoption into a forever home.

Second Chance Humane Society has been organized in Mason County to fill this vital community need. Their Board is actively seeking a shelter location and foster homes. For information or to volunteer your expertise, please call Jacki Osgood at 757-9219 and visit them on facebook.

Thank you!

Community Cats TNR gratefully acknowledges a grant award of \$500 from the Community Foundation for Mason County. Community Cats TNR appreciates the Foundation's recognition as a community non-profit organization which contributes to the quality of life in Mason County.

Special thanks goes to Pizza Hut, Pierrot Hair Designs, House of Flavors and Bob Alexander for sponsoring fundraising events, and to all who donated money, towels, sheets, blankets, building materials and cat food!

Do you have a friendly stray?

If you have a pet or stray cat that you can handle, visit www.fixingfurryfriends and fill out an application for 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.



Community Cat No. 400 asleep in the arms of Mandi Bates, Veterinary Assistant at the Animal Hospital of Ludington prior to surgery on August 27, 2015.

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.)

Shop Amazon at this link:

<http://smile.amazon.com/ch/46-3759577> and Amazon will donate 0.5% of your purchase to Community Cats TNR!

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Upcoming events

Dec 5, Noon to 3 pm—Make a donation of \$10 or more to Community Cats TNR and receive a free haircut by Stacy at Pierrot Hair Designs, 313 S. James St, Ludington!

Wednesday, Dec 9, 4 pm to 7:30 pm—Pizza Hut fundraiser and bake sale. Pizza Hut will donate 10% of proceeds on eat in, carry out and delivery!

Come to our next meeting: Sunday, January 10, 2016 at 2 p.m. at Ludington Library.



Strangers in a Strange Land

It starts out mildly enough: Heading to work on the subway, you realize you forgot your wallet. *No big deal, you think. I'll borrow money to get home.*

Soon the lights go out and the train hurtles toward the sky, speeding through the atmosphere. Time passes-it's hard to tell how long. The subway is grounded, the doors swing open, and unfolding before you is a city you don't recognize.

A few things are familiar-the Starbucks on every block, the cars, the English phrases on signs. But it's cold, you're hungry, you're penniless and the sun is setting. You think of your children who will be waiting to be picked up from school. Who will get them home safely? What will they eat for dinner?

With gathering dread, you notice a sinister-looking man eyeing you from a storefront. You want to escape but have no idea where to go. *Where am I? you wonder, wracked with fear. What's happening?*

Surprise! You've been trapped and relocated.

This is the plight of cats (and raccoons, opossums, squirrels, skunks, etc) that are trapped and relocated.

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. There may be kittens left behind to starve.

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, water, or shelter, 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!

(Taken in part from All Animals, Jan/Feb, 2015, a publication of the Humane Society of the United States, author Nancy Lawson)