



Community Cats News

Community Cats TNR
P. O. Box 384
Ludington, MI 49431
Winter 2018—2019

www.communitycatstnr.org

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

TNR Still Going Strong!

It seems that 2018 has been a banner year for kittens. The other animal groups in Mason County have been overwhelmed by the need to find foster and adoptive homes for kittens and cats. Community Cats TNR is not a rescue organization, but has coordinated efforts with volunteers from Mason County Animal Advocates, Lakeshore Animal Friends and Second Chance Humane Society to help them catch (trap) kittens and cats in need of rescue. There is an on-going need for volunteers to foster cats and kittens and help find permanent homes for them. For more information on the mission of each of the other Mason County animal groups, see page 3.

The homeless, free-roaming feral cat population typically begins reproductive efforts starting in February, because it seems that every female is having kittens in April! Community Cats TNR has a policy of suspending trap-neuter-return during the cold months of winter. We believe it is cruel and harmful to subject the cats to the stress of winter weather and surgery at the same time. As early as possible, usually in March, we work with our partner veterinary clinics to TNR as many females as possible. We continue TNR throughout the spring and summer months, and again TNR as many in the fall as possible before cold weather arrives.

As of early November, 2018 Community Cats TNR has Trap-Neuter-Returned 879 homeless, feral, free-roaming cats. Based upon a very conservative estimate calculating only the reproductive rate of the females, we have so far prevented the birth of at least 123,000 unwanted kittens! As Community Cats TNR begins its seventh year of operation, our goal, with your support, is to continue to help the caregivers reduce the number of “community cats” in their neighborhoods.

Visit our website: www.communitycatstnr.org

Like us on facebook

“The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated.”

— Mahatma Gandhi



Cat # 800, asleep in the arms of Tangella Christmas, LVT, is a young calico female, spayed by Dr. Rex Payne DVM, at the Country Veterinary Clinic P.C. on July 19, 2018.

Kitten Information

Kitten season is at a peak from April through September. The offspring of homeless cats face a very uncertain future and are at the mercy of cold weather, predators, and starvation. For information about what to do if you find kittens, visit www.communitycatstnr.org and click on the Kitten Care tab for a link to the Alley Cat website. The site provides a comprehensive guide for caring for kittens, and an excellent progression link illustrating their age and growth. It also suggests that you first leave them alone—mom cat is nearby.

Christmas shopping on Amazon?

Use the following link
and Amazon will donate 0.5% of your
purchase to Community Cats TNR!

[http://smile.amazon.com/ch/
46-3759577](http://smile.amazon.com/ch/46-3759577)

THE NEED FOR SHELTER



Every year, 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.

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.

Visit www.alleycat.org or www.bestfriends.org, or www.neighborhoodcats.org and www.communitycatstnr.org for ideas and information on how to build shelters. A new idea recently suggested is to stack old dry/clean tires, cut a hole (about 6" x 6") toward the bottom, put a rain proof roof across the top and put a lot of straw inside.

Community Cats TNR volunteers have built numerous Alley Cat shelters during the past six years. Donations of 1/2" exterior plywood, luan or paneling, insulation board and fiberglass insulation, exterior latex paint in a "camouflage color," and 50 and 30 gallon storage bins are needed.

THE REQUEST FOR SHELTERS, ALREADY BUILT, HAS INCREASED EVERY YEAR. RIGHT NOW, WE NEED:

- * 1/2 INCH PLYWOOD (DOESN'T HAVE TO BE FULL SHEETS)
- * RIGID "BLUE BOARD" INSULATION—1/4", 1/2" AND 1"
- * VOLUNTEERS TO BUILD SHELTERS

PLEASE CALL 845-7888 IF YOU CAN HELP WITH THIS!!!!



A view of the interior of the Alley Cat winter cat shelter plan displaying double insulated walls, insulation under vinyl flooring and wind guard.



A view of one finished Alley Cat shelter with rubber roof next to large totes of similar size ready to be constructed.

IN MEMORIAM

Community Cats TNR remembers those who loved and cared for cats, and thanks family and friends for contributions in 2018 honoring their memory:

Dan Coates
Janet K. Coffee
James Kelly
Karen Bergez
Bill Kelley
Billy Sielski

Did you know . . .

That dropping a cat off in the country in site of a barn is unlawful? It is abandonment. It is cruel. It is unfair to the people who find the cat and try to save it from starvation and probable injury.

Cats are territorial. A cat in a new location is usually rejected by other cats, doesn't know where to go to eat and drink, doesn't know about predators, doesn't know where to hide, and tries to cross fields, roads, rivers, and miles to find its way back home before starvation, dehydration, infection, or frost bite takes over.

PLEASE ADVOCATE FOR THIS TO STOP!

The Importance of Fresh Water

Free-roaming cats have a real struggle finding fresh, clean water, especially during the winter. Maintaining proper hydration is critical to their overall health. For your pet cats and the outdoor cats, provide clean water daily and wash the bowls frequently.

During the winter, a heated water bowl is ideal. Other ideas to prevent water from freezing quickly include:

- ◆ *If possible, refill the bowls with hot or warm water. A pinch of sugar stops water from freezing as quickly, and provides an added energy boost.*
- ◆ *Keep the water in the sun and use dark colored bowls that will absorb the sun's heat.*
- ◆ *Purchase a solar powered bowl that is designed to work only at temperatures of 30 degrees or higher and must be kept in the sun.*
- ◆ *Use wider and deeper bowls and insulate the bowls.*
- ◆ *Use double-layered bowls that have an insulated layer between the surface of the water and the surface against the ground.*
- ◆ *Place the water dish inside a small styrofoam cooler to slow the freezing.*
- ◆ *Use microwavable disks under the water bowl.*
- ◆ *Surround the top and sides of the feeding area with plexiglass in order to create a greenhouse environment for the water.*
- ◆ *If there is a water source like a spigot, run the water slightly.*
- ◆ *Shield the bowl from the wind.*

Mason County Animal Groups

Lakeshore Animal Friends supports Mason County Animal Control by providing spay/neuter certificates for cats and dogs adopted from Animal Control.

Fixing Furry Friends provides certificates to Mason County residents to help with some of the cost of spaying and neutering their companion animals. If you have a dog or cat (or stray cat that you can handle), visit www.fixingfurryfriends.org and fill out an application for a spay/neuter certificate.

Mason County Animal Advocates has become involved in rescuing, fostering and adopting at-risk animals. This group is in need of more foster homes.

Second Chance Humane Society (Mason County PAWS) has been organized to seek the establishment of a no-kill shelter and network in Mason County—an intake shelter for at-risk animals, and a network of foster homes. Their Board is actively seeking funds for a no-kill shelter.

Mason County Mutts provides assistance at Mason County Animal Control and supports projects to make the area more dog friendly. (231-794-2757)

Mason County Animal Control (843-8644), Lakeshore Animal Friends (843-1414), Second Chance Humane Society (757-9219), and Mason County Animal Advocates (231-239-3326) all have foster cats and kittens needing new homes. If you can help any of them by adopting or fostering cats or kittens, please contact them today!

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!**

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YES—I CAN HELP!

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Name _____

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Address _____

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Phone Number _____

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Comments _____

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

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What is Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)?

Homeless, free-roaming, abandoned, feral cats are:

- Humanely trapped by trained caregivers and volunteers.
- Transported to veterinary clinic
- Given a health check, parasite treatment, rabies and distemper vaccines
- Spayed or neutered
- Left ear tipped for identification
- Returned to colony to continue their better quality of life.

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Upcoming events

DINNER AT PIZZA HUT!

Wednesday, Dec 12 from 4:00 to 7:45 pm—Pizza Hut fundraiser and bake sale. Pizza Hut will donate 10% of proceeds on eat in, carry out and delivery!
PLEASE JOIN US FOR THIS IMPORTANT FUNDRAISER!

Come to our next meeting: Sunday, January 13, 2019 at 2 p.m. at Book Mark, 201 S. Rath Avenue, Ludington.

Find us during the Friday Night Live events next summer and look for our annual yard sale in August or September.

Thank You to . . .

An Anonymous donor foundation that awarded a \$1,000 grant in 2018 to provide flea/ear mite treatment, pain medications, and antibiotics as needed.

To our veterinary partners—the doctors and staff of Country Veterinary Clinic, PC and Animal Hospital of Ludington. Without their help, support, and professional expertise, Community Cats TNR would not exist.

To all who made direct and memorial donations, donations of cat food at Shop N Save, donations of building materials for shelters, donations of time and baked goods to help with fundraisers, and especially all those caregivers who continue to feed, water and shelter homeless cats.

Food Donations

An important mission of the Community Cats TNR program is to help caregivers feed their homeless cat colonies. A cat food donation box is available throughout the year in the entrance at Shop N Save. There is always a need for more food and your donations are very much appreciated! Purina Complete dry food in the blue bag is a favorite, but all kinds, dry and canned, are delivered promptly wherever needed.

Sleepy Cats!'

A recent article in *Cat Watch*, a publication of the Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine, reported that a video-camera behavioral study watched 26 feral cats that had been TNRD. Almost 90 percent of the time, the cats were resting or sleeping. Nine percent of the time was spent roaming around and the remaining one percent was spent eating/drinking at feeding stations, or hunting. CCTNR's experience is that the best time to trap is during morning or late afternoon feeding time, or just before dusk. 10 a.m. through early afternoon is generally "nap time."