



# Catalyst for Cats

A Non-Profit Organization

Dedicated to

Altering the Future for Ferals

## NEWSLETTER

PO Box 30331 • Santa Barbara, CA 93130 • Phone: (805) 685-1563 • Email: [catalyst4cats@cox.net](mailto:catalyst4cats@cox.net)

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### Our Mission:

*As a feral cat organization our primary purpose is to spay and neuter feral and abandoned cats, and to socialize and find homes for rescued kittens. These services are designed to address the feline overpopulation problem and to prevent cruelty to animals by preventing the birth of unwanted and uncared for cat and kittens.*

### From the Founder

## National spotlight on Catalyst's achievements

**W**e are proud to report that *Cat Fancy*, the prominent national cat magazine, featured *Catalyst for Cats* in its February 2009 edition. I received several calls from delighted volunteers, and *Cat Fancy* sent me a "Not Your Average Cat Lady" t-shirt, which I'm looking forward to wearing.

In addition, we received inquiries from all corners of the country, including Juneau, Alaska, Pennsylvania, and a request for assistance in capturing an elusive mother cat from Georgia. I'm happy to report that with a couple of helpful hints, the trap-shy mother cat was captured within a few days.

Spring is in the air and every year the caterwauling begins and soon after, the meows of helpless kittens. The rush is on to prepare for the task ahead: organizing, planning, gathering supplies and lining up fosters to socialize the feral kittens.

Marci, our foster coordinator, is looking for anyone who might be interested in fostering kittens for socialization or mom's with their nursing kittens. It's a beautiful sight to see the kittens contentedly nursing as well as the aftercare of the mother. And it's great family fun watching the kittens play. I'd bet the kids won't be watching TV while the kittens are there. Please call Marci at 344-4663 if you're interested.

We are pleased to have held several spay days at the Santa Maria Shelter already this year. These should

help in reducing the number of unwanted kittens being born. It also allowed us a chance to catch up on the number of calls we received from last year. We hope to begin with a clean slate and keep up with spay/neuter requests as they come in, thus preventing as many kittens as possible from a life on the streets with all its inherent dangers and difficulties. The spay days scheduled for the rest of the year should assist with that plan.

Despite this progress, the situation remains at crisis levels in Santa Maria, where most of our calls come from. We neutered almost 600 cats last year, with the greatest percentage by far from the Santa Maria area. As I drive through Santa Maria I now see areas where we have made an impact and the colonies are either stable or feral cats no longer remain. None of it was

easy; in fact, most of it was very difficult, but the feeling of satisfaction is enormously rewarding.

While the country and our community face all

sorts of economic challenges, we continue to ask for your support. We are moving in the right direction, and our volunteers put their heart and soul into helping the ferals live a better life. I do hope those of you who are fortunate enough will help us in our efforts towards our goal of "making every cat a wanted cat."

*Randi Fairbrother*

*Fostering kittens is not only rewarding,  
but also great family entertainment--  
perhaps, even, competition for TV.*

# In Appreciation

**W**e are very grateful to those who participate in our goal of preventing feline overpopulation or in improving the lives of felines in whatever way they can. Some are mentioned, but all are appreciated. We are essentially a volunteer organization and rely on our dedicated volunteers.

**Belinda Burns** – for using her organizational skills in the Valley: establishing and maintaining feeding stations, trapping expertise, and general trouble shooting for the area.

**Barbara Hilaire** – for her unwavering and generous support of our program.

**Teresa Mitton** – for her generosity with spay/neuter of dogs and cats in the North County.

**Rosa Soto** – for fostering several litters of kittens and for feeding and trapping cats in her back yard.

**Santa Barbara Humane Society** – for their generous help and kindness in accepting our socialized kittens for adoption.

**Kathy Brandt** and **Betty Mazzetti** – for their help in placing, socializing and adopting rescued felines.

A very special thank you to **Lavi** and **Monica Gonzalez** (the “Pied Pipers of Santa Maria”) who continued to trap, foster, tame and recuperate both feral and

tame, sick and injured felines, without a break since last spring. They never say “can’t.”

And to the **many others** not mentioned that contribute to our accomplishments. Please know we appreciate your efforts.

**Jill Mosher** - for adopting our first FIV positive cat over ten years ago. Prior to adoption he tested FIV positive. He was so personable no one in the vet’s office wanted to put him down. They called me and when I visited him he rolled over and rubbed against the bars of the cage. I remembered thinking, “This cat must not be put down.” Feral cat organizations were coming to the realization that FIV positive cats were capable of living a good life for many years, and it did not have to be a death sentence. I recalled Jill liked orange cats so in desperation I asked if she could foster him until I could find someone to adopt him. Bless her and her husband; they adopted him and have an outdoor enclosure for him to use or not. He has three favorite sleeping spots in the house. They have taken excellent care of Reggie all these years. He’s now well over 13 years old and still going strong.

The theory that FIV cats must be put down is not valid. Feral cat organizations do not advise routine testing. The money is best spent on spay/neuter costs. Neutering prevents fighting, thereby preventing FIV.

**Beth Rushing** – she takes over local Santa Barbara and Goleta trapping and rescue jobs as needed. We get about one to two calls a month and she does a great help.



**Results:** Catalyst’s “Pied Pipers of Santa Maria” (Lavi and Monica Gonzalez) led these two cuties to improved conditions.

## Wish List

*Catalyst* needs the following in order to carry on its charitable and educational goals. If you can help, please call 685-1563:

- Homes for kittens and cats
- Trappers and transporters for Santa Ynez, Lompoc, and Santa Maria
- Feeders for Santa Maria and Santa Ynez Valley areas
- Safe relocation sites for mousers. They will earn their keep. We often try and socialize our older kittens because we prefer they have loving homes. Also, some of them need to have medical care because of upper respiratory or other problems. After a lot of time, love, sweat, and tears we sometimes realize they must go to a relocation site more suitable to their temperament, such as a barn situation. With time they still have the potential to warm up to the feeders.
- People who understand the importance of getting their pets “fixed.”

# Spring is in the air... and kittens are everywhere!

*They're adorable,  
but oh so plentiful  
at this time of year  
and needing homes.  
Catalyst volunteers  
Lavi and Monica  
Gonzalez took  
in these nursing  
mothers and their  
offspring at least  
until something  
more permanent  
can be arranged.*





# He couldn't get what he wanted sitting on a porch

**T**hey called the black and white cat the "Porch Cat" because he lived on the front porch of a house on the main street in Guadalupe. Abandoned, but neutered, he found his way to Rema's front porch. We had become acquainted with him when Rema asked for assistance with a group of feral cats in her backyard. Because of other pets in the house, he was not allowed inside, but it was clearly what he wanted. This gentle, sweet, and loving cat needed a better home and it haunted me.

One day I received a call from a former co-worker

of mine saying she was interested in getting a cat. An older cat was most suitable. I immediately thought of "Porch Cat." Things were set in motion to get him ready for adoption and transported to Santa Barbara.

It was love at first sight and I am so happy. I called the next day to see how it was going and Pat said he was on the bed with her. On further follow-up calls, the good news continued. He follows Pat around and can go in and out as he pleases.

And naturally, with his change in residence, he has taken a new name: Lucky.

—Randi Fairbrother

## *With passing of Princess, a long standing colony closes up shop*

**H**er life wasn't one of royal ease, but for some reason we called her Princess. She was simply a medium hair black and white cat like so many others. We trapped her in February 1994. That is a long life for a feral cat living next to a creek bed.

Once stabilized, the colony consisted of about eight cats. We removed, socialized and homed about five kittens. Rhia started to help feed the colony about three years ago, with three cats remaining.

Rhia called me one morning concerned about Princess because she had not eaten in several days and looked sick; nor did she run to greet her as she usually did.

I immediately called Beth Rushing who also volunteers for ASAP, akin to our local animal shelter. Beth has done a superb job and been most helpful in the last year or so doing the trapping locally. They met late in the afternoon that very day and Rhia was able to put Princess in a carrier. Beth brought her to the vet the next morning, and Bill Wallace, DVM said she was in very bad shape and he strongly suggested euthanasia as the most merciful thing to do.

Her passing was the end of a colony. The cats were feed, watered, sheltered and loved by their caretakers for many years. These cats had one visit to the vet in their entire lives. That is the power of TNR (trap, neuter and return). They lived outdoors with both its dangers and pleasures. I think they were happy in that life.

—Randi Fairbrother

## Best Singles Ad Ever

This has to be one of the best come-ons ever printed. It comes from among the singles ads in the Atlanta Journal last year:

*"SINGLE BLACK FEMALE seeks male companionship, ethnicity unimportant. I'm a very good girl who LOVES to play. I love long walks in the woods, riding in your pick-up truck, hunting, camping and fishing trips, cozy winter nights lying by the fire. Candlelight dinners will have me eating out of your hand. I'll be at the front door when you get home from work, wearing only what nature gave me. Call (404) 875-6420 and ask for Daisy. I'll be waiting..."*

Turn to page 7 to see the results.

### DON'T LEAVE A CAT BEHIND. AND HELP REMIND OTHERS TO BE RESPONSIBLE



*Please read and post  
the enclosed  
"Stand By Me" flyer in  
any public place you can.*

## Cats come with claws!

**N**ever declaw a cat! Declawing often results in irreversible physical and psychological damage. An excellent scratching post is available from **Felix Company (206) 547-0042**. Ask for their catalog. The **#1** (large) is a good selection.

# Catalyst Photo Album



*"TEDDIE our 10 month old rescue butterscotch tabby is the joy of our lives. Our Female Lab Rosie and our Calico Teancie are his best friends. He is Mr. Lovable." —Tom & Cheryl Elder*

*Whether rescued, adopted,  
or in a stable colony,  
whether feral or once-feral,  
our cats seem to give their  
human friends the urge to  
get out their cameras.*



*Rescued in Santa Maria by Lavi and Monica Gonzalez just in time for her photo session, Annie has yet to find her forever home.*



*SOLO can relax in his favorite spot in the sun at headquarters for his well-stabilized colony in Goleta thanks to the efforts of Michael and Trish Fountaine.*



## *Tributes & Memorials*

**H**onoring or remembering a special person or pet provides a means for the donor to recognize the richness and happiness brought to someone, and allows *Catalyst* to improve the lives of cats less fortunate. Donations have been made....

### **In Honor of:**

**All homeless cats, the world over** – by Eileen Carroll

**Bootie** – by Eleanor Wyatt

**The feral cats in Los Olivos** – by Monica Dingman

**Victoria Blunt** – by Michelle Garbarino

**Belinda Burns** – by Tom & Diane Weisenburger

**Chaya and Taz** – by Mr. and Mrs. Dan Carmean

**Randi Fairbrother** – by Bill Long

**Jackie Boy**, the best cat ever – by Nancy and Dan George

**My dog, Kai** – by Patricia Johnston

**Mr. & Mrs. William Nelson** – by Gary Peterson

### **In Remembrance of:**

**Isabel Beck** – by Donna Donnely

**Isabel Beck** – by Ciesto

**Elizabeth Betten, Joan and Bessie Bowers** – by Trudy Fernandez

**Butterscotch**, we miss you – by Charles and Cherry Barney

**Camille**, dear cat – by Joanne White

**Earth Angel and Otis** – by Tori Blunt

**Lunita** – by Diane Chase

**Beloved Ping** – by Deborah and Mary Lynch

**Sam** – by Pat Dowell

**Senator** – by Benjamin Duggins

**Sheba and Missy** – by Margaret Jones

**Snickers**, my best friend, age 15 years, I will miss her – by Dale and Debbie Johnson

**Sweet Pea and Quatro** – by Lynne & Bud Borderre

**Nellie Wyse** – by Jean L. Edwards and Patricia R. Massette. Nellie Wyse was in her 80s when we stabilized her colony (about six cats) over 10 years ago. Nellie loved her colony as well as two of her own cats. It would make Nellie happy knowing her brother cares for the two remaining cats.

**Little Girl** - She was the perfect apartment cat. Everyone knew this black kitty as she made her daily rounds throughout the senior apartment complex.

Gisella adopted her as a stray kitten and when she found it increasingly difficult to care for her she asked Lee Schneider, another tenant in the building to take

over Little Girl's care. Lee had befriended her already and loved her, so the transition went smoothly. Little Girl continued to visit Gisella's and sun herself in front of her apartment door until she passed on.

Lee adored her. She went in and out of Lee's apartment at will and—to Lee's distress—all too often brought in a living "gift" during the night. Little Girl liked to visit new tenants. When the tenant called the number on her tag, Lee would tell them "Oh, she'll come home, she's just checking out your apartment."

I adopted her after my friend Lee passed in February 2008. At first Olga, a neighbor, took her in, but she was getting up in years and another young cat in the complex began to terrorize her. When I first brought her to my house it concerned me that she would not be happy here, having lived all her life at the apartment complex. I was always the "bad guy," the one who put her in the carrier for vet visits and applied the Advantage. But I need not have worried; she was content from the moment I brought her home with me.

Despite having never seen a litter box, she caught on immediately. After keeping her in the house for about three weeks I began to give her supervised visits outdoors because I knew she loved roaming and lying in the sun. She never ventured out of the patio or further than a few steps from the front door. She greeted anyone who came to the door with her tail held high. She was delightfully sociable—quite different from the usual cats I adopt.

A couple of weeks ago, because of a malignant tumor behind her left eye, I knew it was time to say good-bye. It makes it easier for me to think of her and Lee and even Gisella greeting her as she went over the Rainbow Bridge – by Randi Fairbrother.

**Scarlett** – by all us who love cats. Perhaps some of you will recall the name Scarlett and remember the newspaper and television images of the burned face. She was a true hero mother cat. She rescued her five kittens from a burning abandoned building in New York City in 1994 and one by one placed her kittens by the sidewalk. She was badly burned but survived as did four out of her five kittens. The story was prominent in the national media. In October 2008, because of multiple physical problems and renal failure it was determined it was time to let her go. Hers is a truly remarkable and inspirational story.

# Updates: Catalyst Action & Related Issues

## Santa Ynez Valley

**B**elinda Burns, our efficient Santa Ynez Valley co-ordinator wants to acknowledge a couple of new feeders in the Valley: Jim and Norma Gray and Gabby De Sevilla. She also wants to thank Pete Nicklin and Joe Thomas for always being there whenever needed.

## Spay/Neuter Task Force

**T**he Spay/Neuter Task Force continues its slow work towards an ordinance that would require most dog and cat owners in Santa Barbara County to spay and neuter their pets. Details have not yet been agreed upon by Task Force members, who have been meeting twice a month since September (with a break while Chair Ron Faoro recovered from a neck injury and loss of his home in the Tea Fire). The Task Force hopes to have a recommendation for the county board of supervisors by early May.

*Editors note: If the mandatory spay/neuter law existed, the number of cats abandoned would probably be less. We find it appalling that upwards of 15 or more breeding cats can be left behind to fend for themselves. Also, if only a few cats remained, the chances of their being taken with the family would be greater.*

## A Succession of Spay Days

**W**e “fixed” 21 cats when *Catalyst for Cats* held our own spay day at the Santa Maria Shelter on January 28. Many thanks to Dr. Vale of All Valley Animal Hospital in Santa Maria, who came to the rescue by filling in at the last minute, and to our vet techs Becky Clement, Cheryl, and Tuesday Cool from the shelter staff. Also thanks to our volunteer coordinator Elizabeth Mazzetti and our volunteers Kathy Brandt, Belinda Burns, Kelly Eckberg, Randi Fairbrother, Marci Kladnik, Mary Levesque, Landa Parisi, Deanna Koens, Stacia Koens, and Summer Turner.

In addition, Animal Services held spay days on February 22 and March 29 of this year. During these two spay days a total of 133 cats were altered and *Catalyst* brought in 81 of them.

The following are the names of those who participated in one or both days: Larry and Linda Greco, Tami Hurley, Beth Simmons, Lynn Arnerich, Diane Miner, Deanna and Stacia Koens, Dianne Raynor, Stephanie Eldridge, Toni Perez, Cheryl Belhausen, Linda Hess and Heather Kennedy (of VIVA), Kelsey Ferrari, Travis and Linda Jenkins, Debbie Leppo, Joyce Cole,

Tuesday Cool (CVT), Lynn Compton, Leslei Weiss, Debbie Shelly, Angela Walters, and veterinarians Dr. Ruth Corbo, Dr. Darcie Barnes, and Dr. Michele Noreen. Santa Barbara’s St. Francis Pet Clinic was well-represented by Sarah Bernal, Emma Moyer and veterinarians Dr. Ron Faoro and Dr. Kellye Harmon.

## Grants Received

**W**e are grateful to the trustees of the Ronald and Phyllis M. Bruce Trust for the Protection of Animals for spay/neuter costs. We appreciate their support of our work to help ferals.

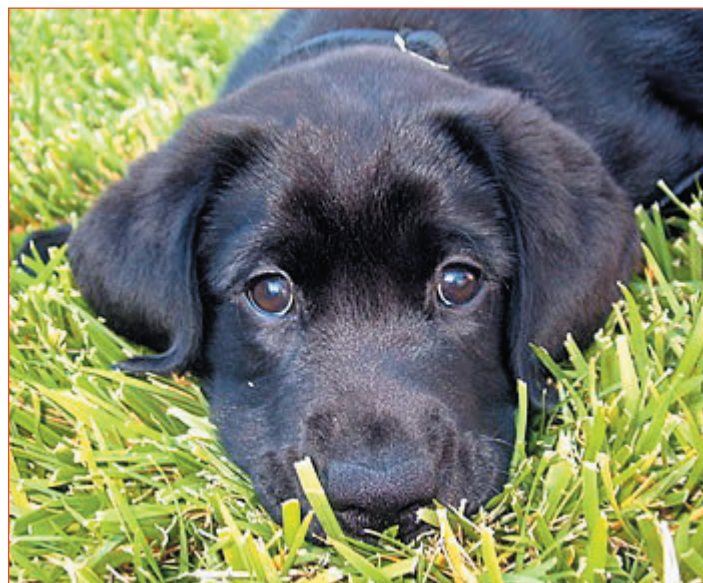
Also, the Wendy P. McCaw Foundation has generously granted us money for food and supplies and also to the Tiny Tim Fund for medical care. We are most appreciative for the kindness and understanding of our needs in addition to spay and neuter.

## Website Update

**A** new way to donate has been added to our website. Check out the Cars for Causes link on the right hand side of our home page, [www.catalystforcats.org](http://www.catalystforcats.org). If you have a vehicle or boat that you would like *Catalyst for Cats* to benefit from, this would be a great way to do it. It will generate 70% of the proceeds, and best of all, we do none of the paperwork!

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## Best Singles Ad Ever (con’t. from pg. 4)



Over 15,000 men found themselves talking to the Atlanta Humane Society about an 8-week-old black Labrador retriever.