



Island Cats Newsletter

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The Board of Directors will meet in December at the home of President Allen Mason, date and time to be announced. A quorum is attained with attendance, by teleconference or proxy.

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## US Humane Society Position Statement: Trap-Neuter-Return

The Humane Society of the United States believes that feral cat overpopulation is a community-generated problem and that every community has a responsibility to work toward a solution. The HSUS is concerned about feral cat populations, the welfare of individual cats, and the welfare of wild animals.

Feral cats are un-socialized cats that may be one or more generations removed from a home environment and may live in a group, or colony, of similar cats. These cats and their offspring are victims of abandonment, accidental loss, and failure by owners to sterilize their pets.

The HSUS advocates community-based Trap-Neuter-Return programs with on-going responsible management as the most viable, long-term approach available at this time to reduce feral cat populations. Responsible management of existing feral cat colonies should include: humane trapping, sterilization, rabies vaccination, and treatment for illness or injury; removal of kittens and friendly adults for possible placement in homes; euthanasia of animals whose suffering cannot be alleviated; ear-tipping and returning ferals to the same location where they were trapped provided they would not face imminent risks; and providing lifelong care consisting of adequate food, water, and shelter as well as regular monitoring of the colony for sickness, injury, and the arrival of new animals. The goal of any feral cat management program should be to maximize quality of life for the cats and to eliminate the existing colony over time through attrition.

For a TNR program to be successful, cooperation among many members of the community is essential. No one person or agency should be expected to devote all the resources needed or shoulder the responsibility alone. Instead, organizations and individuals can offer their services to achieve a comprehensive goal, while still working within the scope of their mission and capability. A single program, such as subsidized sterilization, is an excellent step forward, but cannot effect change without other supportive pieces in place, such as public education and outreach, adoption resources, dedicated colony caretakers, and cooperation among the various interest groups. A working coalition, in which each member respects the others' contributions and limitations, and where there is productive and open communication, is a formula for success. While The HSUS strongly recommends that each community work toward the goal of non-lethal management, we realize that euthanasia may be considered as an interim solution where TNR cannot be implemented.

Inherent in all decisions about whether to maintain a particular colony is the potential negative impact on local wildlife. The HSUS values the lives of individual wild animals, no matter their species status. The goal of any TNR program should be to lessen the impact on wildlife by reducing the number of feral cats and eventually eliminating their presence from the environment. The location of colonies is an extremely important issue, and reinforces the need for a community-based approach to ensure that colonies are managed so that impacts on wildlife are minimized.

The HSUS recognizes that there are real challenges to reducing the numbers of feral cats currently living on the streets of this country, and this statement is meant to encourage all members of the community—citizens, veterinarians, animal shelters, wildlife advocates, policy makers, public health departments, businesses—to work together towards a goal of non-lethal approaches to feral cat management.

## Fun Cat Facts

Every cat's nose pad or nose leather is different like a human fingerprint. Cats use their noses not only for smelling, but the nose will also detect changes in temperatures.

Cats' eyes are so big that if the eyes of humans were proportionately as big, they would be about 8 inches in diameter.

Cats are considered color-blind and see the world in tones of white, black, gray.

A cat's tail usually tells his mood -- carried high kitty is proud and content. (A mother cat's upright tail is a signal for her kittens to follow her.) If kitty's tail is extended straight, kitty is stalking. If kitty's tail is thrusting side to side, kitty may be angry. If the tail is straight in the air and quivers or twitches, kitty is very excited and happy to greet its owner and is overcome with emotion. If the tail looks like an upright bottle brush, kitty is now defensively aggressive and means he would rather get away, and if provoked, he will defend himself.

An adult cat can weigh as much as 20 pounds and as little as 5 pounds.

A cat scratching post is used to satisfy the urge to stretch, clean claws, and mark territory, not for claw sharpening as is most commonly believed.

**CIRCLE THE DATES . . .  
... YOU'LL WANT TO BE THERE!!**



### **January 15 – Amici's Bartender Contest**

*A party filled with fun and prizes  
Expect surprises to add to the enjoyment of the evening.*

### **February 10 – Chesterfield Hotel Purrfect Pawty and Silent Auction**

*Guaranteed to be one of the seasons most talked about parties... this is the one you certainly don't want to miss.*

## ☹ **COMPLAINT CALLS ARE COMING IN** ☹

As more seasonal residents return to Palm Beach, Island Cats is beginning to receive more calls. Some are complaints about cats eating near homes where they are not wanted, and some calls are about cats running across yards. Most of the calls, however, have been from residents expressing delight about how healthy the cats look and saying they are happy to see more cropped ears indicating sterilization surgery is being done. ALL calls, favorable or not, are welcomed by the Field Operations Team and Board of Directors because they want to accommodate man and animal. Each call will be used as a tool for improvement in the management of the cats. The calls also provide an opportunity for Island Cats to tell residents about the various deterrent devices being used by the field teams and have proven successful at keeping cats away from areas where they are not wanted. Some skeptics were reluctant to even try these tools, but when they finally agreed to test the systems were delighted at the successful results. Several systems have been purchased are already at work on properties on the island.

If you or someone you know wants to keep unwanted animals away from your property, call 689-2287 and ask about the deterrent systems. What do you have to lose by trying?

President Rutherford B. Hayes [1877-1881] received a Siamese cat from the American Consul in Bangkok. The cat, ultimately named Siam, was the first Siamese cat to arrive in the United States.

## A SUCCESS STORY!

One of Island Cats' colony caretakers shared the story about arriving at regular feeding time one evening to find one of her semi-social cats approached but had monofilament line dangling from his mouth. Upon closer inspection she saw a fishing hook embedded in his lip and knew he had to have help. The attempt to hand capture kitty failed (and she had the scratches to prove it). It scared the cat and he was now fearful of her and ran to hide. It also made trapping him extremely hard, so she set up the box trap designed by Alley Cat Allies. She made herself as invisible as possible and watched the cat overcome fear of the trap and take the bait – he was now on his way to the vet to have the hook removed. "What hurts me more than the offending hook callously abandoned by a careless fisherman was that I used the trust I spent years building with the cat to trap him. I know it was the right thing to do – get him help – but I felt like I had betrayed him", she said. The bottom line of the encounter is that "Gray Boy" was sedated so the veterinarian could remove the hook, and the visit was also used to revaccinate him, too. As for the trust they had, it was a very short time later that the kitty was back to enjoying the touch of the human hand and is happy to be "home" – he is fully recovered and doing well.

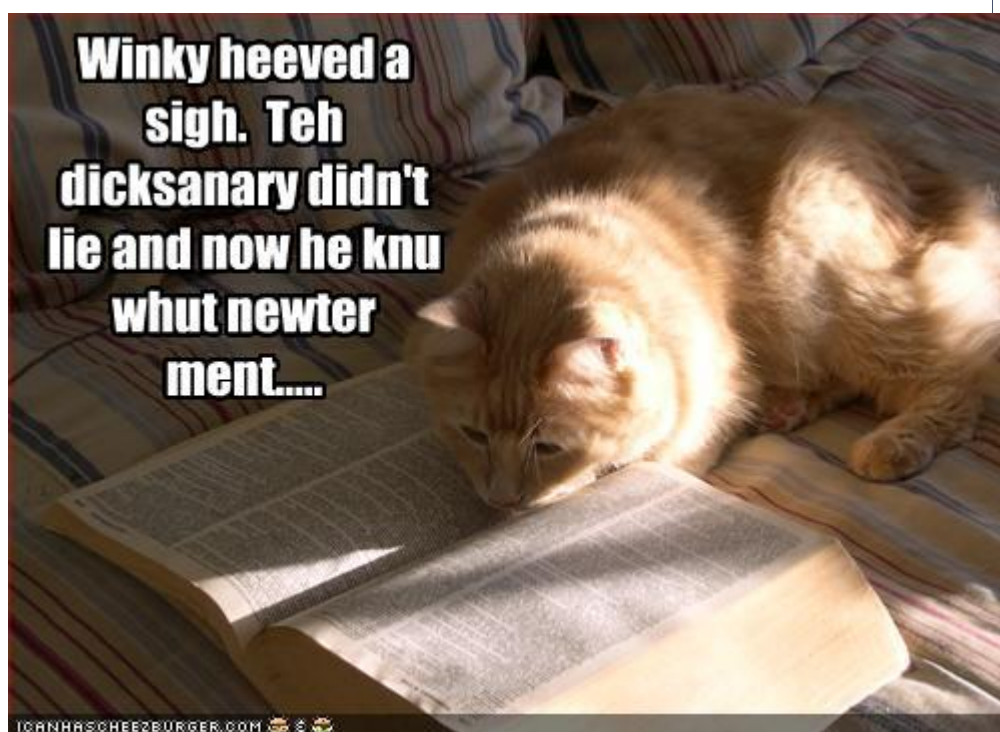
## MICRO-CHIPS ... ALL IMPORTANT REUNITERS

"There is a strange cat in my yard that has to be removed," said the caller. Island Cats Field Director responded promptly and found a cat that was obviously well fed, healthy, and friendly, but it was the collar around her neck that provided the best clue that this was not a feral cat and surely was someone's pet. The cat was immediately scanned for a micro-chip, which was present, thanks to the responsible pet owner, and the hunt was on for the owner. The local veterinarian was contacted to check their chip database, and when that failed to provide identity Animal Care and Control was called. Kudos to the responsible pet owner for registering the cat's micro-chip number with the proper authorities. By the end of the day, cat and owner were reunited.

The Field Director learned the cat is named Trixie, and Trixie was happy to be home again that evening -- but no one could make the kitty promise not to go visiting neighbors again. "If I get call and find that sweet girl where she isn't supposed to be, I will know where she belongs thanks to the responsible pet owner for micro-chipping and registering the number of the cat," the Director said.

Island Cats has pledged to all cat owners that their pets will be returned to them as quickly as possible if their cat's micro-chip numbers is registered with the proper authorities -- Animal Care and Control, the local veterinarian and Island Cats. This event could have ended so badly had the Field Director not been able to locate the pet owner.

Bottom line: pet owners need to have their pets micro-chipped AND register that number with various entities for quick retrieval!



## MYTHS AND MISCONCEPTIONS

### *Feral cats pose a threat to humans.*

Feral cats are naturally wary of people and will not approach humans they do not know. Feral cats will not attack unless they are cornered or feel threatened. Parents must teach their children to not approach or touch ANY unknown animal. Children should ask an adult or caregiver for help if they think an animal may be trapped, sick or injured or if they find a baby animal.

### *Feral cats are diseased and spread rabies.*

A common misconception -- studies show feral cats and owned cats share similar health status. TNR protects the public. Vaccinating, sterilizing and treating cats for fleas and returning healthy cats to managed colonies is the best way to protect the public as it creates a barrier between humans and wildlife.

### *The cats will go away if you stop feeding them.*

By not feeding the cats, people will actually create a greater nuisance since cats will be forced to rely on scavenging and foraging for food. Cats with no regular food source will encroach closer to property hoping to find food, and there will be an increase in chance encounters with people as they are driven by starvation. Feeding the cats on a regular schedule is the first step in colony management and in turn will allow for trapping and sterilization of the cats. Feeding stations can be placed in areas away from people to reduce chance encounters.

## FUNDRAISING QUESTIONS ANSWERED

### **What is a party-less party?**

It was announced on National Feral Cat Day that Island Cats would seek 2,000 individuals who care to contribute \$100 (or more) so the annual budget for the feral cat program will be realized. One of the Directors crafted a party invitation to a non-party with the message about this and prior to Thanksgiving and mailed several thousand invitations hoping to find the 2,000 donors. "Since no Town funding goes to support the program, although the work is clearly town serving, we needed to find a creative way to raise the money for this public charity," she said. "Hopefully every recipient will realize it really is very little to give towards a worthy case and spreads the overall cost to many rather than a few."

### **And you are also seeking grants?**

Volunteers have sharpened their pencils and are always at work doing the job of providing answers to questions on an application to warrant cash awards from animal friendly Foundations. "We hope to retain the financial assistance from the Foundations that were good to us this year and add more for next year," the chairman said. "Our calendar is set up so that no deadline is missed and we avail ourselves of every opportunity to make application....the cats depend on us."

### **Don't you have two more things planned?**

The fundraising chairman explained that receiving the necessary funds to operate this program is not guaranteed from any one or two projects, so we must plan events hoping to get the money needed. "No one will want to miss the bartender contest we have planned for January 15 at Amici's, and certainly not the *Purrfect Pawty* on February 10 at The Chesterfield Hotel.

### **Why so much attention to fund-raising?**

"With the downturn in economic conditions, all non-profit corporations are scrambling to find the money to meet their budgetary needs", the President said, "and these directors are focused on the financial viability of the corporation." He further explained that with generous funding, Field Operations will be able to improve what is good about the program, introduce new ways to execute some duties even better and continue to make Island Cats a model program for other communities to mimic. "We have the right protocols and the right people to do what needs to be done," the Field Chairman added, "to stabilize the colonies and prevent future generations of homeless cats." Success is dependent on donations.

### **How does someone donate to Island Cats?**

Island Cats has made donating easy and requests the citizens to support this program by giving any amount they can afford. Donations can be made via the website at [www.island-cats.org](http://www.island-cats.org) or by sending a check to P. O. Box 332, Palm Beach, Florida 33480. Credit cards can be processed through the website or by phoning 689-2287 and providing the information.