

cat tales

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FELINE FRIENDS NETWORK

Message from the Board Chair

by Doug Fyfe, Chair, FFN Board of Directors

A crisp if not bracing Sunday, February 22nd saw 63 members of Feline Friends Network meet for the Annual General meeting at the Optimist Hall in Stratford. Thank you for turning out, especially given the cold temperature. The meeting went through the functions that an AGM must observe, and it was enlightening to see members ask some searching questions, and being satisfied with the answers, the topics not just the usual enquiries about some fiscal items, but about the organization's approach and how it functions – this is the sign of a healthy organization.

A sad point was board member Val Pinder tendering her resignation to allow her to focus on her other commitments and responsibilities. Val will be sorely missed at future board meetings; her input and sage advice will be hard to replace. Val, on behalf of the board of directors, thank you for your five years as a board member, helping the more unfortunate cats and kittens in Stratford, and the rest of Perth County. We wish you health, happiness, and success in the future. Thank you for continuing to be a staunch supporter and volunteer with Feline Friends, and we look forward to meeting up with you at future FFN events.

Late last year, Lisa Keeler resigned from the board for health reasons. Lisa, we miss your input and experience at board meetings in helping us to come to the best decisions. Thank you for your five years as a board member. On behalf of the board of directors, I also wish you health, happiness, and prosperity for the future.

We are pleased to welcome Cathy Russell as a new board member. Cathy brings valuable expertise and experience to the board and I'm sure will be a great asset to Feline Friends Network and the cats and kittens of the county.

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So many THANK YOU's!

To FFN member Cathy Russell who applied for a Manulife "Helping Hands" grant acknowledging her many volunteer hours with FFN ... and we got a cheque from them for \$500!!!

To Adam and everyone at Global Pet Foods, Stratford, for choosing FFN for their February "Show Us Your Heart" campaign. Final numbers aren't yet in, but it appears that the campaign raised approximately \$1,400! We are truly blessed to have such wonderful support.

To Nestle Purina for a large donation of cat food to feed our ferals. And to Paul Simpson and Larry Baswick who drove down to Mississauga in less-than-ideal conditions to pick up the donation. Two thumbs up!

The really great thing about cats is their endless variety. One can pick a cat to fit almost any kind of decor, colour scheme, income, personality, mood. But under the fur, whatever colour it may be, there still lies, essentially unchanged, one of the world's free souls.
– Eric Gurney

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I would like to thank the remaining board members and other volunteers for their support, commitment, and initiative to FFN and to the cats and kittens of Stratford and Perth County.

And last, but certainly not least, I thank all of the members of Feline Friends Network for your decision to be a member of the organization, which provides a valuable service for the humane treatment of our feline friends.

Best wishes to all for a healthy, happy, and prosperous 2015.

Stratford pet sale regulation

by Sharon Morrice

FFN member Ken Wood has made a proposal to Stratford City Council to regulate the sale of pets in Stratford pet stores. Currently, stores are permitted to sell domestic animals such as kittens and puppies for profit. This practice is problematic because the animals that are sold are not spayed or neutered, and are likely to reproduce, adding to the problem of overpopulation that FFN is working to stop. Also, there is a chance that animals in pet stores may come from kitten and puppy mills, which are lucrative illegal breeding operations where abuse and neglect are rampant.

The matter was referred by City Council to the Infrastructure, Transportation & Safety (ITS) Sub-committee. Currently, city staff are collecting information and will report back to Councillors at an unspecified date.

FFN would like to see regulations put into place that reflect the following set of beliefs:

1 | Pets are NOT products. A for-profit model of pet sales has a negative impact on animals and our community.

2 | The only sources of animals available for adoption in pet stores should be reputable shelters and rescue organizations.

3 | All animals available for adoption in pet stores must be spayed or neutered.

Please show your support! Call, write, or email the councillors on the ITS Sub-committee. Phone numbers and extensions are available at <http://www.stratfordcanada.ca/en/insidecityhall/citycouncilcontact.asp>. Or click on the following links to email individual committee members:

Chair: Councillor Kerry McManus
kmcmanus@stratfordcanada.ca

Vice-chair: Councillor George Brown
gbrown@stratfordcanada.ca

Member: Councillor Brad Beatty
bbeatty@stratfordcanada.ca

Member: Councillor Graham Bunting
gbunting@stratfordcanada.ca

Member: Councillor Bonnie Henderson
bhenderson@stratfordcanada.ca

Also, please email the City Clerk's Office at clerks@stratfordcanada.ca to express your interest and give your thoughts on this important animal welfare issue.

You can read Feline Friends Network's official submission to Council on our website, at http://felinefriends.ca/ffn_pet_sale_regulation.pdf

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*The naming of cats is a difficult matter.
It isn't just one of your holiday games.
You may think at first I'm mad as a hatter
When I tell you a cat must have three
different names
- T.S. Eliot*



Friendly, not feral

Last month, in an effort to educate our members and others about the problem of abandoned cats left to fend for themselves, *cat tales* began featuring stories of supposedly “feral” cats who turned out to be not-so-feral after all. This month, meet Millie, a feral momma who found a new home with FFN member Kelly McBeath.

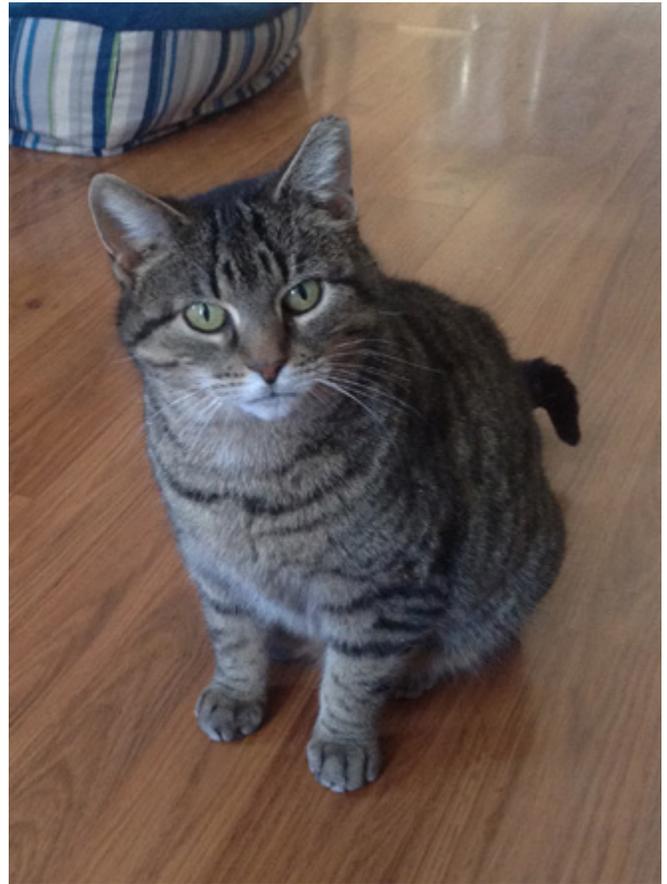
MILLIE MOVES IN

by Kelly McBeath

In mid-May 2014, I noticed that we had guests living under our shed after one of my dogs kept watching the shed through the fence of our dog run. When I went inside and looked out the window, I saw two little kittens looking back at the dog. I began putting food out for the babies and days later spotted the momma cat. Since I knew I would never be able to catch or keep the kittens, I contacted Feline Friends to ask for help. Several days later, Marg Usprech (one of FFN’s TNR co-ordinators) came to my home and we made a plan to trap the kittens and the momma cat – who I had already decided to name “Millie” – would be spayed and returned to me so I could care for her as a community cat.

It took several days, lots of patience, and finally some sausage to trap the kittens. FFN found first foster homes and then forever homes for the two kittens, and I was so relieved that they would be loved and cared for. Over the summer Millie became more and more friendly towards me and soon she would let me pet her.

One night I let my dog out and noticed that she was sitting beside something. It turned out that Millie was now spending time inside the dog pen close to the house. As the weather turned cooler, I began to worry about how we would keep Millie warm. My husband made her a shelter, but there was a lot of discussion about bringing her inside. On Thanksgiving weekend,



we decided that Millie could no longer live outside and set up a room for her. Two days later she walked into the house and into her new life.

It took just two weeks for Millie to get used to our three dogs and start exploring the house. She is emerging from her shell a little more every day, and has recently discovered that she loves to play. She learned very quickly when it was feeding time and comes running to the kitchen when she hears the bowls. She has become a member of our family and will never need to worry about being cold or hungry again. We are so happy to have her.

*Please pass the word along ...
turning a house cat out to “fend for
itself” is cruel, morally wrong, and
can be prosecuted as “abandonment”
under the OSPCA Act.*



Having a birthday? Celebrate with FFN

Thank you to everyone who renewed their FFN membership at this year's AGM. You may have noticed a new line on our membership form – "Month you were born" and be wondering why we could possibly need that information.

Astrological signs are said to be used to generate expectations about future events and since birthdays are future events (LOL), we want to send you a reminder in advance of your special day. If you are planning on celebrating with family/friends and would rather that people don't bring gifts, please consider requesting a donation to Feline Friends Network in your honour instead. FFN is working hard to spay/neuter as many cats in Stratford/Perth County as we can and every dollar helps us add another "sneuter" to our total!

SPLIT RAIL COUNTRY STORE NOW OFFERS DISCOUNT TO FFN MEMBERS!

Locally-owned and operated, the Split Rail Country Store is located on the outskirts of Stratford at 4304 Mornington Street North/Hwy 119. The store carries kitty litter, cat food, treats, a wide variety of dog products from food to toys, bird-seed, horse-related items (including cowboy and muck boots), and gifts. Local eggs, cheese, maple syrup, honey are also available.

Full-time employee Ayesha Nothof fosters for FFN. Please stop in to the Split Rail and let them know you're an FFN member to receive a discount! For more info, call 519.273.1881 or visit their website at www.splitrailcountrystore.com.



Sabrina considers her next "read" purchased at the Upscale Yardsale

Upscale Yardsale

by Pat Burnell

It happens on the 12th of March
To 16 Fern you come
You buy some stuff to help the cats
You also have some fun.
Got some jewellery, books, and such?
We don't need so very much
It's not too late
So please donate.
The Upscale Yardsale is a blast
Come early as the stuff goes fast!!!

The Upscale Yardsale runs from 6–8 pm. Donations can be dropped off at 16 Fern Street. If you are donating gourmet food, please let Pat Burnell know ahead of time at pmburnell@hotmail.com.

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French novelist Colette was a firm cat-lover. When she was in the U.S. she saw a cat sitting in the street. She went over to talk to it and the two of them mewed at each other for a friendly minute. Colette turned to her companion and exclaimed, "Enfin! Quelqu'un qui parle français." (At last! Someone who speaks French!)

– Anonymous



Calling all angels ...

We all know that cats are angels ... well, some of the time! But we're looking for some very special human angels to help some very special cats.

From time to time, FFN comes across cats diagnosed with Feline Leukemia (FeLV). Most recently, that cat was Bambi (*cat tales*, February 2015) who was lovingly cared for at the end of his life by FFN members Barbara and Warren Beckett.

At most humane societies, a diagnosis of FeLV results in immediate euthanasia because FeLV is a contagious disease with no cure. The disease will almost certainly shorten the cat's lifespan, and FeLV-positive cats cannot be adopted into homes where there are FeLV-negative cats without the risk of spreading the infection.

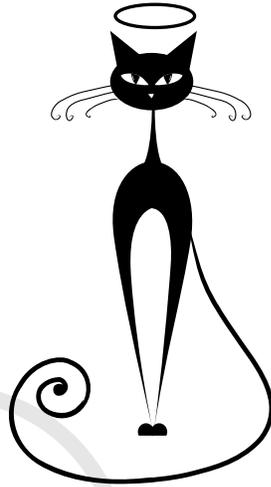
However, as demonstrated by Star's story in the May 2014 issue of *cat tales*, FeLV-positive cats may not show signs of illness for months or even years. In fact, FeLV-positive cats tend to be healthy right up to the moment when they "are not." Is it right to euthanize such cats while they are still healthy?

We at FFN don't think so. We believe it is the time to take rescue to the next level, which is why we are searching for some very special "cat angels" with no resident FeLV-negative cats who are willing to provide permanent foster homes for one or more of these cats when the need arises. FFN will cover any medical costs incurred over the cat's lifetime.

Could you be such an "angel"? Or do you know someone who could? If the answer is "yes" – or even "maybe" – please contact Cheryl at 519.273.8067 for more information. You'd be saving a life.

I think one reason we admire cats, those of us who do, is their proficiency in one-upmanship. They always seem to come out on top, no matter what they are doing – or pretend to do. Rarely do you see a cat discomfited. They have no conscience, and they never regret. Maybe we secretly envy them.

– Barbara Webster, from *Creatures and Contentments*



Fantastic felines on film!

Spring is just around the corner, and with it, the 3rd annual Feline Film Festival! A lot of great videos have been submitted so far, but we don't want them to stop coming in. So don't forget, while you're guffawing at the latest silly cat video, or filming your own crazy kitty, take a minute and make sure we see it too! To submit your favourite videos, please post them to our Facebook events page. If you're not on Facebook, you can submit videos by emailing links to films@felinefriends.ca. Although Youtube is the best source for videos, because they are easy to download and use in our festival, please send us your favourites no matter where you find them!

Also, just a reminder that the Film Festival includes a silent auction! If you have something you would like to donate – whether it's an item or gift certificate that you think people would like to bid on – please email Holly Roulston at holly@felinefriends.ca and let her know. Proceeds from the Film Festival and silent auction will, of course, benefit cats through our programs, and you will have our undying gratitude.

Paws of Perth County Adoptathon

Saturday, March 21 | 10 am to 3 pm
Global Pet Foods (684 Ontario Street)

Adoption by donation (cash/cheque only)
Suggested: \$65 | includes vaccinations, de-flea, de-worm, spay/neuter, microchip

For info, contact Paws of Perth County
519.949.1695 | 519.272.0848 |
pawsofperthcounty@gmail.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
garet markvoort

