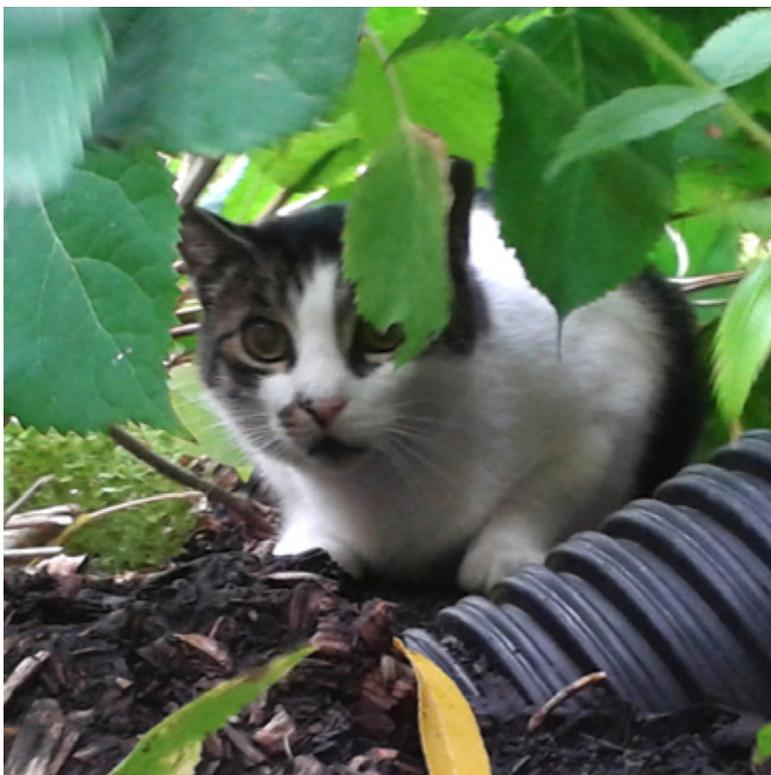


# cat tales

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FELINE FRIENDS NETWORK



FFN feral Smudge in the garden

## Remembering – and moving on

When FFN began in 2006/2007 the focus of our work was spay/neuter and Trap/Neuter/Return (TNR). As the years passed and we spayed and neutered more and more cats, we began seeing fewer and fewer actual “feral” (wild) cats. Cats trapped as ferals were often simply very frightened cats and, with some foster care, many of them were able to be adopted into loving homes, rather than returned outdoors.

In 2015, thanks to co-ordinators Holly Roulston and Marg Usprech, FFN put an actual Adoption Program into place to complement our work in TNR when such cats were trapped.

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## Don't miss the Upscale Book & Bake Sale this coming Thursday!

March 9th from six to eight  
Grab a nibble – don't be late!  
Go below to check the books,  
Buy some food from our great cooks,  
Maybe a scarf, perhaps a shawl,  
Come and look – we have it all.  
Let's make this a big success  
16 Fern is the address!

Last minute donations? No problem! Get in touch with Pat Burnell at 519.271.0657 or [pmburnell@hotmail.com](mailto:pmburnell@hotmail.com) to drop them off.



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Where do these “friendlies” come from? We can’t know for sure, of course, but we assume that most have been abandoned. Taking them off the streets does two things ... Most importantly, it likely saves their lives because most abandoned cats will not have the skills to survive “living rough” for the long term. Secondly, it prevents more feral cat colonies from forming. Almost 100% of abandoned cats are unaltered. Left on the street, they will breed – and their offspring will become the next generation of truly feral cats.

This month we would like to share memorials to two FFN colony cats. The first, Smudge (pictured on page 1), was a true feral – born outside and living happily there. The second, Elvis (pictured at right), was an abandoned cat that we were sadly unable to save. Both deserve to be remembered and honoured.

### SMUDGE SAYS GOODBYE

*With help from Frances Evans*

My name is Smudge Skubowius-Adair. I was born in the spring of 2006, with my two brothers and one sister. When we were old enough to cross the street, our mother took us to the Sun Room Restaurant for their patio service. Shortly after that, mom went her own way ...

My siblings and I would make our way over to the Sun Room each night. All the staff fed us but our favourite night was Friday when Shirl Skubowius and Ray Adair were in charge. In the last seven years of my life I got to see them Friday and Saturday nights – and I trusted them more than any other humans!!!!

In February of 2007, Feline Friends had my siblings and me fixed and vaccinated to give us the best shot at life. We were lucky to be FFN’s first ever TNR project – what an honour!

Over the years, we had many adventures. Once my brothers and I got trapped for almost three weeks in the Sun Room’s soffits. Thank goodness we had some extra weight to lose!



Elvis – warm and well-loved in his foster home

Eventually we relocated to behind the Spa Near the Tracks, beside the Parlour. We can’t thank the owner, Erin, enough for welcoming us. I’d also like to thank everyone who fed me over the last 10+ years. As most of my fans know, I went to cat heaven in January. I am warmer but the food is not as good!

Love,  
Smudge

### ELVIS TAKES HIS LEAVE

*By Cheryl Simpson*

A couple of years ago, Elvis showed up suddenly at an FFN colony on the outskirts of Stratford. After being neutered and eartipped, he adapted to living in the colony. Over time, though, his health began to suffer.

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COMING SOON ... *an update on World Spay Day, held during the week of 27 February and on FFN’s efforts to increase the availability of cat food at the House of Blessing and the Salvation Army.*



## THANK YOU!

To Adam and Global Pet Foods of Stratford for choosing Feline Friends as their “Show Us Your Heart” charity during the month of February.

To Kimberley and Stratford Pet Valu for continuing to fundraise for FFN in 2017.

And to both stores for doing their very best to provide us with as much cat food as possible so that we can not only feed our own feral and foster cats but also – when amounts allow – donate to the local Salvation Army and House of Blessing food banks, helping cat guardians in financial difficulty feed their feline companions when the going gets rough.

## ANOTHER SUCCESSFUL AGM

FFN’s annual general meeting was held on Sunday, 26 February. Committee reports and financial results demonstrated the vitality of our organization and the progress that FFN continues to make. So many of you do such great work to contribute to FFN’s success. Thank you one and all.

felinefriends.ca

feline  
film  
festival

IT’S BACK! JUNE 9, 2017

Mark your calendar now! Our 5th annual @ Knox Church, Stratford. Contribute videos now by posting them on our facebook page (facebook.com/felinefriendsnetwork).

Remember to include #felinefilmfest in your post. Or, email links to films@felinefriends.ca

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In September 2016, his caregiver informed FFN that while frightened, Elvis wasn’t truly feral, and she was afraid he wouldn’t survive another winter outdoors.

FFN got Elvis into the care of a vet and we decided that we would try to save him in spite of his weak state and probable old age.

His wonderful foster mom Cindy indicated that she would adopt him once he was well enough. For two months, she and her family and staff ministered to him. Gradually Elvis started putting on weight – eating 2 tins of high quality food per day – and looking like a cat again. Even more exciting, he was starting to enjoy being petted and brushed!

Then, quite suddenly, Elvis stopped eating. FFN took him back to the vet for tests. After two days in hospital, the vet determined that he had a weak heart and was in the final stages of kidney failure. And, just like that, we had to say “goodbye.”

We are thankful that Elvis received as much love and care as we could give him at the end of his life. But the niggling feeling remains – if we had realized he wasn’t feral and taken him in earlier, would he still be with us?

Each year, as FFN continues on, we begin to understand more about the cats we are trying to help and are thus able to help more cats in the way that is best for each of them. Doing so does take “a village” of willing volunteers – from colony feeders and trappers to the all-important foster homes. To all of you, from the bottom of our hearts, thank you.

And, to those who haven’t yet “taken the plunge” to volunteer, if you think you might be interested in working with these incredible cats, please give us a call at 519.301.5735 to learn more. You might very well be saving a life.

*By associating with the cat, one only risks becoming richer. – Colette*

NEWSLETTER EDITOR  
garet markvoort

