

# cat tales

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FELINE FRIENDS NETWORK

## VERY important facts & figures

Look to the right of this paragraph, under the illustration of the cat ... in the eleven years since it was founded, the Feline Friends Network has **spayed or neutered well over 2,000 cats!!**

FFN currently has **146 members**. If your membership has lapsed and you would like to renew, call FFN at 519-301-5735 or visit <http://www.felinefriends.ca/membership.html>.

FFN will be very visible in the Stratford community this month:

- On **Friday, 15 September** from noon until 4:00 pm and **Saturday, 16 September** from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm, Pat's fabulous "Puddy Products" will be on display and available for sale during the Global Pet Foods "Customer Appreciation" weekend.
- On **Saturday, 16 September** and **Sunday, 17 September**, the Pet Valu location on Huron Street in Stratford will play host to any available adoptable FFN kittens.
- On **Friday, 22 September** from 11:00 am until 3:00 pm, FFN will have a booth at the Festival Marketplace. Come by and buy your Wine Raffle tickets – before it's too late!

**Lastly – and most importantly** – FFN's ability to help cats in need is in **serious jeopardy**. Our Trap/Neuter/Return program is receiving **more and more requests** from all over Perth County and there are **ONLY TWO VOLUNTEERS** to deal with them. They desperately need help. We know you believe in the work FFN does and we are asking for **more "boots on the ground"** in order to continue.

To volunteer for TNR, all you need is a car, the ability to lift 10–15 lbs (the weight of a cat in a trap) and the desire to help the most neglected and needy homeless cats. FFN provides training and we can tailor your volunteer time to fit your schedule. **The need is urgent. Please help. Email us today at [info@felinefriends.ca](mailto:info@felinefriends.ca) to find out more.**



## C is for ... co-operation, community, and cats

*Cheryl Simpson*

Residents of "The Village at Listowel" – a retirement community just outside Listowel, Ontario – had a problem ... too many cats ...

Over the years, stray and feral cats had moved in and they were multiplying. Some residents complained about them; others fed them to help them survive in their harsh outdoor world. But community manager Carolynn Whitfield knew there must be a better way – a solution that would not only satisfy everyone, but that would also help the cats. So she contacted Feline Friends Network to find out how this could be achieved.

In July, FFN representatives Cheryl Simpson and Virginia (Ginny) Bowman went to speak to a group of interested Village residents about a Trap/Neuter/Return solution and to see whether the residents might be willing to do the work required to successfully achieve their goal of "turning off the tap" of an expanding feline population.

The residents readily agreed and a partnership was formed: the residents would

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trap and eventually release the cats and would care for the future colony. FFN would provide the traps and show the volunteers how to use them and how to look after the trapped cats both before and after their spay/neuter surgery. FFN would also partially subsidize the cost, with Village residents and Killam Properties (the owner of the Village) also donating funds.

Listowel FFN volunteer Ginny also agreed to supervise the first trapping and FFN volunteers Paul Simpson and Doug Fyfe offered to drive the cats to and from the veterinary clinic. Appointments were made at the newly opened East Village Animal Hospital in Kitchener (EVAH-K), and the Village/FFN partnership was in business!

To date 12 cats have been TNR'd and relocated a short distance to a special cat condo created by the Village volunteers. It is estimated that there are between 10 and 15 more cats and kittens to TNR, and the Village residents now have the knowledge and confidence to see the project through.

All of us at FFN would like to sincerely thank the FFN volunteers, EVAH-K, and most especially the "Village Volunteers" for their commitment to these cats. Yes, TNR is work, but, oh my goodness, is it worth it!



Above, top, a Listowel feral trapped and on his way to the vet; above, bottom, getting ready for the exciting moment of opening the doors and releasing the spayed/neutered ferals; at left, the "Village Volunteers" of Listowel

### Do I need special skills to volunteer to trap a feral cat?

While FFN can show volunteers some "tricks of the trapping trade," the most important qualities for trapping a feral cat are PATIENCE and PERSEVERANCE!



## P is for ... patience, perseverance, and Penelope

FFN TNR committee

Trap/Neuter/Return (TNR) can sometimes be a daunting task. So was the case with Penelope.

In mid-June of this year, FFN received a call about a mother cat and kittens who were living in a flower bed. FFN put a plan in place, arranging a foster home for the kittens and, in the event that the mother, was a true feral, a future caretaker for her.

Three of the kittens were trapped quickly and immediately went to foster care for socialization. The remaining two kittens were more cautious, preferring to peek through the plants (see photo at top right) instead of coming out to eat.

Then, the mother cat moved the kittens several times and, while there were sightings, FFN couldn't determine their new location.

After three weeks, the last two kittens were spotted under a car on a busy street. Trapping resumed immediately and many late nights and early mornings were spent patiently sitting on the grass trying to coax these two very shy kittens into the traps.

Then ... another setback ... first one kitten disappeared ... and then, a couple of days later, the other. We were heartbroken and afraid that everyone's efforts had been for naught.

However, thanks to the diligence and perseverance of the foster caregiver, the last kitten was finally located. She was trapped and named Penelope.

In the three weeks that Penelope was gone, she had become a host to a cuterebra that was located in her chest (see photo at right). The cuterebra is a parasite that uses the cat/kitten as a host and can grow up to an inch long. It can be life threatening and cause a great deal of pain for the infected animal.

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Above, one of the kittens, either Penelope or one of her siblings, peeking out of the flower bed; below, the site of the cuterebra parasite that was using Penelope as a host



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Penelope was treated and fortunately made a complete recovery. The next focus was socialization. Penelope was three weeks behind her other three siblings and it showed.

With lots of love and patience, Penelope continues to progress with her socialization. She was recently adopted with her sister, Molly, who will continue to help bring Penelope out of her shell.

The mother cat was trapped, spayed, and returned to her outdoor home. No more kittens will be born outside and it is possible that, with time, the mother cat can also be brought indoors.



Trapping Penelope took a great deal of time and effort but it was worth it!



Sweet, shy girl. Penelope is now fully recovered and while she is not yet fully socialized, she has made progress. She was recently adopted with her sister, Molly, who will bring her out of her shell.

FFN has been overwhelmed with phone calls this past spring/summer.

Since the beginning of June, we have entered 63 kittens/cats in our adoption program.

39 cats have already been adopted and 21 kittens will be available for adoption once they are old enough for their spay/neuter surgery.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR  
garet markvoort

