

cat tales

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FELINE FRIENDS NETWORK



A Remembrance of MumCat ...

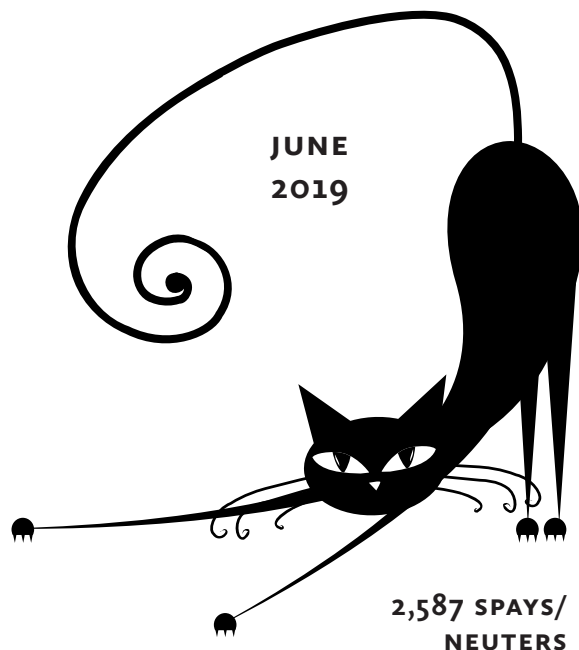
by Barbara Beckett

Almost twelve years ago, Pretty, the lone feral being fed by FFN in an industrial area in the south end of Stratford, brought a guest to dinner. How nice ... a friend! In short order, the two girls – beautiful black cats, each with a wee white bib at the throat, one bronze-eyed beauty, one green-eyed – settled in together.

Months later, FFN discovered that six unborn babies had arrived with Pretty's friend ... kittens now old enough to be spay/neutered but too old to be successfully socialized for homes. Thus, the newcomer became known as MumCat and we were now officially a colony.

Over the years, MumCat never lost her mothering instinct. Two of her sons, still living in the colony to this day, were often kept in order with a swift smack from one little black paw. She

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Enforcing animal cruelty laws in Ontario: Who will protect the vulnerable?

The Ontario Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (OSPCA) announced in March that it will no longer investigate and enforce animal cruelty laws after 100 years of doing so. They offered a transition phase, which ends 28 June, after which the organization says it will shift into a support role in animal cruelty investigations, providing animal shelter, forensic evidence collection, and veterinary services.

CEO Kate MacDonald said the OSPCA would like to see a model similar to that in New York, where the NYPD has an animal cruelty squad that leads investigations and works with the American SPCA, which handles similar support services.

The OSPCA has police powers – it can enforce both provincial and Criminal Code animal cruelty laws – under the OSPCA Act that became law in 1919, but its role came into question in early January when an Ontario court found the OSPCA's powers to be unconstitutional and gave the government a year to remedy the situation. The judge said the

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had high standards. Nothing too rambunctious or deemed inappropriate was allowed. And *absolutely no* pushing at the food dish – if she chose to eat with the family.

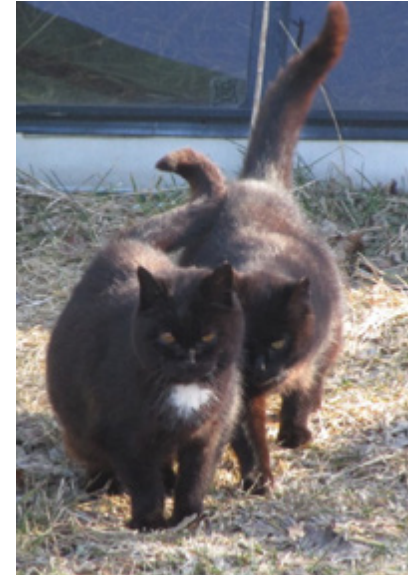
MumCat was a hunter. Evidence of her hunting prowess (and that of her sons) was often found on the site. Last summer, the body of a large rat was laid out for the admiration of all. A nearby catering service has often expressed appreciation for the free pest control.

At many feedings, MumCat would sample the menu items, sit and daintily groom her sleek, glossy coat, and then head off to her hunting grounds where she could stalk prey and keep an eye on us at the same time. Other times, she would perch atop one of the discarded tires on the site and supervise mealtime from there.

MumCat drank from puddles all of her life, spurning the dishes of fresh, clean water set out for her. She was, indeed, an independent soul. In her younger days she would periodically go off for time on her own for as long as a week. Every mother deserves a break!

MumCat was always very cautious – a survivor. During my first two years feeding at

the colony, I often only saw her sweet, black face peeking around the corner of the feeding station or her two black ears in the long grass. I seldom saw her eat. She did become a bit more trusting over time, as additional feeders joined the colony volunteers.



Cheryl Simpson fed breakfast and dinner on her own at the colony every day for more than a year after MumCat's arrival and was the first entrusted with Mum's fur babies. Cheryl could pet or brush MumCat. Those two were bonded.

The rest of us showered MumCat with love and admiration but she rebuffed our attempts to touch her. She was feral at heart and yet was so precious to each of us. My, we miss her!



IN MEMORY OF RICK HUBAND

FFN would like to express our deepest sympathy to the family of Rick Huband, husband of Carole Huband, who was one of Feline Friends Network's earliest volunteers.

Rick was interested in history, genealogy, heritage preservation, and theatre, and contributed to our community as a past-president and volunteer with ACO Stratford-Perth County. He and Carole recently won the James Anderson Award for Cultural Heritage.

Our gratitude to the Huband family for naming FFN as a suggested recipient of memorial donations.

We're very sorry for your loss.



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province erred when it gave police powers to a private organization without imposing accountability and transparency standards on the agency. MacDonald said the court's ruling was the "catalyst" in its move away from animal cruelty investigations.

Animal welfare advocates are worried about a lack of leadership and planning by the provincial government to address the gap in animal welfare law enforcement after 28 June.

Humane societies in Ontario may be allowed to enforce animal cruelty laws once the province's animal welfare charity abdicates its role. A spokesman for Solicitor General Sylvia Jones says the move is a transitional measure until the government comes up with new legislation in the fall.

The Ontario Provincial Police do have the authority to enforce animal welfare and protection laws. According to the OSPCA Act, "In any part of Ontario in which the Society or an affiliated society does not function, any police officer having jurisdiction in that part has and may exercise any of the powers of an inspector or agent of the Society under this Act."

But animal welfare is not exactly a priority of the OPP. The force says that it will assist municipal bylaw enforcement, the OSPCA, or ministry "if requested to do so [but] the management and dispatch of domestic or wild animals is not currently a core policing duty," says OPP spokesperson Carolle Dionne.

FFN asks you to urge the Government of Ontario to act quickly on this matter. We need a new animal welfare agency that is adequately trained and funded to investigate and enforce cruelty and neglect of domestic, agricultural, and wild animals. It must be accountable, transparent, and capable of protecting vulnerable animals



throughout Ontario. In Perth County, contact Randy Pettapeice, MPP, 55 Lorne Ave. E., Unit 2, Stratford, ON N5A 6S4, call 519.272.0660 or toll free 1.800.461.9701, or e-mail randy.pettapiececo@pc.ola.org.

Based on the following articles:

"OSPCA tells Ontario government it will no longer enforce animal cruelty laws" by The Canadian Press, posted 4 March 2019 at <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ospca-ontario-animal-cruelty-laws-1.5042073>

"Ontario takes steps to allow humane societies to enforce animal cruelty laws" by The Canadian Press, posted: 17 May 2019 at <https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/toronto/ontario-takes-steps-to-allow-humane-societies-to-enforce-animal-cruelty-laws-1.5140145>

"The scary state of animal cruelty in Ontario" by Brett Tryon, 14 April 2019. Posted at <https://nowtoronto.com/news/animal-welfare-cruelty-ontario/>

Although all cat games have their rules and rituals, these vary with the individual player. The cat, of course, never breaks a rule. If it does not follow precedent, that simply means it has created a new rule and it is up to you to learn it quickly if you want the game to continue. – Sidney Denham

Cats often devise their own sets of rules that they think we should live by, and they may be quick to chastise us if we fail to adhere to these rules! – Margaret Reister, DVM





A couple of reminders ...

ABOUT STRAYS

Due to the volume of referrals, Feline Friends Network would like to remind our members and friends that we do not have a facility for stray cats nor do we take surrenders.

We do not have veterinarians on call and we do not supply medications or diagnose illness. We are 100% volunteer-run and volunteers are not available 24 hours a day. We try our best to offer guidance in emergency and non-emergency situations and to answer inquiries promptly depending on volunteer availability.

ABOUT MEMBERSHIPS

Are you a card-carrying Feline Friends Network member? Just a reminder that FFN memberships are available all year-round, not just at our Annual General Meetings. You're welcome to join our little 'kitty club,' whether you'd like to become a new member or are a renewing member. Our membership fee is \$15 annually, which can be paid by cash, cheque, e-transfer or through PayPal.

Benefits of an FFN membership include:

- Knowing that you support an organization of volunteers who champion the humane

treatment of homeless cats, assist low-income cat owners wishing to spay or neuter their cats, and encourage the public to be responsible cat owners.

- Receiving our newsletter, *cat tales*, highlighting events and news related to FFN.
- Being able to buy the FFN t-shirt at cost.
- Show your membership card and get a 10% discount at local businesses, including a number of pet stores. Please note that discounts are extended to our members as a courtesy by the businesses, and may change or be withdrawn at any time.

Please see <https://felinefriends.ca/membership.html> for further details.



BIG THANKS ...

A big thank-you to Nancy Hotson, owner of Buzz Stop, who rallied for FFN and collected just over \$400 in donations towards the medical expenses of the cats in our care. One lucky donor – Kiera Di Diomete of Stratford – took home a giant chocolate Easter bunny.

FFN is very grateful to everyone who donated and especially to Nancy for her continuing generosity and volunteer work!



CLOTHES TO CASH

FFN is excited to announce we have partnered with Stratford's Covet, The Community Closet, for a FUN new fundraiser that we hope will be an ongoing way to raise money for the vet care of cats and kittens in FFN programs.

Do you have great vintage items or currently trending clothing, shoes, bags, or coats – men's and women's – that someone else would LOVE? Would you like to donate your items to be sold, with a percentage of the proceeds going to FFN?

If so, stop in to see the friendly staff at Covet and let them know the items you are donating are to be added to the Feline Friends Network account. No appointment needed, but please be selective and take no more than 6-8 items. <http://www.covetconsign.com/>

SEW GENEROUS!

A GREAT BIG THANK YOU to Jaseena and mom Jennifer Cates, who have been sewing catnip pillows with the leftover material from the doll clothing they make. In May, they donated \$124 to FFN from the sale of the catnip toys!

Jaseena also sewed this pretty stack of washable pet beds for our foster kitties!! You can check out their The Busy Momma facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/thebusymomma/>.



Crunch Fitness is celebrating its “Dirty 30” – and EVERYONE is invited!!!

by Alanna Mulready, Manager, Crunch Fitness

On 11 June 2019, Crunch Fitness Stratford will host an open house to celebrate and support Feline Friends Network! Join us for an amazing day, with vendor tables, giveaways, raffle prizes, contests, and a few more tricks that we're keeping up our sleeves. We will also have a full evening of our world-class Group Fitness with special one-night-only programs!

Proceeds from this event will be used to support FFN – the organization that made it possible for our gym to receive the most important gift of our lives – our cat! Not only is Gymmy part of the Crunch Fitness family – he is also a Registered Therapy Cat who has played an important role in the lives of many of our members. Check him out on Instagram @gymmythecat – he's kind of a big deal!

Crunch is located at 925 Ontario St, Stratford. For more information, call 519.273.3107 or e-mail alanna.mulready@crunchstratford.ca.



Wish List

CAT SUPPLIES

- unscented dust-free clumping cat litter
- cat food – Friskies paté and/or hard kibble
- kitten food – Royal Canin (soft or dry), Purina (dry), KMR kitten supplement

GIFT CARDS (allows us to buy supplies)

- grocery stores
- pet stores
- Canadian Tire
- TSC
- Home Hardware
- Costco
- Staples
- Blowes

CLEANING SUPPLIES

- bleach
- small white garbage bags
- Dawn dish soap
- paper towels
- dog poop bags

MISCELLANEOUS

- pens and/or sharpies
- erasable markers
- note pads
- disposable gloves
- antibacterial soap
- liquid hand soap
- scotch tape
- sticky notes
- paper (letter size)
- highlighters

We want your empties!

FFN's year-long liquor bottle drive is now underway! Instead of returning them to the Beer Store, please drop off your beer cans and bottles, and wine and liquor bottles at 179 Hibernia Street, Stratford. FFN will use the deposit cash to help kitties.

The bin for empties is currently placed to the left of the porch. We are experimenting with the set-up, so bear with us as we work out the kinks! Look for the green FFN banner!



Get the goodies!

Volunteers are holding a bake sale on Saturday, 15 June, from 10am to 2pm at Pet Valu, 581 Huron Street, Stratford. Please join us for a variety of yummy edibles! All proceeds from the treats you buy will support FFN's spay/neuter and foster/adoption programs.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR
garet markvoort

