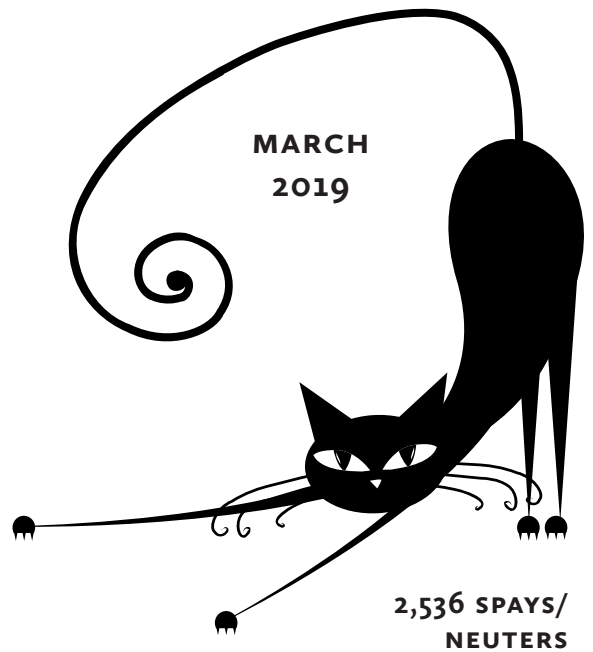


# cat tales

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE FELINE FRIENDS NETWORK



Syd sleeping in his favourite spot – which also happens to be Deb’s favourite spot to sit. He will share, Deb says, as long as she brushes him. “He likes the brushing so much that he will turn over for me to brush his belly,” she wrote, “and the purrs that follow are amazing.”

## No “quick fix”... but a happy outcome!

In 2017, FFN was informed of a cat with a litter of kittens under a porch by a caller (Deb) who hoped that we could take them into our foster/adoption program. Since mom cat didn’t appear to be friendly, we were concerned that the kittens might not be young enough to be socialized/adoptable.

While FFN was making arrangements to trap the family, a raccoon tried to attack them in the night and was driven away by Deb who had heard the ruckus. Mom cat must have decided that the location was no longer safe for the kittens and moved them in the night.

Approximately three months later, mom cat returned with the kittens, now even older, bigger, and – we feared – much harder to socialize. We felt the family could do well as an outdoor colony, with Deb as a caretaker. Deb, however, was not deterred. Determined to socialize the 4–5-month-old kittens, she trapped them all, along with a young adult male. Dubbed “Syd,” the young male was returned to the outdoors after he recovered from his neuter surgery, with daily meals and a shelter provided. The kittens were slowly socialized and, ultimately, adopted.

But where was mom cat? She’d made herself scarce after the kittens were trapped, showing up occasionally to eat but on an inconsistent basis that made it hard to trap her. It seemed that she had slipped through the cracks ...

But in the spring of 2018, mom cat reappeared – with another litter of kittens that she started separating and abandoning in the yards of Deb and her next-door neighbour. After bringing the three kittens abandoned in her yard into her house, Deb discovered that an elderly neighbour was feeding mom and two much bigger, healthier kittens. This time, mom and all the kittens were trapped!

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Mom cat was spayed and moved to a foster home for recovery and to work on her socialization, while Deb fostered all the kittens. Over a period of a few months, mom and all five kittens were adopted. Only Syd remained.

Syd had been coming consistently to eat on the porch, but once the remaining kittens were gone, he started to show signs of wanting to come into the house. Deb obliged and gradually, the more often he was indoors, the longer he felt comfortable staying in.

It was then that Deb noticed that Syd seemed to have a sore mouth and trouble eating. He went off to the vet where he was diagnosed with stomatitis, a severe, painful inflammation of a cat's mouth and gums in which ulcers form in the mouth. Syd was booked to have all his teeth removed and Deb nursed him through his recovery.

Syd is now happily an only cat and king of his castle! This boy is so lucky to have found Deb. A cat that FFN listed as a TNR (trap/neuter/return) in mid-November 2017 has come full circle and is no longer homeless. FFN would like to thank Deb for all her hard work – we think it's fair to say that she has earned the rank of "Cat Lady"!

### A HEARTY THANKS

We would like to give Global Pet Foods Stratford three cheers for showing their love for felines! Their 'Show Us Your Heart' campaign – which ran from 8 to 22 February 2019 – has raised approximately \$500 for Feline Friends. Thanks to Adam and staff for another generous donation in support of our spay & neuter programs!



Syd waiting for Deb to open the patio door. According to Deb, "he won't go out unless he has a full belly – must be from the year and a half he spent outdoors. He has adapted quite well to the indoor life but still likes his outdoor adventures.

"I want to give my great appreciation for all the work FFN has done. With their help, we have gotten 15 cats and kittens adopted out to great families and homes. Also, they spayed and neutered 12 stray barn cats from the neighbourhood which has since reduced the cat population in my area. Much thanks!"

*When anyone mistreats it, the cat wants nothing more to do with that person and will remember him or her for a long time. It doesn't believe in the doctrine of turning the other cheek and won't pretend that it does.*

– Lawrence N. Johnson

*If you shamefully misuse a cat once she will always maintain a dignified reserve toward you afterward. You will never get her full confidence again.*

– Mark Twain

*If you yell at a cat, you're the one who is making a fool of yourself.*

– Unknown



# AGM Report

by Sharon Morrice

Feline Friends Network's Annual General Meeting was held Sunday, 24 February 2019, at the Falstaff Family Centre. The attendance figure of thirty-three people likely reflects the forecast for damaging winds and snow squalls.

Treasurer Jamie Lamond reviewed FFN's financial statements, noting that FFN enters 2019 with a healthy surplus, despite having to dip into our reserves in 2018. While revenue from donations and fundraisers decreased from 2017, adoption revenue was up. Expenditures also increased in 2017 for the TNR and Low-Income Spay/Neuter Assistance programs and for the emergency medical fund.

Marg Usprech, one of FFN's TNR and Foster/Adoption coordinators, reported that 279 cats went through our TNR and Foster/Adoption programs – an increase of 59 cats from 2017. The two programs are closely linked, as we are finding that many of the TNR cats are not truly feral, but instead shy cats that have been displaced or abandoned. Almost all these cats are under the age of two and unaltered.

The TNR program saw an increase of 46 cats for a total of 134. 2018 was the first year in which FFN had to put the TNR program on hold due to the volume of requests and lack of availability of appointments at vet clinics. We will be accepting TNR applications again in mid-March.

Adoptions also increased with 145 cats and kittens adopted through FFN in 2018. We piloted a new location – the 'cat flat' – for foster cats, which enabled us to help an additional 58 cats that we would otherwise have been unable to place. More foster homes are very much needed.

Holly Roulston gave the fundraising report, including the results of the annual FFN Wine Raffle (which sold-out again this year), the 6th annual (and likely final) Feline Film Festival, Giving Tuesday, Mintie Bar sales, Pat's Puddy Product sales, the Donate-a-Car program, and

online auctions which each raised between \$800 and \$1,500. FFN is also grateful to local pet stores, Global Pet Foods and Pet Valu, both of whom again selected FFN as the recipient of their in-store fundraising efforts in 2018. To free up volunteers to spend less time planning fundraisers and events and more time caring for cats, Holly encouraged members to join our monthly donor program through Canada Helps. She also noted that, after requests from the public, FFN has recently added a birthday party fundraiser (see 'Party with a purpose' on page 6). Looking ahead to 2019, FFN is also hoping to apply for more grants to help fund our programs (we have applied for the City of Stratford community grant) and we would appreciate suggestions of any other relevant community, business, or family grants.

The nomination of members for the FFN Board of Directors extended Holly Roulston's term by two years and added a new director to the board. Brenda Ford, a long-time FFN member, volunteer, and foster caregiver, was approved for a three-year term.

FFN President Sharon Morrice touched on some of FFN's accomplishments in 2018, including a by-law being enacted in the City of Stratford banning the retail sale of unsterilized cats and dogs. Cats and dogs displayed for adoption in pet stores must now be from reputable rescues or shelters, and they must be spayed or neutered before adoption. FFN's Low-Income Spay/Neuter Assistance Program was overhauled to make the application process simpler and more transparent and more online forms were added to the FFN website to handle adoption inquiries, behaviour advice requests, and TNR and foster applications in order to streamline the collection of information and use our volunteers' time more efficiently.

In 2018, FFN reached 2,500 spays/neuters since it formed and helped more cats through its TNR, Foster/Adoption, and Low-Income Assistance programs than ever before. Morrice noted that, while higher spay/neuter numbers *are* a great achievement, FFN's ability to sustain

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or increase such numbers is in doubt without more volunteers stepping forward to help carry the workload. More help is particularly needed in the areas of TNR, Foster/Adoption, and Fundraising.

Finally, Morrice gave thanks to FFN's members, donors, vet clinics, local businesses and, especially, its volunteers for their contributions and support throughout the year.

P.S. If you have grant information to share or are interested in becoming more involved by volunteering to foster a cat, plan a fundraiser, or help us do trapping in your area, please contact FFN at [info@felinefriends.ca](mailto:info@felinefriends.ca). While *no one* can do it all, *all of us* can do something!

*There are many intelligent species in the universe. They are all owned by cats."*

– Anonymous

### **WORLD SPAY DAY TALLY**

Thirty-two spay/neuter surgeries (thirty-one cats and one dog) were done by five local clinics who participated in World Spay Day!

Many thanks to Avon Pet Hospital, Kirkton Veterinary Clinic, Perth Veterinary Services, Romeo Pet Hospital and St. Marys Veterinary Clinic for accepting our challenge to offer discounts on or around the date of 26 February 2019, and to volunteer, Rachelle Czartorynskyj, for doing such a great job organizing it!

The importance of 'fixing' our pets cannot be overstated.

# 2019

### **TIME TO RENEW!**

The time is right to renew your Feline Friends Network membership or to become a member for the first time! 2018 membership cards expired on 28 February 2019, so renew or sign up now to enjoy a full year of member benefits.

FFN's \$15 membership fee helps it carry out its spay/neuter programs, including Trap-Neuter-Return, Foster & Adoption, and Low-Income Spay/ Neuter Assistance. As a member, you get voting rights at the Annual General Meeting, discounts on FFN t-shirts, as well as a 10% discount when you show your card at the following businesses: Feed-All Pet Centre, Split Rail Country Store, Ruffin's Pet Centre, Global Pet Foods, McPhail's Pet & Animal Needs, B&B Pet Supplies, and Shuttercraft Window Coverings.

To renew, mail a cheque to Feline Friends Network, 134 Brunswick St., Stratford, ON, N5A 3M1; send an e-transfer to [info@felinefriends.ca](mailto:info@felinefriends.ca) (please use "spayneuter" as the answer for the security question); or pay online via Paypal. Full details at <https://felinefriends.ca/membership.html>. Please don't forget to include your name, mailing address, phone number, and e-mail address with your fee.

*Note:* the discounts businesses extend to our members are provided as a courtesy and are subject to change at any time without notice.



# Remembering Spotty

by Cecile Munro

To the great sorrow of his colony caretakers, Spotty passed away sometime overnight in his shelter on 21 February 2019. My husband, Ross, found him around 8:00 am when he went to feed the cats.

Spotty was the most senior cat in all of Feline Friends Network's colonies. When Ross and I moved to Stratford in 2004, we met Spotty near our home, where he and a group of other cats were roaming around in the fields as well as the edges of apartment building parking lots. He looked about two or three years old then and seemed to be "in charge" of the cats.

One day, I decided to bring a can of cat food with me when I went for my walk. I saw Spotty and he looked at me. When I snapped the lid open – to his delight and that of his nose, too – he rushed over to me. Gobbling up the food within seconds, he proceeded to get close enough for a pet! His purring seemed to be his way of thanking me for this food and attention. I promised to return to see him the next day.

I told Ross all about this beautiful black-and-white male cat who was so friendly – and so hungry – mentioning that there seemed to be a lot of other cats in the wooded areas too. I wondered if Spotty belonged to anyone and Ross thought he likely did since he was so friendly and eager to be petted. Ross suggested that we could bring him treats on our walks.

We moved away from the area in 2010 and, from time to time, I wondered how the cats were doing. When we returned in 2014, I recognized Spotty immediately! He ran up to us and let me pet him behind the ears. I went to get some food for him, which he ate quickly. As Spotty and I reconnected, I noticed that there were four other cats watching us from about eight feet away. From then on, if the others were around when I brought Spotty his treat, I would put some cat food down and walk away so that they could eat, too.



Portrait of a gentle giant, by John Sieling

After asking around, I learned that the cats had a shelter belonging to Feline Friends and were being looked after by a neighbour named Charlie. Charlie and his wife, Mary, invited Ross and me to an FFN barbecue in August 2014 where we signed up for membership and started feeding the cats on a regular basis. Spotty would wait for our car to come back and meet us at our parking spot, so we carried cat chews in our pockets. After receiving one, he would accompany us to our door, making sure we got home okay.

Spotty was a true gentle cat and would "walk" me back to the door of the apartment building, which he also did for Cheryl J., another feeder. He definitely liked women – especially if they fed him!

Spotty was the undisputed head of his cat colony and enjoyed sharing food from each of the other cats' dishes. He would discipline Hairy and Orangie when they were fighting, banishing the instigator of the fight from the shelter for two days. I once saw Spotty slap Hairy across the face when he was picking on Little One, forcing him away from the colony. The other cats respected Spotty!

Spotty loved food – especially salmon! – and liked his independence. Although big in size, he was very gentle and also fair. I am sure Spotty would have liked to thank the current cat feeders – Lu Anne, Cheryl J., Alisha and Breeanne, Rachelle, Cheryl S., Ashton and Alexis, Mike and Mandy, Jakki, and Maureen, as well as others who help from time to time.

A "gentleman" and a classy cat, Spotty will be greatly missed by all.



## Party with a purpose!

Is it birthday or anniversary time? Make your celebration even more special by throwing a party with a purpose! Ask your guests to make a donation to Feline Friends Network in lieu of gifts and help a cause that we hope is close to your heart.

And, if you advise FFN of your celebration at least two weeks in advance of the date, we will order a 6-inch cat-themed cake – in your choice of chocolate or vanilla – for you to pick up from a Stratford, Ontario baker. Your cake will be personalized with a banner at its base.

Your guests can make donations through Canada Helps (click on the ‘Donate Online’ link on our website, [www.felinefriends.ca](http://www.felinefriends.ca)), by e-transfer to [info@felinefriends.ca](mailto:info@felinefriends.ca) (please use the password “spayneuter”), or by bringing a cash/cheque donation to your event!

The first FFN birthday party fundraiser was held on 2 February 2019 for Lyla’s 10th birthday and raised \$195 to help the cats! Way to go Lyla!



## EVAH turns five

Where has the time gone? The East Village Animal Hospital (EVAH) in London, Ontario, is celebrating five years of low-cost, high-volume spays and neuters!

EVAH also provides general out-patient medical and surgical services for pets cared for by low-income individuals, those on social assistance, spay/neuter organizations like FFN, animal rescues, and shelters in a 12-county region.

And EVAH’s second clinic, in Kitchener, is a year old. We congratulate them on their very significant contribution to reducing cat overpopulation and homelessness – 24,650 spays/neuters, 15,000 patients welcomed, and over 50,000 appointments and consultations!

Hurrah EVAH!

*Cats speak a subtle language in which few sounds carry many meanings, depending on how they are sung or purred. ‘Mnrhnh’ means comfortable soft chairs. It also means fish. It means genial companionship ... and the absence of dogs.*

– Val Schaffner

*If a cat spoke, it would say things like, “Hey, I don’t see the problem here.*

– Roy Blount Jr.

NEWSLETTER EDITOR  
garet markvoort

