

# Kitty Kat Mews

The Newsletter of Save Our Strays, Inc.

Volume 16, Issue 2

Serving Pinellas County

Fall 2011



**Karrie, Sophia & Bella**



**Penelope,  
very affectionate**



**Frankie,  
16-pound boy**

**Tyra,  
colorful tortie**



## Save Our Strays, Inc.



A no-kill,  
non-profit  
organization  
dedicated to  
rehoming

abandoned cats and kittens.

### **CONTACT US:**

**PO Box 373  
Indian Rocks Beach, FL 33785**

**727 481 5091**

**727 481-5262** (Surrender Line)

**E-mail:** [sos@saveourstraysinc.com](mailto:sos@saveourstraysinc.com)

### **On line:**

[www.SaveOurStraysInc.com](http://www.SaveOurStraysInc.com)  
[www.Petfinder.com](http://www.Petfinder.com)

### **ADOPTION LOCATIONS:**

#### **Debi's Puppy Love**

9673 Bay Pines Blvd.  
.....Seminole 727 392-7662

#### **Saturdays Only**

These **PetSmart** stores:

Every Saturday; 11:30 am – 4pm

#### ♥ **CountrySide**

26277 US 19 North at  
Enterprise Rd,  
Clearwater 727 799-3311

#### ♥ **Largo Mall** Ulmerton Rd.

Largo 727 518-2600

Various Saturdays, 11 am - 2 pm;  
call 727 328 1291 for exact dates

#### ♥ **Tyrone Blvd & Park St**

St. Petersburg 727 343-7900

### **Board of Directors & Officers**

Co-Presidents: Linda Hartnett &  
Nancy Skoney

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Val Laking

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Editor: Donna Johnson

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A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the division of consumer services by calling toll-free (800-435-7352) within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval or recommendation by the state

-2-

## Walmart awards education grant to Save Our Strays

Save Our Strays, Inc. has received a 2011 Walmart Education grant for \$2,000 to promote the importance of spay/neuter programs in reducing the feline population.

SOS receives calls every day to rescue stray cats and kittens from across the county. Obviously, more education is needed to help people become responsible pet owners. Estimates are that an unspayed female cat with her mate and all of their offspring can produce almost 400,000 additional cats in only seven years. Spay/neuter programs are the only answer to this feline population explosion.

SOS volunteers and the project's grant writers, Ruth Duncan and Robert Scott, talked with Cindy DeCrane, Human Resource Manager for the Clearwater store. "Walmart is pleased to help SOS take a positive approach to ending the stray cat issues in our neighborhoods," Cindy stated.

Save Our Strays thanks Walmart for this additional funding, which will help spread the message in our community about the dire need to control the over-population of cats. SOS provides literature at special events and at its adoption sites to make pet owners aware of area spay and neuter programs.

## SOS to benefit from Gulfport Pet Project

If you have walked around downtown Dunedin, FL you have probably seen paintings of pets on numerous buildings. They were created by Murals for Mutts, Inc., a non-profit organization that brings awareness about animal welfare to the pet community and beyond by painting pet murals on public and private walls.

The group's artists have recently created a pet art project in Gulfport to raise funds for two local animal welfare groups: Limbo Chihuahuas and Save Our Strays, Inc. The Gulfport Pet Project will feature pet portraits on the outside walls of local businesses. Interested in having a portrait painted? E-mail [muralsformutts@gmail.com](mailto:muralsformutts@gmail.com) or call Dawn at 727-902-1671. The \$100 fee provides \$50 for the rescue group and \$50 for artist's expenses.

## SOS adds Pinellas Park adoption site

Pinellas Park animal lovers are invited to stop by *Pets Plus*, 7640 49th St. North the third Saturday of each month from 11 am – 2 pm to see a selection of our loving felines and hopefully fall in love with one of them. Call 727 345-6217 to verify dates.

## 🌸 🌸 🌸 🌸 🌸 PetSmart stores host Adopt-a-thons 🌸 🌸 🌸 🌸 🌸

Mark the weekends of September 9 -11 and November 11-13 to receive special bonuses at PetSmart when adopting a pet. Adopters get coupon for a free bag of Purina Pro Plan and "other valuable coupons."

## Save Our Strays set to participate in fall events

*The International Cat Association* - shows will be held Saturday & Sunday Sept. 24 & 25; and Sunday, Nov. 20 from 9 am to 4 pm at the Minnreg Center, 6340 126th Ave No, Largo.

*Tangerine Blues Fest* – Saturday Sept 24 from 4 pm to 10 pm, 5022 Tangerine Ave. So., Gulfport.

## Looking for a declawed cat?

Freckles, a brown & white Tabby female is available at press time. Call 727 481-5262 for updates; returned cats are often declawed.

# Controlling feral cat colonies

They live in alleys, in culverts, behind restaurants – anywhere that they can scrounge for food to survive. It is estimated that over 100,000 stray cats and kittens struggle to live in Pinellas County. Some were abandoned, others are lost; a large percentage of these cats are feral or undomesticated. Not spayed or neutered, felines can become sexually active as young as five months old. They live in colonies, which continue to multiply; soon the colonies are out of control. The following is a true account of a neighborhood in south St. Petersburg where three women joined forces to control the spiraling cat overpopulation problem and made a difference.

With cat traps that she has personally purchased, Sue Rountree is an advocate for the TNR (Trap, Neuter, Return) of feral felines. The tireless animal lover received a call in April 2011 from Kathy Wyss regarding some feral kittens. Sue learned that Kathy was helping a lady named Kim that was feeding a colony of 80 cats. Sue agreed to try to tackle the dilemma. Meeting with Kim, Sue learned that there were several small colonies that together covered about a 1/2 square mile area. As the caregiver, Kim traversed from one alley or house to another each night feeding all the hungry cats. "It was really overwhelming!" Sue recalled.

The women's goal was to TNR all the cats, get the kittens into foster homes and then relocate as many of the cats that they could to farms, barns and other sanctuaries.

During the first weekend of 'mass trapping' in April, Sue trapped 24 felines. Soon she realized that the caretaker wasn't aware of how many cats she was really feeding. This colony of an estimated 80 cats grew to be a colony of 140 cats.

Compounding the process, Sue related, "there were about 20 'nursing moms' that we couldn't trap because we didn't want the kittens to die."



*This young feral cat – less than one year old - was trapped in South St. Petersburg and gave birth to a litter just hours later while she was still in the trap. Only one of the kittens lived – probably due to the mother cat's small size and her lack of proper nutrition.*

*Raindance, the surviving kitty, thrived with access to all of her mother's milk. With daily human contact, the grey Tabby developed into a playful spirited kitten. Summer, the mother cat, was spayed after Raindance was weaned.*

Trapping every weekend through June, the trio TNR'd 107 cats. Remarkably, homes were found for 27 kittens and 27 adult cats were relocated.

The project had to be put on hold temporarily this summer. The women are committed, however, to continue working the large area until all the cats have all been spayed/-neutered.

In the meantime, Sue and her supporters move to other colonies to control unwanted breeding.

Altered cats are identified by a notch on their left ears, which are clipped at the tip when they undergo surgery. This designation lets trappers know if a cat has been altered or not.

The group still has 33 cats to spay/neuter as well as some kittens that were too young to trap earlier in the spring.

As a general rule, after all of the cats in a colony have been spayed/

neutered, a caregiver continues to feed the felines on a daily basis. Over a period of time, the contained colony will shrink in size and eventually disappear due to natural causes.

Several counties in Florida have implemented successful TNR programs for feral cats and have experienced a drop in intake numbers at their local animal shelters. In the Tampa Bay area, Hillsborough Co. Animal Services works closely with the Humane Society of Tampa Bay.

\*Statistics on cats in the county for the four-year period 2007 through 2010 show that aggressive spay/neuter programs produce dramatic results. Total intake for the period decreased 27%. Euthanasias decreased from nearly 17,000 cats down to close to 11,000 – a 35% decrease. During the same time, the number of cats TNR'd increased by 5,225 – a 200% total increase. The county's successful spay/neuter voucher program resulted in 8,863 vouchers redeemed – a 282 % increase in usage.

If you see a stray cat or a colony of strays, please act to prevent them from having unwanted litters. For help in trapping, Sue may be reached at 727 504-2343.

In Pinellas Co., the SPCA offers SpayDay every other month on the 4th Sunday of the month. Its next SpayDay is in September. To rent traps and make an appointment, call 727-586-3591 ext 13.

SPOT (727-329-8657) in St. Petersburg provides low-cost surgeries Tuesday through Thursday.

National Feral Cat Day is Oct 16. Alley Cat Allies, a national advocacy organization, has a great website at [www.alleycat.org/NFCD](http://www.alleycat.org/NFCD) that promotes joining the movement to protect outdoor cats.

\* Statistics include Hillsborough County Animal Services, Humane Society of Tampa Bay & ACT (Animal Coalition of Tampa).

## Bringing seniors together



*Peggy Olson and Daisy Mae*

Growing up in rural Vermont, young Peggy Arey once beat up a boy that had kicked her cat. Now ninety years later, Peggy Olson is still caring for cats in need.

When Peggy downsized to her current condominium, her cats (Cotton and her daughter Suzie) moved also. Cotton was Peg's companion for 17 years; Suzie lived with her for 21 years, passing away in December 2010. Peggy was very lonesome without a feline companion.

Associated with Neighborly Care Network's Pace Program, Peggy mentioned the void in her life to her social worker. Michelle Deaton called Save Our Strays and learned that our organization welcomes the opportunity to match senior citizens with senior cats.

Charlie came to Peggy's home in May. A large grey and white Tabby, Charlie was initially adopted from SOS as a kitten.



*Charlie*

Now declawed, he was dumped in Pinellas Co. Animal Services' drop box in March 2010 – 10 years later and was in a foster home until he became a member of the Olson household. Charlie is cautious of noise in his new home, but he loves to be combed and to sit near Peggy. With a playful spirit, Peggy says, "he acts like he is two, not eleven years old."

As a companion for Charlie, Daisy Mae joined the Olson family in June. This grey and white Tabby was also adopted as a young cat in 2004. When she was rescued in April 2011, she had been abandoned and was in poor health with acute anemia and a severe abscess on her side. After treatment at Clearwater Animal Clinic, Daisy Mae was good as new.



*Daisy Mae*

Charlie and Daisy Mae keep Peggy entertained. One of their favorite pastimes is playing with peacock feathers. "I wish I could take more," Peggy says with enthusiasm.

Peggy will celebrate her 97th birthday in October. An avid storyteller, the petite grandmother enjoys reminiscing about moving to Pinellas County in the 1950s, working as a nurse at Mound Park Hospital (now Bayfront Hospital) and always having cats in her life. Peggy's goal is to live to be 100 years old with her cats at her side.

Older returned cats that are now happy in foster homes include: Tuxedo cat *Charlotte* is thriving with April B after stints in numerous foster homes.

*Lucia* now loves living with Ann H. The Calico is another victim that

was adopted in 2005 as a kitten and then abandoned to fend for herself. She was found with severe flea dermatitis and dental problems in April 2011.

*Sassy*, discarded in February 2011 after five years, immediately fit in with Nancy L. Nancy also is fostering *Baxter*, a 10-yr. old black & white male returned in May 2011 due to his family's home foreclosure. Plus seniors *Jimmy*, age 11 and *Chan*, age 5, are enjoying life with Eileen E.

### We still need homes Can you help?



Looking for an affectionate lap cat? Will has a great outlook on life despite having to have his right front leg amputated after SOS rescued him. The brown and white Tabby, age 5, was abandoned when his owner moved away.



Daniella is a striking Calico with green eyes. Adopted in 2003, her owner discarded her in March 2011.

SOS is proud of its guaranteed return policy. It is difficult, but we always provide for our senior cats. Would you or someone you know provide a loving home by fostering a cat on a temporary basis or permanently fostering a senior feline? Call SOS at 727 481-5262.

## Laptop computers showcase kitties available for adoption

*Editor's note: In our last newsletter we asked our readers to donate laptop computers for adoption presentations. We asked and we received.*

When animal lovers stop by our adoption sites at PetSmarts, they can select from usually 10 to 15 cats and kittens. Now they can also view over 50 additional felines on a laptop computer. Perhaps someone is looking for a big orange male cat or a young grey kitty – by scrolling through the photos featured in our adoptable cats presentation, he can find a great cat to check out and adopt.

A collaborative effort by our volunteers has made this adoption tool possible. Three laptop computers were donated by our loyal readers. Save Our Strays thanks Gary Gallupe, Belleair Bluffs; Annina Donaldson, St. Petersburg; and Mary Wallman, St. Petersburg for their generosity.

The Powerpoint presentation was developed initially by Jane Johnson. An on-going effort keeps the presentation current. Paula Hays serves as photo editor. Jennifer and Robin Rives update the software program for the laptops adding photos of adoptable kitties and deleting those that have been adopted.

SOS kitties are grateful for everyone's help in promoting their quest for forever homes.

## Holiday gift wrapping location sought

Since 2006 Save Our Strays volunteers have gift wrapped hundreds of holiday packages in December at Borders Books & Music at Tyrone Mall. The multiple-day event became our biggest fundraiser netting several thousand dollars in tips each year.

With the closing of Borders, we need a new venue with heavy traffic to attract busy shoppers. Know of a charitable establishment that has the space in December to allow for a table and chairs for our talented volunteers? Call 727 545-1116 with your ideas. New project will be promoted in December newsletter.

## Surprise birthday party



*Mary Wallman celebrates her 80th birthday with fellow Save Our Strays volunteers in July. From left front row: Val Laking, Donna Johnson, Mary Wallman, Dennis Garver. Back row: Robin Bass, Fran McDermott, Jannie Hume and Vera Hatch. Not pictured: Trish Laczko and CarolAnn Mateo.*

## Honoring pets in your will

Remembering homeless animals in your will is a wonderful gesture. Giving your bequest to a no-kill organization offers added peace of mind.



Making a gift to Save Our Strays can be as simple as adding a short codicil to your will or an amendment to your trust, depending on your current estate planning documents.

If you would like to remember Save Our Strays in your Will or Trust, the recommended language is simple:

*I hereby give, devise and bequeath \_\_\_\_\_ percent (\_\_\_\_%) or \$\_\_\_\_\_ (for a definite dollar amount) to Save Our Strays, Inc., a Florida non-profit corporation having charter number N9400000525 and tax I.D. No 59-3274561.*

Remember to protect your pets' future In the event that something unexpected happens to you.

Always consult your tax advisor or attorney about any bequests you wish to make and about any changes you want to make to your Will, Codicil, or Trust documents.

Marie T. Rives, an SOS volunteer and attorney may be reached at [riveslaw@tampabay.rr.com](mailto:riveslaw@tampabay.rr.com) to answer any general questions you may have about gifts or bequests to Save Our Strays. Your support is appreciated.

## What ever happened to Tyson



This handsome Tabby, featured in our Spring 2011 issue, required surgery for an obstruction in his air passageway. He is now king of the roost at the Jo Miller/Nigel Duffett household. One of the family's felines had died, leaving the remaining cat alone and depressed. In a week Tyson and the 'sad' kitty were friends. And Tyson, who loves water, was showering with the family. Tyson's foster mother said he was exceptional. Tyson's new mom says, "exceptional does not even come close to describing Tyson."

## Our Adoption Report

Save Our Strays adoptions for 2011 included 66 for January and February. March 34, April 30, May 32, June 27, July 17 for a total of 206 for the first seven months of the year.

# Latest contributors

Effective through August 15, 2011



## Blue Ribbon Membership

(\$100 - \$999 donation)

Maureen Ballinger  
Jack & Frances Bargert  
David & Melanie Craig  
Connie Cutliff  
Dennis Devlin  
Chuck & Ann Gibson  
Sam & Cindy Gray  
Kathleen Kerrins  
Naomi Malone  
Andrea McFadden, "*From Roscoe, the SOS kitty we adopted*"

Catherine Rasmussen  
Ruth Sparrow  
John & Nancy Stafford  
Ken & Mary Wanner  
Betty Zandi

## Paws Membership

Ora Faye Arp  
Suzanna Bedy  
Sarah Bergstrand  
Sharon Bridges  
Deborah Brown, "*From Fur, Stormy, and Buddy*"  
Juanita Cannara  
Nancy Collo-Price  
Joseph Corr  
Juanita Cannara  
Frank & Shirley Davis  
Anita Deal  
Jerome DeClercq  
Judith Dipolito  
Nancy & Doug Doll  
Deborah Duty  
Pat Fugman  
Judy Galperin  
Robert Gerwig  
Judie Glenn  
Judith Hall, Morgan Stanley Smith Barney  
Jobi Harris  
John & Livia Hawkins  
Ray & Marge Hill  
Daniel Hood  
Yvonne Huff  
Janet Korn  
Joann Kreitman  
Michele LaMontia  
Patricia Lange  
Allan & Nancy Lonschein  
Andrea & David Manson  
Barbara Martin  
Fran McDermott  
Kyle McNeer  
Edith Mills  
Kim & Craig Nowicki  
Nancy Oakley  
Ron & Joan Oughton

Monte & Mary Palmer  
Evelyn Perna  
Kelly Phaus  
Donna Pitts  
Barbara Purtee  
Anita Rallo  
Jim & Wendy Rexroad, "*We Love Our Hailey*"  
Cathy Roberts  
Helen Rollins  
Katharina Slaght  
James Tomaszewski  
Diane Wechet  
Ruthe Yow

## In Memory of Pets

From

Callie Arthur Markowitz  
Kona Suzanne Todd  
Sylvester Nature's Food Patch

## In Honor of People

From

Jack Woolf's birthday Gina Woolf

## Meow Mail



"Thank you for bottle-feeding/fostering Roscoe. He is now eight years old and the joy of my life. He is a sweet little Momma's boy that is cherished and spoiled." *Andrea M., Roscoe's Mom*

"Thank you so much for all you do to help homeless cats!"  
*Karen T., Gulfport Café*

"The black and white kitten I adopted from your organization is one of the best cats I've ever known. Thank you and your loving foster volunteers."  
*Betty Z.*

"Just a note to thank you for taking us in and for adopting us to the Bradleys. We sleep and play all day and have many toys and tunnels to play with." *Carlos and Charlie, adopted September 2010*

## Our Wish List

Canned & dry cat food  
Canned kitten food  
KMR (kitten milk replacement) & bottles  
Scoopable clay litter  
Humane traps for feral cats  
Pet stain & odor remover  
Catnip toys  
Postage Stamps  
PetSmart gift cards  
More dedicated foster homes & volunteers



***Please bring items to our PetSmart space on Saturdays***

*There are two means of refuge from the miseries of life:  
Music and cats - Albert Schweitzer*



## Volunteer Spotlight

### Diana Ross

"I was always involved with animals in one way or another," says Diana Ross who began helping Save Our Strays in 2002. As a teenager working in a Woolworth's pet department in Ohio, she would "wear" a real chameleon on her shoulder when she was selling pet food and products. "The customers always used to get a kick out of it," Diana recalls.

Diana and her husband Lloyd raised two children in the northeast and were Florida snowbirds until they moved to Trinity, FL permanently in 2002.

Diana 'discovered' Save Our Strays when she was shopping at PetSmart and became involved with fund raising. She started making catnip pillows, which proved to be a popular product in the feline world. Save Our Strays has sold over 4000 of the



*Diana Ross holds two kittens in front of catnip pillow display at SOS' Countryside Mall adoption site.*

washable pillows according to Diana. The catnip creations were featured in an issue of JoAnn Fabrics quarterly publication in 2006.

Diana also developed an interactive game called "Pick a Duckie" in which participants donate and win small prizes. The game was featured this past spring during Pet-a-Palooza at Coachman Park. "Young and old alike enjoyed donating to our cause and being able to go home with a prize," Diana remarked.

The Ross family has always had pets - mostly cats. In addition to their own felines, Diana and Lloyd foster Save Our Strays kittens. This energetic lady started working part time at Paw Paws Pet Boutique in Countryside Mall this year. On Saturdays she's at the gift boutique as a SOS volunteer with adoptable kitties on hand.

In her spare time, the Pennsylvania native likes to play mah jong and take line-dancing classes. Diana loves all the SOS friendships that she has developed and reminisces, "I have lots of great memories so far and I look forward to making many more."

#### Special thanks!

*Anna Wilson* collected money for SOS during a neighborhood sale this summer.

*Walsingham Horseman's Association* offered its concession stand to SOS during its May horse show.

*Nature's Food Patch*, Clearwater honored SOS as the July recipient of its "Bring your own bag" campaign, which encourages customers to bring their own reusable bags.

Return envelopes provided courtesy of **Clearwater Animal Clinic**, 1639 S. Missouri Av., Clearwater FL, 727-584-1151

3<

**Please support Save Our Strays, Inc.  I'd like to Join / Volunteer**

**Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Address:** \_\_\_\_\_ **City:** \_\_\_\_\_

**State/Zip:** \_\_\_\_\_ **E-mail address:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Home Ph:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Work Ph:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Cell Ph:** \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to contribute toward expenses for special-needs cats;  cost of printing newsletter in color.

I want to support Save Our Strays, Inc; enclosed is my gift of:

\$10 \$25 \$50 \$100 \$250 \$500 \$1,000 (Corporate/Best of Show) \$\_\_\_\_\_ Other

**Interested in volunteering?** What would you like to do?

(transport cats, PetSmart on Saturdays, foster a cat or kittens, fundraising, special events, mailings)

**Can you help foster a Save Our Strays kitten or cat? Please phone: 727 481-5262**

Foster home caregivers need to agree to a home visit prior to fostering for Save Our Strays, Inc. You also must understand fostering requires a commitment to seeing the process through to adoption which means you could foster a cat for, perhaps, as long as six months. You also must be able to transport the cat to the veterinarian in Gulfport and to PetSmart for adoption. We adopt from PetSmart at Largo Mall, Countryside area, and from the Tyrone Blvd. store on Saturdays. See page 2 for times.

## I need to be your **ONLY** cat

*Dana, a tortie*



*Corona, flame point  
Himalayan, 6 years old*



*Maddie*



*Ginger,  
talkative  
lady*



All Save Our Strays cats have been spayed/neutered, tested for Feline Leukemia and Feline Immunodeficiency Virus and are current on rabies and distemper vaccines. We're microchipped too, which provides for identification in case we become lost. Please check our web site or call 727 481-5262 to see these and other loving kittens and cats.

*Squeak*

