

Governing Board:
Karon Simoni, President
Lauren Chautenauf, VP
Judy Neumann, Treasurer
Ann Cecchi, Secretary
Wendy Kurtz, VMD
Laraine VanBlarcom
Kathy Rivera



501 c (3) NONPROFIT ORGANIZATION

P.O. Box 25637, ROCHESTER, NY YORK 14625

Volume 3 Issue 1

2011 Summer Issue

OUR MAY EVENT CELEBRATION WAS A WONDERFUL SUCCESS!



In celebration of our 12th anniversary, Habitat for Cats hosted a feral cat benefit and fundraiser on May 22, 2011 at the Diplomat Banquet Center in Rochester. Over 100 cat-lovers attended. The event featured a Silent Auction and a Raffle of donated items. Auction bidders could choose from a remarkable variety of items including designer jewelry, one-of-a-kind art & photography, and a flag flown over the nation's capital donated by Congresswoman Louise Slaughter. For more pictures of the

event and information visit our website HabitatforCats.com

Our President, **Karon Simoni** (left in picture with Becky) led us through the program, introducing Board Members and the Event Committee and acknowledging Gold, Silver & Bronze Sponsors, Silent Auction Donors and HFC supporters. After lunch, local Veterinarians were honored for their support, and **Dr. Barbara Silva** was recognized for her dedicated work at the feral cat spay/neuter clinic. Dr. Silva brought with her a \$3000 wish list of aging and failing equipment that needs to be replaced in order to safely continue spay/neuter operations. This is one of our priorities this year.

Kathy Rivera, was instrumental in bringing our Keynote speaker, Becky Robinson, President and Co-founder of [Alley Cat Allies](http://AlleyCatAllies.org). Becky's message was informational and entertaining: focused on the lives of our nation's feral cats and offered suggestions on how organizations like HFC can help through action and community education. Check out Becky on the Daily Show Segment dated 7/11/11 at alleycatallies.org

New York State Senator Joe Robach, invited to join our celebration by Walt Simoni, completed the presentations as he congratulated Habitat for Cats for our achievements over the past 12 years and wished the group continued success.

An attendee, Jo Anne Ashley, characterized the Event as "...**one of the best afternoons of my life. The whole day was wonderful... Thank you so much for all you do for the kitties.**" HFC would like to extend heart-felt thanks to the event sponsors and volunteers who made it possible and, of course, to those who attended, ultimately making the HFC Anniversary Gala a great success and a lot of fun!

CLINIC NEWS & UPDATES

Judy Neumann, Hotline Coordinator reports that as of July 31, 2011 HFC has spayed or neutered 5,390 feral or stray cats through our Trap Neuter Return Program. If you are feeding any free roaming cats or colonies of cats, please call our hotline for advice or to schedule an appointment before 2 cats grow to a colony of 200. For a minimal donation, they are sterilized, vaccinated, given a flea treatment, pain medication and a left ear tip, which is the universal symbol for a spayed or neutered feral cat. Please call us or check our website for clinic details. To date this year, the hotline has received and responded to 544 calls.

NOTICES:

Our general meeting is September 24th at the Penfield Library

Two fundraisers coming up on September 15th & October 24th details inside..

CAT TALES NEWS & UPDATES

YATES COUNTY CATS AND KITTENS OPERATION RESCUE

In March, Kerri Sher received a call from Yates County Animal Control. Help was needed with a situation involving an unknown number of cats and kittens left behind by an elderly couple, forced by health issues to move to a nursing home. Kerri reached out to Laraine VanBlarcom, the Adoption & Foster Manager for HFC, who in turn reached out to Patti Crane and Ellen McGuire, volunteers for HFC. The first visit to this small, untended home was an eye-opening experience as the couple had been gone for some time. The HFC group came armed with face masks, gloves and boots – all of which came in handy as even the driveway consisted of several inches of thick, cloying mud which sucked in several of our vehicles!

Inside the house, the smell was indescribable! These cats and kittens had been left to fend for themselves for several weeks with no litter boxes or food. Every single cat, with the exception of about half a dozen, was orange making it almost impossible to get an accurate count. Rescue began that very first day, with Laraine and Ellen trapping in the house and Patti trapping the less socialized cats living in the basement. Kerri joined the group on subsequent trips to assist with the trapping and transporting.

Rescue efforts continued over the course of three weekends ultimately resulting in the rescue of 37 cats and kittens. Sadly, several cats escaped during the rescue and were never seen again. Heartbreakingly, all but two of the females were pregnant, and many cats suffered from “cauliflower ear” (damage to ear structure) due to massive and untreated ear-mite infections. Many also had cloudy, gray and damaged eyes due to untreated eye infections. Two of the cats required immediate eye surgery – one for a full removal of the eye, and one for corrective surgery. We are extremely grateful to Dr. Gluckman of Mendon Village Animal Hospital who performed in kind, the corrective eye surgery and neutering of Barr, (as he came to be called), and to Dr. Kimberly Stanz a Buffalo Ophthalmologist, who performed Finley’s eye removal and neuter for a minimal fee. Finley has since found his forever home and Barr was placed in a wonderful barn.

Statistics on the rest of the rescued cats:

One severely injured cat had to be euthanized. One mom cat and all five of her kittens died shortly after she gave birth, cause unknown. Another Agency took eight of the younger kittens and put them up for adoption. Ten were relocated to a wonderful barn (after they were spayed and neutered) and given a chance at a new life. Five pregnant cats delivered 4-5 kittens each, all of which are healthy and in foster care. One mom and 4 of her 5 babies have been adopted by caring families.

The youngest mom, sweet, adorable Maya, who delivered 3 babies, took on several orphans as if they were her own. All of these youngsters along with Maya are now ready for their very own homes. Two of the rescued house cats, Abby and Robin, are still awaiting much needed surgery. Abby has a broken tooth and needs a full dental, and Robin needs a surgery called a Pinnectomy. This is a FULL REMOVAL of one of her ears due to such severe damage by ear-mite infestation that it cannot be saved. This necessary surgery will cost between \$1000 and \$1500 but cannot be avoided. Donations of \$2100 have been received and at least the same amount is needed to offset the many expenses incurred by this huge rescue operation. An additional 28 healthy cats are in foster care, awaiting their own homes.

As this newsletter is being written, we just learned that our team has rescued four additional cats that we thought were gone for ever. So, now we are hopeful that all have been removed. A sad but wonderful success rescue.

FOSTER & ADOPTION CORNER

As you can see, our Foster Program has been quite busy. Kittens that were rescued in March are now 4-6 months old, healthy and being shown at Pittsford PETCO Sunday Adoption Days and at PetSmart in Greece on Saturdays. We have continued to experience an explosion of critical situations this Summer. People are calling about abandoned pregnant cats, orphaned kittens, more hoarding situations or just requesting help for cats left behind by owners who have moved away, have gone into nursing homes or passed away.

Laraine VanBlarcom, Coordinator of the Adoption Program reports that the adoptable rescued cats have had necessary medical care and treatment and because of the loving care received from their foster parents are healthy and ready for adoption to their forever homes. At present there are 100 kittens in foster care. We also have many wonderful, loving, mature cats living in foster care who would dearly love to have their very own forever home. Visit www.petfinders.com to see these gorgeous cats.

We also have our adult cats. Though many come to adoption days, there are many wonderful, loving mature cats living in foster care who would dearly love to have their very own forever home. Go to www.petfinders.com to see these gorgeous cats that for various reasons, do not attend the weekly PetCo or PetSmart adoption days.

WHY TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN IS THE RIGHT THING TO DO

Lauren Chateauf, our Vice President, reminds us that Trap Neuter Return (TNR) is nationally recognized as an effective method to control the feral cat overpopulation problem. By humanely trapping feral cats and having them sterilized, the colony population is immediately stabilized as the breeding stops. This lowers the number of cats and kittens taken into local shelters, results in lower euthanasia rates and reduces the strain on local shelter resources. Sterilizing feral cats also reduces unwanted behaviors such as outdoor spraying, fighting and yowling, eliminating the three biggest complaints concerning stray cats. In addition to keeping pests and rodents away, a colony of sterilized feral cats will keep other cats from moving into the area.

FREE ROAMING CATS GRANT TO TARGET TRAILER PARK COLONIES

Favored locations where feral cat colonies thrive are in trailer parks. Generous caregivers put out food, water and shelter, usually found under trailers or sheds. HFC believes that educating people on TNR is the key to controlling these colonies. Volunteers have worked in this area many times over the years, but the funding was never available to spay/neuter enough cats to cause a measurable impact on the resident colonies. Investigation into a recent call to HFC about several litters of feral kittens showed a much larger problem. At least 20 kittens and dozens of adult cats were found in just one small area. Many well-fed, ear-tipped cats who had visited our clinic up to five years ago were also evident.

Penfield Animal Control has not had the funds available to help alleviate this decades-old situation. Dr. Wendy Kurtz, VMD, announces that Habitat for Cats is exploring grant sources to fund targeted problem areas with high volumes of free roaming cats such as Penfield's trailer parks. Meanwhile, a general meeting has been scheduled for **Saturday, September 24th, at 6:30pm at the Penfield Library** located on Baird Rd to discuss and develop a plan of action for these trailer parks. We will need volunteers to trap and transport cats to and from our clinic and to release them. Foster and forever homes for kittens and friendly adults are also needed. Please consider supporting HFC in this endeavor.

VAN DUSEN V. IRS VICTORY FOR VOLUNTEERS AND CHARITIES

Habitat for Cats hopes this recent IRS decision helps you decide to volunteer in our organization. This decision paves the way for volunteers of IRS-recognized animal-rescue groups like HFC to deduct unreimbursed expenses incurred in furthering our mission, such as fostering kittens and friendly cats. It also clarifies rules for deducting unreimbursed charitable expenses of \$250 or more, especially if they involve the use of a home. Specifically, the taxpayer must keep records of pertinent expenses, and the charity must issue a letter of acknowledgement.

Jan Van Dusen, 59, of Oakland, California volunteers for Fix Our Ferals, whose mission is quite like HFC's, provided foster care for about 70 feral cats. The IRS denied her deductions in 2004 and considered them nondeductible personal expenses. In 2009 she went to Tax Court, a national venue for disputes of all sizes. "If it came down to helping a cat with a medical problem or saving for retirement, I would spend on the cat's care—as will a lot of rescue workers," she said. Her pretrial experience with IRS agents was intimidating and the lawyers "tried to portray me as a crazy cat lady." Court workers, on the other hand, were sympathetic asking, "Why is the IRS persecuting a Cat Lady?" In a 42-page decision, Judge Morrison agreed with many of her arguments, ruling they were unreimbursed expenses incurred to help a charitable group in its mission. (see **Wall Street Journal** (WSJ) 6/11/11 Stray Cat Strut: Woman Beats IRS)

TALES OF DOING THE RIGHT THING



Patti Crane and Joan Taber, two HFC volunteers spent several days rescuing a beautiful long-haired tortoiseshell cat and three beautiful kittens from a drainage pipe at an abandoned business in Victor. A young woman named Becky (permission to publish her name?), who lives in Mendon, reported this cat family and called us immediately upon discovering the situation. Becky stopped by every day to check on the cats and fed them until they were all finally rescued. Becky and her family also thoughtfully donated \$100 to help with their care. Pictured are two of the kittens, happy and healthy in their new foster home.

When Pat Culver received a call from a childhood friend for help with three newborn abandoned kittens found by her son, Will, she called HFC and found volunteers Laraine VanBlarcom and Kerri Sher, who stepped in and bottle-fed the three small, coal-black kittens 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Fortunately, Pat was able to elicit support for their care by reaching out to "... **persons with kind hearts and commonsense social responsibility,**" who generously sent HFC donations for "Will's Kittens."

Meetings & Events Where Can You Find HFC

You are invited to join us at our quarterly public meeting **Saturday September 24th, Penfield Library, Baird Road, 10am - 1pm.** Please check the website or call the Hotline for the December 15th, meeting details.

Attention Animal and Jewelry Lovers there are two great events happening both to benefit HFC

Tuesday, **September 15, 2011** join us at **5pm** for *Simply You.....a jewelry party that Celebrates your life in style* at the Palmyra Moose Lodge 3808 next to the VOA, on Route 31, Palmyra/Newark Road. A spaghetti dinner for the price of \$6.00 will be served. You can opt to start buying on line <http://www.susanv.mysimplyyou.com> Our ID # is 3019. **Half of the profits and one piece of jewelry for door raffle will be donated to Habitat for Cats.**

Monday, **October 24, 2011** at **5pm** come to *PawBrokers Jewelry Party to benefit Habitat for Cats!* **Donate jewelry** you no longer wear **and purchase beautiful**, reasonably priced jewelry that works with your current wardrobe or to give as gifts! Come to Mario's, 2740 Monroe Ave and enjoy great company with a "Pawtini", a signature drink made just for PawBrokers.

Look for your invitation in the mail or check out our website for more information!

For appointments to spay/neuter cats call our hotline @ 585-234-2894

You can always find our information, cat adoptions and much more by logging on to: habitatforcats.com
A email works just as well, please contact us at habitat4cats@yahoo.com
we would love to hear from you.

Looking to adopt, maybe foster, please come visit our cats and kittens at the following locations
PETCO 3300 Monroe Avenue every Sunday from noon - 4
PetSmart 3042 West Ridge Road, Greece every Saturday from 1- 4

THANK YOU FOR YOUR DONATIONS AND SUPPORT.. A little bit goes a long way.

If you need healthy cats for your barn, contact us.

Habitat for Cats, Inc.
P.O. Box 25637
Rochester, New York 14625