



# StreetTails

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE FERAL CAT COALITION OF OREGON

FALL 2023

## 8,000+ Cats Helped at FCCO This Fiscal Year!



FCCO operates a high-volume spay/neuter clinic with a focus on reducing feral and stray cat populations. In our last fiscal year, that ended on September 30, we cared for 8,286 cats which was 1,000 over our goal! A few of the lucky kitties are pictured here. This amazing level of care represents a critical community safety net for cats made possible by the dedication of caregivers and the support of our incredible volunteers and donors. Thank you for helping the cats!

### *Story from the Streets*

We have lived in this house for decades and never had this many feral cats. We're on a 7-acre property in the farmlands and in the last couple years people have been dropping off cats (who then have kittens). We wish they would quit doing this. Some cats are friendlier, some are very feral and won't let you near them. They all have access to a lot of open barns for shelter and we feed them regularly.

Everyone was so helpful and professional at FCCO throughout this process which was so overwhelming and stressful for us! It was actually very easy. We caught 35 cats with traps and two more were caught in a drop trap. The cats are now doing fine and two kittens have even been taken into a home with a catio!

*~ Shelley, Woodland, WA*



# President's Corner

Guest Column by Kris Ellingsen, DVM  
FCCO Past President

FCCO is thrilled to share that we helped more than 8,000 cats during our fiscal year that ended on September 30! This is our second biggest year ever.

This milestone is a credit to how the organization is run, from the top down. The clinics themselves have a standard flow to minimize cat stress and maximize efficiency and staff safety, given the cats are feral or stray community cats. The staff is well trained, and contract surgeons have honed their skills in HQHVSN (High-Quality High-Volume Spay/Neuter) to perform surgeries that result in the cats requiring less anesthesia and tissue handling, so their recovery time is faster. And it is our incredible donors whose support allows caregivers to pay-as-they-can for our donation-based services.

Prior to the COVID pandemic FCCO had been seeing fewer feral cats and was able to add surgeries for low-income pet cats, to help prevent future feral cats. Since reopening in summer 2020, veterinary services area-wide have significantly declined, including spay/neuter. With cat mating season in full swing during the pandemic pause, and no or limited spay/neuter availability, the cat population exploded. The area has not caught up. Thus, FCCO has seen continued high demand for feral and stray cat services which is filling even our expanded



surgery capacity.

To respond to this need, FCCO added staff, which is no small feat. Veterinary clinics area-wide have been hit with increased prices, supply chain delays, staffing turnover, and veterinarian, vet tech, and vet assistant shortages. Salaries, rightfully, had to be increased to match this demand. And FCCO is in this mix. FCCO has been fortunate to find surgeons and techs who can perform these specialized skills, but it is and remains an ongoing challenge.

I have been a veterinarian for 35 years, all but five of those in cat-only practice. I joined FCCO as a volunteer surgeon in 2001, then as a board member since 2003, and I continue today as a contract surgeon. I have witnessed the incredible expansion of FCCO and the respect and care given to feral and stray cats and their caregivers. It is an honor to be part of FCCO and the critical safety net we provide the cats in our community. Thank you for being an important partner ensuring FCCO can remain a vital resource providing very-needed services that no one else offers for caregivers of feral and stray cats.

## Use Straw, Not Hay, for Cat Shelters

An outdoor cat house filled with straw will keep your feline friends warm and cozy during the winter. The difference between straw and hay may seem mundane, but it can actually make a world of difference for cats. They look similar, but while straw makes excellent bedding for outdoor cat shelters, hay becomes a soggy mess.



### Hay

Hay is typically used to feed animals, like horses. It soaks up moisture, making it cold and uncomfortable for cats—and has the potential to get moldy. In the winter, a wet bed can even be dangerous, making cats more likely to get sick.

### Straw

Straw, the dry leftover stalks from harvested crops, repels moisture, making it the best bedding for outdoor cat shelters. Loosely pack the straw in the shelter to the quarter or halfway point. That's it!

The easiest way to tell the difference between straw and hay is the price: hay generally costs two or three times more than straw. Straw is tough, thick, lightweight, and yellow or golden. Hay is usually heavy and green, but there are varieties, so if you aren't sure—ask the sales clerk!



*Make an easy outdoor shelter for a cat! If not for one you feed, consider making one and bringing it to FCCO to be donated to a cat in need! Instructions are at [FeralCats.com/outdoor-shelter](https://www.feralcats.com/outdoor-shelter).*





## Cars for Cats!

Do you have an old car, truck, RV, or boat sitting in your driveway that you've been meaning to get rid of? You can easily donate it and get a tax donation that will make a huge difference in the lives of many feral and stray cats!

Your vehicle does not need to be running nor does it need to be dropped off, but it must have an engine and be towable. Recently a 1998 Toyota Camry auctioned for \$3,500 for FCCO, so look out your window, think about how nice it will be to get rid of that old vehicle, and donate your car for the cats!

Learn more at [FeralCats.com/vehicle](http://FeralCats.com/vehicle).



## FCCO Wish List

Your donations make a difference! Our Wish List at [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com) has these items and more for easy delivery to FCCO. If you'd prefer to buy locally the list is also at [FeralCats.com/wish](http://FeralCats.com/wish). We're grateful for your support!

- Masking tape (3M, 1"- this brand is hard to find but works best)
- Dry cat food (adult & kitten)
- Ziplock bags (1-gallon, freezer)
- Distilled water (gallons)
- Fleece fabric (cut into 28" x 46" rectangles, if possible)
- Newspaper (folded to 8.75" wide rectangles, if you can!)
- Baby wipes (unscented)
- Garden hose (15')

# Bid4Cats

Fun Pawliday Shopping!



Celebrate  
**National Feral Cat Day**  
& help the cats when you  
Bid4Cats!

**October 16 - October 22**  
**[FeralCats.com/bid4cats](http://FeralCats.com/bid4cats)**

National Feral Cat Day is October 16th - a purrfect day to help the cats by bidding in this Online Auction!

Get a jump on holiday shopping. You'll find art, jewelry, whimsical gifts, packages for cats and cat-themed packages, and lots more! Your bids will help FCCO spay/neuter feral and stray cats, so bid high and bid often. There are more than 100 items - surely something for someone on your holiday list, or purrhaps for you! We hope you have fun as you Bid4Cats!





**FERAL CAT  
COALITION  
OF OREGON**

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## Trap-Neuter-Return in Action!

*Two hungry cats showed up on Alexandria's property in Estacada, OR. Her kids named them Butterbutt Boots (pictured) and Oreo Socks and put out food. The cats stuck around. They're fed daily, but now that they are spayed/neutered and vaccinated Alexandria also knows that they are healthy and won't reproduce.*

## Who We Are

### FCCO BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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*Counsel is generously provided pro bono by Vanessa A. Usui, Duffy Kekel LLP*

FCCO is a spay/neuter program with services that are donation-based for feral and stray cats.

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# WE'RE IN GIVE!GUIDE!

Find us at  
[giveguide.org/nonprofits/fcco](https://giveguide.org/nonprofits/fcco)

November 1<sup>st</sup> - December 31<sup>st</sup>

WILLAMETTE WEEK'S  
**give**  
 GUIDE

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