

projectpurr

VOLUME 18

WINTER/SPRING 2010

nonprofit volunteer feral cat advocate organization

Project Purr Board Members: Margaret Rinner, Director; Lynne Achterberg;
E.V. Sharp, DVM; Suzanne Haberman; Sheri Benkosky; Lucinda Swan

Project Purr is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit volunteer organization dedicated to humanely decreasing the feral cat population by providing funds towards our lowcost feral cat/kitten spay/neuter program in Santa Cruz County, California. Project Purr advocates Trap/Neuter/Return (TNR) as the preferred method for feral cat population control.

2009 – A Year of Synergy

Project Purr's commitment to the care and protection of the feral cats living in the shadows of our community continues stronger than ever. Hardworking Project Purr volunteers keep the focus on our mission to humanely decrease the feral cat population through Trap-Neuter-Return and our low-cost spay/neuter program, even as we quickly adapt to the changing circumstances in the state of the economy, increased program costs, and a record-setting number of cats coming through our lifesaving program.

We have also discovered that the greater number and more varied things we do, the greater impact we have! It motivates and energizes us. We are picking up speed... so while maintaining our purpose, despite the intensity around us, we open to new ideas and have surprised even ourselves!

Project Purr encourages and supports cooperation among animal rescue groups, the veterinary community, our county shelter, and with you, the public, in the belief that by working together *synergistically*, greater goals, that are more creative and far-reaching, can be achieved. These collaborations support and build towards making our community a better place to live for people and animals. When Project Purr sees a need that can be met without undermining our core mission, we respond by stepping up.

Through the compassion and generosity of the people of Santa Cruz County, together we can create a better world that truly reflects the humane ethics of our community.

Project Purr's All-Volunteer Community Accomplishments

Greater EDUCATIONAL OUTREACH

Project Purr sponsored a free Thursday evening lecture series with Santa Cruz County Animal Services with guest presenters, including many local veterinarians, speaking on a variety of subjects to help animals.

Thank you to Dr. Ann Gratzek on Diseases of the Eye; Dr. EV Sharp generously spoke at three lectures on Animal First Aid, Parasites, and Holistic Alternatives/Acupuncture; Dr. Craig Evans on Vaccines; Dr. Kerrin Hoban on Animal Behaviors; Dr. Shelley Dornan on Companion Animal Wellness; educator Joyce Leonard on Reiki for Animals and How to Socialize Feral Kittens.



And Project Purr gave the final lecture in the series on, of course, Feral Cats and Trap-Neuter-Return. We appreciate all our animal loving lecturers!

Greater COMPASSIONATE CARE

Project Purr started and runs a new “**Fix & Feed ~ Pets in Need**” program. Dog and cat food is collected in big bright blue donation barrels in the lobbies of the Live Oak and Watsonville county shelters and then is distributed to pets of persons in need, animal rescue groups, and managed feral cat colony caregivers. The pet food is distributed along with bi-lingual low and no-cost spay/neuter and veterinary resource information.

One commonly cited reason for abandoning companion animals or surrendering them to shelters is the inability to feed them due to economic hardship and lack of accessibility to affordable veterinary services. By networking with

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2009 – A Year of Synergy

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established relief organizations that have food pantries geographically dispersed throughout Santa Cruz County, Project Purr is able to get the food distributed to those who need it. The food is provided free of charge, without judgment or requiring proof of income. This program offers a unique safety net to reduce suffering by striving to keep animals out of the shelter, healthy, and in their homes, while providing targeted information about accessible spay/neuter to reduce animal overpopulation to those who could most benefit.

"It is up to all of us that have a little, to give a lot, to those who have not... including our furry friends. Your support is very heartwarming. You are greatly appreciated by us."

— Annette Marcum, Founder and Director of Valley Churches United Missions

"Dear Lynne... just wanted to let you know that the pet food has come to be a blessing to the community."

— Brother Eddie Mungia from The Potter's House in Watsonville

Project Purr also distributes to Loaves & Fishes in Watsonville to help fill their busy pantry and the Homeless Persons Health Project in Santa Cruz.

Our new "Fix & Feed Pets in Need" program, in cooperation with Santa Cruz County Animal Services, collected over 9,000 pounds of dog and cat food valued at over \$13,500. to give to animals in need!

Project Purr welcomes your donations of unopened cans and bags of dog and cat food, volunteer time, and money to help us continue and expand "Fix & Feed ~ Pets in Need!"

Greater LIFE-SAVING of feral (unsocial) cats through RELOCATIONS

Through increased education and networking, Project Purr assisted in the relocation of more feral cats than any prior year. In 2009, Project Purr participated in the relocation of 72 cats, most of which were cats and kittens rescued from our animal shelter, and which, sadly, would otherwise have been euthanized because they are deemed unadoptable by the shelter. These 72 cats were the lucky few. At our shelter and shelters across the country, the highest number of cats and kittens that are euthanized are feral (unsocial) or offspring of feral cats.

Most feral cats already have a home, which is simply the outside territory in which they live. In general, feral cats should never be brought to the shelter, because the shelter has no viable options for them. Instead, they should be humanely Trap-Neuter-Returned to their known territory. They require food, shelter from the elements and predators, and lifetime care.

We have followed up on the results of these life-saving Project Purr relocations, and found that nearly 90% of the cats are working out well and doing great in their new homes. Thank you to all the new feral cat caregivers!

Anyone seeking outside or barn/shed/garden/porch cats, please help save more lives and contact Project Purr for assistance in rescue and relocation.

We believe that all life is precious and deserves our compassion and dedication, young or old, stray or owned.

"The two younger cats from Project Purr are quite sociable ... they won't let me touch them but will come out when I'm doing work outside. They will take food right off my fingers. The two little ones came and sat nearby while I was teaching a raku class in the garden almost as if they understood. The cats are doing well, and they've got the rats whipped ... they definitely are a 'green' rodent solution!" – Crystal Creek Organic Farm

Greater OFF-SITE ADOPTION EVENTS

In December 2009, Project Purr and the Santa Cruz Animal Welfare Coalition organized the second annual "Home for the Holidays: Good Homes for Pets" Adoption Faire at Whole Foods Market in Capitola and PetSmart in Santa Cruz. Once again this year, adult cats had been "waiting for their turn" while kittens flooded the shelter. For months, our shelters filled with adult cats needing homes, and Project Purr wanted to help them. So shelter dogs, cats and bunnies were brought out into the community where people could meet them. For the first event, Project Purr partnered with the Santa Cruz SPCA at Whole Foods Market. This event was so successful that Whole Foods has invited us to create a monthly event for 2010. The "Home for the Holidays" events took place over several weekends and brought more people into the shelter and generated a lot of good buzz, adoptions and education. Thank you Whole Foods Market and PetSmart!

Project Purr also initiated another successful monthly offsite dog adoption event called "Pups at Peet's" hosted by Peet's Coffee & Tea near Nob Hill on Bay Avenue in Capitola. Thank you Peet's!

Project Purr recognizes the benefit of offsite adoptions, to expose more people to the wonderful animals in our local shelters, and increase community participation and education.

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How Feral Cats - and Project Purr – Changed My Life

By Amelia Erickson

It all started when I was fourteen. I came home from a long summer vacation on the east coast to find something that would change my life. While I was gone, a large feral cat colony had sprouted in my neighbor's unkempt yard. He was feeding them, but he was also letting them breed out of control. There were nearly two dozen unsterilized cats in his yard, including three mothers that had just given birth to eleven kittens.

I knew I had to do something to help these cats and learned that Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) was the answer. My family and I started trapping cats to get them spayed/neutered and then release them back into the colony. We caught five kittens and started fostering them so they could get adopted. We ended up keeping three of those kittens, returned one after he was neutered (since he couldn't be socialized), and we found a home for the last one.

But my parents, although cat lovers themselves, did not like all the work of trapping and fostering. Without their ongoing support, my ability to help the cats was in jeopardy. Trapping cats requires driving the cats to the veterinarian

for surgery, but I was only fourteen. Luckily, I knew about a wonderful non-profit group called Project Purr, which was specifically formed to help people TNR feral cats. I worked out a deal with Lynne from Project Purr: when there was an appointment available at the veterinarian the next morning, I would trap a cat. She would come pick the cat up, take it to the veterinarian to be spayed/neutered, let it recover, and then return it back into the colony. With Project Purr's help, I knew I could TNR the whole colony.

Of all the cats I trapped, one especially affected me: a mother that was pregnant. The veterinarian chose to abort the two kittens because they were oversized for the mother. If I had not trapped her and had Lynne not brought her to the vet for me, the cat and her kittens would have died while she tried to give birth. Thanks to Project Purr, her life was saved.

It took some time, but all in all, I TNR'd between fifteen to twenty feral cats with the fantastic help of Lynne and Project Purr. For two years now the colony has not had any new kittens, which is a testament to the success of our TNR



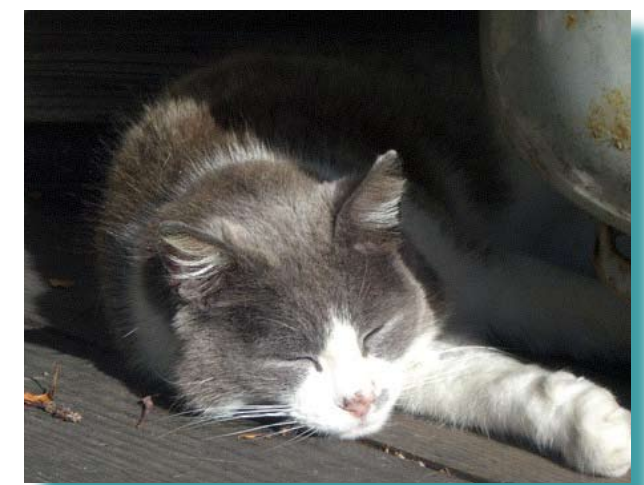
Here I am holding my cousin's ex-feral cat Maka. I knitted the hat myself!

efforts. The cats are happy, healthy, and well taken care of by my neighbor, who loves them with all his heart. And of course, my family and I love the three kittens that we adopted, and they're all doing great.

Next year I will go to college where I will study to become a veterinarian. I know now that as a veterinarian, I will always help feral cats in any way I can. I am so grateful to Lynne and Project Purr for helping me change the lives of so many cats, and for changing my life as well.



These are four of the five kittens my family trapped before I called Project Purr. The Siamese is Kona (renamed Dart when he was adopted), the tuxedo is Maui (a.k.a. Fuzzbutt), the silver tabby is Silver, and the white one is James.



This is one of the cats who was born in the colony, but moved to my house. Her name is Cloudy. She's now about 13 years old, and is living her feral life out happily.

How to Raise a Litter of Feral Kittens with Project Purr

A Girl Scout Silver Award Project

By Rachel Krzczowski

Kittens are Found!

On April 10, 2009, we received a call from Lynne at Project Purr saying that a litter of newborn kittens was being fed by a business owner on McPherson Drive. SIX babies! The McPherson Six were with a feral momma kitty, and we would try to leave them with the caregiver until they were about 4 weeks old, which would be toward the end of April.

Sudden change of plans: on April 15, we got an urgent call that the mother cat was trying to move the kittens, and we'd have to take them TODAY. Lynne was able to grab them all, except the mother, who would be trapped and spayed as soon as they could catch her. Lynne would take them back over the weekend while we worked at Camp Arnaz, a Girl Scout Camp. Lynne took the kittens directly to Soquel Creek Animal Hospital, and my mom met her there while I was in school. The kittens all tested negative for FELV/FIV so it was safe to bring them into our house with no risk to our three cats.



Preparing For Kittens

Before we brought the kittens home, we had to prepare a quiet place. Since they were feral babies, they had never been inside a house before, with kids, dogs, cats, and a loud TV. The corner of the office was the perfect place: warm, no drafty breezes, quiet, with doors that can be closed. We took our coffee table and covered it with plastic trash bags, then several blankets, and the hutch sat on top. Then we put blankets and a very small litter box in the hutch.

The Bottle Days

When we get kittens, they are normally so young that they still have to drink milk, so we give them formula from a bottle. When feeding the babies with a bottle, you have to be careful not to squeeze too much formula out of the bottle or it will get into their lungs. Try to squeeze the bottle so that just enough formula gets out and the kittens will latch on. When they latch on to the bottle, their ears will twitch and they drink much more that way. If they don't latch on, most of the formula drips out the side of their mouth, and we have to wash them. We wipe them with a wet, warm washcloth until all the formula

is off. Then since they are too tiny to know how to go to the bathroom, I had to wipe their butt until they peed or pooped. Yes, it was very gross. To make sure that they were all gaining the right amount of weight, I weighed them before and after they ate and recorded it, and if they needed anything like medication (TM) for eye infections, I wrote that also.

Introducing Food

When they start getting teeth at about four weeks, we soak hard baby kitten food in heated formula until it gets mushy and then mush it up and feed them one by one instead of using a bottle. We gradually start to make their food more and more solid until we think that they can eat solid food. We don't take them out one by

one anymore and just make sure that they always have hard food in a bowl in their hutch.

Vet Visits

The kittens have to be taken to the vet for check-ups and to check if they have worms or any other problems because they were living outside. They also get their shots. This litter had big round potbellies, so they defi-

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nitely had worms. Lavender had runny eyes, so the whole litter got eye ointment until the runniness was gone. When the kittens are all healthy and over two pounds, they get spayed and neutered.

Play Time

Kittens need to be let out of the hutch multiple times per



day. I let them out and keep them in a big room with no breakable things in it. I also stay in the room and watch them just in case they do something stupid like climb the curtains. We have a kitty fishing pole so that I can play with them and make them run around in circles, to tire them out so they will sleep in the hutch. Having six kittens was like having a whole herd of elephants running back and forth on the hardwood floor.

Finding Homes

Finding homes is always hard because I want the very best for my kitties and know that they will be happy and safe. I try to find indoor homes where they can have someone that loves them and will care for them. Indoor homes are required because most bottle babies are too fearless to go outside. They would probably get killed by a coyote because they would think it was just a dog like my sweet puppy that helps raise them, or they would get hit by a car trying to figure out what it was in the middle of the road. From this litter, four kittens went to people we know, and only two to strangers (who are now friends.) The last two were six months old when someone saw them on www.projectpurr.org and came to meet them.

Giving them Away

This is always the hardest part and very upsetting to think about at times. Even though you may have been preparing for this since you first got kittens or even before that, it is still extremely hard to give away the baby kitties that you cared for and loved for so long. It may be the last time you ever see them, or you may get to see them again because you gave them to your friend, but you still will feel some sort of sadness. Either way, I try to just remember that giving them away happy and healthy means that I did my job and that I gave a family or more than one family another member to love and give a great life.

And they all lived happily ever after.



2009 – A Year of Synergy

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Greater FOSTERING of PREWEAN/UNDER-AGE KITTENS

Over 70 kittens were either lifted from the bushes from feral moms, rescued from the shelter after a life-saving call was initiated, or brought to Project Purr from the community at large. Many of these kittens needed bottle-feeding, weaning, and socializing. Thankfully, loving volunteers stepped up and opened their hearts and homes to the kittens which needed hours of feeding, playtime, and nurturing. When the kittens reached a healthy weight at about 8 weeks, they went through our pediatric spay/neuter program and home finding began.

Teamwork and creative cooperation saves lives... a win-win-win... that's synergy!

Greater YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

Several amazing young people took on Trap-Neuter-Return projects. One 14-year old and her father successfully TNR'd a colony of cats living in the vacant area across from their house. Another young person fostered and found homes for a litter of 6 rescued kittens and fulfilled the requirements for the Silver Award for Scouts. A third young girl diligently persisted with TNR for several years so that what began as a large unmanaged colony in her neighborhood has finally had no new kittens birthed for over two years!

Compassionate Action through TNR from these inspirational young people builds a better world for all of us. It is wonderful to see the next generation step up and demonstrate compassionate action! Thank you for getting involved!

Increased LIFE-SAVING

Our low cost subsidized feral cat spay/neuter program at Adobe Animal Hospital, now in it's 20th year, fixed and vaccinated a record-setting number of feral cats. One trapper TNR'd over 57 cats ...and is still trapping!

We believe our TNR program is a very large piece of the puzzle in achieving a day when there are no more homeless pets. Hundreds of feral cats received quality veterinary care through our program, which includes health checks, surgeries for spay/neuter and testing for feline leukemia and feline immunodeficiency virus, vaccinations for distemper and rabies, and a permanent visual identifying eartip.

Thank you Adobe Animal Hospital and Staff!

Project Purr believes in a feral cat's right to life. We work to elevate the status of community-stray-feral cats, promote their humane treatment, and help them live free from the stress of uncontrolled breeding. We do not feel they should be killed simply because they were born without a house address. Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) is effective and humane... while teaching nonviolence and tolerance for others. We are committed to quality care for our feral cats and safety for both the cats and the community.

If we are truly to become a humane community, we must embrace programs that humanely and effectively reduce the cat population while saving lives, not ending them, and implement and sustain programs that are innovative and proactive.

Greater FINANCIAL SUPPORT FROM YOU is needed!

Without your generous financial support, Project Purr's spay/neuter program, the keystone of our mission, would not be possible. Late in 2009, Project Purr's low-cost spay/neuter program received huge cost increases. In order to continue serving our community's cats, we need to seek more community support.

Times are hard ...for everyone ...but through increased volunteerism, diversified programs, and with your financial



help, the synergy of people working harmoniously together towards our common goals will succeed. Your donation makes a positive and life-affirming impact on the animals of our community... as together we strive to meet their needs in new and exceptional ways!

Our Promise to You! For over 20 years, Project Purr has filled a unique niche for Santa Cruz County residents wanting to help doorstep stray and feral cats and kittens with low cost spay/neuter, advice, and hands-on assistance. We have carried the torch of educating, promoting and financing the saving of lives of feral cats through TNR for our county and we want to continue to be the leader in advocating for feral cats.

Community cats are a community problem and need... and deserve... a community solution. We want to engage everyone to insure the animals we love are cared for and safe.

We envision the day when feral cats will no longer be surrendered to the shelter, there is abundant access to affordable spay/neuter, and all animals have loving homes.

We are doing work that needs to be done and there is so much more to do. Won't you join us?



Our Lighthouse Field Kitties

This year for my part in doing community service, I decided to help Project Purr in their efforts to spay and neuter feral cats in Lighthouse Field because the more feral cats that are spayed and neutered the fewer kittens there will be each year.

My dad and I recently bought a house across from Lighthouse Field. We soon began to notice that there were several cats that hung out in his front yard during the day. I suggested that we put out food and try and trap them so we could keep them. I soon realized the naivety of my idea, after we had caught a cat and kept it in the bathroom overnight. When I opened the door I was shocked to see the cat launching itself at the door. Instead of keeping the feral cats, my dad called Project Purr. My dad trapped and took them to the vet while I took care of the rest: feeding the cats, cleaning their litter boxes, socializing them and doing lots of laundry! Afterwards, we became the official feral cat caretakers of Lighthouse Field by the county shelter.

So far, we have spayed or neutered nine feral cats but have sighted and named about fifteen. We hope to have sterilized all the cats by the end of summer. By doing so, we will (humanely) prevent more kittens from being born.

~ Skye Spencer, Age 14



What the Neighbors Don't Know...

What the neighbors don't know....you must tell them. Most of the people in your community probably don't know the facts about feral cats or the benefits of managed feral cat colonies. They don't know:

The cats are regularly provided with food, shelter, and veterinary care.

The cats could have lived in the area for many years and have developed a strong bond with their home territory, each other, and the people caring for them.

The cats are not tame and cannot be adopted into homes. If trapped and surrendered to animal shelters, they will be killed as they are deemed "unadoptable" by the shelter.

The cats pose no health threat to humans or other animals, and provide organic 'green' rodent solutions

By sterilizing and managing colonies of healthy feral cats, you can reduce and effectively control the number of cats in the area.

As a feral cat caretaker, your job is also to address the concerns of neighbors. A caretaker can forestall many problems by establishing and maintaining a friendly dialogue with

people living near a feral cat colony. Present information in a reasonable, professional manner and you will give them confidence that you know what you are doing and care about their interests.

Explain tactfully that the cats have lived at the site for a long time, that they have been (or will be) sterilized, which will cut back on annoying behaviors, and that a managed colony will be stable and healthy. Also explain that if the present colony is removed, new, unsterilized cats are certain to move in and the problems will recur. *You are humanely solving a neighborhood problem, that already existed, with no time or expense to them.*

Address individual complaints by listening patiently and asking questions that uncover the specific problem. In most cases, when a neighbor demands that all the cats be removed, it is because of a single, resolvable situation involving just one or a few cats. Maintain a constructive, problem-solving attitude in order to uncover the real objection. TNR is compassionate action which improves cats lives, humanely controls population and solves community issues. TNR works!

'Twas the Night Before Christmas: Timber's Story

'Twas the night before Christmas and everyone was rushing around to get all the last minute things done before tucking in for the night when a frantic call came in to the Project Purr helpline. Behind the Felton Feed Store was a very scared cat... looking very skinny and not moving "quite right" as it tucked deeper under the deck when people approached.

Could Project Purr come help quickly before everyone shut down for the holidays? I grabbed my trap and a variety of baits that had helped frightened unreachable cats to safety many times before... left my last minute Christmas Eve to-do's behind... and headed out.

Sure enough the trap worked, and slumped inside was a beautiful young Siamese cat, her leg stuck in her collar where she had stepped through, rubbing a huge wound around her neck and under her arm which smelled very infected.

We covered her with a big dark towel to calm her and began driving back to town, hoping the vet and staff at Adobe hadn't already left for the holiday and that we would be in time.

We made it! And our favorite feral cat vet, Dr. Craig Evans rushed her into surgery. She was soon under the anesthesia and out of pain. With no microchip found and testing free of disease, we spayed her at the same time. She was sleeping peacefully from the anesthesia as I took her home and tucked her into a hutch upstairs between some soft warm blankets.

By Christmas morning she was awake and very ready for breakfast. But this beautiful blue-eyed cat moved very little and when she did, she acted as if the leg was still bound up in the collar and would barely move her head.

We worried about the trauma it had caused her and continued to care for her daily. She ate all the nutritious food so heartily that we had to portion it out as we so often do with previously starved rescues.

Since she wasn't listed as missing anywhere, and an ad in the paper

didn't produce her owner, we knew we needed to look for a new forever home.

Amazingly we heard about a mother and daughter looking for a cat to adopt and Siamese would be their first choice. Kim and her mother, Gail, who now is blind, came over with her working dogs Heidi and Cody, to meet the rescued kitty.

Gail remembered a very blue-eyed Siamese cat from her past, and would very much like to adopt her!

I worried about the new home.. had I put together the right mix... would it be right for everyone?

Gail and Kim cherished her from the very beginning. They took her home, began the long healing process, and named her Timber.

Many times a day they gathered her up in soft blankets and held and stroked her gently to give her love and confidence.

Sometimes they'd sing songs like 'coming round the mountain' and the dogs would do their parts by chiming in with the woo-woo's. Timber was beginning to move her leg and head like a cat again and she was beginning to blend in.

Their dedication to her was paying off.

This summer old Cody passed away. Timber and Heidi still miss him and are now figuring out their new relationship with each other. But they're all working it out and there are small steps forward as their relationships grow.

It's been almost a year now and things will take more time, but that's what they've got. And what's even better... the blue-eyed Siamese cat that appeared on Christmas Eve was exactly what they'd wished for!



SPAY IT FORWARD
Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Program
www.projectpurr.org
Non-Profit Feral Cat Advocate Organization

Project Purr Budget Summary 2008

INCOME

Adoptions.....	\$ 3,065.00
Community Donations	25,025.00
Hosted Donation Boxes	1,504.00
Yard Sales	51,000.00
Network for Good	1,381.00
Bank Interest	838.00
TOTAL INCOME	\$82,813.00

EXPENSES

Veterinary Services	\$52,570.00
FelV/FIV Test Kits	5,834.00
Insurance	1,500.00
Food/Litter/Supplies	14,450.00
Colony Food	3,500.00
Vehicle Expenses	850.00
Yard Sale Expenses	3,387.00
Education (includes newsletters, printing, computer/phone)	8,782.00
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$90,873.00

Cats/Kittens Assisted in 2008
(Feral 414, Domestic 28)

**GRAND TOTAL CATS/KITTENS
ASSISTED 1997-2008**5,493

Our deficit budget reflects our decision to continue to invest in our community's cats. Thankfully Project Purr had a little money saved which covered these expenses, and despite these increased expenses and growing demand, we were able to help all the feral cats that came our way in 2008...a much greater number than ever before!

2009 Budget Update Alert!

In September 2009, Project Purr's feral cat spay/neuter program costs increased 100%!

Many people mistakenly believe that the \$25. copay for our feral cat program covers the entire cost for a feral cat. In actuality, the total cost involved to Project Purr ranges from \$89. for a male feral cat to be neutered to as much as \$204. for a single female feral cat spay with complications. Most female feral cats incur dual complication charges, as they frequently are lactating, and, additionally, are either in-heat or pregnant! **And with no adoption fees to create seed money for other cats, helping community cats takes a lot of money.**

To offset cost increases, Project Purr is creatively organizing more community outreach activities, which have positive fiscal impact, and have great *synergistic* impact...to educate and engage everyone in helping the animals and to save lives. Despite generous financial support from the community, we find **we must step up our requests for donations** as we end another record setting year helping hundreds and hundreds of "community cats" thereby humanely preventing the births of thousands. Without funding for our spay/neuter program, we are just people feeding cats!

Please help us help the kitties.



Project Purr ~ Cyber Charity

You're invited! Join Project Purr on **Facebook Causes** as the "Santa Cruz County Feral Cat Coalition" and stay connected on Project Purr's **NEW Best Friends Network Charity** site by sharing all the exciting things happening for feral cats everywhere. Post tips and pictures, send out messages, and receive news and alerts on how you can help our own local Santa Cruzin' "Community Cats!"

MissionFish, eBay's charitable on-line fundraiser for nonprofits to donate, shop and sell at auctions which support our mission. Thank you to the wonderful Friends of Project Purr!

Project Purr ~ you can check us out at www.projectpurr.org to learn about Trap-Neuter-Return, the worldwide humane first choice for feral cats, and meet rescued cats and kittens looking for lifelong loving homes!



*What we do for
ourselves dies with us.
What we do for others
and the world remains
and is immortal.*

~Albert Pine



San Juan Community Charity Pumpkin Patch

Sell pumpkins and donate the money back to schools and local charities grew as an idea 20 years ago and flourished again this year thanks to Cub Scout Pack 618 and their leader. Smart shoppers who visited the patch donated \$200. to Project Purr in exchange for fabulous big pumpkins. Thank you to all the hard working volunteers for your charitable donation to us.

Congratulations on your huge success in raising \$5,300. to give back to our community!

Saving Shadow

California State University Monterey Bay (CSUMB) is located on the former military base of Fort Ord, formally one of the largest training bases in the country. CSUMB is made up of new and refurbished buildings, but there are still many old, abandoned military buildings centered around the university. Row after row of former military barracks were once training grounds and housed thousands of field artillery and cavalry troops. Now this was “home” for groups of stray and abandoned cats.

One kitty in particular stood out—a beautiful, silky, black with bright-white whiskers who would constantly meow whenever I tried to approach it. At first, he kept his distance but after weeks of feeding the kitty, it finally found enough trust and slowly began to approach me, rubbing against my leg, purring as I patted his head. Every morning around 7:30 a.m., “Shadow” would be in the exact same spot waiting for me to arrive to feed his hungry soul.

As the weeks went by, Shadow was always there, waiting for me, constantly meowing as I stroked his fur, and hungrily lapping up every morsel of food. As the months passed, my wife Melody and I decided that Shadow needed more than just a meal. He needed human companionship and, most of all, Shadow needed love. Unfortunately, we were restricted from keeping pets where we lived.

We captured Shadow and took kitty to the Monterey County SPCA (MCSPCA) on a Monday morning. We were told Shadow didn’t have a microchip and was a neutered male about two years old.

Later the MCSPCA stated that after four days in the shelter, we were surprised to learn that he would not be a



Shadow in his former “home” in the abandoned buildings at CSUMB.

candidate for adoption and would have to be euthanized that Friday! We knew this was not an option and quickly paid all the necessary fees to adopt him. We were now left in a situation where we really needed assistance in finding Shadow a home.

After a quick search on the internet, we found “Project Purr.” I called the organization’s number and received a call from Lynne that very same afternoon! Lynne from Project Purr took the lead and helped us place Shadow into a good home.

We really want to thank Project Purr. There are not enough words to express our gratitude for what Project Purr has done for Shadow —and for us too.

~Richard and Melody Passmore, **Monterey**

Project Purr Feral/Free Roaming Cat Spay/Neuter Program

Feral cats have had little or no human contact causing them to develop a natural fear of humans. A bobcat is a wild cat... a feral cat is a homeless domestic cat. Not all homeless cats are feral... some may be stray social housecats who are lost or abandoned. Please don’t look away... **SPAY A STRAY!**

Project Purr’s life-affirming program is available to ALL Santa Cruz County residents, regardless of income!

Soquel Creek Animal Hospital, 2505 S. Main Street in Soquel. Monday-Friday 8am-6pm, CLOSED on Saturday/Sunday. Drop off cats for surgery in traps between 8am-9am.

For safety, all cats and kittens (at least 4 months old) must come in covered individual traps for surgery. Do NOT use cat carriers.

Humane Traps are loaned **FREE**

of **CHARGE** (refundable security deposit required) from:

Watsonville Animal Shelter

580 Airport Blvd. Watsonville

831/454-7303

Santa Cruz County Animal Services

2200 7th Avenue, Santa Cruz

831/454-7303

(Fact: Almost all feral cats and kittens surrendered to the county shelter are deemed “unadoptable” and will be euthanized. Please choose life!)

Plan Ahead!

Cats/kittens need to arrive in COVERED traps 8am - 9am. Kittens must be minimum 4 months. Only one cat per trap!

The program includes: Anesthesia, FeLV/FIV test (cats/kittens testing positive must be humanely euthanized) Spay/ Neuter, FVRCP and RabiesVaccines and Mandatory Ear Tip! (Eartipping is the humane surgi-

cal removal of 1/4 inch of the top right ear. The eartip serves as a life-saving permanent visual identification mark showing that the cat is owned, has been tested for disease, spayed/neutered and vaccinated.)

YOU pay only \$25.00 for each feral cat/kitten at Soquel Creek Animal Hospital and Project Purr will pay your unpaid balance!

Surgery After-Care Instructions

Spayed/neutered cats/kittens must be picked up after surgery by 5:30PM. Take the cat/kitten home and leave it in the completely covered trap in a safe warm location overnight. Release the cat/kitten the next morning in the exact area where it was trapped. Over time the stitches will dissolve. Provide fresh water and quality food daily in the established feeding location. It is best to feed early in the day. Food should

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Cliff’s Tale

Lisa used to live in Santa Cruz. She returned in the summer of 2009 to do some petsitting. She loved to walk along the cliffs overlooking the ocean. While walking after dark one evening, she saw the silvery reflection of the moon on the water and looked for a spot where she could sit and meditate in the moonlight. Near the surfer statue, she spotted the steps leading down to the rocks below, and took them.

At the bottom of the steps, near the surfline, she settled herself among the jumble of rocks. Suddenly she thought she saw something moving. As she strained to distinguish what it was, she realized it looked like a cat. She got up to see, but the cat moved away and then she thought she caught a glimpse of something else—a darting dark kitten—very hard to distinguish from shadow. Was it true? She marveled that she never would have even seen the kitten if the other cat hadn’t drawn her attention first.

Lisa came back the next day, and then repeatedly, at different times day and night, and would catch glimpses of the elusive, cold and hungry kitten, but could never get close. There were lots of hidey holes among the boulders, and dead cormorants in the rocks. She brought dishes of cat food and fresh water and wondered what else she should do. It was so weird to find a kitten here. She worried, knowing the danger the kitten was in, hiding down in the spaces between the rocks. She was running out of time because her sitting job was ending. Soon she was going to have to return home and abandon the poor kitten.

Finally, in desperation, she sought help on the web and found Project Purr. She called and spoke to Lynne, who came right over. Lynne met Lisa at the surfing statue and down they went, searching for a flat spot in the rocks to set up a wee kitten trap. It was difficult, balancing on the rocks with the waves crashing, sending spray on them, but they found a spot. Once the trap was baited and set, Lynne left, and Lisa settled down to watch the trap.

By the time Lynne reached home, there was an excited message from Lisa that the kitten had been caught! It had only taken 20 minutes with the trap, in contrast to Lisa’s many days and nights of agonizing over what to do. Traps really are lifesavers!

The little kitten was terrified, dehydrated and boney with a large injury on its neck... and smelled like old fish. Lynne set him up in a hutch in her foster room with lots of cozy warm blankets, food and water, to begin the healing and socializing process.

Several weeks later, and after a vet checkup and testing, the little male kitten moved to Lucinda’s, another Project Purr foster, for more care and socialization. At first he was wary from his scary abandonment experience. But as the days passed, he began purring often and loudly, and became quite the character. His neck wound was healing. He fattened up and his coat got shiny. He turned easily from a very scared kitten to one that was relaxed and friendly, so it seemed likely he was a domestic kitten abandoned at the beach, and quite possibly had been pecked on the neck by an inquisitive scavenging bird.



Lucinda named him Cliff and, eventually, after neutering and when she felt he was ready, she took his photo, wrote up his bio and posted him on the Project Purr web site. Cliff had turned into a very handsome, adorable and soulful smoky black kitten with shadow stripes that showed when he played in the sun.

A local surfing family was looking on the Project Purr website for a kitty to adopt, and was surprised to read that Cliff had been rescued from the rocks below the surfer statue, right where the mom had surfed that morning. The mom and her daughter went to meet Cliff and they both got down on the floor to play with him. The little girl said, “I just love kittens with big ears.” They were smitten and felt Cliff was meant to be theirs!

We smile, thinking about all the people that participated in the successful rescue of one scrawny black kitten: the woman who saw a desperate kitten in the night and persevered until she figured out a way to help; Lynne who gave information, loaned a trap, and then took the kitten in for initial fostering; Lucinda, who further socialized the kitten; the nice people who donate to Project Purr to help with vet bills to enable rescue work; Dr. Miller at Soquel Creek Animal Hospital who kindly reduces costs to Project Purr to enable rescuing not only this kitten, but future kittens too; and the loving family who adopted him.

Cliff, rescued from a jumble of rocks on the Santa Cruz shore, is now safe, happy and loved. It really does take a big caring and compassionate community—all of us—to nurture and save each life.



Spay/Neuter Program

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be eaten or removed by nightfall to avoid attracting nuisance nocturnal creatures such as skunks, raccoons, and predators. Continue daily feeding after release even though the cat may not return for several days.

Spay/neuter is the most important thing we can all do to help the animals.

Congratulations! TNR is feral cat TLC!



nonprofit volunteer feral cat rescue organization

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webmaster@projectpurr.org
www.projectpurr.org
Tax ID#31-1576984



Thank you to all of you who support Project Purr.

You may not often get to see the day-to-day impact your generousities have on us. We do, and it's a gift. Without your help, none of this would be possible.

It matters to us, and it matters to all the kitties. It matters. It means something. And it wouldn't have happened without you. Thank you.

~ Margaret, Lynne and Lucinda



Yes! I want to help Project Purr's rescue efforts.

Name _____

Address _____

Or donate securely on-line at Networkforgood.org

Thank you.



Your donation of any amount is greatly appreciated.

Fix a Feral! Spay a Stray! Help Save Lives Today!



**TNR is Feral
Cat TLC!**



**Together we are
making a
difference.**