

# projectpurr

VOLUME 15

WINTER 2006-2007

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 of feral cat population control as opposed to Trap and Kill.*

## Project Purr's Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Program for FERAL Cats At Adobe Animal Hospital

Feral cats are non-domesticated (non-social) unowned cats. All cats/kittens must come in humane traps for surgery. Do NOT use cat carriers or boxes. Cats/kittens in cat carriers or boxes will be refused services.

(Feral cats/kittens needing special services, such as for wounds, abscesses or upper respiratory infections require regular rates and can NOT participate in this discounted spay/neuter program. Please check with Adobe Animal Hospital for those estimates.)

To borrow a trap call:

Watsonville Animal Shelter

580 Airport Blvd., Watsonville, CA 95076

831/454-7303

Santa Cruz County Animal Services Authority

27 Janis Way, Scotts Valley, CA 95066

831/454-7303

Santa Cruz SPCA

2260 7th Ave, Santa Cruz, CA 95062

831/465-5000

Adobe Animal Hospital is located at 1600 Soquel Drive, across from Dominican Hospital, Santa Cruz, CA 95065. Their phone number is 831/475-6365. Hours are M-F 7:30AM-6PM and Sat 8AM-3PM. NO surgeries on Saturday / Closed Sunday

Plan ahead! Call Adobe before trapping to determine when surgery times are available. Cats/kittens need to be dropped off before 8:30AM. Late drop-offs or unscheduled cats may not be treated the same day. Adobe Animal Hospital will try to accommodate you.

Only the following items are included in the spay/neuter package: Anesthesia, FeLV/FIV test (cats/kittens testing positive will be humanely euthanized) Spay/Neuter (OVH/CAST) Vaccines (FVRCP/Distemper and Rabies)

Mandatory Ear Tip (Mandatory ear-

tipping is the humane surgical removal of 1/4 inch of the top right ear. This serves as a permanent visual identification mark that shows that this cat has been tested for disease, spayed/neutered and vaccinated.

Kittens must be minimum of 4 months old for surgery.

You must bring each cat/kitten in an individual trap for surgery.

**YOU pay only \$25.00 for each feral cat/kitten at Adobe Animal Hospital.**

**Project Purr will pay your unpaid balance!**

### Surgery After-Care Instructions

Spayed/neutered cats/kittens must be picked up from Adobe after surgery by 5:30PM. Take the cat/kitten home and leave it in the 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 dry food daily in the established feeding location. It is best to feed



early in the day. Food should be eaten or removed by night fall 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.

## Great News for Watsonville/Freedom Feral Cats

Friends of the Watsonville Animal Shelter (FOWAS) nonprofit is now offering **BUSINESSES** in Watsonville and Freedom unlimited **FREE** spay/neuter services for feral cats.

This **FREE** service for feral cats (and feral kittens over four months of age) is also available to all **RESIDENTS** of Watsonville/Freedom...unlimited and regardless of income!

And, if you are a Watsonville/Freedom resident who can show proof of low-income status, you may have up to

**3 DOMESTIC** cats/kittens (or dogs!) spayed/neutered **FREE** through FOWAS.

These three **FREE** programs are made available from FOWAS at the Watsonville Animal Shelter, 580 Airport Blvd. in Watsonville. Vouchers, humane trap loans (there is no rental charge, however a refundable security deposit is required) and more details can be obtained from shelter staff. Their phone number is 831/454-7303, ext 7. The shelter is open from 9AM to 5PM, 7 days a week.

# Charlie

I first saw him on the sidewalk a couple years ago: a scrawny and unkempt tabby with a funny-looking tail that was skinnier at its start than at its end. My neighbor called him "Big Balls." Big Balls was a mean cat, he said, a mean cat that beat up their fluffy housecat almost to the point of death. Big Balls wasn't very friendly to humans either. He ignored me when I tried to get his attention, and when I offered him some dry cat food one day he turned up his nose and took off. He preferred real food: gophers and rats. I once saw him hunt and eat a gopher in less than a minute. All that was left of the poor creature was its hard head and bitter gallbladder.

We have a lot of gophers in our yard, so Big Balls ended up spending a lot of time there. When I started giving him a bowl of milk as an occasional treat, he warmed up to me. I didn't feed him regularly, and he would be gone for days at a time, but eventually we started to consider him a part of the family and decided we would call him "Charlie."

We went to the mountains on vacation for a couple weeks last summer, and when we got back, Charlie acted like he had really missed us. He was very affectionate, and jumped up on our laps when we sat on the big swing in the yard. He'd never done that before! We started to feed him, and he made the swing his permanent home. We noticed that he had tapeworms, and became concerned about his health. That's when we started thinking about bringing him to the vet and taking care of him better. I had never wanted to get him neutered before, thinking, who are we to be chopping off his big balls? I sure wouldn't like it if some giant grabbed me and chopped off mine! But when I spoke to my cat-loving friend Kate, I was surprised to learn that boy cats who get neutered live much longer than un-neutered cats, that they fight less and get fewer infections. Besides, said Kate, if you go to Project Purr, they'll not only neuter him but will give him all his vaccinations too! For only \$25!

So I called Project Purr, went to the SPCA and got a cage, and felt really bad about tricking Charlie into following a trail of



cat food (which he now loves) into the cage. I brought him over to the hospital, and they took good care of him. He got neutered and vaccinated, and got an extra shot for his tapeworms, and I picked him up the same day. We let him eat tuna that night, as a special treat. I was afraid he'd know I had orchestrated the events leading to his castration, but I don't think he does. Or if he figured it out, he has forgiven me. Because Charlie is more affectionate than ever! He's always rolling over to have his belly rubbed, and he purrs more loudly than any cat I've known.

Charlie still lives outside, and I don't really consider us his "owners." He's his own cat, living his own life. But I'm glad we were able to help him, to help him live longer and healthier. And I'm glad that Project Purr didn't have to make us register him as our cat and us as his owners. If there was that additional level of bureaucracy or cost involved, we probably would have done it anyway, because we love Charlie. But I'm sure that there are other people who wouldn't, people who otherwise might want to help a stray cat. And that would mean more cats dying young, getting infections, making kittens that don't get enough to eat, the survivors growing up to continue the vicious circle. The kind of life Big Balls had, before he turned into Charlie with the help of Project Purr.

-- by Kaz Wegmuller

## Other Discounted Spay/Neuter Programs

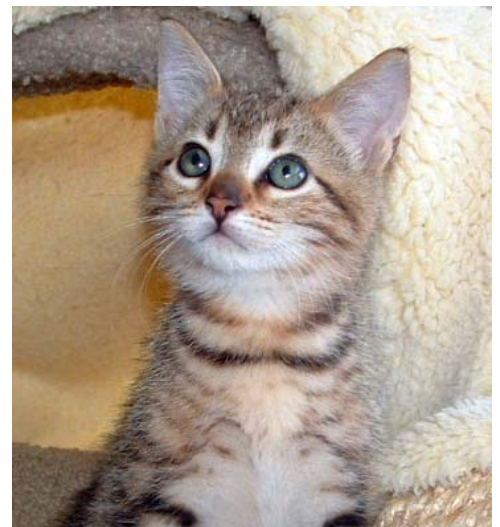
Santa Cruz SPCA advertises low-cost spay/neuter for financially challenged individuals. Call 465-5000 to see if you qualify for their domestic cat program.

Low-income Monterey County residents may call Animal Friends Rescue Project (AFRP). Call 831/333-0722 for domestic cat voucher information.

AFRP also has FERAL cat spay/neuter voucher information. AFRP advocates only Trap/Neuter/Return and will NOT refer you to assistance for trap and euthanize.

More than thirty years of documented proof show that trap and euthanize policies have no lasting effect on reducing feral cat populations. Trap and euthanize is expensive, cruel, and ineffective. A feral cat management plan call trap/Neuter/Return (TNR) has a dramatic impact on ethically solving neighborhood feral cat problems. TNR is effective, responsible and humane. The breeding stops. Populations are gradually reduced. Nuisance behaviors associated with mating and breeding are virtually eliminated. The cats are vaccinated against disease. The quality of life for these feral cats improves. Thousands of people are helping feral cats, and you can, too!

SPCA of Monterey County has low cost spay/neuter for ferals. Call 831/373-2631 x218



# Project Purr's Labor Day Fundraising Sale

When the dust settled and all the goodies had left the field, Project Purr's Labor Day Fundraising Sale had \$21,000.00 in the bank!! We are proud and thankful for both the generosity and hard work from all our wonderful supporters, thereby making the Labor Day Fundraising Sale our biggest and best yet!

Thank you to all the many wonderful local businesses including the Silver Spur, Ristorante Italiano, The Buttery Bakery, Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, Staff of Life, Annie Glass, The Bagelry, Crow's Nest/Shadowbrook, Zinnia's Home and Garden, Pacific Cookie Company, and Gayle's Bakery & Rosticceria who donated generously to the silent auction part of our rummage sale.

Overwhelming community participation showed enthusiastic support for Project Purr and Trap/Neuter/Return (TNR) the ethical choice for reducing feral cat numbers. TNR is effective, cost-efficient, and humane. Managed colonies and TNR teach compassion, nonviolence and tolerance for others. As an organization we are committed, with compassion, to a high quality standard of care for our ferals, integrity, safety for both cats and humans, and community responsibility! We believe in a feral cat's right to live, free from the stress of uncontrolled breeding. We believe, along with other feral cat spay/neuter organizations around the world, that feral cats should not be killed simply because they were born without a house address. Spay/neuter is the single most important thing we all can all do to help the animals!

We thought it would be interesting to find out just how our yard sales have grown over the past 10 years...and we surprised even ourselves! From a slow beginning in 1996 and \$490.00 raised at our first sale on Branciforte Avenue to the culmination of this year's field sale on Thurber Lane/Soquel Drive and \$21,000.00, we have raised over \$175,000.00 selling "stuff" to fund spay/neuter for all of Santa Cruz county's kitties!

Our "Antique Corral" this year was organized by helpful volunteer "antiquers" and overflowed with historical treasures ... anything and everything .... many items donated from amazingly generous and caring local residents....original oil paintings, handmade oriental rugs, weavings, quilts, dolls, china, silver, glass, jewelry, folk art and paper ephemera.

(If you have precious belongings, please consider donating them to help the animals. Project Purr is a volunteer organization and therefore your gift is NOT used to pay salaries or common overhead expenses. Gifts can also be made in recognition of both people and companion animals. Consider making Project Purr, a 501(c)3 nonprofit, a beneficiary in your will, living trust, life insurance, pension plan or charitable trust. Such gifts are deductible for estate tax purposes. To leave a bequest,

---

***"I had a linguistics professor who said that it's man's ability to use the language that makes him the dominant species on the planet. That may be. But I think there's one other thing that separates us from animals. We aren't afraid of vacuum cleaners."***

***-Jeff Stilson***

please consult with your family attorney. You may contact Project Purr directly at 831/423-MEOW (6369), PO Box 891, Santa Cruz, CA 95061 or email [webmaster@projectpurr.org](mailto:webmaster@projectpurr.org)

So, remember to save all of those tax deductible, quality donations for our next sale, which will be on (or near) the end of May, Memorial Day Weekend in the year 2007...and, of course, mark your calendar to come shop too!!!

## Bring Donations Instead of Gifts



*- by AJ DeCamara, age 10*

This year I celebrated my tenth birthday with a party which included many of my friends. Every year for my birthday I choose to give to a charity. This year I chose Project Purr as my charity. I asked all my guests to bring a donation, food or other items suitable for kitties. We all had lots of fun, and in the end there were many items to go to Project Purr.

Since my 7th birthday I have chosen a charity for my birthday. My mom suggested this idea and I liked it. So every year I have chosen a different charity for my friends to bring a donation instead of presents for me. I love to have my friends bring something for charity because this makes me feel good deep inside. Every year it is fun looking at all the worthy charities, and deciding which will be my charity that year.

Project Purr was my charity this year because they care for the homeless cats in our area. They feed them, and try to get them spayed and neutered so that there will be less kitties that have to be outside by themselves. Most of our kitties have been kitties that were wild or abandoned, and they have given us lots of happiness. My Nana and Papa have seven kitties and all of them were wild or abandoned kitties. I guess the love of kitties and wanting to help take care of them runs in my family.

I would suggest that everyone try this for just one year to see how good it makes you feel. My little brother, Matthew is already considering his first charity for his 7th birthday in March. I'm betting it might be Project Purr. What about you, won't you consider this for your next birthday?

## -- Project Purr Endorsments --

The doctors and staff of Creekside Veterinary Hospital support the practice trapping, neutering and returning feral cats to their original environment. We believe this to be a more humane and ethical treatment than the practice of trapping and euthanization.

*-Sarah Hawklyn, DVM  
-E.V Sharp, DVM  
-Kathy Calvert, DVM  
-Hilary Stern, DVM*

As a professional caregiver, I strongly support the concept of catching, spaying and/or neutering, and releasing (feral cats). To do otherwise is unconscionable.

*-Jay Buscaglia, Heritage Kennels*

We have been doing TNR for a number of years now. It seems to be a compassionate and caring way to deal with an issue that is NOT of the kitties making. It works for us and is very rewarding.

*-Bob and Simone Young*

Having researched the alternatives I think Trap Neuter Release of feral cats back into managed colonies is the best we can do for the cats and for ourselves.

*-Harriet Butts, Kitty Hill Resort for Cats*

I support Project Purr in their efforts to reduce the overpopulation of feral cats with their TNR protocol because I believe it is the most ethical and humane way of doing it and it is proven to work.

*-Isabelle Magnin*

Several years ago, we were involved in a 3 month long rescue with Project Purr. We got to witness first hand the outstanding results. We trapped, tested, neutered and gave shots to close to 30 feral cats. It was such a good feeling knowing that we made a difference in the lives of these cats.

*-Susie and Phil Kaplan*

Trap/Neuter/Release! What greater gift than a second chance? Thank you Project Purr.

*-Kitty Fields*

I truly believe in the TNR program. Not only does it help reduce the overpopulation of feral cats but it also educates our communities to become involved with the seriousness of this sensitive issue. Educating our communities about how the TNR program works and where to go for resources can become the foundation for ending un-wanted shelter killings.

*-Connie Marshall*

I endorse TNR happily because it creates an effective barrier by establishing territory with animals who are disease free and not able to reproduce. Good work!

*-Hannah Good, DVM*

I have practiced TNR many times and could never consider anything else. TNR is humane and saves lives.

*-Bob and Marilee Geyer  
Animal Advocates*

TNR'd cats are perfectly happy and healthy living outside. I have been a feral cat caregiver for 4 years and I see it as a workable solution. We think of them as our cats, but they choose to live outside!

*-The Hallbeck Family*

Trap and Kill doesn't work....a similar group of breeding cats just moves in. TNR keeps the same stable, healthy cat population. TNR is worldwide.

*-Susi Lark, Grooming by Susi*

TNR is kind and it works.

*-Ed Jameyson*

*-Pete Lindsay and Joanne Curby*

I am so thankful Project Purr helped us get some feral mousers...even though they are feral, they are very much a part of our family.

*-John and BethAnn La Barba*

An individual feral cat's health would be greatly enhanced through Trap/Test/Vaccinate/Alter/Return/Maintain (TTVARM).

*-Kerrin Hoban, DVM*

We support Project Purr in its effort to help control the feral/stray cat problem by the trap/neuter/release (TNR) protocol. Though all systems for dealing with the feral/stray problem have difficulties with achieving the goals of no feral/stray cats. We think the TNR system is more humane and ethical than either the,"do nothing - self limiting system" or the "trap and destroy system."

*-Adobe Animal Hospital*

*Craig Evans, DVM*

*Molly Tackabury, DVM*

*William Baumhelfner, DVM*

TNR must play an integral role in reducing our homeless pet population. It is the only humane way to control pet overpopulation while still valuing the lives of these animals our society has abandoned.

*- Devon Lincicum, Veterinary Technician*

"Read carefully Santa Cruz! The feral cat colony registration ordinance will not only effect those who give their time, money, and heart to managing feral colonies, it will also punish pet owners who have more than 2 cats that are allowed outdoors. Do not allow our county to use your tax dollars to euthanize feral cats. Removal of feral cats does not work. At the very least allow those who are willing to help at their own cost do so unhindered...and maybe someday our county officials will have it in their budget and hearts to support all of us in our shared goal...humanely reducing the feral cat population in Santa Cruz County. Thank you."

*-Hope Lopez*

*-Christine Shaw*

## Ivan's Thoughtful Gift

Project Purr has received a \$20,000.00 gift from the estate of Ivan Veriovkin. Ivan was an older Santa Cruz kinda fellow who was a great champion of cats that were hard to find homes for. He lived in a small trailer park with his cat friends. He used to take the bus to all Project Purr adoptathons or rummage sales and catch us up on how he and his cats were doing.

Ivan grew up in a Russian immigrant family in New York City, was a beer vendor in Candlestick Park, moved to Santa Cruz, enjoyed a good beer, KGO radio and loved cats. He always adopted older and more difficult to place cats. He was a supporter of Project Purr for over 15 years.

Cats were his life! At one time he owned 12 cats and he went to great lengths to please them. He would take the bus to the store to get fresh fish heads, take the bus home again, and then make delicious homemade fish head stew with potatoes and carrots for the cats - and for himself! Ivan called on Project Purr for assistance whenever he or his cats needed something. He knew Project Purr would be there!

We were surprised and delighted that Ivan thought of us and we were touched that he left this gift to Project Purr. We thank Ivan for his gift. He knew all the money would go to cats ... that's what he wanted. Thank You Ivan! You will be missed.

## -- Project Purr Endorsements --

My family and I have supported Project Purr for several years after moving here and have seldom worked with a more committed group of caring people and their many volunteers. The funds raised at their annual yard sales benefit not only the feral cats and kittens but the entire human community of Santa Cruz in their humane treatment, medical care and population control of these cats. It is essential that ASA (Santa Cruz County Animal Services Authority) continue their partnership with Project Purr, and especially to return any trapped ear-tipped ferals (already altered and placed in a colony) versus euthanasia at the shelters.

Thank you.

*Anonymous (registered voters in 95003)*

The Santa Cruz SPCA supports feral cat colonies as long as all potential ferals are spayed or neutered, vaccinated, tested for FELV/FIV and the person who is caring for them must feed or arrange feedings 365 days per year. In addition, each time another cat is added, they register the cat with Santa Cruz County Animal Services Authority.

*-Lisa Carter, Director  
Santa Cruz SPCA*

Busy animal lovers often wish they could do more to help their furry friends, but worry about the time, cost, and emotional commitment involved in many of the options. TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) is a fantastic way to make an impact on numerous fronts at once. It helps reduce the social problems of domestic cat overpopulation and homelessness, decreases euthanasia rates for ferals, and improves the quality of life for each individual feline involved — all for very little time or money. It also appeases those in the community who are less supportive of the presence of feral cats, as it leads to the eventual reduction in the outdoor cat population. If you are looking to make a difference, TNR is a great way to be involved.

*-Anonymous*

*(In honor of Bo, Mo, Joe, and Stubb, 4 special kitties who have lived the good life for over 10 years thanks to TNR!)*

Why trap, neuter, and return, when a feral cat could be trapped and euthanized, immediately reducing the population? Because a compassionate community works to reduce social problems while also treating each individual in-

cluded with care and respect. TNR is one of the best opportunities I can think of for a community to do just that: work toward the elimination of cat overpopulation and homelessness, both serious problems, while respecting the rights of each individual feline to live out his or her natural life, and in familiar surroundings.

*-Carmel Granger  
Center for Animal Protection  
and Education (CAPE)*

Without using the TNR method of controlling the feral cat population, the only other method is killing the cats. This is not an acceptable alternative. I have used the TNR method for hundreds of feral cats and given the cats a chance to live their life without the breeding and other health issues related to feral cats who are not in a maintained colony. When you remove feral cats to another environment, new feral cats will replace the ones you have removed. It is a never ending cycle. The survival rate of a colony not having to be relocated is much higher than when you relocate the feral cats. When you relocate the feral cats, typically you lose a quarter to a third of your animals to the new environment ...cars, dogs, people and other predators. TNR is the only acceptable method of maintaining the feral cat population.

*-Lisa Lewis*

I fully support and respect the excellent work of Project Purr. It can be a thankless job, and I know the difficulties and harassments people endure when they undertake TNR. I have the utmost respect for responsible volunteers and citizens who dedicate their lives to TNR and maintaining feral cat colonies.

*-Carie Broecker, Executive Director  
Animal Friends Rescue Project  
[www.AnimalFriendsRescue.org](http://www.AnimalFriendsRescue.org)*

If S/N of domestic pets is so healthily asserted to control overpopulation, why wouldn't it apply even more so to ferals? Aside from the obvious, it also contributes to maintaining a healthier life for them. Those who have attempted the TNR program rather than the alternative, euthanasia, have found it more effective, productive and rewarding. My non-profit rescue organization PURRR (Providing Unadoptables with Rescue, Rehabilitation and Residence) highly supports TNR and engages in it regularly.

*-Carol Davidson*



*Friends of Santa Cruz County Animals  
(FOSCCA) Board Member  
Julie Wood, Friends of Santa Cruz County  
Animals (FOSCCA) Board Member*

Without Project Purr, our family of cat-loving yet allergic children would never have had the opportunity to nurture our two adored cats. Rescued as kittens from an auto repair lot where they had been abandoned, our cats were cared for, neutered, and tamed by dedicated Project Purr volunteers. They came into our lives as healthy and resilient outdoor cats, ready to love and be loved.

Project Purr and its dedicated volunteers provide a unique and irreplaceable service in Santa Cruz County.

*-James and Enid Brock  
registered voters in 95060.*

“Project Purr has shown for years that the emotional solution to the feral cat population problem is also the intellectual solution. Trap/Neuter/Return is a policy that controls wild cat populations as well as wild rodent populations. Please make this policy permanent.

*-Ken and Leslie Krzeczowski  
Feral Kitten FosterParents  
and Registered Voters in 95066*

“I have done Trap/Neuter/Return many times and find it to be a kind solution for both myself and for the kitties...knowing that because of it, they will have long, happy, healthy lives.

*-Jane Dalton*

# Montecito of Los Altos Gifts Project Purr

For over 45 years, Montecito Preschool, the largest private preschool in Northern California, has offered the young child access to a tree studded campus, natural animal habitats, and barnyard animals. The curriculum provides youngsters with a myriad of nature-oriented experiences involving the care and respect for all living things.

After learning about Project Purr, Montecito's owner/co-founder Molly Matthews decided to donate its company van to the feral cat advocate organization Project Purr. Montecito felt this donation was a good example to the preschool community to remember our neglected feline population of feral cats. The Matthews family has always loved animals, and cats in particular. Recently, Montecito has shifted to making the connection between children, animals and nature stronger. Inspired by Montecito's historical focus on nature and by Richard Louv's "Last Child in the Woods: Saving our Children from Nature Deficit Disorder," the school's director, Erin Mobley, announced an important emphasis and re-focus for the coming year on a more nature oriented, environmentally based curriculum.

Project Purr believes in respect and compassion for all living creatures and is changing the way that stray and feral cats have been traditionally viewed and dealt with in our communities. These forgotten felines deserve compassion, care and protection for their entire lives. Through endorsing Trap/Neuter/Return, an effective, cost-efficient, and humane means of controlling the free-roaming cats, Project Purr subsidizes their own lowcost spay/neuter program for Santa Cruz County at Adobe Animal Hospital. Spay/neuter is the single most important thing we all can do to help the animals! There are not enough homes for all the animals and you can never stem the tide if you ignore the least understood and in the most danger, feral cats and kittens!

This year, in particular, brings the renewal and revival of Montecito's long held philosophy, "We believe the bond between humans, animals and nature begins in childhood." The donation of the school's van is one step in this direction to help animals. In addition, Montecito has formed a partnership with the Silicon Valley Humane Society, so the children and staff will be involved in many community and classroom projects to help both cats and dogs in Silicon Valley.

Molly Matthews believes Montecito may indeed be an antidote for the modern problem of nature deficit disorder, which may be partly responsible for disturbing contemporary childhood trends including obesity, attention disorder and depression. She believes the negative influences of technology for this wired generation, where there is a diminished use of children's senses could be remedied through intimacy and wonder of nature. This is indeed a great challenge and may begin with turning off the objects in the material world that distract us such as television, cell phones, and computers. Although there is less outdoor space, more concrete, no vacant lots, less natural habitats now, she remembers growing up with hills close to woods, fields, creeks, lakes and caves. Exploring, watching, identifying, collecting, consumed her childhood hours.

Montecito's staff is "committed to providing a safe, nurturing environment for our preschool community, honoring the worth and dignity of each child, as well as promoting a sense of discovery and a joy of learning." She reminds us that children do



what they see: therefore if we model respect for nature, including our neglected feline population, our children will notice. For when we are immersed in nature, we calm down, creativity is nurtured and confidence is gained.

*For information please visit [www.montecitoschool.com](http://www.montecitoschool.com).*

## Possess and Control?

The feral cat's life may in fact be shorter than that of the domestic cat on our bed, but it is *her* life, *her* relationships with her comrades and her environment, *her* world. Her every instinct tells her to avoid the human, avoid confinement. She tries desperately to escape from us, to get back to the world she knows and understands. If we understand the cat at all, if we care about her at all, if we can rise above the human need to possess and control, we must let her go. We can cherish her from a distance, admire her spirit, celebrate her life for what it is, help her by honoring her needs as they truly are. Neuter her, protect from disease, build her a shelter, educate the community about her, but do not try to "own" her. Give her freedom, peace of mind, and dignity.

### **Because it is we who do not understand.**

It is we who mistake our own needs for those of the cat; it is we who need them, not they who need us. We need to feel important, we need to feel special - we have that "special" touch that will tame a feral cat. We have "saved" them, we are truly compassionate, even heroic. We give up hours of our day to sit with them, nurture them.

It's important to recognize that if a cat is truly feral, then the most compassionate choice may be to allow him to live outdoors. Trying to domesticate such a cat is little different from trying to make a squirrel or a raccoon a household companion - you might succeed somewhat, but never fully and only with a great deal of time and patience. Moreover, you would not be permitting the animal to live in the manner that suits him best.

*We don't see that we are terrorizing them, forcing them into an alien environment because it fits our definition of what is best. We don't see what is really special - the essential "catness" of the feral cat, her independence, natural wildness and strength.*

Many well-meaning people, convinced they are "saving" a feral cat by bringing him indoors, end up condemning the poor creature to a life of hiding under the bed and being in constant fear. Better a fuller, even if riskier, life in freedom.

*Donna Bishop  
Founder, Alliance for Animals*

# Dad's Last Wish

For six years my father, Tex, fed his little feral cat. "Spot," as he called her, first came to his yard when she was just a kitten. Her wild mom brought her there to be fed by the little man with a cowboy hat.

Through the years dad fed his feral cat each day. Sometimes he was rewarded by being allowed to stroke her back for just a second. Other days a hiss and spit were her thanks.

My dad became terminally ill this last January. We moved him from his home in East Palo Alto to live with us in Soquel. We traveled over the hill most days just to feed Spot — we made arrangements to have her fed on the days we were unable to go. Spot had grown accustomed to her daily meal and didn't seem to be a great hunter.

On June 21, at my home, with family all around my dad passed. We continued to feed Spot daily as it was one of my father's wishes. We had to sell his home, the house he built with his own hands sixty years ago - Spot's feeding place. We didn't know what to do about Spot. We were desperate knowing she wouldn't do well on her own

We contacted Project Purr — they provided us information on how we might relocate our feral cat. They coached us, they loaned us a trap, they provided us vet care once we caught Spot and they loaned us a large hutch that was to be her home for four weeks (they even included

a large furry blanket to make her comfortable.)

On the day I caught Spot, I took her to Adobe Animal Hospital. They checked her over, gave her necessary shots and returned her to me. I took her home, put her in the large hutch with the comfy bed, a litter box and a toy she never looked at, located in a very quiet and sheltered place in our yard.

For four weeks, I feed her twice a day, spoke to her and hoped above all hopes she would become familiar with her surroundings

On November 24, it was time for Spot to have her freedom. I gave her breakfast, then opened both the large doors to the hutch. She wouldn't leave. For two days she sat cuddled in the large brown furry blanket in the corner of the hutch. Then, on Sunday morning, after finishing most of her morning meal, she left

When deciding to try to relocate Spot I had been told by Project Purr there was a chance that once released I may never see her again, and though very sad at the thought, I was willing to accept that consequence knowing I had given her the best chance I could

For four days there was no sign of her. I continued to put out food and continued



to hope. I had a Thanksgiving Day wish, that I would see her again, that she would come by our home for a meal or two. But with no sign of her I was resigned to the fact that she wouldn't return. And then, the morning after Thanksgiving while I was putting out her dish, calling her name, and giving the little clicking sound my dad always gave when he called her, I heard a familiar meow. She was talking to me. Spot had come home

A very special thanks to Project Purr, without you I would have never been to give my dad's his last wish.

*-Melody*

## Donations & Fundraising

Project Purr is a nonprofit charity (tax ID# 31-1576984) and we gladly accept donations of money...always in good taste! Our mailing address is Project Purr, PO Box 891, Santa Cruz, CA 95061.

Networkforgood.org is our cyber charity of choice...you can find a link to it on our website... [www.projectpurr.org](http://www.projectpurr.org)...it is a direct, secure online donation site, and no commission is taken. Giving Feels Good!

Rummage sale items such as quality household things...books, knick-knacks, garden stuff, tools, dishes, clothes, etc. are welcome...anytime...we have storage! (Check our website for unacceptable items.)

Annual gifts to Project Purr may be in the form of cash, appreciated securities, bonds, property or personal effects of value, such as jewelry or art, and qualifies for generous tax deduction. As a donor, you may designate your gift as unrestricted, for use by Project Purr where the need is greatest, or restricted to a specific program or purpose of your choosing.

Planned gifts may be contributed to Project Purr in your will or living trust, and your estate will qualify for a tax benefit. This reduces the amount of estate taxes that might be due, affecting your loved ones. This type of gift allows you support the future of Project Purr without any cost to you now.

Tribute gifts to Project Purr makes a thoughtful gift in memory of a deceased companion animal, or animal loving individual, or as a way to honor someone living who deserves special recognition.

Volunteering is often needed and welcomed by Project Purr. You may consider offering your time or your professional expertise. Volunteering does wonders for your spirit and helps make miracles happen!

Easy gift giving...Consider donating to your favorite charities for birthdays, holidays, and special events. Put the names of your favorite charities in a hat and draw! Learn about others favorite charities and spread the word about Project Purr! Don't

forget about employer gift-matching programs...they can double or even triple your gift!

In-Kind Donations...Project Purr is always in need of supplies for our furry clients....items such as new, one piece, washable, nonremovable covers cat beds, new cat tress, chicken or turkey baby food for socializing feral kittens, and new cat toys, including furry mice, balls, and wand toys. Quality dry kibble and canned wet cat food make great gifts too.

We are currently looking for these organization needs items to help run Project Purr: large patio umbrellas, pop-up shade pavilions, card tables and large tarps for our fundraising yard sales, and first class stamps for mailing newsletters.

Our largest expense is veterinary care, everything from routine altering to critical emergence care. If you know of a local veterinarian (perhaps consider asking your own personal vet! ) who would be willing to offer discounted services to us, please let us know.



nonprofit volunteer feral cat advocate organization

P.O. Box 891  
Santa Cruz, CA 95061  
(831) 423-6369 (MEOW)  
webmaster@projectpurr.org  
www.projectpurr.org



**Project Purr is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit charitable organization (Tax I.D. #31-1576984). Our feral cat low-cost spay/neuter program and other services are supported solely through the generosity of our contributors. We do not receive federal, state, or local government funding.**

**Your donation of *any* amount is greatly appreciated.**

**Don't Euthanize..Sterilize! Help Save Lives Today!**

**Ensure LIFE..without Litters!**

Please Mail your donation to Project Purr  
P.O. Box 891 • Santa Cruz, CA 9506

or visit our educational website [www.projectpurr.org](http://www.projectpurr.org) to donate on-line.



*On behalf of the thousands and thousands of cats we have helped over the past 19 years ... made possible by you and by the caring Project Purr volunteer team ... and for all the contributions of time, money and loving support ... Thank You! We are making a difference!*



No matter how much cats fight there always seem to be plenty of kittens.

-Abraham Lincoln

“The love for all living creatures is the most noble attribute of man”

~ Charles Darwin

**“Remember ...  
when the cat's away,  
the mice will play!”**

---

**Fix a Feral!  
Ferals Are Our Friends!  
Spay/Neuter Saves Lives!**