

Feral Cat Foundation



Summer 2011

An all-volunteer non-profit organization

OUR COMMITMENT

The overpopulation and suffering of homeless and unwanted cats in our society demands a humane solution. Feral Cat Foundation (FCF) accepts the challenge to promote public recognition of this problem, to pursue workable solutions and, without euthanasia, to humanely reduce the population while improving the quality of life for these innocent victims of human neglect.



A day in the life of a member of Feral Cat Foundation is not very glamorous, and sometimes not very rewarding. But this day was different!

There were four absolutely darling little bundles of fur gently playing when the feeder showed up one morning at her feeding station in an empty lot. Black, black and white, brown tabby and grey and white, the kittens were just big enough to know to be afraid of the human. So under the building they ran. Trap Time! We went back the next morning with little kitten traps and caught two kittens within an hour. The other two went into hiding under a building across the lot, along

with mother. We waited an hour or two, but to no avail. Not fur nor whisker could be seen.

The two kitten traps were left by the building, but since mother was diligently watching everything we did, it was decided that the best course of action was to just go away for awhile. So we did, but planned to check the traps again in two hours. This was a safe thing to do as the lot was completely fenced and we had a key to the gate lock. When we came back shortly after noon both kittens were trying to sneak the food out of the traps without actually going into them. This is such fun to watch - seriously. They crept up to the trap, their necks stretched to maximum length, to see if they could sniff the food out of the trap. When this didn't work tiny paws were stuck through the wires on the sides of the trap to try and snag some food. Sometimes (actually very seldom) we are smarter than the cats we are trying to trap. The food in the trap is smashed down on the paper so the cat, or kitten in this case, cannot snag it and pull it out the side. So this effort failed as well. Finally, after about an hour one of the kittens gave up and went into her trap. The other took another hour before curiosity and hunger won out, and we caught him as well.

Now the difficult part starts. We needed to get the mother, as these kittens were still nursing. One of the kittens - the loudest, of course - was put in a carrier with a large trap set in front of the carrier. This often is a successful way to trap a mother. She will go into the trap trying to rescue her kitten. Sometimes it just takes awhile.

This mother was very young herself, so we were surprised at what a really good mother she was. She spent several hours moving back and forth between the two hiding places across the lot from each other, calling her babies all the time. She would go up to the carrier holding her kitten and yell at the kitten to quit fooling around and follow her. Then she would turn around and walk a few feet, turn around again to see if he was following her, and go back to scold him again. On top of the trap, around and around the sides of trap and carrier, on top of the carrier; she even tried to dig the dirt out from under the carrier to see if that helped. She jumped into the back of the car at one point to see if the kitten she knew was in there could be freed. Imagine our surprise when we, who were diligently yet unobtrusively, trying to keep track of her on the ground, turned around and saw her in the back of our car. Who, I ask you, is smarter?

Watching this mother get more and more agitated about her kittens was a bitter-sweet experience. We felt sorry for her frustration, but we also knew without a doubt that her life, as well as that of her kittens, would be much better once she was altered. She was too feral to consider for adoption, but her kittens would have good, indoor-only forever homes once they were big enough.

The mother finally forgot herself and tried to sneak into the trap for her kitten. It took two or three tries, but finally she went in far enough to trip the trap. After about fourteen hours at that lot, success! The family would be put together again in a foster home until the kittens were weaned.

Mother was spayed in June, recovered and returned to her lot to live out her life without having to worry about another litter of babies. She comes for breakfast daily. The kittens were altered in July and will be taken to adoption days to find their forever homes. Their lives will be much improved, and the cycle of reproduction in that lot has been stopped. There will be no more unwanted, feral kittens born to this mother.

The members of Feral Cat Foundation willingly give up their days, and often nights, to improve the lives of the cats and kittens we come across. Have you seen stray or abandoned cats in your parking lots at home or at work, or at the dumpster in back of your favorite fast food restaurant? These cats are often starving and in danger. Often they endure miserable lives, and they need our help. We can help them, but just as important, you can also help them by buying the enclosed raffle tickets. We have terrific prizes - all donated. A list of our prizes is attached. Tickets are \$2 each, or a book of 6 for \$10. Simply fill out the ticket stubs and mail them with your check for \$10 (or more if you can) in the enclosed envelope, or to Feral Cat Foundation PO Box 1173 Alamo, CA 94507. If you would like to purchase more books, you may call our hot line (925) 829-9098 to leave a message, or you can send a stamped, self-addressed envelope to our PO Box. All proceeds from this raffle are spent directly on the cats. FCF is one of the few all-volunteer rescue groups with no paid staff and no professional fund-raisers, and your purchase of these tickets will have a real impact on the work we do. We hope we can count on your help. Please send in your ticket stubs and donation TODAY.

