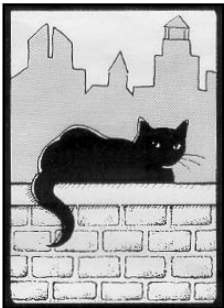


CATmatters

Every Cat Matters. Every Person Counts. Spring 2009

A Feral Cat Caregiver, Volunteers and GNHCP = Teamwork Helping to Improve the Lives of Ferals

by Val Maloney



The Greater New Haven Cat Project, Inc. (GNHCP) is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization formed in 1996 to address the problems of cat overpopulation, neglect and abuse in our area. GNHCP provides spay/neuter assistance for feral, stray and abandoned cats, and promotes responsible pet ownership through educational workshops. The organization is comprised solely of volunteers, and is funded through private donations, fundraising events and grants.

The GNHCP Board Executive Committee

Cheryl DeFilippo	President
Rebecca Gibb	Vice President
Emily Doubleday	Treasurer
Chris Tomczyk	Secretary
Amy Priest	Development
Rose Majestic	Development
Liubincio Tosici, DVM	

Additional Board Members

Roberta Reynolds	Chair, Newsletter
Jennie Llanos	Community Services Coordinator
Kathy Antos	Volunteer Coordinator

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On the same day Chris moved into her new home, she spotted a beautiful calico cat in the next lot. Although she knew nothing about feral cats, she knew she couldn't let the cat go hungry. When she put out a bowl of food it was apparent that the cat was very hungry and quite skittish. Soon "Girlfriend" showed up every day at 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m. looking to be fed.

The months and years that followed brought more cats and kittens into the colony: "Stubby," an American Bobtail cat with short front legs and a stubby tail; "BW," a petite black and white female who is very social with all the other cats; "Stretch" a very friendly male who must have gotten lost from his home or possibly dumped into the colony; and, "The Moolie" a shiny black cat that "talks" to be petted.

When litters of kittens were born, Chris took the kittens, socialized them, and found homes for as many as possible. Unfortunately she was not able to find homes for all of the kittens and the colony grew. Instead of enjoying her beautiful cats, they caused Chris a profound sense of sadness because the situation was getting out of control and because not all of them were socialized, she knew of no way to stop the cats from multiplying. Some nights Chris would hear the turmoil and run outside in an attempt to break up the cat fights and the mating. It was exhausting and fruitless. She would lie awake at night

listening to the cats fighting and pray for an answer to this problem.

Chris knew she couldn't find homes for all the kittens and sometimes the kittens weren't strong enough to survive their first week of life. Sometimes the cats would give birth in a location that was unsafe for the kittens. One time a cat gave birth in a barrel, a heavy rain followed, and all of the kittens drowned... such sadness for a woman who loves animals and just wanted to protect and care for them.

While looking for homes for the newest litter of kittens, a co-worker told Chris about The Greater New Haven Cat Project (GNHCP). Chris called without delay and was so relieved when the organization said it would help – volunteers were sent to humanely trap the cats and arrange to spay/neuter every cat.

The initial trapping went very smoothly with a number of cats going off to the veterinarian for vaccines and surgery. On subsequent trapping attempts, there were a few smart female cats that resisted going into the traps. And, one male cat that kept going in for the bait and getting caught over and over.

Soon all 22 cats were trapped, spayed or neutered, and returned to Chris. The atmosphere within the cat colony was peaceful and Chris could relax and enjoy her cats. There were no more cats howling, no more cats



Stretch

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fighting, and thankfully no more kittens. Chris no longer had to catch kittens and convince friends and relatives to adopt them. Instead she spent her time building

a colony “manageable,” in the sense that no new cats will join and no new kittens will be born into the colony. The assistance from GNHCP was during the year 2000 and 9 years later, the colony is still



Chris and the colony

managed. The males live peacefully not having to battle for the females and suffering bite injuries. The females live with less stress on their bodies because there are no more pregnancies. These cats are especially lucky in that they have insulated plastic bin shelters, a no-freeze water bowl, and a covered feeding station.

cat shelters out of plastic storage bins which she stuffed with straw to keep the cats dry and warm. GNHCP gave her a large plastic dog crate which she, and another GNHCP volunteer, turned into an insulated cat house, with a loft, for multiple cats.

Thanks to The Greater New Haven Cat Project, Chris’ cat colony is a model that trap/neuter/return works to humanely address the cat overpopulation problem and renders

the answer to Chris’ prayers.

GNHCP was truly



Plastic bin shelter

Memorial Contributions

In memory of my beloved cat, “Kitty” 11/7/08 - Anne Voloshin

In memory of Max, Milo, Rosey, and Derrick Canali- Barbara Canali

In memory of Maxine Green - Marilyn Green

Spay/Neuter Statistics by Town for 2008

Ansonia	5	Northford	1
Bethany	6	No. Haven	5
Branford	12	Orange	33
Bridgeport	4	Oxford	10
Cheshire	2	Rocky Hill	1
Clinton	1	Seymour	1
Derby	6	Shelton	1
East Haven	77	Stratford	1
Groton	2	Torrington	1
Hamden	61	Trumbull	1
Hartford	1	West Haven	96
Killingworth	1	Wallingford	11
Meriden	2	Waterbury	3
Milford	13	Wolcott	1
Naugatuck	3	Woodbridge	29
New Haven	195	Totals	586

American Red Cross Animal Humanitarian Award presented to GNHCP President



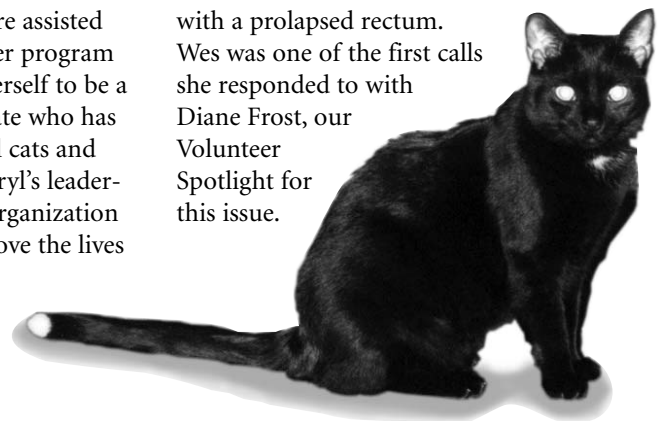
As the President of GNHCP, Cheryl DeFilippo helps alleviate the suffering of abandoned, abused and neglected cats. For the past nine years,

Cheryl’s commitment to these defenseless animals has included oversight of the organization, scheduling trapping and veterinary appointments, monitoring fundraising activities, managing the Center in New Haven where the foster cats live, negotiating “sticky” circumstances involving cats living outdoors, recruiting/training and

ensuring cohesiveness among the volunteers, developing educational workshops, and reviewing grant applications. Cheryl has saved many cats’ lives during her tenure with the organization, caring for at least 2,000 cats and kittens in the local area whose fate otherwise would have been tragic. Over 600 cats were assisted through GNHCP’s spay/neuter program in 2008. Cheryl has proven herself to be a compassionate animal advocate who has always put the welfare of feral cats and foster cats first. Through Cheryl’s leadership and tireless efforts, the organization provides services which improve the lives of cats, their caregivers and other members of the community, while at the same time humanely addressing

the cat overpopulation issue, and promoting responsible pet ownership, respect and ethical treatment for animals.

Cheryl’s personal drive is due to Wesley Davenport (shown here), a former GNHCP foster adopted by Cheryl, who was rescued from New Haven with a prolapsed rectum. Wes was one of the first calls she responded to with Diane Frost, our Volunteer Spotlight for this issue.



Volunteer Spotlight

by Roberta Reynolds

It takes special dedication to crawl under a mobile home, late at night, to rescue kittens, but that is exactly what Diane Frost has done... willingly.

One of our original volunteers, Diane has always had a calling to help animals. She recalls her grandmother feeding a group of cats in the back yard; what we now refer to as a "colony." Long before the days of trapping ferals to spay or neuter, i.e. trap/neuter/return (T/N/R), Diane learned to care for animals through the love her grandmother had for these cats.

As an adult, Diane became a member of PETA, a volunteer for the Bridgeport Animal Shelter and lobbied in Hartford for TAIL (Teaching Animal Awareness

And Legislation). Through these associations, she was asked to attend a "Cat Conference" in 1996 organized by Esther Mechler, the founder and national director of SPAY/USA, a national referral service for low-cost spay/neutering, and an instrumental figure in grassroots organizing, leadership development, and implementing programs to end cat and dog overpopulation. From this conference, The Greater New Haven Cat Project was born, with Diane as a member.

Diane began volunteering in the area

of fundraising for GNHCP, but became interested in being more "hands-on" and soon started trapping ferals in 1997. In those early years, it was easy to fall in love with



Peanut



Jade

Pumpkin

A few of Diane's adoptees



Mommy-son



the cats she helped and she opened up her home to a few of these "at-one-time" strays. She gave them a far better life than they would have had outdoors, even going as far as to give new moms and their litters her bedroom while she slept on the sofa. Diane estimates close to 20 moms with litters have passed through her doors and onto adoptive homes. She recalls one very pregnant cat trapped on Blake Street in New Haven, who delivered her kittens in Diane's dining room. Two of this litter's

kittens found homes in a very unlikely place: Florida! A friend of a Blake Street resident heard of Diane's rescue during his visit to CT and rented a car to drive his new adoptees down south, safely.

Diane has always lent herself to many of GNHCP's needs. Besides assisting in GNHCP's trapping of close to 600 ferals, she has fostered innumerable cats, assisted with transportation and recovery at our spay/neuter clinics, and you can see her every year walking in

the St. Patrick's Day Parade in New Haven. She does whatever has to be done to ensure the cats she is asked to help, indeed get that help, going as far as working with one caregiver for one year to be sure every member of that colony had been spayed or neutered. Very warm and quick to smile, Diane uses

her easy-going nature in her approach to trapping. She has developed different techniques to attract even the most resistant of ferals.

Besides all she does for GNHCP, Diane has worked for 16 years at Subway Real Estate Corporation in the property leasing department. There too, she has helped fellow employees with their own feline situations. She shares her home with a feral named "Lucifer," one very lucky cat.



Cats make about 100 different sounds. Dogs make about 10.



GNHCP Wish List

Things to keep our Center clean and running smoothly and to keep our foster cats happy and healthy.

Gift cards to WAL★MART, Petco or grocery stores

First-class stamps

Paper towels

Trash bags

Simple Green

Dish soap

Frontline

KMR Powder Formula

Catnip toys

Cat treats

Toy Mice

Unopened dry and canned cat food

Donations

The Greater New Haven Cat Project, Inc. (GNHCP), begun in 1996, works to combat the cat overpopulation dilemma with a comprehensive spay/neuter program that focuses on the numerous feral colonies and abandoned cats of Connecticut. We also locate excellent, stable homes for the friendly cats and kittens that are found or abandoned in the streets and houses of the Greater New Haven area. Finally, we offer other programs such as The Tommy Fund, Barn Home Project and regular operations at our Center. If you would like to aid and abet our burgeoning mission, then please consider one of the following options for your gracious donation:

Basic Donation:

With an annual donation of \$25, you will receive copies of our newsletter, *Catmatters* twice a year.

Population Donation:

With an annual donation of \$45, you will receive a copy of our newsletter, *Catmatters*, twice yearly as well as a 10% discount on all GNHCP merchandise or tickets for a GNHCP fundraising event. Most importantly, this type of gift enables GNHCP to spay one female cat and to promote a healthy, humane approach to the cat overpopulation problem.

Gift Donation:

With a minimum donation of \$25, this gift is a great idea for a birthday or holiday for the fellow or sister cat lover in your life. The recipient will receive an acknowledgment on your behalf in addition to our newsletter, *Catmatters*, for one year.

Memorial Donation:

You can recognize a special animal or person in your life with a donation that will help other cats.

Additional Contribution:

Any additional donations received through our newsletter will help to fund our spay/neuter program, The Tommy Fund (for extraordinary veterinary expenses) or operations at our Center.

Foster Cat Sponsorship:

With a donation of \$125, you will receive our newsletter, *Catmatters*, for one year, a photo and update on your sponsored cat and a 10% discount on GNHCP merchandise or tickets for a GNHCP fundraising event.

Please sign me up for a:

Basic Donation (\$25) : _____

Population Donation (\$45) : _____

Gift Donation (\$25) : _____

Sponsor a Foster Cat (\$125): _____

Memorial Donation: \$ _____

In memory of: _____

Contribution to GNHCP:

Spay/Neuter Program \$ _____

Tommy Fund \$ _____

Center expenses \$ _____

Name _____

Full Address _____

Thank you for your support of our efforts. All donations are tax deductible.



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