

FoFF Fall Calendar

- September 4 Yard Sale 8-2
147 Preble St. Ext. South Portland
- September 13 Thrifty Kitty Grand Re-Opening
11-8 Potluck 5:30
General Meeting 6:30
- September 25-26 Pet Quarters Tabling
- October 5 National Feral Cat Day
FoFF Cat Photo Contest
- October 11 General Meeting 7 p.m.
- October 16-17 Kennel Shop Tabling
- October 24 Woofstock
- November 13-14 Fall Feline Frolic 9-3
- December 4 Christmas at Thrifty Kitty 9-3
- Nov/Dec. Borders Christmas Wrapping

*We need YOU to make these events
a success! Contact our office to volunteer!*

**Check our website for new fundraisers and events.
www.feralfelines.net**

Friends of Feral Felines
PO Box 8137
651 Forest Ave. 2nd floor
Portland, ME 04104



Who We Are

Friends of Feral Felines was established in 1993 to reduce feral cat populations through spay-neuter programs. We also provide more humane lives for feral cats through feeding and monitoring colonies, domesticating feral feral kittens, and rehoming feral cats when needed. We are a 501(3)(c) nonprofit so donations are tax-deductible.

Telephone: 207-797-301, 651 Forest Ave. Portland, ME
www.feralfelines.net Email: office@feralfelines.net
Office Hours: 11 a.m. to 3 p.m.

Click for Cats: FoFF Photo Contest

This fall FoFF is launching its first feline photo contest to raise much-needed funds. Categories will include Kittens, Outdoor Ferals, Mr. Handsome and Miss Cutie, and more. The entry fee is \$5 per photo. Photos will be posted and voted for online. The contest will run through October to help celebrate National Feral Cat Day on October 16, 2010. For full details visit our website, www.feralfelines.net.

Good Search Engine Benefits FoFF

Every time you use Good Search.com (versus Google) as your search engine and designate FoFF as your chosen charity, FoFF will make money! To add Good Search to your toolbar visit:
<http://www.goodsearch.com/toolbar/friends-of-feral-felines>

The Advocate

Newsletter of Friends of Feral Felines

Summer/Fall 2010

A Word from the President

My name is Tianna Higgins and I am the new President of FoFF. More than five years ago, I found FoFF when I needed help with a feral mom and several kittens that came to my house. Since then I have trapped, recovered, and fostered over 100 feral cats and kittens, so I truly know the nitty-gritty of the rescue work that is at the core of FoFF. I have found that this organization is filled with dedicated people who do all they can to make life better for feral cats, but we always need more help. We need you.

As summer fades into fall and the nights get cold the need will become even greater. Winter is a brutal time to be on the street, so it's critical that we neuter as many ferals on our waiting list and relocate those without shelter as soon as possible. We need your labor, of course, but as the year draws to a close we desperately need your donations as well to replenish our coffers and allow us to say yes to more needy cats.

Your \$100 donation helps spay or neuter a cat and provide flea and parasite treatment and a rabies shot. Your \$50 donation can buy lots of food to take care of colonies or provide foster parents with much needed supplies. Your \$25 dollar donation can buy gas for a transporter or supplies to craft items we make and sell. We understand times are tough for everyone, and we promise to put your hard-earned dollars to work in the best way we can. Help us help feral cats; they thank you in the most amazing ways. I look forward to working with all of you in our shared mission of taking care of the most forgotten felines.



Spay Event Warriors: Reingold and Ringley, two of the 20 cats spayed or neutered during FoFF's annual Spay Event in late February, recuperating afterwards.

"Fixing" the Problem: Annual Spay Event Helps Reduce Feral Population

Thanks to the valiant staff at the Southern Maine Veterinary Hospital and dedicated FoFF volunteers, 20 feral cats were trapped and spayed or neutered in one March week during this year's annual Spay Event. Similar events were held nationwide in conjunction with National Spay Day on February 23rd. The hospital generously set aside time every day to fix a few of these frequently intractable cats.

This year FoFF focused on one longstanding barn colony, where the cat population had reached 50 at one point in the past. The loss of nearly 30 cats to "natural" causes--disease, untreated injuries, traumatic accidents--is a silent reminder of the suffering of feral cats in out-of-control colonies without a dedicated caretaker. While a neighborhood gentleman provided some dry food, these cats were otherwise left to fend for themselves. Probably due to the inbreeding that develops after a colony reproduces for several generations, one of the cats had a congenitally deformed leg.

To date, all the cats but one (with a chronic ear condition) have been rehomed to other farms where they are welcomed and cared for. (See "Happy Endings," page 3, inside for details.)

Grand Reopening Thrifty Kitty Store

Monday, September 13th, 11 to 8:00

**Potluck Dinner 5:30
General Meeting 6:30**

*** 50/50 Raffle *
* Chair Massage ***

More details inside!

IN MEMORIAM

Donations were made to FoFF on behalf of the following cherished cats or cat-lovers who have passed on. Memorials, as well as honoriams for the living, are accepted on an ongoing basis and help us provide compassionate care for feral felines.

- ◆ In honor of the years of love, care, patience (and Prozac) that Frannie gave to his beloved old cat, Betty. Sleep well now, Frannie.
- ◆ From co-workers Sally, Michelle & Rita--who all understood!
- ◆ In memory of Uncle Mark D. Roach. Love, Madelyn Chapman.
- ◆ In memory of John & Nan Cahalane. From Lynda C. Kelley.
- ◆ In memory of Sadie Davis, my sweet, brave, bobble-head boy. You stole my heart. Love, Beth Davis.
- ◆ In honor of Cosmo, a feline of great distinction, and his devoted mom, Beth. He'll still get his whipped cream in heaven. From Jill.
- ◆ In memory of Cmere Harris. From Amy Harris & Michael.
- ◆ In memory of Preston "Pat" Murphy. From Darlene Ward.
- ◆ In memory of Jean F. Swift. From Gregory Dearborn.
- ◆ In honor of the memory of David Stone. From Mary Stitzell.
- ◆ In memory of our beloved cat, Tribute, who crossed the rainbow bridge on August 10, 2010 at 15 years old. From Barbara Muir.
- ◆ In memory of "The Good Dad," a Sebago feline and father to 40 feral cats, all neutered and placed. He came inside willingly and lived a wonderful nine years, proving that sometimes even an adult feral cat can be the most loving cat of all. Love, Mary Stitzell.
- ◆ In memory of Kathy Patterson, from Bonney Bouley and Larry Stevenson-Grund.

IN HONOR

- ◆ A donation was made to honor the Twitchell Family of Oxford. From Ellen Schultz.



Oceanna, above, was a lifelong resident of Custom House Wharf, Portland. Known as Ginger by Harbor Fish workers and customers, this dearly loved cat was hit and killed by a car this April when she crossed the wharf to get her breakfast from her best friend, Charlotte Croteaux, a market employee who had looked after Ginger since she was a kitten.

FoFF feeders were always happy to see Oceanna when they did their nightly rounds and, as Ginger, she evolved into being almost a mascot for the market. She is deeply missed by many.

Expanded Thrifty Kitty Store Grand Reopening

All are invited to attend the Grand Reopening of Thrifty Kitty, FoFF's fundraising thrift shop, on **Monday, September 13, from 11 a.m. to 8 p.m.**, 651 Forest Ave., Portland. The expanded store features books, videos, art works (including local artists), knick-knacks, Laurel Burch-designed apparel and pocketbooks (see below), FoFF logo merchandise, and the usual thrift store finds. The festivities are also intended to kick off our fall/winter fundraising season, plus offer a chance to mingle with fellow feral cat devotees.

There will be a **potluck dinner** at 5:30 p.m., followed by a **general meeting** at 6:30 p.m. To donate to the potluck RSVP the office.

A drawing will be held for a **50/50 raffle**, with tickets sold from now through the grand opening. Tickets to sell or purchase may be obtained at the office.



Chair massage for donations to FoFF will be provided by At Home Massage from 2:30 to 5:30.

We welcome your donated items, including your own art for consignment, or your donated time to Thrifty Kitty.

FoFF Volunteer Openings

Here are a few ways to get involved with FoFF, and we are always open to ideas for new ways to help feral cats.

Foster People: Work to domesticate feral kittens. Must have spare room in home, patience, and time. Must commit to cats until adopted.

Fundraisers: Assist with planning and working at fundraisers. Should have ideas, energy and enthusiasm for project work.

Publicity Assistant: Prepare and place press releases for events and ongoing needs.

Tablers: Man a table of items for sale for usually 2-4 hours at a fundraising event. Should enjoy interacting with the public.

Trappers: Set and check humane traps. Requires own transportation, flexibility, physical fitness, resourcefulness, patience, and enjoyment of the outdoors.

Feeders: Feed a feral colony usually one day every 1-2 weeks at designated time. Must have own transportation, be reliable and dedicated, and able to move around outdoors in all types of weather.

Transporters: Have own transportation and be available usually before 9 and after 3 to take cats to and from vets.

Supply Manager: Keep track of equipment such as traps and kennels and order merchandise and supplies as needed.

Happy Endings:

Ferals Successfully Rehomed

Since January, FoFF has successfully rehomed dozens of feral cats living in unsafe or neglectful situations without a responsible caretaker. This includes two colonies in particular. The first group involved 20 farm cats that were fixed as part of this year's Spay Event. The 20 cats were the survivors of a group that numbered approximately 50 just a few years ago.

In the ensuing years, the other cats died of "natural" causes--untreated illnesses and injuries or traumatic accidents, silent testimony to the kind of suffering common in unsterilized, ever-growing colonies without a compassionate caregiver. The cats lived mainly on a little dry food provided by a kindly neighborhood gentleman. One cat had a congenitally deformed leg, one of the side effects of the inbreeding that occurs in such colonies.

The other large group of 15 cats came from a tiny, unsanitary trailer where they were housed with domesticated cats as well in a hoarding situation. Many of these cats were so malnourished they had lost most of their fur.

Fortunately, after fixing the cats FoFF was able to rehome all but several of them to barns and farms with cat-loving caretakers. Many people took multiple cats, including Sarah Jackson of New Hampshire, who adopted six from one colony. Her email, excerpted below, illustrates how feral cats, though they do not want to be held or sometimes even seen, can inspire the same degree of devotion and fascination as domesticated cats.

"Just another update on all my kitties for you! Since they've been released [from acclimation kennels], they all have developed their own routine. The morning after I released them, I found a dead mouse on the barn floor – good kitties! The other day, Gilly (the littlest one) was so proud of herself because she caught a cricket. I told her what a good girl she was – crickets today, mice tomorrow!

Romeo (the very friendly one) is my little shadow, following me all over the place as I do chores. He pokes his nose in everything and is always looking to be picked up and patted...He's a sweetheart! But he is still very skittish of strangers. [Note from editor: Occasionally a seemingly feral cat in a colony turns out to be friendly after being relocated and acclimating.]

Gilly and Serena are also around quite a bit, and they do follow me around, but not quite as closely as Romeo. Although I was able to pat Gilly when they were in their crates, she doesn't allow me to get quite that close now that she's free.

I don't get to see the other three as often, but I do see them every evening. The best time to see them is at dusk. I stand very quietly outside the house (usually holding and patting Romeo) and as darkness falls, one by one they appear. They each go in the hay trailer, eat and drink, then wander off into the night. Then, before I go to bed, I go out to check on the horses one last

Painter, right, is one of six feral cats taken from a neglectful barn and adopted with five of his colony mates in the same New Hampshire barn.



Jackie and friend, below, came from a hoarding situation in a trailer where they competed for infrequent food with 13 feral plus some domesticated cats. Some cats lost fur due to malnutrition. Jackie injured an eyeball but her caring new owner brought her to the vet and she is recovering nicely.



I love my new place, but it felt like a property with a couple of horses on it. Now that six more souls call it home, it feels like a true farm. I love watching for my cats to see what they're up to, and it's fun to see them interact.

time. I wear a headlamp and I look around the yard. Nearly always, there are five or six pairs of eyes watching me.

In case you can't already tell, I love my cats! I love my new place, but it felt like a property with a couple of horses on it. Now that six more souls call it home, it feels like a true farm. I love watching for my cats to see what they're up to, and it's fun to see them interact.

Thanks again so much for all your dedicated work to help feral cats. I'm so pleased with mine and can't stop telling people about them – and I always mention your organization."