



Spring 2014

# SNIPPETS

News from the SD West River Spay/Neuter Coalition

 Edited by: Donna Watson  
 Layout: Donnette Thayer

## Happy Tails



Tigger beat the odds. Abandoned, starving, and suffering from a severe eye infection, Tigger has found a happy forever home. Many thanks to our fine Facebook friends who helped save Tigger's life. Left: Tigger before. Middle and Right: A healthy, happy Tigger.

### A FEW OF OUR HAPPY TAILS

#### Tigger (above)

When Tom Huhnerkoch, DVM (Dr. Tom), first saw the little black kitten rescued from the Strawberry Hill colony, he didn't hold much hope for him. At only four weeks and weighing around one pound, the kitten suffered from a severe eye infection. Despite the odds, Dr. Tom named the kitten Tigger, fattened him up a bit and treated him with antibiotics before surgically removing his eye. Post surgery treatment required a very expensive antibiotic. One of our Coalition facebook followers, Shayla Grant, was so moved by the kitten's predicament that she started an on-line fundraiser to help pay for the medicine. It was touch and go for a few weeks but eventually Tigger improved. Then a setback occurred when the infection moved into the kitten's other eye, But Dr. Tom worked his magic, and with loads of TLC from him and his wife Kay, the kitten began to grow, his good eye cleared up and his vision improved. He loved playing with the other Strawberry Hill kittens the Huhnerkochs were fostering. Tigger wormed his way into Dr. Tom's and Kay's hearts and is now a pampered indoor kitty who loves to play with his many toys and his cat friends.

#### Festus (inset)

This striking black and white boy was one of a few tame cats in an abandoned colony of 30 on Strawberry Hill. While releasing three supposedly feral cats into their new barn home after surgery, volunteer Claudia noticed that one of them was walking with a bad limp. In fact he hobbled right to her wanting to be petted. Thinking, "this is not a barn cat," she picked him up and took



Festus, happy, still scrappy, in his new home.

him to the vet, who found that one of his back legs had been broken and healed improperly, leaving it an inch shorter than the other. Through our volunteer network, Laurie in Custer found Festus a wonderful home where he gets lots of love and doesn't have to rush to compete for food or a warm lap.

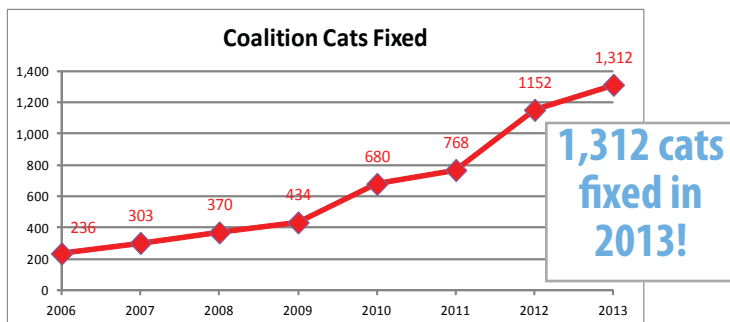
(Continued on page 4)

# A TRUE COALITION

## Our Caregivers

Our wonderful participating veterinarians include:

Clinic	Vet	Contact Information
Animal Clinic of Rapid City	Becky Wagner, DVM	1655 S. Valley Drive Rapid City, SD 57703 (605) 415-4990
Belle Fourche Veterinary Clinic	Bill Marlatt, DVM	406 Summit Street Belle Fourche, SD 57717 (605) 892-2618
Cook Veterinary Clinic	Victoria Cook, DVM	1727 E. Anamosa Rapid City, SD 57703 (605) 399-2665
Country Cats	Tom Huhnerkoch, DVM	By special appointment only.
Country Vet	Lloyd Emond, DVM	14102 Highway 40 Hermosa, SD 57744 (605) 255-5221
Metzger Holcomb Animal Clinic	Sandra Holcomb, DVM	144 E Grant St. Spearfish, SD 57783 (605) 642-3422
Mountain View Animal Hospital	Lynne Mazzone	1130 Jackson Boulevard Rapid City, SD 57702 (605) 343-8050
Northern Hills Veterinary Clinic	Carl Johnson, DVM	713 Anna St Sturgis, SD 57785 (605) 347-3606
Rapid Spay	Wendy Howard, DVM	7410 Black Hawk Rd. #5 Black Hawk, SD 57718 (605) 721-7729
Spearfish Animal Hospital	David Elsom, DVM	310 7th Avenue Spearfish, SD 57783 (605) 642-5771
West Winds Veterinary Hospital	Kristina Trautman, DVM	580 Seger Drive Rapid City, SD 57701 (605) 343-3061



## Letter from the President

### Join us!

Donna Watson



Coalition President Donna Watson

A handful of animal lovers met late in 2005 to figure out a way to help the pets in western South Dakota. Overly optimistic, we called ourselves a Coalition, and in 2006 began hosting affordable spay/neuter cat clinics at the office of our single veterinarian, Kristina Trautman, West Winds Animal Service in Rapid City. That first year we altered 216 cats. Each year following, additional generous, caring veterinarians and volunteers throughout the Hills have joined our ranks, and we have become a coalition in the true sense of the word, hosting clinics and conducting Trap, Neuter, Return (TNR) from Custer to Belle Fourche. Volunteers lend each other a hand with

advice, placement, trapping, swapping equipment and just plain moral support, sometimes badly needed. In 2013 we reached a milestone of 1,312 cats! We invite you to join Coalition volunteers in our mission to save cat's lives through spay/neuter. Call 593-5550 and sign up - we need you! ●

***"When a man loves cats, I am his friend and comrade without further introduction." Mark Twain***

## Active and Much-Valued Volunteers

- Donna Watson, Deadwood (since 2005)
- Donnette Thayer, Edmonton (2006)
- Carol Markeson, Belle Fourche (2007)
- Sarah McEvoy, Deadwood (2007)
- Sandy Kringin, Belle Fourche (2008)
- Shari Rose, Rapid City (2008)
- Kristina Prioetti, Rapid City (2008)
- Kathy Brown, Black Hawk (2009)
- Claudia Murphy, Black Hawk (2010)
- Marshall Raeburn, Deadwood (2010)
- Laurie Kampfer, Custer (2011)
- Lori Tetreault, Whitewood (2012) ●

**98.5%  
of  
donations  
go to  
S/N!**

### Contact us by mail or through our website:

South Dakota West River Spay/Neuter Coalition  
P.O. Box 286  
Deadwood, SD 57732  
605-593-5550, 605-593-5549  
<http://spayneutercoalition.com/>



**Like us on  
Facebook!**

# PEOPLE AND PLACES AND CATS

## Trap, Neuter, Return (TNR)

*A large portion of Coalition funds and volunteer efforts go toward TNR. During 2013, we successfully stabilized five large colonies (with up to 30 cats per colony) and several smaller ones.*

### Strawberry Hill

**Wendy, Lori, Claudia**

In May, Wendy discovered that a neighbor on Strawberry Hills (south of Deadwood) had moved and left a large colony of both tame and feral cats and kittens. She immediately set up feeding stations and tried to decide how she could accomplish the enormous job of fixing and relocating all the cats. After many calls, Wendy found Lori, a Coalition volunteer from Whitewood. Lori said it was the most heartbreaking scene she had ever witnessed. The women took home sick tame cats and kittens to care for and in the meantime started trapping. Of the 30 cats in the colony, four died. The women placed the fixed feral cats in caring barn homes and found permanent homes for the tame cats and kittens. Wendy and Lori deserve big kudos for taking on this enormous TNR effort.

### New Underwood

**Kristie**

Soon after Kristie moved to rural New Underwood she noticed several malnourished cats wandering around her open garage and house apparently searching for food. A neighbor told her they belonged to the previous owner, who had left them behind. The neighbor, not a cat lover, said that if the cats continued to wander over

to her property she would shoot them. So Kristie quickly bought food, set out water bowls and fortified their garage shelter. Then she got busy trapping and transporting cats to her vet. With three done, she realized the enormous cost she was facing with up to 15 remaining. Looking for low-cost options on the Internet led Kristie to our website. Shari offered financial assistance, ever pleased when someone is willing to assist in trapping and transporting. Within three weeks most of the cats were fixed and living happily in their cozy shelter. Just a few more to go! Thank goodness for caring people like Kristie.

### Box Elder

**Phyllis**

Phyllis, a retired woman in Box Elder, called the Coalition for help. Two years earlier she and her husband, Richard, began feeding two strays, and since they couldn't afford the high cost of spay/neuter, watched as the colony multiplied to 12 cats. At last she heard about the Coalition and of course we were happy to help. Phyllis and Richard did all the work of trapping and transporting, and continue to care for the now controlled colony. Volunteers especially appreciate caring folks like Phyllis and Richard.



### Moorcroft, Wyoming

**Lisa**

Lisa called about controlling the ever expanding number of cats in her barn. She was so eager to do this that she was willing to trap and drive 80 miles to Spearfish to have the cats altered, so of course we were eager to help. All 11 cats now live happily in Lisa's barn. Oh, except for one Siamese kitten who earned the privilege of being a pampered member of Lisa's household.

This is just a sample of successful TNR efforts throughout the Hills – so many stories, so little space! ●

**"I hold that the more helpless a creature, the more entitled it is to protection from the cruelty of man." -- Mahatma Gandhi**

## Our Heroes

### CENTER OF THE NATION HUMANE SOCIETY



**The Coalition is grateful for Center of the Nation Humane Society's generous donation to help animals in Belle Fouché!**

### THE SUMMERLEE FOUNDATION

**The Summerlee Foundation, once again, has generously donated funds to assist with spay/neuter of tame and feral cats. Thank you, Summerlee!**

(Continued from page 1)

**Marble**

Volunteer Lori Tet-reault received a call in September from an employee at the Motorcycle Museum in Sturgis about an abandoned kitten that employees had been feeding outside the building but had not been able to catch. With winter approaching they worried about it not having any shelter. Lori trapped the kitten, had her spayed and found her a wonderful home with Buck, The Cat Whisperer who lives outside Sturgis and has a special knack for taming wild cats. He named the multicolored cat Marble, and she is living the good life with her motorcycle days behind her.



Marble: Living the good life.

**Pounce and Button**

In October, volunteer Shari Rose trapped these pretty Calico kittens along with four feral adults from a summer RV camp in Rapid City. With no one left to feed them, Shari set up a nearby feeding station and shelter, had the cats fixed and released them, and brought home the semi-tame Calico kittens to



Pounce and Button.

tame. After only two weeks in her bathroom, the kittens rubbed around her legs when she came into the room, competing for attention. Through contacts and facebook she found a great forever home for the girls. A month later when Shari went to visit them, she saw the kittens run to their new mom, Kathy when she called them, and Shari felt that surge of pleasure that rescuers get when they know they have given a pet a new lease on life.

**Mick**

For weeks, the young black cat roamed the section of Mickelson Trail that passes through Custer. A friendly boy, he would jump out of the bushes and run up to people. After hearing about him from several people, volunteer Laurie Kampfer decided to track down his owners. She knocked on doors along the trail, but no one claimed him. She then decided to find the cat, which wasn't hard because around 7 pm every evening he was known to join the track team where they started their evening run. Sure enough, he appeared. Laurie called to him and he jumped into her arms. She carried him home, so happy to get him to a safe place. Because her ten other rescue cats would not accept him, she found a home for Mickelson (Mick) with a wonderful woman and her dog. ●



Mick and family: Kiki (left) and Tessa (right)

# Petsmart Grant for TNR!

In December, the Coalition received a generous grant from PetSmart to conduct TNR at four mobile home parks in Black Hawk. With large colonies in each park, we have a lot of work ahead of us. In fact, we could really use some help. If you have time to set and monitor traps or transport cats to and from a nearby vet and/or if you have room to foster homeless tame

cats and kittens (and/or to tame feral kittens), please contact us! We need you!

**To contribute, call 605-593-5550 ●**

# Going the Extra Mile

**ELIZABETH, Age 14**

Her dad said she could have a cat, but caring for it would be her sole responsibility. She called and asked how much it would cost to spay a female so she could save up enough babysitting money. Elizabeth mentioned that her 12 year old sister had a cat too, a male that she was responsible for. Handwriting on the wall, Donna signed them both up for a clinic, waiving the entire fee for the male, but Elizabeth failed to show up on clinic day. Donna sent a voucher and still she was a "no show." Finally Janae, vet tech with Rapid Spay, offered to pick up the cats on her way to work and deliver them back home at the end of the day. Many more litters of kittens avoided!

**DOROTHY**

Dorothy, age 95, had taken in two strays, a "mom" cat and her adult kitten, who came and went through a cubby hole in the mobile home bathroom. Knowing the cats had to be fixed she called, but had no idea how she would catch and transport the semi-feral cats to the vet. Claudia came to the rescue, set traps inside Dorothy's home, caught the cats and took them in. Later in the day Claudia returned the cats to Dorothy and before releasing them, patched the hole so they couldn't get out while they were healing. ●

