



Spring 2018

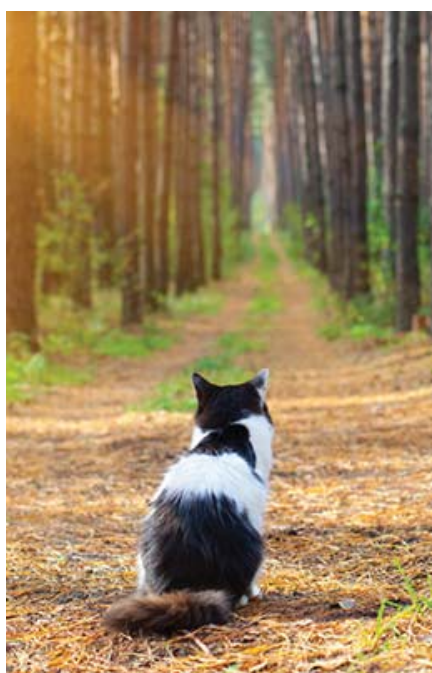
SNIPPETS

News from the SD West River Spay/Neuter Coalition

 Edited by: Donna Watson
 Layout: Donnette Thayer

Help for cats at “the end of the road” and for the caring folks who take them in

“Somebody just dropped off another cat.” Volunteers have become accustomed to hearing this comment from callers who live on isolated roads outside our Black Hills towns. No streetlights or nearby neighbors make rural areas prime locations for uncaring people to abandon unwanted pets. Requests for help come in so often that we began referring to them as “end of the road” callers. These are people who care; who willingly allow little lost ones to join their cat families because they haven’t the heart to turn them away. Although willing to provide food and shelter for new additions, they often cannot afford the high cost of having them fixed. Much of our work involves helping these kind folks at the “end of the road.”



Not all cats are lucky enough to find such caring people. You’ve probably seen some of these cats scurrying across a field, down an alley or dead along the highway. A domestic abandoned cat is usually woefully unprepared to survive. While some cats retain their hunting skills, most do not, and those who can hunt generally will not find enough prey to survive. Finding clean water poses another challenge, as do our frigid winter temperatures. Without shelter and weak from poor nutrition, cats are most likely to freeze to death. An abandoned cat lives an average of two or three years, and during their short lives they continue to reproduce.

Statistics show that 60 to 100 million feral cats live in the

U.S., generally the offspring of unaltered abandoned cats. The burgeoning offspring contribute significantly to the high rate of cat intake and euthanasia in U.S. shelters, a direct consequence of abandonment. Alarming, only 10% of animals received by U.S. shelters have been spayed or neutered. While educating pet owners about the importance of spay/neuter has helped, the real solution lies in making the surgeries readily available and much more affordable. We are so grateful to our dedicated vets throughout the Hills who offer their time and resources to help save cats lives through spay/neuter. Some day at some far off future date, we hope and believe that every kitten born will be wanted -- that no cats will wind up at the end of the road and that abandonment will be a forgotten cruelty. ●



More than just faces . . .

A few of the “end of the road” cats we have helped this past year. We work hard to change the looks in their faces from fear and confusion to trust and contentment.

WORKING OUTSIDE THE BOUNDS

Happy Tails

New beginnings for cats at "the end of the road."



JB (Just Blessed): This 6-month-old female showed up in Jeanette's barn with her leg caught in a collar, which had become imbedded a quarter inch into her armpit. We had helped Jeanette with spaying another kitten a month before, and she said the

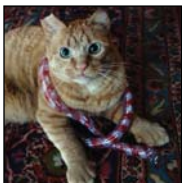
two appeared to be siblings. She figured both were dropped off along her country road at the same time, but it took little JB a month longer on three legs to make it to safety. Jeanette cared for the new arrival and has given both abandoned kittens a wonderful home.

Gizmo: A kind person found Gizmo wandering almost blind on a small town street and picked her up. She could not afford the expensive surgery to repair a congenital eye deformity and contacted volunteer Lori



Gizmo

Tetrault for help. Gizmo's condition fell beyond the bounds of Coalition spending, and Lori transported her to Second Chance Sheridan Cat Rescue where she received the necessary surgery. Coalition volunteer Shari Rose set up a "gofundme" site to help with the surgery cost. Once her eyes have healed, Gizmo will be up for adoption.



Mac

Mac: He lived for years on an elderly woman's front porch, braving the cold in Rapid City. When she died, a relative considered having Mac euthanized because no one in the family wanted him. Lori happened to be trapping in the neighborhood, heard about Mac's plight and picked him up. Neutered and placed, Mac now lives in a warm home; no more frostbitten ears for this boy!

Spirit: Shari found Spirit living under a mobile home where she was trapping. A vet confirmed that the unspayed female was deaf and blind. After being fostered for a few weeks, sweet Spirit was taken in by a rescue organization that arranged for her to go to the Best Friends Animal Shelter in Utah. She lived there with other blind cats until a visitor



Spirit

fell in love with her and took her home.



Mad Max

Mad Max: This tame intact male had been hit by a car on a 5 degree winter day. Shari was passing by and saw the cathunched over, head on the pavement, on

the side of a busy highway. She stopped to make sure the cat was dead, and convinced that he was, turned to leave. She happened to glance back and was amazed to see his ear twitch. Shari picked him up and ran him to a vet. Despite severe bruising, Mad Max had suffered no permanent injuries. After a six week recover in a foster home, he was neutered and now lives in a warm and loving forever home.



Dinky

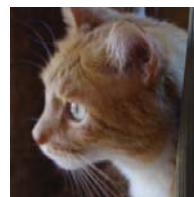
Dinky: A colony caretaker called to say he had rescued a tame kitten from the colony. Wyatt said the kitten appeared to be only six to eight weeks old and was sick with a runny nose and teary eyes that seemed to be covered with a heavy film. Dr. Tom came through again: he kept the kitten for a week, treating him for acute eye infections and severe malnutrition. He found that little Dinky was actually six months old! The kitten now has a wonderful home with his rescuer and his wife Misty. And we still haven't figured out how a tame kitten wound up in a feral colony!

Community Cats:

Chic, a compassionate elderly Rapid City woman, noticed a feral cat and kittens on her cul-de-sac. She started feeding them and even fixed up a heated shelter



for them. When the cats were almost full grown, neighbors began to worry about them breeding and called the Coalition. Shari trapped not only the mom and her four kittens, she also caught a large tom cat! The little cat family lives happily on the cul-de-sac working to keep down vole and mice populations.



**Garri's Cat
Cheeto**

Garri's Cats: When our dear friend and long-time donor Garri Garrison died, she left 13 cats. Belle Fourche volunteer Sandy Kringen rounded up the cats and found homes for 11 of them, including two FIV cats adopted by another Coalition volunteer and two additional FIV cats that Sandy adopted herself.

Coalition volunteers saved these lucky cats, but most cats abandoned at the "end of the road" are not so lucky.

Spay a Stray

SPAY A STRAY

A Note from the President



For over 30 years I've been helping cats. Friends sometimes ask: "But why cats?" I've always been an animal lover, as are all of us who spend time volunteering to rescue, foster or otherwise improve the lives of domestic animals. But -- "why cats?" To me it's because cats are the most ignored, mistreated and persecuted of all domestic animals -- that is, those

domestic animals that we, as average citizens, have the ability to help.

Cats are like snowflakes, each one is different. And yet if you've ever had a cat (or a cat has had you), you know their capacity to give and receive love, the silly antics that make you laugh, their companionship and loyalty. Every kitten born has the potential to be a loving companion, but many never have this chance, and are destined to a life of fear and a constant struggle to survive. Every year our volunteers go the extra mile to remove

kittens and tame cats from colonies and from the streets and give them loving homes.

I am so proud of our success over the past 11 years; we have seen both the intake and euthanasia rates for cats decline at the Humane Society of the Black Hills. Now with four organizations in western South Dakota working toward the same goal -- to provide reduced cost spay/neuter, we are clearly making a difference. We have become part of a national movement to make the United States a "No-Kill Nation" by 2025. **◆**

Contact us by mail or through our website or Facebook page

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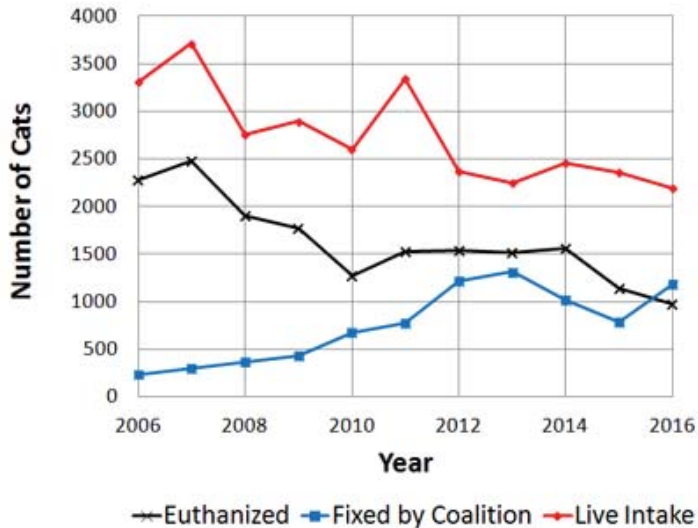


Like us on Facebook!
 West River Spay Neuter Coalition

The impact of almost 9,000 fixes

Since becoming operational in 2006, Coalition volunteers have been responsible for altering 8,819 (as of February 2018) cats in western South Dakota and the surrounding area, preventing the births of thousands of kittens, many of which would have been born to suffer or die at a shelter. Our work has helped reduce shelter intake at the Humane Society of the Black Hills. We use these data to track our success.

Many thanks to Jacque Harvey, Executive Director of the Humane Society of the Black Hills (HSBH), for providing data and for all the work she and the good folks at HSBH do for the animals who come into their care, and to Friends of Twin City Animal Shelter, Western Hills Humane Society, and the Sturgis/Meade County Animal Shelter, Operation Pets, and Oglala Pet Project for their good work in helping animals. **◆**



THANK YOU! LET'S KEEP UP THE GOOD WORK

Your donations have helped save thousands of cats' lives and prevented the cruel deaths of many thousands more. Please help. Any amount is appreciated. Thank you.

Participating veterinarians -- giving their time and resources to help save cats' lives:

Belle Fourche Veterinary Clinic	Belle Fourche
Cook Veterinary Clinic	Rapid City
LFC Veterinary Service	Custer
Country Vet	Hermosa
Northern Hills Veterinary Clinic	Sturgis
Spearfish Animal Hospital	Spearfish
Country Cats	Lead

Our Amazing Volunteers (north to south)

Carol Markeson, Belle Fourche
 Sandy Kringin, Belle Fourche
 Lori Tetreault, Whitewood
 Sarah McEvoy, Deadwood
 Donna Watson, Deadwood
 Shari Rose, Rapid City
 Laurie Kampfner, Custer
 Donnette Thayer, Nebraska

Foster homes
 Christy Land
 Kristi Skorseth
 Shari Rose
 Kathy Brown

HELP!

Save cats' lives! Just an hour a week will mean a lot. We need volunteers for fundraising, administrative work, answering phone calls, trapping, fostering tame cats and fostering/taming feral kittens.



OUR SUPERHEROES

Black Hills State University Honors Students held their fourth annual **Furball** last October. Under the direction of **Dr. Courtney Huse-Wika** and headed up by **Katelyn Woten** and **Skylar Smith**, the event was a huge success and lots of fun. Thanks to their hard work we can now fix more cats in the northern Hills.

Other major donors to whom we owe our sincere gratitude:
 Kathy Huse-Wika Thayer-Gladstone family
 Beth Morey John Gamon
 Roxanne Horkey Sandy Kringen
 Lynn Namminga Lori Magelky
 Ted Heider Mary Scull

98.5% of donations pay for spay or neuter surgeries!

And we can't forget to thank Maria Trainin, who continues to make beautiful cat cards for the Coalition.

A special thank you goes out to everyone who has sent in whatever he or she could afford to help with our mission of saving cats' lives through spay/neuter. Every donation counts! Paypal makes it easy to donate at our website: spayneutercoalition.com

You too can be a hero!
Write a check, pop it in the mail. Or just PayPal us!

