

The Hairball Herald

A newsletter from L.I.C.K.

A non-profit cat rescue and adoption organization

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2008 – More than enough cats

- Peggy Thomson, LICK Founder/Director

After all the trap-neuter-release the rescue groups did in the winter of 2008, we were hoping that “kitten season” would be a light affair this year. Not so much. As with every other rescue group/individual and shelter in this area, LICK was overwhelmed early and often as the calls came pouring in. Mother cats were having their kittens in shrubbery, under decks, in woodpiles

and in storm drains. Some pregnant cats surprised us by having their kittens within hours of rescue. (Talk about timing!) We’d bring them in at night and by morning they were no longer alone in their cages. Blessed events were happening everywhere. For example: The Mom pictured above (Blueberry, with two of her kittens, Streudel and Cobbler) hid her kittens in the beautiful landscaping of a homeowner in Hammonton. As I lifted each little 3-week old furball from the center of a dense shrub, the shrub next to it would growl menacingly. A gray head with very worried eyes finally poked through as number three was being airlifted in my hand and the growl turned into a heartbreaking plaintive mew. Not to worry, I told her – I’m taking you, too. The kittens were placed in a carrier at the back of the shrubbery and a humane trap was placed in front of it. Fifteen minutes later, Mom overcame her fear of the trap in order to get to her kittens and all four were transported to the LICK shelter. Ta-Da!

And so it went, all spring and summer long. LICK rescued 83 kittens. Some were old enough to be TNR’d, some were adopted, and some are still waiting for homes. Sadly, many calls for help were turned away as we ran out of space, time, and funds. NEXT YEAR, we have to do things differently. We need foster homes – lots of them – who will take in the litters, socialize the kittens, and help adopt them out. If you think you’re up to it, give us a call! You will be providing a vital service and saving the lives of some little precious furballs.

As for the TNR skeptics who point to the numbers and claim that it doesn’t work, I just have this to say: Just imagine how much worse the stray overpopulation would be without it. We may not be getting ahead of the problem, but at least we’re keeping it from getting worse. And I still believe that with sustained assistance from area vets and organizations in providing low cost spay/neuter programs and the relentless efforts of the rescue groups and individuals who do all the rescue and recovery, we WILL eventually get ahead of it



A community effort

One of the great things about LICK is that it is an all-volunteer group effort. It started out in 1996 as one individual putting up one little shed and filling it with cats plucked from a parking lot in Atlantic City. It now is that one little shed – and two other barns, run by 12 volunteers, stocked with cats from all over Atlantic County, and supported by countless individuals and groups. Thank you to all who contributed funds, food, supplies, bedding, labor, services, encouragement, and love this past year. You are **all** appreciated more than you know, and a few should be recognized here:

Barbara & David Lieberman – Always there when needed in **every** possible way.

Betty Thomson – LICK's grandma. Your support is very special.

Linda Gordon – A longtime supporter. What would we do without your encouragement?

Gayle Terry – How blessed we were when you decided to help us out in so many ways.

Judy Astin – A new friend whose love of animals matches your generosity.

Dr. James Hagan (Cologne Animal Hospital) – Your years of providing spay/neuter services for LICK are appreciated more than you will ever know and have tremendously advanced our mission to reduce the stray overpopulation. And great staff!

Dr. Mary Wilkes – We are deeply grateful for your time, expertise and help in every way to keep the LICK kitties healthy.

Dr. Lori Nordt (Atlantic Animal Health Center) – What a gift your free Spay Day was last February! You really made a difference! And your help with emergencies since then has been greatly appreciated.

Dr. Sue Rew (My Best Friends Veterinary Hospital) – We gratefully acknowledge your ongoing commitment to LICK's efforts and look forward to an even deeper alliance now that the practice is open! (YAY!)

Nancy Beall (Director – Atlantic County SPCA) – Your support of LICK in so many ways has made our mission much easier this past year, from providing the recovery area for our cats on Spay Day USA, to loaning us your own van on numerous occasions to get to/from various clinics, and for significantly furthering our TNR efforts with that marvelous mobile spay/neuter van! And thanks to Bill Beall for piloting that van!

The LICK volunteers are the most special people in the world. Many thanks to:

Lisa Butari, Reva Heintz, Matt Curry, Mary Ann McGann, Vikki Schiffler, Sharon Verdine, Aliza Saduk, Susan Spengler, Karen Abrahamson, Kathy, Norm Splatt, and Peggy Thomson. Also special thanks to our foster moms Karen Sauchak, Gayle Terry and Lois Oliver, our catnip party provider Susan Albright, and our webmistress Lucia Van Pelt. We also want to gratefully acknowledge the efforts of our fundraiser support staff: Beth Chevalier, Heather Colache, Tina Bauer, Donna Heck, Lisa Butari, Kathy Gandolfo, Norm Splatt and Cody, Cory, Mike, and Matt Curry.

And thank you to all of the many people who agreed to Trap-Neuter-Return when we were unable to take any more in. This was the only chance for these cats to survive and you gave it to them. I wish we could clone you!!

Finally, no acknowledgement of assistance would be complete without mentioning the support of fellow rescuers, both individuals and groups. Their moral support, hands-on assistance, and shared tears and laughter are invaluable. These people are intertwined in all of LICK's efforts: Yvonne Iannocco, Colleen Morgan (Thrifty Kitty), Judy Cantin (C.A.T.S.), Jean Evans, Valerie Laudermilch, Dick Soucy, and Julie Fors.



Martina, the beautiful cat pictured here, would like to remind you of a few things you can do to help improve the lives of cats in your little corner of the world:

Now that the weather is colder, please remember to clear any cats out from under your hood before starting the car to avoid fan belt injuries. Just give the horn a little honk - or pound on the hood – wait a few seconds to give them time to vacate, and then start your car.

Buy animal-safe antifreeze and sidewalk salt/de-icer.

Put out some warm, inexpensive shelter for any strays you are feeding. Just get an 18-gallon tote with lid, cut a cat-size hole in one end, line it with straw or a blanket, and place a brick on the top (to keep it from blowing over). It's wind/water proof and cozy! And cheap!!

Now for the lighter side

THINGS EVERY CAT SHOULD REMEMBER:

- * **Screaming at the can of food will not make it open itself.**
- * I should not assume the patio door is open when I race outside to chase leaves.
- * **If I play "dead cat on the stairs" while people are trying to bring in groceries or laundry, one of these days it will really come true.**
- * If I put a live mouse in my food bowl, I should not expect it to stay there until I get hungry.
- * **The guinea pig likes to sleep once in a while. I will not watch him constantly.**
- * If I bite the cactus, it will bite back.
- * **I will not stand on the bathroom counter, stare down the hall, and growl at nothing right after my human has finished watching "The X-Files."**
- * My human is capable of cooking bacon and eggs without my help.
- * **Television and computer screens do not exist to backlight my lovely tail.**
- * No matter how dangly and attractive they are, my human's earrings are not cat toys.
- * **The canned cat food is already dead. I do not need to kill it by swatting bits of it all over the floor.**
- * I am a carnivore. Potted plants are not meat.
- * **I will never be able to walk on the ceiling, and staring up the wall and screaming at it will not bring it any closer.**
- * It is not a good idea to try to lap up the powdered creamer before it all dissolves in the boiling coffee.
- * **If my human wants to share her sandwich with me, she will give me a piece. She will notice if I start eating it from the other end.**
- * The goldfish likes living in water and must be allowed to remain in its bowl.
- * **I cannot leap through closed windows to catch birds outside.**
- * The large dog in the back yard has lived there for six years. I will not freak out every time I see it.
- * **If I must give a present to my human's overnight guests, my toy mouse is much more socially acceptable than a live cockroach, even if it isn't as tasty.**
- * As talented as I may be with kitty litter, my human will not be impressed with my attempts to build sand castles in the litter box.

How you can help

We understand that many people have been hit hard by present economic conditions. Still, a little bit goes a long way with animal rescue. (For instance, a \$5 donation will buy 6 cans of cat food or a bag of cat litter.) Larger donations, for those who are still able, are applied as follows: \$25 pays for gas for a week for vet visits, rescue stakeouts, and supply pick-ups; \$55 will cover a spay/neuter; \$100 buys antibiotics for 12 sneezing kitties; \$150 provides enough dry cat food for a week; \$195 pays for van insurance for a month; \$250 covers the entire weekly food/supply bill at Sam's Club (food, litter, paper towels, bleach, trash bags, disposable aluminum pans for isolated sick kitties). Larger amounts allow us to take care of non-routine veterinary care including emergency visits, medicines, dentals, lab work, and x-rays.

There's a little self-addressed envelope with this newsletter. If you decide to put something in it for the LICK cats, you will have our gratitude and the satisfaction of knowing you are a part of this community effort. Checks should be made out to L.I.C.K. Gift cards to Sam's Club, PetSmart and WaWa Gas work, too!

Non-monetary donations are equally appreciated. We are always in need of canned and dry cat food, cat litter, paper towels, and trash bags.

No funds left over at the end of your bills? Then consider **donating your time**. It could be a one-time assistance to help with yard work or shelter maintenance or an ongoing effort of one-day-a-week barn cleaning and cat-tending. Does once-a-month fit into your schedule? You could stop by and bleach the traps, cages, and carriers that are constantly being rotated into use. (This is outdoor work.)

Special needs: We need an alternator for our van. Any offers of help? We also need some outdoor lighting in the large barn area and a few more "mangers" for weather-proof feeding.

This year Iacobucci Homes and Asbury United Methodist Church independently held their own **food drives** for LICK. (**THANK YOU!**) This has been unbelievably helpful. You could do the same – just approach someone at your workplace, church, or organization, and see what you can do.

Thank you, everyone, for helping us in our mission to improve the lives of cats and kittens in our communities.



Name: _____ Phone _____

Address: _____

____ I would like to volunteer. ____ I would like to foster ____ I am donating the following: _____