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It is Alley Cat Allies' practice to exchange the names of our donors with other charities that share our values. We do this in order to both expand our donor base and to spread our mission and to support those charities who we feel are working toward the good of animals and our community. Please notify us if you would prefer that we not share your name. We would be happy to remove your information from our exchange list.

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A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Nothing "Necessary" About This Evil

What gets us into trouble is not what we don't know.

It's what we know for sure that just ain't so.

—MARK TWAIN

MORE CATS are intentionally killed in the United States than die from any other cause.

Who is responsible? Surely there are not that many depraved individuals. And, in fact, there aren't. The vast majority of these killings are perpetrated not by cruel individuals, but under the authority of an antiquated animal control system. In particular, the killings are performed by government employees and government contractors, and spill over to private shelter employees. Everyone deplores this killing. Many characterize it as "evil." What separates Alley Cat Allies (ACA) from many other organizations that claim it is a "necessary evil" is that ACA knows it is not.

Today's animal control system began over 100 years ago to address certain serious harms that dogs posed to humans. That system has become widespread and deeply entrenched; it is now written into all state and many local government laws, and also includes government buildings, equipment and personnel, and government contracts, budgets and revenues. The system is based on ownership of animals; it seeks to control animals by controlling their owners. The laws are a collection of owner duties to prevent damage, such as duties to leash, to muzzle, to fence, to vaccinate. But in the past three decades, the stray animal population has undergone a radical change. Cats have eclipsed dogs as the majority of the stray population, and many of these cats are not socialized to

humans because they are offspring of a lost or abandoned owned animal.

Nevertheless, many animal organizations insist that the historic system based on owner liability continues to be viable today, and ignore the changed demographics of the unowned stray animal population. They claim that we need to strengthen the existing system; broaden existing laws to include cats, increase enforcement, impose more fines—in short, do more of the same. And in the interim, continue to accept that killing is a necessary evil.

But feral cats are not socialized to humans. They are not adoption candidates. To put them into an animal control system, where the only positive outcome is adoption, is to hand these animals a death sentence. For these reasons, Alley Cat Allies insists that a new animal control system is necessary—a system that offers positive outcomes for stray and feral cats. In other words, we recognize that the historic animal control system is the problem, not the solution.

Fortunately, a viable, nonlethal alternative has already been identified and is being implemented in communities across the world.

Since 1990, ACA has been the national leader in humane education about feral cats and in promoting Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) as the only humane, effective method to reduce their population. Now you can help ACA spread the truth about the plight of feral cats. Help us reform the system of government-sanctioned killings. Together we can spread the word that the "necessary evil" of killing cats is anything but necessary.

Thank you so much for your support. ●



Donna Wilcox

Our Mission: Alley Cat Allies is dedicated to advocating for nonlethal methods to reduce outdoor cat populations.

Our Vision: Alley Cat Allies envisions the time when TNR and other nonlethal control measures for managing outdoor cat populations are accepted as the standard.

What Is TNR? TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN (TNR) is a full management plan in which stray and feral cats already living outdoors in cities, towns, and rural areas are humanely trapped, then evaluated, vaccinated, and sterilized by veterinarians. Kittens and tame cats are adopted into good homes. Healthy cats too wild to be adopted are returned to their familiar habitat under the lifelong care of volunteers.