



Winter 2010

Feral Focus

Showcasing how your gifts are improving the lives of outdoor, homeless cats

IndyFeral offers Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) and colony management assistance for stray & feral (wild) cats in Central Indiana.

From the Executive Director

IndyFeral Thrives Even During a Down Year

Volunteers, donors still help stray and homeless cats



It was a tough year. Organizations, businesses, and families struggled. We all did more with less. IndyFeral was no exception. However, despite the hard times we still managed to take care of more feral cats than we ever have in our seven-year history. In 2009, IndyFeral:

- Spayed or neutered 3,100 cats and kittens.
- Provided medical care to over 400 cats and kittens. This includes medical, surgical repair or long-term recovery with the goal of returning the cat or kitten to its colony.
- Re-homed 600 friendly cats and kittens with the help of our adoption partners, the Humane Society of Indianapolis (HSI) and Cats Haven.
- Distributed 30,000 pounds of cat food to caretakers to assist in feeding their cat colonies.
- Distributed over 200 cat shelters free of charge to protect colony cats from the harsh winter weather.
- Passed a TNR ordinance in the city of Southport.
- Launched a new partnership with Habitat for Dogmanity – called Habitat for Catmanity – to build cat colony feeding stations.

We could never accomplish these things without the tireless dedication of our volunteers: cat captains, veterinarians, colony caretakers, board members, and other volunteers who regularly provide time and talent to keep our programs

moving forward. And of course, our donors play a critical role in generously supplying the financial resources necessary to make our operation happen.

Special thanks to our ongoing corporate sponsors and organization partners – Pet Supplies “Plus,” Spay-Neuter Services of Indiana, Humane Society of Indianapolis, Cats Haven, Low-Cost Spay Neuter Clinic of Hamilton County, Indianapolis Animal Care and Control, and many others – all provide resources to make our TNR work possible.

The need for TNR is still great, and this year we will continue to work with HSI on an exciting new venture to address this problem. HSI will open Indianapolis’ first collaborative low-cost spay/neuter and animal welfare center in Fountain Square – the area where the need for TNR is the greatest.

IndyFeral, FIDO, and Indy Pit Crew will all share space in this new facility. The goal is to sterilize 5,000 cats and dogs the first year and by year three, increase that number to 10,000 – 12,000. The center will have a huge positive impact on animal welfare in Indianapolis.

On behalf of IndyFeral and the thousands of cats and kittens who are helped every year, thank you for caring. Here’s to a happy and productive 2010.

All the best,



Lisa Tudor

Feral Focus is published
by IndyFeral
P.O. Box 30054
Indianapolis, Indiana 46230-0054

IndyFeral is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization dedicated to helping stray and feral cats in the Indianapolis area by creating resources to provide food, shelter, sterilization, and medical care. Our mission is to reduce the unowned stray and feral (wild) cat overpopulation through the non-lethal method of Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR), not trap and kill.

Lisa Tudor, Executive Director
Direct questions or change of address to contact@indyferal.org or call (317) 596-2300.

Stories From Our Caretakers

From Julie: A memoriam for Old Tom



This is Old Tom. He passed away in November last year. My husband and I had submitted a post on the IndyFeral listserv about his strange neurological condition, and we appreciated the advice, suggestions, and good luck wishes we received.

Old Tom was FIV-positive and by all accounts, had a rough life. He had every right to be grumpy and resentful for the hand he had been dealt, but he was quite the opposite. When he was first introduced into our colony (he came to us via IndyFeral – Tom was scheduled to be put down by a local shelter because he was FIV Positive, but because he was ear-tipped, IndyFeral was contacted to find an alternative placement), he was shy and reserved. He would disappear into thin air if he got scared and then reappear just as quickly.

Eventually, he settled in and it became apparent that he was a lover and not a fighter. He loved nothing more than a chin rub and would light up at the sound of my husband's voice.

When it became obvious that he was declining, we sought medical help – Tom was terrified but was always a complete gentleman. We knew that his time was running out. Letting them go never gets any easier; it reminds me just how important their lives are and the impact they have on our own lives, even if they are “just cats.”

Old Tom, we miss you. From starting your life as an outcast stray, to being an IndyFeral poster kitty, you were always a handsome man with a beautiful soul.

The American Association of Feline Practitioners recommends against routine euthanasia of healthy FIV positive cats.



From Hayley, Colony Caretaker: Thanks, IndyFeral

IndyFeral has helped me out for over 2 ½ years – and is an amazing organization. It has been a truly rewarding experience going through the TNR program and being the caregiver for all of the cats. I'm so glad there are other people out there that have the same compassion for these stray cats as I do.

For the longest time I couldn't understand why no one else cared about these cats – my heart was so broken for them and I would just cry every time I saw them. But thanks to the IndyFeral volunteers, I can live with peace in my heart knowing they have proper shelter and food because others care, too. That is a huge blessing to me!

News and Gratitude

Annual IndyFeral Mum Sale – September 2009

Many thanks to Soules Garden that, for the second year in a row, donated daylily bulbs to IndyFeral's annual mum sale. And a big shout out to Veletta Smith, an IF caretaker who works at Soules and helped to get them involved.



Thanks also to Donatos Pizza in Broad Ripple for their donation of pizzas for the volunteers.

Habitat for Catmanity

Save the date –
Sunday, February 21

It's a difficult task to provide ample access to food for homeless cats, especially during cold months. Our focus will be on building feeding stations that can be placed at cat colonies served by IndyFeral. We will build as many as we can get done in one day. For more information on ways you can help, contact Paula@habitatfordogmanity.org



Neighbors Work Together to Save Growing Colony

One energetic TNR advocate made the difference



Pam knew that TNR was the answer to an overwhelming free-roaming cat problem in her mobile home community. The other solutions she had tried just didn't seem to work: loading up the kittens and taking them to Uncle Bill's Pet Shop for possible adoptions or taking the female adults to FACE low-cost spay/neuter clinic for sterilization.



"No matter what I tried or how hard I tried, I just could not keep up," Pam said. "It seemed more kittens just kept showing up. My time – and my funds – were running out."

Then, just by accident, Pam was handed a flyer describing IndyFeral and its services.

"I knew immediately that I had the solution to my overwhelming problem," Pam said. "Even at \$20 per cat for spay/neuter, it was a great deal because that price also included vaccines and flea treatment."

Pam contacted IndyFeral in July of last year and was provided assistance in sterilizing six cats. Amelda, an IndyFeral board member and tireless volunteer cat captain, told Pam about an elderly woman in the same mobile home community.

"I explained to Pam that we had helped her elderly neighbor spay/neuter 28 cats just a few streets over from where Pam was living," Amelda said. "I also explained that if her neighbor could have gotten out and told her

other neighbors about IndyFeral (she was physically unable), we could have accomplished even more."

As it turns out, Pam was very willing to do what her elderly neighbor could not – tell everyone in her park about IndyFeral. Soon after she did, five of her neighbors called and registered with IF. When it became apparent how many cats were in her neighborhood colony, IndyFeral took serious action.

"We decided to dedicate one whole spay/neuter clinic day to Pam's mobile home community cats," said Amelda. "It was incredible. We fixed 65 cats from her community alone!"

Even Pam did not anticipate 65 cats. And while \$20 was a great price, IndyFeral, through grant funds and donations, was able to financially assist in the sterilization of these cats.

"No way could we afford to pay for all of the cats that needed our help," said Pam. "If this type of financial support was not available from IndyFeral, we could never have made this happen."

In the months that followed, even more cats from Pam's neighborhood showed up at the clinic. In total, 129 cats have been TNR'd thanks to Pam and her neighbors. Additionally, nearly 20 friendly cats and kittens have been removed and adopted with the help of South Side Animal Shelter and Humane Society Indianapolis.

"It's amazing what you can do with an informed community who will work together," Amelda said. "We need 100 more Pams and her caring, compassionate neighbors."



Amelda (l) and Pam (r) at Pam's neighborhood spay day

Stay connected with IndyFeral on MySpace, Facebook, and Twitter



MySpace

www.myspace.com/indyferal



Facebook

www.facebook.com/pages/IndyFeral-Inc



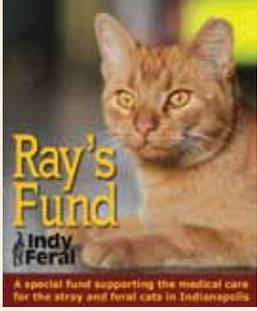
Twitter

<http://twitter.com/IndyFeral>

Stay even more connected with the feral cat community by joining the IndyFeral mailing list.

It's quick and easy and gives you the latest news, events and requests for volunteer involvement in your e-mail. Visit www.indyferal.org to sign up!

Ray's Fund Dedicated to Health Needs of Ferals



Special veterinary approach is required

IndyFeral believes every stray and feral cat has value, regardless if it is sick and/or may not be socialized to humans. Although feral cats are the same species as domestic cats, they require a special veterinary approach that provides for their distinct needs.

Our veterinarians evaluate the course of care for a feral in need and develop an individual treatment plan. This may include medical, surgical, and long-term care, until he or she is ready to be returned to its colony or placed with an adoption group if medically dictated.

If you feel a homeless cat deserves the same care and attention that you would give a pet cat, won't you help? By donating to Ray's Fund, you're helping to provide unique medical care and treatments such as antibiotics for respiratory infections, wound sutures,

pain medication, and the course necessary to heal a broken leg.

Make your donation today. Return it in the enclosed envelope, specify that it's for Ray's Fund, and know that you have helped drastically improve the life of a stray or feral cat.

Here's a story from Carol, a colony caretaker whose partially blind feral cat Sophie was assisted by Ray's Fund resources:

"Even though our tiny black feral Sophie has passed on, we want to thank you for the years she may not have had if not for IndyFeral. One of your vets discovered she had pyrometra during her spay and gave her antibiotics to help. Unfortunately, she was one of those kitties that are never entirely healthy. She would have been impossible to take to a normal vet, so we relied on IndyFeral to help us take care of our most feral feral. Thank you for helping her to survive as long as she did, and live the best life she could."

Food Bank Reserves Dwindling

Daily food and water is critical to ferals' wellbeing

Nutrition for feral cats is extremely important given the rigors of their outdoor lives. Providing daily food and water is the single most important action one can take to stabilize the cat's health on a consistent basis.

Through its food bank, IndyFeral distributes 30,000 pounds of food every year to volunteer caretakers who cannot pay for all the food necessary to feed the over 2,500 managed feral colonies around the city. Over 150 caretakers rely on IndyFeral every month to provide food to feed the colonies that need it.

It's a daunting task to keep the food bank stocked, and supplies are running low.

How You Can Help

If you would like to donate dry or canned food to IndyFeral's food bank, donations may be dropped off at the following Pet Supplies "Plus" and Petco locations:

Pet Supplies "Plus"

Greenwood: 8810 S. Emerson
Broad Ripple: 2238 Broad Ripple Avenue
Avon: 9871 East U.S. 36

Petco

Greenwood: 7565 US Highway 31 South
Speedway: 6020 Crawfordsville Road
Broad Ripple: 7225 N Keystone Avenue

IndyFeral also participates in the Purina Weight Circle Program. When you donate weight circles from select Purina dry foods to IndyFeral, we are reimbursed by Purina and use those dollars to purchase more food. To learn more about the weight circle program, visit our website – indyferal.org – and click on food drive.

On behalf of our caretakers and the thousands of homeless cats on the streets in Marion County, thank you.



Reduce Your Carbon Paw Print with IndyFeral's New "Green" Reusable Bag

Carry your groceries, cat food, dog food – whatever you need – in this great reusable bag from IndyFeral. At only \$5 per bag, now you can't afford not to be green!

The bag is a standard size shopping bag – khaki color only. All proceeds go directly toward spaying and neutering outdoor free-roaming cats.

Dimensions: 12" w x 13" h x 8.5g. Bottom stabilizer included. Reinforced 20" handles, 100% reusable, wash in cold water, line dry.

Order by visiting indyferal.org.