

SOUTH COUNTY CATS

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Dear South County Cats Friends and Supporters,

It's time for a **Mewsletter** because 2009 is off to an exciting start and it's not too late to recap last year's achievements!

Kitten Season is here!

It is at this time of year that many people who are looking for kittens think there is a kitten shortage. There is a reason why spring, summer (and fall) is called "kitten season." It is because the outdoor female cats' heat cycle is truly seasonal. Around the Winter Solstice, when the days start getting longer, female cats go into heat. With a gestation period of approximately 63 days, the first litters of kittens are usually born in March. May is when an abundance of these kittens enter the shelters as they are now weaned, and the cycle continues through fall, with many queens having 3 litters, 10-15 kittens, during kitten season. This is why you see so many "**Beat the Heat**" promotions going on right now.

Spay Day USA

As an all-volunteer organization, **South County Cats** depends on a dedicated group of volunteers who give as much time as their busy lives allow. While our volunteers are active year 'round, our organization will publicly observe two important events during the year. One is **Spay Day USA**, celebrated on February 24th. The other is **National Feral Cat Day** on October 16th.

One of our activities taking place for **Spay Day USA** this month is offering free spay/neuter to cat owners at a small mobile home park in Renton. We are working with **Renton Animal Control** and the **Seattle/King County Humane Society** to stop the overpopulation and breeding that has been taking place there for years. The animal control officer said there were over 100 cats in the small community. While we are targeting the "pet" cats, another organization will trap-neuter-return the feral and free-roaming cats. This is truly a cooperative effort

of several groups and we hope to see far fewer litters of kittens at this location this spring, as does the Humane Society, who was on the receiving end of many of the cats and kittens last year.

While we are "promoting" our spay/neuter assistance this month for **Spay Day USA** by submitting articles to our local newspapers, we offer financial and transportation assistance for spay/neuter all year. **In 2008, we provided assistance for over 670 spay/neuters!** That is a significant increase from 473 in 2007. While we are hoping our services will be needed less and less, especially if legislation passes providing spay/neuter funds through pet food distributors (click <http://savewashingtonpets.org/default.aspx> for more information) our spay/neuter goal for **2009** is a realistic **500**. We are well on our way with **78** spay/neuters this year.

CAToberfest

What a blast! For those of you who stopped by our first community event, we hope you found that **CAToberfest**, our celebration of **National Feral Cat Day**, was a great success. What started out as a thank-you party for our supporters, quickly turned into a silent

auction and fundraiser, thanks to the hard work of our volunteers, both procuring donations and making baskets. We enjoyed seeing so many of you there and hope to make this an annual event.



2008 Statistics

As you read earlier in this newsletter, we provided spay/neuter assistance for **670** cats last year. As members of the **Washington Federation of Animal Care and Control Organizations**, we are required to report our “numbers” each year in order to be eligible for grant money raised through the “**We Love Our Pets**” license plates. Last year we received two grants from this organization - \$3,500 for spay/neuter and \$1,000 for vaccinations.

Here are some interesting facts about our 670 spay/neuters:

spay/neuter 2008				
Adult M	Adult F	Kitten M	Kitten F	total
201	240	108	121	670

female	54.04%	ear tip	59.43%
male	45.96%	no ear tip	40.57%

In 2008, **190** kittens were rescued by or surrendered to our organization. Because we don't have a physical shelter and are limited by the number of foster homes we have available, 108 of these kittens were transferred to other organizations for placement. We concentrate on the tough cases – the feral kittens that the shelters cannot accommodate. Often times, we foster the kittens until they are adoptable, then transfer them to other organizations with physical shelters where they are quickly adopted. We did adopt out **68** kittens ourselves! This is only possible because of our wonderful foster volunteers and partners such as **All The Best Pets** (in Issaquah) where we held several adopt-a-thons!

Volunteer Spotlight

What an amazing group of volunteers we have, from fostering to driving cats to/from the spay/neuter clinic, to cleaning cat carriers, they do it all!

One of our new volunteers last year was **Debbie Howe**. She came to us through a “friend of a friend” and we're not sure she knew what she was getting herself into. Not only has she washed hundreds of dirty, smelly towels, she fostered **38** kittens last year.

Here is her recap:

This was my first year as a foster home. My husband was reluctant, but willing to give it a chance. (He just wants me to be happy) Since then, 34 kittens have passed through our home during this calendar year (2008).

1st - 5 girls, 3 torties 2 orange tabbies...all 5 adopted from my home.

2nd - 4 bottle babies for 10 days and then on to another organization with more resources.

3rd - 3 VERY sick, very dirty babies, the little boy died.

4th - 4 boys part manx. They were a blast-I leashed trained them and did my first adopt-a-thon.

5th - 4 more boys. I enjoyed them for a week and then we split the litter up for more socializing.

6th - 1 little lost kitten about 4 days old, was bottle fed and warmed in my home before being reunited with her family. (Bus Barn baby)

7th - I finished off 3 kittens from another foster home and took them to an adopt-a-thon to find their forever home.

8th - 4 little, sick, unloved, flea-ridden gray kittens. I thought I would lose another kitten, but after hard work and forced feeding the littlest made it. At their first bath, the water rinsing off of them was brown/red with flea dirt. We saved them and handed them to another organization where they were all adopted.

9th - 3 little torties that would have been put down, because they were so unfriendly. They were in more than one home for socializing and then given back to the shelter and adopted the very next day.

10th - My last this year. The magnificent 7. 6 girls 1 boy. They were semi-social or less, but all came around in their own time and were promptly adopted.



OOPS 38 kittens...count them.

Over all it has been a very rewarding year. I have loved and treasured every little life I have been blessed to take care of. ~Debbie Howe

Persian Cats Fostered

Debbie fostered our first litter of kittens in 2008 and our last litter of kittens in 2008. Now, in 2009, Debbie's first success story is the Two Persians – **Pricilla and Melody**.



Pricilla

One of our volunteers, **Sheila**, heard about two retired grand champion Persian cats whose owner is terminally ill and was concerned about her cats' future. As it turns out Debbie is not only a fantastic foster mom but used to raise and show Persians. We brought that part of her life out of retirement and Debbie talked with the Persians' owner who agreed to let us find homes for the kitties. She wanted to meet Debbie and visit her home and once she was certain that Debbie knew all about Persian cats, Pricilla and Melody and an entire household of supplies were transferred to Debbie's home.



Melody

Pricilla and Melody already had some mats and Debbie had her work cut out for her. She ended up shearing Melody into a lion cut because some mats were so tight she could hardly walk.

As luck would have it, **King County Animal Care and Control** had an adoption event scheduled at **Reber Ranch** the weekend after we received the Persians. **South County Cats** was invited to participate. We didn't have kittens to adopt out but we set up our information table in hopes of getting the word out about our spay/neuter assistance services.

Several of our volunteers donated their time to this event. When Debbie showed up with the Persians, they stole the show. This certainly helped our donation can and gave Debbie a chance to talk about **South County Cats**! While the Persians were not adopted at this event, thanks to **PetFinder** and Debbie's careful screening, they have found forever homes and Debbie's kitten room is now free for our first litter of feral kittens of the season!

RE-HOMING: In 2006 there were almost 900 Persian cats waiting to be adopted on Petfinder.com.

Twelve Tabbies

One notable event in 2008 was the intake of 12 tabby kittens. A call came in from Jesse, a nice gentleman in Enumclaw, who was referred to us by one of the veterinarians out there. He had 3 litters of kittens (make that 4, more on that later), 12 kittens total, and he'd rounded them all up into a box in his horse stall.



Twelve Tabbies *continued*

Caring for this many kittens was truly an effort of many volunteers. The 12 tabbies were picked up immediately and we quickly realized they had not been socialized. The best way to socialize feral kittens is to split them up into small groups and so the 12 kittens were divided among 6 foster homes. Many thanks to Ashley, Emily, Janet, Secrette, Sara, and Kitty Harbor for fostering the Twelve Tabbies.

These kittens were all adopted into wonderful homes but that wasn't the end of our assistance. The 3 mama cats were spayed (thanks to Cris's efforts), plus a male cat (who was Siamese and a hermaphrodite and probably *not* the papa cat) was altered. Additionally there was a feral mama cat and 3 kittens that were TNR-ed at this home. The final tally was 20 cats! Jesse was very grateful for our help as his 20 cats could have become 120 cats this year had we not stepped in to help.

Barn Homes Save Lives

Elliot was rescued from a local shelter after having been returned several times for "house-soiling." He was tested for a urinary tract infection which came back negative. Since Elliot had experience living outdoors, our only hope for a forever home for him was a cozy barn. A very kind family who "adopted" three feral kittens and a feral adult really wanted a barn cat they could pet. Elliot was a match! Elliot's new family exclaims "I love Elliot! He is the Patriarch of the barn. You can always see him overseeing the three black kittens, sitting authoritatively, watching them play. The three black kittens live in the barn with him and are not afraid of me any more, but they won't let me touch them."



How You Can Help!

No non-profit newsletter is complete without a plea for help! There are many ways [you can help](#) our efforts to save lives through spay and neuter.

Let people know about our services. - We provide financial assistance (and transportation) for low-income and disabled people. We do not ask for proof of need. Through our Tame Spay/Neuter Program, low-income people with tame cats who have their own transportation are referred to our partner veterinary clinics such as Coalition Humane, South Seattle Vet, Animal Clinic of Kent and Value Pet Clinic (Renton and Kent) and we cover the cost.

We also help with Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) of feral cats.

Supplies and money – We can always use cat litter, kitten food, bleach and more. Please see our wish list on our website. Of course, monetary donations are always appreciated.

Coin Can Monitors – Our coin cans brought in over **\$1,600** in 2008. If you would like to place a can at a local business please contact our **Coin Can Captain Kathy Myers** at kathyjmyers@netzero.net. Please see the list of businesses supporting our cans on our website.

Volunteer – We can always use more volunteers. A complete list of [volunteer activities](#) can be found on our website.

Please visit our beautiful, new website thanks to the many hours dedicated to this effort by our volunteer Lynn.

www.southcountycats.petfinder.org



Thank you all for your support of *South County Cats*. We are a small organization making a BIG difference.

South County Cats is an all-volunteer, IRS 501(c)(3) non-profit organization.

Note: If you wish to be removed from this list, please let us know with a reply.