



# The Feline Network

*A Kindhearted Approach to Feline Overpopulation*

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[www.felinenetwork.org](http://www.felinenetwork.org)

Spring 2023

## Who's Helping Whom?

I have been so fortunate to intertwine my two biggest passions in life: teaching and fostering kittens. I have been teaching for 30 years but most recently at Pacific Beach Continuation High School. Our students are wonderful kids who have been through many challenges in their short lives. Many of them have past traumas that they have worked hard to overcome. Trust is hard for them. Honestly, some of my students remind me of feral kittens. They have learned to survive amidst difficult situations just like many of our foster kittens and yet, with love and nurturing, they have wonderful hearts and personalities that are waiting to burst forth.

I am grateful that I have been able to bring my foster kittens to my classroom daily, sometimes introducing three-week-old bottle babies to my students, who had never seen kittens so small! They learned to bottle-feed and tend to their needs. They are extremely gentle and nurturing as they feed, snuggle and love on these tiny fur balls.

Bottle babies are always a favorite; however, recently I brought in a cage with a litter of seven-week-olds that had never had any human contact. This litter of five hissed and spit and spent the first couple of days trying to hide in a pile behind their litter box. Students patiently sat by the cage talking to them and dangling toys to try to distract them. We soon started the daily holding and passing of kittens with the constant reminder of, "Don't put them down!!!" There are too many nooks and crannies for them to hide in the classroom. Students beamed with pride as the hissing and spitting gave way to

snuggles and catnaps and eventually PURRS! My principal walked into the classroom after a week and asked, "Is this really the same litter of kittens?" The kids learned that patience and love will eventually lead to trust and a relationship, and as much as they love the bottle babies, this is the litter they have bonded with the most.

When I asked my students what they loved most

about fostering, it had to do with what the kittens did for them and not what they did for the kittens. Sage said, "I have loved having the kittens in class with us. It makes my day ten times better. The kittens are a great stress reliever!" Cerina seconded that with, "I love being around the kittens. They make me calm and relaxed."

I think we underestimate the amount of stress our young people feel. Having kittens in the classroom is a win-win. My students feel less stress, which allows them to focus and concentrate and learn at a higher level, and they are attending school more regularly. There were many days when I would ask students who looked sad how they were doing and the response was often, "The only reason I came to school

today was because of the kittens."

At the end of the day, I'm not sure who is benefiting the most, the students or the kittens (which become well-socialized and trusting of humans). I am so very thankful that my two passions in life have come together!

By Deannie Greenelsh



# TO HONOR AND REMEMBER

## In Loving Memory of

**Steven T. Burns**, by Nancy Meddings.

**Nic Gaudiuso**, by Toni Erpenbach. "In memory of the 'Animal Whisperer.' He is greatly missed by all."

**Don Hartley**, by Debbie Kraft.

**Howard Noack**, by Kendra French. "In loving memory of my husband Howard who loved and supported animal rescue."

**Amber**, by Collette Marie.

**Wilma Finley**, by Diane M. Hendrickson. "Classmate, University of Nebraska. Class of '65."

**Bubba**, by Juliane Roberts. "He was a feral farm cat on Los Berros Road. Thank you for helping him. I miss him."

**Caolán**, "Deb Holt's sweet boy," by Carolee & Emilee Hunt. "We were honored to be able to spoil him at the Nest and recognize what a lucky boy he was to have Deb as his mama."

**Edie**, by Erin & Ken Messer. "Although Edie had a rough start, from the time she was rescued and then adopted by us she had the best of everything. We will love and remember her forever."

**Gino**, "my friend Frances' beloved kitty," by Nancy Loe.

**Paisley**, by Liz Woods.



**Rufus**, "a Shell Beach feral kitty," by Peter & Carol Reese.

**Tai**, by Cory Kent. "My beloved Tai, who I adopted 17 years ago as a scrawny baby – died in my arms 5/3/2022. Thank you!"

**Zakk**, by Carole & Jeffrey Bloom.

**Zippi**, by Arlene Nunes-Day. "My loving Zippi (16 years)."

## In Honor of

**Susan & Ed Bernard**, by Pat Markcity.

**Roxane Bohn**, by Joan Kobara.

**Carol Brookshire**, by Carol Deranian. "Happy Birthday, Carol."

**Debra Holt, Lynette Crane & Elaine Genasci**, by Sharon & John Dobson.

**Kristin Perl**, by Janice & Bob Contons.

**Rose**, by Mitzi McCullough. "Rose is one of our trapped cats from years ago. She is now my friendly housecat. She is funny and sweet and lots of company."

## In Appreciation of

**Jo Bettencourt**, by Frank Woods, "for going above and beyond in socializing and rehoming my cat."

**Christine Collie**, by Elizabeth Nagano. "Years ago I was working at the Women's Shelter and the neighborhood it was in became a gathering place for abandoned cats."

Some of us took one or two cats into our homes but recognized that the ever growing population was more than we could manage. Christine Collie came and worked tirelessly until all the cats were trapped and rehomed."

**Christine Collie & Kristin Perl**, by Nancy Grant. "I want to thank Kristin and Christine for their assistance when my two kitties were diagnosed as ringworm carriers. They were both very helpful."

**Lynette Crane & Feline Network**, by Maxine & Joe Colin. "Continued thanks to Lynette and all of you wonderful people!"

**Elaine Genasci & Feline Network**, by Silvia Laurette. "Thank you for the help trapping two female cats and a tomcat. It wasn't easy getting them. Hopefully they will live a happy life without contributing to an overpopulation of ferals."

## The Feline Network

by Sally & Jack Adam. "Thank you for all you do for so many cats, bringing them less suffering, comfort and a future."

by Carole & Jeffrey Bloom. "We adopted beautiful Iris last summer and she is a wonderful addition to our home and loves our big cat and little dog."

by Judy Fitzgerald. "Thank you for all that you do for these kitties! I adopted two from you last year and I love them!"

by John Fleming. "Thanks for loving wild kitties!"

by Lynda Fullerton & Lulu the Wonder Cat. "Thank you so much for your help with Lulu. She is doing well."

by Nicole & Tod Hagobian. "My son Shay raised this money by making and selling things he made with his Rainbow loom. We got our cat Sophie through you and he wanted to give back. He is 12."

by Roger & Susan Henslin. "You all do amazing work and are much appreciated."

by Jackie Johnson. "I'm currently feeding six cats and, after years, one old feral has finally let me pet him and he now waits for his touching time. Another feral has progressed to not running when it sees me open the door. Three of the others cuddle and the last one is thinking about it. Thank you for all you do for our beautiful feline friends."

by Jim & Lisa Maino. "Thanks for all the good work you've done and continue to do! We love our kitties."

by Jodie, Ryan & McLean Roofing. "Thank you for taking care of all the sweet kitty fur babies on the Central Coast! We love you and the work you do! XOXO."

by Jeanne Mello. "Thank you so much for helping me with the three kitties I trapped."

by Elana Peters. "Thanks for rescuing these marvelous creatures."

by Margaret Rice. "Thank you for Holly & Joy, the two black sisters adopted last December! They are living the pampered life as Jupiter & Saturn!"

by Marleta & Bob Garner. "As always, thank you a million times for all of your tireless work."

Donations may also be made on our Facebook page and through our website at <http://www.felinenetwork.org>.

# The Heart of Fostering

When Hannah Hayward saw two down-on-their-luck kittens being given away as freebies at a gas station, she felt compelled to give them a chance at a wonderful life. She packed them into her truck and once home immediately reached out to Feline Network. Not only were our foster homes over capacity but, upon assessment, the 6-week-old kittens had a definitive case of ringworm (which would send the faint-of-heart running in the opposite direction) and were missing round patches of fur from their ears, noses, legs and tails. They were also malnourished and heartbreakingly shy.

The kittens would need five weeks of treatment for ringworm, including daily oral medication and probiotics, weekly sulfur baths and daily disinfection of their crate to eliminate the fungal spores that ringworm lesions produce. They would need additional feedings, nutrients and fluids to correct their malnourishment and lots of daily socialization to overcome their fear. Hannah committed to fostering the kittens on the spot, aware that a large amount of time and effort would be necessary.

Hannah's diligent efforts caring for "Meg" and "Harrison" led to drastic week-over-week improvement in their condition. After five weeks they had transformed into plushy-soft, healthy and loving sweethearts ready for their forever home. A cat-loving family of six applied to adopt them. Hannah felt mildly nervous, but upon meeting the Velazquez family she was over-

whelmed by their loving and tender-hearted nature and felt that the kittens could not end up in a more devoted home.

Hannah took on ringworm, one of the most dreaded conditions to foster homes, followed the ringworm protocols to a "t", and overcame it with humble grace. This demonstrates that it doesn't take experience, just a heart and passion for kitties, to be an incredible and life-changing foster.

Meg and Harrison's new family has created an Instagram account for the adorable pair, and they now have around 100 followers engaging in posts and following the photos as Meg and Harrison grow and develop. If you would like to see more of these adorable and silly siblings, their Instagram profile is [meg\\_and\\_harrison](#).



Hannah took on a daunting challenge.

By Kristin Perl

## Without a SHADOW of a Doubt, a Microchip Can Help a Lost Pet



We're Sacramento Bound!

What better way to start 2023 than to have an incredible rescue story unfold? Right after New Year's Day, a tame, black cat showed up at a feral feeding station in Oceano. At first the volunteers who tended to the site thought the cat must belong to a nearby neighbor and was merely mooching an extra meal. After a few weeks, Feline Network volunteer Mike Davis scanned the cat to see if it was microchipped. To his surprise, the cat indeed had an ID number. His granddaughter, Jaide, tracked down the owners, who lived in Sacramento 250 miles away! Shadow, their beloved pet, had been missing for four months. While the chances of ever finding Shadow were looking grim, they continued putting up fliers and posting him on social media. They had not given up hope!

Jaide and her friend Cela decided to drive Shadow to Sacramento to unite him with his family. Shadow wanted nothing to do with the transporting cage and insisted on being in a lap the whole ride. The family, including Shadow's cat companion, were elated to have him back home safe and sound. Upon his arrival, he acted like he had never left and made himself right at home.

How Shadow ended up on the Central Coast is anybody's guess. Like Bob Dylan's song, it was "a simple twist of fate" that Shadow ended up with caring Feline Network volunteers who went above and beyond the call of duty to help him get home. And of course, a reunion would not have been possible without Shadow being microchipped.

By Annie Dreizler

## Milo, another Microchip Success Story

What do the names Milo, Eddy, Tabatha and Tabby have in common? They are all names that were used to describe one beautiful, super-sweet six-month-old brown tabby who showed up at a property in South County where unwanted cats are sometimes dumped by their owners.

Jenevra Macchi has tended to this particular site for years. Milo was fortunate enough to come across her feeding site one night; and once he found Jenevra he stayed close by, venturing only to the nearby Forestry Department headquarters. The foresters took him under their wing during the day, splitting the cost of his food and setting up a spot for him to hang out during station hours. (They called him Eddy.)

Jenevra asked around to see if anyone knew who owned this sweet kitten (she called him Tabatha or Tabby before she knew he was a male). She put a collar on him hoping someone would claim him. After a few weeks, she brought him to Feline Network. We scanned him for a microchip and found one! We contacted his family, and they picked him up within the hour. He had been missing for three months.

Whether your fur baby is indoor-only or not, a microchip is a powerful and low-cost tool for reuniting lost pets with family and home.



Wait, what is my name now?

By Kristin Perl



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## **A Winter Surprise**

A family in a mobile home park in San Luis Obispo was surprised to find a stray mama cat with a newborn litter of kittens in a metal shed behind their house in early January. This is quite an unusual time for kittens to be born. The family and a next-door neighbor cared for them, and the children played with the kittens. The kittens were very tame and friendly when Feline Network took them in. Darcy Lazar fostered them until they were adopted. The mother cat is tame, and she is now living with the family.



**Surprise!**



**Special Delivery**

## **First Spring Kittens**

A Pismo Beach postal worker discovered a very pregnant, tame mama cat in her truck when she arrived home from work in Nipomo. She took the cat to Mesa Vet Clinic. They called Feline Network and said she was “ready to pop.” They asked us to take her in. Volunteer Linda Cohen picked her up and took her to the foster home of Valerie Koos in San Luis Obispo, where she gave birth to six kittens the next morning.