

# THE ADVOCAT



Spring/Summer 2014

A Billerica Cat Care Coalition Publication

News for BCCC Members, Friends and the Public

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## Help Homeless Cats and Kittens

Visit our web site:  
[www.billericacatcarecoalition.org](http://www.billericacatcarecoalition.org)

### Learn About:

- Feral Cats
- Pet Overpopulation
- The Importance Of Spaying & Neutering
- View Our List of Available Cats
- Become a Volunteer

### Donate To Our Food Bins at:

- Market Baskets in Billerica
- Billerica & Tewksbury Libraries
- Agway, Chelmsford

### We have Donation Jars at:

- K-9 Comforts, Billerica
- Shank's Mare, Billerica
- Lexington-Bedford Veterinary Hospital

### Our Sponsoring Vets:

- The Cat Doctor
- McGrath Animal Hospital
- Tewksbury Animal Hospital
- Middlesex County Animal Hospital

## BCCC - Success Stories

Teddy



Teddy wandered the streets late at night, during some of the harshest winter months, trying to find a place to keep warm. He eventually found his way to our president's house where he was given a heated bed and warm food and water on her three season porch. Finally, after attempts to find out where Teddy belonged, BCCC brought him in for foster care. During his vet visit, it was determined Teddy was not neutered and is FIV+. After his neuter, Teddy went into a loving foster home, where his big personality and charm emerged. Today, Teddy lives in his loving forever home where his family dotes on him and he in return, amuses them with antics only Teddy is capable of.

Lily was a young cat found with 4 young kittens of her own to care for. Initially thought to be feral, after being placed in a foster home, it was found she was not feral at all. Lily was a gentle, shy cat who needed the right person and environment to thrive and show her true colors. We believe Lily was an abandoned cat living on her own and surviving the best she could, including caring and protecting her family. Today, Lily resides with her loving foster mom who gives her lots of treats, toys and attention. She is thriving and has blossomed into a playful cat who has been learning to trust and who likes to "talk". Lily's kittens have been adopted into their loving, forever homes. When she is ready, Lily will be adopted into her forever home, too.

Lily



Susie is a bit timid and fearful especially when meeting someone new or if startled. But once you gain her trust, she is very sweet and loves to be petted. Her green eyes will mesmerize you. Precious, although a bit shy like her sister, warms up more quickly. She loves attention and to loves to eat!

Susie and Precious are very bonded, often doing things together whether it be eating, playing or sleeping. They are often cuddled up together in the corner of a chair or on a bed. They are very good girls who can be talkative and like to make their needs and presence known by a meow or rubbing up against your legs. They can be playful, affectionate and very loving even though they do not like to be held for long periods of time. They would be best in a quieter environment as dogs or younger children may be too intimidating for their personalities.



To adopt Susie and Precious please visit: <http://www.billericacatcarecoalition.org/adoptionform.php>

## Letter from the President

In 2003, my husband and I were on a bicycle ride and happened past Billerica Animal Control. As we rode past the outdoor kennels, I noticed a small beagle with a large tumor that had grown under his jaw. That caused me to stop to learn more about this little guy. Which then turned into a search to find someone to provide medical care for "Bailey" (that was his name). After receiving permission from the town for a no-kill beagle rescue (B.O.N.E.S.) to take Bailey in for foster and vet care, I started thinking about what it would be like to have a no-kill animal rescue organization in our town.

After visiting other organizations to learn about animal rescue methods, with a small amount of publicity, on a rainy May night in 2004, 22 people with big hearts and vision, joined me to discuss what we could do to help animals in need. In particular, the discussion focused on cats and kittens, since it appeared there was already some established dog rescues in surrounding areas, but, no cat rescues here. The result - Billerica Cat Care Coalition (BCCC) was born. Even though I did not have a cat when we started, it didn't take long for that to change.

**In 2014, BCCC is celebrating our tenth year of existence, with more than 1,000 feral cats in and around Billerica spayed or neutered, to humanely help end the cycle of over reproduction.** And, hundreds of friendly, abandoned cats and kittens have found their forever, loving homes. We've met and made so many friends along the way - via our trap/neuter/return (TNR) program for ferals or you've adopted our rescued cats and kittens or you've helped support our programs by volunteering, donating and attending our events.

What started with a bike ride on a sunny day and one small beagle in need, has turned into a community organization of talented volunteers dedicated to principals and actions of the no-kill movement. We know from your support in the public, you agree. We look forward to seeing you at our events and greatly appreciate your continued support.

From all of us at BCCC, and, from those who cannot speak for themselves, thank you.

With gratitude and purrs,

 Sharon



## GOT KITTENS?

Tell us Immediately!

BCCC is often contacted about feral kittens too late (when kittens are 4-6 months old), usually due to cold weather concerns.

Please contact BCCC early, *when kittens are first discovered*, so we can try to help get them in and socialize them for adoption. When kittens are older, it is harder for us to socialize them.



Visit our Facebook page and see how BCCC is making a difference. We've got pictures, rescue stories, and more!

[www.facebook.com/pages/Billerica-Cat-Care-Coalition/178563832586](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Billerica-Cat-Care-Coalition/178563832586)

## MRFRS Catmobile



Wow! Low cost spay/neuter service for your cat in your neighborhood: \$80 for males, \$100 for females. The package includes exam, spay/neuter, rabies vaccination, flea treatment and nail trim.

And now there is a Catmobile2, which will serve central and metrowest Massachusetts.

To find out when the Catmobile will be in your area, go to [www.catmobile.org](http://www.catmobile.org)

How to make an appointment:

**Online:** [www.catmobile.org](http://www.catmobile.org)  
**Phone:** 978-465-1940  
**E-mail:** [catmobile@mrfrs.org](mailto:catmobile@mrfrs.org)

**THE ADVOCAT**  
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Editor  
Jody Nelson

*This newsletter provides general information. It is not intended to provide medical advice. Medical advice should be obtained directly from your veterinarian.*

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# 10th Annual The Cat's Meow

PRESENTED BY BILLERICA CAT CARE COALITION

## Chocolate Tasting & Silent Auction

To benefit cats and kittens in need!

Friday, MAY 2, 2014, 7:00 pm - 9:30 pm

TEWKSBURY Country Club, 1880 MAIN STREET

TEWKSBURY, MA 01876

PURCHASE ONLINE AT [WWW.BILLERICACATCARECOALITION.ORG](http://WWW.BILLERICACATCARECOALITION.ORG)



\$25.00 in Advance

\$30.00 at the Door

### Calendar of Events

SAVE THE DATES!

#### March

March 15, 2014: 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM - Meet & Greet at Petco - 51 Middlesex Turnpike, Burlington MA

#### April

April 5, 2014: 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM - Spring Farmers Market at Jones Farm - 246 Acton Rd. Chelmsford MA - Meet BCCC's adoptable cats and kittens and purchase catnip mice and pet beds

April 9, 2014 2:00 PM to 6:00 PM - Tewksbury Health Fair - Senior Center, 175 Chandler St. Tewksbury, MA

April 12, 2014 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM - Billerica Health & Wellness Fair - Billerica Elks, 14 Webb Brook Rd. Billerica, MA

April 19, 2014: 11:00 AM to 1:00 PM - Meet & Greet at Petco - 51 Middlesex Turnpike, Burlington MA

#### May

May 2, 2014: 7:00 PM to 9:30 PM - 10th Annual The Cat's Meow Chocolate Tasting and Silent Auction - Tewksbury Country Club, 1880 Main Street Tewksbury MA - Information available at [www.billericacatcarecoalition.org](http://www.billericacatcarecoalition.org)

Check our website calendar for additional events.



Scan THIS QR code WITH YOUR PHONE TO GO DIRECTLY TO OUR WEB SITE!

## Feline Immunodeficiency Virus and CATS

Anne Richards, DVM  
The Cat Dr., Bedford, MA & Nashua, N.H

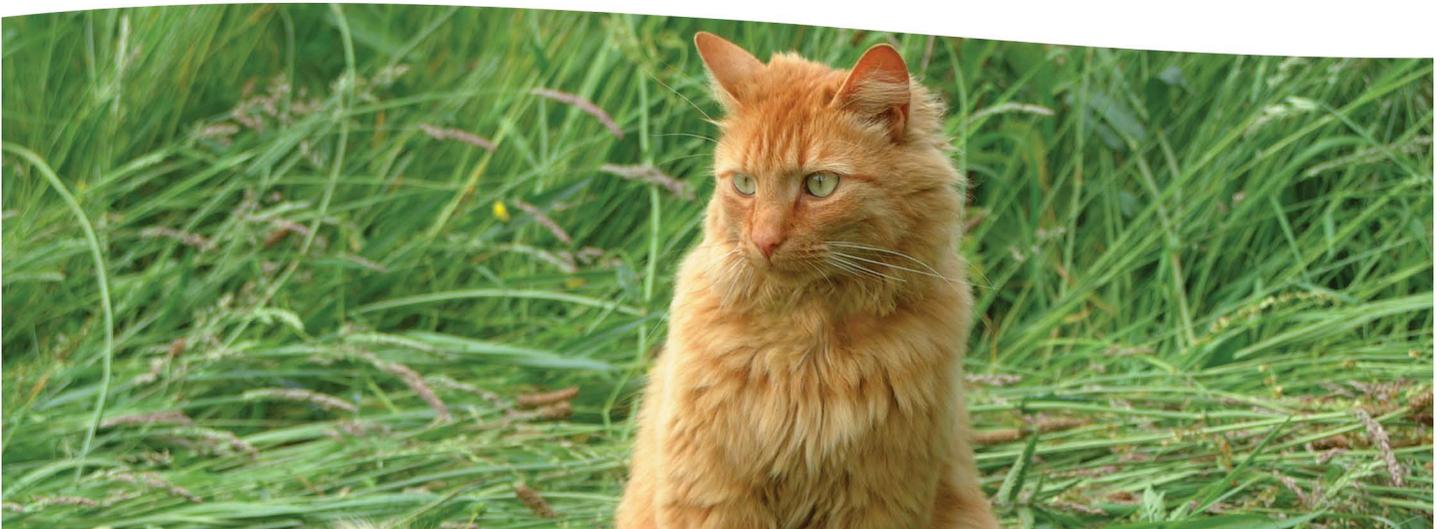
When you are looking for a new kitty from a rescue group or shelter, you may sometimes see a really cute or handsome cat that appeals to you, but he or she may be labeled as FIV-positive. What does this mean and how does it affect your decision about whether or not to bring that cat into your home?

“FIV-positive” means that a cat has antibodies to FIV in his or her bloodstream, indicating that he or she has been exposed to FIV and is therefore infected. FIV is a viral infection and the initials stand for Feline Immunodeficiency Virus. It is in the same family of viruses as HIV, but it cannot infect people and there are some important differences between the human and feline infections. Like HIV, FIV cannot live outside of the body and so can't be spread by casual contact. In cats it is usually spread in the saliva by deep bite wounds and occasionally from a mother cat to kittens during the birth process. It is usually not a sexually transmitted disease in cats. Unneutered male cats, or tomcats, are most commonly infected because they fight with other tomcats over females and territory. FIV infects white blood cells called T-lymphocytes and can hamper a cat's ability to respond to infections with other viruses and bacteria, but luckily it rarely leads to the full-blown immune system failure that is characteristic of AIDS in people.

Although the decision of whether or not to adopt an FIV-positive cat is ultimately up to you, you should not immediately turn away from these cats. Since FIV is not easily spread between cats, it is usually possible to bring an FIV-positive cat into your home and have him live safely with FIV-negative cats as long as you introduce them properly. A careful, slow introduction, which is the least stressful way to introduce a new cat regardless of his or her infection status, will help to minimize the possibility of serious fighting that could spread infection. FIV-positive cats, just like all cats, should have regular veterinary checkups to watch for signs of problems secondary to the infection. They may be more likely than the average cat to have trouble with respiratory infections, dental inflammation, allergies, and cancers such as lymphoma, but these are problems that we see even in FIV-negative cats. Most FIV-positive cats have a normal lifespan.

The best way to prevent cats from picking up an FIV infection is to spay and neuter them to decrease roaming and fighting over mates and territory, and to keep cats indoors. A vaccine is available for FIV but is not currently recommended by the American Association of Feline Practitioners because the test for FIV involves looking for antibodies to the infection and vaccinated cats test positive for these antibodies. Until a better test is available to tell the difference between infected and vaccinated cats, the decision of whether to vaccinate your cat should involve a careful and informed discussion between you and your veterinarian.

**For more information about FIV, check out the Cornell Feline Health Center's online brochure at [http://www.vet.cornell.edu/fhc/healthinfo/brochure\\_fiv.cfm](http://www.vet.cornell.edu/fhc/healthinfo/brochure_fiv.cfm)**



## Providing for Your Pet's Future Without You

Petfinder - Courtesy of HSUS

Because pets usually have shorter life spans than their human caregivers, you may have planned for your animal friend's passing. But what if you are the one who becomes ill or incapacitated, or who dies first? As a responsible pet owner, you provide your pet with food and water, shelter, veterinary care, and love. To ensure that your beloved pet will continue to receive this care should something unexpected happen to you, it's critical to plan ahead. This information sheet helps you do just that.

### What can I do now to prepare for the unexpected?

In the confusion that accompanies a person's unexpected illness, accident, or death, pets may be overlooked. In some cases, pets are discovered in the person's home days after the tragedy. To prevent this from happening to your pet, take these simple precautions:

- Find at least two responsible friends or relatives who agree to serve as temporary emergency caregivers in the event that something unexpected happens to you. Provide them with keys to your home; feeding and care instructions; the name of your veterinarian; and information about the permanent care provisions you have made for your pet.
- Make sure your neighbors, friends, and relatives know how many pets you have and the names and contact numbers of the individuals who have agreed to serve as emergency caregivers. Emergency caregivers should also know how to contact each other.
- Carry a wallet "alert card" that lists the names and phone numbers of your emergency pet caregivers.
- Post removable "in case of emergency" notices on your doors or windows specifying how many and what types of pets you have. These notices will alert emergency-response personnel during a fire or other home emergency. Don't use stickers; hard-to-remove stickers are often left behind by former residents, so firefighters may assume that the sticker is outdated or, worse, they may risk their lives trying to find a pet no longer in the house.
- Affix to the inside of your front and back doors a removable notice listing emergency contact names and phone numbers. Because pets need care daily and will need immediate attention should you die or become incapacitated, the importance of making these informal arrangements for temporary caregiving cannot be overemphasized.

### How can I ensure long-term or permanent care for my pet if I become seriously ill or die?

The best way to make sure your wishes are fulfilled is by also making formal arrangements that specifically cover the care of your pet. It's not enough that long ago your friend verbally promised to take in your animal or even that you've decided to leave money to your friend for that purpose. Work with an attorney to draw up a special will, trust, or other document to provide for the care and ownership of your pet as well as the money necessary to care for her.

### Do I need legal assistance?

Before making formal arrangements to provide for the long-term care of your pet, seek help from professionals who can guide you in preparing legal documents that can protect your interests and those of your pet. However, you must keep in mind the critical importance of making advance personal arrangements to ensure that your pet is cared for immediately if you die or become incapacitated. The formalities of a will or trust may not take over for some time.

### Is a will the best way to provide for my pet?

Although your lawyer will help you decide what type of document best suits your needs, you should be aware of some drawbacks to wills. For example, a will takes effect only upon your death, and it will not be probated and formally recognized by a court for days or even weeks later. What's more, if legal disputes arise, the final settlement of your property may be prolonged. Even determining the rightful new owner of your pet can get delayed. In other words, it may take a long time before your instructions regarding your pet's long-term care can be carried out.

This doesn't necessarily mean that you should not include a provision in your will that provides for your pet. It just means that you should explore creating additional documents that compensate for the will's limitations.

For the complete article, please visit: <http://www.petfinder.com/dogs/bringing-a-dog-home/providing-pets-future/>



## Volunteers - It's What Makes BCCC Purr

Volunteering is an awesome way to meet people who share similar interests as you and support a cause that's near and dear to you. If you're unable to donate money to support your local cause, donating your time instead is just as valuable. Who knows, maybe you'll learn some new skills and make some new friends. Volunteering with an animal rescue group such as Billerica Cat Care Coalition can provide a sense of responsibility because people and the cats really depend on you.

Volunteers are vital to the success of our no-kill organization's mission which is to reduce the suffering and death of feral cats in Billerica and surrounding towns through a Trap/Neuter/Return (TNR) Program. BCCC volunteers promote low-cost spay/neuter of companion animals through local programs such as The Catmobile, educate the public on local animal issues via our newsletter, and offer advice and assistance to the local community and folks dealing with homeless cat situations or needing to re-home a cat. As part of the cat overpopulation solution what little you can do will make a difference and positively impact our community.

Many volunteers work tirelessly behind the scenes - from our retirees to those with a full time job. Despite their busy lives, volunteers manage to set aside some time to help keep BCCC purring...our Accountant, Attorney, Food donation bin pick-up, Thank you letter writer, Petfinder & Adopt-A-Pet photographers, Newsletter editor, Foster home providers, Foster & Adoption Coordinator, Volunteer Coordinator, TNR Coordinator, TNR team-Trappers, Drivers and Caretakers, Feral colony feeders, Shelter builders, Event planners, Fundraisers, Webmaster and Designer, and Board of Directors. To all our wonderful volunteers who donate their time in support of Billerica Cat Care Coalition and you the community who support us with cat food donations, supplies and monetary donations... a heartfelt THANK YOU!

It takes a lot of great support with fabulous volunteers willing to do whatever is necessary to be a successful organization and help the cats and kittens in need. If you're 18 years or older, we'd love to hear from you. If your schedule is full and don't have much time to commit to volunteering, but still want to make a difference, our website lists several opportunities to help us. For those animal lovers under 18 yrs, BCCC has a few special projects and great suggestions on how you can help the kitties, just contact us.

Please visit [www.BillericaCatCareCoalition.org](http://www.BillericaCatCareCoalition.org) for a volunteer application or write us at Billerica Cat Care Coalition, P.O. Box 141, North Billerica, MA 01862.

Billerica Cat Care Coalition encourages everyone to find their passion, whatever inspires you and volunteer. What you get back from volunteering is so much more than what you give. There are endless volunteer opportunities where you can make a difference.

- Jeanne, BCCC Volunteer Coordinator



Thank  
You!!

BCCC would like to thank the following organizations and people for their generous support:

- Agway, Chelmsford
- Billerica Public Library
- Pat Bucko, Artist
- Charles J. DiMatteo Jr., CPA
- DeMoulas Market Baskets
- K-Nine Comforts, Billerica
- Michael Kuszek, Photographer
- McGrath Animal Hospital
- Middlesex County Animal Hospital
- Jody Nelson, Designer
- Shaun Nelson, Web Designer
- Nestle Purina
- Petco Foundation
- Petco in Burlington
- Shank's Mare, North Billerica
- Tewksbury Animal Hospital
- Tewksbury Public Library
- The Cat Doctor
- Donna Turley, Attorney
- Greater Lawrence Technical School
- MA State Association of Emblem Clubs

Thanks also go out to the private citizens who have donated to the BCCC. You help us keep the cats fed and healthy!

### Volunteers Needed

We are in need of several professionals to help us help the cats and kittens of Billerica, MA. Requirements include experience, references and a love of cats.

For complete volunteer information please visit our website at:  
[www.billericacatcarecoalition.org](http://www.billericacatcarecoalition.org)

- Fundraiser
- Grant Writer
- Carpenter
- Foster Care
- Drivers
- Trappers



# Why Trap-Neuter-Return Feral Cats: The Case for TNR

Alley Cat Allies

## What is Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)?

Trap-Neuter-Return is the humane and effective approach for stray and feral cats. Now in practice for decades in the US after being proven in Europe, scientific studies show that Trap-Neuter-Return improves the lives of feral cats, improves their relationships with the people who live near them, and decreases the size of colonies over time.

Trap-Neuter-Return is successfully practiced in hundreds of communities and in every landscape and setting. It is exactly what it sounds like: Cats are humanely trapped and taken to a veterinarian to be neutered and vaccinated. After recovery, the cats are returned to their home - their colony - outdoors. Kittens and cats who are friendly and socialized to people may be adopted into homes.

Grounded in science, TNR stops the breeding cycle of cats and therefore improves their lives while preventing reproduction. It is a fact that the removal and killing of outdoor cats that animal control has been pursuing for decades is never ending and futile. Since feral cats are not adoptable, they are killed in pounds and shelters. With a successful program like Trap-Neuter-Return to turn to, it's hard to believe that animal control agencies continue to kill cats, even though that approach has shown zero results.

It is time to put an end to catch and kill. Trap-Neuter-Return provides a life-saving, effective solution for these beautiful, independent cats.

There are so many reasons to embrace and promote TNR! Trap-Neuter-Return:

- **Stabilizes feral cat colonies**
- **Improves cats' lives**
- **Answers the needs of the community**
- **Protects cats' lives**
- **Works - other methods just don't**

Source: <http://www.alleycat.org/casefortnr>





**Billerica Cat Care Coalition**  
**P.O. Box 141**  
**North Billerica, MA 01862**  
 Address service requested

**How Can You Help The Cats?**

**You Can Save Lives.... Right Here, Right Now.**

*The cats are depending on you. You can make a difference. You can make their hard lives a little bit easier.*

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS GIFT OF:  
 \$25 \$35 \$50 \$250 OTHER\_\_\_\_\_

All contributions are fully tax-deductible and greatly appreciated.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_



**Thank You!**

You may donate online at [www.billericacatcarecoalition.org](http://www.billericacatcarecoalition.org) using PayPal

You may also send a check to:  
 Billerica Cat Care Coalition P.O. Box 141 N. Billerica, MA 01862

**THANK YOU FOR DONATING FOOD AND SUPPLIES TO OUR FOOD BINS. IT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!**

**Donation Locations**

- Billerica Market Basket
- Billerica and Tewksbury Public Libraries
- K-Nine Comforts, Billerica
- Shank's Mare, Billerica
- Agway, Chelmsford
- Diamond Dog Grooming, Billerica
- Lexington-Bedford Veterinary Hospital
- Pet Source, Lexington

**Wish List Items**

- Canned Cat Food
- Dry Cat Food
- Kitten Food
- KMR Kitten Milk Replacement
- Kitten Bottles
- Cat Litter
- Cat Toys
- Pet store gift cards
- Buy items on our Wish List at Amazon.com

**OTHER WAYS TO HELP:**

- Donate inactive cell phones/Blackberrys
- Use GoodSearch.com for BCCC
- Use iSearchiGive.com for BCCC
- Shop online at [www.iGive.com/BCCC](http://www.iGive.com/BCCC)
- Volunteer Your Time
- Donate Your Used Vehicle [www.donationline.com](http://www.donationline.com)