

CARETAKER MEMBERSHIP

Dear Feral Cat Caretaker:

Who are we? According to the Humane Society of the United States, there are 17.5 million of us, nationally, feeding and caring for homeless cats and kittens, referred to as feral cats and strays. There are hundreds to thousands of persons in our cities and local communities who have opened their hearts and check books to help. In doing so, many find themselves isolated and misunderstood by their friends and relatives and the communities they serve.

Most of us work under the radar screen. We do not want anyone to know who we are, what we do and how many we do it to. We crawl around in the bushes looking for kittens and cats that are ill, and do our work under some of the most challenging circumstances ever devised by a civilized society. Since we are caring for cats that live out of doors, their lives are always in some jeopardy and we are usually caring for them on someone else's property.

As it now stands, in most communities, caretakers and issues with feral cats are responded to in a fragmented manner. Since we do not advertise what we are doing, persons who would be supportive of us do not know we exist. In many instances, there are several persons feeding the same cats and they do not know about one another. There are persons in our neighborhoods that would be willing to help us, but we are hesitant to approach them. We work in this manner, so as not to put the cats and ourselves at risk. Our anonymity, lack of support and fear all work against us and those we care for. We usually wait to contact someone when the situation is out of hand.

WHAT IS WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE? The time has come for us to unite into a cohesive, well informed group of people who will be able to help each other. You might be a caretaker who has 2 feral cats in the backyard or are caring for 150 in an industrial area miles from home. Our mission is to unite caretakers in a membership with FCCC that will show solidarity and a united front for national recognition. We can begin by networking, sharing our resources and experiences and helping one another. By forming a constituency, we can make a difference in our communities, with our politicians and our neighbors. We can educate children in schools and in various ways reach out to others. We can do it, because we have been touched by a homeless stray feral cat or kitten and know how precious and precarious their lives can be and how indispensable we are to them.

THINK ABOUT THIS – Not one feral cat or kitten would be trapped, neutered, vaccinated, spayed or cared for without the heroic efforts of a feral cat caretaker. It is time for us to stand up and be counted.

Join with us by completing the attached form. We will be conducting workshops in the Los Angeles area. The time and place will be announced.

All of the information on the Caretaker Membership Application will be kept strictly confidential and will not be shared with any other organization or persons other than the Feral Cat Caretakers' Coalition.

**Thank you for being there.
Feral Cat Caretakers' Coalition**

© 2003 Feral Cat Caretakers' Coalition