

B E R K S H I R E



ANIMAL
D.R.E.A.M.S.

OUR MISSION:

To improve the lives and promote the humane care and acceptance of feral cats throughout Berkshire County and beyond. Through Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) the population of feral cats will become stabilized, with healthy cats and a zero reproductive rate. Through advocacy, education and action, we raise awareness and activism among citizens, animal care professionals, local government and the business community.



Hope for the Future

Throughout the ages, feral cats have been persecuted. Whether rounded up and killed, or left to fend for themselves, these cats have suffered greatly as a result of human neglect and misunderstanding. Animal DREAMS is the only organization in the county helping and advocating for feral cats.

With our Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program in Berkshire County, feral cats are captured, spayed/neutered and then returned to their home territory. Studies have shown TNR to be the most humane and effective way to reduce the numbers of cats living in the wild. With TNR, no new kittens are born, while adult cats, healthy and no longer able to reproduce, keep new, unaltered cats from moving into their territory, and with time, the numbers go down.

Because feral cats are wild, they are not adoptable, and therefore, killed if taken to animal shelters. However, feral cats are able to live long, healthy lives outdoors, as the wild animals they are, as long as they are looked after and not allowed to reproduce. Caregivers check on the cats in their neighborhood, and bring fresh food and water daily. Insulated sleeping shelters are provided for the cats, insuring that regardless of cold, rain or snow, the cats will be warm and safe inside.

Our founder and director recently attended the National Feral Cat Summit, where experts in the field of feral cats met with rescue groups from across North America. The county in Florida where the summit was held has *all* feral cat spays/neuters paid for by the county. What a goal for Berkshire County! Getting a handle on the population in the Berkshires (numbering several thousand cats) is a massive undertaking and requires the cooperation and financial support of many, many people. **It takes a county.....won't you help?**



Gift idea: Why not make a donation to **Animal D.R.E.A.M.S. in someone's name?**

Consider sponsoring a feral cat. \$100 will pay for all the veterinary care for one feral cat, as well as its food for one month. You can also donate online by credit card on our secure donations page.

www.BerkshireAnimalDREAMS.org

Dignified Rescues Education Advocacy Medical Services

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In 8 years, we have helped almost two thousand cats, with two thousand stories. Following are a few **Berkshires' rescues from Autumn 2007:**

The night was cold, the first frost settling hard over the Berkshires. Most people were snug in their homes, as a cat lay in the middle of the road, the victim of a hit and run. Fortunately, the people who stopped to help called Animal DREAMS when they saw that he was still alive. We drove half an hour to the site, found him (he had dragged himself under a parked van in a lot) and transported him to the Animal ER in Pittsfield. With a crushed pelvis and head injury, had we not intervened, he would have died a slow, agonizing death or been an easy find for a predator.

For two years, a gray tiger cat, had been hobbling around a neighborhood with a compound fracture of his front leg (yes, 2 years!). Only one person had tried to catch him early on, but had been repeatedly unsuccessful. The infection and subsequent damage to the leg, as it dragged along the ground, created the worst leg injury we had ever seen, with a myriad of painful and messy complications for the cat. Upon learning about the situation, we went to the area and within half an hour, captured the suffering feline and got him to a veterinarian.

A skinny, 6-month old kitten, fur greasy with oil, and one eye ulcerated, was ravenously hungry. As restaurant patrons dined, he was darting in and out from under their cars trying to find food. Volunteers saw him and **started leaving food out for him until we were able to trap him. He had quite possibly been a "pet", acquired by the nearby summer camp, or by vacationers who had left him behind at the end of the summer. It's a cruel** mistake to think that a cat left to fend for itself will survive our harsh winter, all the while searching for food, water and warm shelter without succumbing to frostbite, starvation and disease.

What these stories illustrate is the need for a safety net for the many cats out there, living among us. In the majority of cases, there are no town or city services to deal with cases such as this, and well-meaning citizens have to take the initiative. In each case, many, many people saw the cats suffering, but looked the other way. In each case, one person made an effort, which made the difference for the cat.

That person could be YOU.

Through your support of Animal DREAMS, we can continue to be there for the forgotten cats of Berkshire County.

Fortunately, most of the cats we deal with are healthy ferals who have someone who is looking out for their well being. In these situations, we can trap the cats, arrange for their vet care, and then return them back to their colony and caregiver. We offer help with housing, feeding and care as well.

Do you know someone who is feeding feral or stray cats? It is very important to arrange for spay/neutering and vaccinations for the cats. Please tell them about us, and ask them to call us.

Animal D.R.E.A.M.S. Board of Directors:

Yvonne Borsody, Founder and Director

Victoria Wright, President

Bill Polk, Treasurer

Judy Isserlis

Nancy Larkin, Secretary

Lin Schreiber



The Benefits of Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)

- ◆ A reduction in the numbers of cats and kittens born in the wild.
- ◆ Public Health benefit (all cats in the TNR program are rabies vaccinated).
- ◆ Tourists appreciate seeing healthy cats rather than hungry cats jumping into dumpsters.
- ◆ Absence of unpleasant behaviors (fighting, spraying, mating) displayed by unaltered cats.
- ◆ Diminished impact on wildlife.
- ◆ Feral kittens and adult strays can be socialized and adopted out as house pets.
- ◆ A sense of community involvement.
- ◆ A great way to volunteer and get students involved.
- ◆ A sense of personal fulfillment and stewardship in helping feral cats.



Thank-You to our dedicated volunteers, feeders, trappers, veterinarians and their staff, merchants who display our donation canisters, couriers, foster families and donors. We could not do this without you! The weather conditions are often extreme (especially, it seems, when we are involved in a rescue or a major trapping project!). The hours are long and the benefits are few, but the satisfaction of knowing that the lives of these beautiful, dignified, resourceful felines have been improved by our efforts is the greatest reward of all. Thank-You!!

Animal D.R.E.A.M.S., Inc. is a not-for-profit 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Donations are tax-deductible to the extent provided by law. We are a grass-roots organization receiving no public funding, and are wholly dependent on private donations to continue our important mission. Your donation stays in Berkshire County, helping local animals who live among us.

Wish List

- Businesses to sponsor adoption ads in local newspapers
- Canned cat food: Friskies Buffet, Fancy Feast, Wellness
- Dry cat food: Premium brands (Wellness, Nutro, Calif. Natural, Science Diet, Felidae) to mix with supermarket brands
- Motion-activated scouting camera (digital)
- Towels, fleece blankets, and puppy training pads
- Bales of soft straw or hay for bedding
- Postage stamps for newsletters
- Black and color ink cartridges for HP 1610 inkjet printer
- Marketing and PR talent
- Cat litter
- Paper towels
- Empty metal coffee cans (to make donation canisters)



Winter 2007-2008

B E R K S H I R E



ANIMAL
D.R.E.A.M.S.

For Adoption



Gilligan

Overweight male, seeks love for new beginnings. I am attractive, young, though somewhat rotund (OK, I'm fat!), so I'll need someone who can resist my begging for food! My best friend MaryAnne, who is very shy, can't live without me, so we have to be adopted as a pair. We'll all be so happy!



MaryAnne



November

Well-mannered, calm, and dignified. Perfect for someone who lives alone and wants just one special cat. Spayed, 4 years old, she is a devoted feline.



MingChen and MingXia, an inseparable brother/sister pair, 7 months old. These 2 gorgeous, silly all-black siblings would be perfect for a home with older children

Jet is an all-black, 2 year old male. An abandoned pet, he was rescued from the streets of North Adams. Jet would be best as an only cat, although he gets along with calm dogs and older children. What a love he is!