



NEIGHBORHOOD CATS NETWORK, Inc.

CHRONICLE

Winter - Spring 2025

A Year of Impact: Protecting Community Cats and Empowering Caregivers

At Neighborhood Cats Network, our mission is twofold: to improve the lives of community cats and to support the incredible caregivers who dedicate themselves to their well-being. Our selfless volunteer feeders face immense challenges— whether it's braving harsh weather, managing limited resources or navigating personal physical difficulties. That's where we step in, offering practical solutions and unwavering support to make their vital work easier.

It's hard to believe it's been almost a year since our Neighborhood Cats Network began! In that short time, we've made a remarkable impact on the lives of countless homeless community cats in need. We're thrilled to announce that we've successfully built and installed over 80 cat cabins and feeding stations throughout our community. Recently, we even created custom feeding stations designed for ease of use by two feeders— one elderly and the other with a disability— both facing physical limitations that made feeding their community cats a daunting task. They needed a solution, and we rose to the challenge.



Our winterized cat cabins are more than shelters; they're a lifeline for cats and a source of hope for their caregivers. Many community caregivers, unable to afford or build proper shelters, have faced the heartbreak of watching their beloved cats endure freezing temperatures. Seeing these cats safe and warm inside a cabin often brings tears of joy and relief, knowing they no longer must suffer through harsh winters unprotected.



Neighborhood Cats Network goes beyond assisting caregivers— we pour our hearts into nurturing the many colonies under our care. Every single day, our dedicated volunteers arrive armed with food, compassion, and boundless love, ensuring each cat feels cared for and valued. These daily feedings are far more than a routine— they're lifelines, symbols of hope, and proof of our relentless commitment to the health, happiness, and well-being of every precious feline who depends on us.

But our work doesn't stop here. We're committed to continuing this mission and invite you to join us. Whether you can volunteer your time, donate funds, host a cat food drive, or spread the word, every contribution helps. Together, we're not only providing for the cats but also honoring and uplifting the caregivers who love them like family.

Neighborhood Cats Network

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Our mission is to compassionately improve the lives of community cats by providing them with nourishment, housing, TNVRM (trap, neuter, vaccinate, return and manage) as a pathway to a better future.



Winter Care Tips - Help community cats stay safe and warm this winter

1. Provide Winterized Cat Cabins: Insulated shelters are essential. Use materials like Styrofoam and/or wood with straw bedding (DO NOT use blankets or hay, as they retain moisture).

2. Elevate Shelters: Keep shelters off the ground to prevent moisture and cold from seeping in by placing them on a pallet or bricks.

3. Entrance Protection: Orient the entrance away from prevailing winds and incorporate an overhang to protect against snow and rain.

4. Increase Food Portions: Cats need more calories in winter to maintain body heat. Feed high-protein, high-fat food.

5. When possible, use Heated Water Bowls: Prevent water from freezing by using heated bowls or insulated containers. Replace frozen water frequently

6. Serve Warm Meals: If possible, provide warm food to help cats fight the cold.

7. Provide Windbreaks: Create a wind barrier with bales of straw around feeding stations and shelters.

8. Avoid Antifreeze: Ensure antifreeze and other toxic substances are inaccessible to cats.



9. Monitor for Injuries or Illness: Winter can be harsh; watch for signs of frostbite or other issues.

10. Spay/Neuter Programs: Continue TNVR efforts to prevent more litters being born in the cold.



Purrs and Pours: A Holiday Cat Food Drive Success Story

This holiday season, Jen Cheney and Sherry Cooke Ientilucci embarked on a heartfelt mission to bring joy and nourishment to community cats. Their deep love for these resilient felines and unwavering support for Neighborhood Cats Network inspired them to rally their friends and family around an extraordinary cause. With a determination to leave no bowl empty, they organized two impactful events: a lively online cat food fundraiser on Facebook and a cozy, festive in-person gathering for their loved ones.

Jen and Sherry made it easy for people to contribute by offering several donation options: direct donations through the Neighborhood Cats Network website, Venmo contributions for food purchases, bringing food donations to the event, ordering from an Amazon or Chewy wish list for direct delivery and picking up pre-purchased food at the happy hour. These flexible choices allowed everyone to give in a way that suited them best.

The in-person Purrs and Pours Happy Hour created a cozy, festive atmosphere, held at a central location and thoughtfully kept to two hours to accommodate busy holiday schedules.

Guests brought donations instead of traditional hostess gifts, while Jen and Sherry provided appetizers and drinks, ensuring a relaxed and enjoyable evening for everyone.

To add some extra holiday fun, they raffled off a festive gift basket to one lucky donor. The evening concluded with a group photo that perfectly



captured the warmth, generosity, and holiday spirit of the gathering.

Thanks to Jen and Sherry's efforts, "Purrs and Pours" was a resounding success! They collected an impressive amount of food, ensuring community cats will have full bellies this winter. Beyond the donations, the event fostered a sense of connection and shared purpose, proving that even small gatherings can make a big difference.

We hope their story serves as inspiration and you'll consider organizing your own cat food drive! Whether it's for a birthday party, family function, group gathering, game night or themed event, it's a wonderful way to make a difference. Contact us at info@neighborhoodcatsnetwork.org or call us at 315.584.1374 for more information and to get started!

Colony Spotlight: Marilyn and the Cats of the Whiskered Woodlands



When we first met the 14 cats in their wooded refuge, their world was harsh and unyielding. The trees provided scant protection from the biting cold, their makeshift shelters were barely standing, and their mealtimes were a gamble against the elements. These resilient cats lived each day without knowing warmth, stability, or consistent care.

But their story changed when Neighborhood Cats Network stepped in.

We saw their plight and knew we could do better for them. One by one, with the help from our friends, The Colony Caregivers, they were trapped, and each cat was spayed or neutered, protecting them from the endless cycle of reproduction. Then came the next step: creating a

true haven. Seven sturdy, winterized cat cabins now dot their woods, offering cozy refuge from freezing winds and snow. Three large well-built feeding stations provide a sheltered spot where meals are served daily, no matter what the weather.

And meals—they come like clockwork, delivered with love by our dedicated volunteers. These cats no longer fend for scraps



in the cold; instead, they savor warm, hearty meals that nourish their bodies and spirits.

Marilyn, the queen of the colony, now greets us each morning with trust and gratitude. Her presence is a reminder of why we do this—to bring comfort, safety, and love to the most vulnerable. Together, we can turn even the coldest corners into warm, loving spaces....



A Day in the Life of a Neighborhood Cats Network Volunteer Feeder

Every morning, Jane starts her day with one purpose in mind: to care for the community of cats she has come to know and love. As a dedicated volunteer feeder for Neighborhood Cats Network, Jane braves the cold of winter and the unpredictability of weather, ensuring that each cat in her care receives a hearty meal and the comfort of a warm, safe space.

Before leaving her house, Jane warms up the moist food, measures out the dry food, and fills the water bottles. The journey begins early, when she bundles up in layers and heads out to the colony. Even on the most frigid mornings, when the temperatures dip below freezing, Jane's commitment to the cats is unwavering. She checks on the feeding station, replenishing food and water, making sure no cat goes hungry.

Feeding isn't just about food—it's about connection. Jane takes a moment to observe, ensuring all the cats are accounted for, watching



for any signs of illness or distress. She's developed a keen eye for spotting changes in behavior or appearance, which is crucial for catching health issues early. If she notices anything concerning, she reports it to the team at Neighborhood Cats Network, who act quickly to help.

Despite the challenges, the rewards are immeasurable, making the early mornings worthwhile. There's something special about witnessing the transformation of a once-wary

cat, like Horton, who now comes closer with each visit, or

Daphne and Lottie who have learned to trust and even greet Jane at their feeding station. These small victories remind her of why she does this work.

For Jane, being a volunteer feeder isn't just a task—it's a passion. It's a bond that grows stronger with each visit, with each meal provided, and with every cat who finds a bit more comfort and safety in the world. She may only be one person, but her impact is immeasurable, one meal at a time.



My Feeder, My Hero

Each morning, as the cold winds sigh,
You arrive beneath the waking sky.
Through frost and snow, through storm and sleet,
You bring me life, a love so sweet.

Your hands lay down my daily meal,
A kindness deep, a warmth I feel.
But you gave more than food alone—
A winter cabin, my safe, warm home.

Its walls protect, its straw holds heat,
A shelter strong against the sleet.
While bitter winds around me howl,
Inside, I rest, my heart less foul.

I may never climb into your lap,
Or curl up close for a gentle pat.
But know, dear friend, with each soft bite,
Your love has turned my dark to light.

So, thank you feeder, for all you do,
For seeing me, for pulling through.
In your care, I've found my place,
A gift of hope, a saving grace.

From Surviving to Thriving: A Winter Rescue for Community Cats

At Neighborhood Cats Network, we don't just show up—we transform lives. When RockKats TNR reached out about a devoted feeder caring for five homeless cats, we knew we couldn't wait. These cats, lovingly spayed and neutered by RockKats TNR, faced a brutal winter with nothing but a few tattered boxes and an exposed feeding area to protect them. The feeder's heart ached at the thought of these precious lives battling bitter winds and freezing temperatures, utterly defenseless.



Former cat shelter

We sprang into action. The urgency was undeniable. Our volunteers were wasting no time, pouring their hearts into building insulated cat cabins. Each was crafted with care, featuring straw bedding and windproof entrances to create a haven against the harshest elements.



Former feeding station

Today, these five resilient cats have warm, cozy shelters to call their own, hearty meals every day, and a feeder whose unwavering dedication is supported by a team that shares her mission.



New cat shelters

This transformation is a profound testament to our purpose: to replace hardship with comfort, fear with safety, and neglect with the dignity every community cat deserves. It's why we pour our hearts into this work—to give these resilient souls the chance to not just survive, but truly thrive...



New feeding station

Honor a Loved One with a Personalized Cat Cabin and Help Support Community Cats



A named plate on a Neighborhood Cats Network cabin is a heartfelt way to honor a special two- or four-legged companion. Whether commemorating a beloved pet, celebrating a cherished friendship, or marking a special occasion like an anniversary or birthday, these custom plaques add a personal touch to the cozy shelters we provide. For \$250, you can sponsor a cabin with a personalized plate, and we'll email you a photo of the finished product. Not only does this gesture celebrate a cherished bond, but it also makes a meaningful difference by providing warmth and safety to community cats in need. Each plate tells a story, transforming a simple cabin into a symbol of love, memory, and impact.

Stronger Together: Changing lives for Community Cats

At Neighborhood Cats Network, collaboration isn't just a part of what we do – it's the very foundation of our mission. Together with our incredible partners, we are transforming the lives of community cats across the region. This past year has been nothing short of remarkable, as we've joined forces with passionate individuals and organizations who share our unwavering commitment to creating safe, compassionate spaces for these resilient cats. Here are just a few:

A heartfelt thank you to Colony Caregivers for their incredible partnership with us in providing vital Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) services! Their dedication and collaborative spirit have been instrumental in helping us improve the lives of countless community cats. Together, we're reducing overpopulation, ensuring healthier colonies, and creating a brighter future for these resilient cats.

Another special thank you to Ray and Lynnette Steinmetz, the painters behind our cat cabins and feeding stations. Their work not only helps protect the structures from moisture but also lends an appealing look for business owners, making it easier to place these shelters in public spaces.

Many thanks also go to Chris Wade, who along with his daughter Lillie, is helping construct our winterized cabins. Their efforts are ensuring that more community cats have warm, secure places to weather the winter.

These partnerships are a testament to the incredible power of teamwork and the extraordinary difference we can make when we come together for the welfare of community cats.

NEIGHBORHOOD CATS NETWORK, INC
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