

## **-- Feral Cat Forum --**

### **Presented by the HVHS**

February **7**, 2007 -- Pomona, NY: The HVHS is spearheading a forum concerning feral cats whose population in Rockland is ever increasing. The HVHS is in favor of a no-kill solution and is organizing this event to share knowledge and expertise with those interested in this unique animal population. Recently the HVHS conducted an informal census and within a half-hour identified 20 feral cat colonies with more than 300 felines. This exercise suggests that a formal study would disclose there are thousands of feral cats in Rockland. In order to aid these animals and control their population, a plan based in scientific knowledge about their propensity to breed and expand into territories must be shared. Municipal animal control will not assist residents or animal welfare organizations attempting to either help these cats or eliminate them from residential areas. By virtue of these animals being feral does not make them disposable. The problem is uncontrolled breeding and there are basically two solutions available:

1: Trap all feral cats and euthanize them. This is only a temporary solution since eliminating a colony only invites a neighboring colony to move into new territory.

2: Trap, spay/neuter, medicate and release the cats to live out their lives without producing more kittens and permit them to keep the rodent population down.

Which philosophy will help control the feral cat population at an acceptable cost? Which merits financial support, public or private? Does it matter that some do, and some do not find euthanizing feral cats acceptable? Will either policy produce 100% success, (i.e., eliminate or substantially reduce the feral cat population)? The empirical evidence suggests that spay/neuter, release is a more effective, less costly means of controlling feral cats than euthanasia. We doubt it is more acceptable to many residents. We find the evidence favoring the no kill alternative persuasive. Failing to address the issue worsens the overpopulation expansion geometrically.

The forum will take place on Wednesday, February 28, 2007 from 4:00 – 6:00pm at the New City Library located at 220 North Main Street, New City, in the auditorium. Space is limited, those interested should call 845-354-3124 to register – we suggest \$15 per person.

For further information, please contact the HVHS at 845-354-3124.

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The HVHS is a private, tax-exempt organization, chartered as a society for prevention of cruelty to animals in New York State and has cared for abandoned, unwanted and abused animals in Rockland County since 1891.