



T-TOWN MEWS

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Maintaining Momentum in 2020

I have to admit, things looked bleak in the Spring of 2020 when our primary spay/neuter clinic closed temporarily due to the pandemic. The T-Town TNR team and the entire animal welfare community was clearly anxious about the many kittens that were being born during the clinic shutdowns.

Yet our strong resolve prevailed. This did not inhibit our momentum from past years. We still met our goals to recruit more trappers and increase our monthly TNR numbers. In October, we reached an organizational milestone of 5,000 cats since 2015. By November, we had exceeded the 2019 total of 1,377 cats. And at the printing of this **Mewsletter**, more than 1,600 cats and kittens have gone through our program in 2020.

What does this mean? More than 1,600 cats that will no longer be reproducing, but rather living their best lives; no more breeding behaviors like fighting and roaming; no more struggles to find safe places to rear their kittens; fewer kittens dying on the street or overpopulating an already burdened city shelter.

T-Town TNR received 537 requests for assistance with colonies of cats from the public in 2020, more than double 2019. We believe Tulsans understand the importance of Trap-Neuter-Return in managing the community cat population.

This year, we received grants from the **Grace and Franklin Bensen Foundation, Petco Foundation, Walmart Giving Fund, Athletes For Animals, Onxy and Breezy Foundation, the Major League Baseball Players Trust** and the **Kirkpatrick Foundation**. We are grateful that these foundations believed us worthy of their funding. Part of these funds were dedicated to project "**Route 66 Snip and Tip**" for TNR in District 4. We have exceeded our 400 cat goal in that district at this time but continue to address colonies there.

Costs are much higher this year. We are doing virtual fundraising currently during important winter months. TNR is most successful in the winter when there are fewer kittens or pregnant cats and the cats are eating in common areas regularly. It is harder once the breeding starts in February.

We are forever grateful to all of you who support us throughout the year. Truly, we cannot sustain this effort without our ongoing collaboration with you. Sincere thanks and best wishes for the new year.

Samantha Polen
Executive Director

Kitten Catch-Up

Because of closed clinics, we found ourselves helping to save sick and dying kittens. Since we do not have an adoption program, many of our team members foster at their own expense and partner with adoption groups for placement. Unfortunately, the number of kittens and cats in Tulsa far exceeds the adoptive homes available.

Field Briefs

ES: It's hard to talk about without a ton of emotion. Mario and Luigi were near death when I found them. This colony was riddled with illness: ringworm, respiratory infection, and malnutrition caused from parasites. I have worked with more than 40 cats from this colony so far. Sadly, two kittens and two adults were lost due to illness, but with the help of teammates, donations and great vet care, 15 very sick kittens were fostered, nursed to health and adopted into loving homes, including Mario and Luigi.



Mario, the night he was found



Mario and Luigi in their new home



Little Fred had to have a leg pinned, but ended up with an inside home in the deal!



CP: We were trapping when we heard meowing out of a storm drain. Tulsa firefighters were called to access the drain so that a trap could be placed under the street. We stayed up all night to get this tiny kitten who now has a good home.

Winter Cat Shelters

T-Town TNR and Tulsa SPCA collaborated in making more than 100 Winter Cat Shelters available to the public, for FREE! Within hours of posting the availability of shelters to our Facebook page in late October, all shelters had been reserved to 64 requesters. We continued to work together, making dates and times available for pickup. Please follow us on our Facebook page for news of when more shelters will be available and how to request them.



Donations can be made at TTownTNR.com, or PayPal at TTownTNR@gmail.com or mail to:

T-Town TNR
PO Box 703013
Tulsa, OK 74170

The CARES Act for 2020 allows individual taxpayers that do not itemize to take up to \$300 "above the line" deduction.

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CP: Marciano, trapped at The Gathering Place with a sibling, in his new home.

JR: While using a drop trap to get stragglers one evening, one of the eartipped cats came to check it out. We had TNR'd him almost three years ago and he looks happy and healthy.



Why Microchip Community Cats?



- Because we track cats by colony and location, we know where its "home" is. If an injured cat ends up at a vet clinic or a shelter, its chip tracks back to our organization and we can get it home.
- Deceased cats are scanned for chips when picked up by the city. This information helps us and the city to understand any reasons that cats might be dying. For example, we are finding that fewer spayed and neutered cats die in traffic-related deaths. Studies show that cats stay nearer their food sources and do less roaming if sterilized, therefore not crossing dangerous streets and highways in mating behaviors.
- Community cat caregivers and neighborhoods appreciate that there is potential for finding missing colony cats.
- Approximately 30% of the cats or kittens in our program go into indoor homes directly or are handed off to organizations with adoption programs. It is a benefit that these cats can be tracked by microchip should they ever be lost or displaced from their homes.

T-Town TNR began microchipping in February. We received our initial 1,000 chips through a grant from **Bissell Pet Foundation** and **Petestablished** and another 500 most recently from **Onyx and Breezy Foundation**.

When you think of TNR, your first thought would not be about data gathering and the need for technical expertise. And yet, a large part of what our team does is track the data and document the colonies and the cats in them.

We know the only way we can tell if we are impacting Tulsa's cat overpopulation is by having the numbers to back it up. Our database, created in-house by team members and now available to other TNR groups nationwide, allows team members to input data in the field using smartphones, including cat statistics, equipment locations, microchip information and more.

Other important data is donor management. In October, we switched to a new software package to securely and confidentially manage and track donor information. Donor management software (DMS) is critical to fundraising and communication. We realized a significant savings in switching to the new DMS which was critical this year as we struggle with funding our work. Our database currently holds over 1,200 supporters.

TNR Tech



Interested in Helping?

There are many opportunities for volunteers to contribute whether it's listening to the public's requests for help, trapping cats, or transporting them to and from clinic appointments. We are a small team, so we need self motivated people who can learn fast and be flexible. Visit our website to find out more and sign up. <https://www.towntnr.com/volunteer.html>



Funding the Mission



Due to COVID-19, we were unable to safely host our largest fundraiser, **City Nights**. With over 1,600 cats going through our program this year, funds were needed more than ever. Given the current situation, we adapted and looked to alternative ways to raise necessary funds. This included two online auctions, See's Candies fundraiser as well as virtual BINGO and drawings sponsored by **Walmart Foundation**.

Dave and Jill Borkoski and the **Tulsa Drillers** gave us **Mystery Balls**, COVID style, this year. This was an online event that involved a random drawing for baseballs autographed by major league players. The funds from this raised over \$2,000 for the **Special Medical Fund**, which was established last year by Jill Borkowski.

T-Town TNR is struggling to come up with new ways to fund the mission. Our clinic costs alone (Spay-Neuter-Vaccinate-Microchip) now averages \$9,200 per month. This does not include special medical, supplies, storage, insurance and other program expenses. Despite our best efforts, we will not be able to continue to process 165 cats per month without more income. We will continue to look for additional funding, including grants and alternative fundraising events until we can resume in-person events.

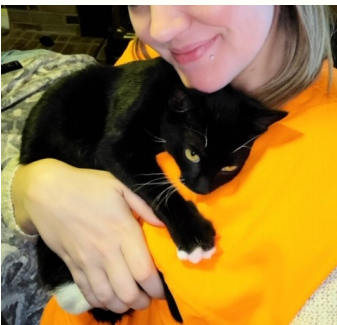
Special Medical Fund

T-Town TNR believes in doing what is best for each cat and each colony within our abilities. That is why we vaccinate for both rabies and the upper respiratory viruses that plague our city's cats. It costs an extra \$15 per cat, but we believe it is worth it.

Further, if an illness or injury needs to be addressed, we do it. We maintain a separate fund for special medical expenses that we deem extraordinary. These are the illnesses that require hospitalization or injuries that require surgery. In 2020, we saw a lot of these. There were several surgeries to pin or remove limbs and several eye removals. If these cats are not deemed safe to return to their colonies, we find homes or sanctuary for them. This is very expensive, but we are dedicated to giving them better lives. Pictured here are a few of them.



Pretty Tracy has endured three surgeries and months at the vet clinic before going to a foster home. She is now ready for a forever home. Contact us for details!

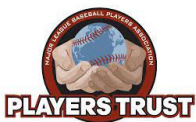


Magpie's dangling broken leg was mangled and her foot infected. The leg had to be amputated. She has since been taken into a home. Her siblings and mother are safe, sterilized, well fed and provided shelter.



Brandy was treated for an intra-nasal blockage that prevented her from breathing normally.

Special thanks to our partners



Common Bonds
Oklahoma. Pets. People. Places.



BISSELL PET FOUNDATION™
Until every pet has a home.

