

# DATAW ISLAND FELINE FOUNDATION MAY NEWSLETTER 2019

DIFF was involved with some interesting cat incidents over the last year, all of them with heartwarming results.

## **Kitten on the highway!**

First there was the scary moment when a tiny kitten fell out from underneath a car travelling on Route 21 near Polowana Road. A landscape company employee on his way to Dataw saw it happen right in front of his own car. He jumped out and stopped traffic on the highway until he could scoop up the tiny baby. Having several pets of his own, there was no way he could keep this little one, too, so he implored the owner of the home at which he was working to take on the burden. She, too, had a houseful of pets, so she called on me as a representative of DIFF for help. The first thing we did was get him some kitten milk, and the next was to put out an urgent request to the island. And, as Dataw always does, Dataw came through. One of our residents took him on as a temporary foster. That designation lasted maybe two days. He became Lucky, a beloved member of the family, and now weighs seven pounds!

## **Where did this calico come from?**

The next event took place behind one of the Bluff villas. The owners, who were staying there temporarily, had been feeding a beautiful calico cat for several months, but when they were ready to leave, they called the Beaufort County Animal Shelter to see what to do. The shelter folks knew about DIFF and contacted me to try to handle it. Well, that one didn't take long at all. We put out a notice to Dataw along with a picture, and very quickly the cat, named Callie, was reunited with its owner who had been searching for her for several months. Workers at the home had left a door open and the cat, who was spooked by all the noise, took off. The reunion was touching and caused more than a few tears of joy.

## **Five beautiful orphaned babies**

And then there were the five adorable kittens that were frolicking along Polowana Road by Dataw's water treatment facility. A security guard found them and was very fearful that they would all be killed because they insisted on following him out onto the road. He contacted me, and we soon had all five of these babies ensconced on the screened porch of one of DIFF's volunteers. These kittens were clean, healthy, and totally socialized. Someone cared for them until they were weaned and then abandoned them. DIFF volunteers continued their care and socialization until the kittens were big enough to be neutered/spayed and turned over to the animal shelter for eventual adoption. Well, three of the five went there. Two of them stayed behind and became precious pets of a DIFF volunteer.

## **Smokey finds a new home**

Our most recent arrival to Dataw is Smokey, a beautiful shorthaired gray male. DIFF volunteers cared for him for a month under Ally Cat Allies protocol and when he was accustomed to his daily visitors, about a month in, he decided to search for his own habitat. He was MIA for several days and was finally spotted in and about Sparrow Nest. He is comfortably ensconced in a wooded area there with an above ground, roofed feeding station, a sleeping hut and a visitor's chair for feeders' playtime and feeding. He purrs, loves to be scratched but most of loves his treats! Bye, bye more marsh rats!

Roberta Gunderson again, presented her ever popular DIFF /Feral Cat talk to both OLLI and PEO (Philanthropic Educational Organization.)

Beverley Porter and Connie Brotzman created an article for Dataw's Spring Dateline publication. Beverley will pass it on to Dataw Academy to be included in the curriculum in the future.

The DIFF Annual Meeting was held on January 17, 2019. Our treasury is healthy reported Tom Hurley., and we will not have to run another fundraiser. This news drew smiles all around. Ingrid Schweitzer presented a spreadsheet replete with every feral /free range cat tracked by DIFF from the beginning of time. We continue to go along with about 40 volunteers and between 12 and 18 cats with feeding stations at the Marsh Colony, Odingsell, Gleason's Landing, the Tennis Center and various private homes on island.

Officers will remain the same for 2019: Dale Martin, Executive Director; Pat Ashton, co-Executive Director; Tom Hurley, Treasurer; Roberta Gunderson, Secretary; Beverley Porter, Cat liaison; Ingrid Schweitzer, Head Tracker and Fred Houle, Emeritus. We seriously must find a few new possibilities for leadership positions as most of us have held office for going on 10 years: new blood is good!

Our Annual Tea was hosted by Ingrid Schweitzer in her most lovely home on March 26. It was a lively event with much cat chatter and a bit of wine consumption accompanied by sweet and savory appetizers created by volunteers. Thank you so much Ingrid.

We did have one moment of sadness when Tucker, who had wandered into the Marsh Colony, tested positive for Feline Leukemia. Medically it is recommended feral cats be euthanized to avoid what would be a miserable lingering death process in the wild as well as putting colony members at high risk of contracting it ..

**DIFF Mission statement:** *To stabilize the population and provide assistance to feral cats on Dataw Island, SC, through feeding, spaying, neutering and adoption programs; and to provide public education on feral cat management programs.*