

# THE ADVOCAT



Fall/Winter 2014

A Billerica Cat Care Coalition Publication

News for BCCC Members, Friends and the Public

## In This Issue

Featured Stories	1
Featured Cat	1
President's Message	2
TNR Feral Photos and Event Calendar	3
Winter Weather Tips	4
Cat Dental Care	5
Adoptable Cats	6
What Our Volunteers Say	7

## Help Homeless Cats and Kittens

Visit our web site:  
[www.billericacatcarecoalition.org](http://www.billericacatcarecoalition.org)

### Learn About:

- Feral Cats
- Pet Overpopulation
- The Importance Of Spaying & Neutering
- View Our List of Available Cats
- Become a Volunteer

### Donate To Our Food Bins at:

- Market Baskets in Billerica
- Billerica & Tewksbury Libraries
- Agway, Chelmsford
- Pet Supplies Plus, Billerica
- Pet Source, Lexington

### We have Donation Jars at:

- K-9 Comforts, Billerica
- Shank's Mare, Billerica
- Lexington-Bedford Veterinary Hospital

### Our Sponsoring Vets:

- The Cat Doctor
- McGrath Animal Hospital
- Tewksbury Animal Hospital
- Middlesex County Animal Hospital
- Lexington-Bedford Veterinary Hospital



To adopt Susie and Precious please visit: <http://www.billericacatcarecoalition.org/adoptionform.php>

## Trap/Neuter/Return (TNR) for Feral Cats: A Look Behind the Scenes



*Simba*

After more than 10 years, BCCC has trapped, spayed/neutered, vaccinated and returned thousands of cats. We've learned a lot. We've met caring people trying to do the right thing by feeding and providing shelter for ferals. Without TNR, the feral cat cycle continues.

That's where we step in and provide free TNR to get cats fixed. Ferals are TNR'd, including "eartipping" (indicates cat is fixed). We rely on the public to help find ferals and also feral kittens so they get into foster for adoption.

Here are some situations that show how BCCC helps:

- A feral cat was trapped with severe difficulty breathing. After careful medical review, we determined allowing her to be euthanized was the right decision. Her autopsy revealed numerous broken ribs and a lung 8 times normal size. She suffered a severe trauma. Instead of dying alone, she was humanely relieved of incurable suffering, with dignity and respect.
- An older kitten brought in for TNR was lactating, revealing she had a litter of her own, though barely old enough and severely underweight. Imagine trying to find food, while nursing a litter of new babies! She's fixed and will not have to repeat that experience.
- Animal Control responded to a call about a cat that was hit and killed. More cats were found at the site. BCCC paid for the cats' spays/neuters/vaccinations.



*Angus & Simba*

Susie is a bit timid and fearful especially when meeting someone new or if startled. But once you gain her trust, she is very sweet and loves to be petted. Her green eyes will mesmerize you. Precious, although a bit shy like her sister, warms up more quickly. She loves attention and to loves to eat!

Susie and Precious are very bonded, often doing things together whether it be eating, playing or sleeping. They would be best in a quieter environment as dogs or younger children may be too intimidating for their personalities.



## Letter from the President

There is nothing quite like driving through Billerica and surrounding towns, knowing there are places where feral cats have been spayed or neutered and continue to receive care with their feeding station and shelters. It is also satisfying to know formerly feral kittens are brought in for foster and adoption. The best feeling of all is the network of compassionate people who work together to provide no-kill, humane resources for ferals and access for owned cats to affordable spay/neuter on the Catmobile. BCCC's no-kill network reaches far and wide for felines in need outside our service area.

Via our trap/neuter/return (TNR) program, thousands of cats are now spayed/neutered and vaccinated, in addition to medical care they might not otherwise receive. The cycle of over reproduction of kittens born into a feral cat cycle is being slowed down, thanks to these efforts.(NOTE: BCCC's tnr program is free).



Clyde

What does it take to make this chain of kindness work ? BCCC volunteers,municipal partners and you ! You donate cat food in our local donation bins, money to help pay vet bills and related expenses and other creative ways you reach out to work together.

What was an idea more than 10 years ago has blossomed into an effective, no-kill organization. Of course, we realize, our jobs will never be done.

There will always be cats and kittens in need, tnr will continue for feral cats, and, abandoned cats and kittens will need safe harbor, until they find forever homes. We look forward to seeing you at our events and hearing from you, when there is a need or question. Consider volunteering and adopting with us.

From those who cannot speak for themselves, we say with deepest gratitude "thank you".

With gratitude and purrs,

Sharon



### Buy a Shelter for Ferals

Keep them Warm Throughout the Winter

Help keep your ferals warm with a BCCC feral cat shelter. Sturdy and easy to carry, these shelters provide a safe haven from harsh weather conditions. The cost is \$40.00 and they are made to order, so be sure to get your order in on time!

To order, contact us at  
[info@billericacatcarecoalition.org](mailto:info@billericacatcarecoalition.org)



Visit our Facebook page and see how BCCC is making a difference. We've got pictures, rescue stories, and more!

[www.facebook.com/pages/  
Billerica-Cat-Care-  
Coalition/178563832586](http://www.facebook.com/pages/Billerica-Cat-Care-Coalition/178563832586)

### MRFRS Catmobile



Wow! Low cost spay/neuter service for your cat in your neighborhood: \$80 for males, \$120 for females. The package includes exam, spay/neuter, rabies vaccination, flea treatment and nail trim.

And now there is a Catmobile2, which will serve central and metrowest Massachusetts.

To find out when the Catmobile will be in your area, go to [www.catmobile.org](http://www.catmobile.org)

How to make an appointment:

**Online:** [www.catmobile.org](http://www.catmobile.org)  
**Phone:** 978-465-1940  
**E-mail:** [catmobile@mrfrs.org](mailto:catmobile@mrfrs.org)

### THE ADVOCAT

Volume 9 Issue No. 2

Editor  
Jody Nelson

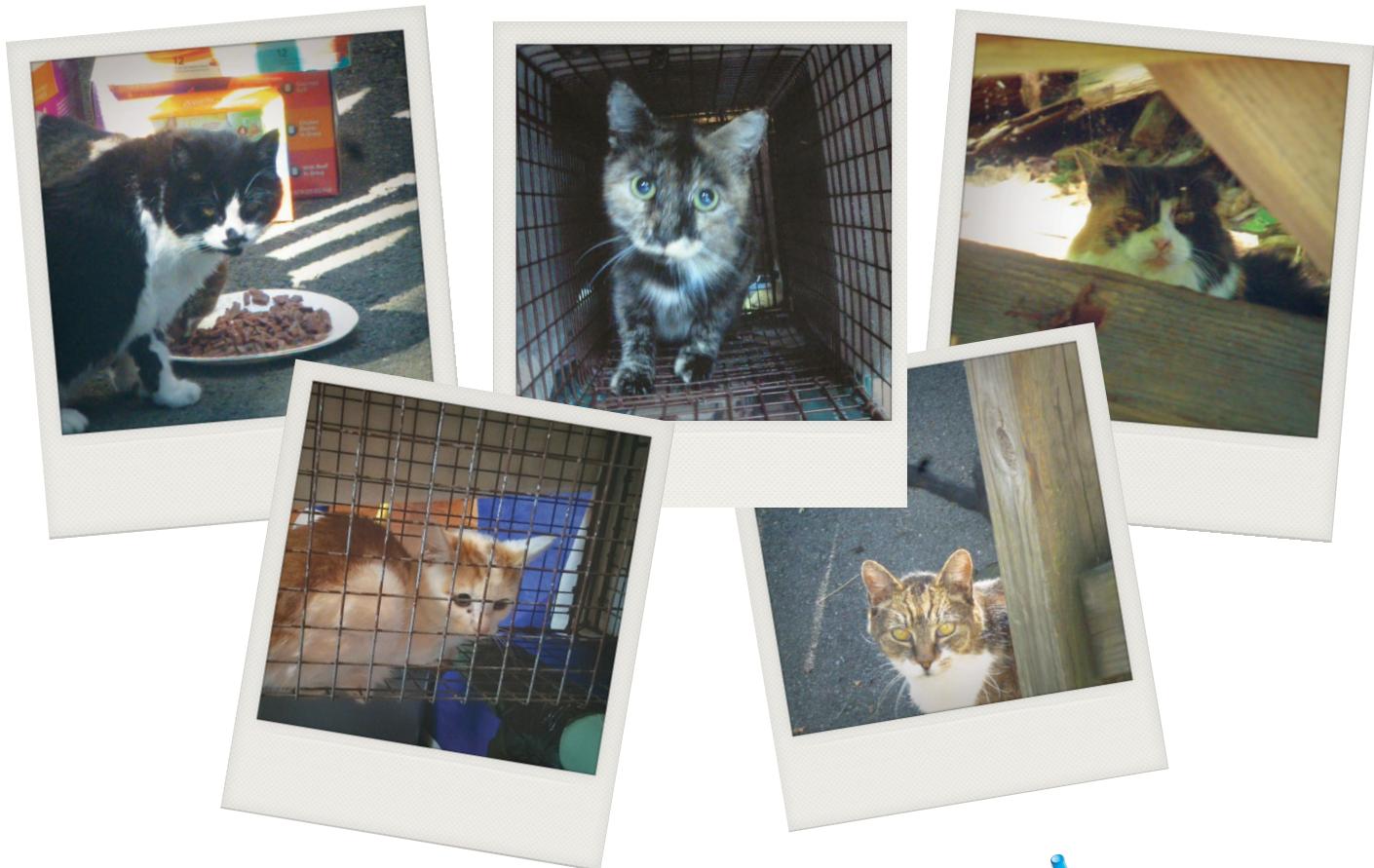
*This newsletter provides general information. It is not intended to provide medical advice. Medical advice should be obtained directly from your veterinarian.*

*Material may not be reproduced without permission.*

© 2014 Billerica Cat Care Coalition  
All Rights Reserved.

## TNR Ferals

Some of the cats you've helped BCCC help !



### Calendar of Events

**SAVE THE DATES!**

**Oct 7, 2014:** 5:00 PM to 9:00 PM - Save a Cat - Eat Pizza! Pizza fund-raiser and raffle - Flatbread Restaurant, 213 Burlington Rd Bedford, MA

**Oct 18, 2014:** 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM - National Feral Cat Day - Collecting donations for the foster and feral cats - Market Basket Plaza, Rt 3A, Billerica MA 01821

**Dec 6, 2014:** 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM - Pet Photos with Santa - Agway, Chelmsford, MA

**Dec 6, 2014:** 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM - Winter Farmers Market + Meet & Greet - Agway, Chelmsford, MA

**Dec 13, 2014:** 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM - Winter Farmers Market + Meet & Greet - Agway, Chelmsford, MA

**Jan 3, 2015:** 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM - Winter Farmers Market + Meet & Greet - Agway, Chelmsford, MA

**Jan 24, 2015:** 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM - Winter Farmers Market + Meet & Greet - Agway, Chelmsford, MA

**Feb 7, 2015:** 10:00 AM to 2:00 PM - Winter Farmers Market + Meet & Greet - Agway, Chelmsford, MA

*Check our on-line calendar for additional events.*



**Scan this QR code  
with your phone to  
go directly to our  
web site!**

## Winter Weather Tips

Source: Alley Cat Allies, [www.alleycat.org](http://www.alleycat.org)



Stray and feral cats are at home outside, but they can always use some extra help in cold or severe weather. Follow these tips to help them stay even safer, warmer, and healthier during severe storms and winter months.

### **Shelter**

Shelters keep feral cat colonies comfortable in cold and other harsh or severe weather conditions. Placing discreet shelters in quiet locations away from foot traffic helps keep cats from taking shelter in places where they are in danger or not welcome. There are endless variations of cat shelters. Dog houses also do the trick with a few modifications. Here's a few tips to help you get started:

A good size for a shelter is at least 2'x3' and at least 18" high. Larger shelters are not necessarily better, since heat disperses quickly, leaving the inside as cold as the outside.

- F Cats will huddle together inside for warmth, so provide colonies with multiple shelters that can fit three to five cats each. If you are caring for fewer cats, use a smaller shelter so it takes less body heat to warm up.
- F Make sure the door is no bigger than six to eight inches wide to keep out other animals. If you're modifying a dog house, you'll need to block off part of the door to make it cat-sized. A flap on the door will also keep snow, rain, and wind out.
- F Insulate the shelter with straw to repel moisture and keep cats warm and dry (Note: Make sure it's straw, but not hay, because hay absorbs moisture. Blankets may seem like a good idea, but since they are also extremely absorbent, they make bad bedding).
- F Raise shelters off the cold ground to conserve warmth. Wooden pallets stuffed with insulation work well for elevating shelters and keeping out drafts.

### **Build a Feeding Station**

A simple feeding station with a roof and sides will protect food and cats from precipitation and icy breezes during meal times. Building a feeding station also establishes a specific area where the cats know to come for food, so they spend as little time exposed to the elements as possible. As with shelters, elevating the floor of the feeding station off the ground keeps food and paws warmer. Feeding stations also

offer many year-round benefits for your colony, including deterring insects and making colony management easier. The moderate time and effort it takes to build one this winter will be well worth it all year round!

### **Food**

When temperatures drop, the colony will need extra calories to maintain energy levels. Provide extra food and water during the winter, and do your best to keep it from freezing. (See above to learn about building feeding stations to protect food and hungry cats from the cold.)

- F Feed the cats on a regular schedule. The cats will know when to come around, and both the food and the cats will spend less time exposed to the weather.
- F In colder weather, make sure to feed larger portions than you usually do for an extra caloric boost.
- F Observe the cats and the time it takes for the food to be eaten. If the cats eat all of the food in 15 minutes or less, put out a bit more.
- F If you can keep it from freezing, feed wet food—it's easier to digest, so cats save more energy for keeping warm. Consider warming canned food prior to arriving at the site and using insulated bags to keep the food warm during travel.
- F Since wet food is also quicker to freeze, make sure you put out dry food too, or if you think the food is very likely to freeze, you may want to feed only dry food.
- F Spray insulation foam into the underside of plastic feeding dishes to keep wet food from becoming fishcicles!

### **Water**

Change water bowls twice daily to keep water from freezing. Use deep bowls rather than wide ones, and refill them with hot or warm water. If the colony is close to an outlet, heated electric water bowls will also do the trick.

- F Keep the water in the sun and use dark colored bowls that will absorb the sun's heat.
- F Shield the water dish from wind by placing it inside a small styrofoam cooler or surround the top and sides of the feeding area with plexiglass to create a greenhouse environment for the water.
- F Purchase a microwavable heating pad like a microwaveable disk to use under the water bowl.
- F Add a pinch of sugar to the water to keep it from freezing as quickly and to provide an energy boost for the cats.

## Cat Dental Care

Courtesy of [www.catvets.com](http://www.catvets.com)

### What is Dental Disease?

Kittens have 26 teeth, while adult cats have 30. If each tooth can be considered a patient, that equates to a lot of dental care! Periodontal disease is considered the most prevalent disease in cats three years of age and older. The periodontum is comprised largely by the “unseen” portions of the teeth which lie below the gum line, in addition to the gums. Therefore, detection and assessment of periodontal disease can be subtle.

Dental disease begins when bacteria colonize the mouth and a plaque biofilm is formed. Over time, this biofilm mineralizes, and calcifies into tartar. The bacterial population accumulates, which leads to inflammation and results in periodontal disease. Additional factors such as misaligned teeth, systemic disease, nutrition, and genetics may also contribute to disease.

There are Four stages of periodontal disease, with Stage One being the most minimal and progressing through to Stage Four.

Stage One is the only stage that is considered reversible, through the use of professional and home dental healthcare. This is the reason that the recommended time to begin professional dental evaluations and cleanings is within the first or second year of a cat's life. Professional dental evaluation should be performed thereafter every 6-12 months, and will involve a general examination while the cat is awake, but will also require anesthesia to allow for complete examination. This anesthetized examination will include dental charting, periodontal probing, and intraoral x-rays. Dental procedures (such as teeth scaling and polishing, or surgical extractions of diseased teeth) are often performed at the same time as the anesthetized examination. More frequent dental examinations may be required for patients with severe dental disease; your veterinarian can help to guide you in this process.

In addition to periodontal disease, cats can also develop other dental diseases, including feline odontoclastic resorptive lesions (FORL), stomatitis (widespread inflammation of the mouth), and fractured teeth.

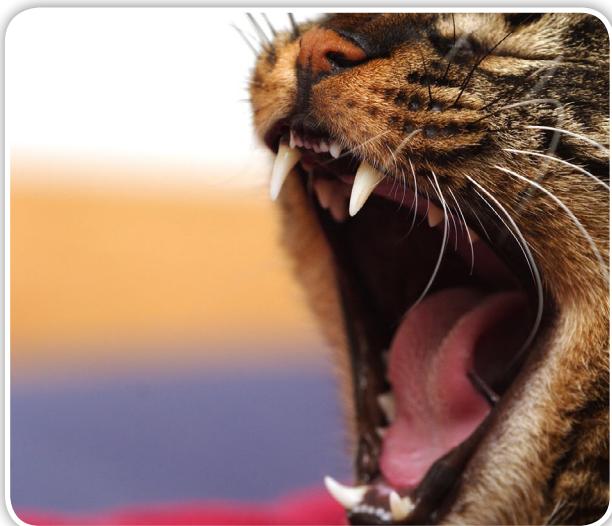
### What to Look for?

Signs of dental pathology can include bad breath, dropping food or chewing only on one side of the mouth, facial swellings or draining wounds, bleeding or discharge from the mouth or nose, sneezing, pawing at the mouth, tooth grinding, or discolored teeth. Often there are no obvious signs of dental disease. Most cats with dental disease still eat without a noticeable change in appetite! Discuss your cat's teeth at their routine preventive care veterinary visit.

If you are suspicious of dental disease, an examination by a licensed veterinary professional is indicated.

### Home Care

The gold standard for preventative dental homecare is tooth brushing. Additionally, a variety of dental prescription and non-prescription diets, treats and toys, along with oral rinses, gels, sprays and water additives have been developed. The Veterinary Oral Health Council ([VOHC - www.vohc.org](http://www.vohc.org)) provides a list of the specific products which meet certain standards for the retardation of plaque and calculus, and can be found on their website. Home care is not sufficient once dental disease has progressed past Stage One - only professional dental therapy can effectively treat the more severe stages of dental disease.



## Some of Our Adoptable Cats

To adopt our cats please visit: <http://www.billericacatcarecoalition.org/adoptionform.php>

**Emma**

I am Emma and I'm 9 years old. I have a laid back personality but don't let my age fool you. I'm as quick as any cat half my age. I am a healthy cat but some say I'm thick boned. I can be a shy about meeting new people but once you get to know me, you'll see I have a big heart. I like my space but I will cuddle if I feel comfortable. I do prefer to keep all paws on the ground at all times.

Emma is not good with young children. She is spayed. She has never been around other cats or dogs.

She has been an indoor/outdoor cat all her life. Her owner has to find her a new home.

**Simon**

Simon is a gray and white tuxedo cat that is about 1 1/2 years old and has been in foster care since he's been 2 months old. Simon was born with Microphthalmia (small eyes), nearly complete cataracts, and eyelids that fold inward. One of Simons eyes had to be removed due to constant pain. He now seems to "see" better since having that eye removed. Though he has cataracts in his remaining eye he can still see shapes and gets around fine. This is all he has known so he doesn't realize he is not like other cats. Right now his eye is fine but should anything happen in the future with his eye BCCC would pay for the treatment going through one of our vets.

Simon loves all the cats that live in his foster house. He wants to play with everyone and is not aggressive. We feel Simon would do best in a home with a cat to play with and a house with no young children as he can't see if they are coming at him. He is currently living with 3 kids, a large dog, and 7 cats and is fine with all of them.

**Goldie**

Hi, my name is Goldie, after my eyes, as you can see. I was shuffled around for several months, until my foster mom (through BCCC) rescued me from being put on Craig's list. I've been there for over a year now learning to trust again. And now I'm looking for my new forever home after my last owner decided she didn't want me anymore when she brought another kitty home one day. I definitely need to be your only kitty to love.

A quiet home would also be nice as I startle fairly easy. I need someone who truly loves and "gets" cats as I can, on occasion, be a bit temperamental. Are you the right human parent for me? I hope so, I so want a home of my very own.

**Ace**

Ace is looking for a home where he can be the center of attention without any other cats . He is very loving to people, but not other cats. Although he was found living outdoors, he does not cry to go out. He is quite beautiful with long black fur. His vet estimates he is 5 year old. He does have kidney disease but it is currently controlled by diet and you would never know he has the disease. He eats Prescription Diet KD food and does drink a lot of water.

He is neutered, up to date with his shots and negative for FIV/Felv. Please consider bringing this 'Special' cat into your home.

## What Our Volunteers Say

*“I’m a super busy person. Feeding feral cats or driving them to the TNR clinic makes me slow down and appreciate nature around me. Nothing warms my heart more than seeing my feral cat waiting for his breakfast. I feel like I’m connecting to the bigger picture of life.”*

- Maureen M., Feral cat feeder and transporter for spay/neuter clinics

*“I really enjoy volunteering my time to transport the cats to the clinic, as I feel I am directly helping to the overall goal of the BCCC. I also enjoy working the meet and greets to provide info on the organization and help find our cats their forever home!”*

- Kelly, Transporter for spay/neuter clinics and volunteer at Meet & Greets

*“I really enjoy volunteering at the TNR clinic. Each time you go you’re assigned a different job which allows you to learn the entire process. Some of these jobs place you in the operating room so you can actually observe the surgeries being performed - very cool. The most heartwarming part of the TNR clinic is the time and care that is taken with all of the ferals. It’s very heart warming. Love it.*

- Donna, TNR clinic volunteer

*“I love saving kitties and seeing them go to their forever homes. The look of happiness on their new family’s face is priceless.*

- Carolyn, Foster mom

*“I volunteer in many needed areas because they are helpless animals without a voice.”*

- Maureen B., Foster mom

*“We’re errand runners for BCCC and have been doing this for several years. Being retired, it’s a perfect fit for us working behind the scenes - collecting the mail, checking donation bins and running occasional errand to places only open during normal business hours. It gets us out and we’ve met a lot of nice people over the years.”*

- Jim & Karen, Operations volunteers

*“People have thousands of agencies, organizations and charities to help them. I want to help cats who don’t have a home with someone to help them.”*

- Bob, Feral cat trapper,transporter and caretaker



BCCC would like to thank the following organizations and people for their generous support:

- Agway, Chelmsford
- Billerica Public Library
- Pat Bucko, Artist
- Charles J. DiMatteo Jr., CPA
- DeMoulas Market Baskets
- K-Nine Comforts, Billerica
- Michael Kuszek, Photographer
- Jody Nelson, Designer
- Shaun Nelson, Web Designer
- Nestle Purina
- Petco Foundation
- Petco in Burlington
- Shank's Mare, North Billerica
- Tewksbury Public Library
- Donna Turley, Attorney
- Greater Lawrence Technical School

Thanks to private citizens who donate to BCCC. You help us keep the cats fed and healthy.

### Volunteers Needed

We are in need of several professionals to help us help the cats and kittens of Billerica, MA. Requirements include experience, references and a love of cats.

For more info on how you can volunteer, visit:  
[www.billericacatcarecoalition.org](http://www.billericacatcarecoalition.org)

- Foster Caretakers
- Trappers
- Feral Cat Feeders
- Drivers
- Carpenter





## How Can You Help The Cats?

### You Can Save Lives.... Right Here, Right Now.

*The cats are depending on you. You can make a difference. You can make their hard lives a little bit easier.*

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROUS GIFT OF:

\$25    \$35    \$50    \$250    OTHER\_\_\_\_\_

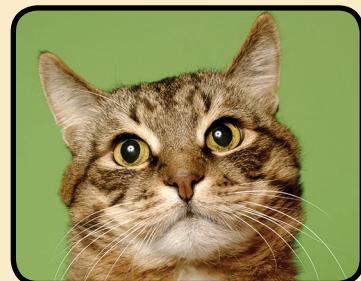
All contributions are fully tax-deductible and greatly appreciated.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_



**Thank You!**

You may donate online at [www.billericacatcarecoalition.org](http://www.billericacatcarecoalition.org) using PayPal

You may also send a check to:

Billerica Cat Care Coalition P.O. Box 141 N. Billerica, MA 01862

### THANK YOU FOR DONATING FOOD AND SUPPLIES TO OUR FOOD BINS. IT IS GREATLY APPRECIATED!

#### Donation Locations

- Billerica Market Basket
- Billerica and Tewksbury Public Libraries
- K-Nine Comforts, Billerica
- Shank's Mare, Billerica
- Agway, Chelmsford
- Diamond Dog Grooming, Billerica
- Lexington-Bedford Veterinary Hospital
- Pet Source, Lexington
- Pet Supplies Plus, Billerica

#### Wish List Items

- Canned Cat Food
- Dry Cat Food
- Kitten Food
- KMR Kitten Milk Replacement
- Kitten Bottles
- Cat Litter
- Cat Toys
- Pet store gift cards
- Buy items on our Wish List at Amazon

#### OTHER WAYS TO HELP:

- Donate inactive cell phones/Blackberrys
- Use GoodSearch.com for BCCC
- Use iSearchiGive.com for BCCC

- Shop online at [www.iGive.com/BCCC](http://www.iGive.com/BCCC)
- Volunteer Your Time
- Donate Your Used Vehicle [www.donationonline.com](http://www.donationonline.com)