



The Scoop



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What's New

This month was even more exciting than in the past! Along with our good friends at the Pine Island Eagle (cat of the week) and Florida Weekly (free announcements), the News Press has featured us on the front page of the Cape Life section. The article was extremely well done and has prompted numerous calls. Having people find out about us, is extremely beneficial to the shelter.

Enough about us, the cats had a great month too. They were allowed to share in the birthday celebration of one of their alumni, Patrick. Even though he couldn't attend, he asked his mom "Aunt Maxine" to send food and presents for everyone!

We attended the annual Splash Dog-Dock Diving Event at Santa Barbara Animal Hospital last weekend. A special Thank You to Amy Abercrombie for making some tasty treats for us to sell at the event!

For those of you that have asked, we are still having our annual rummage at Mike Greenwell's this year. The date is to be determined, but should be in the next month. So, if you have any treasures you would like to part with, feel free to drop them off at the shelter. We would be happy to take them off your paws!

Thank You to all the wonderful people at the Sam Galloway Dealership. We needed a new vehicle large enough to transport kitties and they helped make our lease more affordable.

We continue to receive some pet food etc donations from our bin at Publix in the Santa Barbara Center store. Thanks so much to them for letting us have the bin.

Also if you've been in some of the Starbucks stores you may have seen our donation canisters. Thanks Barb for managing that for us.

If you would like to volunteer but have little time to spend at the shelter, we are always looking for someone to help occasionally with a load or two of the tons of shelter laundry we do. Be fore warned though, it's some pretty stinky stuff!

When I started writing this column for the Scoop, I thought I'd run out of things to say! I was wrong..I could go on and on. With 175 kitties and wonderful people involved with us there is always news! If you have something you want to share with us please submit it. I will "try" and keep my entry a little shorter.

Betty

Check out our new Amazon wish list!

Donations are delivered right to us, so it's very popular with our out of state friends!

http://www.amazon.com/gp/registry/2B9L726OFQIJ/ref=cm_sw_em_r_ws_gBRcRb1PT6H5C_wb

It's Kitten Season... Again!

I'm not going to get on my soapbox about spaying/neutering your pets, because it's common sense. Unfortunately for a lot of people, it isn't and that's why shelters are full. We hear all the time about people who let their cats get pregnant so that their children can experience the birth. Okay, then what?

Cats can get pregnant up to 5 times a year. You figure an average litter is 5 kittens, so that's approximately 25 kittens a year. Now add in the fact that at 6 months, those kittens can go into heat and you can see how quickly this gets out of control.

Until I started the shelter, I never realized there was a "season" for kittens. I just thought it happened all the time, and it does. However, there are certain times a year when the birth rate is way above average. All the cats seem to have their kittens at the same time and they are everywhere. Believe it or not, it is actually related to changes in daylight. Breeders actually use artificial light to stimulate the cat's hormones. We are in the midst of one of those seasons right now.

I have gotten multiple calls not only for people who don't know where to take them, but from people who have questions on how to take care of them. I like the second type better!

Here are a few tips in case you ever find yourself with some orphans!

The two major causes of death in kittens are hypothermia and hypoglycemia. So keep them warm! You can use a heating pad on a LOW setting, or a hot water bottle. Newborn kittens can't shiver so temperature is a major concern.

The other major concern is food. They need to eat every few hours. You can get the kitten milk substitute, but I prefer to use goat's milk. You can find it in the grocery store next to the canned milk. Cut it in half with water and it goes a long way. The kittens seem to prefer it, and it's a lot cheaper.

What goes in must come out, so don't think you're done! The little ones rely on their mother's tongue to help them eliminate. I don't think you want to do that, so use a wet Q-tip or cloth to



Sabrina and her brood

stimulate the areas. A gentle back and forth motion should do the trick. Be patient however, it can take a little while for things to start. It's a good idea to do this a little while after they eat.

I've also been asked when to wean them and how to get them to use the box. When the kittens get teeth, you can safely introduce them to wet food. Don't expect them to start chowing down the minute the bowl is in front of them. You will need to put a little in their mouth and when they are ready they will naturally want to continue eating.

Kittens instinctively begin to dig at 4 weeks of age, so to prevent accidents, confine them to a small area with a low sided litter box. Fill it with something natural, like corn or pine litter. Kittens sometimes try to eat litter, which can be very dangerous. Beware of the pellets! I know of at least one fatality from the pellet getting lodged in the kittens throat. When they are using the box successfully you can move them to a larger area, but make sure they know where to find the box. You may have to put them in the box after they eat a few times just to make sure.

Those are the basics, but as always I'm happy to answer other questions. Feel free to ask!



Peters Purr-spective...

I have been ruminating about the word meow. It's not our word but yours. Some partially deaf person heard us say Me Now, as in give Me things Now! It also means I want to be noticed Now. It is all about Me Now (not the dog your kids or spouse). We sure wish we could clear this up, because it makes us sound silly. We keep on repeating Me Now... and you keep on saying meow. Well whatever. As long as you understand, why labor the point? My job as resident philosopher requires this kind of deep thinking. It's the kind of thing that keeps me from some of my catnaps. I guess what's important is that Marnie knows the correct meaning of the word. When she walks through the door the first thing she hears is a chorus of MeNows!

Peter
Resident Philosopher