

I need to bring a matter to the attention of the town, in the event you did not know of it. The number of cats in the urban and rural areas has exploded over the last few years, and something has to be done.

I am not a cat person, but started helping out a mother cat who came to my deck with 2 furry babies in late December a couple of years ago in minus 15 degree weather. One of these kittens was Bessie, a mother who has had a few litters since.

I cannot/will not turn away from helping out the kittens, they would die without help one way or the other.

A few weeks ago I had 9 kittens about 5 – 6 weeks old suddenly on my deck and it was only humane to help them. It was a time consuming, hectic, costly venture. I spent hours and hours online trying to find someone who would take 1 or 2 or 9 kittens.

I was supplied with a list of shelters/rescue groups, but if you contact them, you get the F-bomb.....Full. Humane Society was not helpful in taking the kittens, nor helping me with getting the cats here fixed. They did, however give me a bag of kibble and were sympathetic. They could not even consider taking my Bessie in until late August, unfortunately she is going to have babies any day now.

A lady got a hold of me, feeling bad for my situation and guided me through getting the cats homes, but also arranged for Bessie to go there, they will keep her and look after her and the kittens until they are old enough to leave the mother. Shots will be administered and will try to find homes. Then, Bessie will end up going somewhere in Ontario to get fixed, and returned to me.

This lady, along with a number of others are doing this on their own, which is a costly venture, a time consuming venture, and they are getting overwhelmed and burnt out. They do their best to find a place that can fix the cats, and also find homes. This goes beyond what they do, but am so glad she helped.

Northumberland needs the TNR program, which is group that does all this (Trap-Neuter-Return) I do not have cages/traps, not equipped to do what they do, nor have the connections Ontario wide to help the over population of cats.

The problem of the rapid reproduction of cats is causing more problems. People are complaining that too many birds are being hunted by the cats, the over abundance of cats has brought more foxes and coyotes to even the urban areas. In another municipality a coyote actually attacked a child. This will get worse if something is not done now. Get rid of the food supply and the coyotes and foxes may go away!

The problem of too many cats has been created by none other than humans. Humans who do not get

their cats fixed, let them out to run. Humans need to fix this, humanely. You can't just drop cats off somewhere else to be someone else problem.

The unchecked cat crisis exists in cities from Cornwall, Ottawa, Smith Falls, Guelph, Orillia, the list goes on and on. A TV documentary on Cats in Cornwall.

Northumberland is also very bad...the lady I know is involved in helping a gentleman trap 30 cats, another 28 cats and a lady is waiting to get help trapping 21. This is only one lady, one area to show you how bad it is.

I am not a cat person, but wish to have this looked after by our Municipality. Humane Society doesn't appear to be handling it, I know of others who have had lack of response. But this needs to be handled asap because 4 months will reproduce many, many more. It is paramount.

We need Northumberland County to have many sub set ups of TNR once the system is set up, but my concern is the Port Hope area.

We need By-law on board to put together a cat bylaw, get controls so people must register their cats, the fees could go to help the control of cats. The cat owners that are going to have house cats, need to have them fixed. When getting a bylaw established, the volunteers who are doing this now can assist bylaw and should be contacted to help with that, as they are aware of the problems and issues.

There has to be education on this, so people will adhere to the control efforts.

We need funding for the TNR and help with equipment and the cat shelters who have the common goal of caring and control. Some of these ladies are driving to Toronto frequently, waiting in traffic, on their own dimes to help with the situation, but this burden should not be on them, and they need assistance.

I realize some issues take a while to finalize within the Municipality, but unfortunately for every day that this is not looked after and acted on, the problem is getting worse. We need council to discuss, act and put this in motion.

I would ask you to search out the TNR program, perhaps watch Cats in Cornwall, a TV documentary, search out to see how many cities/towns are in a catastrophic situation, but it has to be acted on, perhaps we can get the funding in the fall.

Bob Barker, may you rest in peace, but we could really use someone like you now!

Could we please get this on top of this problem and do something NOW rather than later.

I will be coming before council in the near future.

Thank you

Susan Smith