

# ALLEY CAT ACTION<sup>®</sup>

Alley Cat Allies Newsletter | [alleycat.org](http://alleycat.org) | FALL 2019

*For Alley Cat Allies' More Than Half a Million Supporters and Activists*

## CHANGE FOR EVERY KITTY IN EVERY CITY STARTS WITH YOU

She wants to save more lives.

That's why Elaine Spencer traveled all the way from Tulsa, Oklahoma, to Dallas, Texas, for Alley Cat Allies' first ever Every Kitty, Every City<sup>®</sup> TEXAS conference.

Elaine is the grants and IT specialist for T-Town TNR, a Tulsa-based Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) nonprofit. The all-volunteer organization's hard work has already saved more than 3,200 cats and counting, but Elaine and her team are determined to do more. Alley Cat Allies is working with them to change Tulsa's laws to officially protect community cats.



*In order to save cats like Sammy, humane policies must be enacted in every community.*

Every Kitty, Every City TEXAS was designed for those like Elaine, who have the heart and drive to save cats and want to make an impact. She and more than 100 advocates from across the nation gathered in the grand ballroom of the Statler Hotel in July as the keynote address given by Alley Cat Allies President and Founder Becky Robinson kicked off the event.

"We want to help you speak up for cats, just as



*More than 100 advocates attended Alley Cat Allies' first ever Every Kitty, Every City TEXAS conference on July 23.*

you're already prepared to go out to care for and help them every day," Becky told the crowd. "We want you to be prepared to protect them and advocate for them."

Becky spoke about understanding cats and their place in our society, and why more and more municipalities and animal control agencies are adopting nonlethal methods of control. She cited the national survey conducted by Harris Interactive for Alley Cat Allies, which found that 89 percent of Americans want humane sterilization programs for cats rather than killing them. "Our officials need to update our laws and policies to reflect those values," she said.

Her words inspired Elaine and so many others.

"Becky's presentation is going to make [changing our ordinances] so much easier," she said. "I feel so charged and ready to tackle that."

*(continued on page 5)*





# PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

There is no other group like Alley Cat Allies. Every day, our unmatched leadership and advocacy help people change their communities to protect cats.

You hold in your hands the stories of just some of our recent progress.



*At Every Kitty, Every City TEXAS, Drew Pearson, Dallas Cowboys legend and Super Bowl XII champion, honored Becky Robinson for her nearly 30 years of protecting and improving the lives of cats.*

We have been responding to people around the world needing our expertise on nonlethal programs. In the summer, we continued our work in Texas by holding our first Every Kitty, Every City conference (and we're already planning more!). Read all about it on the first page.

We've also been proactive in helping to overturn laws that endanger cats

and pass those that protect them. Through our tireless advocacy, New York recently became the first state to ban cat declawing.

This work to save the lives of cats is only possible because of your valued support. Please help us continue our critical advocacy.



For the cats,

Becky Robinson  
President and Founder

## Connect with me online

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It is Alley Cat Allies' practice to exchange the names of our donors with other charities that share our values. We do this in order to both expand our donor base and spread our mission, and to support those charities that we feel are working toward the good of animals and our community. Please notify us if you would prefer that we not share your name. We would be happy to remove your information from our exchange list.



**OUR MISSION:** To transform and develop communities to protect and improve the lives of cats.

**OUR GOALS:** 1) Reform public policies and institutions to serve the best interests of cats; 2) Expand and promote cat care; 3) Increase understanding of cats to change attitudes and eliminate misconceptions.



# NEW YORK BECOMES FIRST STATE TO BAN CAT DECLAWING



*Declawing cats is a cruel but unfortunately common veterinary practice. The harmful effects of declawing could cause a cat lifelong pain.*

On July 23, New York became a leader by passing the first statewide law to make declawing cats illegal.

“By banning this archaic practice, we will ensure that animals are no longer subjected to these inhumane and unnecessary procedures,” said New York Governor Andrew M. Cuomo in an official statement.


Alley Cat Allies and the Paw Project, a nonprofit organization working to end

declawing through education and legislation, led the way to the victory. Together, we mobilized thousands of supporters in New York and beyond who contacted their legislators asking them to vote in support of the ban. We greatly thank the bill’s sponsor, Assemblymember Linda B. Rosenthal.

“Gov. Cuomo and New York legislators are protecting millions of cats in their state by banning this all too common, but cruel veterinary practice,” said Becky Robinson, president and founder of Alley Cat Allies. “Declawing is a misnomer—it’s more accurate to call this procedure de-knuckling. It amputates the last bone of a cat’s toe, which is like cutting off a person’s finger up to the first knuckle.”

At Alley Cat Allies’ Every Kitty, Every City TEXAS conference, Jennifer Conrad, DVM, founder of the Paw Project, explained why cat declawing bans are necessary because this practice is still too common in the United States. Today, although declawing is rejected in much of the world, only nine U.S. cities—and now New York state—have banned it.

Declawed cats are often in so much pain that they avoid the litter box or bite to defend themselves. These are two of the most common reasons cats are taken to animal shelters, where the majority will be killed. “In Los Angeles, there was a 43.3 percent decrease in the number of cats relinquished to shelters after the city’s declaw ban went into effect,” Dr. Conrad explained to attendees.

Alley Cat Allies and the Paw Project are advocating for similar laws in other states including California and New Jersey. 



*Because of your support, Alley Cat Allies and the Paw Project were able to compel New York to pass its ban on declawing cats. The law, enacted in July, will save the lives of cats like this one.*



Alley Cat Allies®

*Every Kitty, Every City®*

**FLORIDA**

**JOIN US!**

**JANUARY 2020**  
**ORLANDO, FL**

**LEARN MORE:**  
**[alleycat.org/Events](http://alleycat.org/Events)**



# GLOBAL CAT DAY: MOBILIZING THE WORLD FOR CATS



From Tallahassee to Tokyo, compassionate people across the globe spent this year's Global Cat Day®, October 16, helping cats however they could. From practicing Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) to volunteering at a local rescue, every action of every size made a difference.

When we champion cats on Global Cat Day, we strengthen our shared movement to value cats' lives all year, all around the world. Alley Cat Allies is proud of the trailblazers who roll up their sleeves and devote heartfelt hours toward social change that benefits cats and people alike.



## PROFILE IN COMPASSION: JENNIFER MOORE



*Mikey lives with Jennifer Moore, an Alley Cat Allies Feral Friends Network member. Mikey inspires Jennifer as she reunites cats displaced by the 2018 Camp Fire in California.*

that their cats survived too," explains Jennifer.

Alley Cat Allies responded immediately when the


It has been nearly a year since the Camp Fire burned a devastating path through Northern California. Alley Cat Allies Feral Friends Network® member Jennifer Moore has spent every possible moment of it helping affected cats return home.

"There isn't much that feels better than calling up a survivor from the worst wildfire in California's history and telling them

disaster struck in November 2018, connecting with FieldHaven Feline Center to shelter and treat cats displaced by the flames. We opened the Alley Cat Allies Recovery Center® to reunite hundreds of cats with their families.

Many of these reunions were possible because of volunteers like Jennifer, who scour the internet to find people who are searching for their cats. The volunteers ask for photos of the missing cats, then determine if they match any of the rescued cats.

Jennifer, who grew up in the Paradise area and whose father lost his home in the Camp Fire, knows well the weight of her work.

"The animals lost in that fire are family members, just covered in fur," Jennifer says. "There has not been anything in my lifetime that has felt more important than helping them." 



# CHANGE FOR EVERY KITTY IN EVERY CITY STARTS WITH YOU

(continued from page 1)

Texas was a perfect venue to bring cat advocates together to listen to and learn from each other, because locals have accomplished so much with Alley Cat Allies' support. Fort Bend County Animal Services, for example, went from killing hundreds of cats to saving more than a thousand after Alley Cat Allies helped them establish a TNR program last year.

The shelter's leaders were featured prominently at Every Kitty, Every City TEXAS to talk about the success of the program and how to replicate it.

"We weren't euthanizing cats before. We were killing them," Rene Vasquez, director of Fort Bend County Animal Services, explained in his presentation. "Now there's no more killing, and the stress relief we all feel is incredible."

Local laws and policies dictate what happens to cats, so humane change must start there. Fort Bend was no different. Alley Cat Allies Staff Attorney Molly Armus and Calley Gerber, founding attorney of Gerber Animal Law Center, talked to attendees about how they passed Fort Bend County's TNR-friendly ordinance, and strategies for passing similar legislation in any community.



Jennifer Conrad, DVM, founder and director of the Paw Project and Becky Robinson, president and founder of Alley Cat Allies, after Dr. Conrad was presented with The Oliver, Alley Cat Allies' prestigious award for cat champions.



Enthusiastic advocates at Every Kitty, Every City TEXAS listen as Becky Robinson gives the conference's keynote address, which highlighted cats' place in our society.

Jennifer Conrad, DVM, spoke about her worldwide experiences as the founder of the Paw Project, which is collaborating with Alley Cat Allies to successfully pass laws that ban the cruel practice of cat declawing.

There is still a huge need for spay and neuter services around the nation and the world. Rick DuCharme, founder of First Coast No More Homeless Pets, shared how he established lifesaving low-cost spay and neuter and TNR in Jacksonville, Florida, and how others can do the same.



Frank the Feral® mingled with attendees and welcomed them to the conference.

Through Every Kitty, Every City TEXAS, Alley Cat Allies lauded attendees who are rolling up their sleeves to make long-lasting change for cats in their communities. Alley Cat Allies is always here to share our expertise, and we are already planning for future conferences in other regions. 🐾

# PROFILE IN GENEROSITY: DONALD C. MEHRER



*Donald C. Mehrer, a longtime donor to Alley Cat Allies, helps community cats like this one.*

People who know Donald C. Mehrer joke that he's lived nearly nine lives. He's a Vietnam War veteran, a former biker, a husband to his wife, Margaret, an artist, an antique salesman, a builder of antique cars, and so much more.

Donald, 73, is especially proud of his life as an ally to cats. He


cares for community cats in his town of Babylon, New York, and has donated to Alley Cat Allies since 1999.

"Cats deserve it, they're worth it," Donald says. "They do

so much good for us, mentally. And they need us to defend them. That's what I do and what [Alley Cat Allies does]."

Donald first learned about Alley Cat Allies from his mother, a compassionate donor who "gave to everyone." Now, Donald not only gives whatever he can, he also plans to leave his estate to help cats into the future.

"I always say I've been building an empire throughout my life," says Donald. "And I've decided that the cats are going to inherit that empire."

When he isn't helping cats, Donald most enjoys painting, fixing cars, and spending time with his two cats at home, Me-My and Hello. 

Visit [alleycat.org/PlannedGiving](https://alleycat.org/PlannedGiving) (CFC #10964) (EIN #52-1742079) or for more information, call **866-309-6207**.

## HISSES AND PURRS

The stories of those who deserve to be celebrated...or scorned.



**PURRS** to **Austin Pets Alive! in Texas** for its studies and program to change misconceptions about Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV). FeLV-positive cats can live healthy lives and are adoptable.



**HISSES** to the **town of Gander in Newfoundland, Canada**, for refusing to amend its animal control bylaws so advocates can legally practice Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR).



**PURRS** to the **Lycoming County SPCA in Pennsylvania** for no longer accepting trapped community cats as of this summer. Instead, it is offering financial assistance for spay and neuter.



**HISSES** to animal control in **Salt Lake City, Utah**, for giving a resident a citation for allowing her cat to spend time outdoors in her own yard.



**PURRS** to the **Muncie, Indiana**, police department for creating a policy that allows residents to pay off parking tickets by donating cat supplies to the local animal shelter.

## SAVE A CAT WITH A MOUSE

With just a few clicks, you can make a difference in cats' lives and help transform communities. Here are some online resources to help you on your way:



### QUESTIONS?

Looking for assistance with cats?  
[alleycat.org/GetHelp](https://alleycat.org/GetHelp)



### DONATE

Protect and improve cats' lives.  
[alleycat.org/Donate](https://alleycat.org/Donate)



### LEARN

Advocate for cats in your community.  
[alleycat.org/CommunityChange](https://alleycat.org/CommunityChange)



### TAKE ACTION

Receive our action alerts and other emails.  
[alleycat.org/SignUp](https://alleycat.org/SignUp)