

Captain Courageous



“The Captain,” as he was affectionately known to his friends, was a big orange tiger cat with a white diamond-shaped marking on his chest, white “socks” on his paws, and golden eyes. He was one of the first feral cats to participate in the Merrimack River Feline Rescue Society (MRFRS) trap/neuter/return (TNR) program, and he lived along the Newburyport waterfront for many years, charming his caregivers.

Like all connoisseurs of fine food, The Captain knew his way to a few good dining spots, or more specifically, “the roast beef triangle” as one of his caregivers describes. Each week, she and her husband (as feral cat colony co-caregivers) would share their Sunday roast beef dinner with The Captain and his feral feline friends. No sooner would this kind couple finish serving the evening meal at one feral cat feeding station, and The Captain would show up at their heels at the second station nearby for a second helping. And as the couple prepared to leave the third station, The Captain would again reappear – hoping for a third serving of roast beef! The Captain’s enterprising ways and regal demeanor always put a smile on the faces of his caregivers and lifted their spirits.

But tragedy struck one afternoon when The Captain’s caregivers discovered the cat with a grievous injury. Despite a deep laceration to his neck that left the cat nearly decapitated, The Captain managed to drag himself to his caregivers as he sought their help. They rushed The Captain to an MRFRS veterinarian – hoping for a miracle.

In addition to The Captain’s traumatic injury, presurgical blood work revealed that The Captain was also suffering from advanced Feline Leukemia. With his compromised immune system, he would not survive surgery. The courage and dignity that The Captain displayed, along with giving them his trust, touched his caregivers’ hearts. In The Captain’s final moments, with their hands gently upon him, his dedicated caregivers said good-bye as the veterinarian ended The Captain’s suffering.

The death of their beloved Captain galvanized his caregivers to keep The Captain’s memory alive. Wishing to honor The Captain and help other feral and homeless cats, who might go unnoticed or disregarded, they established *The Captain Courageous Fund*. The fund is solely dedicated to providing emergency, lifesaving veterinary treatment for feral, stray, and homeless cats.

Since it was established, the MRFRS *Captain Courageous Fund* has helped to save the lives of many homeless and feral feline citizens throughout greater Newburyport and beyond. The Captain’s spirit lives on through these cats and through his good friends and caregivers who knew and loved him.

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*Please consider donating to **The Captain Courageous Fund**. Your donation will help to save the life of a forgotten homeless cat – and keep The Captain’s memory alive.*