



# 2021

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# Annual Report



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**Feline Rescue Society**  
Caring for Cats in Need



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## Our Vision

A compassionate world where all cats live happy and healthy lives.

## Our Mission

To improve the lives of all cats and provide support and education for the people who care about them.

## MRFRS Guiding Principles

- We strive toward elevating the status of cats in society.
- We serve people and cats with open, nonjudgmental hearts and minds to enhance the quality of life of cats and improve the experience of the people who care for and about cats.
- We put compassion and integrity at the center of all of our decisions.
- We provide proactive education, tools and assistance to serve the population of “at risk” cats, whether owned or unowned.
- We strive to align our programs and services with the evolving needs of our community.
- We work collaboratively with each other and other organizations to be a model and resource for cat welfare.
- We judge our success by the extent to which feline lives are improved and by the positive experiences of the people we touch.

## To our Leadership Donors – a pillar for MRFRS’s success,

Who would have thought as we started this fiscal year that we’d still be dealing with COVID related issues 12 months later! It has been a year of challenges but with our dedicated staff, volunteers and you by our side, we’ve shown that **anything is paws-able**.

Despite the challenges, during this past fiscal year the lives of more than 3,992 cats have been improved.

- The Catmobile continued its valiant efforts despite having significant mechanical problems, finding alternative solutions such as stationary clinics and partnering with brick & mortar facilities when the Catmobile was inoperable. Over 3,000 cats were spayed/neutered thanks to their dedication.
- Between the Catmobile and our Sunday Feral Clinics, 275 feral cats were altered and vaccinated before being released thus improving their quality of life tremendously.

“Despite the challenges, during this past fiscal year the lives of more than **3,992** cats have been improved.”

- The adoption staff not only was able to create a virtual adoption program to help almost 400 cats find loving homes but they also assisted 387 cats through the pet retention program, a program geared to help families with behavior advice, food and medical assistance.
- The MRFRS Feline Assistance, Resources & Support (FARS) played a key role in our pet retention services. This program is supported solely by donations and helped a record breaking 108 families with medical assistance so their cat could remain a part of their family. To help so many families during this stressful time means the world to us.

While we celebrate our successes we also look forward to the coming fiscal year when a new Catmobile will be delivered and when we will be able to expand the program made available by the Cummings Foundation to microchip thousands of cats for free while providing local Animal Control Officers with the tools they need to scan for chips.

In closing, we would be remiss if we did not take a moment to remember three leadership donors whose passing this year has left a void in the MRFRS family.

- **Katharine Bradford.** Katharine was a frequent adopter whose cats often looked out from the pages of the annual MRFRS calendar. Her foundation’s long-time support has helped MRFRS accomplish many projects through the years.
- **Pat Connolly.** Pat was on MRFRS’S Board of Directors for many years and was instrumental in obtaining the generous financial support from the Institution for Savings. A frequent adopter and lover of all things cat, she helped

guide MRFRS’S mission for many years. Her bequest will help MRFRS realize its vision for the future where even more cats will be helped.

- **Janet Rogers.** Janet was a guardian angel for those kitties who no one wanted and who needed a soft warm place to call home until their deaths. As an unpaid volunteer coordinator, she trained and shared her passion with many who walked through the adoption center doors. We were in awe of her love and commitment to “her cats.”

Thank you for sharing our mission and for helping the MRFRS team make paws-abilities come true by being a part of the MRFRS Leadership family.

Sincerely,



Gail A. Lynch  
President, MRFRS Board of Directors

## Adoption Program

MRFRS's Adoption Program takes in homeless cats and kittens and places them into loving homes.

In FY 2021, MRFRS took in 434 cats and kittens. All were checked for wellness prior to adoption, treated for any medical conditions, vaccinated and spayed or neutered before adoption.

MRFRS is especially well known for our ability to find loving homes for older and special needs cats and kittens. We've collaborated with many organizations statewide and admitted cats from 12 organizations this past fiscal year. Since our inception in 1992, the **Adoption Program has placed over 23,228 cats and kittens.**

Lately, the Adoption Center team has been busy making the shelter building compliant with new Massachusetts regulations so cats can be safely housed at the shelter once again.



"Hermes spends his time snuggled up with whoever happens to be in bed but doesn't mind a good play time or wrestle with his new brother Milo. He always meows to make sure we know he's around and needs a pat. He's well loved and cared for." *–Hermes' adopter*

## ◀ Hermes

Hermes came back to MRFRS at 4-years-young after his owner passed away. He has diabetes and needs insulin twice a day along with regular blood glucose checks. Despite his medical condition, Hermes is playful, talkative and loves to snuggle. Hermes was adopted through MRFRS's Care for Life program which lessens the financial burden on the new owner and helps place difficult-to-adopt cats. The Care for Life Program also helps open up more space for the shelter to take in additional cats and save more lives.

## Expansion of Foster Care

When MRFRS's adoption center closed to the public in March of 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic, the cats in our care moved from the shelter into loving foster homes. Our community stepped up to the plate in a big way! We welcomed **15 new foster homes** and foster homes who typically foster kittens offered to foster more challenging adult cats, some with medical issues.

While we all miss having cats in the shelter, the cats have thrived in foster care. Being in a home while they wait to be adopted is less stressful for them than being in a shelter environment. We've also seen an incredible decrease in common illnesses like upper respiratory infections. Cats and kittens in foster even seem to have an easier time adjusting to their new homes after they're adopted.

Together with your support, nearly **400** cats & kittens found new homes this year.



## THE CATMOBILE

MRFRS's mobile low-cost spay/neuter clinic for cats travels as far south as Attleboro and as far west as Gardner. The Catmobile works with over 30 shelters and rescues statewide and clients travel from all over Massachusetts, New Hampshire and beyond to utilize the Catmobile's services.

The Catmobile is staffed by a veterinarian and technician who completed **148 days of surgery** this past year in spite of 50+ days of cancellations due to mechanical issues. Since 2008, the **Catmobile has spayed and neutered over 68,539 cats!**

Thanks to a generous four-year grant from Cummings Foundation, all cats fixed on the Catmobile will receive a free microchip!



3,010 cats were spayed or neutered on the Catmobile this year.

## Other Spay/Neuter and Low-Cost Wellness Programs

### Sunday Spay/Neuter Clinics & TNR Assistance

MRFRS's spay/neuter clinics for feral cats, held at MSPCA Nevins Farm, are free to trappers and run primarily by volunteers. After a hiatus due to COVID-19, Sunday Clinics resumed in August 2020 and four clinics were held in FY 2021. In addition, the Catmobile held two mobile feral clinics to help meet the demand for spay/neuter for free-roaming cats. Since 2000, **feral clinics have sterilized over 14,200 cats!**

MRFRS also rents out humane traps for the purpose of TNR (trap-neuter-return) and provides referrals to low- or no-cost spay/neuter services. MRFRS volunteers also manage three feral cat feeding stations in Salisbury.

### Low-Cost Rabies & Microchipping Clinics

MRFRS regularly offers low-cost rabies and microchipping clinics that are open to all. Run by MRFRS staff and volunteer veterinarians, the clinics are open to both cats and dogs and help ensure that everyone in our community has access to low-cost rabies vaccinations. In April of 2021, we held our first-ever curbside clinic where we **served 68 animals.**

At future clinics, microchips will be free thanks to a four-year grant from Cummings Foundation.



## Veterinary Assistance Programs

### Feline Assistance Resources and Support (FARS)

MRFRS's FARS Program assists pet owners facing economic hardship when their cats need medical care for injuries or illness. FARS's goal is to give loving cat owners the chance to keep their cats, rather than surrender them to a shelter or be forced to decide to euthanize. The program is funded solely by grants and donations. This past year, your support enabled us to assist 108 cats and families across Massachusetts and southern New Hampshire.

### Captain Courageous Fund (CCF)

MRFRS's CCF was founded in 1995 in memory of a feral cat named Captain, who passed away as a result of severe injuries. In his honor, CCF assists caretakers of free-roaming cats in getting the medical care these cats need when they are injured or ill. We helped seven cats in these situations last year. The program is funded solely by restricted donations from donors.

Together we helped **120** sick or injured owned & community cats get the care they needed.



### Eliza ▶

On a Thursday, Eliza started vomiting. On Friday, when she threw up a piece of rubber, her family became even more concerned. They took her to several emergency veterinarians, afraid that they would not be able to get Eliza the care she needed because the cost was so high. They couldn't imagine euthanizing her just for lack of financial means. Their young daughter offered all of her savings from holidays and her allowance, and her family struggled with trying to help her understand that it still wasn't going to be enough. They reached out to see if our FARS program might be able to help. Thankfully, we were able to help cover the cost of Eliza's care, allowing her to stay with the family who loves her. Her family wrote:

**"Your financial support made an enormous difference. Eliza, a.k.a. "Princess Paw Pants" is the second smallest member of our family and yet she's a giant presence in our home. Her big brother cat, Tango, relies on her for snuggles and grooming and her kitten-sister, Ella, still has so much to learn from her. She's so lovable even the dog naps with her! Her human brother and sister can't imagine life without her and now they don't have to. Thank you for helping us save her life this weekend. It means the world to us to have her here with us, where she belongs."**



### ◀ Stella

Meet Stella! When her finder needed help, CCF answered the call. Stella was found as a stray and worse, she was injured. Her finder contacted CCF for assistance with her veterinary care. Stella unfortunately needed a leg amputation but CCF was able to contribute and her amputation went well. As Stella rested comfortably (warm, inside and with a full belly) and healed, her finder fell in love with her and decided to adopt her.

## Keeping Pets with their People

This past year, pets in our community were also feeling the impact of COVID-19. MRFRS's goal to keep cats with their families and out of shelters is more important than ever as many people struggle financially.

To help struggling pet owners, MRFRS, as a member of the Pet Food Task Force, assisted with the collection and distribution of cat and dog food to local human food pantries so those in need could access help as easily as possible.

The pet food pantry, FARS Program and Bridge Program all help keep cats in their homes. Behind the scenes, we do even more important pet retention work, like assisting with behavioral issues and lost and found cats.

## Bridge Program

MRFRS's Bridge Program assists local cat owners who find themselves in perilous circumstances—domestic violence, hospitalization, house fire or other issues—through temporary foster care for their beloved pets. While in our care, MRFRS ensures all pets are spayed or neutered, microchipped, and updated on vaccines.

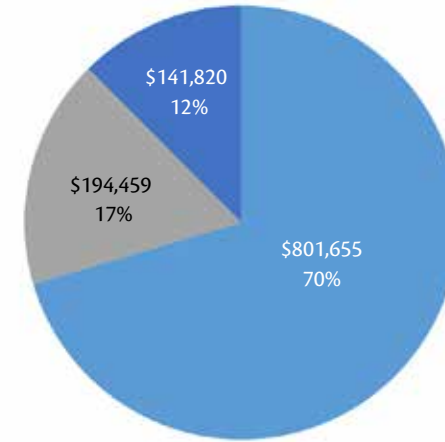
## FY21 Pet Retention Highlights

- Helped **14 cats** with behavioral issues stay in their homes
- Assisted **88 people** with lost and found cats
- Reunited **22 lost cats** with their families



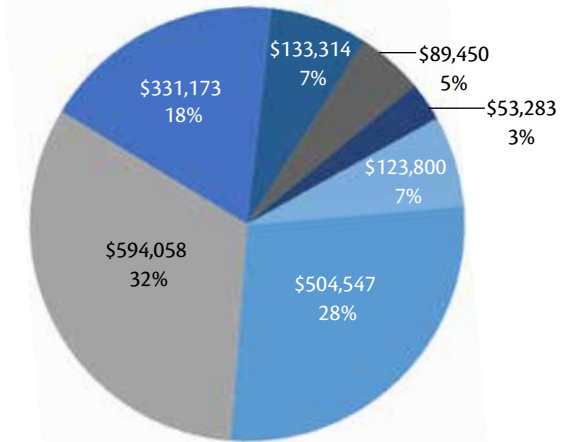
## Year-End Financials

2020 Operating Expenses



- Programs
- Fundraising
- General & Administrative

2020 Income



- Programs
- Fundraising
- Bequests
- Events (less expense)
- Grants
- Investments/Interest
- PPP Loan

Footnote 1: MRFRS's Paycheck Protection Program Loan was forgiven.

Footnote 2: In addition to the above income, a generous donor has pledged \$3,591,526 to be paid in installments over the next nine years. Accounting practices require identification of the full value of the pledge in MRFRS's current financial statements, even though only a small portion of the money has been received and the balance is not guaranteed. The pledge receivable is recorded in MRFRS's audited financials and Form 990.

## Thank You

MRFRS is grateful to the following organizations, whose generous grants have helped us fulfill our commitments to cats and their guardians in FY 21:

Athletes for Animals  
BISSELL Pet Foundation  
Carlee Charitable Trust  
The C.E. & F.C.A. Foisy Foundation  
Community Foundation of N. Central Massachusetts  
Cummings Foundation  
Foundation M  
Humane Society of the United States  
Institution for Savings Charitable Foundation  
Katherine Bradford Foundation  
Massachusetts Animal Coalition  
Petco Love  
PetSmart Charities  
Red Acre Foundation  
Shirley Shattuck Windsor Trust  
World's Best Cat Litter



We would also like to thank our Leadership Donors\*, who represent our most loyal and generous supporters:

A.W. Chesterton Company	Amy Borner	Elizabeth Condakes	Anne Steward Fuller
Abraham's Bagels	Neil & Mary Helen Bouchard	Pat Connelly	Robyn Broderick
Nancy Alexander	Diane Boucher	Susan Coolidge	Kathleen Goguen
Elizabeth Allen	Brenda Bourque	Robert Corey	Leslie Gold
William Anderson	Martha Bowers	Kathy Costigan	Newbury Animal Hospital
Thomas Andrews & Christine Gilman	Susan Bradley-Quaranta	Chrystal Coughlin	Thomas Stoker & Venetia Guerrasio
Catherine Armstrong	Brian Brown	Diane Courtemanche	Jeff & Margaret Hall
Martha Bagni Shulman	Bulger Veterinary Hospital	Cummings Properties	Janet Hander-Powers
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		Dr. Steven & Lisa Finkel	Barbara Hiscock
		Tina Flagg	Wendy Hoyt

\*Leadership Donors contribute \$500 or more to MRFRS during the fiscal year.



Joyce Hurd  
IDEXX Laboratories  
Lisa Jensen Interior Design  
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Susan Krawiec  
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### MRFRS Staff

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 Jeffrey Hall, *Vice President*  
 Stacy LeBaron, *Treasurer*  
 Cynthia Sullivan, *Clerk*  
 James Lagoulis

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 Jeff Hall  
 Stacy LeBaron  
 Cynthia Sullivan  
 Jim Lagoulis  
 Ed Ramsdell  
 Adrienne Linnell  
 Maureen Pomeroy  
 Nancy Alexander  
 Brooke Whicher

Approximately 160 volunteers  
 donated 30,000+ hours this past  
 fiscal year alone!



### Honorary Members of the Board of Directors

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 Martha Bagni Shulman  
 Tara Becker  
 Joe Bell  
 Betty Bronk\*  
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 Lynda Schnare

### Founders

Jan DeWitt  
 Dorothy Fairweather  
 Nancy MacNeill  
 Shirley Magnanti  
 Sheila Mullins

\*Posthumous



MRFRS was founded in 1992 in response to the 300+ cats along the Merrimack River in Newburyport. The effort our founders launched was one of the first in the nation to use Trap-Neuter-Return to improve the lives of free-roaming cats. Once all of the cats had been trapped and fixed, we fed them twice a day at waterfront feeding stations and monitored them for illness, injury, and any new additions. In 1993, we opened our first adoption center and then, in 2003, moved to our current cageless facility. In 2000 we started offering free monthly spay/neuter clinics for feral cats, and in 2008, we launched our Catmobile program to provide convenient and affordable spay/neuter services across Eastern and Central Massachusetts. All told, MRFRS has helped more than 135,000 cats and kittens in our 29 years of work.



#### **MRFRS ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICE**

15 Main Street, Suite 207 • Salisbury, MA 01952

#### **MRFRS SHELTER & ADOPTION CENTER**

63 Elm Street (Route 110) • Salisbury MA, 01952

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#### **CATMOBILE**

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