



# Community Meeting

Maui Humane Society  
Wildfire Response

# Introduction and Welcome

**Dr. Lisa Labrecque**  
Chief Executive Officer  
Maui Humane Society



# Presenters

- **Nikki Russell** - Chief of Operations, MHS, MODERATOR
- **Bryan Kortis, Esq.** - National Programs Director, Neighborhood Cats
- **Laurie Gaines**, DVM - Chief Veterinarian, Maui Humane Society
- **Kate Hurley**, DVM, DACSM - Program Director, UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program
- **Joy Smith**, Executive Director, FieldHaven Feline Center
- **Keoni Vaughn**, Executive Director, Lanai Cat Sanctuary
- **Emily Drose**, Fire Cat Specialist, MHS
- **Lisa Labrecque**, Chief Executive Officer, MHS

# Additional Panelists

- **Susan Richmond**, Executive Director, Neighborhood Cats
- **Aleisha Swartz**, DVM, Outreach Veterinarian, University of Wisconsin Shelter Medicine Program and HVMA Disaster Committee
- **Denae Wagner**, DVM, MPVM Lead Veterinarian - **Facility Design Veterinarian**, UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program
- **Melissa Jenkins**, Operations Director, Operation Catnip
- **Johnny Lingao**, MHS Wildfire Community Liaison
- **Jeanie Schumacher**, MHS Reunification Specialist
- **Pilar Diaz de la Rubia**, MHS Fire Cat Marketing Specialist

# Agenda

1. **Field Services** - Bryan Kortis
2. **Medical** - Dr. Laurie Gaines
3. **Housing** - Dr. Kate Hurley
4. **Assessment and Reunification** - Joy Smith
5. **Data & Transfer Programs** - Nikki Russell
6. **Operation Fire Cats** - Emily Drose
7. **Ongoing Support Programs** - Dr. Lisa Labrecque
8. **Q&A**

# Field Services - Bryan Kortis

## Brief history

Aug 9 - 26: No access for animal rescuers

Aug 26 - Sept 1: ASAR (Animal Search and Rescue) allowed in - approx. 89 cats trapped and removed. ASAR estimated 100-200 cats remained.

Sept 3 - present: Cat rescue activities in the burn zone (feeding, trapping & camera monitoring) coordinated by Neighborhood Cats - 293 cats removed as of 11/12/23. Estimated 150 to 180 remain.



## **Situation on 9/3/23:**

- Overcrowded shelter
- Far more cats in zone than expected

## **Response:**

- Implemented program combining shelter-in-place with trapping-to-capacity



## Shelter-in-place

- Over 80 feeding stations set up
- Daily food & fresh water
- Mix of volunteer & paid feeders
- Feeders are from the West Side, many have lost homes or jobs
- Number of stations reduced as population falls (and all of a station's cats are ID'ed as using others, too)





## Trapping-to-capacity

- Outflow from zone matched to capacity of shelter to manage inflow
- Initially, with capacity low, trapping focused on ill/injured, pets, pregnant, young kittens. But the policy has been no cats released if caught.
- As capacity has increased, trapping now also includes geographic zones and all cats in them
- Trappers include experienced disaster zone professionals & locals

## Technology - mapping

- App used to map feeding stations
- Provides guide to feeders who are assigned zones
- Provides ready reference to trappers for targeted locations
- Identifies location of cameras & type of camera

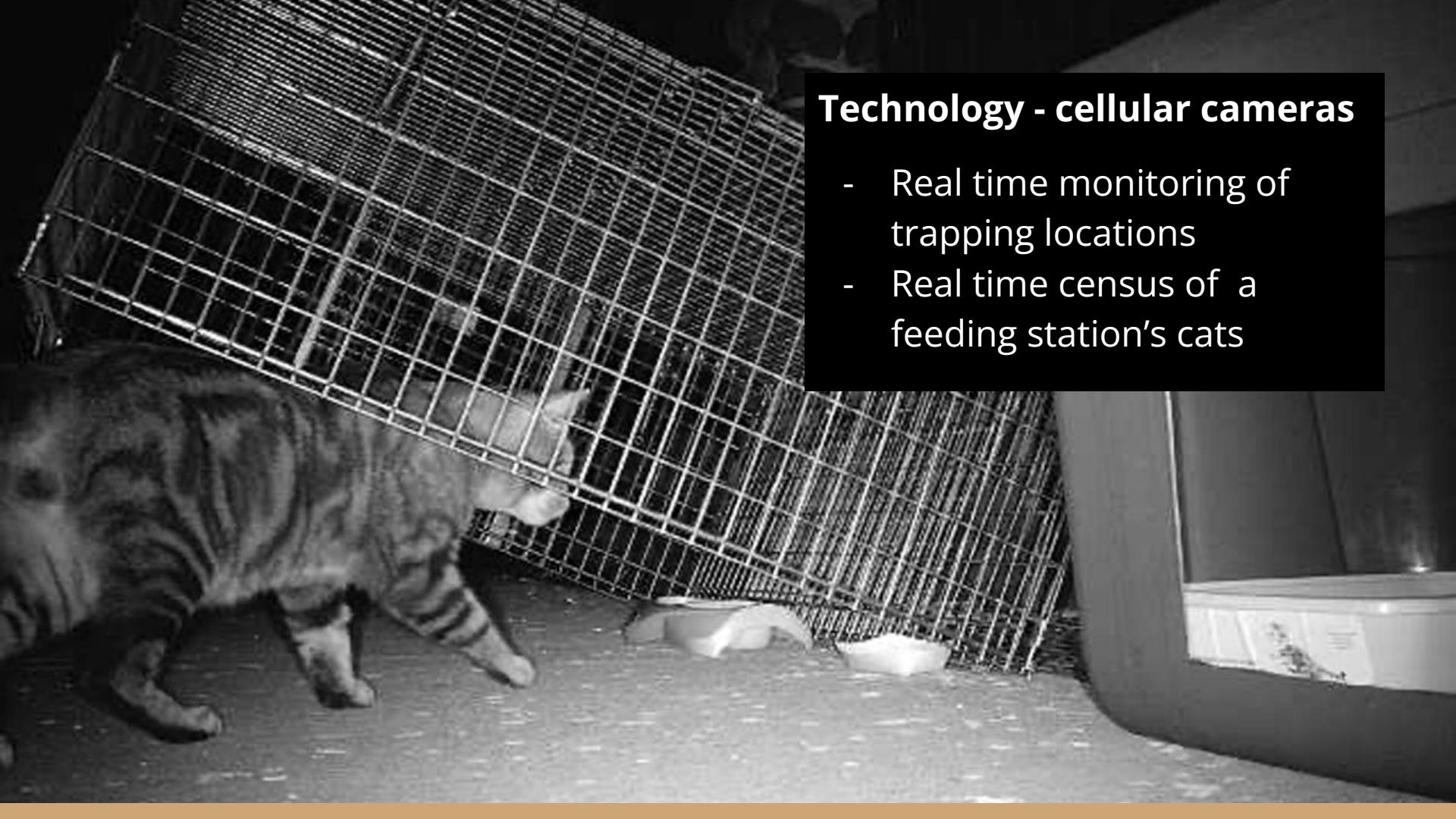


## Technology - trail cameras

- Identify high priority cats (e.g., collar cats, injured)
- Census of cats by station
- Matching to lost pet reports
- Tracking movement of cats between stations

Thanks to **Kitty Charm Farm**  
for donating over 20 cameras!





## Technology - cellular cameras

- Real time monitoring of trapping locations
- Real time census of a feeding station's cats

## How can you help?

- Please keep us informed and coordinate with us if you feed in the burn zone.
- Perimeter feeders - let us know where & when
- If you sight cats in the burn zone or know where any are being fed, let us know



# Veterinary Care

## Dr. Laurie Gaines



# Hospitalized Patients: Injuries

- Corneal ulcers
- Dehydration
- Burned ears
- Burned paws
- Burned skin (abdomen, nose, mouth, tail, eyes)
- Exposed bone
- Infection
- Smoke inhalation
- Toxin ingestion?
- Cardiomyopathy?



# Euthanasia

All of the animals that presented to MHS were given a chance. Although we saved the vast majority of our patients, we had to make the difficult decision to euthanize some of them. The animals that were euthanized were:

- Suffering
- Badly injured with a grave prognosis
- Badly injured and untreatable
- Not responding to treatment or worsening while on treatment



# Hospital Patients: Treatments & Diagnostics

- Bathing to remove toxins/contaminants from fur
- Oxygen therapy
- Fluids (subcutaneous and intravenous)
- Pain medications (Injectable, oral, and local anesthetic blocks)
- Medications to reduce inflammation and/or coughing
- Antibiotics (oral and topical for wounds and eyes)
- Wound care
- Laser therapy
- Surgery
- Diagnostics: labwork and imaging





## Point-in-time Behavior Assessment



**Friendly**

**Stable**

**Check-In  
Exam**

**Medical Concerns**

**High Fear,  
Anxiety and/or  
Stress**

**Stable**

**Sedated  
Check-In  
Exam**

**Medical Concerns**



# Check-In Exams

- ID check: Microchip? Tattoo? Ear tip?
- Exam:
  - Sex, Reproductive Status, Weight, BCS, Age, Eyes, Ears, Nose, Mouth/Teeth, Skin/Coat, Heart, Lungs, Abdomen, Limbs, LNs.
- Wood's lamp exam
- Hydration check
- Microchip, Vaccine, Deworming, 3 month flea control
- If Intact and healthy enough:
  - Surgery, tattoo, post op pain meds
- Other meds as determined by DVM
- Note color and unique features, take photos



# Cat housing - why does it matter?

Dr. Kate Hurley

Cage size, movement in and out of housing during daily care, and other environmental and population health risk factors for feline upper respiratory disease in nine North American animal shelters

Denae C. Wagner, Philip H. Kass, Kate F. Hurley

Published: January 2, 2018 • <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0187001>

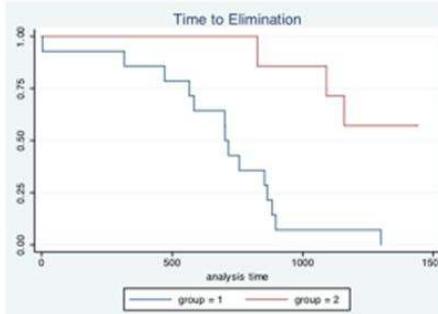
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Variable	IRR	95% Confidence interval	P value
Cat intake (ln)	1.23	0.75–2.02	0.41
Intake Housing Floor Space <6 ft <sup>2</sup>	1.00		
Intake Housing Floor Space 6 to <8 ft <sup>2</sup> <sup>a</sup>	0.69	0.45–1.06	0.09
Intake Housing Floor Space >8 ft <sup>2</sup> <sup>b</sup>	0.078	0.06–0.10	<0.0001
Hiding Space in Intake Housing (Never)	1.00		
Hiding Space in Intake Housing (Sometimes)	7.29	3.04–17.50	<0.0001
Hiding Space in Intake Housing (Always)	5.98	3.46–10.32	<0.0001
Mixed-Age Housing present	1.00		
No Mixed-Age Housing	1.89	0.78–4.58	0.16
Number of Housing Moves (> 2 in first week of stay)	1.00		
Number of Housing Moves (≤ 2 in first week of stay)	0.19	0.14–0.25	<0.0001
Intranasal Vaccine Use (FVRC <sup>c</sup> )	1.66	1.13–2.44	0.010

> 8 sq. feet floor space, double compartment housing for initial care = 50 fold risk reduction for URI

# Housing and health

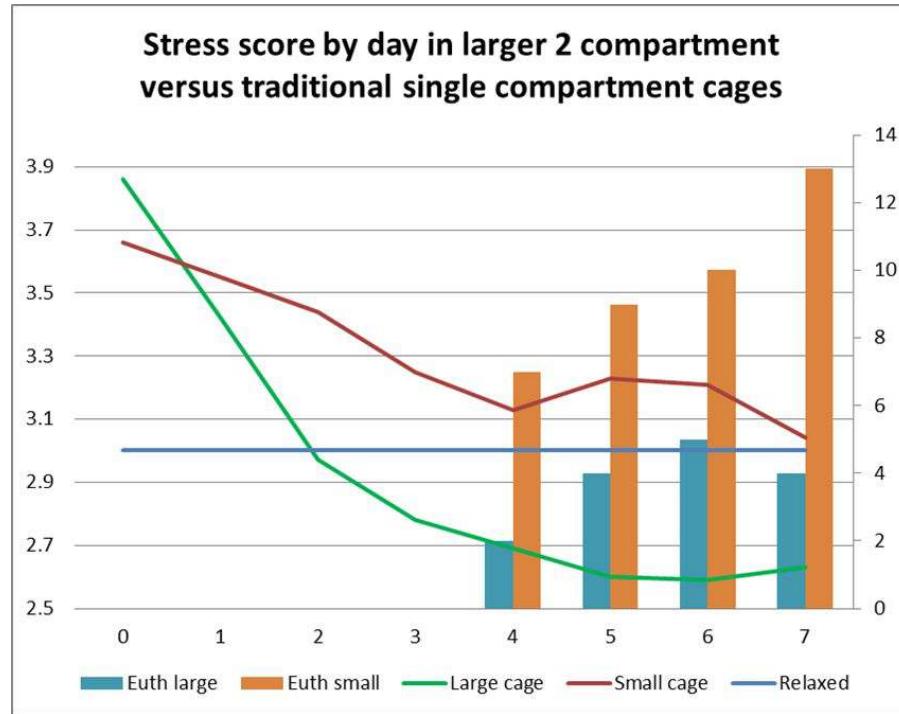
## Basic maintenance



Chi<sup>2</sup>(1) = 11.12  
P = 0.0009

Grooming and eating/drinking also more often *absent or delayed in small cages*

# Housing and behavioral assessment

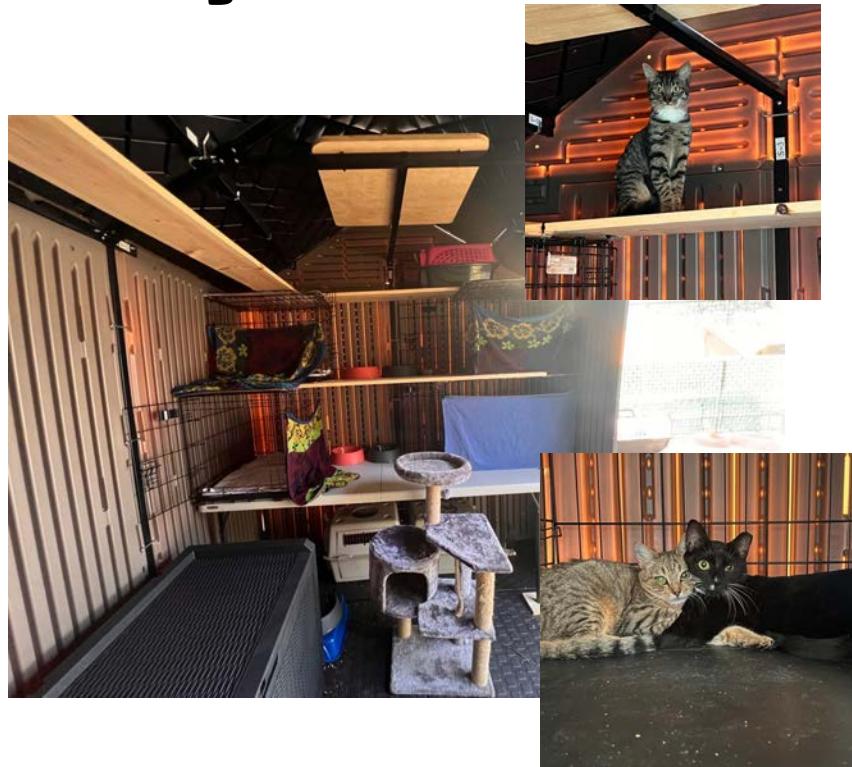


# Cat Housing based on lifestyle adaptation



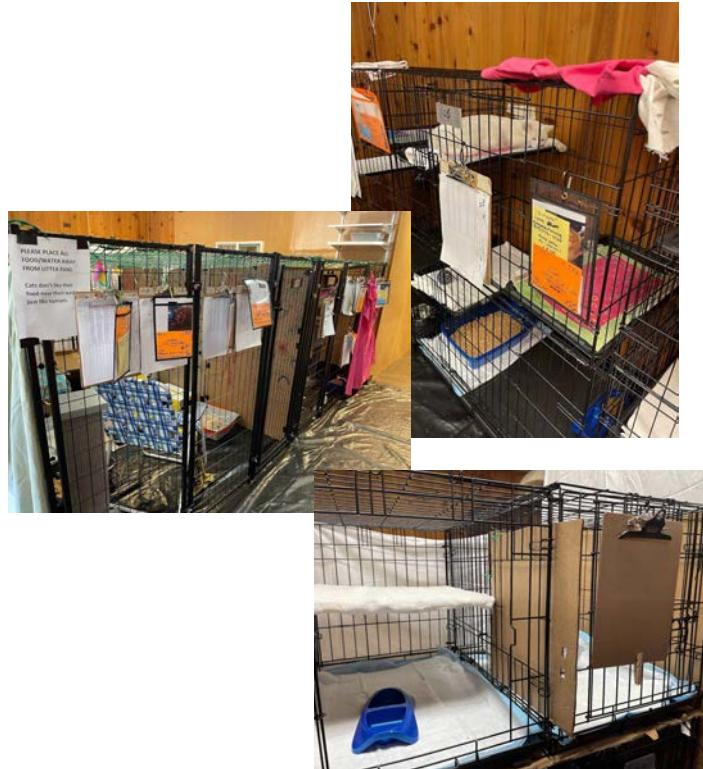
# Humane indoor/outdoor housing

- 18 square feet per cat
- Multiple resources, multiple levels
- Allows care with minimal disruption of fearful and feral cats
- Allows cats to choose to find comfort in each other or have their own space



# Humane single indoor housing

- 8 square feet per cat
- Separation of litter box from food and water
- Double compartment or large enough to enter and clean without disruption
- Allows cats to choose to hide or to see and be seen
- Several different options for different cat needs



# Recovery and Reunification

Joy Smith

## **Three things I can guarantee about cats after fires**

- Cats survive
- During survival the most happy tabby may find her inner wild cat persona
- People want to know their cats survived and be reunited
  - It often takes time to process

# After Rescue - Recovery & Reunification

- How cats are sheltered is key
- Simultaneous recovery and reunification
- Appropriate housing and interaction to facilitate recovery
- Defining future pathways to outcomes if reunification doesn't happen
- **Environment is important too**
  - Quiet
  - Slow
  - Zen
  - Time without humans



# Assessing & Enriching

- Are you frightened or are you really a man-eating tiger?
- Behavior staff and volunteers have a tool box of tricks



# Reunification

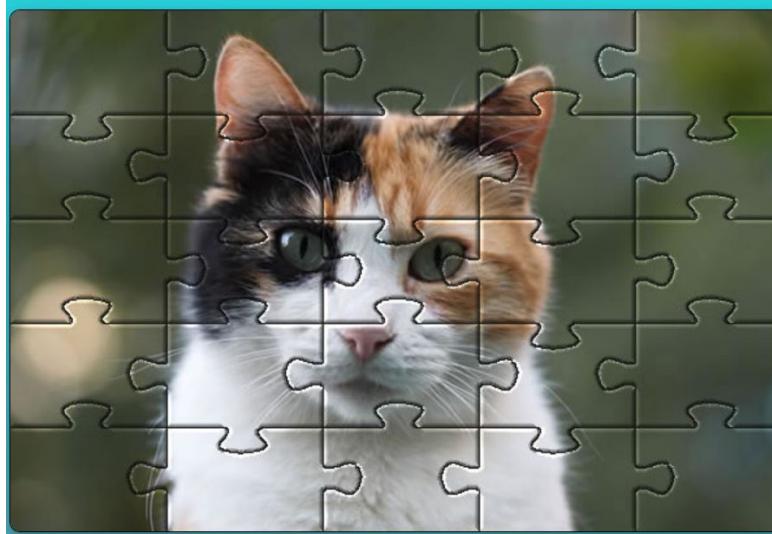
- Home with family
- Reunited but needs temporary housing
- Reunited but family can't keep - surrender
- Identified by caregiver and relinquished for adoption
- Colony caregiver
- Casual acquaintance



# Finding Fluffy's Family

Each cat is a jigsaw puzzle - some are 25 pieces, others 1,000

- Clues to reunification
  - Microchip with UTD registration
  - Unregistered
  - Gender & altered status
  - Where found
  - Physical characteristics
  - Color
  - Weight - not so much
  - Temperament - not so much
  - DSH brown tabbies and black kitties!



# Getting to the cat's people

Let people know their cats may have survived

- Main source of information - website
  - Easy to access and navigate
  - Accurate and detailed information
  - Updated as new clues emerge
  - Easy ID system - L#

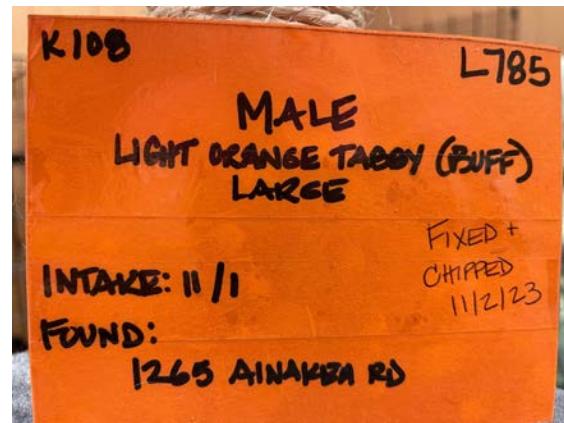
# Getting to the cat's people

Social media is our friend

- Pictures, videos - all well identified
- Harness power of people who want to help
- Keep pushing it out

But also need traditional methods

- Signs, banners, posters
- Out and about in the community



# Current Lahaina Wildfire Statistics

Nikki Russell

## **Intakes:**

Surrender	27
Stray	527
DOA	<u>370</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>924</b>

## **Outcomes:**

Adoption	71
RTO	164
Transfer Out	64
Died	4
Euthanasia	23
DOA	370
In Care	228

# Transfer Program

- Wings of Aloha
- Greater Good Charities
- Transfer Partners
  - Leilani Farms
  - HARF
  - The Pet Shop
- Adoption Partner
  - Cat Cafe Maui
  - Petco
- New Partnership



# Lanai Cat Sanctuary - MHS Partnership

Keoni Vaughn

- Lanai Cat Sanctuary (LCS) & Maui Humane Society (MHS) have had a successful partnership for the past 2 years. LCS takes in ferals and MHS adopts out socialized cats via Cat Cafe Maui. A win win for both islands.
- LCS specializes in rehabilitating unsocialized, unadoptable cats.
- Transfer and exchange program will focus on Lahaina Fire Cats.
- A one of a kind creative partnership in Hawaii that ensures positive outcomes for 400 cats on Maui and Lanai.





CATFURTERIA  
CHING

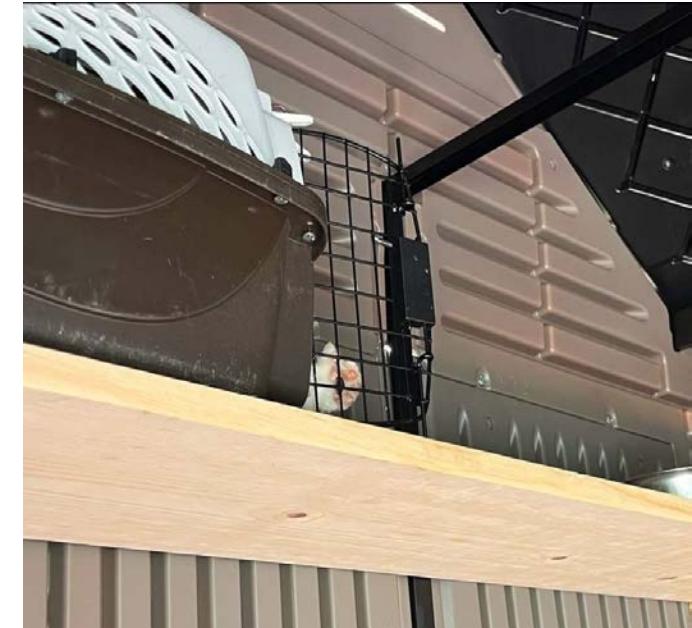




# Operation Fire Cats

Emily Drose

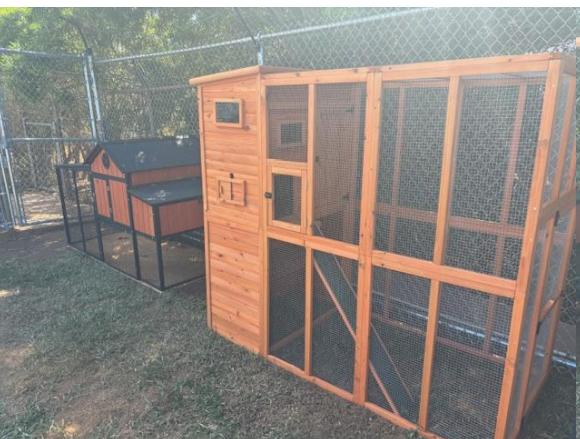
We may have rescued them, but we need you to help us save their lives



# Outdoor adaptive housing

- Short term, humane housing
- Food, Litter, Housing all provided!
- Acclimation guided by leading experts
- Home visit for placement of housing. We do it all for you!

3 housing options



# Courtesy of: Operation catnip

## BEHAVIORS THAT INDICATE THAT THE CATS ARE READY TO BE RELEASED:

- Lounging comfortably in the crate, especially stretched out rather than curled up!
- Spending most of their time outside of their “hiding space”
- Playing with items inside the crate or with each other
- Eating, drinking, or using the litter box in your presence
- Meowing or purring in your presence
- Making a “mess” by kicking litter out of the box or knocking over food/water bowls
- Have a structured feeding time, preferably twice a day. This way, you can expect the cats’ presence at the same time each day, and can take note of their absence if they miss any meals.
- Have a “call:” a phrase or word that you use to summon the cats. Something like “here kitties!” or “dinner time!” They generally bond strongly with one or two people, and will respond to the voice of their most trusted humans, especially if they hear the same phrase regularly and associate it with food.
- Only leave out enough food that the cats can finish in one sitting. Leaving out large amounts of extra food will attract bugs, predators, wildlife, and other cats.
- The cats will typically find their own places of refuge on your property, but you’re also welcome to provide structures of your own specifically for the cats, such as commercially-manufactured cat houses or DIY shelters!
- While these cats are typically not wandering up to strangers for attention, it’s a good idea to let your neighbors know that they should expect to see the cats around. It’s normal for sterilized outdoor cats to travel least 1/4 mile in every direction from their home base, and they will probably frequent other properties, especially if there are other cats there or cat food left out.



Place a sheet over the crate so that the cats feel safe and enclosed!

A hiding box or den is critical! The cats will retreat to the box when they feel scared. Keep the den in the back of the crate to discourage the cats from getting too close to the door and trying to escape. Face the den entrance toward the side of the crate, not the front, so that the cats don't feel like you are reaching for them when you move the bowls and litter box.

Provide fresh water, dry food, and wet food. Confined feral cats can be stressed and may not eat readily, so it's important to give them food that is enticing.

Food, water, and litter should be near the front of the crate. This way, you can clean and refresh their supplies without disturbing or handling the cats, who can hide in their den if they choose!

# Matchmaking 101

Based on length of stay, bonded pairs, co-housed and stress management



# Ongoing Support Programs

- Dedicated Wildfire Team
- Mobile Veterinary Care
- 4EverPets Program - Pet Food and Supplies
- Health Certificates and Travel Stipends
- Rental Support - Pet Deposits
- Community Medicine Program
- Operation Fire Cat
- Transfer Program
- Improving Fire Response

