



Correspondence: 1112 Persimmon Lane, Shepherdstown, WV 25443
Donations: P.O. Box 827204, Philadelphia, PA 19182-7204
Phone / Fax: 304-262-0080 Email: FarmManager@pigs.org

June 2007

Dear Friends,

On Thursday, June 7th, PIGS received an urgent call from a neighboring county's animal control department. This agency only handles dogs, and they needed our help to remove cats from a neglectful home.

We arrived at the home around noon, accompanied by two deputy sheriffs serving a search and seizure warrant. The police kicked open the door. We were immediately assaulted by a putrid stench. The tile in the foyer had about three inches of feline feces.

A few cats came running to us, begging for help. We were able to catch twenty-seven cats at the front door.

The deputies called for back up. Twenty minutes later, several fire trucks and police cars pulled up to the house. In HAZMAT suits equipped with air tanks, the sheriff's department searched the house. Animal control officers followed behind videotaping each room.



I adorned a protective suit and facemask to try to shut out the awful smell. There are no words to describe the house's stench. It literally took our breath away. Our nostrils and lungs burned from the deep ammonia odor. Our feet slid out from under us as we walked across a thick layer of feces covering the floor. Our eyes burned to the point where we could barely see. Roaches scattered around the floor. Fleas and flies swarmed around our faces. The kitchen stove, table, shelves and counters were hidden beneath three to eight inches of feces. Garbage and debris filled each room, making it even more difficult to maneuver.



The cats were afraid of the humans in the HAZMAT suits, and we had to use nets to catch them. We moved couches and chairs to find carcasses of tiny kittens lying in large piles of feces. The health inspector joined us in the dark, foul house. After a few minutes, he condemned the small, trashed dwelling.



After a grueling 2 1/2 hours, we removed forty-eight cats, including 32 unaltered males and 16 unaltered females. There were three nursing mothers with seven kittens, ranging in age from six weeks to just a few hours old. All of the cats suffered from severe upper respiratory infections, dehydration, bite wounds, ear mites and anemia from flea infestation.

We transported all of the cats back to the county's old dog pound – a cement room containing five dog runs. We spent another three hours photographing and examining each cat.

As much as we wanted to bring all the cats back to PIGS, the Sanctuary simply does not have adequate facilities to house this many additional felines. Instead, we took with us two pregnant females who were due to deliver any day and two other felines who required immediate veterinary care.

The next day, we again went into the house to make sure no cats were missed. After another two hours, we were able to rescue three more scared males – bringing the total cats rescued to fifty-one.

On Monday, June 11, the owner of the house was arrested and charged with 49-counts of animal cruelty. The owner released custody of the cats to the county. The next day, the county allowed PIGS to treat the cats for fleas, ear mites and worms at the pound. We also vaccinated them and tested them for feline leukemia and FIV.



Because this county does not “do cats” it would typically euthanize these felines. The county will not house the animals long-term. Nor will it provide for their veterinary care.

We asked the county if they could make an exception in this case, temporarily housing the cats if we fund their spay/neuter surgeries and handle the adoptions. The county wants to work with us, but time is short. Two animal control officers have volunteered their time to help us treat the cats. They want to save these felines as much as we do, but their hands are tied.

PIGS cannot take in fifty more cats! We just can't.

We do not have the necessary barn space or financial resources to provide permanent homes for fifty additional felines. At the same time, we cannot allow them to be euthanized! These cats were rescued from the most horrid conditions imaginable. They are sweet, highly adoptable, and deserve to be cared for and loved for the first time in their lives.

Spay/neuter surgeries and vaccinations for fifty-one cats will cost \$2300. These figures do not include the expense for the kittens yet to be born. PIGS has already exhausted our on-hand stock of dewormers, vaccinations, flea/tick medication, antibiotic and leukemia/FIV tests to treat these felines. Follow-up treatments will be needed in just a few short weeks.



I am writing to beg for your help. Please consider doing the following:

1. Sponsor a cat's veterinary care. Just \$45 will pay for a cat's spay/neuter surgery and rabies vaccination. The cats cannot be adopted unless they are “fixed.” An additional \$12 will cover one cat's next deworming, flea/tick treatment and remaining vaccinations.
2. Please adopt one of these wonderful felines, or help us find a loving home for them. There is every color, size, and type cat – a lilac-point Siamese, a Maine Coon, classic tabbies, calicos, black fur, white fur, blue eyes or green eyes.

Animal control has given us until mid-July to find homes for these cats. After that date, they will be put down.

Though these wonderful felines have been removed from their tortuous circumstances, they cannot truly be rescued without your help. Please help us fund their veterinary treatment. Most importantly, please consider taking “just one more” animal into your loving home. Call us as soon as possible to discuss which animal would be right for your family! These cats need your help – now. Their very lives depend on it.

Until next time,

Melissa Susko
Executive Director

P.S. Please remember to “save the date” for PIGS’ 15th Anniversary potluck picnic celebration scheduled for Saturday, September 22nd from noon until 4PM. More information about this event will be forthcoming in our August newsletter.