

The Eastern Utah Tourism & History Association

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"A People without a history are like the Summer wind over the buffalo grass." (Translation: Hot Air) -- Sioux saying.

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Greetings. We are the Eastern Utah Tourism & Historical Association, or EUTHA for short. We are a registered 501c3 non-profit organization. We are dedicated to maintaining and telling the story of eastern Utah's unique history and tourism opportunities.

We are not asking for money, we are simply asking that you take a few minutes to read this letter. By now, some of you are aware, witnessed or have heard about one of our side programs, the Community Cat Colony Project. And some of you have heard some positive information and others have heard outright false information.

Our volunteer efforts are for the long-term benefit of the community as well as community cats. We have been working with other non-profit organizations to create a nationally recognized grassroots program that does much more than the average trap and release program.

Our goals for the past couple of years have been going out to cat colonies in the area and performing various functions. These cats are not the wild, vicious critters that some people have been spouting misleading, deceptive information about.

Cat colonies actually perform good community services within the area. Cat colonies keep the mice, pigeon, snake, raccoon and rat population from exploding. Some of these vermin do carry diseases such as Hantavirus, which is not transferable to cats. And as a general rule, cats can't transfer diseases to humans.

Some of the things that we do with these colonies are:

Cataloging the cats by photographing them. That way, if a new cat shows up at a colony, we can see where it came from. Some of these cats can be just "feline neighbors that are visiting from a nearby house", but some have been dumped there (unfortunately, sometimes while

pregnant) and previously did have homes. Through our measures we have been able to reunite missing house cats with their owners.

Photograph records also makes it easy to prove that people are spreading hateful misinformation when they claim cats in an area are dropping like flies... all you have to do is just sit at the colony site with your photos and compare and count noses and the rumor is easily disproved.

Controlling the population. For years we have been members of the national Stay & Spay and Alley Cat Allies Programs. We have caught cats and have had them spayed or neutered, given shots and necessary veterinarian care and then returned them to their colonies or in some cases, found them homes if they are able to be adopted. Some of these cats have fallen into the last category and have actually gone far enough that they are in training to become therapy animals and have scored high marks.

We are keeping track of abandoned cats, diseases, poisonings and killings within the colonies. Unfortunately, this has happened. We have investigated poisonings and killings of cats by humans in the past and it is a felony under Utah law and is punishable with a fine of up to \$100,000 and/or ten years in jail. To us it is horrible when a domestic house cat is abandoned... complete with a collar and the collar disappears, but the cat does not and the cat is just looking for a new home, or cats are abandoned in a mutilated condition.

We are controlling the spread of these colonies. Yes, we feed and water the cat colonies. However, leaving food is not enough, as we live in the desert, water is important too for many reasons. First, there's the health of the cats. But, by leaving water at the feeding areas we have brought the colonies closer to an area and have reduced the number of cats running across roads in front of traffic. This also makes it easier to trap the cats for spay/neutering.

Removing too many cats from colonies produces a "vacuum effect" where other community cats from other areas move in and the documenting/trapping/etc. process has to start all over again.

Giving out information to deter cats from specific areas to those who want it. We have also been giving information to people who want to deter the community cat population from their yards. You can deter a cat from your area by simply planting a few natural plants or objects and blocking holes in sheds. As with most everything, the exchange will be an increase in the rodent and pigeon population.

Low cost spay/neuter vouchers. We are on a list to receive some from the state of Utah "soon." In the mean time, we have been working with another non-profit and directing people to

use their vouchers. Low cost spay/neuter vouchers are great for those who want to adopt a cat, but can't afford to pay full veterinary price. We have also been telling of available programs, such as the "No More Homeless Pets Bus" that offers discounted/free spay/neuters. We have been lucky enough to have had the No More Homeless Pets Bus in conjunction with the Carbon County Humane Society come to Carbon County for two consecutive years. Once again, it will be stopping this year at Active Re-Entry in Price, Utah.

These are some of the things that we have been doing for the betterment of the community as well as the cat colonies from our own finances. We hope in time to turn this from random citizens and independent groups into an organized network (or "crazy cat group" if you prefer) with proper feeding stations, complete with signage documenting the protected area.

Already, some other cat projects have expressed an interest in what we are doing and offered their own success stories and started to adopt some of our ideas, such as the D.O.C. in Salt Lake who stabilized their cat population in a year and a half. We have had some local residents who now take a digital camera with them to document the cats when they feed/trap. Also, much to our surprise we had a tour from California who requested to see the colonies that we feed... so you never know where a cat supporter/lover will pop up.

We invite you to learn more about our exciting grass roots program. If you are interested in adopting a cat or assisting in the fostering process, or if you have any genuine concerns or questions, we invite you to use the contact information in our letterhead or address our Board through official recorded means.

Thank you for your time and interest in the Community Cat Colony Project.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Darrin Teply", written over a horizontal line.

Darrin Teply EUTHA Co-director.