



# ONLINE KITTEN CONFERENCE

June 11–13, 2021

*All times listed are Eastern Time.*

Friday, June 11

7:00–8:00 p.m.

**Stacy LeBaron, Community Cats Podcast**

Opening Remarks, Technology Practice

**Kierianne Hansen, LVT, The National Kitten Coalition**

**Medication Tips and Tricks**

Medicating any animal can have its challenges, but sprinkled throughout the evening, Kierianne will give you some tips and tried-and-true tricks to make giving medications to your kittens easier.

**About Kierianne Hansen**

Kierianne is a licensed veterinary technician and has worked in the veterinary field for more than a decade. Her special interests include feline, neonatal/pediatric, and shelter medicine. She has been with National Kitten Coalition (NKC) for three years as a workshop instructor and is also now serving as NKC's Educational Programs Manager. Additionally, Kierianne works at a busy six-doctor veterinary practice in Northern Virginia and enjoys teaching her clients and different audiences within the animal welfare community how to care for animals. Kierianne has personally fostered numerous kittens and cats through medical issues. She resides in Virginia with her husband, daughter, and two cats, Schmidt and SuperHans.

Saturday, June 12

10:00–10:15 a.m.

**Stacy LeBaron, Community Cats Podcast**

**Kierianne Hansen, Rosemarie Crawford, The National Kitten Coalition**

Welcome

10:15–11:15 a.m.

**Tori Fugate, Chief Communications Officer, Kansas City Pet Project**

### **Strategies for Recruiting Your All-Star Foster Team**

Fostering is the future in animal welfare, and to be a foster-centric organization, we have to recruit and engage the people who are helping us save lives at our organization. But how do you bring in more people to foster for your organization and help you save lives? In this presentation, we'll discuss the many ways that your organization can recruit more people, families, organizations, and businesses to support your lifesaving efforts through your foster homes. Through marketing efforts and by utilizing tools like social media, outreach, working with the media, and telling your stories in your community, you can bring in a group of all-star fosters for all areas of your foster program—including harder-to-place pets, medical cases, behavior cases, and hospice. In this presentation, you'll be able to learn easy-to-implement strategies that you can take back to your organizations, no matter how small or large your team is or whether you're a volunteer-based group or a municipal shelter with a large contract.

As a Human Animal Support Services (HASS) pilot shelter, KC Pet Project has been embracing the foster-centric strategy of moving as many pets as they can into foster homes. With more than 50% of their pets living in foster homes, recruitment of fosters is always at the forefront of their minds. Not only do they have robust recruitment strategies, but they are constantly building resources and tools to support their foster families and their program overall, while building a team of volunteers that support the program and their staff members. Caring for over 10,000 pets a year, the organization would not be successful without the support of their fosters, and they are excited to share how other organizations can learn from their strategies and save lives through their foster program.

### **About Tori Fugate**

Tori joined the KC Pet Project team in March 2012, shortly after the organization took over the Kansas City, MO, animal shelter in January 2012. Tori's role with KC Pet Project has enabled her to build the organization's brand and promote its mission from inception to what it is today. She oversees all marketing, events, web management, social media, retail sales, education initiatives, and media relations, and she recently served on the design and construction committee of the KC Campus for Animal Care, Kansas City's new animal shelter. She enjoys the opportunity to promote KC Pet Project and its pets through social media and in print, radio, and television appearances on a local and national level—including People Magazine, The Dodo, The Huffington Post, CBS News, USA Today, Queer Eye, and The Rachael Ray Show.

11:15-11:45 a.m.

**Break, Cat Trivia**

11:45–12:45 p.m.

**Liz Stamper, Midwest Regional Specialist, Best Friends Animal Society**

### **Using Your Data to Become a Kitten Warrior**

Want to learn how to use your data to help the tiniest residents of your organization? In this session, we will learn how using your data can help you increase the save rate for this population. Starting our journey from the time of intake to the point of adoption, we will be discussing how you can make this dream a reality, as well as how to market kittens for fostering, how to retain fosters, and how to troubleshoot difficult situations! At the end of this session, you will be your community's kitten warrior and be ready to begin this new journey with confidence!

### **About Liz Stamper**

Liz is the Midwest Regional Specialist with Best Friends Animal Society, where she travels and consults with shelters and rescues on how to improve upon, or expand on, current lifesaving operations. Prior to joining the Best Friends family, Liz worked for her local humane society for over ten years, wearing many different hats. Her areas of expertise include neonatal care, foster programming, reducing length of stay, and shelter medicine. In her free time, Liz enjoys doing puzzles, going to concerts, and playing games with her husband and daughter.

12:45–1:15 p.m.

**Lunch break**

1:15–2:15 p.m.

**Mariah McCulley, Director of Operations, Animal Friends Alliance**

### **How to Tame Your Feral**

Have you been faced with the hard task of what to do with undersocialized kittens? Are your foster homes reluctant to take them? Adopters won't give them a second look? But they keep pouring in? This presentation will help instill confidence in your staff and foster homes and enable them to see these kittens for what they are: scared. We will cover techniques about how to set fosters up for success from the get go (focusing on housing and set up), give a play by play of what the first few days to weeks should look like, and talk about how to tell when these kittens are ready for adoption. We will also tackle some of the more difficult aspects of fostering undersocialized kittens, including best age range, separation, handling, how to treat kittens that are sick, and finally, when it is ok to throw in the towel and route for working cat placement or return-to-field. We must respect and recognize how incredible undersocialized kittens are and put in the time and steps to help them become confident house cats!

### **About Mariah McCulley**

Mariah graduated from Colorado State University in 2009 with a bachelor of science in zoology. She completed multiple independent studies focusing on animal behavior during her undergrad years, both in Tasmania and the US. In 2012, she began her career in animal welfare at the Fort Collins Cat Rescue and Spay/Neuter Clinic (now Animal Friends Alliance after a successful merger). She worked in multiple different areas, from customer service to TNR, and ran several departments, all culminating in her current director position. Her passion for ferals began when she saw them being overlooked and regressing in the shelter, and she knew there had to be a better way. Since that day, she has been a strong advocate for giving these types of kittens and teenagers a leg up and a fair chance.

2:45–3:45p.m.

**Fiona Norby, Foster Care Program Manager, Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region**

**Growing Your Foster Program: Increasing Your Capacity and Saving More Lives!**

Presentation description.

**About Fiona**

Bio

3:45–4:00 p.m.

**Break, cat trivia**

4:00–5:00 p.m.

**Joanna Fortin, Director of Community Programs, Animal Welfare League of Alexandria**

**Are you ready for CATastrophe?**

Disasters can affect anyone. Preparing to care for your family, pets, fosters, and shelter animals during and after an emergency is vital before the disaster hits. This session will offer participants a brief overview of emergency planning and response for animal shelters, rescue groups, and foster parents, with a focus on considerations for kittens. It will cover common emergencies to prepare for, information on creating an emergency plan for shelters and foster homes in advance of a crisis, and agencies and organizations that can help with the process. We will also touch on the concept of community animal response teams and how you can join or create a team within your community.

**About Joanna Fortin**

Joanna has been working in the field of animal welfare for sixteen years. She has worked at several shelters, including both municipal, government-run facilities and contracted, nonprofit shelters. Her experiences span a variety of sheltering fields, including animal care, adoptions, behavior, and transfer. She currently serves as the director of community programs at the Animal Welfare League of Alexandria, VA, where she administers a number of community support programs, including a community pet pantry, spay and neuter assistance program, veterinary assistance program, TNR program, and the AWLA's emergency preparedness and response activities. She is the team leader of Alexandria's Community Animal Response Team, and is also a member of the Virginia State Animal Response Team's board of directors, a position she has held for five years.

5:00 p.m.

**Closing remarks**

Sunday, June 13

10:00–10:15 a.m.

**Stacy LeBaron, Community Cats Podcast**

**Kierianne Hansen, Rosemarie Crawford, The National Kitten Coalition**

Welcome Back!

10:15–11:15 a.m.

**Allison Hunter-Frederick, Cat Behavior Consultant and Trainer, Allison Helps Cats**

### **Enriching Your Kitten's Sensory World**

Enrichment improves the mental and physical health of cats by presenting them with mental challenges, encouraging physical activity, and stimulating natural behaviors. It can benefit cats of all ages and take different forms.

In this presentation, we'll focus on sensory enrichment for kittens. Sensory enrichment involves stimulation of the five senses: visual, auditory, olfactory, gustatory, and tactile. I'll refer to studies on the topic, draw on personal examples from fostering kittens, and provide a list of ideas that can be used in foster homes and/or shelters.

### **About Allison Hunter-Frederick**

Allison is a cat behavior consultant and trainer, cat therapy handler, and pet education blogger. She also volunteers for a local no-kill cat shelter, for which she has fostered seven litters of kittens and uses sensory enrichment as a key component of kitten socialization.

Through her business, Allison Helps Cats LLC, Allison's goal is to help cats become cherished family members using education to improve their relationship with their owners. Her services include blog articles and checklists, monthly video chats, bi-monthly classes, and consultations with weekly check-ins. Two of her classes include activities on sensory enrichment.

Allison has a certificate in cat behavior & retention from the Humane Society of the United States, and a Silver Level certificate from Low-Stress Handling University. She has taken multiple cat behavior courses, including Train Your Cat from Karen Pryor Academy. She belongs to the International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants, Pet Professional Guild, All Pet Collaborative, and Best Friends Network Partners.

Allison has volunteered with Hearts United for Animals and Husker Cats, and has fostered for The Capital Humane Society and Joining Forces Saving Lives. Currently, she volunteers with Lincoln Animal Ambassadors, The Cat House, Love on a Leash, and Horisun Hospice.

11:45–12:45 p.m.

**Tina Reddington Fried, Director, Los Angeles Volunteer & Kitten Programs, ASPCA**

**Empower Your Kitten Foster Parents to be Adoption Ambassadors**

Animal shelters and rescues across the country and beyond are empowering their foster volunteers to save more lives through Adoption Ambassadors, a foster-assisted adoption program that sends pets to their new families directly from foster homes. In 2020, Adoption Ambassadors accounted for 31% of all placements for the ASPCA's LA Kitten Foster Program. Learn how to leverage this great opportunity using best practices and innovative ideas from the field so you can continue saving even more lives!

**About Tina Reddington Fried**

Tina has been with the ASPCA for over ten years, holding various roles on the Direct Response, Fundraising, and Member Communications teams, and she is now on the ASPCA Los Angeles team. Tina developed the ASPCA Volunteer Program in Los Angeles and launched the ASPCA Pee Wee Program in Spring of 2017. Her foster and diversion program has cared for nearly 7,000 kittens and cats since its inception four years ago, and the live release rate for 4–8 week old kittens at their focus shelter has jumped from 15% in 2016 to 84% in 2020. Tina lives in Los Angeles with her husband Kyle and their two cats, Baby and Rachel.

12:45–1:15 p.m.

**Lunch break**

1:15–2:15 p.m.

**Mary Molloy, CPDT-KA, Behavior Consultant and Certified Professional Dog Trainer, Behavior Vets of NYC**

**Improving the Odds For Kittens—Helping Caregivers Socialize Kittens with Kitty Kindergarten Classes**

Most pet owners now know that it's crucial to socialize their puppies—but many don't realize they need to socialize their kittens too! At the ASPCA, I work with cats who have behavior issues. I see cats surrendered for behaviors that proper socialization could have prevented, had the owners known how to prepare their kittens for life in the human world. Kitty Kindergarten classes provide a fun and engaging way to teach kitten caregivers the knowledge and skills they need to get their kittens off on the right paw. In this presentation, I'll discuss different models for Kitty K and how to best tailor your class structure and content to your audience, be they owners, fosters, or shelter employees/volunteers. I'll also look at some strategies for getting the word out and getting classes filled.

**About Mary Molloy**

Mary is a certified professional dog trainer and behavior consultant who got her start at the ASPCA in New York City in 2005, volunteering with the behavior department. She began learning how to help dogs and cats with behavior issues find loving forever homes. While at the ASPCA, Mary completed a year-long internship working with the dogs rescued by the ASPCA's Humane Law Enforcement Division (the subject of Animal Planet's Animal Precinct). She then continued training both dogs and cats and helped teach their Puppy Kindergarten classes for adopters. In 2010, after receiving her professional dog trainer certification, she founded Nirvana Tails, providing "training and behavior help for enlightened pets and their people." In November 2020, Behavior Vets of NYC invited Mary to join the team as a behavior

consultant. She jumped at the chance to become part of one of the best groups of veterinary behaviorists, behavior consultants, and trainers anywhere.

In addition to her work at Behavior Vets, Mary continues her relationship with the ASPCA as a cat behavior counselor for the Anti-Cruelty Behavior Team. She is also a trainer for the Community Pets Program, a compassionate outreach initiative of the Animal Care Centers in NYC. She has presented on feline body language and socialization, low-stress feline handling, kitten socialization, and taught basic dog manners classes. Mary launched her first Kitty Kindergarten class in 2017 as a hands-on, in-person kitten socialization class. Due to COVID-19, she took Kitty Kindergarten online. Mary realized that, even though she missed getting to meet and play with many adorable kittens, the online format broadened her reach. It made her able to engage caregivers who couldn't always attend a class in person. She has contributed her expert opinion to Chewy.com and The Wirecutter articles, and she has been a guest on the Brick Underground Podcast, discussing anxiety in urban pets. Her blog post, "Tales of the Power of Positive Reinforcement," was featured in the 2017 Train for Rewards Blog Party on Companion Animal Psychology's website. She is a professional member of the Association of Professional Dog Trainers (APDT) and a supporting member of the International Association of Animal Behavior Consultants (IAABC).

2:15–2:45 p.m.

**Break, cat trivia**

2:45–3:45 p.m.

**Esther Mechler, Founder, United Spay Alliance**

**Philip Bushby, DVM, MS, DACVS, United Spay Alliance**

### **How to Spread the Word About Early S/N and Convince Your Vets!**

For decades, veterinary schools have taught that the appropriate age for spay/neuter of cats is 6 months of age or older. Research, however, reveals that there are significant health benefits for spay/neuter of cats prior to 5 months of age. The position paper produced in 2016 by the Veterinary Task Force on Feline Spay Neuter has been endorsed by the AVMA, AAHA, AAFP, ASV, Catalyst Council, Cat Fanciers Association, Winn Feline Foundation, International Cat Association, ten state veterinary associations and numerous humane organizations. Unfortunately, the recommendations of the task force and the endorsements appear to be a very well-kept secret. This presentation will discuss the efforts to get the word out and provide suggestions for convincing local veterinarians to spay/neuter cats prior to 5 months of age.

### **About Esther Mechler**

A graduate of Bates College and the University of Rochester, Esther majored in psychology and education, with a career in guidance and student personnel. In 1990, she left the traditional workplace to begin a program to end companion animal overpopulation. SPAY/USA was started with the goal of finding affordable, accessible spay/neuter services for anyone in need. The program grew from a single vet in Connecticut who gave a 50% discount for referrals to a national program with thousands of veterinarians, clinics, and programs. The program is now run by North Shore Animal League.

Esther recently worked with grassroots animal advocates to organize the United Spay Alliance, which is comprised of statewide networks of spay/neuter programs. USA is currently seeking leaders in several states. In conjunction with these efforts, a campaign to move the recommended age for feline spay/neuter back by four weeks, Feline Fix by Five (FFF), was started in the late 1990s. The FFF campaign has earned the endorsement of the AVMA, AAHA, AAFP, and ASV, plus a dozen individual state veterinary medical associations.

**About Dr. Phillip Bushby**

Dr. Bushby is a 1972 graduate of the University of Illinois CVM. A board-certified veterinary surgeon, he has served on the Mississippi State University CVM (MSU-CVM) faculty for 43 years. He established the MSU-CVM shelter program and is a frequent speaker on efficient spay/neuter. He was a member of the organizing committee for the shelter medicine specialty board, received the ASPCA's Henry Berg Award in 2008, the AVMA's Animal Welfare Award in 2012, and the Association of Shelter Veterinarians Meritorious Service Award in 2015. He holds the Marcia Lane Endowed Chair of Humane Ethics and Animal Welfare at Mississippi State University.

X:X0–X:X0 x.m.

**Name, Org**

**Presentation Title**

Presentation description.

**About Name**

Bio

5:00 p.m.

**Closing remarks**