



# When the Cats Cannot Stay

June 24, 2006

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**The Foundation**

**Mission and Goals**

**The History of Barn Cats, Inc.**

## **THE CATS**

### **Criteria for Acceptance**

- Is there a cage available in my house?
- How many other cats are in the pipeline?
- Is the cat in danger?
- Is it an adult?
- Is it sterilized?
- Do you have transportation to get it to my home?
- **We do not accept...**
  - Kittens
  - Declawed cats
  - Un-sterilized cats

### **Where do they come from?**

- Rescue organizations
- Independent rescuers
- Family members
- Municipal animal control departments
- Universities
- Natural Disasters: Katrina – 32, Rita 18

### **Placement Criteria**

- Come in together – go out together
- Singles are grouped with a second cat or cats
- Try to match up what the barn owner wants

**Note: Barn Cats volunteers do all the relocations. A barn owner cannot come to the Barn Cats site to pick up cats. Also, we reserve the right to NOT LEAVE the cats if we do not think it is a safe place.**



## **THE RELOCATION PROCESS**

### **Finding the Barn Homes**

- Recommendations from barn owners that have our cats
- Press releases to small town, rural newspapers
- Flyers at large animal vets and feed stores
- Internet
- Recommendations from Animal Control and humane organizations
- Links from other humane websites
- Articles in newspapers, magazines, newsletters
- TV and radio spots

### **The Interview Process**

- Where is the barn located?
- Do you live on the property?
- How far is the barn from the house?
- How large is the barn?
- Do you keep horses, cattle, sheep, goats, etc. or is it just a hay barn?
- Is the barn totally closed in or open on one or more sides?
- Do you have wooden, hay, or concrete flooring?
- Are there coyotes close by?
- Do you have a donkey, Great Pyrenees, or llama for coyote control?
- Is there currently a cat living in the barn?
- Have you ever had cats in the barn? If so, what happened to them?
- How many cats would you like?
- Is there a phone number where I can reach you to “put a plan” together?

### **Rejection Criteria (Red Flags)**

- Barn Owner is not willing to maintain the caged cats for the 2 week relo period.
- Owner does not think it is necessary to leave out food for the cats.
- Location has a serious predator problem and owner is unwilling to get a donkey, etc. for predator control.
- No one lives on the property.
- Property is “For Sale”.
- There is no safe place to set up the cages for 2 weeks.
- Owner has a dog that has killed a cat previously.
- Other cats have “disappeared”! (Was the cat neutered?)

### **Other Factors to Consider**

- How far away is the property?
- Are there raccoons in the area?
- In the summer, is there enough ventilation in the barn?
- In the winter, can be cages be placed away from any cold wind?
- Is the barn closed up each evening?
- Are the barn dogs “cat friendly”?

**Note: As you drive onto the property, observe the other animals and the people with the animals. If you do not have a good feeling, do not leave the cats!**



### **What Makes a “Good” Barn Home?**

- People that live on the property
- Family with children or a retired couple
- Horse barns are better than cattle barns – must feed the horses daily
- Places for the cats to “hide” (old barns are better)
- Family owns a donkey, llama, or Great Pyrenees for predator control (or maybe there is one next door)

**Note: If the relocation site is a horse riding or boarding stable, this is a “business” to these folks. Yes, they may need cats, but generally they do not pay any attention to them and the cats “take off” when released.**

### **Moving the Cats**

- At the housing site, place a small carrier in the large cage as a “hiding box”.
- Tie or use a bungee cord to keep the carrier door open.
- When you need to move the cat or clean the cage, just un-hook the door, close it, and pick up the carrier.

### **Setting up the Cages for Relocation**

- Use Bargain Hound 36” cages from PetsMart (have pins in the corners) (\$56).
- Put two or three together with a door at each end.
- Lay the cage floor tray down as the bottom. It is not attached.

**Note: We do not use the bottom piece of the caging. It makes it too difficult to assemble.**

- Put a small litter box at one end. (“sweater boxes” or “dish pans” from Big Lots or the Dollar Stores)
- At the other end have a feeder and waterer on a tray. If the waterer is knocked over, the tray will contain the mess. We use feeders/waters from Wal-Mart...Le Bistro that look like small water coolers. Fill the feeder / waterer before you leave the property.
- Put in a rug in the winter. (get those at Big Lots)
- In the center, have a “hiding box” with a bed, sheet, or towel (carrier with no door or the top of a covered litter box).
- Put in toys if the cats are younger.
- Lay the top piece on top of the sides and door. Ensure that the hooks on the end are over the door section.
- Secure the top to the sides with alligator clips.

**Note: Just laying the top on not enough to ensure that it will stay in place. We use medium size alligator clips to attach the top to the side sections.**



- Leave an extra tub of litter and a tub of food (PetsMart Authority) for the relo period.
  - These small tubs come from empty litter containers.
  - We use Tidy Cat 50 lb bags from Sam's Club...If you are registered as a small business, you can use "Click 'n Pull" and they will have it ready for you at the front of the store.
- Provide a litter scoop and zip lock bags to put the nasty stuff into. (scoops: cheapest at Wal-Mart \$.89)
- Leave a large plastic tub at the site with the litter scoop, bag, and the food tub inside. The large plastic tubs come from Big Lots.
- If we put up a triple cage with 2, 3 or 4 cats in it, we use a medium-size tub from Big Lots as a litter box.

### **Paperwork**

- Prepare a folder to leave with the barn owner.
  - Relocation Agreement
  - General Information document
  - Directions for Extreme Heat and Cold while the Cats are Caged
  - Barn Owner Responsibilities at Release statement
  - Copy of your general flyer to leave at a vet's office, feed store, etc.
  - The rabies certificates of the cats your are placing at that location
- The Relocation Agreement
  - Name, phone numbers, email address, etc. of the barn owner
  - Release of Liability statements
  - "Where did you hear about Barn Cats?"
  - General information about the cats
    - Name
    - Estimated Age
    - Description
    - Sex
    - Source: community where the cat was trapped
  - Get someone to sign it **BEFORE** you leave.
  - Always ask for a donation.
- Equipment Checklist
  - Do a count before you leave the site.
  - Make 2 copies: Take one with you and leave one with the barn owner.
  - This makes it easier to ensure that you get "everything" back.
- Care Giver Instructions
  - Check the feeder/water each day.
  - Scoop the litter each day.
  - Ensure the cages are safe from vehicles / horses / dogs and have plenty of ventilation.
  - Talk to the cats – make friends.
  - After two weeks, close the barn in the evening and leave the cages open..
  - Leave the cages set up for the next week so the cats can come and go.



- Barn Cats will come the next weekend and pick up our equipment.
- Other Recommendations
  - List references for predator control
    - Donkey
    - Llama
    - Great Pyrenees
  - List low-cost spay/neuter clinics in the area
  - Provide a sheet with “Instruction for Extreme Heat and Cold” while the cats are caged.
- Contact Information

### **Hints and Tips for a Successful Relo**

- The barn owner should not release the cats if it is raining.
- Ask the barn owner to put some towels or sheets in the cages so the cats get their scent. Then, after release, prepare a “hiding place” for the cats using those towels or sheets.
- While the cats are caged, start a schedule of feeding them canned food at the same time each day. They will always show up for canned food!
- Dry food should always be available for the cats. Catching the mice is a game.
- Cats will always use a litter box. If you have not seen them, put out a litter box and see if it gets used. A raccoon will eat the food but will not use the litter box.
- Talk to the cats while they are caged. Try and make friends.
- Ensure that any dogs on the property get used to the cats while they are caged.
- If there is an ant problem, put Diatomaceous Earth around the food bowls.

### **Housing a Feral Cat before Relo**

- We use folding cages for “Large Dogs” that are permanently set up.
- In the cage is a rug, a litter box, a feeder / water (or a hanging bowl), a tray and a carrier for a hiding box with a bed or sheet in it.
- We use bungee cords to hold the door open on the carriers.
- Sometimes put in a plastic table over the feeder / water to give them additional room but also to keep an active cat from turning them over.

**Note: User a carrier as a “hiding box” allows you to just close the door and move the cat easily for relocation or in-house cleaning.**

### **Overall Recommendations**

- Do not try and do everything from trapping to relocation.
- Do not let the Care Giver who brought you the cat go on the relocation to place the cat. This is a privacy issue.
- Do not tell the Care Giver exactly where you put the cat....same issue.
- If you get a friendly cat, trade it to a humane organization for a feral.
- Set up times for in-take, otherwise you will be accepting cats a midnight.
- Understand that most relocations will be done on Saturdays



- The equipment will come back VERY DIRTY from the barn site and must be cleaned before it is reused.
- Most of this is common sense. Do not over-think it!

If you want help setting up a Barn Cat program, call or email Peggy at Barn Cats, Inc.

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