

LETTER: A little tragedy in Digby is a recurring tale

The Digby Courier

Published: Jul 20, 2015 at midnight

Updated: Sep 29, 2017 at 7:54 p.m.



<p>Little Mama is the calico on the left. The boots belong to Sue Dexter-White.</p>

Sometime overnight on July 15, a small tragedy happened on Racquette Road. ‘Little Mama’, a female feral cat, was struck by a car and killed while trying to carry one of her kittens across the road. The kitten also died.

No doubt some people will say, "So what? Just another cat." But for members of the Society for the Friends of Ferals, who have been feeding Little Mama and several other feral cats on the Digby waterfront for years, this small tragedy was yet another example of the needless suffering that happens because some people still won't spay or neuter their pet cats.

The Society for the Friends of Ferals is a TNR (trap-neuter-return) organization whose goal is to reduce the number of homeless, stray and feral cats by spaying or neutering them, and then providing shelter and food. Whenever possible, young adoptable kittens and friendly (i.e., dumped) cats are placed into good homes.

Little Mama was wily, and we were never successful in our attempts to trap and spay her. We have no idea where she was trying to re-locate her most recent litter; our members and nearby neighbours on Racquette Road looked for any surviving kittens without success. Without doubt, the kittens also suffered a miserable death—of starvation, thirst, or predation. So unnecessary, so preventable.

It is very frustrating this time of year to see signs on the side of the road, notes on grocery store bulletin boards, and postings on Facebook, advertising kittens 'Free to Good Home'. Guaranteed, Little Mama was only one or two generations away from a 'Free to Good Home' kitten.

If your cat has a litter, you might be able to find enough friends or relatives to adopt them. But what about the next litter mid-summer, and then the possible fall litter? A female cat can have three litters—four to five kittens per litter—each season. Do you have that many friends and neighbours and relatives that you can be sure will give them a good home? Or will you end up handing them over to strangers out of sheer desperation? And what happens to them then? There are rumours circulating this year of kittens being fed to a pet python.

If you're not part of the solution, then you're the problem. Please, pet owners, have your animals spayed or neutered. If you can't afford the full cost, there are organizations that can help. Let's work together toward the day when there will be no more homeless cats.

Chris Callaghan, secretary, Society for the Friends of Ferals

No doubt some people will say, "So what? Just another cat." But for members of the Society for the Friends of Ferals, who have been feeding Little Mama and several other feral cats on the Digby waterfront for years, this small tragedy was yet another example of the needless suffering that happens because some people still won't spay or neuter their pet cats.

The Society for the Friends of Ferals is a TNR (trap-neuter-return) organization whose goal is to reduce the number of homeless, stray and feral cats by spaying or neutering them, and then providing shelter and food. Whenever possible, young adoptable kittens and friendly (i.e., dumped) cats are placed into good homes.

Little Mama was wily, and we were never successful in our attempts to trap and spay her. We have no idea where she was trying to re-locate her most recent litter; our members and nearby neighbours on Racquette Road looked for any surviving kittens without success. Without doubt, the kittens also suffered a miserable death—of starvation, thirst, or predation. So unnecessary, so preventable.

It is very frustrating this time of year to see signs on the side of the road, notes on grocery store bulletin boards, and postings on Facebook, advertising kittens 'Free to Good Home'. Guaranteed,

Little Mama was only one or two generations away from a 'Free to Good Home' kitten.

If your cat has a litter, you might be able to find enough friends or relatives to adopt them. But what about the next litter mid-summer, and then the possible fall litter? A female cat can have three litters—four to five kittens per litter—each season. Do you have that many friends and neighbours and relatives that you can be sure will give them a good home? Or will you end up handing them over to strangers out of sheer desperation? And what happens to them then? There are rumours circulating this year of kittens being fed to a pet python.

If you're not part of the solution, then you're the problem. Please, pet owners, have your animals spayed or neutered. If you can't afford the full cost, there are organizations that can help. Let's work together toward the day when there will be no more homeless cats.

Chris Callaghan, secretary, Society for the Friends of Ferals