



Making a difference...together

Juan de Fuca Electoral Area

2-6868 West Coast Road, PO Box 283

Sooke, BC, Canada V9Z 0S9

T: 250.642.1500

F: 250.642.5274

E: directorjdf@crd.bc.ca

Tuesday, June 16, 2015

To Whom it May Concern,

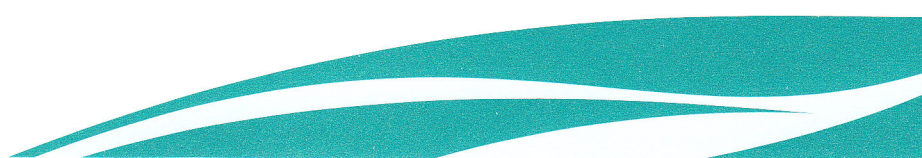
Margarita Dominguez has requested a letter of support which I am delighted to provide. Margarita has been working in the East Sooke, Otter Point and Sooke Region for the past number of years capturing, saving and rehabilitating feral cats. She has been relentless against all odds in her quest to help animals with little or no funding and support from government.

I understand that she is now expanding to set-up a pet food bank in addition to helping feral cats. If her new society Safars has even half the energy, passion and dedication to animals that Margarita has demonstrated, they will be a huge asset to Victoria and the Capital Regional District.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Hicks". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mike Hicks
Regional Director
Juan de Fuca Electoral Area





Making a difference...together

Bylaw and Animal Care Services T: 250.474.3351
212-2780 Veterans Memorial Parkway F: 250.391.9727
Victoria, BC, Canada V9B 3S6 www.crd.bc.ca

February 8, 2013

Sooke Council and Finance Administration Committee
2205 Otter Point Road
Sooke, BC
V9Z 1J2

Dear Council and Committee members,

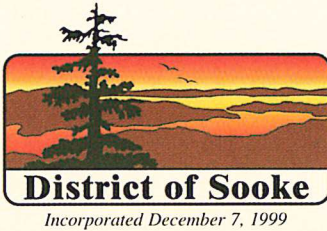
RE: Feral Kitten Whisper Program

Please be advised that we are aware of this group and the work Ms. Dominguez and her volunteers do with Feral cats and local youth. Managing the number of feral cats in the region is a challenging task and this group certainly helps with alleviating this problem. It is a great idea they have to include youths in caring for these animals. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to call me to discuss.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Don Brown', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Don Brown
Manager
CRD Bylaw and Animal Care Services
250-474-3351 (21)



2205 Otter Point Road, Sooke, British Columbia, Canada V9Z 1J2

Phone: 250-642-1634 • Fax: 250-642-0541 • Email: info@sooke.ca • Website: www.sooke.ca

0220-01

May 19, 2015

To whom it may concern:

RE: Letter of Support for Sooke Animal Food & Rescue Society / Victoria Pet Food Bank & Feral Cat Rehabilitation Society

On behalf of the District of Sooke Council, I am pleased to provide this letter of support for the Sooke Animal Food and Rescue Society / Victoria Pet Food Bank & Feral Cat Rehabilitation Society ("Society").

The Society is a group of volunteers that are dedicated to providing assistance to animals in distress (feral or stray) and to support low income families within the Sooke area by providing pet food. The Society is managed and operated by volunteers and is largely funded through donations. The Society also provides educational and volunteer opportunities to youth in the community.

The District of Sooke supports in principle the Society in their efforts to manage the number of feral cats in the area and their petition to other levels of government for assistance and in addressing this serious issue.

Sincerely,

Maja Tait
Mayor

Victoria Pet Food Bank and Feral Cat Rehabilitation Society
Incorporation No. S-0059393
Business No. 83263 6906 RC0001

On February 5th, 2017, the Victoria Pet Food Bank & Feral Cat Rehabilitation Society, previously called, the Animal Food and Rescue Society, aka Safars, completed its fifth year serving six different communities in the Greater Victoria Area.

During the first year the society's main two goals were, control feline overpopulation and prevent the abandonment of animals with food donations. However, as the society entered on its second year the phone calls increased by fifty percent with people asking for help with abandoned cats on their property and with pet food donations. On this fifth year the phone calls and help provided has tripled and without financial help to fulfil the demand we cannot see how we can continue helping this large community. In addition to our two missions we have now become counsellors; we help people take their pets to the veterinary hospital and fundraise for them; we help people move; we find homes for their pets when they cannot find a pet friendly rental, and much more. Following is a description of the society's two main goals, achievements and public response.

1) The Spay/Neuter/Release Program (TNR)

The Spay/Neuter/Release Program (TNR) is an internationally known non-lethal humanely method to control feline population practiced in many countries around the world such as: USA, England, Denmark, Australia, South-Africa, India, and others. The animal is captured, spayed-neutered, de-wormed, de-fleaed, tested against Feline Leukaemia Virus, and vaccinated against contagious diseases such as: Feline Leukaemia, Panleukopenia, Viral Rhinotracheitis, Calicivirus, Chlamydiosis (Pneumonitis), and Rabies. In many countries the animals are released immediately after surgery, but for health reasons our society prefers to give the animal a chance. We assess its character to see if it can be adoptable and we provide a short, or long recuperation and rehabilitation period.

Feeding the feral and stray cats before and after capturing them is part of the society's second program, the pet food bank. The proved theory behind the feeding is to reduce illnesses and also to prevent the animals to hunt birds.

According to the National Centre for Infectious Diseases: Healthy Pets Healthy People and the American Society for the Prevention of Animals, ASPCA, cats are vulnerable to infections such as Campylobacter infection, Cryptococcosis and Bird Flu (Avian Influenza).
Campylobacter bacteria, causes diarrhoea, abdominal pain, and fever.
Cryptococcosis: a fungal disease can cause pneumonia. Bird Flu is a deadly virus.

The capture, spay/neuter, vaccinating, de-worming, feeding, and maintaining health the cats colonies is known as “the control, or management of cat colonies”.

- The other important advantages of managing colonies are the noise nuisance and hygiene factor reductions. The SPCA, in Honk Kong and the SPCA, in the United States indicate that since the TNR program entered in action, both countries saw a significant reduction of complaints in relation to the meowing and fighting of cats. The feeding side of the TNR program also helped municipalities reduced the public hygiene hazard caused by the scavenger behaviour of hungry animals.

Result, the most positive impact of the TNR Program can be appreciated in shelters across the United States. A study conducted in the United States from 1992 to 1999, in San Diego and in San Francisco, California, reveals that since the introduction of the TNR Program the total number of cats taken into shelters dropped by 34% and by 28% describes the SPCA, in Hong Kong.

To this point, Safars’ own statistics regarding their first mission, the cats, needs to be noted as an achievement. If Safars would not have existed the Greater Victoria’s Juan de Fuca region would have had 2129 new cats born, in 2012, and 159.000, in 2013. These numbers are the product from only the 59 cats rescued in 2012. A female cat can have up to 7-8 kittens three times a year and so do the female kittens of each litter.

Cats rescued, spayed/neutered and adopted to private homes or to farms:

2012 – **59** (vet clinic did not have data program)

2013 – **66** cats rescued from the Beecher Bay reserve: 40 spays & 6 neuter + 20 kittens

2014 – **84** cats from different colonies: 37 spays & 35 neuter + 12 kittens

2015 – **96** cats: 46 spays & 50 neuter

2016 - **53** cats: 27 spays & 26 neuters

Total cats rescued in five years = **358** + 35 rescued already spayed/neutered = **393**.

What could have been done differently by the Juan de Fuca residents if Safars would not have existed? What are pet owners supposed to do when they cannot keep an animal? Where are they supposed to take it?

Before Safars existed some pet owners did not have a choice as to where to take their cats. Many low income families do not own a car and the animal pound, or kill shelter, is 50 km from the closest city, Sooke, to the place where the animals are in general abandoned, which it is at another 30-40 km outside Sooke. This extremely visited region by international tourists includes the unincorporated districts of Otter Point, Shirley, Jordan

River, and Port Renfrew and it is known by its luxurious B & B and foreign owned mansions. The BCSPCA is also a 50 km from Sooke and they do not work with feral or stray animals.

It must be noted that the only financial aid our society received to prevent feline overpopulation in five years has been minimum.

In 2013, the District of Sooke gave us \$1500 to buy the traps, but the grant had the condition to buy an insurance policy of \$620.52 leaving us with just \$879.48.

In 2013, the BCSPCA pledged \$7500 for our spays and neuters, money that we stretched during two years. Apart from these two grants the rest of the money for spay/ neuter and medical treatment has come from our board members' pockets in form of loans to be paid at some point in the future and how can we? All our present and passed board members believe in our work and would like our programs to continue. The Capital Regions director, Mike Hicks, and the animal control chief-by-law officer also believe and support our work. This is the reason why today we are so desperately applying for the gaming grant. We have been notified of three giant cat colonies where we calculate are more than one hundred suffering cats to rescue.

We have already visited the lands where the animals are and we are preparing ourselves to start the feeding process before trapping. We also received a call for help with cat rescue and with pet food from the Beecher Bay and from the Port Renfrew First Nation Reserves. Apparently, the cat and dog overpopulation is getting to an alarming point in these two reserves and kittens are now been used as bait for dogs to attack.

With this little help, with public donations, with fundraising, and with the help of other animal lovers who know our devotion to help our community we have gotten by until now.

However, today, we are really concerned about how are we going to pay for the expensive gas to daily feed and rescue the cats 30-40 km from where we are located. We are also worried about the supermarkets preferring to throw the pet food out instead of donating it to our pet food bank as they did three years ago. We are going to have to start buying pet food now.

There are several reasons why our pet food bank is extremely important to our community; especially, to children and to the disabled. We know by experience that pets are a very important part of the mental well-being of children who are bullied in school, or who live their lives among domestic violence. We know that a person suffering from: depression, anxiety, isolation, personality disorders, or other mental illness would have a breakdown if they have to give away their pet.

Pet Food Bank – Part 1, in Sooke & Juan de Fuca Region

The program was started by Safars' president, Margarita Dominguez, in 2000, before the society was not even registered yet. Margarita had discovered a couple of families who even though they adored their pets they could not afford to feed them. She also noticed that most of these families were disabled and that their animals meant the only moral support they had. The first animal she started fundraising for was "Brew" a German Sheppard suffering from a skin infection caused by yeast, chicken, soy, by-products, or/and other products. After the first visit to the veterinary clinic she learned that this infection could have been prevented with hypo-allergenic food.

Brew was the pet that kindled the decision to start a not-for-profit society to help low income families with pet food, supplies and vet bills. In the beginning, although the society did not have funds to advertise the program from December 2012 to January 2015 Safars provided 300 lbs/136 kg of dog food and 66 lbs/30 kg of cat food plus dozens of cans for cats and dogs every month door-to-door to low income families and to the Beecher Bay's poorest band members. Since 2015 the food donations decreased while the families requesting help increased. Nowadays, the door-to-door deliveries to more than thirty families are from Sooke to Victoria.

Pet Food Bank Part 2, Victoria – *THE BONELESS PROJECT*

At the end of December 2012, one of Safar's co-founders presented the board with the idea of extending the pet food bank to the homeless dogs in Victoria. The vote was unanimous and a new partnership with Our Place Society, (OPS) a support centre for the homeless and hungry, was created. The project was immediately appreciated by residents for fulfilling an existing gap in the community.

In its first twelve months of service and with the help of the media, the society provided six hundred pounds, 600 lbs/ 272 kg, of kibble and 30 cans for dogs per month to OPS. After two years in OPS, in November 2014, Safars' board decided to transfer the pet food bank to a society that would allow pets inside their facilities. The society chosen was the Victoria Cool Aid Society because it manages an emergency shelter, three transition shelters and several buildings for seniors. In addition, we also extended the pet food bank to Salvation Army's Stan Haggen Centre for Families.

The amount of pet food Safars needs to deliver every month to emergency shelters, to families door-to-door, to foster homes, and to volunteers feeding the colonies is stated below. Nevertheless, because supermarkets and the majority of large corporations / pet stores have the policy to throw out the food instead of donating it to pet food banks we rely exclusively on donations. Privately owned pet stores allow us to place food collection bins in their stores and sometimes donate food to our program.

We also collect food during our fundraising events, dog parties and pet food drives.

-
Our monthly delivery of pet food.

DOGS

827 lbs - 375 kg = \$2500 approx at \$100 the 15 kgs bag of kibble.

40 cans of wet food = \$2 each = \$80 + tax

Door-to-door = 330 lbs/150 kg

Emergency Shelters = 497 lbs/ 225 kg

CATS

741 lbs / 336 kg = \$1260 + tax

210 wet food cans = \$1 each \$210 + tax

Colonies – 318 lbs / 144 kg

Foster homes, door-to-door and shelters = 423 lbs / 336 kg

In conclusion, in order to keep providing the wonderful services we offer to the community we need financial help to buy:

Pet Food and supplies such as winter coats for the street dogs and shelters for the outside cats.

Spay / neuter and medical expenses.

Repair our old vehicle or buy another which is so essential for everything we do

A data management, an accounting program and a web design software.

Food collection bins and much more