

Britto, John

From: Monika Sudds <monikasudds@live.com>
Sent: Tuesday, December 5, 2017 10:34 AM
To: Clerks@vaughan.ca; Bevilacqua, Maurizio; Ferri, Mario; Rosati, Gino; Singh, Sunder; lafrate, Marilyn; Carella, Tony; Shefman, Alan; DeFrancesca, Rosanna; Racco, Sandra
Subject: VAS in the Halifax Chronicle Herald but not a compliment to Vaughan and TNR Services

What are other saying about the progress within Vaughan around the issue of advocacy for Animals and feral cats.

Monika Sudds



Martin Field posted in TNR Vaughan.



Martin Field

December 4 at 7:49am

How incredibly timely - this article calls out Vaughan and most especially the animal Services supervisor, Susan Kelly.

<http://thechronicleherald.ca/opinion/1525820-opinion-no-feral-cat-%E2%80%99crisis%E2%80%99-population-control-making-progress#.WiLgw1Ac9i0.facebook>
<http://thechronicleherald.ca/opinion/1525820-opinion-no-feral-cat-%E2%80%99crisis%E2%80%99-population-control-making-progress#.WiLgw1Ac9i0.facebook>

OPINION: No feral cat 'crisis,' population control making progress



Like



Comment

[View on Facebook](#)

[Edit Email Settings](#)

Reply to this email to comment on this post.

OPINION: No feral cat ‘crisis,’ population control making progress

LINDA FELIX

Published December 1, 2017 - 8:49pm



Tom, a feral cat in the Spryfield area, looks out from behind some rocks in November 2013.
(RYAN TAPLIN / Staff)

Mayor Mike Savage has said that Halifax is a modern, progressive city. I support that. Part of being modern and progressive is also reflected in how we treat our animals.

This past week, the Ecology Action Centre and several bird conservation groups brought in a guest speaker from the city of Vaughan, Ont. Susan Kelly was here to promote their successful animal services program. I attended the session, as we are always seeking new, innovative and effective ideas.

Kelly recommended to Halifax city council that they should strike an advisory committee to help them create a new cat bylaw. City council already did this several years ago. It is called the domestic and feral cat advisory committee.

Kelly also recommended that city council should have a law so our pet stores could not sell animals that come from puppy mills. Halifax was a leader in that movement; it is roughly five years since our city pet stores started adopting out rescued animals from city rescue and shelter organizations. And city hall did not need to get involved.

Ontario shelters still euthanize for convenience and space. In Halifax, our shelters support the no-kill model; cats are adopted to good homes. We are progressive and modern in this thinking. Many municipalities in Ontario ignore their feral cats. Or if they manage to catch them in traps, they are euthanized.

Here in Halifax, our city council not only recognizes their feral cats, they partner with other organizations on TNR (trap-neuter-return) to humanely reduce the cat population. Even better than that, they help fund it. In Vaughan, feral cats are killed. Outdoor feral cat shelters are not allowed. TNR groups across Ontario are looking to Halifax with envy for the modern progressive way we deal with our cats.

Vaughan has a limit on the number of pets allowed per home. If you are over your quota, you are asked to “rectify” your pets. It doesn’t take much imagination to know what that means. Ontario is not a leader in legislation for pets and I would never use the city of Vaughan as an example of a good animal control bylaw.

Can we do better in Halifax? Yes, we can. We need made-in-Halifax solutions for made-in-Halifax problems. We do not need to strongarm our citizens with quotas. Killing is never the solution to our problems. Should our household cats be kept inside for both their own protection and the protection of wildlife? Yes, I would endorse that and I practice what I preach. Public education and awareness, before we alienate citizens with overbearing rules would be a good start.

Halifax has too many cats. When city council discussed a comprehensive cat bylaw years ago, they were stuck on the tremendous cost that a shelter and staff large enough to contain all the cats would cost. The city could not afford to enforce a cat bylaw. What Halifax needs is fewer cats.

How do we accomplish that? Spaying and neutering is the answer. Every rescue group and every shelter only adopt out cats that are altered and cannot reproduce. TNR services for feral cats are free. Both shelters have low-cost spay/neuter programs for those of low-income. The Spay Day HRM program provides charitable spay/neuters for cats. The SPCA has a mobile feline spay/neuter clinic that is getting out to rural areas, barns and large feral colonies. All this is the work of our progressive, modern thinking citizens and organizations.

What caused the sudden feral cat crisis in Halifax that was declared by all in the media this past week? The Ecology Action Centre and bird conservation organizations have declared it so. They are promoting studies, flawed research, whose findings are extrapolated to the point of hysterics. One report uses the word “estimate” over 60 times. We have people with limited cat knowledge and no frontline experience telling us how things should be done. They tell us TNR doesn’t

work. They tell us spay/neuter programs are not the answer. They see cat identification and strong-arming citizens with an invasive cat bylaw as the answer to our cat problems.

People ask me, are you making any progress? Are we getting anywhere with all this work? How do you know?

Since we are on the front lines dealing with cats daily, we see the difference. For the first time in forever, both city shelters had room to take in cats this year. For the first time ever, there were weeks with no free kittens on Kijiji. We conducted TNR on a feral colony in Spryfield four years ago. Twenty-five cats were spayed & neutered. Today, only six cats remain in the colony and there has been no growth, no kittens, in the colony since.

While we still have much work to do, our efforts are not in vain. Spay/neuter is the humane method of cat population control and it works. Perhaps when we have fewer cats clogging up the system and fewer cats to deal with, the city of Halifax can afford to provide animal control services that include cats.

Linda Felix is president of the Spay Day HRM Society.