

♥ If you love your pets, have them spayed or neutered. ♥

- Cattery
- Low Cost Spay/Neuter
- Adoption Services
- Foster Homes
- TNR Assistance



- Feral Sanctuary
- Lost and Found Service
- Animal Placement Service
- Pet Owner Education
- Cat Boarding

Declawed cats who need indoor homes.
Read more about declawing on our back page.



Pistachio



Fanny



Maui



Paris

Adoption Center
Street Address:
133 North D Street
Lompoc, CA 93436

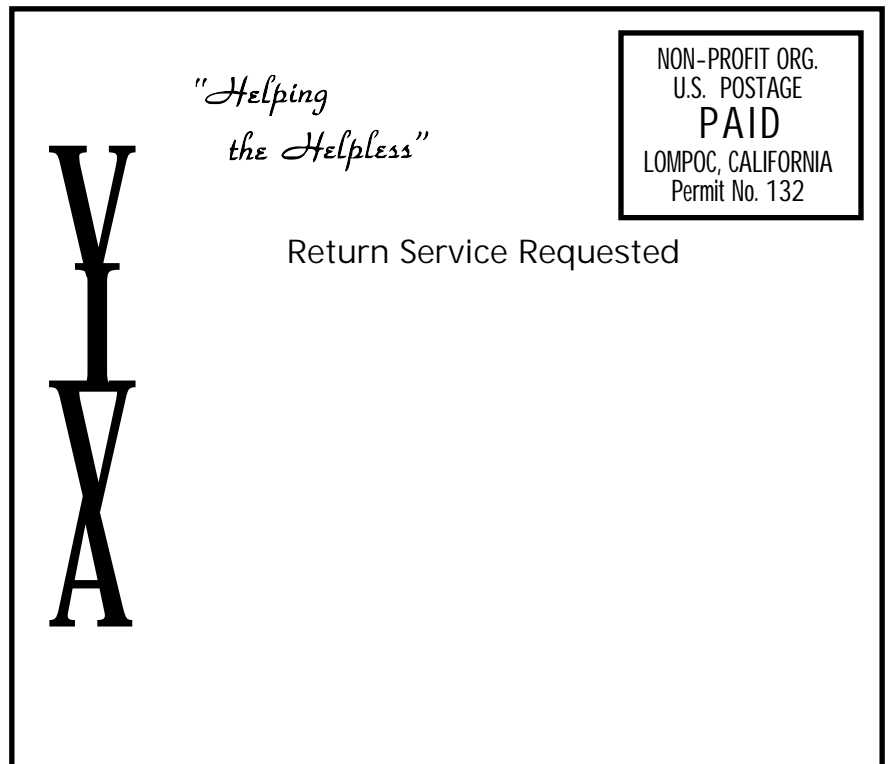
Hours:
Saturdays from
10 to 4 or
by appointment

Phone:
(805)735-6741

Mailing Address:
VIVA
PO Box 896
Lompoc, CA 93438

Website:
<http://vivaonline.org>

Email:
info@vivaonline.org



APRIL 2008

CALENDAR:

4/13-19: Animal Cruelty-
Human Awareness Week

4/20-26: World Week for
Animals in Laboratories

4/22: Earth Day

Adoptions are held every
Saturday 10AM - 4PM or by
appointment on Mon, Tues,
Wed and Thurs mornings.

April is "Prevention of Animal
Cruelty" Month

OVERWHELMING RESPONSE

We had women as far away as
Carpenteria respond to our plea for
people to help fold and stuff our
newsletters. Unfortunately, we
couldn't take up people out of the
Lompoc area on their offers, but
we certainly appreciate them. At
least ten new volunteers will help
each month; that will cut the work
load for the people who have been
dealing with 500 - 1000 each!

NOW LET'S HAVE AS MANY VOLUNTEERS FOR THE FCS

There is much work to be done at
the Feral Cat Sanctuary, and the
caretaker needs help! A very few
people have volunteered at various
times, but the sanctuary requires
on-going, weekly workers. Daily
workers would be even better!
Building, cleaning, and weeding are
a few of the chores. New arrivals
are in cages that need cleaning.
Please call Shirley @ 736-3995 or
leave a message @ 735-6741.

PURINA CAT CHOW OFFER

From a Santa Monica newsletter reader came the following info: Purina is offering a free bag of cat chow when you call in and take a 2-minute survey. If you don't want or can't use the coupon (one to a household), please send it to US in the contribution envelope (along with your contribution?). We use Purina Cat Chow daily. The number to call is 1-866-MEOW (6369). If you all did this, we'd save a lot of money.

THE KITTENS ARE COMING... THE KITTENS ARE COMING

It's already started. This weekend we had a small grey mom and her little black babies come to the cattery. From there they went to a foster home where they can grow, stay healthy, and be socialized for awhile before they are ready for neutering and adoption.

Our problem? We don't have nearly enough foster homes. That will mean we have to turn away moms and their babies. "What do I have to do to be a foster home?" you wonder. You need a quiet room where the moms can feel safe and where the babies can't get under things when they start moving around. You need to be able to make a two to eight week commitment to that litter. If you're willing, you need to learn how to bottle-feed and take care of babies that don't have mothers. That's rare; mostly the mom is with her babies and she knows what to do for them.

If you can volunteer your home and your concern for these litters that are on the way, please call us @735-6741. Leave a message.

THIS CURRENT ECONOMY'S EFFECT ON THE ANIMALS

With people losing jobs and their homes, animals are going to get left. When folks can't afford their own food and medicine, how are they going to afford them for their dogs and cats?

Foundations that give money to non-profits depend on interest to fund their grants. With interest rates going down and down, the foundations won't be able to give as generously as they'd like. The same goes for donors, especially those on fixed incomes. When they're not getting the necessary return on their investments/savings, they're not going to be able to continue to donate as much as they'd like.

Which brings us to VIVA. Just cat food prices have soared. Gone are the days when we could get canned food for \$.25. Now we're lucky when we only have to pay \$.33. Without sales, we pay from \$.35 to \$.40 a can. With the cattery, Sylvester House, and the Feral Cat Sanctuary, we probably use at least four cases a day. The cats go through a lot of dry food daily. Utilities, as well, have risen in price. We are definitely feeling the pinch. We appreciate your support!

Until there are none, adopt one (or 2).

QUICK FACTS ABOUT FIV

From Best Friends Magazine M/A 2008

*FIV is a cat only disease. It cannot be spread to humans or other non-felines.

*FIV is a slow virus that affects the immune system over a period of years.

*FIV is spread almost entirely through serious, penetrating bite wounds. This type of bite wound is seen most often in feral, intact tomcats. The virus can also be spread through blood transfusions and badly infected gums, and on occasion a mother may infect her kittens while they're in the womb or through her milk after they are born.

*FIV can't be spread casually between cats, such as in water bowls or in litter boxes. Cuddling, playing, and other forms of casual physical contact do not spread the virus.

*Many FIV-positive cats live out their entire lives healthy and happy, never showing any symptoms at all.

*The FIV virus was discovered in 1986. Before then, FIV-positive cats and non-FIV cats lived together peacefully all the time.

*The ELISA snap test is the most common test for diagnosing FIV. A positive ELISA test should be confirmed with a Western Blot test.

*FIV cats should be kept indoors, fed a nutritious diet, and should see a vet at the first sign of illness.

*FIV cats are a joy to adopt!



Victoria Viva, an FIV+ kitty, came to our shelter in September and gave birth to a litter of FIV- kittens the day after she arrived. She was recently adopted by a loving family.

A Better Analogy for Declawing

Imagine that you're a prima ballerina. You are incredibly strong and graceful; you can dance an entire ballet on your toes. Then you wake up one morning in overwhelming pain to find that your toes have been cut off to the first joint. We often remind our readers that declawing a cat is comparable to amputating your fingers to the first knuckle but the analogy isn't really accurate. Declawing a cat is more like amputating a ballerina's toes.

Cats don't walk on the soles of their feet like people do; they are digitigrade animals that walk on their toes. The area of the paw that contacts the ground consists entirely of phalanges (toes or fingers). Since declawing removes not only the claw, but also a portion of the boney phalanges, a declawed cat has lost a percentage of the weight-bearing surface of her paw and therefore must adapt by changing her stance. This gait change in itself can lead to long-term medical problems in some unlucky cats. Other declawed cats may develop behavioral problems like inappropriate aggression or litter box aversion. We recently took in a kitty who was so mangled from his declawing procedure that we had to take him to Dr. Ganter at Village Vet for corrective surgery which included removing one of his pads. There was so much scar tissue covering his exposed bones that he was in pain with each step he took. To let us know of his pain, he started eliminating wherever he stood and holding up his right paw. He's now recovering nicely (and using the litter box).

You might ask why veterinarians are willing to declaw cats if the procedure is so painful for the cat and can potentially cause such harm. While they may not want to perform the procedure, clients often insist that they will have the cat euthanized or relinquish it to a shelter if the vet doesn't perform the procedure. While one study showed that about 4% of clients follow through, over 50% of clients who want to have a cat declawed make the claim. The vet may be saving the cat's life by performing the surgery. Veterinarians are caught between a rock and a hard place when a client asks to have a cat declawed.

What can you do to train your cat not to claw your furniture? First of all, make sure you have a scratching post your cat likes. Some cats prefer tall posts covered in sisal rope while other cats like horizontal cardboard scratchers. I have a sisal carpet post in my house that only one of my cats will touch. They like the sisal rope, but they find the sisal carpet unacceptable. It's in your best interest to accommodate your cat's wishes on this matter. When you see your cat clawing the furniture, pick him up and put him on the scratching post. If there's a particular corner on the sofa that your cat likes to scratch, try covering it with double-sided adhesive strips until your cat learns to leave that spot alone. If a new sofa is in your future, stay away from the textured fabrics that appeal to cats. My sofa is covered in a smooth ultrasuede and the cats never claw it. The tapestry-covered chairs are another matter however.

If you can't live with the shabby chic look that cats so often impart to their environments, adopt a cat who has already been declawed. We have several declawed cats in the cattery right now. While a couple of them have behavior problems typical to declawed cats, others are very well-adjusted and ready for homes. See our front page for photos of a few of them.

Don't be cruel. Don't declaw.