

# Creature Comforts ~ Feral Cats and Kittens

By Michal Smith

Last month was all about controlling late hatching fleas, catching feral cats and raising kittens. This month we take it to the next level in controlling the feral cat population and preparing for the holidays.

Creatures, as have several volunteers in the community, cared for many feral kittens associated with the valiant and commendable efforts of Kim Tierney, City Council Member, and the partnership she was able to form with Feral Cat coalition of Oregon (FCCO) on behalf of Vernonia residents. Residents have been "managing" the feral cat overpopulation for years since the flood but it has become somewhat out of control in the last year. Kim heard

the complaints and concerns and took action. The last count had 104 cats and kittens caught and turned in by Kim and local residents to be spayed/neutered by the FCCO—WOW!

The OFCC provides this service free of charge, but does ask for a \$30 donation to help defray the expense of the surgeries. They are providing a great service for our community. If you're looking for a great cause to support with a donation this one should be high on the list. All donations are tax deductible: Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon P.O. Box 82734 Portland, OR 97282

Kittens that are caught and returned to Vernonia following their surgery are looking for a good home. It probably goes without writing, Creatures will be full of sweet little darlings

looking for their forever homes through the month. Please consider adopting and spread the word to co-workers, family and friends. The kittens will be "fixed", will have received first shots, been given worming and flea treatment and are well socialized. As always, the adoption fee is low to encourage adoption and to cover only the associated costs of their care. Thank you in advance for being willing to open your hearts and homes to these 'lil guys!

Also, going on at Creatures in November is the kickoff of the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Paper Puppies and Kitten sale and pet food collection to benefit Bailey's Pantry at Vernonia Cares Food Bank. Bailey's Pantry is the arm of the local food bank that provides pet food to families in need who have pets too! Each paper puppy or

kitten is sold for \$1 through Dec. 31st and placed in the stores windows. Last year, just over \$375 was raised and donated in food, so this year we'll shoot for \$425!!

If that's not enough, beginning shortly after Thanksgiving, you'll be able to pick up your live and locally grown Christmas tree at the store. These beautiful live trees will be delivered fresh weekly from Mike's Christmas Tree Farm!

On sale this month are all flea topical treatments when purchased by the 3, 4 or 6 month supply and all Aspen large dog beds (see store for details)!

Open Monday-Friday 10-6; Saturday 10-5; Sunday 12-4; 503-429-PETS (7387).

# WOEC Current: Saving Energy During the Holidays

By Sarah Rossi

West Oregon Electric Cooperative is proud to sponsor this year's Vernonia Spirit of Christmas House Decorating contest. Start planning the decorations you are going to use now, and get ready to make your home stand out and represent the warm glow of this special season. Check out the energy efficiency tips below for some helpful hints on how to decorate with LED lights and keep that holiday spirit alive without wasting energy.

### Decorating:

- Consider replacing older strings of holiday lights with more energy efficient light emitting diodes, LEDs. Most stores now sell LED lights, and many of the new outside Christmas decorations are already made with them. Minimize fire hazard risk with LEDs, as they are shatterproof, shock resistant, safe to touch, and shouldn't overload your electric circuits. LEDs save up to 80-90 percent of your decorative lighting energy costs, and use 10 times less energy than incandescent mini-lights and 100 times less energy than standard bulbs.
- Wait until dark to turn on your Christmas lights and make sure to turn them off before you go to bed. Six hours or less of daily use is a good goal to aim for.
- Using holiday lighting wisely can lower power consumption. Timers and photo cells can help reduce power usage by turning the lights on at dusk and turning them off at a desired time. Just make sure that the timer you use is rated to handle the total wattage of your lights.
- Fiber optic trees and decorations are the ultimate in energy efficiency. In most cases, they use a single light bulb located in the base of the unit to light the entire decoration. That makes them energy smart and budget smart.
- Turn your room lights off when your tree lights are on. The lights on your Christmas tree may provide

more than enough lighting to navigate around the room.

- Christmas lights are nice, but so are candles. Set up luminaries along your walkway and use candles throughout your home to achieve a beautiful holiday glow, without adding to the electric bill. Just be sure to use them safely and never leave them unattended. Also the new LED flameless candles are great for giving a room that candle glow without the dangers of an open flame, all with one little battery that lasts a very long time.

### Cooking/Entertaining:

- Use your microwave and toaster oven for small holiday cooking tasks, and save the oven for big cooking tasks.
- The holiday season is a big time for baking. Make the most of your oven and the energy that goes into heating it, by cooking several dishes at once. Remember: it takes the same amount of energy to heat a full oven as it does a nearly empty one.
- Whether preparing holiday feasts or simply doing some baking, don't be tempted to open the oven door. Every time you do, the temperature goes down 25 degrees, forcing your oven to work harder and use more energy.
- Use lids on your pots; foods cook faster (meaning less energy use) when the lid is on and you use the right cookware. There is a lot to be said for proper tools in the kitchen, and investing in the right cooking instruments can actually help you cut back on your energy use while helping you create delicious holiday treats.

- Don't pre-rinse your dishes. Dishwashers today are powerful enough to clean without the necessity of pre-washing everything. Just scrape the big stuff off and put them in the dishwasher to cut back on water use and energy by letting your dishwasher fulfill its purpose on its own.
- While entertaining guests, you can turn the thermostat down. The extra bodies in the house means extra warmth at no cost to you.
- Remember entertaining guests after dinner can be as simple as playing some board games, or taking a walk around Vernonia to look at Christmas lights and decorations. The important part of the season is spending time with your family and friends.

We wish everyone a Very Happy Thanksgiving and energy efficient holiday season. Remember a few simple changes can make a difference in your energy bills. Using just a few of these tips can keep you festive and energy smart without your family and friends even noticing the difference. Good luck to all of the house decorating contestants and enjoy the upcoming Holidays!



Vernonia Cares Food Bank  
PO Box 126, 627 Adams Avenue  
Vernonia OR 97064  
November/December 2013

Dear Friends,

People are preparing for the holidays. However, this year, many people will not be able to celebrate because they are faced with serious economic problems. Some have lost jobs, others cannot find employment. Some are restricted by a budget which cannot cover their basic living expenses. There are those in our community who have lost their homes. Grocery budgets are depleted. It's hard to believe that people in America go to bed hungry, but it is true. Food pantries like Vernonia Cares provide emergency groceries to help out. As the weather blows colder, the need for nutritious food grows higher.

For twenty eight years, Vernonia Cares Food Bank seeks to help alleviate hunger and it's root causes in the Vernonia area. Twenty-seven percent of our clients are children; senior citizens comprise another sixteen percent. We assist an average of 414 people per month. We depend upon donations of food and money to supply groceries and to keep our doors open for those who need us the most. The United Way of Columbia County provides about one-third of our budget, with volunteers lending support through fundraisers to help meet the other two-thirds of our expenses. We receive no government financial support.

Would you consider a donation to assist us? We are aware that the current economy has stressed everyone's budget. A gift of any amount helps us. Please complete the information slip below, and place it with your donation into the envelope you'll find with this letter. We appreciate donations to our general fund which keeps our pantry open year round. A second option is to designate your gift towards a special holiday food box. It contains the basic groceries for a Christmas meal, including a turkey. Or, your gifts may be given in honor of or in memory of those you designate. Their names will be published in The Vernonia Voice in the December or January issue. If you want a tax-deductible receipt, it will be provided, if you designate that request on the slip. Your generous contribution will allow us to continue to be your hands extended to the hungry who reside in and around Vernonia.

Thankfully, Sandy Welch, Director

Enclosed is my donation to Vernonia Cares Food Bank. (Please print clearly)

My Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City, State and Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Please choose ONE:

Designate this gift towards the General Fund OR

The Holiday Box Fund (estimated cost is \$30) OR

Given in memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Given in honor of \_\_\_\_\_

Please send acknowledgment to (name and address) \_\_\_\_\_

I would like a tax deductible receipt mailed to me.

Vernonia Cares Food Bank

PO Box 126  
627 Adams Avenue  
Vernonia, OR 97064-0126

Phone: 503-429-4414  
E-mail: directorsandy@yahoo.com  
EIN#93-0901900

**TOO BUSY?**  
Call your LOCAL bookkeeper

**PAYROLL PLUS LLC**

**Edi Sheldon 503-429-1819**  
edisheldon@gmail.com

Licensed tax consultant • Full service payroll  
Personal & small business bookkeeping • QuickBooks assistance  
CORPS, S-CORPS, LLC, Partnerships • Personal one-on-one service

LTC #29629 - Oregon licensed tax consultant  
RTRP #P00448199 - designated as a registered tax return preparer by the Internal Revenue Service  
The IRS does not endorse any particular individual tax return preparer. For more information on tax return preparers, go to www.IRS.gov.