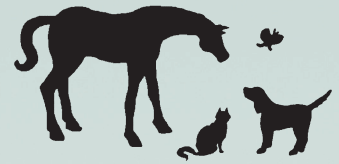


# FMCA news



*"Dignity for Animals"*

## Message from the President

Have you ever wondered: Why does my dog have this embarrassing habit of sticking his nose in to my friend's crotch? Isn't my dog's slobbering licking of my mouth a "kiss" of affection? Do dogs laugh? Is barking simply to get attention? Does a dog's yawn express boredom? What does ear or tail presentation mean? Is urine marking just territorial? Can my dog see color?

*Inside of a Dog*, by Alexandra Horowitz answers all these questions and much more! In this wonderful book, which I consider the best book on animal behavior published in the last decade, the author describes dogs' perceptual and cognitive abilities with a readable light style and the weight of science behind her.

She draws a picture of what it might be like to be a dog. "This book is about imagining a dog's point of view; how the dog experiences the world; what he wants and needs; what he thinks about and understands."<sup>1</sup> The centerpiece of her book is to explain the concept of a dog's "umwelt," what life is like to the animal; the animal's point of view."<sup>2</sup> Contributing to a dog's umwelt is the dog's genetic history and the dog's sensory capacity, what it smells, sees, and hears.

Although dogs and wolves descend from a common Canidae line, the present day wolf is not an ancestor of the dog. The differences between dogs and wolves are probably due to both the character of the protodog taken in by humans and human domestication through breeding. One reason dog breeds are so very different is "the biology of breeding is that genes for traits and behaviors come in clusters."<sup>3</sup> One difference in organization is that dogs do not form true packs. Numerous physical differences include a smaller brain. Although studies show that wolves solve certain types of physical puzzles better than dogs, other evidence shows dogs' brain quality trumps brain size. One seemingly small difference between the two species with remarkable consequences is that dogs look at our eyes and faces.

The nose is to the dog what eyes are to the human. "The dog's universe is a stratum of complex odors."<sup>4</sup> The lining of our big nosed friends is blanketed with tiny receptor sites that receive the molecules of smell chemicals. While humans have only six million receptor sites, the dog's nose can have over two hundred million. It has been estimated that a beagle's sense of smell may be a million times more sensitive than ours. In addition, dogs have a vomeronasal organ (first discovered in reptiles) that is located above the roof of the mouth along the floor of the nose. The tiny hairs covering this organ detect the pheromones, hormone-like substances, which are carried by fluids such as urine. This explains your dog's disgusting (to humans) habit of touching, or licking, another dog's urine. The personalized message transmits all hormonal changes, such as the readiness for sex. A dog can detect a teaspoon of sugar diluted in a million gallons of water!

What the dog smells on us and each other gives us a view into the world from the vantage point of the nose. "The human armpit is one of the most profound sources of odor produced by any animal; our breath is a confusing melody of smells; our genitals reek."<sup>5</sup> The sweat and sebaceous glands of our skin is constantly excreting fluid and oils holding our brand of scent. Our friend's crotch, armpits, and mouth (and our own for that matter) can indicate what we've eaten, whom we kissed, and what we've brushed up against. Those wet licking kisses are more likely to give information about what we've eaten than just a sign of affection. In addition, we leave behind a trail of skin cells as we move. Even after hours or days, the trained tracking hounds use ground and air scents to find a missing child. Odor identifies characteristics of an individual dog and human. Dogs can even smell your emotions, especially fear, anxiety, and sadness and are being successfully trained to "smell" diseases such as cancer. Remember that leaving their smell, including urine marking, is a dog's method of communication with other dogs. Don't be too hard on your dog when he greets a new dog with his nose in the new comer's rear!

Vocalization is one of the tools dogs use to communicate with us or with each other. Countless hours of research has revealed some universal features of sound signals: "They either express something about the world – a discovery, a danger – or something about the signalers themselves – their identity, sexual status, rank, fear or pleasure."<sup>6</sup> Distinguishable dog barks include alarm barking, stranger barks, isolation barks, and

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The Friends of Montgomery County Animals, Inc. is an all-volunteer, non-profit, tax-exempt humane organization. FMCA does not have a shelter. All rescued animals are in foster homes. We receive no government funding and are entirely dependent on private donations.

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Interested in sharing a heart-warming poem or article of interest to be included in our next newsletter? Contributions are welcome. Please mail your articles to FMCA, PO Box 386, Germantown, MD 20875 or send by email to [fmca volunteer@comcast.net](mailto:fmca volunteer@comcast.net).

Do you have friends or neighbors who you think might like to join Friends? Please feel free to share this newsletter with them. We would love to have them as new members!

**Don't forget to visit  
our Friends website at  
[www.fmca.freesevers.com](http://www.fmca.freesevers.com) or  
[www.friendsofmontgomerycountyanimals.org](http://www.friendsofmontgomerycountyanimals.org)**

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

*(continued from page 1)*

play barks. Pitch normally distinguishes the bark category. It is incomplete to say that all barks are "attention-getting." A dog's laugh is a subtle "breathy exhalation that sounds like an excited burst of panting."<sup>7</sup>

Happily, the set of sounds heard by a dog's ears overlaps with the human auditory range of 20 hertz to 20 kilohertz. Dogs can hear sounds up to 45 kilohertz, hence the power of the inaudible (to us) high-pitched dog whistle. Research does suggest dogs understand language to a limited degree. Dogs respond more to the sound of what we say. Pitch and the rising or falling of sounds gets dogs' attention. High-pitched sounds interest the dog because they might indicate the excitement of play, while low pitches might signal punishment.

"There is a language of the body, formed of phonemes made from rumps, heads, ears, legs, and tails. Dogs know how to translate this language intuitively."<sup>8</sup> Erect posture can announce aggression, while a crouching posture can signify submission. A yawn, a wide-open mouth with teeth covered, is not a sign of boredom but may signal anxiety or stress. Tail held high when coupled with stiff wagging does not indicate happiness, but a threat. The familiar happy wag is a tail held above or out from the body that draws rough arcs in the air.

"Snout beats eyes and mouth beats ears," Horowitz says on page 122. It is not surprising, considering the olfactory prowess of dogs, that vision plays a supporting role. Nevertheless, a dog's eyes, which are much like ours, allows it to see details that we overlook. Dogs, like wolves, see and detect motion at night or in low light. The difference in conformation of the retina in the dog's eye, the distribution of photoreceptor cells and the speed at which they operate, allows them to see motion more clearly, but miss an object that is right in front of them. Contrary to popular belief, dogs are not color-blind. Rather than the three cones, red, blue, and green in the human eye, dogs have only two cone types, blue and greenish-yellow. Imagine what the color of objects in an interior room bathed in yellow lamp light would look like and you have a feel for how dogs see color. Dogs make up for their cone deficiency by having many more rods than humans. Rods function more in low light and changes in light density that is seen as motion. In addition, dogs have a higher flicker-fusion rate than humans, i.e., they see the world faster. "How do dogs apply their visual ability? Cleverly: they look at us."<sup>9</sup>

The gaze of a dog's eyes on our faces or another dog's face, unlike eye-contact avoidance of many other animals species, shows they pay attention to humans: to our location, movement, moods, and face. The distinctive ways dogs look at humans tells us a great deal about a dog's cognitive abilities, what an animal understands about the minds of others. They also show the ability to follow a human's gaze. Dogs not only gaze to get attention, make request of us, but what kind of inattention lets them misbehave!

In tests and observations of dog's intelligence, one is struck by how often dogs use humans to solve problems: "They have applied a novel tool to the task. We are that tool. Dogs have learned this – and they see us as fine general-purpose tools."<sup>10</sup> Dogs can see and therefore learn that other dog or human behavior serves "as a demonstration of how to get to a goal."<sup>11</sup> Horowitz concludes that "they communicate – but not with all the elements of human language; they learn, imitate, and deceive – but not in the way that we do."<sup>12</sup>

Science is relatively quiet on the questions: What does a dog think about? What does a dog know? Horowitz has come to several conclusions on dogs' conceptions of time, themselves, their past and

*(continued on page 7)*

## IN MEMORIAM

### Virginia Merchant

FMCA lost long time member and supporter Virginia Lucille Muse Merchant on August 7, 2011, when she died at home of natural causes. She dedicated herself to the animals in many ways, including assisting the owners of the animals financially, as well as making life better for those animals in need. Since she joined the FMCA in the mid-1980s, her generosity has impacted thousands of animals.

Virginia's involvement with FMCA started after the late Pat Lankford called her and said, "Virginia, this group needs us." They joined forces with the late Dee Esherick to be a guiding force to drive the organization to what it has become today. The three women were an important part of the FMCA board throughout the decades.

States long-time FMCA Treasurer Winnie Reed, "I loved Virginia Merchant. We had a common love of gardening and the Virginia Military Institute, from which her husband, the late Col. Robert A. Merchant (USMC) graduated, and from where I have relatives who have graduated. We have been friends for a long time, and I will always remember her Christmas parties; especially when the tree outside of their home got too large and Bob couldn't get lights all of the way to the top of the tree. Virginia was a class act, a lady who gave of herself and who expected nothing in return. If she could make the world a better, safer place for her friends, family, and animals, then she was happy."

Virginia's compassion for the animals led her to work on the FMCA cookbook that was published in 1993 as a fundraiser. Although she spent numerous hours on the cookbook, Virginia also diligently dedicated herself to insure the success of FMCA and its events, including the Spring Luncheon and Fall Fashion Show fundraisers. In addition,

Virginia's impetus was felt from coordinating the models with the store owners that had the clothes, to securing homes for the spring luncheons.

She is survived by her daughter, Ginger, and her brother, Allan, both of whom currently reside in Texas. Virginia was buried next to her husband in Arlington Cemetery on August 31, 2011. Her dedication and service to our group will be greatly missed.

### My Precious Little Girl Mydnite

Ann Marie Thompson

From sad beginnings you came to me – took awhile to get used to me – and Harley too, who liked to be boss – but then a whole new world, even though small – bins to climb – soft comfy beds – long looks out the window "talking" to the birdies – hours of watching Animal Planet on TV – catnip pillows to knead – ricola wrappers, junior mint boxes and balls to bat around – and your favorite – that little red ring on a string – plastic bags and boxes to jump on and hide in – your little scratch pad – afternoon naps in the closet – Ashley's Winnie the Pooh book bag you loved to sit on – coming to see me with your cute little model walk, one foot in front of the other – loads of snuggles, special head butts and face rubs – always purring, even at the end – you were such a gift – I loved you so much – and I miss you so much too – have fun in your new life at the Rainbow Bridge until we meet again – my precious little girl, Mydnite...

Special thanks to FMCA, Claire Proffitt and Dr. Negola for all they did for so long to keep you with me. I am so grateful...

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**Questions?**

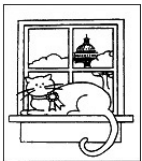
Alan Waghelstein – 301-233-2604 • Ann Wagner – 301-512-0232

Viridian independent representatives

# EVENTS



Cat and kittens, fostered by Friends of Montgomery County Animals, are available for adoption at the Luv-A-Pet Center in PetSmart at the Milestone Center in Germantown. Adoptions are by appointment during the week and on Sundays. Adoption events take place on most Saturdays from 2:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. in front of the Luv-A-Pet. Visit our web site, [www.friendsofmontgomerycountyanimals.org](http://www.friendsofmontgomerycountyanimals.org), to view many of the cats and kittens that are available for adoption.



## Capital Cat Fanciers Cat Show

FMCA cats and kittens will be available for adoption at the Capital Cat Fanciers cat show at the Montgomery County Fairgrounds on November 12 and 13 from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. Come visit our foster cats on the lower level of the Fairgrounds building. Vendors with lots of great cat stuff are located on the upper level! Don't forget to check out the cat show including the CFA's Feline Agility Course on the lower level.

**Admission:**

Adults – \$6.00;  
 Under 12+ Seniors – \$4.00;  
 Family of 4 – \$16.00

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 Coupon!**

*Cannot be combined  
 with any other offer*

**Capital Cat  
 Fanciers 2011  
 Montgomery  
 County  
 Fairgrounds**

## Paws In The Park

On Saturday, April 23, FMCA participated in Paws in the Park Dog Walk & Fest at Boyer Park in Gaithersburg. This event was a joint effort of the Montgomery County Humane Society and the City of Gaithersburg. Despite a few rain showers during the day, many dog owners brought their beloved pets to parade through the park. Many vendors were



present. FMCA volunteers raffled off a large dog bed filled with donated treats, toys, etc., for the canines. They also sold scarves made by Terri Allen from donated fabric, as members cleaned out

their fabric drawers. Don't these pooches look adorable wearing their stylish scarves! Over \$300.00 was donated from this activity. Many thanks to Terri Allen, Posey Fox and Sue Recher for representing FMCA at this fundraising event!



**Don't forget! You can now . . .**



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## Dog Parks Revisited

Marion Webster

In a previous article for this newsletter I gave information regarding our local dog parks.

In her book, *Inside Of A Dog*, reviewed here by our President, Claire Proffitt, Alexandra Horowitz refers to how her observations of dog behavior began in a dog park. The subject of dog behavior is fascinating.

I have observed at our parks most, if not all, of the behaviors that she mentions in her book.

Our canine friends appear to have a code of behavior that must be adhered to. Those breaking the code may be shunned. This behavior is best observed when dogs are at play.

When they first meet there is the usual tail wagging or greeting and shared sniffing. If the meeting is to progress to play, there is an interesting ritual to watch. There seem to be signals that are part of the code. You may have seen dogs bow to one another. This is an invitation to play. This may be followed by paw slapping on the ground, pawing at the other dog, head nods, nipping, head jockeying, open mouth volleys and tumbling.

What is amazing is that difference in size does not seem to be a factor. Small and large dogs play together well. The dogs seem to self-handicap. They play at the level of their partner.

Unlike humans, this sort of play is carried well into adulthood. Play is ended with both dogs flopping to the ground panting, having had a lovely, fun romp.

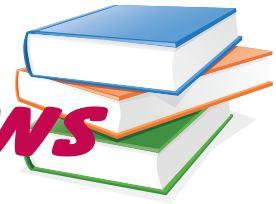
If you would like to have an interesting experience, go to one of our dog parks and enjoy observing the behavior of man's best friend. Now you know what to look for.



FMCA is proud to be part of this charitable program. Please help us by identifying Friends of Montgomery County Animals, Inc., (#44491) as your designated charitable organization when you donate to the program. Our animal friends thank you for your donations!

FMCA is proud to be part of this charitable program. Please help us by identifying Friends of

## BOOK REVIEWS



Ellie Brown

*Dog Sense* by John Bradshaw is an impressive and scientific study of dogs – from their earliest beginnings up to their present predicament in the world today.

The author shows how, over time, dogs have been adapting themselves to suit man's needs. As a result, they are in crisis. Their world is shrinking and much of their innate character has been lost or compromised. The book asks us, "What can we do to better their lives?"

John Bradshaw suggests that we respect the innate nature of our dogs and maintain the specific traits of their various breeds. If you live in an apartment, for example, do not choose a herding dog and then try to curtail his instincts! Choose a dog that can happily co-exist in your life style! If you are a breeder, stop breeding for artificial standards of appearance. This practice has had damaging effects on many breeds.

The author also promotes a kinder, gentler, approach to dog training, rather than the dominance-based methods prevalent today. Dogs, he says, are primarily social creatures that seek only to fit into our families. They are not furry, little extensions of us, nor are they wolves seeking a dominant role in a pack. As owners, we should not be trying to assume an Alpha position either. Our pets deserve discipline based on praise, love, and positive reinforcement. *Dog Sense* is an important book that I highly recommend to our membership and to anyone who would like to learn more about "dogdom." It provides a fresh, new understanding of Man's Best Friend.

On a lighter note, I recommend *The Dog Who Came In from the Cold* by Alexander McCall Smith, the very same author who gave us the hilarious *Number One Ladies Detective Agency* series.

Our hero, Freddie de la Hay, is a Pimlico Terrier, who has unwittingly infiltrated a Russian spy ring. He is a far cry, and generations removed, from the original wolf that came in from the cold!

Freddie is just one of the many delightfully eccentric residents of a crumbling English neighborhood known as Corduroy Mansions. Each resident has his own quirks and foibles and his own bizarre tale to tell. We follow these residents on their ordinary rounds, and find that their lives are anything but ordinary! This book is pure fun, a charming cameo from the unique imagination of Alexander McCall Smith.

## Thank You! Thank You! Thank You!

Many thanks to the following for supporting our efforts to find forever homes for our foster animals!

Gaithersburg Veterinary Clinic – 301-519-3456

Lake Forest Animal Hospital – 301-740-1083

Montgomery Village Veterinary Center – 240-683-8387

Negola's Ark Veterinary Hospital – 301-216-0066

PetSmart in Germantown – 301-916-2029

## Three Homeless Kittens

Darius, Nigel and Hercules are three very lucky kittens. They were born in a business park that backs up to the Homeless Men's Shelter on Gude Drive in Rockville, MD. Fortunately for these three, they were smart enough to befriend the men that live at the shelter. The kittens eventually had the men sneaking bits of food out to them. In return, the kittens allowed the men to pet and



Darius

hold them, and actually socialize them. In stepped Charleen Cochran, FMCA member Victoria Kaas' sister, who works with the Men's Shelter. She discovered what was happening and asked the men if she could find the kittens the homes that they so deserved. The men agreed, knowing that some of the adult cats have met untimely deaths on Gude Drive and that this was no life for a kitten.



Hercules



Nigel

Darius (black and white) was the first to come into FMCA. He is the most outgoing of the bunch and the most relaxed. Next came Nigel (black). He is the reserved one, but likes to play and be petted. Last came Hercules (brown tabby). She is (yes, it's a girl) the shyest of the three but still loves

attention and will flourish in a quiet home. All three are now ready to be adopted.

Thank you to the men at the shelter for taking the time to care about three wayward kittens and to tame them. You did a fabulous job!

## Sarge

Sarge is an engaging, active cat who thinks he is a person. He is shy with strangers but enjoys nothing more than to hang out with those he knows. He likes to sit with you while watching television or to walk around the house with you. He loves sports – his favorite game is chase. The game begins when he taps your leg and runs – hoping you will follow. Sometimes he



suddenly stops to enjoy a good backscratching – turn around and he will chase you right back!

Food is important to all cats. Sarge thinks quantity is important too; if his bowl begins to run low, he'll tap you on the leg and run to his bowl. He prefers to have company when he eats. He takes his water from the faucet.

Sarge tolerates dogs but does not like other cats.

Sarge has one bad habit – unfortunately, someone taught him to play rough. His forever home will need to know how to tolerate this bad habit and what to do when he plays too hard.

## Tasker and Acapella

In mid May, FMCA received an inquiry from Devon Rex Rescue to see if we could help with a neglect situation in Philadelphia. After getting more information, we agreed to take in two of the cats. Before coming to FMCA, Devon Rex Rescue agreed to incur some of the veterinary costs for both cats. Through a combined effort, both groups contributed to getting the cats healthy enough to find new homes. The two cats that FMCA took are 10+ years old and had lived in a cage for many years.

Tasker is a Havana Brown mix. This handsome chocolate guy is just a ham. He fit into his foster home with no problems from the get-go. He loves attention almost as much as food. He also loves playing with feathers on a stick. He has had a dental, and his senior blood work is perfect. Tasker gets along with other cats and



seems to be okay with dogs. He is still waiting for his new home!



Acapella is a Devon Hybrid. This gal came to us petrified of being touched. Her skin would just ripple as if to say, "I can't believe you're

touching me." Within two weeks, she was putting her head in her foster mom's hand and purring. Within a month, she was riding on her foster mom's shoulders!

On August 14, Acapella found her forever home. Along with several other foster cats, Acapella had gone to the Hidden Peak Cat Show in Baltimore with her foster mom, Leigh Hughes. The couple that adopted Acapella was looking specifically for a smaller, older cat because they have a 30-year-old African Grey and had recently lost a senior stray that they had taken in a few years ago.

On September 24 and 25, FMCA again had cats for adoption at the Hidden Peak Cat Show in Baltimore. The couple that adopted Acapella stopped by and gave Leigh an update. Acapella is quite the clown in her new home, plays with toys, and even plays fetch. She also adores the attention that is lavished on her and has turned into a lap cat.

## MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

(continued from page 2)

future, and right and wrong. Like humans, dogs have an inner biological clock. Reading the “air” in the environment gives them clues as to the time of day, and we can set our clock by the dog’s belly! Although dogs have not been tested to detect specific time lengths, the bumble can measure time. Dogs do not see their image in the mirror as an image of themselves. If smell was added, they might test better. On the other hand, dogs rarely misjudge their abilities and understand their relative size. Every dog owner knows that dogs remember a great deal and anticipate what is in their near future. Dogs probably do not think of themselves as being “guilty” of bad behavior. His submissive posture is in anticipation of punishment from his angry human!

The author best sums up an informed leap inside a dog. “We have physical information (about their sensory systems, etc.), historical knowledge (their evolutionary heritage, etc.), and a growing corpus of work about their behavior. In sum, we have a sketch of dog unWelt,<sup>13</sup> the dog’s point of view. A dog’s world is full of smells and well peopled. “We can add: it is close to the ground; it is lickable. It either fits in the mouth or it doesn’t. It is in the moment. It is full of details, fleeting and fast. It is written all over their face. It is probably nothing like what it is like to be us.”<sup>14</sup> Dog’s are human knee-height where the world is more odiferous, especially when it includes our smelly feet or shoes. By licking, which is tied to smelling, the dog brings his environment intimately close, thus defining his personal space close to his own body. “The dog defines the world by the ways that he can act on the world. In this scheme, things are grouped by how they are manipulated (chewed, eaten, moved, sat upon, rolled in).”<sup>15</sup> Dogs live in the moment. They probably do not think abstractly. Because scent moves quickly, the dog’s world is moving faster than ours. “Mood, interest, and attention are writ in capital letters from the altitude of the head, the lay of the ears, and the radiance of the eyes.”<sup>16</sup> Is this your dog?

1 *Inside of a Dog*, by Alexandra Horowitz, Question and Answer section at end of book.

2 *Ibid*

3 *Inside of a Dog*, by Alexandra Horowitz, pg. 48.

4 *Ibid*, page 68

5 *Ibid*, page 75

6 *Ibid*, page 99

7 *Ibid*, pages 103-104

8 *Ibid*, page 109

9 *Ibid*, page 137

10 *Ibid*, page 181

11 *Ibid*, page 187

12 *Ibid*, page 206

13 *Ibid*, page 243

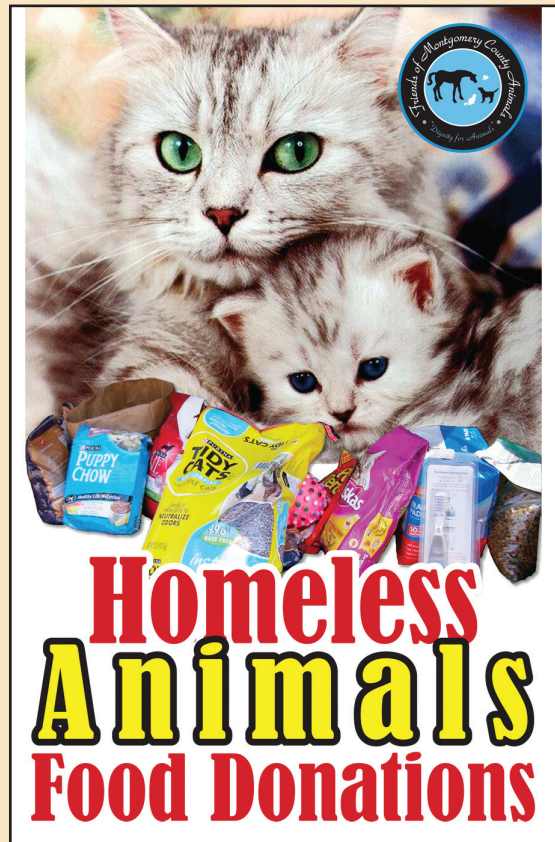
14 *Ibid*, page 243

15 *Ibid*, page 248

16 *Ibid*, page 257



## How Can I Help?



# Homeless Animals Food Donations

FMCA has been accepting monetary and food donations to assist people who are feeding feral cats in Montgomery County. Unfortunately, there are many feral colonies that need to be fed, TNRed, and generally monitored. There are dedicated people who travel around on a daily basis to do this. This activity takes a great deal of time, personal sacrifice, dollars, and even risk of personal injury. We are trying to help with feeding, as well as the Fix-it Fund that we maintain to help with the spaying and neutering. Each Saturday at the PetSmart adoption day, we ask for donations of either food or dollars to help fund this drive. We are asking you, as members of FMCA, to bring cat food or monetary donations to the fall luncheon for this cause. We will also accept donations at any other time to assist these dedicated feeders and caretakers. Thank you for your support!

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# Save-the-Date

**Come One, Come All  
Celebrate FMCA and Fall!**

**TPC Potomac at Avenel Farm  
Wednesday, November 9, 2011  
Doors open at 10:30 a.m.**

TPC Potomac at Avenel Farm is the lovely setting for FMCA's annual fall luncheon with a fabulous fashion show and bountiful boutiques. Shop like crazy! The vendors will donate 20% of their total sales to FMCA. CAbi independent consultant, Lori Veirs will present the latest fashion trends and donate a percentage of sales to FMCA too! It's a win-win and a great way to enjoy a delicious lunch with friends.

We want to grow our membership. Please invite friends and family to attend this important fundraising event to help the animals. Your support is greatly appreciated. We can't do it without you! See you there!