

Feral Cats Allowed to Stay at Country Club

Private facility working with advocacy group following reports that it would remove cats from grounds.

There's no driving the cats off this range.

The Army Navy Country Club in Arlington, Va. is working with a cat-advocacy group to control a colony of feral cats living on its grounds; contrary to reports, the ANCC will not send the cats to a shelter where they might be euthanized.

That should be good news for cat lovers, including many members of the club, who feared the worst after The Washington Post reported in late December that the club planned to remove the feral cats beginning in January.

Alley Cat Allies, a national organization based a few miles away from the club in Bethesda, Md., has agreed to help manage the dispossessed animals without taking them away from their makeshift home.

Everything is pretty much the same, with some minor adjustments, says Becky Robinson, National Director for Alley Cat Allies. Everyone including the club board is glad this is going to be resolved in a humane manner.

Robinson notes that the club board never intended for the cats to be killed; club officials and management had decided not to comment publicly its plans. Now, the club is communicating internally with its members about the controversy. Its membership largely consists of retired and active military officers, according to the club website.

Feral cats have lived at the Arlington site for about 40 years, and there are several caregivers who feed and play with the cats daily. Most cats have been vaccinated and sterilized at club expense.

There have not been any kittens in two years, Robinson says.

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