



[Search Help](#)

[Search our 7-day Archive](#)

Search today's site for:

- News
- Entertainment
- Opinions
- Living
- Feature Sections
- Archives
- Classifieds & More
- Services

- Subscribe
- Web Site Comments
- Customer Service
- Front Page
- Interim Publisher: Bob Cox
- Online Editor: John Sullivan



Passages

Obituaries

RSS Feeds & E-mail News Alerts

Subscribe now

BOMBER REPORT

Special Coverage

FAILING OUR CHILDREN

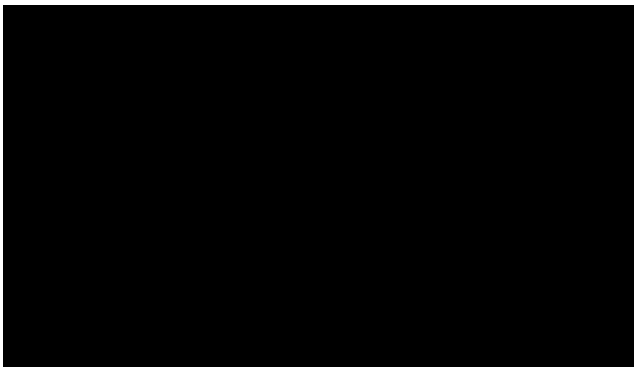
Life

View seven day [Life Archive](#) for previous Winnipeg Free Press stories.

Couple caring for cats fights Winkler bylaw Argue animals need their help

Thu Oct 25 2007

By Gabrielle Giroday



FAMILY PHOTO

Caged catwalk in the Steckley's backyard leads to an enclosed treehouse where the cats can play.

nursing back to health for other homes.

"(The city) will get rid of these cats," said Kevin Steckley, a 51-year-old who runs a Winkler engineering firm.

SHE was their first -- a small cat found in a ditch four years ago with a piece of wire wound around her furry neck, her teeth rotting because she couldn't produce enough saliva.

Twenty-nine other cats have since found refuge in Gerri and Kevin Steckley's Winkler home, and now the couple fears they'll lose the animals they're fostering because of a city bylaw that prohibits more than two dogs and two cats in a single household.

The couple said they were notified by a city official this month that they are violating Winkler's animal control bylaw.

However, the Steckleys said they'll move outside the city before they give up caring for the animals they said they're

CLICK HERE FOR DETAILS

Save Up to **70%** on Contact Lenses

Fast Free Shipping

FREE PRESS POLL

Are you worried about getting an infection when you go to hospital?

Yes

No

Blog Central

Milt Stegall

Move the chains

forward

Lindor Reynolds

Mike McIntyre

Mia Rabson

Mary Agnes Welch

[More Blogs](#)



He said he wants to challenge the city's 14-page animal control bylaw to include an exception to the two-cat limit for homes fostering animals.

"We put a lot of effort into getting these cats the way they are and to see it go down the tubes like that...it shows a lack of responsibility," he said.

Kevin Steckley said the cats he and his wife care for are spayed and neutered shortly after birth, so the cat population they have doesn't spiral out of control.

"We need to care for animals," he said.

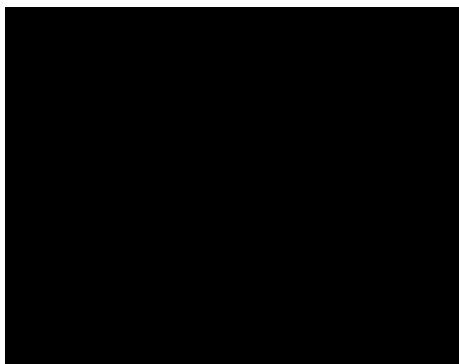
"If we don't care for animals it just diminishes the value we have on human life."

On October 23, the couple received a letter from the city citing the bylaw and saying the couple had breached it.

The letter indicated the couple is allowed an extension on the normal 30-day period to decrease the number of cats in their home to two because of the number of cats in their home.

"They weren't being picked on or anything of that nature, it's just that 30 cats is a long way from two...I was made aware they have more cats than the bylaw allows," said Winkler's chief administrative officer Vince Anderson.

"If people want to keep more animals than that they have to do it outside city limits."



FAMILY PHOTO

Gerri and Kevin Steckley say they'll move outside the city before they give up caring for the animals they say they're nursing back to health for other homes.

According to the bylaw, animal owners who flout Winkler's animal control bylaw can be fined \$50 to \$500 for their first offence, and \$100 to \$1000 for their second offence -- as well as a potential 30 days in jail.

Gerri Steckley said the cats are all contained within their home or in a tunnel in their backyard that leads to a enclosed treehouse in the backyard where the cats can play.

The Steckleys said they started taking more animals to their home from an under-resourced area shelter, with neighbours and friends also delivering cats that needed care.

"They had a hard time getting a home for these cats...it's costly for people," said Gerri Steckley, 53. "They're just like (our) children."

The gaggle of cats includes seven from a local humane society the couple said were traumatized after living at a local farm, where the animals developed lung infections.





ReaderPix!
Win prizes!
Send us your pet
pix!

They're hoping those animals will be ready soon for adoption, after six months recuperation with the Steckleys.

"Unfortunately, the humane society is having a hard time finding homes for these cats," she said. "I brought them to my home so they could adapt better to people....they're doing well with me."

gabrielle.giroday@freepress.mb.ca

[Return to Top](#)
[Return to Index](#)

**Editor's
Bulletin**
with Margo
Goodhand
[Subscribe now](#)



email
this
story



printer
friendly
version

View seven day [Life Archive](#) for previous Winnipeg Free Press stories.

© 2007 Winnipeg Free Press. All Rights Reserved.
The Winnipeg Free Press is a member of the [Manitoba Press
Council](#).