



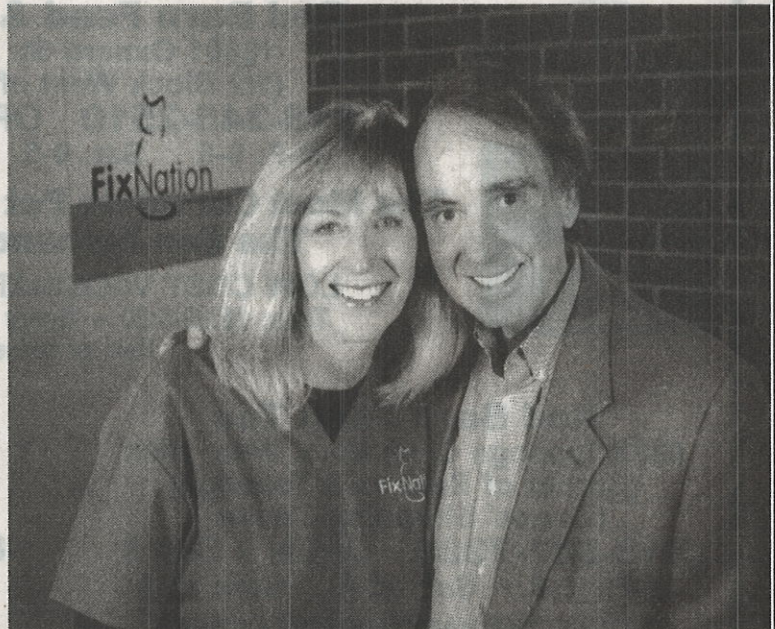
# The Pet Press

*For The People Who Love Animals And  
The Animals Who Need To Be Loved*

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## **Karn Myers & Mark Dodge** The Founders of FixNation Work To Save Feral Cats Despite Overwhelming Obstacles *By Lori Golden*

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If you're a cat lover in Los Angeles, especially a cat rescuer or one of those unsung heroes who feeds feral cats in the middle of the night, you probably already know about FixNation. Before there was FixNation, however, there was Best Friends Catnippers. And before that, there were Mark Dodge and Karn Myers, two people in San Diego who fell in love, married, and eventually discovered a shared desire for wanting to help reduce the population of homeless cats.

For those of you who may not realize there are different categories of the cats you may find hiding in your bushes and roaming around your streets, Mark offers this breakdown of commonly used terms.

### **What is a feral cat?**

Feral cats are outdoor, free-roaming cats that have never been socialized to humans and are living in a "wild" state. This could be a formerly domestic cat that has been abandoned and has reverted back to a wild state or a cat that has been born on the streets and has never had any contact or interaction with humans. Feral cats look like

regular domestic housecats, but because they have never been socialized, they are very fearful and distrustful of humans. Some arch their backs and hiss and show aggression; others avoid eye contact and just run. True ferals cannot be picked up or handled. Very often, you can't even get close to them.

### **What is a stray cat?**

Stray cats are former pets that have either been abandoned or have "strayed" from home and become lost. Stray cats are generally tame and able to be handled. These cats used to be cared for by an owner, but are now homeless and trying to survive on their own on the streets. Stray cats can be handled and petted, although they still may be skittish or frightened and run away from people. Generally, though, stray cats

*(cont'd on page 20)*

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