

ReminderNews

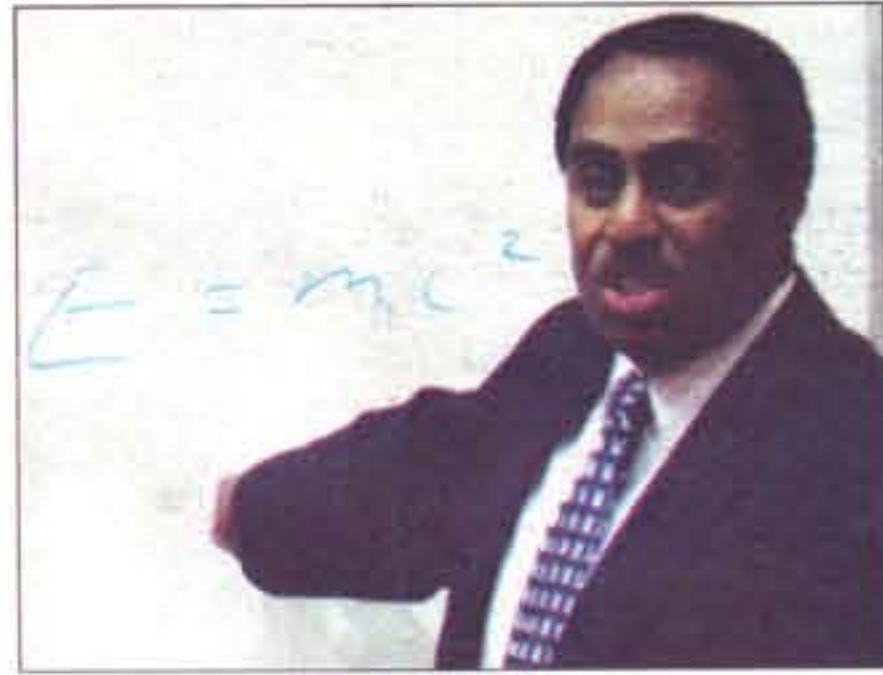
SPEAK OUT

IN MANSFIELD

TIME TRAVELER

First steps taken

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CONSTANT WASTE

So far, the only solutions mentioned for the Social Security shortfall are to increase taxes or reduce benefits. Why doesn't anyone mention all the IOUs in the Social Security Trust Fund not being repaid as well as the constant waste of example, the "bridge to nowhere" and countless other pork barrel projects and the money spent on the Iraq war.

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ECSU Senior Design Group: Front row (L-R) Ashley Elliot, Ilana Kolodnicki, Melissa Smith; Back row (L-R) Thurmond Thigpen, Malachi Maynard, Jason Maloney, Lloyd Gevri and Bonin Curri. Photo by Brenda Sullivan.

WILLIMANTIC MUSIC FOR THOSE IN NEED

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STORRS FOOD & FUN AT OKTOBERFEST

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STUDENTS DESIGN BILLBOARDS FOR CATS

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PAGE 10 Windham/Mansfield ReminderNews November 2, 2007

LOCAL NEWS

ECSU billboards advocate for stray cats

BY BRENDA SULLIVAN
Staff Writer

Later this month, drivers along the main routes through Willimantic will be greeted with images of cats and their caregivers, as part of a public awareness campaign about the city's new spay/neuter ordinance. Aimed at reducing the number of unfed, unhoued, unloved stray cats in the city – possibly numbering in the hundreds – the ordinance requires all cats over the age of 6 months to be spayed or neutered unless the owner buys a breeder's license. It also prohibits owners of unspayed or unneutered cats to allow them to roam. And there are restrictions on giving away kittens, such as a minimum age, vaccinations, and a ban on giving away kittens in public places. Those who violate the ordinance will face fines.

Mansfield was the first town in Connecticut to pass a cat spay/neuter ordinance, after being petitioned and persuaded by Lamont of CATS Northeast, and her supporters. Now, Willimantic is the first city in the state to pass this ordinance.

"Windham is unique in adopting the ordinance as an urban community where enforcement is an even greater challenge," Lamont said.

When Lamont approached Eastern Connecticut State University Professor of Digital Art & Design June Bisantz for help making local residents aware of the new law, Bisantz enlisted her students to design poster and billboards. The slogan they chose, "Windham Takes Responsibility," is meant to praise the proactive ordinance, and includes a Web site address and a phone number for more information.

Despite the fact that stray cats often suffer terrible disease, starvation and injury, "there are no grisly images because we wanted to be upbeat and congratulatory," Bisantz said.

It was an educational experience for the design students not only as an ad campaign for an actual client, it also raised their awareness of the problem. "This is our first opportunity to have our work seen," said Jason Maloney. "And now, everywhere I go, I see stray cats," he said.

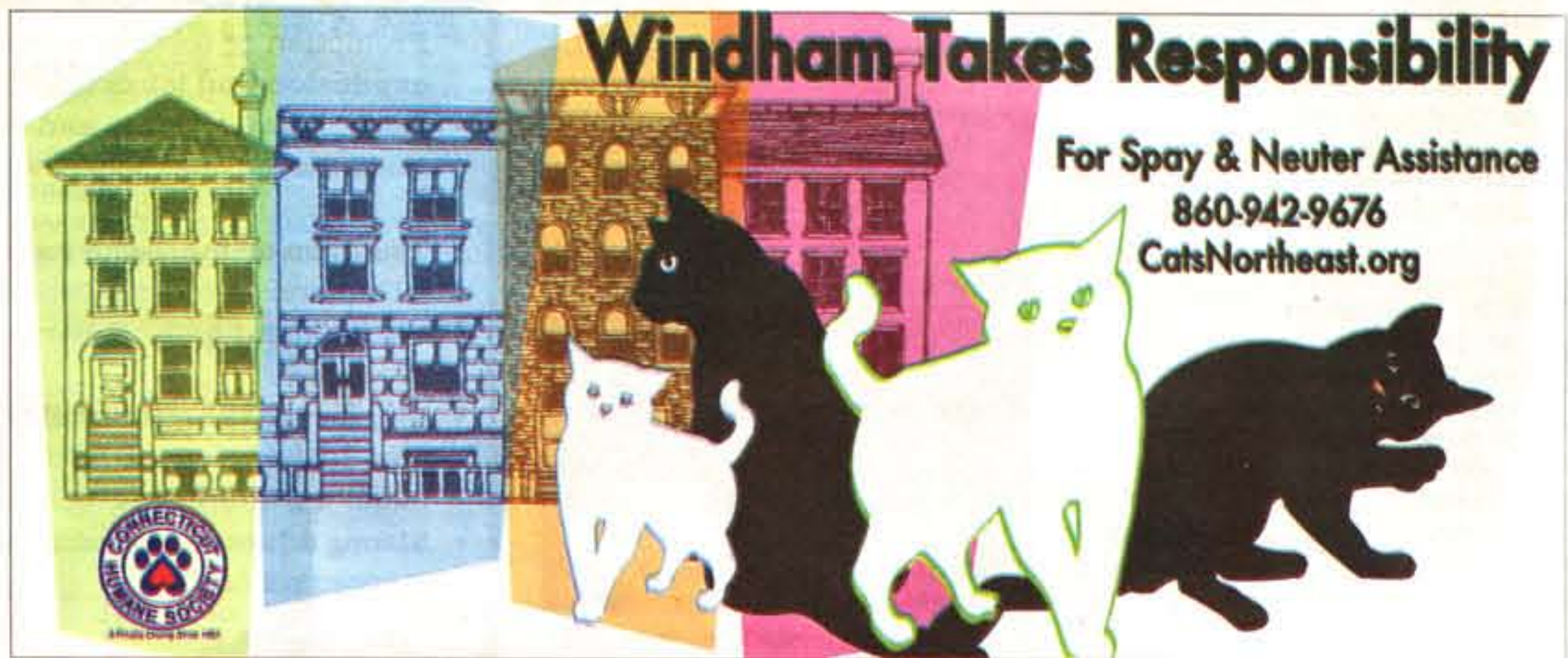
Lloyd Gevri added, "The nice part of the project is that it's rewarding personally, and for the community."



Ashley Elliott stands beside her billboard design (see larger image below). Photos by Brenda Sullivan.



Ilana Kolodnicki chose to depict just a hand petting the cat so that the viewer's focus would be on the cat.



Ashley Elliott's billboard uses Willimantic's Victorian architecture for the skyline in her billboard.



Bonin Curri also played with Willimantic's Victorian atmosphere by dressing his human character in 1920s clothing, holding a protective umbrella over the cats.



Lloyd Gevri created a series of three billboards, this one suggesting a father and mother and their four-legged companion.