



Solutions

Helping Animals and the People Who Love Them

Issue 17

September 2006

SNAP's mission is to eliminate the need for euthanasia in our community's shelters, to reduce the number of homeless animals, and to educate the public about the importance of spay/neuter.

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SNAP is a Missouri 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.

What's inside

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REVOLUTION: PART ONE

The changing face of animal welfare

The year is 1991. You've decided to add a new dog to your family, so you head for the local shelter in search of a companion. As always, the shelter is overflowing with animals in need of homes. You choose a wonderful mixed breed—not yet neutered—and take him home with a spay/neuter certificate (or maybe with a promise that you'll get him fixed). You're glad you were able to save this one, but deep down you know that the vast majority of the dogs you saw today will be euthanized. It's a sad fact of life, but the revolution is about to begin.

In just 15 years, the world of animal welfare has changed in ways we could not have imagined. This two-part series will examine those changes and their impact on the animals we love. Part One looks at targeted spay/neuter, while Part Two will examine the effects of technology and the “no-kill” philosophy.

Spay/Neuter History 101. The spay/neuter message promoted in the 1970s and 80s was incredibly effective. The number of animals euthanized plummeted during those years thanks to spay/neuter. By the early 1990s, animal welfare experts realized that most pet owners had gotten the message. It became increasingly important to focus on those populations of animals that were still breeding: free-roaming cats, shelter animals, and pets of low-income owners. The time had come

to work smarter, not harder, and the idea of targeted spay/neuter was born.

Trap Neuter Return. Free-roaming (feral) cats have been gathering around food sources for years. Some observant cat lovers noticed that no matter how many cats were removed from an area and euthanized, more



were always waiting in the wings to take their place. An endless cycle of trap and kill was clearly not the solution to the problem. There was another idea, one that had worked successfully in the UK and other parts of Europe. What if you trapped the cats, sterilized and vaccinated them, clipped their ear to identify them, and returned them to their territory? Thus began the Trap Neuter Return (TNR) movement. Perhaps no one should have been surprised that it actually worked! The populations of these cats stabilized and TNR proved to be cheaper than removing and euthanizing the cats.

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SNAP's Ice Cream Chill-Out "beats the heat"

Despite near-record heat, the loyal friends, volunteers and supporters of SNAP's mission rallied at the Rogersville Community Park on July 15th to again show dedication to our program and our animal friends.

There were fun activities for our canine pals, including a parade, games, silly pet tricks contest and plenty of water and treats. Attendees



This is Stephen Typaldos Lack and his dog, Pumpkin. Stephen was one of the talent show winners but elected to donate his winnings back to SNAP. Thanks, Stephen. You are awesome!

were entertained by the Model-T club, antique fire trucks, exhibitors' booths, and giveaways and information. A highlight again this year was a people talent contest, giving some aspiring entrants a chance to strut their stuff to the delight of the crowd.

Our Sponsor-a-Spay booth attracted guests to sponsor surgeries and vie for a beautiful dogwood tree, won by Linda Bower of Rogersville. Our young people were attracted to face painting (and ice cream, of course).

And then the star of the show, Babs the celebrity cow, was thoughtful enough to 'make her deposit' early in the day, allowing one lucky person—Linda Thurman of Lebanon, who had the winning ticket—to 'make her \$500 deposit' the next day!

While the delicious and plentiful ice cream literally 'melted in your mouth', it was a good excuse for eating it fast and often!

How hot was it? Talk about hot dogs! It was so hot, several pooches were cooled by

a lick or two of the good stuff! In addition, the concession stand served tasty burgers and hot dogs and lots of cold beverages.



A full shave-down might have been the preferred hairdo of the day, but this poodle braved the heat anyway!

At the end of the long hot day, the SNAP program was enriched

by over \$5,700 which will go towards our long-term goal of ending pet overpopulation. We want to thank all our friends, sponsors, donors, talent, and volunteers—especially Susan Tolliver and Laurel Bryant—in this successful fundraiser for SNAP's important mission.



A young man and his ice cream were soon parted—by the heat!

In Memoriam

Earl Rothman

John Robertson's dog

Buddy

Dee Smith's dog



Don't forget to take AIM!

An easy way to donate!

Have you ever considered donating to SNAP with an automatic bank account deduction? If not, consider taking **AIM** (Direct payment with **Animals In Mind**). You authorize regularly-scheduled donations to be deducted from your checking or savings account. Your donation will automatically be made on the fifth of each month. For just \$9 a month, or less than 30 cents a day, your donation would fix two dogs and two cats each year. The **AIM** form can be downloaded at our website: <http://www.snap123.org/pdf/aimformandflyer.pdf>.

Upcoming events

- ◆ **SNAP Board Meetings**—September 13, October 11, November 8. 11 am at the Library Center. Board meetings are open to all volunteers and supporters. If your schedule permits, we encourage you to attend.
- ◆ **Woofstock**—September 16, 10 am—2 pm at Phelps Grove Park. This fundraiser is sponsored by Camp Bow Wow and will benefit SNAP and other nonprofits. There will be food and lots of dog activities. Keep your fingers crossed for good weather!
- ◆ **Dogfest**—September 30, 10 am—2 pm at the Chesterfield Family Center. Will benefit the Springfield-Greene County Park Board's Dog Park Committee.
- ◆ **McAlister's Deli SNAP Night**—October 9, 5-9 pm at the 1460 E. Primrose location. Mark your calendars now! SNAP will receive 10% of all sales so bring an empty stomach and join us for a good dinner and a good cause. And don't forget the *sweet tea*!
- ◆ **SNAP Volunteer Workshop**—December 9, 2 pm, at the Library Center. We'll be assembling the newsletter and doing a Christmas-related thing or two. Please join us!

New t-shirts for sale!

SNAP has new spay/neuter t-shirts for sale. **Randy Georges** of RG Graphics (rgeorgesdesign@gmail.com) offered to design the shirts and here's the result. Thanks so much for your help, Randy! To see the shirt design in color, go to our website and look at the PDF version of this newsletter. The shirts are colorful and carry a great message, so be sure to buy one for yourself (and at least one more as a gift for a friend or loved one).

The shirts will be on sale this month at the Woofstock and Dogfest events (detailed above) and are also available every Saturday at our PetSmart table. They are \$12 each. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to call us at 417-823-7627.



Cat spay increase effective September 1st

We knew this time would come, and it indeed has arrived. Beginning September 1, 2006, the cost of cat spays increased by \$10 per surgery. SNAP does more cat spays than any other type of surgery, and our vet fees up to this point have been exceptionally low.

This increase was strictly our decision. In fact, let us take this opportunity to thank our participating vets for performing over 3,800 cat spays in the last six



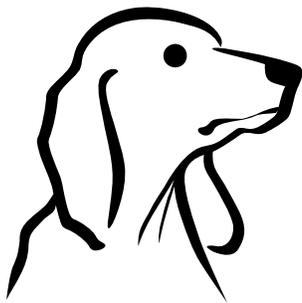
years at such incredible discounts. Your support and belief in our cause is much appreciated.

So what does this all mean? Well, an increase of about \$8,500 per year in vet expenses. The reality is that we must make up this shortfall through increased fundraising since we are not asking our clients for higher co-payments. Raising the fee was the right thing to do. Without the support of our vets, there would be no SNAP.

A yellow dog...*By Cindy Bird*

Darby came into my life on Valentine's Day, 2005. The first thing I noticed about him— other than he was painfully thin – was that he was yellow; not golden as a retriever or a lab, just plain yellow. It turned out that he belonged to a person who obviously didn't consider him 'a member of the family'. Absolutely no attention or care was given to him.

My neighbor and I tried unsuccessfully to talk the owner into giving him up so we could find a better home for him, but to no avail. We started feeding and giving him attention after the owner left for work or was away. We both enjoyed watching him blossom into a happy, healthy dog.



One day, the owner moved away and agreed to let my neighbor have Darby. At least he had a home with someone who cared for him. She feared he might get run over so he was re-

strained in the yard most of the time. I loved letting him loose to run through the fields, his yellow hair blowing in the wind, finally coming back to give me a big wet kiss.

We continued to try to find a permanent home for him but had no luck. Now it's too late. He seemed to be fine when he was fed and watered one Friday evening but the next morning he was dead. We have no idea what happened to Darby but feel so sad that we were not able to find a loving, caring family who would've been lucky to have him in their life.

I'm writing this because I feel he didn't get enough attention in his short life, even from us, his friends who really did care for him. I'd like to ask you to think about Darby, if only for a moment. Picture a big friendly yellow dog running free in 'doggy heaven'. Maybe the next time you hear someone say they don't want to spay or neuter their pet (for all the wrong reasons: they'll get fat, will change their personality, want her to have just one litter, want my kids to see a live birth), you might remind them of Darby. He likely was born into a big litter, given away or abandoned because no one really wanted him, left to survive only by the kindness of strangers who cared for him but could not give him all he deserved.

I really loved that yellow dog and will miss him.

Spotlight On ... SNAP pets

Meet Miss Kitty, who is one year old. She lives in Sparta with a big family: five people, two other cats, and a dog. “The peace of mind you get after being spayed is absolutely amazing,” said Miss Kitty. “I’d recommend it to all my furry friends.”



This is Megra. She lives in Springfield with her owner and five feline housemates—Stripe, Moo-shoe, Snow, Trouble, and Tigger—all of whom were helped by SNAP. Megra wishes to extend her gratitude for being fixed. “I don’t have to worry about those pesky mood swings anymore,” she said without a trace of a hiss.

REVOLUTION: PART ONE (continued from page 1)

In the last 15 years, the number of free-roaming cats euthanized in animal shelters has declined dramatically because of TNR. A national organization, Alley Cat Allies, was formed to promote TNR and works with communities around the country to help establish new programs. Each year more communities get on board with the idea, and the state of Illinois even passed a law in 2005 (“Anna’s Law”) that provides statewide public funding for TNR.

Sterilization before adoption. Sterilization before a dog or cat is adopted from a shelter is the only way to get 100% compliance from owners that their newly adopted pets will not reproduce. Even among shelter animals whose new owners pay for surgery and receive a spay/neuter certificate, nationwide compliance is still only about 50%. As recently as seven or eight years ago, sterilizing animals before adoption was the exception, not the rule. As hard as it is to believe, the majority of shelters in the U.S. were contributing to the very problem they sought to solve! Shelters have slowly come to this realization and many—though not all—have taken steps to become a part of the solution instead of the problem. Thankfully, most shelters in the Ozarks have bought into this idea and do spay or neuter their animals before adoption.

Financial assistance for low-income pet owners. After it was discovered in the 1990s that puppies and kittens brought to shelters were disproportionately

from low-income neighborhoods, and after surveys revealed that cost was a major barrier to sterilization, it only made sense to target this group of pet owners. Research had found that when low-cost spay/neuter programs were available to all pet owners, 75 cents of every dollar was wasted because the vast majority of those animals would have been fixed anyway. On the other hand, research has shown that every dollar spent on spay/neuter programs for low-income owners actually saves three dollars in impoundment and euthanasia costs.



We couldn’t discuss low-income spay/neuter without mentioning Peter Marsh, the country’s foremost expert. Marsh, a former lawyer, spearheaded the effort in New Hampshire to finance low-income spay/neuter throughout the state with a \$2 dog licensing surcharge. The program was implemented in 1994 and by 2000 shelters and animal controls in New Hampshire no longer had to employ euthanasia as a means of population control. Back in 1991 would you ever have thought this was possible?

To be continued in our next issue...

YES!

I would like to become a member of SNAP to help reduce the number of unwanted animals born in Southwest Missouri. I understand that by becoming a member, I will receive a quarterly newsletter and an invitation to SNAP's annual meeting. (Membership is renewable annually and is tax deductible. Payment may be made by check or money order.)

Name _____ Phone _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Email _____

\$15 Student/Senior (60 & over)

\$125 Business

\$25 Individual

\$500 Lifetime

\$40 Family

OR...

_____ I want to help! Please send information about becoming a SNAP volunteer.

_____ I want to support SNAP's work with the enclosed tax-deductible donation.

_____ Please make a donation in memory of _____

_____ Please send me information on estate planning .

_____ I would like to "Sponsor-a-Spay." I am enclosing \$ _____ to sponsor:

_____ A specific pet (indicate pet's name) _____

_____ The pet at the top of SNAP's waiting list

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The Humane Solution to Pet Overpopulation