



Solutions

Helping Animals and the People Who Love Them

Issue 22

Dec 2007

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

- Mandatory spay/neuter laws
- By the numbers
- New research on spay/neuter



Spay & neuter posters: Where are they now?

In late February, SNAP launched an educational campaign that included posters being placed in businesses around the Springfield metro area. In addition, 15 posters were placed in 13 locations in Mount Vernon, Missouri by volunteer (and new board member) Cynthia Typaldos. Before placing the posters she met with the business manager/owner, asking for permission and if they would leave the poster up for at least six months. Everyone agreed, and in November Cynthia went back to all locations to see if the posters were still there and to get feedback on whether they were being noticed.

Most of the posters are still in place and have been very successful, drawing lots of interest from passersby. Surprisingly, Cynthia was even contacted by a dog breeder who saw a poster and wanted the names of area veterinarians who did early-age spay/neuter!

Here are some comments made by business owners or employees. A complete listing of quotes and photos of the persons interviewed can be found at <http://spayandneuterposters.blogspot.com/>. Many thanks to all of the Mount Vernon businesses who so willingly placed the posters in their stores and facilities!

Mount Vernon City Hall (<http://www.mtvernon-cityhall.org/>).

"We moved the poster right next to our customer window so that it would have better visibility. We'd like more of the handouts too." – Jason Patton, city employee



Eldorado Games (www.eldoradogames.com).

"Everyday someone stops by to read the poster (which is in the window). During Apple Butter Makin' Days we put out more information and about 20 people came to talk to me about SNAP and spay & neuter in general. Most of them had no idea that a cat could have so many kittens in her lifetime, and start at such a young age. People were glad there was someone out there to help them get their pet(s) fixed, although some people thought the service was completely free" – Kim Typaldos, owner

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New member welcome

Individual
Phyllis Bixler

Student/Senior
Ann Landkammer
Doris Spinabella

And a special thank-you to lifetime member Candy Trogolo!



Sponsor-a-Spay List

We really depend on our Sponsor-a-Spay program and

you can help this Christmas season! With increasing costs for gas, food and other essentials, our clients are in need of more help than ever.

The list below shows some of the dogs currently in need of extra help. If you would like to sponsor one of them, just fill out the form on the *newsletter insert* and send it to SNAP with your donation. \$40 will sponsor one dog.

- | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|
| 🐾 Doodle, male | 🐾 Jericho, male |
| 🐾 Carmen, female | 🐾 Mukki, male |
| 🐾 Jake Two, male | 🐾 One-eyed Jack, male |
| 🐾 Casey Jo, female | 🐾 Gabby, female |
| 🐾 Ellie, female | 🐾 Tuffy, male |

In Memoriam

*Mel Dixson
Martha Caywood
Mary Lou Nodine
Butch Locke
Sadie Gibbons
Payne Halbrook*



In Honor of

*Helen M. Doty
M.E. Beach
The staff of Parkcrest Veterinary Hospital
The staff of Deerfield Veterinary Hospital*

A reminder: Help SNAP by shopping online

As the holidays draw near, please consider using iGive if you shop online. There are more than 680 stores to choose from, including Home Depot, Land's End, Staples, Best Buy, The Gap, and many more. Businesses generally donate anywhere from 3-8% of the purchase amount and everything is done electronically so there's no extra work for you—or us!

To use iGive, go the SNAP website (snap123.org), click on *How to Help*, then *Shop Online*. Click on the iGive icon, and you'll be taken to the website where you'll be set to shop and donate to SNAP at the same time. Thanks for your support!



Mandatory spay/neuter laws



Our View

In recent years we've heard a lot about breed-specific legislation. Now there's another legislative issue that is causing an equal amount of controversy: mandatory spay/neuter laws. The controversy stems from the divisiveness that these laws inspire. Animal welfare groups seem equally divided and passionate about why they will or will not work.

The issue became newsworthy earlier this year when California proposed a statewide spay/neuter ordinance. Several recent editorials in the Springfield News-Leader have called for a similar law to be passed here. In the most recent legislative session, statewide spay/neuter ordinances were signed into law in five states: Connecticut, Illinois, North Carolina, Rhode Island and Tennessee. Another 11 states have county ordinances.

Those who advocate mandatory spay/neuter maintain that the need is clear, even if it is unlikely that all pet owners will comply. They also tout the benefits of spay/neuter—for the pets, the owners, and the protection of public health. Perhaps surprisingly, we would have to side with the opposition. Here's why:

Animal welfare experts agree that most people "get" the spay/neuter message; surveys show that 73% of owned dogs and 86% of owned cats are sterilized. The three remaining groups that need help—as we've said before in previous editions of this newsletter—are feral cats, shelter animals, and pets of low-income owners. Mandatory spay/neuter does nothing to address the first two groups. Feral cats are not owned and would not be affected by these laws. And although most states, including Missouri, require shelter animals to be sterilized, many "comply" by issuing spay/neuter certificates, of which only about 50% are re-deemed. Again, a spay/neuter law would not help.

That leaves low-income owners needing assistance. Although we would be the first to rally around the need for sterilizing pets in low-income households (which remains the most effective method of reducing euthanasia), we think offering financial assistance is a better approach than trying to make owners comply with a law they cannot afford.

In many areas, the problem is not a *surplus* of animals but a *shortage* of animals people want to adopt. This may seem counterintuitive, but there is a logical explanation. Some people will only adopt a puppy or kitten, no matter how much we extol the virtues of adult or senior animals. For other adopters, physical challenges or housing restrictions prevent them from considering larger dogs. Because of these often misguided preferences, shelters throughout the country are full of pets that are considered less desirable: adult animals and large-breed dogs. Let's face it: shelters are not overrun with Chihuahuas and Yorkies. In fact, the "average" shelter dog is an 18-month-old unneutered male lab mix. Public education, not mandatory spay/neuter, will improve this situation.



Bottom line: mandatory spay/neuter laws are a one-size-fits-all solution to a problem that has many causes. Spay/neuter programs for low-income owners, along with behavior training, ID tags or microchipping, public education campaigns, and feral cat programs are the most effective ways to keep animals from entering shelters. Though these approaches won't reach everyone, they can reduce shelter populations so that the number of pets coming into shelters is not greater than the community's ability to give them homes.

—SNAP Board of Directors

Letter to SNAP

Dear SNAP:

Recent I had the opportunity to join several other Yoga teachers in organizing a Yoga Mala. A Mala is a free event to bring Yogis together for a peaceful purpose and to pass along our good fortune by donating to an important charity or cause.



I had been to a friend's birthday party just the month before and remembered how easy it was to just drop a donation in the SNAP canister.

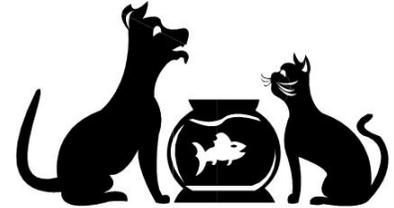
We agreed to have a canister available at our Mala. I made a brief introduction about SNAP and we were blessed with a nice donation. It could not have been easier. Most people are very interested in what SNAP is doing for pets and their people.

Lisa Taylor

By the numbers: Walking the talk

SNAP volunteers are a diverse bunch, but that special something that bonds us is our love for animals. Our concern is not limited to our own pets, but includes the strays that we help—and often adopt—as well as the thousands of homeless animals throughout the Ozarks.

Simply put, we can't stand the suffering and we want it to end. And



SNAP volunteers really do walk the talk. In addition to volunteering hundreds of hours each month and promoting spay/neuter at every opportunity, our core group of 35 volunteers proudly share our homes and lives with 220 pets: 51 dogs, 85 cats, 8 birds, 66 fish, 6 horses, 1 donkey, 1 chinchilla, 1 slider turtle, and 1 giant African millipede! That works out to 1.5 dogs, 2.4 cats, and 2.4 "other" pets apiece! And in case you're wondering what a giant African millipede is, think millipede but larger. Much larger.

Special Thanks

Our volunteers have been extra busy this fall manning SNAP tables and sewing bandanas. These activities have brought in more than \$2,200 since the beginning of September!

- ◆ Saturday tabling at PetSmart has been busy and productive thanks to the many volunteers willing to make and sell bandanas. We appreciate **Niki Knopf, Vicky Hansen, Susan Smith, Anne Weiss, Susan Colburn, Sandy Jensen, Carol Gosselink, Caitlin Sandwell, Susan Bell** and **Pam Poirot** for all their hard work this fall.
- ◆ Thanks to the folks at the **Cruse Dog Park** for letting us participate in **DogFest** again this year. As always, it was lots of fun seeing all the dogs and their people. These volunteers manned the SNAP booth and we appreciate their help: **Pam Poirot, Tammy Teal, Sandy Jensen, Susan Smith, Susan Bell** and **Carol Gosselink**.
- ◆ Thanks to **St. Johns Chapel United Church of Christ** for allowing us to participate in their **Holiday Bazaar**. A group of volunteers manned a booth—thanks to them all: **Beverly Jaeger, Susan Scobey, Chadd & Miko McFarland** and **Susan Bell**.

Spay & neuter posters: Where are they now?

(continued from page 1)

Turner's Calico Corner – Ben Franklin Store (http://www.mtvernonchamber.com/mt_vernon_roster.php). “One lady came in and told me how glad she was to see the poster. She thought it was wonderful that we were helping promote the spaying and neutering of all pets.” – *Pam Smith, employee*

Summerfresh Super Market (<http://www.summer-fresh.com>). “We are happy to display the posters. The Mount Vernon community has been good to us and we want to give back.” – *Mark Allen, manager*

Keen Bean Coffee Roasters (<http://www.keenbeancoffee.com>). “We’ve put the poster in a prominent place on our bulletin board. About 25 people a day browse the board (it’s right next to the restrooms). People from the local community come to our coffee shop, but we also attract sales reps working the Ozarks and truck drivers.” – *Tracy Bradshaw, owner*

Feed & More Country Store. “We put the poster up here right in front of the side door, which is where most of the farmers come in. Our customers do spay and neuter their dogs – they don’t like to put up with females in heat. They care about their animals and buy high quality dog food.” – *Joyce Garbee, employee*



“Contagious” effect of spay/neuter

An organization called Firepaw (Foundation for Interdisciplinary Research and Education Promoting Animal Welfare) completed a recent study on pet overpopulation. The subjects were communities funded by Maddie’s Fund grants. For those of you not familiar with Maddie’s Fund, it is the largest animal welfare foundation in the country and gives multi-million dollar grants to entire communities that pledge to go no-kill. Programs studied were found in Utah, Arizona, California, and Florida.



One of Firepaw’s findings was especially fascinating to us. One of the complaints about low-income spay/neuter programs is that they may take business away from other veterinarians. Not only was this not the case, Firepaw found that discounted programs actually *increased* regular spay/neuter procedures in the communities studied. Marketing was thought to be a big factor. The low-income programs were publicized by promoting the many benefits of spay/neuter, including health, behavior, and the social benefits gained from not contributing to pet overpopulation. In addition, there may have been a bandwagon effect—that is, people tend to spay/neuter more often

when they see it as a socially accepted behavior for pet owners. Gives a new meaning to the importance of public awareness, doesn’t it?

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)
- \$25 Individual
- \$40 Family

- \$125 Business
- \$500 Lifetime



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

MAIL TO: SNAP • P.O. Box 14354 • Springfield, MO 65814 • (417)823-7627

Solutions!
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The Humane Solution to Pet Overpopulation