

Solutions



Spay/Neuter~ The Humane Solution to Pet Overpopulation!

Volume 1 Issue 3

March, 2003



Which of these dogs will make the better pet - the mutt or the purebred golden retriever?

We don't know, but one thing is certain...you can't judge the quality of your pet's companionship based on a pedigree.



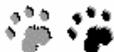
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Frequently, when SNAP volunteers sell our low-cost certificates at the Humane Society, pet owners tell us that they have unaltered pets at home and have no intention of having them fixed. Why? "My pit bull (or coon hound or border collie or whatever) has papers, so I'm going to breed her." Sometimes we are able to convince the pet owner to reconsider. Often, however, we are not.

In this issue, we will focus on the impact breeders have on animal overpopulation. We will primarily refer to dog breeding, since we hear the "papers" argument almost exclusively from dog owners. However, much of this material also applies to the breeding of cats. We hope you will read the information and consider sharing it with anyone you know who would benefit from it.

Message to Prospective Breeders

Almost every day, one of our volunteers hears that a friend, a family member, a co-worker, or a SNAP client is going to breed his/her dog because the dog "has papers." With the number of perfectly healthy, adoptable dogs and cats being destroyed in shelters today, this is a huge concern to those of us in the field of animal welfare who work to end population control killing.

Just because a dog has papers does not mean the dog is breeding quality. Just because a dog has papers does not mean the owner is going to make a profit by breeding it. Just because a dog has papers does not mean its owner has the experience, knowledge or ability to carry the breeding process through with any

level of success. What the pet owner can count on is that the breeding process is going to be a huge, expensive hassle.

Dogs come from five basic breeding sources:

Commercial breeder (often referred to as a "puppy mill") - a breeder who handles multiple breeds and sells them to brokers and other breeders. The puppies end up in pet stores all over the world. Many of the breeding dogs and their offspring are eventually sold at dog auctions, usually to other breeders. Commercial breeders breed animals strictly for profit.

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

Message to Prospective Breeders

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Dog fancier - an individual who specializes in a particular breed for the purpose of breeding, exhibiting and competing in dog fancy shows with his purebred. Many dog fanciers are responsible breeders. According to the American Kennel Club, dog fanciers make up only 20% of the owners of purebred dogs.

Casual breeder (often referred to as a "backyard breeder") - a dog owner who mates his registered purebred dog with another dog of the same breed. Casual breeders are usually inexperienced and breed their dogs because they want to make a profit or because they think their dogs have a look or temperament that must be shared with the world. Often, however, the dog will be accidentally bred with a neighbor's dog, resulting in a litter of mongrels. Because these breeders are inexperienced, their litters often have physical or behavioral defects.

Irresponsible owner - a pet owner who does not intend to breed his pet but fails to have the pet altered or to take precautions to prevent breeding. Reproducing strays can be included in this category, since most strays are homeless because of irresponsible owners.

Responsible breeder - a breeder who:

- specializes in one breed (two at most) and has vast knowledge about the breed
- is not interested in making a profit
- is only interested in perpetuating or improving the quality of the breed
- has a waiting list of carefully screened homes available before the dogs are bred
- carefully raises, vets, and socializes the pups until they are old enough to be sold
- requires all pups of less-than-championship or show quality to be spayed or neutered
- remains responsible for the pups for the rest of their lives, provides ongoing education and counseling and agrees to take the pups back if, for any reason, they don't work out
- does not overbreed his dog and provides excellent pre-natal care
- would never allow one of his breeding dog's offspring to end up in a shelter

So who is responsible for the pet overpopulation crisis? There is ongoing debate about which group contributes most heavily to shelter populations - breeders or irresponsible owners. Obviously, irresponsible owners contribute to the problem. We know this because of the number of animals who find their way to our community's shelters and be-

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Plan Now for SNAP's 1st Annual Ice Cream Chill-Out!

SNAP is excited to announce our first annual Ice Cream Chill-Out, to be held July 19, 2003, at the Rogersville City Park from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Plan now to join us for the festivities, which will include contests, an auction, a yard sale, Black Angus Bingo and, of course, lots of tasty ice cream!

Awards will be presented for the two booths voted People's Choice and Best Theme.



You can help us make this event a success by donating quality auction items, by volunteering at the event, or by sponsoring an ice cream booth. This will also be a great opportunity for you to advertise your business!

Stay tuned for details, and please call Susan at 767-2937 to let her know how you can help!

**Featured website:
Best Friends Animal Sanctuary**

Interested in seeing how communities around the country have solved their animal population problems? Go to www.bestfriends.org and review the NMHP forum. Animal welfare experts share their ideas and provide helpful advice for making euthanasia a thing of the past. The website also features some terrific resources for teachers interested in including humane education in their curriculum.



Would you like to volunteer for SNAP?

Do you have suggestions for future news-letter articles?

Do you have friends who would like to support SNAP by volunteering or making donations?

Give us a call...we'd love to hear from you!

Kids' Corner

There are many ways you can help make our community a better place for animals. Here are just a few ideas:

Prepare a report or speech for your class about the pet overpopulation problem or about responsible pet care.

Ask your teacher if you can do a letter-writing project. Talk to people at your local animal shelter to find out why animals are being turned over to the shelter. Write letters to elected officials, local TV stations, and newspapers. Make a bulletin board and display responses so other students can see them.

Do you know an elderly person or someone sick who has a pet? Volunteer to help feed the person's dog or change kitty litter. Your help may enable someone to keep a pet they might otherwise have to send to a shelter.

Do you have some ideas? We'd like to hear about them!

Message to Prospective Breeders

(Continued from page 2)

cause of the reasons they are surrendered. But roughly 25% of the animals in our country's shelters are purebreds, and every dog ever born, including those of the Heinz-57 variety, *had a purebred dog at the top of its lineage*. So it seems reasonable to conclude that intentional breeding of purebred animals is the root of the problem.

It is extremely difficult, if not impossible, to convince commercial breeders, dog fanciers, and even responsible breeders to curtail breeding of their dogs until the overpopulation problem is resolved. Commercial breeding is big business with a strong lobbying power, so it is not going to disappear any time soon. As animal lovers, perhaps the best we can do for now is to insist that the existing laws to protect these animals are enforced and to reduce the demand for these animals by obtaining our pets from shelters and rescue groups. We can also hope that responsible dog fanciers and responsible breeders will do their best to promote spay/neuter while enjoying and improving their breeds.

We can and must, however, do everything in our power to keep casual breeders and irresponsible pet owners from contributing to the problem. This is where animal welfare groups can make a difference, and so can you! This newsletter includes a handout about breeding (pages 5-6). Please make copies of the handout and share it with anyone you know who plans to breed a pet or who plans to purchase a purebred pet.

Intentional breeding contributes to the animal overpopulation problem, and that problem exacts a cost on every member of our society, whether we own pets or not. Animal control costs taxpayers more than one billion dollars every year. Homeless animals, running "at large", present a health risk, particularly from dog bites and disease.

Finally, there is a moral and ethical cost. We are still killing five million healthy, adoptable dogs, cats, puppies, and kittens every year. Please help us make it stop.

Safety Alert: Hartz Flea & Tick Products for Cats

Late last year, the EPA announced that the Hartz Mountain Corporation has agreed to enact measures to reduce potential risks to cats and kittens from using two flea and tick products. Under this agreement, Hartz will implement a product recovery, label improvement, and consumer education program for two pesticide products: Hartz Advanced Care Brand Flea and Tick Drops Plus for Cats and Kittens, and Hartz Advanced Care Brand Once-a-Month Flea and Tick Drops for Cats and Kittens.

Hartz is required to recover, repackage, and re-label currently available stock. The relabeled products will include stronger precautionary statements and use directions. Store owners were not required to return the products, so before purchasing be sure you are getting the relabeled product!

To identify the affected product, first look at the EPA registration number on the product's pack-

aging. The EPA registration number is 2596-148 for the Hartz Advanced Care Brand Flea and Tick Drops Plus for Cats and Kittens and 2596-151 for the Hartz Advanced Care Brand Once-a-Month Flea and Tick Drops for Cats and Kittens. In addition, please review the use directions on the product. The affected product will specify a **stripe-on** application, while the new products will specify a **spot-on** application.

If you have the affected products in your home, you should contact Hartz to either exchange the affected products for relabeled ones, or receive a refund for the purchase price. If you have any unused products, or portions of these products, you may contact the Hartz Mountain Corporation toll free at 1-800-275-1414 for instructions on how to exchange the product or obtain a refund from Hartz.

The full EPA article can be viewed online at www.epa.gov.

Where the money goes...

<i>Surgeries</i>	<i>2000</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2002</i>	<i>2003</i>	<i>Total</i>
Dog Neuters	45	110	112	9	276
Dog Spays	64	177	209	18	468
Cat Neuters	43	174	213	28	458
Cat Spays	87	295	470	57	909
Total	239	756	1,004	112	2,111

SNAP's Wish List

- 🐾 A home for every animal
- 🐾 Cash - your cash donations save lives (and they're tax-deductible)
- 🐾 Volunteers
- 🐾 Envelopes (business-sized)
- 🐾 Discounted printing services
- 🐾 Tax preparation and accounting services
- 🐾 Postage stamps (preferably with the Spay/Neuter design)
- 🐾 Pet-themed products and services for sale or raffle at our fundraising events

When Is it Reasonable to Breed My Pet?

Dogs should be bred for one reason only – to produce better dogs as defined by the breed standard. An AKC registration only means that the dog is purebred. It has nothing to do with the quality of the dog. If you have an extensive knowledge of the breed and its special requirements, and if your situation meets *all* of the following criteria, then perhaps it is reasonable to breed your pet:

- You have a dependable waiting list of carefully screened buyers who are so committed to your pups that they have given you a considerable cash deposit to reserve one.
- Neither dog's pedigree includes inbreeding (common ancestors in the first and second generations). You have seen your dog's parents and know that they are excellent representatives of the breed.
- The bitch is between two and six years of age and has had at least two heat seasons since she was last bred. The stud is between 12 months and 12 years of age.
- You have researched the previous generations in both dogs' pedigrees and know what health problems have been seen in related animals. There is no history of hip dysplasia, blood disorders, disc disease, eye disease, deafness, or immune diseases in the pedigrees. Both dogs have been tested for genetic defects. Both dogs are in excellent physical condition, suffer from no health problems, have good skin condition, are not allergic to anything, are free of parasites, and are not obese.
- Both dogs meet the standard of conformation for the breed (size, coat, color, markings, teeth alignment, proper front and rear structure, pleasing appearance).
- The pedigrees of both dogs include numerous champions in conformation, obedience, and/or field work.
- The temperaments of both dogs are exceptional, with no shyness or aggression shown toward people or other dogs.
- You are financially equipped to pay for all vet expenses, including pre-breeding vet checks, evaluations by specialists, pre-natal care, worming updates, and health certificates. You can afford to pay for a Caesarian section if something goes wrong during whelping (this can cost several hundreds of dollars). You are also financially prepared to feed and vaccinate a large litter of pups. Litter size can be from one to fifteen, depending on the breed. Vaccinations can consist of up to four shots at \$30 each per pup, depending on how long you have them. Nursing mothers and their pups require a premium puppy food, and they consume huge quantities.
- You have the time and facilities to devote to the litter for 10 weeks or longer. You are prepared to bottle feed a litter of pups around the clock if the mother should die during whelping. You have the ability to clean up after a litter of pups once they are on solid food. The mother dog may help at first, but that won't last long. Also, the pups need to be kept warm and dry. You may need to housebreak them if you don't place them quickly. They also need to be socialized.
- You are willing to be responsible for every pup's well being for the rest of its life. This means that you can provide assistance to your buyers when they have problems, and you agree to take the pups back if they don't work out. This responsibility is yours for the lifetime of the pups.

If you decide that breeding is not for you, here are additional reasons to spay or neuter:

Females in heat bleed, and it is difficult to get bloodstains out of carpet. They attract barking, fighting males. The smell of an un-neutered male dog's urine, which is used *freely* to mark territory, is very strong. Un-neutered dogs also tend to roam and are more likely to become lost or to be killed by a car.

Dogs who are spayed or neutered tend to live 2-3 years longer. In addition, the risk of cancer in the reproductive organs (uterine, testicular, prostate, mammary glands) is reduced or eliminated.

There are five million healthy animals being killed in our nation's shelters every year. Every animal born means another animal loses a potential home. Please don't allow your pets to contribute to this problem.

Should I Buy a Purebred Dog?

There are many reasons for selecting a purebred dog. Perhaps you like the look of the breed. Perhaps you like the temperament. Maybe you need to know how large your dog is going to be when he grows up.

Unfortunately, our shelters are full of unwanted dogs competing for a limited number of homes. Some of the animals are purebred; others are not. Of course, we encourage you to adopt from a shelter and save a life. If you are adamant, however, about getting a specific breed, and the breed you want cannot be found at a local shelter, you may want to consider adopting from a pure breed rescue group. There are numerous local groups, as well as hundreds of rescue groups all over the country. You can find them on the Internet or through other animal welfare and rescue groups. You can also check the Internet at www.petfinder.com.

If you are unable to find the dog you want through a rescue group and you decide to purchase from a breeder, you should take some time and make the right decision.

First, learn everything you can about the breed you wish to purchase. The Internet is a fabulous resource, and you should use it. Learn which undesirable physical and behavioral traits are common in the breed. Determine whether the personality traits and physical characteristics of that breed will match your lifestyle. Large, rambunctious dogs may not be appropriate if you live in an apartment. Certain breeds are not good with cats. Other breeds are not good with small children. Some heavy-coated dogs prefer to be outdoors. Some dogs prefer a quiet indoor lifestyle. The breed you have your heart set on may conflict with your lifestyle, and you may want to wait until your living situation can accommodate the breed.

Once you determine the breed that is right for you, find a breeder that meets all the criteria of a responsible breeder - one who:

- comes highly recommended from someone you know and trust (ask for references)
- specializes in one breed (two at most) and has vast knowledge about the breed
- is not interested in making a profit
- is only interested in perpetuating or improving the quality of the breed
- carefully raises, vets, and socializes the puppies until they are old enough (at least 8 weeks)
- requires all puppies of less-than-championship or show quality to be spayed or neutered
- remains responsible for the pup for the rest of its life, providing ongoing education or counseling and agreeing to take the pup back if, for any reason, it doesn't work out
- does not overbreed his dog and provides excellent pre-natal care

It is best to see both parents, if possible. A good breeder should be able to arrange that. Animal welfare workers have all heard stories of purebred dogs with hereditary defects and faults. A look at the parents may help you avoid such a problem. Of course, just because a purebred dog is not "show quality" doesn't mean he won't make a great pet. But if you are paying top dollar for a registered dog, you should get what you pay for.

You should also see the environment in which the puppies have been raised. The puppies should be clean and healthy, with clear eyes and coats. They should be playful, without being aggressive. A properly socialized puppy will not be unusually timid.

Finally, if you are purchasing the dog as a pet, please spay or neuter!

Thank You, Merci, Gracias, Woof, and Meow

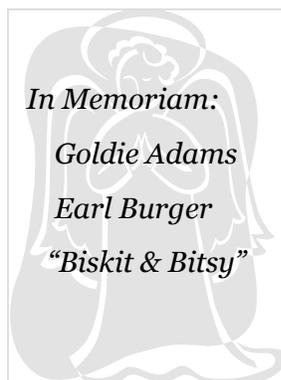
There are always so many people to thank for supporting SNAP's spay/neuter efforts. We appreciate everyone's help!

Southwest Missouri Humane Society
 Andy Williams Moon River Theatre
 All Creatures Animal Clinic, LTD - Bolivar
 Angel Animal Hospital
 Animal Care Clinic - Bolivar
 Animal Medical Center
 Bradford Park Veterinary Hospital
 Buffalo Veterinary Clinic
 Country Club Veterinary Hospital
 Diggins Veterinary Clinic
 Fair Grove Veterinary Services
 Gentle Care Animal Hospital
 Grant Avenue Pet Hospital
 Abandoned Cadillac
 Patricia Anderson
 JoAnn Bardeen
 Rachel Barnes
 Vivian Batista
 Tony Bird
 Barbara & John Brockschmidt
 Ben & Anna Bruening
 Wes Buffington
 Susan Carnahan
 Dorothy Cashier

Musgrave Foundation
 Lakes Country Cat Fanciers Association
 Heartland Animal Clinic
 Kirbyville Veterinary Clinic
 Marshfield Veterinary Clinic
 Mt. Vernon Animal Hospital
 Ozark Veterinary Clinic
 Rogersville Animal Hospital
 Strafford Veterinary Clinic
 Sunshine Animal Hospital
 Taneyville Veterinary Clinic
 Town & Country Small Animal Hospital
 Trokey Animal Hospital
 Willard Veterinary Hospital
 George & Phyllis Fotopulos
 Gloria Galanes
 Vera Haynes
 Marilyn Johnson
 Madeleine Kernen
 Nathan P. Murphy's
 Marcy McReynolds
 D'Andrea Pennington
 Beth Raidel
 Julie Reynolds

We would also like to thank Helga Nicholas and Gwen Bates for their continuing efforts to help our community's animals and for their support of SNAP's spay/neuter program.

Finally, we would like to express our sincere gratitude to a certain visionary foundation that wants to stop the killing of homeless animals. Their very generous contribution allowed us to spay and neuter more than 200 animals!



To Contact Us...



Spay Neuter Assistance Program, Inc.
 P. O. Box 14354
 Springfield, MO 65814
 Phone: (417) 823-SNAP (7627)
 E-mail: snap123@att.net

Lakes Country CFA Spring Fling Cat Show

SNAP has once again been selected as the benefit charity at the Lakes Country Cat Fanciers Spring Fling to be held Saturday and Sunday, March 29-30, 2003, at the Oasis Convention Center, located at 2550 N. Glenstone. Show hours are 10:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. on Saturday and 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. on Sunday. Admission is \$5 for adults, \$4 for senior citizens, \$4 for students aged 13-22, and \$3 for kids aged 6-12. Parking is free.

The SAFE shelter will be there with cats available for adoption. There will be many beautiful purebred cats on display, with judging in three rings throughout both days. There will also be vendors with plenty of cat-related merchandise for sale.

This is a wonderful opportunity to see a variety of champion cats from numerous breeds, while helping SNAP provide low-cost spay/neuters for pets of low-income families. The more people who

attend the cat show, the more funding SNAP will receive.

We are looking for cat-related items to sell in our booth. If you have any items to donate, such as cat art or crafts, please call us at 823-7627.

For a great time, be sure to attend the cat show – and stop by SNAP's table to say hello!



Rocky says, "Neutered shelter cats can be winners, too!"

SNAP Solutions
PO Box 14354
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