



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT:

NEWLY RELEASED GUIDELINES FOR SPAY-NEUTER PROGRAMS ARE MILESTONE ACHIEVEMENT FOR CONTROLLING PET OVERPOPULATION

“Veterinary Medical Care Guidelines for Spay-Neuter Programs” sets guidelines for, and focus attention on, spay and neuter programs to help reduce euthanasia

DATELINE—JULY 22, 2008 – Between eight and 12 million animals will be relinquished to shelters across the United States this year. Sadly, five to nine million of them will be euthanized because of lack of

“No other disease or condition of companion animals takes as many lives as euthanasia. In fact, no other disease comes close.”

**Janet M. Scarlett, DVM, MPH, PhD,
Cornell University and task force
member.**

space or resources to care for them adequately, estimates The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). The root of this predicament is our country’s serious pet overpopulation problem. While solutions might seem overwhelming, one answer is surprisingly simple—affordable, high-quality, high-volume spay and neuter programs.

On July 1st, the Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association published *The Association of Shelter Veterinarian’s Veterinary Medical Care Guidelines for Spay-Neuter Programs*, a milestone in the animal welfare industry. This historic set of guidelines—compiled by a task force comprised of 22 academic, private & non-profit veterinarians from around the country—highlights acceptable standards, and sets the bar for performance for spay/neuter programs nationwide. The document can be found: <http://avmajournals.avma.org/doi/pdf/10.2460/javma.233.1.74>

The Association of Shelter Veterinarians (ASV) (www.sheltervet.org) convened the task force with funding provided by the ASPCA and PetSmart Charities® in order to advance high-quality, high-volume spay/neuter with the ultimate goal of reducing the number of unwanted animals that are euthanized in U.S. shelters each year.

“Taxpayer dollars are going toward removing these animals from the streets, housing them and euthanizing them,” says Dr. Brenda Griffin, task force member and assistant professor at the Cornell

University College of Veterinary Medicine. “Instead of spending money on euthanizing these animals, let’s spend it on preventive strategies, like spay-neuter programs that target the most vulnerable populations.”

For Betty White of Cincinnati, OH finding an affordable spay-neuter clinic was a “godsend”. “My three female cats all had litters within 2 weeks and it broke my heart to take them to the shelter because I know they already had too many kittens. It was such a weight off me when I finally found the UCAN Spay/Neuter Clinic (www.ucanclinic.org) and was able to get my three female and two male cats all done at the same time”

In the case of Nancy Schneiter with the Friends for Ferals program in Asheville, N.C., having access to a low-cost, high-volume clinic-- Humane Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic-- (www.humanealliance.org) is indispensable. Nancy and her small group provide TNR (trap-neuter-return) for feral (wild) cats, and can sometimes care for up to 15 cats a day.

“We have worked with local veterinarians, but they cannot handle the volume of cats we trap. Since the Humane Alliance clinic specializes spay/neuter, they can accommodate our needs and know how to handle the ferals.”

Nancy estimates that since November of 2007, she has already seen a 20 percent decrease in the number of kittens born in the cat colonies that her group manages.

SPAY/NEUTER RESOURCES

The ASPCA and PetSmart Charities offer spay/neuter resources throughout the country. To find a spay-neuter clinic in your area, use the searchable database on the ASPCA’s website at www.asPCA.org/sndatabase. If your organization is interested in starting a high-volume spay/neuter clinic, visit www.petSMARTcharities.org for information about grant funding opportunities.

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