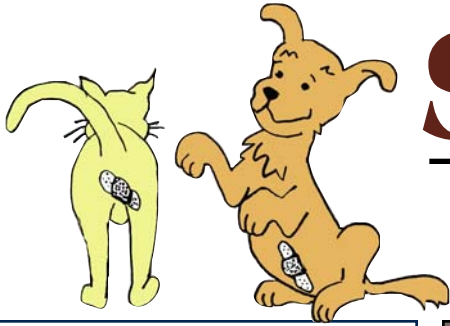


Merry Christmas and Happy New Year! Thank you for your continued support!



Stitch in Time

The Newsletter of Spay and Neuter Solutions, Inc.
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WISHBONE'S CORNER



WELCOME to "Stitch in Time," the newsletter for Spay and Neuter Solutions! We hope to keep you and our many other friends updated on our activities and our progress in addressing the challenge of pet overpopulation in southern Arizona.

For Those of You Who Don't Know Who We Are...

Spay and Neuter Solutions was founded as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization on July 1, 2003, to address the issue of unchecked reproduction among companion animals. Pet overpopulation is an issue of great concern to virtually every animal welfare organization, many of which are overwhelmed by the number of homeless or abused pets in our communities. The goal of Spay and Neuter Solutions is to help make Arizona a pioneer state that can soon claim "no more homeless animals." We work closely with other animal welfare organizations, each of which has its own mission and goals. The sole focus of Spay and Neuter Solutions is in its name: we concentrate all of our efforts on spay and neuter issues.

We **PROVIDE FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE** to defray the cost of spaying and neutering for individuals in need, and we **EDUCATE** pet owners about the importance of these procedures in preventing the birth of unwanted animals and in improving the quality of life for their pets. We are all volunteers; we receive no personal financial compensation. All donations are used either to promote the organization's activities or for program services. Please visit our website at www.spayandneutersolutions.org to learn more about our mission.

There is a new driving force in the battle against pet overpopulation!



Pet-friendly license plate funds spay/neuter in Arizona
www.spayandneutersolutions.org



Momma Cassie with Tommy, Joey and Dee Dee

Success Stories

My next door neighbor is an older gentleman in his 70s, always friendly, always wanting to do the right thing for others. One afternoon a month or so ago, I heard a cat crying from his backyard. I peeked in and saw a tiny orange tabby cat sitting on his patio chair, staring at an empty plate.

I knocked on his front door and asked about the kitten I saw. He said he had been feeding it for a couple of days, and thought he had also seen the kitten's mother, but was at a loss as to what else to do for them besides feeding them canned salmon from his cupboard.

He was so happy to hear that I had several humane traps on hand for catching feral cats. We set up two traps in his backyard, using the salmon on a paper plate as bait, and waited. I got a call about an hour later from him saying that the kitten had waltzed into the trap, gobbled up the food, and walked right back out again.

The kitten was so small that it wasn't heavy enough to trigger the weigh-sensitive mechanism that closes the trap door. For attempt number two, we used a heavier plate in hopes that the combination of the plate and the kitten would be enough weight to spring the door to close.

It turns out that we didn't need the heavier plate at all. A couple of hours later, we had caught the momma cat and the baby kitten -- in the same trap! The next day, we discovered two more kittens and successfully trapped them with the

heavy-plate technique. Anybody can do this Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) thing in their own backyard!

The kittens were only about 5 weeks old, just starting to eat solid food, and weighed only about one pound. The momma cat, who I named "Cassie," looked quite young herself. She was definitely wild at heart, so we got her spayed and re-released her into the yard, but we were able to hold the babies. The little boys Tommy, Joey and Dee Dee are now up for adoption through The Center for Animal Rescue and Adoption (info at www.savemoreanimals.org).



Plate-in-the-trap technique

Thanks so much to Spay and Neuter Solutions for helping us with the spay/neuter surgeries so these cats can live happy, healthy lives without contributing to pet overpopulation in our neighborhood. If the only thing keeping you from doing TNR in your neighborhood is not having a trap, please call them for a loaner trap. They are always happy to help!

--Cynthia Taylor

Our Recent Accomplishments

We have had a very productive year so far, since our last fiscal year ended in June. We raised \$33,781, and 92 percent of that went directly to veterinarian expenses. Thank you all for your generous support! We are especially pleased to have received a fantastic \$5,000 grant from the Red Acre Foundation.

In honor of No More Homeless Animals Day in August, we sponsored our first "Free Fix for Felix" event, during which 140 male cats were neutered (wow!), thanks to Dr. Maria Curtis and her staff at Eastside Spay & Neuter Pet Clinic.

In October, to commemorate National Feral Cat Day, we sponsored additional surgeries at Animal Birth Control of Tucson's clinic at 22nd & Craycroft. It is so wonderful that Dr. Scott Ruth and his staff do so much to provide accessible spay/neuter for the community.

We had a special success story in November that we were very happy to have been a part of. We met a homeless man named Wiley who needed help getting his dog,



M.J., spayed. Due to transportation limitations, we were fortunate to be able to work out a special arrangement with Dr. Debra Stratton at Continental Ranch Pet Clinic in northwest Tucson. Thank you!

Another special surprise came in November when spay/neuter supporters Mark and Melissa Mason decided to ask for donations to our

organization in lieu of wedding gifts. Congratulations on your wedding, and thank you so much for thinking of the animals and people who need spay/neuter assistance!

The holiday season has been a busy one for us, as we have continued to display and sell our pet-themed craft items to help fund our programs. We raised nearly \$1,000 at various Christmas bazaars, including Saguaro Christian Church, the Town of Marana Christmas Tree Lighting/Art & Craft Fair, and St. Michael's Church. This was the fourth year we have been at St. Michaels, and we sincerely appreciate the church's hard work in advertising and accommodating participating groups.

Volunteer Evalina Ondo has been invaluable to us at these types of events. We thank her from the bottom of our hearts for lending a helping hand on every fundraiser and for creating beautiful artwork for us to raffle. We'd also like to thank Mary Phalen for her inexhaustable dedication to feral cat trap-neuter-return projects in the community.

No More Homeless Pets Tucson

Why are there so many homeless animals? According to the National Council on Pet Population Study and Policy, "no homes for littermates" is one of the top reasons why people surrender cats and dogs to animal shelters. And every home people do find for those unplanned litters is a home taken away from a pet already waiting desperately in an animal shelter.



Every year in Tucson, the two largest animal shelters take in millions of dollars from the community and, despite their best efforts, still are killing more than 25,000 dogs and cats each year. There is another way. Prevention is the key to stopping this problem.

Fixing a Broken System...

Often, people's first response to this atrocity is to say that we need to build more no-kill animal shelters or sanctuaries. There truly are some great no-kill operations out there, like Best Friends Animal Sanctuary in Utah. But we do not need more animal shelters -- we need fewer unwanted animals and more responsible pet owners willing to open their hearts to homeless pets.

Tucson's animal shelters take in about \$10 million every year. Instead of trying to put a band-aid on the problem by pouring money into bricks and mortar operations, what if we channeled even one-tenth of that money into addressing the root causes of pet homelessness? One tenth of that would be about \$1 million. Think of what a million dollars would do for the animals if we focused on prevention.

If We Had a Million Dollars...

We would dedicate those resources to prevention and education. Our goal is to keep animals from becoming homeless in the first place, so they don't end up in a shelter system that is unable to care for them, a system where nearly half of them lose their lives. Focusing on prevention and education would reduce the burden on animal shelters and allow the existing system to operate without needlessly killing our best friends.

Their lives depend on us to do better. This campaign helps every single animal-related organization in our community, including the shelters, by addressing the pet overpopulation issue at its broadest level. This campaign is about more than just paying for spay/neuter surgeries. It is about raising community awareness about the plight of homeless pets and promoting spay/neuter as a viable alternative.

Be part of the solution. Get ready to join the campaign for No More Homeless Pets Tucson! Coming January 1...

How to Support Spay and Neuter



▶ A Dollar in the Donation

Envelope. If we could ask everybody who receives this issue of the newsletter to put at least \$1 into the envelope and send it back to us, it wouldn't break anybody's budget AND we would have \$1,157 more to fund spay/neuter!

▶ Arizona Combined Federal Campaign.

If you are a federal employee, you can give to Spay and Neuter Solutions through payroll deductions. The Combined Federal Campaign (CFC) runs from September through December every year. From now to the end of the year, you can make a one-time donation or pledge monthly payroll contributions. Please don't forget to indicate our CFC number -- 4075.

▶ Network for Good.

If you would like to make a **tax-deductible donation** with your credit card, it's easy by visiting the site www.networkforgood.com or by using our secured PayPal link from our website. Checks may be made payable to Spay and Neuter Solutions. Our mailing address is P.O. Box 762, Cortaro, AZ 85652.