



Since 1986, speaking for those who cannot speak for themselves

Holiday 2009

419 Surgeries and 258 Referrals in 2009

We Dare To Dream

In January of this year a group of Williamson Countians met for the first time with a charge from County Mayor Rogers Anderson to create a plan for making Williamson County Animal Control (WCAC) the best animal control program in the state. The WCAC Task Force meets for two hours each month with sub-committee meetings and research assignments filling out time in between.



WCAC Task Force Meeting

Judy Hayes, county commissioner and animal advocate, chairs the Task Force. Members include business leaders, veterinarians, county attorney, animal control volunteers, animal advocates, leaders from different non-profits in the community, and animal control staff as non-voting members. We bring different perspectives, experiences, skills and abilities to the group...an asset as there are different kinds of work to be done. Sub-committees focus on diverse subjects such as the physical shelter, animal care, adoption, euthanasia, education in the community, spay-neuter, and policies & legislation, to name a few.

The first tangible result from this effort has been the creation of monthly Spay/Neuter Clinics held at the WCAC shelter for pets of Williamson Co. residents who qualify. So far a total of 113 surgeries have been done by veterinarians and support staff...all volunteering their time.

A great surprise came when an incredibly generous and anonymous donor gave \$100,000 for air-conditioning of all kennel areas in the shelter. That work promises to be complete by the hot weather of next year!

A third project was the revision of the Williamson Co. resolutions governing its dogs and cats. The revisions provide an updated and strengthened document for review and approval of the County Commission.

Another project is underway to secure land and provide housing for large animals when they are seized as victims of cruelty or neglect. Much time has also been devoted to longer-term projects such as future expansion of the shelter.

As you can see, overall progress has been tangible and significant—and the Task Force is less than one-year-old. The words of Margaret Meade seem appropriate, *“Never doubt the ability of a small group of committed citizens to change the world...indeed it’s the only thing that ever has.”*

PEOPLE FOR ANIMALS is an all-volunteer, not-for-profit animal protection organization dedicated to preventing intentional or unintentional harm to all animals in our community with a focus on dogs and cats. Founded in 1986, our goal is to enhance pet quality of life and reduce the number of healthy pets euthanized in shelters with programs that

Reduce the birth rate of unwanted puppies and kittens

Help people make a lifetime commitment to responsible, caring guardianship of their pets

Promote adoption from shelters

Support animal-friendly legislation.

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A Message from PFA’s President

As individuals and communities face the decades-old issue of “**too many pets and not enough homes**”, we should be asking ourselves some questions. Why does it happen? What can we do about it? Is it even possible to solve it? If so, what are we waiting for?

First the “why” question. Dogs and cats reproduce much more rapidly than humans. **There are about 9 dogs and 45 cats born for every human born in the U.S.** Still, too many of us are not spaying and neutering our canine and feline companions. **Add to that the issue of puppy mills** where dogs in massive numbers are systematically and artificially induced to breed creating a great imbalance in supply and demand. **With cats, we have the influence of the feral cat population and a very high natural rate of reproduction.** In addition to the sheer numbers of dogs and cats being born, **for a variety of reasons, most pets aren’t kept in their original homes for their lifetimes.**

As to possible solutions, let’s first look at what our attempted solutions historically have been. Ever-increasing numbers of shelters and rescue groups have been created and try valiantly to save so many animals. Since there are many more of them being born than there are humans, how can that be the solution? It is **mathematically impossible to succeed** that way!

Consider that we are not using all of those resources—time and \$\$\$--in the most effective way. If a greater portion of that total resource were spent in preventing the births of dogs and cats that will be unwanted—to spay and neuter—it would become **mathematically possible to succeed.** Once they’re born, we’re defeated...in more ways than one.

Given that **TN animal control programs may spend between \$100 and \$250 per animal to fund their efforts,** there are also fiscal issues to consider. So is there “common ground” for all of us? YES. Whether you are a passionate advocate for all animals as I am or you just love your *own* pets as family members, our “defeat” is in the suffering of so many animals. Even if you don’t share that concern, but you are concerned about how your tax \$\$ are spent, we can all agree on this.

Spay/neuter is the most humane, compassionate, and cost-effective approach to solving the problem of too many pets and not enough homes. If we are to win this battle, we must shift some of our individual, group, and societal priorities to spay/neuter and end this preventable sadness.

For the Animals,

Ann Logan

You Can Help End Pet Overpopulation



- Have your own pet(s) spayed or neutered.
- Help someone else spay or neuter.
- Educate about health and behavioral benefits of spay-neuter.
- Get help to prevent behavior issues from costing a pet his home.
- Choose your companion for life from a shelter.
- Buy an Animal Friendly license plate.
- Support PFA in its efforts.



Early Behavior Training: An Underestimated Antidote to Crowded Animal Shelters & High Euthanasia Rates

By Sindy Scalfi, CPDT



Sindy Scalfi, CPDT

Last year, I was reading a pet journal and came across an article that addressed the issue of pet behavior problems as an overlooked, major contributor to crowded animal shelters and high euthanasia numbers; a contributor equal to pet overpopulation. It was the first time I truly began to understand the depth and

breadth of early behavior training, not strictly from a family dog trainer’s view, but from an advocate’s heart and eye—one who is always trying to “get a grip on the problem” of overcrowded shelters and deplorable euthanasia numbers.

I recently contacted Julie Morris, Senior Vice-President of Community Outreach for the ASPCA, to find out what she could tell me about this. She told me about a survey done a few years ago by the (NCPSP) National Council on Pet Population Study and Policy. Their data suggests that, while not directly mentioned by pet owners as a reason for pet relinquishment, behavior issues lay just beneath the surface of most of the top ten reasons.

For instance, two reasons people say they relinquish pets to shelters are “moving” and “landlord issues”. Julie proffered that most people who have easily manageable animals without serious behavior problems are not likely to leave their pets behind when they move, while people who have pets with seemingly unmanageable behavior problems are likely to relinquish them. As for “landlord issues”, she suggested these issues are likely due to barking and/or unruly dogs



of renters/leasers whose neighbors have filed complaints.

Reading between the lines is a needed skill at animal shelters. Many owners are “scared” to say outright their pet has a behavior problem. They don’t want to be the reason the animal doesn’t get adopted. They certainly don’t want to be a contributor to euthanizing the dog or cat. The truth is, they may very well have been, if they didn’t offer their pet the attention it needed and early behavior training.

What Can We Do To Help?

We can start by making sure our own pets, and all the pets belonging to family and friends, will never see the inside of a shelter. We can do this by being proactive and beginning to train our pets the minute we bring them home, especially housetraining! If we need help, there are training books, videos, classes, and private or semi-private training classes available. We can go to the library, the bookstore or get on the internet* to find the material we need. If our pet develops a behavior issue, confront it right away by using the previously mentioned resources. **Remember, being proactive saves lives.**

Along with early behavior training, we should all practice a few other life and death strategies when it comes to innocent dogs and cats.

1. **Spay/neuter** at the earliest appropriate time
2. **Practice intentional pet keeping:** (Rescue, buy or take-in a dog or cat with forethought and knowledge about the needs of the animal and a commitment to provide it a forever home.
3. **Socialization** (See the last issue PFA article on Socialization)

*For cutting-edge training books and videos go to www.dogwise.com

*To find a trainer in your area go to www.APDT.com



Obesity...Deadly but Preventable

Obesity is considered the most common nutritional disorder in dogs and cats. As with us humans, it is increasing as a health issue and is described as the deadliest of diseases and also the most preventable. That is especially unfortunate since in most cases, *we are responsible for our pet's weight*. In general, their weight is a factor of "too much food and too little exercise." Sound familiar?



"This is so depressing!!"

There are other factors however. One may be the quality and ingredients used in their food. Cheaper, dry foods with lower protein, higher grain content may actually encourage more eating to feel satisfied. The advent of high-carb, dry cat food is blamed for much of the epidemic of obesity in cats.

Cats should have more than 30% meat protein—not meat

by-products, corn or wheat—in their diet. A high-protein canned food may be a good solution.

Another factor in continued weight gain is that dog and cat fat cells produce hormones that decrease metabolism and decrease natural appetite suppression. Once fat, obese dogs and cats will burn fewer calories and want to eat more than lean animals.

Those are likely *causes*. What about *consequences* of obesity? The list includes heart disease, high blood pressure, diabetes, joint damage, arthritis, cancer, increased risk during surgery, lessened activity level and even heat intolerance. Clearly the cost in pain and suffering for your pet and vet bills and emotional pain for you are likely to be high.

How do I know if my pet is overweight? Can you feel your pet's ribs with your fingers? Ribs should *not be visible* but you should be able to feel them.

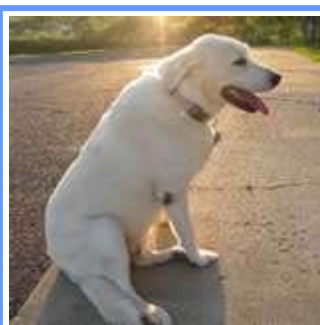
So what can we do? Prevention is preferable, of course. But if it's already too late for that, ideally start with a visit to your vet. Other serious health issues may be involved. Your vet can advise you about the best course of

action based on the severity of your pet's weight problem and any other relevant issues, including the type and level of exercise that would facilitate your challenge. Walks, interactive toys, a 4-legged playmate, etc. can all play a part.

In some cases a reduced-fat prescription diet may be called for and can be purchased from your vet. *These can produce almost "miraculous" results if YOU stick to it!* Many times a "lite" formula, high-quality pet food purchased from pet supply stores and more exercise is all that's needed. There are cautions, however.

When buying pet food, **the adage that "you get what you pay for" does generally apply.** This is no time to economize on your pet's health. **Also, read ingredient labels.** With cat food, a first ingredient of "meat by-products" followed by three grains won't provide enough protein for your carnivorous cat. Watch for nutritional deficiencies during a weight-loss campaign. One common symptom is flaky skin/coat. A vitamin/mineral supplement may be recommended, but a high-quality pet food is your best starting point!

Weight loss and diet can even be an important tool in treating or managing a variety of health issues. For example, a high-protein diet may be used to treat/manage diabetes in cats. A lower protein diet may be prescribed for kidney disease. Weight loss alone may produce improvement in joint pain and mobility issues. A high-quality diet, fed in the proper amount is a key to maintaining your pet's ideal body weight and condition of healthy skin and coat.



"Carrying around these extra pounds is exhausting!!"

These are things we all know but sometimes forget in our attempt to feel good when we give our pet a type or quantity of food that he/she just loves but isn't healthy. Begging and tail-wagging may work wonders on us but can do real harm to our unsuspecting, best buddies! And so, we are back where we started—responsible for our pet's weight.



Update on Pet Vaccination Protocols

For a number of years veterinarians have been challenging their own pet vaccination protocols through extensive research. **The conclusion that annual vaccinations are unnecessary—except in the case of a one-year rabies vaccine—has been confirmed.**

The latest update continues to recommend that 1) the puppy or kitten *series* be given followed by a booster at one year and that 2) re-vaccination of then-adult dogs and cats occurs only at three-year intervals after that.

Additionally the 2009 American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) newsletter reports that the AAHA Canine Vaccine Task Force discusses getting many years (at least 5-7) of immunity from the Distemper-Parvo-Adeno2 vaccines. They conclude that “you can probably discontinue vaccination of dogs and cats by 10 years or so of age without increasing risk of infection.”

For a more thorough discussion of these issues, please go to our website and read the 2007 and 2008 articles entitled *Pet Vaccination Debate* and *New Rules for Vaccinating Our Pets*. Additional website resources are listed there.

Legislation Update

This year’s session of the Tennessee Legislature was unique in a most unfortunate way. Usually, *proposed* legislation regarding animals seeks to ADD protection for animals. This year several bills instead sought to remove existing protections or create new threats. Although none passed, neither were they defeated. We will face the challenge of **opposing** those again beginning in January 2010.

Brief descriptions of those bills are as follows:

- Removes current Dept. of Agriculture pet store inspections and licensing of dog and cat flea market dealers... *Current law is self-funding and effective in protecting animals, consumers, and taxpayers!!*
- Requires the Dept. of Agriculture to license and regulate equine slaughter and processing facilities and provide sanctions for any court action in opposition to setting up a horse slaughter facility in Tennessee... *Horses have never been raised for human consumption in the United States!* Resolution opposes federal legislation banning the transport and slaughter of horses for human consumption... *If passed, this would express our TN legislators’ support for*

the transport and slaughter of horses for human consumption.

A Commercial Breeder Bill did pass this year but only requires licensing of breeders who have 20 or more breeding females. *That would mean an average of about 200 puppies born per year per breeder before licensing is required.* That is a start, but allows many breeders not to be licensed.

Next year we will **support** a Spay/Neuter Deposit bill sponsored by Rep. Charles Sargent. It would require that all monies collected by shelters as spay/neuter deposits (when pets are adopted without the surgery) be used *solely* for spays and neuters of pets in that area.

Go to our website for legislative updates!!

Choose the Animal Friendly License Plate



Does this look familiar? It is in the top thirteen out of 125 license plates in Tennessee. The number sold is down from previous years probably because of the

economy and the increasing number of TN plates to choose from.

This plate funds a much-needed service—providing low-cost spays and neuters to low-income pet owners across the state. It has helped to fund 26,151 surgeries since 2005. About half of the extra cost of this specialty plate goes into a fund which is carefully administered by the TN Dept. of Agriculture. TN non-profits and animal control programs are eligible to apply for grants from this fund.

It provides one of the funding sources for PFA’s Spay-Neuter Assistance Program (SNAP). We encourage everyone to purchase this plate the next time you renew your license. Since the \$\$ are used solely for surgeries, you can know that through your purchase you will be saving the lives of countless animals who would otherwise be born into an already- overpopulated companion animal world. Your animal-friendly plate also says to the world that you are a proud supporter of animals!!



SNAP Stories

Every day, 365 days a year, a PFA volunteer “picks up” calls from our SNAP phone line from pet owners needing financial assistance to spay or neuter their pet(s). Different levels of assistance are offered based on need and are paid directly to veterinarians when a surgery is done. These are thumbnail sketches of conversations that usually provide support, education, AND financial assistance.



Precious, definitely my after picture

♥ **Sad Sack** In September, a kind woman living in Hickman County called about a puppy she rescued from a puppy mill. The sick puppy was offered to her instead of being put down. She said, “I wanted to take them all, but I couldn’t on a fixed income.” Both she and her husband are 100% disabled. “This little sad face just spoke to me,” she said. This five-month old pup she named “Precious” had mange, eye infections, worms, and ear infections. Although she could successfully treat Precious’ illnesses at home, the spay operation and the woman’s limited mobility made for a challenging combination. We found a nearby veterinary hospital and helped pay for the operation. She is grateful to PFA, as she is adamant about doing her part to stop the cycle of overpopulation and abuse.

♥ **Near Death Experience** Another woman, aptly named “Angel,” called PFA for help with one spay and one neuter for cats she had nurtured back to health from certain death. A two-month old black kitten, left at a trash dump, was thought dead. The other, a black and white two-week-old female was spotted one rainy morning on Highway 46. This woman is unemployed and her husband has lost his job, so they barely scrape by with food stamps; nevertheless, she couldn’t look the other way. Angel eventually named the male “Evel Knievel” because he’d defied death. When it came time to neuter and spay the kittens, she remembered PFA. We were glad to help her with “Evil Knievel” and “Raindrop”-- her two new family members.

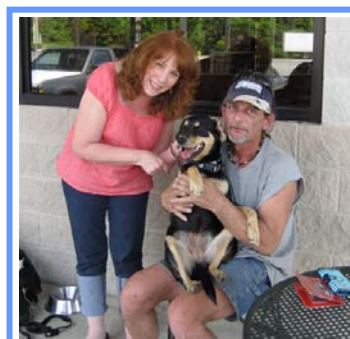
♥ **Hard Times** Having recently lost her job, a mom on food stamps, with an 18 month-old baby and a 21 year-old son in the Army in Afghanistan, called us for help with their cat. Their regular veterinarian fortunately works with

PFA, and knowing the family was facing hard times, had recommended us. We provided most of the cost of neutering, and the cat is living inside with his family.

♥ **Tragedy Strikes** The mom of two children under 12 had experienced a recent streak of tragedy. Her husband and her parents had died in the past year. The family, living on Social Security, struggled to buy food for their two young shepherd mixes, but managed by picking up broken bags from the market. Paying for large-dog spays, however, was impossible. They feared the dogs would become pregnant, multiplying their troubles. Our BARK certificates permitted operations for both, bringing relief to a stressed family.

♥ **Left Behind** When a woman who cares full-time for her 93-year-old mom moved into a house in Williamson County, she found five cats under her barn, one of them pregnant. Money was more than tight on the mom’s pension and Social Security. The skittish cats “would quickly devour the food” she put out and disappear. Patient and loving, the woman gained their trust; at her vet’s recommendation, she called us. We gladly helped pay to neuter the male and then spay the female as soon as the kittens were weaned.

♥ **A Man and His Dog** On her daily route, a woman passed a man and his dog living homeless near I-40. She befriended them and learned Missy was unvaccinated and unspayed. A generous veterinarian accepted our SNAP certificate as full payment. Vaccinations were donated by a retired veterinarian, and a PFA volunteer paid for a bath and two nights’ boarding- while Missy healed. Last we heard, owner and dog were doing well, and the man had found work!



Andrea Tothacer, PFA SNAP Coordinator, Missy, and her owner.



Special Gifts and Memorials

For all of us who make a lifetime commitment to our pets, that last day does come; and unless it comes suddenly, we will be faced with a decision. Certainly it is a solemn decision to be made with your veterinarian's advice and your own love and commitment to your animal companion. But what greater gift of unselfish love could you offer?

In Memory of . . .

Molly Dolly Dog, our sweet rescue who was "the best of everything"...Kathy & Dan McCaughna

Snuphie and **Berno**...Leah & Reginald Bowes

Girlie and **Nicky**, lost both in two weeks...Barbara Harris

Otis, I miss you so much...Nancy Whittemore

Rudy Marshmallow, a favorite cat and we miss him dearly...Sharon Jairdullo

Izzy, my little red rescue Doberman...Sue Cross

My "**Amazing Grace**", **Lady** and **Rugby** will live on in my heart...Astrid Shumate

My precious Schnauzer, **Kacee**...Lois Arnold

Doodles and **Cecil**...Katy Kattelman

Our Beloved **Frog Aaron**...William, Kim, Ellis, Roxie, Nickie, and Patti

Josie Walker, my late mother reunited in heaven with our Maltese, **Misty**. Mother adored **Misty**...Charlie and Will Dunn

Louise Miller, the beloved mother of **Helen Schnider**...Charlie and Will Dunn

Camo, the Jason Smith's family beloved pet...Kim and Neil Smith

Our feisty **Bruno**, we miss him so much...Dawn Vincent

Beautiful **Jules**, thanks for your gift of love...Tonya Dinkel

Lois Bartel's beloved father, **Richard E. Malkin**...Andrea Tothacer

In Honor Of . . .

Gus a 9-year old Scottie, **Watson** who loved to intimidate larger dogs...Martha & Glen Wilson

Nancy Whittemore for all you do for those that mean so much in our lives...Dianna & Randy Stephens & the boys

Bobo, **Coco**, and **Gigi** our precious cats...Melissa and Allen Staley

My sweet, sweet **Maggie**...Lois Arnold

Toby and **Quincy**, who make me smile every day...Ann Conway

Lucas and **Bo**, my special guys that are so loyal...Bobbie Cupp

Denver and **Dakota Roger**, our rescued Bichons that are loved so much...Susan Pate

Vicki Stouts's **Sally**, the Wag...Calvin and Marilyn Lehew

Tippy, we love him...Phoebe and Bob Binkley

Anonymous Donor Offers to Match Your Gift to the Animals

In the true spirit of the season, a generous donor has made a very special gift to the animals this season...an offer to match the first \$2,500 given to PFA for our spay-neuter efforts. A guaranteed opportunity to "double your money" just by sending it right away doesn't come along very often! What a wonderful way to remember your human and animal family members and friends! Speaking for those who can not speak for themselves, we offer thanks for your gift of caring.

People for Animals truly appreciates those who understand the special bond that forms between animals and people. We dedicate this space to those fortunate enough to feel that kind of love. PFA sincerely thanks all members and friends for their generous gifts.

Gift: _____ \$25 _____ \$50 _____ \$75 _____ \$100 _____ Other

All donations are tax-deductible and are greatly appreciated. You can now make your donations, honorariums, and memorials online at www.PeopleForAnimals.net

Special Gifts: Honor your special animal or human friend with a gift to PFA!

In Memory of _____

In Honor of _____



P.O. Box 991 Franklin, TN 37065
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E-mail PeopleForAnimals@comcast.net
www.PeopleForAnimals.net
 Phone (615) 794-8925

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**419 Surgeries and
 258 Referrals
 in 2009**

People for Animals is a not-for-profit animal protection group serving Davidson, Williamson, and surrounding counties. All members are unpaid volunteers dedicated to ending the tragedy of pet overpopulation. Donations are tax-deductible and welcomed in any amount.

Choose to Be A Green Pet Owner

- Spay or neuter your pets. Prevent the “waste” of euthanasia.
- Always adopt a “recycled” dog or cat. Re-home forever a surplus dog or cat.
- Clean up after your pet. Use biodegradable bags.
- Think green when you buy pet products...all-natural foods and other pet products using minimal packaging and natural or recycled materials.

IMPORTANT NUMBERS

PFA SPAY NEUTER ASSISTANCE 794-8925

ADOPTION

Metro Animal Care & Control 862-7930
 Williamson Co. Animal Control 790-5590

REPORTING ANIMAL BITES/INJURIES

Metro Animal Care & Control 862-7930
 Williamson Co. Animal Control Emergency Services 790-5590

EMERGENCY VETERINARY SERVICES

Cool Springs Pet Emergency Clinic 333-1212
 Nashville Pet Emergency Clinic 383-2600

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Anonymous donor makes special gift to the animals...an offer to match the first \$2,500 donated to PFA for our spay-neuter efforts! See page 7 for details.