



## Message from the President

**P**FA is now in its third decade. Those years have provided opportunities for perspective on progress against the deadly disease of pet overpopulation. Looking back, I recall a time when shelters seemed overwhelmed by incoming litters. Now there are fewer litters and more adolescent, adult and elderly animals. That suggests that spay-neuter is having an effect, but also that we are NOT making a life-time commitment to our pets.

Although everyone seems to acknowledge spay/neuter benefits, the animal welfare community still expends only a small percentage of its total effort in prevention of the pet overpopulation problem. And so, **there are still more animals than good homes. If we do not act until they are born, it is mathematically impossible to find good homes for them all no matter how badly we want to or how desperately we try. How callous it would be if we continued with the reactive priorities of the present pretending that we will finally get a different result. We must change our priorities.**

PFA believes that hope lies in continuing to prevent births through spay-neuter AND in fostering responsibility and lifetime commitment through education and awareness. Carl Pope of the Sierra Club said, "We cannot let the future

be dictated by those who care only about the present." In fact, the future IS dictated by the actions of today, and they must not be "only about the present." Therefore, **more individuals and organizations must shift their priorities to PREVENTION—legislation, education and spay-neuter—if the coming decades are to be more humane than the previous ones.**

Can you imagine the strides humans could make in eliminating the suffering of pet overpopulation if our priority were prevention rather than cure? Changing priorities will require us to demand a pro-active approach from our tax-supported shelter programs, to challenge the priorities of private programs, and as we are able to make our own direct contributions of time or money to prevention.

I ask you now to think creatively about meaningful gifts we can give to those animals who know no peace. Speaking for those who cannot speak for themselves, I offer this: *"Please prevent my suffering whenever possible, rather than relieving it. That truly would be the greatest gift of all."*

For the animals, *Ann Logan*