Spay/Neuter Efforts Reach Highs and Lows

Year-round spay/neuter programs for cats and dogs were a top priority for shelters and humane societies during summer's blossoming breeding activity. Many reported their programs are reducing unwanted animal litters, resulting in fewer animal deaths by accident, starvation, torture or euthanization.

But, spay/neuter efforts are surrounded by problems that slow the progress of local programs. Some data indicate, for example, that puppy litters are increasing, and the U.S. may be approaching the "saturation" point for responsible dog and cat ownership. Increased public education is imperative to dispel the myths surrounding spaying and neutering, explain the negative results of owning unspayed or unneutered pets, and encourage responsible pet ownership. In addition, better cooperation between veterinarians and shelters or humane societies is needed if animal-control goals are to be met.

Continued on next page
Dogs and cats mature sexually around six or eight months of age, according to the 1980 Spay/Neuter Service Feasibility Report for the City of Charlotte (Operations Department, Animal Control Division, 2700 Toomey Ave., Charlotte, NC 28203). The report stated that a dog produces nearly 15 times as many young as a human being—a cat, 30-to-45 times as many. It added that most people spay or neuter their pets for their own convenience rather than to reduce animal populations. Public education about the need for spay/neuter operations was highly recommended.

There are many advantages to spay/neuter surgery besides better animal control. Spaying prevents females from coming into heat and spotting the rug or howling and whining. It eliminates the stress of false pregnancy, and it helps prevent mammary cancer or uterine infections.

Neutered males become calmer, gentler, more manageable pets and are less likely to roam alone or in packs after a female in heat. The operation eliminates the desire to "mark" territory by spraying urine. Males are less apt to develop testicular cancer or prostate disease, and they do not suffer a sexual "identity crisis" as is sometimes believed. And, spayed or neutered animals need not become fat and lazy if their diets and exercise are controlled.

Many shelters and clinics are optimistic about their spay/neuter programs:

- Animal Welfare Inc. (2620 Centenary, Suite 236, Shreveport, LA 71104) is helping to rid the public mind of these myths with its flier that explains facts and fallacies about "fixing" a dog or cat. Under the society's low income spay/neuter subsidy program, pet owners earning less than $15,000 yearly are eligible for a $15 or $25 subsidy to defray the cost of each spay or neuter.

- The Amador Pet Action League (A-PAL)(PO Box 190, Jackson, CA 95642) has a spay/neuter financial-assistance program for people with incomes below $10,000, and they convinced the Amador County Board of Supervisors to require a $20 deposit on adopted animals. Between March of 1981 and 1982, the group spayed and neutered 193 animals at a cost of $3500. "[Although] we have met with a lot of resistance from the ranchers, we have accomplished quite a bit," said A-PAL President Olive G. Howe. "We did manage to get our program announcement on a number of the TV channels."

- The Connor Animal Shelter, Kennebec Valley Humane Society (Pet Haven Lane, Augusta, ME 04330) provides interest-free loans of $40 for spaying and $20 for neutering. Pet owners use one of four area veterinarians who deduct the loan amount before billing. Pet owners repay the loan in $5 installments beginning one month after the operation.

Despite the good news, unwanted animal litters continue to plague local communities. HSUS Director of Data and Information Services Guy R. Hodge reported last year that while the size of the U.S. dog and cat population will peak by 1990—filling most U.S. homes with pets—there will continue to be a substantial
It is not too late to register for the HSUS two-day workshop (Sept. 17-18 in Schaumburg, Ill.), “Solving Animal Problems in Your Community.” This is your chance to get the latest news on shelter management, spay/neuter programs, cruelty investigations and other topics. HSUS President John A. Hoyt and Dr. Michael Fox of HSUS’s Institute for the Study of Animal Problems are just two of the speakers you’ll hear. (A special Sept. 16 evening program will be hosted by Dr. Fox.) For information on the workshop and program and a registration form, write HSUS Great Lakes Regional Office, 725 Haskins St., Bowling Green, OH 43402.

The HSUS 1982 Annual Conference on Nov. 3-6, 1982 will highlight the past as well as the present. Held in historic Danvers, Mass.,--birthplace of the American humane movement--the conference will address "Protecting Animals in Today's World" through a series of unique and provocative workshops and membership events.

• Senior HSUS staff members and distinguished guest panelists will look at the future of laboratory animals and farm animals during strategy forums and head-on debate over the trapping issue.

• An animal-welfare administrators' symposium will convene so that those associated professionally with animal welfare can exchange ideas. (HSUS West Coast Regional Director Char Brennon will moderate.)

• Roger Caras, internationally known speaker and commentator, will introduce such speakers as HSUS's Dr. Amy Freeman Lee, who will deliver the keynote address, and HSUS President John Hoyt, who will make his annual presentation to the membership.

• An Institute for the Study of Animal Problems symposium, “Animal Mind--Human Perceptions: Implications for Animal Welfare,” will take place on Wednesday, Nov. 3, to explore the moral status of animals. (HSUS conference participants will receive a special discount if they attend this program; check the registration program for details.)

• The annual awards banquet will be highlighted by presentation of the Joseph Wood Krutch Medal to an outstanding humanitarian for significant contributions toward the improvement of life and the environment.

• A bus trip to the Massachusetts SPCA's Macomber Farm: An Education Center—with its magnificent barns, beautiful landscape, and flourishing livestock—will take place Wednesday, Nov. 3.

For further information about conference registration and the special day trips, contact HSUS Conference, 2100 L St. N.W., Washington, DC 20037. Persons sending in their registration prior to Sept. 15 may deduct $5 from the full registration fee. Rates will be mailed upon receipt of a completed conference registration form.

Charity Auction is Tops

Materials

Teaching Pet-Owner Responsibility

Now that the kids have returned to school, it is important to safeguard pets that may anxiously search for them during the day. The Humane Society of the United States publishes several kits, pamphlets, posters and films—for use by parents, children and teachers—that encourage responsible pet ownership.

To order, indicate the identification number beside the publication. Use a street address rather than a post office box. Make check or money order payable to HSUS, 2100 L St. N.W., Washington, DC 20037. Items available at special prices for bulk quantities are indicated.

Companion Animals (GR3024) This handy pamphlet describes what it means to be a responsible pet owner. Single copies cost 10 cents. Fifty copies cost $4; 100 cost $6.

Responsible Animal Regulation (AC4008) This booklet, prepared for city and county officials, humane societies, and legislative bodies, discusses animal regulation and control problems. Sixteen pages include a model ordinance. $1.50 each.

A Lost Dog's Ticket Home (PM2034) This 17”x 25” poster includes a space for your agency’s address and phone number and local information on how to obtain a dog license. Single copies are $2; 10 or more cost $1 each.

Sharing Sam (HE1008) Teachers will find this flannel board pattern kit helpful. Includes a script designed to encourage group participation while teaching proper pet care and pet-owner responsibility. $3 for a single kit ($2 NAAHE-member price).

My Dog, The Teacher (AV-2) For the third grade or above, this 16mm, 20-minute, color/sound film discusses animal ownership responsibility and the therapeutic value of pets. Rental cost, $10; purchase price, $200.

Patches Gets Lost (AV-5) Part two of this sound-film program talks about adopting and caring for a pet, pet-owner responsibility, and the work of the animal-control officer. It is designed for use with young students. Six minutes long, with basic and straightforward vocabulary. Sold with Part one (A Dog's Best Friend) for $25 ($20 for NAAHE members).
The American Humane Association (9725 E. Hampden Ave., Denver, CO 80231) has compiled the Directory For Humane Education Materials. The directory covers topics such as pet-facilitated therapy, pet-owner responsibility, humane education, trapping and endangered species. It is cross-referenced by states, subject matter and contributions, and it contains a film index. Materials were gathered from humane societies, animal-welfare groups and commercial companies across the nation. Where possible, the age appropriateness of the material was included. The directory is available for $7.50 from AHA.

Two new books explain how to stabilize and relieve suffering of an injured or sick cat or dog before professional help is received. "Emergency First Aid For Cats" and "Emergency First Aid For Dogs," by Sheldon Rubin, DVM, and the editors of Consumer Guide Publications, give readable, step-by-step instructions for emergencies such as burns, broken bones, drowning, poisoning, bites, eye injuries and problems during birth. Simple illustrations accompany each passage. The 96-page books cost $3.95 each, but the price is reduced by 40 percent (minimum order, 12 books) when used for resale. Write Consumer Guide Publications International LTD., 3841 W. Oakton St., Skokie, IL 60076.

This Halloween, treat the kids to an issue of Kind instead of candy. A limited supply of 1982 back issues is available, and we’ll send you 25 magazines for just $6. Allow at least three weeks for delivery. Send us your name and address, along with your check for $6 made out to Kind. Please do not use post office box numbers. We plan to send the magazines by United Parcel Service (UPS); they cannot deliver to P.O. boxes. This offer applies only to the 48 connected states. Sorry, requests from Hawaii, Alaska, and foreign countries cannot be filled in time for All Hallows Eve.

October's Kind Halloween Offer
2100 L St. N.W.
Washington, DC 20037

This Halloween
Give KIND—Not Candy!

"Neutered" means never having to say you're sorry

number of unwanted animals for whom homes are not available. Most of these will be mixed-breed and not purebred animals.

And, a report of 1981 registration statistics by John Mandeville (April 1982, GAZETTE) revealed registered dog litters rose for the tenth time in 12 years, totalling 404,559 in 1981. The article stated that 1,033,849 individual dogs were listed in the Stud Book of the American Kennel Club in 1981--up 22,050 from 1980.

The two groups in the best position to solve the animal population problem--humane organizations and veterinarians--don't always work hand-in-hand. In the May 1982 issue of Modern Veterinary Practice, veterinarians Alan F. Berger and Harold W. Mirk labeled tax-exempt competition by animal-control agencies a "very real--and growing--threat" to veterinary practice. "Even if you do not perceive this as an immediate threat to your practice," they said, "what affects your colleagues in this regard affects you....below-cost services...by tax-exempt organizations...constitute a threat to the free-enterprise concept everywhere."

A confidential questionnaire accompanies their article, which requests veterinarians to list "any tax-exempt groups that have had a negative economic impact on...[their] practice[s] already." Contributions to the "now depleted" Legal Fund are encouraged. The article promises a more definitive questionnaire on the subject in the future.

"I sincerely hope that we can turn attention back to the important issue of solving community animal problems," said HSUS Director of Animal Sheltering and Control Phyllis Wright. "Since nearly 13 million homeless dogs and cats are destroyed each year, it is more important than ever to promote programs in which all can understand and participate."
The Marin Humane Society (171 Bel Marin Keys Blvd., Novato, CA 94947) is helping to feed the pets of disabled or otherwise confined elderly county residents.

"Pet Meals on Wheels" is a new society-sponsored program, conducted with the Marin Senior Coordinating Council's "Meals on Wheels," that provides the elderly with a free, warm and nutritious daily luncheon or dinner at home or at 11 food centers throughout the county. Some of the recipients have found it hard to shop for or open cans of pet food.

"We were constantly getting calls from elderly pet owners who need help with their pets," said Marin Humane Society Executive Director Diane Allevato. "We conducted a survey of our own--talking to the elderly, one-on-one. One of their main concerns was feeding their animals properly."

Under the new program, humane-society volunteers supervise pet-food drives at local supermarkets, urging shoppers to buy an extra bag or can for the elderly's companion animals. Donations are dropped into boxes at the front of the stores. The volunteers sort the food and bring it to the "Meals on Wheels" headquarters where it is delivered to the elderly with their daily meal.

So far, the program has been successful. At least eight West Coast humane societies are talking about setting up similar programs, according to Allevato. "The Coordinating Council is delighted, and the elderly are ecstatic," she said. The society hopes to expand its efforts this fall, assigning four or five elderly residents to a society volunteer who will take their pets for walks, veterinary visits or help with grooming.

"Right now," said Allevato, "we will allow the volunteers to establish their own schedules, beginning with the "Meals on Wheels' recipients and expanding from there. We are very excited about the possibilities." 

**POSITION WANTED**

- Knowledgeable, resourceful person with broad background in animal science, wildlife biology and humane movement. Dedicated to animal rights. Seeks management position with progressive humane organization. Contact Michael Bloomfield, PO Box 3137, Edson, Alberta T0E 0P0, Canada. Telephone 415/791-4205.


**Chlorine Poisoning**

Chlorine bleach--powdered or liquid--is an effective way to combat an outbreak of parvovirus. Some also mixed bleach with other chemicals--a potentially toxic combination--to create a "super disinfectant." Now recovered, the employees are reportedly considering the use of gas masks during clean ups.

**Jail Sentence**

A man who hanged his dog from a tree in his front yard--then slit its stomach--was sentenced to six months in the Sacramento County Jail, according to the July 10 Sacramento Union (Metro Today, Page A-6).

Michael Howard Burke, 44, was reported by neighbors and later pleaded guilty to the misdemeanor charge in June, refusing to be placed on probation. He was sentenced by Municipal Court Judge Arthur Eisinger to the maximum term. He is credited with 31 days already served.

According to the report, the county initiated proceedings to be named as Burke's temporary legal conservator because he has a history of mental problems.

Under this program, the patient can request a court hearing at any time to rescind the conservatorship.

**Extra Bag**

The National Animal Control Association Inc. (NACA) (PO Box 187, Colorado Springs, CO 80901) reported that some animal-control employees have experienced chlorine poisoning while spray cleaning a shelter.

The workers were gradually poisoned while spraying bleach to combat an outbreak of parvovirus. Some also mixed bleach with other chemicals--a potentially toxic combination--to create a "super disinfectant." Now recovered, the employees are reportedly considering the use of gas masks during clean ups.

Chlorine bleach--powdered or liquid--is an effective way to combat parvovirus, and it is cheap and readily available. HSUS Director of Animal Sheltering and Control Phyllis Wright cautions shelter personnel to read the label on any disinfectant and use it in the amount specified by the directions, or use 32 parts water to one part bleach, as recommended by the New York State Veterinary College at Cornell University.

**Items, Continued from page 5**

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**Awards**

Items, Continued from page 5
The New York State Department of Agriculture and Markets has fined a man $11,000 for taking dogs from a county dog control officer and transferring them to a university research laboratory.

Donald L. Stumbo of Lima, N.Y., a federally licensed Class B animal dealer, violated Article Seven of the State Dog Control Law in 28 known instances by taking dogs from Livingston County, N.Y., Dog Control Officer Robert Dennison and transferring them to the University of Rochester Laboratory.

The state law provides that unredeemed dogs seized by a dog control officer for violation of state or local laws may only be disposed of by giving them up for adoption or humane euthanasia. The law is designed to prevent "pound seizure" of animals for use in research labs.

According to the department's Field Staff Supervisor Eileen McShane, "We discovered Stumbo's activities during a routine visit into the field. The department directed Dennison to stop delivering dogs to Stumbo, and we sent a letter to the Livingston County Board of Supervisors, asking them to take action with regard to Dennison."

In meetings with U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) officials, McShane's department requested them to investigate Stumbo's activities for possible federal violations that might justify a revocation or suspension of Stumbo's license. Stumbo's federal license allows him to sell dogs to research laboratories, but Nancy Wiswall of the USDA Animal Care staff confirmed that a case had been submitted against Stumbo to the USDA Office of General Counsel for violation of the federal Animal Welfare Act. Although she can't discuss the case at this time, Wiswall explained that the charges would likely differ from New York state's.

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**SHELTER SENSE Reproducible**

A continuing feature to provide animal control agencies and humane societies with material that will help educate the public on community animal control and responsible pet ownership.

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**When the School Bell Rings, Who Will Protect Your Pet?**

School days are here, and your pet is going to miss the way you played together during the summer! If your cat or dog follows you to school this fall and is lost, will your local animal warden know how to reach you?

Help the warden help you—and your pet—by giving the animal you love a collar, identification tag (name, address, telephone number), and a license tag. Make sure a responsible parent or friend takes your pet for a walk on a leash. Don't let your pet run loose without supervision. Without these safeguards, you may lose your pet forever.

If you find a stray animal, check for an I.D. tag, or call your local shelter or humane society.

Your animal-control officer cares about your pet. Show that you care too, by protecting your pet from getting lost. That way, your cat or dog will be waiting for you at home when the school bell rings.

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This message can be clipped out and reproduced in quantity by your local printer for distribution at schools, shopping centers, libraries and other community locations. Credit must be given to The Humane Society of the U.S. Remember to add your organization's name, address, and telephone number in the space by typing, typesetting or affixing your group's letterhead. You can also purchase advertising space for it in your local newspaper or use it in your organization's newsletter.
As surely as things change, then certainly a talented co-worker will change and grow—and move on.

So it is with SHELTER SENSE Editor Susan Bury Stauffer, who recently left HSUS for another editorial position. As we say goodbye to Susan, I welcome the new SHELTER SENSE editor Deborah L. Reed. Debbie brings to HSUS several years of writing and editing experience and a love of animals, reflected in her weekend work as a tour guide at The National Zoo here in Washington, DC.

But I want to pause and reflect on how SHELTER SENSE began through Susan's efforts, to see where the newsletter is today as Debbie takes over this issue.

Susan joined HSUS in 1977. In April 1978, she created SHELTER SENSE out of her great interest in animal welfare and a recognized need to reach animal-welfare professionals with the message that HSUS cares about their needs and achievements.

Gradually expanding the newsletter from six issues (72 pages) per year to 10 issues (120 pages), Susan carefully researched every aspect of its publication from layout to printing to advertising, wrote most of the articles, and handled subscription problems. Today, nearly every newsletter that comes to HSUS from a local animal-welfare society contains some information from SHELTER SENSE—a real sign that the newsletter is influencing readers.

According to Charles Herrmann, editor of HSUS's children's magazine, Kind, Susan continually searched for the perfect product to give her readers. HSUS Vice President for Field Services Pat Parkes described Susan as one who viewed animals as an avocation as well as a vocation.

HSUS—and SHELTER SENSE—continue to lead efforts to achieve improved animal care because of dedicated workers like Susan. The magazine is for you, about you, and it needs you. Over three thousand copies of SHELTER SENSE are mailed every month. I look forward to its continued growth and success in the months to come, and I encourage you to send Debbie news of your new programs and achievements as well as your concerns.