

## **On the Positive Side: Spay-Neuter is Primary Answer to Community's Pet Overpopulation Problem November 22, 2009**

Our community has a problem with unwanted animals, with some of those pets relinquished by owners, and the problem is reflected in the state of our local animal shelter. When pet owners allow animals to breed indiscriminately, our shelter is pummeled with unwanted young dogs, puppies and cats. When people do not vaccinate, the shelter is then taxed with Parvo and Distemper. What our community does with their pets is a mirror reflection on what happens at our shelter and the result is status quo.

On the positive side, I am hopeful that this community can come together in larger numbers to create solutions and good outcomes for our community companion animal dilemma. The Spay and Neuter Action Program helps folks who cannot afford to sterilize their pets. Since the core of the issue lies in an overpopulation problem, then spay and neuter is the only solution. If the community has 50% less puppies and kittens being born, then we have 50% less euthanasia's at the shelter. The shocking truth of the matter is that one female cat or dog can astonishingly produce over 7000 offspring in less than 3 years.

I write this article to implore our community to take action now. This holiday season go out and talk with your neighbors who have not spayed or neutered and give them SNAP's information. Let them know how important it is to contribute to our community as a whole. Tell the young man that his male dog will be much happier and much less frustrated if he was neutered and he will also be contributing to our community as a whole. When we teach our fellow citizen the importance of community, we turn the tables towards the positive side and they in turn will pay it forward.

Donate to SNAP this holiday season by bringing your pet for Photos with Santa on November 27th and 28th from 10am to 4pm at Better Life Pet Foods, 365 Avenida de Mesilla or call 527-9265 for more information or stop by the SNAP office at the same location and sign up to be a volunteer or pick up information to pass to your neighbor.

Imagine our community with no more homeless, suffering dogs and cats and a shelter free of unnecessary death. What a beautiful place Las Cruces would be. Las Cruces would then reflect our positive community on to others and pay it forward again.

Kat Lacy has been an officer with Spay-Neuter Action Program for nine years and is the owner of Better Life Pet Foods.