

On The Positive Side: Mandatory Spay/Neuter – “A Good Thing!”

by Catherine Wolf

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I just learned that some people are opposed to mandatory spaying and neutering of pets. I find that mind-boggling. Every year millions upon millions of animals are killed in shelters or die painful deaths outside of shelters, just because there are no homes for them. This is an atrocity of such an extreme magnitude that it is unbecoming to a “civilized” society, to say the least. How can we possibly justify reproduction by any cat or dog until the overpopulation is eliminated and there are no more homeless cats or dogs?

As far as I am concerned, allowing one’s cat or dog to reproduce is tantamount to cruelty. Initially that probably sounds extreme but when you consider the ramifications of reproduction, it makes sense. To put it simply, when people allow their cat or dog to reproduce, they are killing homeless animals by robbing them of homes. As an example, if a person allows his/her dog to reproduce, and the dog has 5 puppies, and those puppies are placed in homes, then those homes will not be accepting homeless puppies. That means that 5 homeless puppies or dogs will die because of the 5 puppies that person allowed their dog to have. There is a simple and direct relationship between allowing cats and dogs to reproduce, and cats and dogs being killed in shelters or dying elsewhere because they were robbed of homes.

That is a cruel reality. However, there is good news and that is the fact that this problem is easily solved. Simply spaying and neutering cats and dogs reduces the number of pets that need homes, and thus reduces the overpopulation. A friend of mine has a wonderful quote on all her emails regarding pet overpopulation. It is something to the effect that if your boat is sinking, do you shut off the faucet first, or start bailing? Until recently our society has been bailing furiously, while we continue to sink further and further, because the problem is continuing to grow. It is time that we realize that all the bailing in the world is not going to stop us from sinking if we do not stop the problem at its source. Clearly, to stop sinking (overpopulation) we need to shut off the faucet (stop reproduction). Only then will we be able to stop bailing.

Interestingly, a number of years ago, a friend told me that in Europe they deal with dogs completely differently than we do. I do not know if it is true, but it sounds great to me – people who wish to have their dogs reproduce must obtain a permit, and if their dogs reproduce without a permit they are financially penalized. I have questioned numerous people about this and while no one could confirm it for me, they all said that they did not see cats and dogs running at large as they do in the United States. Regardless whether it is true or not, I believe that it is a good idea and until there are no homeless cats and dogs I do not believe any permits should be issued.

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