



NETWORK NEWS

SPAY/USA...Saving Lives By Preventing Unwanted Litters!
www.spayusa.org

Winter 2002

13 Hints For Increasing Speed Of A Surgery Clinic

by Scott M. Ruth, DVM

An effective spay/neuter clinic performs a maximum number of surgeries in the limited amount of time actually available for surgery. It is significant that not all of the time in a working day is allocated for surgery. Patients must be checked in, records must be started and maintained throughout the day, patients must be discharged to their owners following surgery, the facility must be cleaned and maintained, and (depending on local laws) staff may be required to take midday breaks. Thus, increasing the number of surgeries the clinic can perform each day requires both minimizing the time spent performing non-surgical duties and maximizing the rate at which the surgeon performs each procedure.

During the past decade, I have identified 13 methods of increasing the rate at which a Spay/Neuter Clinic might perform its function. Some of these are surgical techniques and some are management principles.

1 Rapid patient check-in. Any routine or procedure involving movement of clients through the facility, paperwork, and handling patients that can be shortened should be, as long as patient care is

not compromised. It is most desirable to get all animals checked in before surgery starts, without allowing interruptions during surgery time.

2 Staff available to prepare animals for surgery. All procedures that do not require the veterinarian to perform must be performed by lay or licensed staff (depending on state and local laws) so the surgeon is concentrating on performing surgeries and minimizing delays between animals.

3 Tilt surgery table. A gentle incline on the surgery table that raises the hind legs above the head helps the intestine to stay out of the way of the surgeon while searching for the uterus. Because this step makes locating and retrieving the uterus faster and easier, much time is saved on many of the surgeries.

4 Adequate anesthesia. Anesthesia relaxes the patient's body wall muscles so the incision is more easily shifted over the abdominal organs. This allows the surgeon to view and manipulate the



photo courtesy of NSAL America

organs more easily. Surgery becomes easier, faster and safer for the patient.

5 Position of incision. For dog spays, this varies depending on the age of the patient. Properly placing the incision makes surgery faster and easier by allowing the organs to be manipulated more easily.

6 Small incision. A small incision is faster to close than a larger one and is less uncomfortable for the patient. Leaving more body wall intact also allows for less abdominal organ migration into the incision, minimizing interference with manipulation of the uterus and ovaries.

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Letter From The Editor . . .



The events of September 11 changed much about our world, but it did not change our determination to remain focused on a more humane world. Soon after that terrible day, a number of us were getting on planes bound for New Orleans, for the Southern Regional Leadership Conference. We did wonder if the number of attendees would be down; after all, many conferences in New Orleans and nationwide had been cancelled. But we had only one inquiry about that. We had an overflow crowd of 210.

Our speakers were nothing short of fabulous. They gave the audience new ideas, new ways to do things more efficiently, and the courage to act on their convictions. People from throughout the Deep South came to improve their communities' ways of dealing with cat/dog overpopulation. We

plan to have another conference next year and hope that more people will make the effort to get to the conference; there is no substitute for being there.

Hope Tarr's news about the SPAY/NEUTER YOUR PET stamp is monumental – Hope worked for years to make the spay/neuter commemorative a reality. They said it couldn't be done! And other organizations have tried to make this happen without success. Hope will say, rightly, that this was a group effort, which it was. But it would not have come to pass without her tireless efforts. (See page 6.)

And a word about our lead story: Dr. Scott Ruth's tips can help spay clinics all over the U.S. (and beyond) to become more efficient. And as the number of spays per day goes up, the price per spay goes down since professional time is the costliest element of the surgery. We thank him for taking his time to save others' time. And we invite our esteemed veterinary colleagues to join in and add more tips and suggestions if they see fit. We maintain that our vets are the best and the brightest in the land. Thank you all.

We hope to get more news from readers from states where interesting things are happening – please write!

Sincerely,

Esther Mechler



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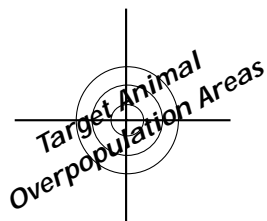
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13 Hints For Speed

cont'd from cover

7 Cut out subcutaneous tissue (fatty tissue between skin and muscle layer).

This simple maneuver allows better visualization of the linea alba (central band of tough tissue between the body wall muscles) so the surgeon can make a better positioned, less bloody incision.

8 Spay Hook. This instrument allows the surgeon to reach into the abdomen and find the uterus without making a large incision.

9 Rupture the suspensory ligament. This common maneuver is avoided by some surgeons because they believe there will be excessive bleeding. This is generally not the case, but the maneuver has a significant advantage because it allows the surgeon to get the ovary out of the abdomen much more easily.

10 Rochester-Carmalt Forceps. This clamp securely holds the ovarian blood vessels so they can be cut before being tied off. This clears the surgeon's view of the vessels and makes the work easier and much faster.

11 Body wall suture pattern. The surgeon can incorporate subcutaneous tissue with body wall (working from each end of the incision toward the middle) and finish with a cruciate stitch in the middle. This allows visualization until the surgeon is ready to close the last part of the body wall incision.

12 Skin suture pattern. Sutures are buried under the skin surface and close a large length of incision with each suture.

13 Records have minimal variation. Medical records typically must show details regarding anesthesia and surgery.

Because surgeries of each type are done nearly identically, records can be designed so that information that is common to all surgeries is preprinted. Variable maneuvers are described in a blank space or a list of possibilities that can be circled or have check boxes. The goal is to minimize writing in each patient's record, saving staff time for patient care.

The time that is saved by each of these maneuvers is small, but overall savings in time can be quite substantial. ☼

Grant from The Kenneth A. Scott Charitable Trust, a KeyBank Trust

SPAY/USA has received word of a generous grant from The Kenneth A. Scott Charitable Trust, a Keybank Trust, to be used for the production and distribution of our quarterly newsletter for the next four issues! We thank the committee for their concrete support, and appreciate their kind words.



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CONTACT: Ledia Nichub
202.667.3630, Ext. 110

Alley Cats to be Honored in Autumn

October 16th Declared National Feral Cat Day

Washington, DC: Alley Cat Allies (ACA) today proclaimed October 16, 2001, to be the 1st Annual National Feral Cat Day. This day will mark ACA's official 11th anniversary. The goal for honoring National Feral Cat Day is to educate more people about reducing feral cat populations with a humane program called Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR).

In honor of National Feral Cat Day, ACA is conducting the Feral Foto & TNR Tales photo and essay contest to obtain real-life TNR success stories and to raise awareness of the feral cat as a special member of the community.

Grand prize winner for the Feral Foto contest will receive a Kodak digital camera, and the winner of the TNR Tales essay contest will receive a desktop printer. Winning entries will be featured in nationwide ACA publications and on ACA's website: www.alleycat.org.

Winners will be chosen during April 2002, by a panel of judges headed by the feral cat proud of it! Orwell T. Cudd of the comic strip, *Fartley*. Winners will be announced May 1, 2002.

ACA encourages organizations across the US to participate in National Feral Cat Day from now through October 16 by distributing information about the contest, providing a day of low-cost or free veterinary services for feral cats, passing out ACA literature, or simply talking about TNR to people who care. A poster commemorating the day, drawn by *Fartley* cartoonist, Phil Frank, is available from ACA for public display. Many groups, including ACA, have already announced plans for events ranging from walk-a-thons to local "spay days" for feral cats.

Alley Cat Allies offers educational materials and advice to organizations, individuals, and municipalities working to reduce feral cat populations through humane, nonlethal methods.

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Letters To The Editor . . .



Hi Esther,

Almost a year ago, you were kind enough to assist us with spaying and neutering a colony of feral cats that live in back of our business. We are pleased to inform you that the project was a success. And we would like to share a story about one of the ferals.

"Big Black Kitty" is one of the male ferals that we neutered last summer. We had not been able to get close to him but for some reason he became friendlier after spending time in our cellar recuperating from his surgery, allowing us to pet him. Last fall he decided to come into the cellar with some of the domestic cats that we have rescued. To our amazement, he became extremely friendly and tame.

We noticed that thick saliva was being discharged from the corner of his mouth and he was having difficulty eating. We had a vet check this out assuming that antibiotics would clear it up. To our horror, we received a call from her saying that it was mouth cancer and that we should put him to sleep. We decided not to follow her advice and brought him back instead. We made an appointment with another vet because we felt we needed another opinion. She hadn't performed any blood work, only a clinical exam. To make a long story short . . . we are happy to say that her diagnosis was incorrect. He had a massive mouth infection. Most of his teeth were extracted and he was given antibiotics for 21 days. The amazing thing is that we gave him an injection every morning and he was terrific. He allowed us to do it without any resistance. He is doing great! We still marvel over his behavior. It's hard to believe that he was ever feral. We wish to thank you and the staff at SPAY/USA for all of your great work. You are making a difference in the lives of these wonderful, often misunderstood little victims of human cruelty.

Sincerely,
Bill and Nancy Hohlowski
Amenia, NY



Esther,

I am getting so much mail from people wanting to take advantage of our Barn/Outside Cat/Kitten Spay/Neuter Program here in Muscatine County, Iowa.

Although your organization cannot do funding, I wonder if the way you sign up vets could be enhanced. They could be asked if they want to sign up for a really reduced rate to receive outside cats that they normally would never see in their offices. That is the feeling of the few vets I have.

They are the rural vets of course and they use the program to fill their low times . . . They cut corners to be able to deliver the prices but they do not cut on the cat's safety, just the deluxe features. The same dissolvable stitches used on inside cats are used for the Barn/Outside Cats. We have not lost a cat due to the extras being eliminated to deliver the special low price.

Our vets require a minimum of 3 cats. The more the better as volume helps to bring in a (small) profit! Costs are also kept low because the cats do not stay overnight at the clinic.

Could this new dimension for your SPAY/USA vet sign-up work in some areas of the country? The Barn Program, as I call it for short, does address the "kitten mill" of our midwest area. Perhaps vets from some areas would not take to it, but it would be attractive to vets in other areas of the country. We welcome questions, and can send more complete information to interested readers. . .

I can't help but feel it deserves at least some brainstorming!

Eleanor Dvorchak
SNAP in Muscatine County, Iowa
SNAPIOWA@yahoo.com



My name is Ramona Chapman, I am the manager/ACO/Euthanasia Tech for the Loudon County Animal Shelter. I have held this position for almost 8 years.

I am pleased to say that through the hard work on the part of the PPAW Clinic in Greenback, Tennessee, The Loudon Shelter is at its all time lowest number of young (puppies and kittens) for this time of year that I have seen in all the years that I have run the shelter.

Our total number of intake animals at the shelter was 178 animals for the month of April 2001. 75% of those were young (8-12 month old) animals and adult animals, not our normal 6-8 week old youngsters. At the time I am writing this, we

have 5 (6-8 week old) kittens and 7 puppies ranging in age for 9 weeks to 5 months. This is unheard of at the start of our (baby) season.

With the PPAW Clinic in our county we at the shelter are really able to see a big difference and many people are calling our office requesting the PPAW phone number; these are people who would never see a veterinarian elsewhere in the county. But these people are becoming more understanding as to the NEED for sterilization. Three years ago I would estimate that 75% of the animals I was forced to put down at this time of the year were young animals for whom homes could not be located.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me.

Sincerely,
Ramona Chapman
Manager-ACO-Euth. Tech.
Loudon County Animal Shelter
480 Rock Quarry Rd.
Loudon, TN 37774
Ph# 865-458-5593
E-mail RuAmustang @ AOL.COM



Dear Editor:

We found your name in *Cat Fancy* magazine. We are writing to ask a great favor of you. Knowing that about 50 Japanese cat lovers are looking for American pen pals to share their warm hearts towards cats, we would like you to spare your busy and precious time to help us.

We would be very grateful if you would inform people who would like to correspond with Japanese cat fanciers. If you know American cat lovers, young or old, please ask them to write to me at the following address:

Respectfully,
Ben Hara
2-18 Ikeda 3 chome
KOFU, Yamanashi, 400-0063
JAPAN



The Miracle of Life . . .

"Come quick, come quick," their mother said,
"The time is getting near."

She feels that when the kittens come
the children should be here.

She told them that a big orange Tom
took "Kitty" to be his wife

"It's wonderful, a gift from God, the miracle of life."

At half a year young "Kitty" feels
too painful and too scared

to appreciate six miracles, blind-eyed and yellow haired.

But she knows these lives depend on her
and nature tells her how,

and as she cleans them, children ask,
"Mom, can we go now?"

But now and then for six more weeks
the children visit her

to play with six new magic toys made of life and fur.

The six weeks pass, the newness gone
and new homes yet unfound,

Mom bundles up six miracles
and takes them to the pound.

Where lovingly, with gentle hands and no tears left to cry,
the shelter worker kiss them once
and take them off to die.

And "Momma Kitty" now she's called
mourns her loss and then,
she's put outside, and, of course,
she's pregnant once again.

Dad tells "Kitty" "STOP THIS NOW
or you won't live here long!"

But deep inside of Momma Cat,
this time something's wrong.

Too young, too small, too often bred,
now nature's gone awry,

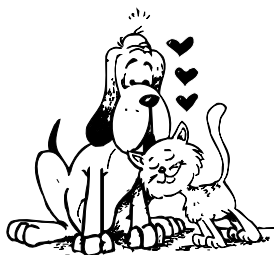
Momma Kitty feels it too and she crawls off to die.

She too is freed from this cruel world,
and from her time of strife.

How harsh the truth, how high the price,
the "Miracle of Life?"

by Barry Taylor, DVM

**Special Thanks to The Mailyn
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assistance!**



Important Upcoming Contraception Conference Announcement!

Dr. Brenda Griffin, DVM, MS, has notified us that The Alliance for Contraception in Cats and Dogs will sponsor an international Symposium on Nonsurgical Contraceptive Methods for Pet Population Control on April 19-21, 2002 at Callaway Gardens, Pine Mountain, Georgia (near Atlanta). Abstracts to be considered for presentation should be submitted by December 3, 2001, to the Alliance for Contraception in Cats and Dogs, c/o Scott-Ritchey Research Center, College of Veterinary Medicine, Auburn University, AL 36849. For additional information about the Symposium, see the Alliance web site at: <http://www.vetmed.vt.edu/Organization/Associations/ACCD/index.html>

The Alliance is a newly formed group to promote the development of nonsurgical methods for contraception of dogs and cats. One of the specific goals of the Alliance is to sponsor an international meeting to facilitate interaction of interested individuals and to encourage exchange of ideas and research results. Organizers for the first symposium are Dr. Stephen Boyle, Chair of the ACCD, and Drs. Henry Baker and Brenda Griffin of Auburn University.

Speakers are being invited to present topics including: FDA regulation of companion animal contraceptive products, gonadotropin releasing hormone (GnRH) vaccines, zona pellucida vaccines, vaccines utilizing other antigens, such as sperm or ovum specific antigens, live virally vectored contraceptive vaccines, carrier antigens which induce immune response to self antigens used in contraceptive vaccines, adjuvants and formulations which enhance immune response to contraceptive vaccines, GnRH analogs, cytotoxic destruction of pituitary gonadotrophs, sclerosing compounds and other contraceptive pharmaceuticals, and the role of the pharmaceutical industry in development and commercialization of contraceptive products. Keynote speakers will address the dynamics and demographics of animal population control. Experts in

basic biology of reproduction and contraception in humans, wildlife and companion animals will share their expertise and results. Poster and platform presentations of original research will be invited. Each session will be summarized by a senior scientist in the field.

The two-day symposium will begin with an evening welcome reception, followed by a full day of scientific meetings, lectures and presentations. A luncheon and banquet will be provided to allow scientists ample opportunity to interact and network with one another. The following morning will be utilized for continuation of the scientific presentations and posters. Abstracts of all presentations, including summary sessions, will be provided to participants and be made available to those who are unable to attend. The names and contact information for all attendees will be printed in the abstract booklet to facilitate interactions following the meeting. A questionnaire will be used to solicit suggestions for the next meeting. Contributors and sponsors of the meeting will be prominently acknowledged.

Callaway Gardens is approximately 60 miles south of Atlanta's Hartsfield Airport which is served by most domestic and international airlines. We invite you to enjoy Southern hospitality, good food, and casual interaction with those dedicated to solving the problem of pet overpopulation through improved methods of contraception. For additional information about the program, venue, accommodations, transportation, etc. visit the ACCD website at:

<http://www.vetmed.vt.edu/Organization/Associations/ACCD/index.html> or email Dr. Baker at: bakerhj@vetmed.auburn.edu

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News From Washington State

The Feral Cat Spay Neuter Project began in September of 1997 after veterinarians and volunteers concerned about the plight of abandoned and homeless cats decided to make a significant difference by offering free monthly spay/neuter services for ferals. Eleven cats were altered during that first clinic and today the Project has spayed and neutered close to 4,000 feral cats in the Puget Sound area. While our volunteers and several Board members have changed over the years, our mission has not and our founding veterinarian and Board President Dr. Christine Wilford remains as committed as ever to providing free monthly spaying and neutering for this often forgotten population of companion animals. Although many individual veterinarians and humane organizations do wonderful work spaying and neutering, there are no other organizations in the area dedicated solely to significantly addressing the overpopulation issues surrounding the tragedy of domestic cats abandoned and left to become wild. Responsible colony caretakers and scores of dedicated trappers continue to fill each monthly clinic with close to 100 cats and as we look toward beginning our fifth year in operation, FCSNP will continue to rely on the compassion and generosity of our community of cat lovers. If you would like more information about the Feral Cat Spay Neuter Project, please write to us at FCSNP, PMB Suite D-5, #112, 13619 Mukilteo Speedway, Lynnwood, WA 98037-1606, or visit our Website at www.spaycat.org <<http://www.spaycat.org/>>. If you live in our area and are interested in becoming a volunteer and/or are interested in helping us fund our efforts, please email Jennifer at jentutty@yahoo.com. ✪



STAMP OUT News Flash !!!

Twin Spay/Neuter Your Pet Stamps Planned for 2002

Sometimes More is... Well, "More"

Okay, folks, it's officially official. The United States Postal Service will be issuing PaLC's proposed Spay/Neuter Your Pet Stamp as part of its U.S. Stamp Program for 2002 ... not as one stamp but as TWO! The Neuter Your Pet Stamp will depict a dog while the Spay Your Pet Stamp will depict a cat. The artwork, high quality photographs guaranteed to wrench even the hardest of hearts, is slated to be unveiled to the public on October 17, 2002.

The fabulous news about the twin Spay/Neuter stamps was confirmed on August 22 in a phone call from David Failor, Manager for the Postal Service's Community Relations office, to PaLC

STAMP OUT project coordinator Hope Tarr. PaLC will be working closely with Mr. Failor and the USPS in the coming weeks and throughout the year to plan promotional efforts both for the October, 2002 unveiling as the larger scale launch celebration to take place in conjunction with the stamps' on-sale date in post offices nationwide.

In closing, we would like to take this opportunity to offer up a heartfelt THANK YOU to all of you who have supported this project since its launch. We are both enormously grateful and deeply, deeply humbled by the tremendous outpouring of support from so many of you – selfless, generous folks around the country as well as Americans abroad – who took the time to make your voices heard. As the success of STAMP OUT exemplifies, working together we really can make a positive difference.

And though we're approaching our own

personal Happily Ever After, this isn't yet the end of the road – or the story. PaLC will be partnering with the Postal Service to plan great promotional tie-ins and educational opportunities aimed at maximizing the stamps' impact. We hope you'll stay tuned by visiting the PaLC website, www.palc.org, and signing up for the STAMP OUT newsletter group for details.

And please do take a moment to celebrate. Pat yourself on the back, sip some cyber-champagne, and brag to an animal-loving friend about what YOU did to make your corner of the world a better place for the animals – a better place period! If you have questions, please visit our website: <http://www.palc.org/petprojects/stampout-faq.html>

Sincerely Yours,

Hope C. Tarr
Project Coordinator, Pet Overpopulation
STAMP OUT A Project of The Prevent a
Litter Coalition (PaLC), Inc. ✪



News From Costa Rica

Changing The Landscape.

Making Spay & Neuter Safer And More Affordable For Companion Animals In Costa Rica

On June 27, 2001, a training program began in Costa Rica for affiliated veterinarians of the McKee Project. This program has been made possible by a grant from North Shore Animal League America (NSAL America). This is a one-day course, the last Wednesday of each month, taught by Dr. Blas Rivas, in Alajuela, and is free to affiliated McKee veterinarians and to the animals being spayed or neutered during the course (average 13 spay/neuters per session; maximum 4 veterinarians per session). Dr. Rivas can be reached at 011-506-443-2526. In addition to areas which have four McKee affiliated veterinarians and an anesthetic machine, Dr. Rivas has agreed to deliver this training on site.

NSAL America/McKee Course Material Covers:

Pediatric Spay/Neuter Less Invasive Procedures

- Small spay/neuter procedures: pediatric and small incisions, which result in less trauma to the animal and less danger if the female tries to open the incision. These techniques were taught in Las Vegas, Nevada, by Dr. Scott Ruth of SPAY/USA, to three McKee Vets in September 2000 (airline transportation provided to one veterinarian by Delta Airlines).

This training results in a less traumatic spay/neuter procedure for the patient,

and the veterinarian can perform 3 to 4 times his or her normal capacity of surgeries in one day, with excellent results. (Less trauma to the patient, more surgeries in one day, is more cost effective for the clinic/hospital.)

Patients at Risk, Pain Management

- Inhaled anesthetics (v. injectible). McKee's Chief of Medical Protocol, Dr. Alexander Valverde, who is currently teaching at the University of Florida, Gainesville, has standardized anesthesia and analgesic protocols for McKee spay/neuter procedures. These protocols will be taught in this course work. Inhaled anesthetic protocol is very important to animals at risk, which most McKee patients are. It is a goal of McKee that every veterinarian in Costa Rica uses an anesthetic machine for spay/neuter procedures, and increases the standard of care provided to all animals.

Sterilization of Instruments, Gowns/Drapes, Materials

- Use of pressure cookers as autoclaves (three 40 lb. pressure cookers and gas stoves were donated through an NSAL America grant) There will be a mini-course (encapsulation of McKee's Monthly Meeting from June 6th, at the Marriott, on sterilization/microbiology) on sterilization of materials, using this type of autoclave, and wrapping, packing



of instruments.

McKee Volunteer Program/Community Outreach – the Soul of McKee

- Dr. Rivas' clinic has an exemplary volunteer group, which is McKee's community model. Their methodology and door-to-door work has resulted in almost no abandoned animals in downtown Alajuela.

Their volunteer strategies, community work, and veterinarian support will be presented and discussed. This part of the McKee Program is as crucial as the surgery: Community outreach and education. These materials are formalized, and are available in Spanish. Translation can be provided.

McKee has 68 affiliated veterinarians as of late June! Thank you all for your wonderful and invaluable support!

Christine Crawford, McKee Project 🐾



BOOK REVIEW by Esther Mechler



The Pet Surplus: What Every Dog and Cat Owner Can Do to Help Reduce It

by Susan M. Seidman

How often have you stood there speechless, not knowing what to say to the same old tired excuses -- amazed that in the year 2001 people are still not aware of the fact that there are far too many cats and dogs -- and that they are unwittingly contributing to this surplus by their thoughtless actions. If they are willing to read, you can save your breath and give them Susan Seidman's new book The Pet Surplus: What Every Dog and Cat Owner Can Do to Help Reduce It. The book is full of interesting information such as the results of the National Council on Pet Population and Policy, what she calls "the shadow population," a history of the pet surplus in this country, various approaches to feral cat problems, responses to various excuses, very interesting information on allergies, housing challenges and so on.

And even if those irresponsible people don't or can't read -- you can read chapters of the book to them!

The hardcover edition is \$25, paperback, \$16, available from Xlibris Corp at www.xlibris.com/bookstore (1-888-795-4274) or from www.Amazon.com or www.Borders.com. ★



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