



# The Cat Overpopulation Crisis

*Taken with permission from the publication "Animal Welfare in Focus" Spring 2009.*

Every year SPCAs and humane societies across Canada admit thousands of homeless animals into their care, and the overwhelming majority of these animals are cats. Cat overpopulation has reached a crisis point and thousands of felines are being euthanized as a result.

The problem of overpopulation has exploded as unaltered males and females are allowed to wander throughout communities, increasing the number of stray and feral cats. Some Canadians recognize this as a problem, but as shelters are filled beyond capacity with cats, it is apparent the severity of the problem is not broadly understood and that a serious challenge lays ahead. The primary remedy to address this is to encourage Canadians to spay and neuter their pets, especially cats.

The seriousness of cat overpopulation can be illustrated by looking at the impact that one unaltered cat can have on

the overall population in a very short time.

One un-spayed cat and its offspring has the ability to produce an additional 420,000 cats (two litters of three kittens a year) over a seven year period. These offspring are destined to be euthanized if feral or not adopted. Based on a nation wide survey, cats make up over 70 per cent of the animals euthanized in SPCAs and humane societies. It's for this reason that cat owners must take action and become responsible pet owners in order to reduce the number of euthanized cats.

The message that needs to be conveyed to pet owners is to spay or neuter your cat. Surgical sterilization provides health benefits such as reducing the risks of some cancers and impeding the possibility of future litters. Rest assured there is no truth to the myths that altering cats changes their personalities or makes

them lazy. There is no justifiable argument against spaying or neutering.

For many, the cost of the surgery still remains a major deterrent, but there are options to help lessen the financial burden. Some spay and neuter clinics operated by municipalities or local not for profit organizations provide a low cost option. A number of veterinarians also offer a low-cost program and doing your research can save you money. The cost of the procedure can be a burden for many cat owners, but the expenses related to pregnancy, possible complications during birth and properly caring for multiple litters of kittens surpasses the cost of the surgery. More importantly, you'll help shelters concentrate on finding homes for neglected cats. By doing this you'll be doing your part to tackle the cat overpopulation crisis.

~~~

Keeping in line with the article above, here are the statistics for the Gladys Groves-Copeland Animal shelter for 2008. Each day a lot of hard work goes into caring for the animals in the Clarenville and Area shelter. This includes meeting with potential families, raising money for the shelter, organizing fund raisers, feeding the animals, walking the dogs, trips to the vet, and the list goes on and on. Please encourage friends and family that do not spay or neuter their pets, to do so.

## Shelter Statistics - 2008

|                             | <u>Cats</u> | <u>Dogs</u> | <u>Total</u> |
|-----------------------------|-------------|-------------|--------------|
| <b>Resident, Dec 31/07</b>  | 26          | 15          | 41           |
| <b>Admitted to Shelter</b>  | 266         | 174         | 440          |
| <b>Claimed by Owner</b>     | 14          | 24          | 38           |
| <b>Adopted</b>              | 123         | 132         | 255          |
| <b>Euthanized</b>           | 117*        | 1*          | 118          |
| <b>Released to Rescue</b>   | 0           | 17          | 17           |
| <b>Resident in Dec31/08</b> | 21          | 15          | 36           |

\* 101 sick or wild cats / 16 adoptable cats / 1 severe aggressive dog



### Summer Students

The SPCA will again this year be hiring up to 3 summer students to work in the shelter.

If you ...

...are a high school student,  
...have a love for animals, and  
...want a summer job,

please mail or email your resume to the shelter.



### Shelter Viewing Hours

#### Monday to Friday

11 a.m. to 12 noon

1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

#### Saturday

1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

**\*\* New \*\***

#### Sunday

1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

### WANTED IMMEDIATELY!!

#### Shelter Volunteers

Volunteers are needed to clean the shelter on a weekly basis or as an alternate when the regular shelter volunteers are unavailable.

To express your interest, please call the SPCA at

466-3489 or

email at:

spsaclarenville@nf.aibn.com



Paw Prints

## AGM in May

The annual general meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, May 20 at 7 p.m. in the Sobey's meeting room, Random Square Mall

*New board members are required.*

If you are interested or would like to know more about what is involved in being a board member, please call or email the shelter.



## SPCA Cookbook

The SPCA published a cookbook many years ago. We figure it is time for another!

Please send your favourite tried and true recipes for humans and critters to Adele Bryant at: ticklecove@yahoo.com or mail it to the shelter to Adele's attention.

As well, we are asking children of all ages to send in your animal drawings so they may be used in the cookbook.

Deadline for submission is June 7, 2009.



## Pet Photo Contest

In upcoming months, the SPCA will be holding a pet photo contest.

13 photos will be selected for a 2010 SPCA calendar.

Further information will be available in upcoming months on the web site, so start taking pictures!



## 9 Years of This!



These are pictures of a dog that the SPCA recently removed from its owners property. The law dictates that the SPCA is unable to identify the owner.

This poor dog has been tied here for 9 years and wouldn't even come out of his house for the owner. An SPCA Constable had to use a rabies pole and drag the dog out of his house and into a crate in order to remove him.

Sadly, 2 years ago this same dog was investigated but by law the owner was providing the basic necessities of life. The law does not require that pets have a good quality of life and the SPCA could not legally take the dog from its owner. Even worse, this same owner had a dog taken from him 10 years ago!

Local SPCAs work with the provincial chapter of the SPCA and other animal groups to lobby government to pass laws that will provide greater protection to animals. You can do your part! Let your government officials know that you demand better animal protection laws!

At the time of this newsletter, the dog, although very nervous, has been assessed and it is felt that he would be wonderful pet in a kind and loving home.

## I Rescued a Human Today

I rescued a human today...her eyes met mine as she walked down the corridor peering apprehensively into the kennels.

I felt her need instantly and knew I had to help her. I wagged my tail, not too exuberantly, so she wouldn't be afraid. As she stopped at my kennel, I blocked her view from a little accident I had in the back of my cage. I didn't want her to know that I hadn't been walked today. Sometimes the overworked shelter keepers get too busy and I didn't want her to think poorly of them.

As she read my kennel card I hoped that she wouldn't feel sad about my

past. I only have the future to look forward to and want to make a difference in someone's life.

She got down on her knees and made little kissy sounds at me. I shoved my shoulder and side of my head up against the bars to comfort her. Gentle fingertips caressed my neck; she was desperate for companionship. A tear fell down her cheek and I raised my paw to assure her that all would be well.

Soon my kennel door opened and her smile was so bright that I instantly jumped into her arms. I would promise to keep her safe. I

would promise to always be by her side. I would promise to do everything I could to see that radiant smile and sparkle in her eyes.

I was so fortunate that she came down my corridor. So many more are out there who haven't walked the corridors. So many more to be saved. At least I could save one.....I rescued a human today.

*Reprinted with permission from Janine Allen and Cherly O'Leary at "Rescue Me Dog" and "Animal Welfare in Focus", Spring 2009.*

To err is human; to forgive is canine.

*Reader's Digest, January 2009*