

"IT'S RAINING CATS and DOGS!"

is more than a cute saying about soggy conditions...



...it describes the crisis in our community!

Unplanned and unwanted litters are expensive to feed, hard to give away, and often end up at the shelter, their young lives at risk in a crowd of homeless animals.

This report tells you what Haywood Spay/Neuter is doing to prevent these litters and more. Learn how we do our part in the *No More Homeless Pets initiative* underway in Haywood County.



HAYWOOD SPAY/NEUTER

2014 ANNUAL REPORT

OUR MISSION

SERVING the COMMUNITY BY
PROVIDING LOW-COST
SPAY/NEUTER SERVICES and
ANIMAL WELLNESS PROGRAMS

www.HAYWOODSPAYNEUTER.org

[FACEBOOK Haywood-SpayNeuter](#)

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Introduction

We beat our 2014 goal of 2,100 spay/neuters — not by much, but we did it! Special thanks to our TNR team for an outstanding 835 community cats Trapped, Neutered, vaccinated, and Returned to their homes in our community!

Through our partnership with Humane Alliance Spay/Neuter Clinic in Asheville, we provided spay/neuter surgeries for 474 owned cats, 835 community cats, and 730 dogs which, including 72 local vet vouchers, brings our 2014 grand total to 2,111!

After the very low refunds received in 2013 from the North Carolina Spay/Neuter Refund Program left us scrambling for funding, we were unsure of our ability to subsidize unlimited surgeries again with only a low co-payment from pet owners. This decision delayed our promotional pricing until we were confident that the state's new allocation formula would help us help pets in a financially sound way.

When we introduced the \$10 Fall Fix special in August, our registrations jumped! How many more pets could have been helped sooner – possibly preventing another unwanted litter – had we the money to kick off the \$10 special earlier in the summer?

Closing another year of serving over 2,000 dogs and cats with low/no-cost spay/neuter surgery gives us *paws*: How many more animals still need our help? Is our program structured to reach those most in need? Is our 2015 goal of another 2,100 surgeries on target?

Programs

Spay/Neuter remains our core program that continues to provide low/no-cost services in large numbers, allowed in part by the role we play as the county's low-cost spay/neuter provider. To keep the momentum going, 2015 starts with a **\$10 Beat the Heat** special to prevent unwanted spring litters.

But a low \$10 copayment is not enough to reach some pet owners. Through field observations made by TNR project volunteers, we began to grasp the scope of the number of pet owners who have little or no access to reliable transportation. Since they cannot come to us, we launched our **ALTERnate Transport** project, an in-field enrollment, pick up and return service to ensure their pets receive the health benefits of spay/neuter and vaccination. *If you like this idea, why not volunteer? The more hands helping pets in need, the sooner we realize our No More Homeless Pets initiative goal!*

Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) has its project roots in 2002 with a small seed grant from PetSmart Charities. With \$2,000 in hand, a team of two volunteers tackled three feral colonies in retail

settings where daily feeding was known to be taking place. Little did they know that by 2014, TNR would be firmly established in Haywood County as the solution that works!

In 2009, we invigorated our current TNR project with fresh grants and volunteers. Our results since then, using over \$200,000 in grants from PetSmart Charities and other generous benefactors:

- ☑ Nearly 4,000 free-roaming cats were sterilized and vaccinated since 2009
 - 1,792 males
 - 2,047 females

- ☑ Shelter cat intakes are down by half since 2008
 - 1,806 in 2008
 - 882 in 2014

- ☑ Shelter cat euthanasia rate is WAY down since 2008
 - 77% in 2008
 - 29% in 2014

We're gathering our thoughts on how to establish realistic feral estimates after six years of TNR in our community. There's nothing in the literature about how to go about it, not even in grant guidelines. We also are thinking about a Community Cats Grant from PetSmart Charities when the new shelter is in place. It requires a new approach to trapped cats impounded (fix vs. kill) and couples with TNR funding.

Top shelf TNR programs recognize the value of finding homes and barns for agreeable cats, and of course, we do too. We sincerely appreciate the cooperation and coordination given by FUR of Western North Carolina and SARGE's Rescue over the last three years to streamline more than 160 homeless cats & kittens from field, to foster, to adoptive homes — in most cases bypassing the stress of an overcrowded shelter altogether. Such a positive and needed alternative. Thank you!

Animal Wellness came into stronger focus when we added it to our mission statement in 2014. Our clients need affordable veterinary care for their pets:

- 90% have household incomes below 300% of the published federal poverty level,
- nearly half are below the poverty level, and
- *100% have pets that they love but are unlikely see a vet before or after a trip on our spay/neuter transport*

Lack of funding affected our 2014 animal wellness program efforts. This needs to change in 2015 to address a variety of basic health issues, including emergency vet visits, urgent care treatment, and basic low-cost parasite control.

- As we go to press, The Francis Fund has excused itself as a Haywood Spay/Neuter 501(c)(3) project, deciding instead to develop an independent path. Created by JoAnna Swanson in 1999 to pay for the emergency treatment of injured or sick animals, the fund served 52 animals at an average expense of \$129 each (total cost = \$6,708) in 2014.
- The amounts paid for professional veterinary care while The Francis Fund operated as a project under our charter were about a third of the actual cost of treatment. The balance was paid over time by the low-income client OR the balance generously was forgiven by the attending vet's practice.
- More animals need help. Few vets can waive or reduce the cost of care indefinitely for a large number of clients.
- Given the scope of the need, our Animal Wellness initiative is a priority for 2015 and beyond.

Microchips provide permanent identification (ID) and can reduce the number of lost pets staying overnight or longer in the shelter. Shelter personnel scan dogs and cats for a microchip at the time of impoundment. When found, officers can call and inform the owner for an immediate and happy reunion.

Since dogs and cats wander and pet collars and tags get lost, the permanent ID provided by a microchip is the most cost-effective and reliable solution available on the market today. We are pleased that North Carolina requires all local shelters to scan every pet entering its doors, notifying owners immediately of found pets.

We held one microchip clinic in 2014, providing permanent ID for another 60 animals. As willing local vets are available, we will hold microchip clinics.

We provide owners with the opportunity to purchase a low-cost (\$15) microchip when their pet receives spay/neuter surgery. However, our clientele typically struggle with their small co-payments for the service and cannot afford the additional protection of a microchip for their pets. Grant applications seeking targeted microchip services have not been successful.

We continue our efforts to encourage Haywood County Commissioners to consider requiring that lost and adopted pets be microchipped before returned to their owners or leave the shelter. In 2014 alone, 450 dogs and 66 cats were returned to their owners after impoundment at the county shelter. New owners adopted 645 shelter animals.

Our Donors are Terrific!

Haywood Spay/Neuter has a loyal group of individual donors who provide us with the funds we need to "Git 'em Fixed".

The Following Foundations and Businesses also Provided Support

Animal Farm Foundation
Grace Episcopal Church in the Mountains
Ken Wilson Ford
PetSmart Charities
Rux Gardens

***Thanks to all of you for your support of our animal welfare efforts in Haywood County.
Every cent makes a difference.***