



Solutions

Helping Animals and the People Who Love Them

Issue 16

June 2006

SNAP's mission is to eliminate the need for euthanasia in our community's shelters, to reduce the number of homeless animals, and to educate the public about the importance of spay/neuter.

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SNAP is a Missouri 501(c)(3) nonprofit corporation.

What's inside

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Annual Ice Cream Chill Out to be held July 15

Looking for a way to cool off? Join us at the Ice Cream Chill Out, SNAP's biggest fundraising event of the year. Festivities will begin at 9:30 am on Saturday, July 15, at the Rogersville City Park, and will continue until 2 pm. Enjoy the pet parade, booths, Black Angus Bingo, stupid pet tricks, and all the ice cream you can eat for only \$3! Bring your best canine friend (on a leash, please) and we promise you will have a fun time! For more information, visit our website at www.snap123.org and click on Events.



Operation TLC grant comes to an end

In March 2005 the Community Foundation of the Ozarks gave SNAP a one-year grant to fund spay/neuter surgeries for low-income residents of the 65802 zip code area. Thanks to increased outreach and a great group of volunteers, we were able to fund 335 surgeries. (Special thanks to volunteer Bonnie Klockenbrink who posted and re-posted flyers relentlessly throughout north Springfield.) This type of outreach allowed us to reach pet owners who would not have been able to have their dogs and cats fixed without our help.

Our sincere thanks to the Community Foundation of the Ozarks!

The project was not without its challenges. We found that pet owners living in this area were very mobile and not always likely to follow through with surgery. Lots of reminders and follow-up phone calls were needed!

Because of *Operation TLC*, pet owners living in 65802 accounted for 25% of all our surgeries in 2005. Also, the number of puppies and kittens brought to the Southwest Missouri Humane Society from 65802 fell by 65% from the six months prior to the grant until the last six months of the grant! During this period, the overall number of animals brought to the Humane Society decreased after a drop-off fee was implemented. However, the decline in 65802 was significantly higher. SNAP will continue to seek ways to serve the people and animals who most need our help. We are making a difference. Hang in there with us!

Nadji's excellent adventure

It was August 2005, a typical summer day in Baghdad—dusty and 125 stifling degrees. On that August day an army captain found a tiny tabby and white male kitten on the military base where she lived. The kitten was about three weeks old, in good shape, and had likely wandered away from his mother. The captain immediately knew who would take him: the two SNAP volunteers she knew who were also living on the base and working as civilian con-



Three-month-old Nadji in Iraq

tractors. So began the journey of Nadji, which means 'survivor' in Arabic. His name turned out to be a harbinger of things to come.

Stray animals are a common sight in Iraq. Cats are viewed by Iraqis as vermin, although some are kept as pets. Dogs are used mainly for protection. The bonds that many Americans have with animals do not exist and aren't easily understood by most Iraqis.

Nadji settled into his new home, unaware of the war going on around him. His home was not in the relative safety of the "green zone" but in an area known as the "red zone" only one block away from Sadr City.

Things went well until November. Nadji grew and thrived. Then the dreaded letter arrived saying that pets were no longer allowed on the base and that residents had 30 days to get rid of them.

In the middle of a war, this was no easy feat. Frantic arrangements were made for now four-month-old Nadji and two other cats traveling to Tyler, Texas. Animals were not allowed through the border crossing into Kuwait. The only option was through Jordan, where an Iraqi travel agent living there agreed to help. The three cats were vaccinated, loaded into carriers, and ready to leave Iraq behind and begin new lives in the U.S.

The travel agent drove the cats down the infamous airport road, widely considered to be the most dangerous seven-mile stretch of highway in the world. Driver and kitties arrived safely at the Baghdad airport, where they were to be flown to Amman, Jordan and then on to Chicago. After arriving in Jordan, the travel agent was able to get pet passports for the cats to travel to the U.S.

Here is where the story turns ugly. For multiple reasons—a limited number of flights from Amman to Chicago, several holidays impacting services at the airport, and a different cultural attitude towards animals—Nadji and his two companions set in their carriers for 10 days in Jordan with absolutely no care—no food or water and no access to litter boxes.

From the time Nadji left the military base in Baghdad until the time he touched down in Chicago, nearly three weeks had passed. He and his two companions were in dire condition—emaciated, dehydrated, covered in feces and urine, nearly hairless. In fact, the cats were in such bad shape that the O'Hare airport authorities wouldn't release them until a friend agreed to go to the airport, take on the authorities, and demand that she be allowed to take possession of the cats. It took some near hysterical behavior on her part,

Continued on page 4

New member welcome

Student/Senior

Ann Lankammer

Individual

M.E. Beach

Pam Copling

Lucretia Holcomb

Leesa Padgett

Paula Walch

Family

Greg & Susan Dodson

Nicole Mertz

Spotlight on ...

SNAP Beginnings

Have you wondered how SNAP came about? Like many successful programs, it was the result of the hard work of a few dedicated people – Jackie Glass, Anne Heim and Connie Chitwood. Jackie's sister started a spay/neuter group in Ohio and Jackie had been involved with animal groups and wanted to try it here. She was doing fundraising and donating to groups doing spay/neuters. Anne was helping a friend spay and neuter a barn full of cats with the help of Bradford Park Veterinary Hospital and Haven of the Ozarks. Connie was a volunteer at Haven of the Ozarks and helped with adoptions at PetSmart.

After a month long public spay/neuter promotion was organized and run through Haven in 2000, it became apparent that a spay/neuter program was desperately needed in this area because the demand was so great. And so SNAP was born. Anne is SNAP's treasurer and continues to play an important role. Connie is an active member and manages the live traps for SNAP clients who need help catching feral cats. Jackie is still involved when she isn't working on her pastured poultry farm, Autumn Olive Farm in Bois D'Arc.

In Memoriam

*Winnie
Richie and Reggie
Versaw*



Special Thanks

- ◆ SNAP has a great friend at Drury University! **Becky Thompson** has been helping SNAP for the last three years. She has been coordinating the Cash for Critters printer cartridge recycling effort for the entire university. She makes sure the word is out to all staff, faculty and students. She collects the cartridges and even sends them in herself. Becky is an animal lover who has found a good way to help. Thanks so much to Drury for all the cartridge donations and extra special thanks to Becky for all of her work on behalf of SNAP.
- ◆ The **Village Inn** restaurant, located at 2036 S. Glenstone, has had a SNAP donation canister on display at their business for a little over two years. In that time, it has brought in \$576! Our sincere thanks to Village Inn not only for the funds they've helped to generate but also the opportunity to get SNAP's name out in the community.
- ◆ Our thanks go out to the Urban Districts Alliance, organizers of **ArtsFest**. Despite the rain, we managed to do very well selling our handmade bandanas and handing out SNAP literature. This year we made just under \$1,000 after expenses, thanks to all those dog lovers who brought their pooches to Walnut Street. Thanks again, ArtsFest. We'll see you next year!

SNAP begins strategic planning



During the first three Board of Directors meetings this year, volunteer Susan Bell led SNAP through a process familiar to many of those in the business world: strategic planning. SNAP's goal is to help as many needy dogs and cats as we can, so we're always looking for ways to work smarter. After much note-taking, many spirited discussions, and a slew of emails, teams emerged to address four issues—board development, fundraising, volunteers, and PR/education. Teams are busy putting plans in place that will help make SNAP a stronger and

more efficient organization. As a result of the strategic planning process, two key positions have already been filled, so we're off and running! Becky Seigel will chair our PR/Education Committee and Susan Bell will fill the role of Volunteer Coordinator. We'll keep you posted on our progress.

Nadji's excellent adventure *(continued from page 2)*

but all three cats were finally released in her custody.

The first task was to get the cats cleaned and fed. They were in such poor condition and smelled so bad that a groomer had to give them repeated baths before the vet would even agree to see them. The carriers had to be thrown away.

Once the three cats finally made it to the vet clinic, they stayed there for four days to be treated for various ailments. One of the Texas cats had to have surgery. While he was in Jordan, his paw had been caught under his collar. The vet feared that the arm would have to be amputated. Luckily, the surgery did the trick and his arm was saved.

The two Texas cats left for home about a week later, thanks to an airline attendant connection, but the friend agreed to keep Nadji until his family returned from Iraq. He would remain with her for four months. Finally, in early April 2006, the two SNAP volunteers arrived to pick up Nadji and bring him to the Ozarks. By the time

he left Chicago, he was healthy, neutered, and full of mischief.

Nadji will be a year old in July. He is secure and happy in his home in southwest Missouri. During the interview for this story, he stalked phantom prey, retrieved a toy mouse countless times, and tormented his feline housemates



Ten-month-old Nadji in Missouri

with his energy and playful personality. He's understandably terrified of carriers—tranquilizers were required to get him from Chicago to Springfield. He's also constantly hungry and has been known to snatch an entire loaf of bread from the kitchen counter. He's traveled to more countries than most people and has seen the worst and best in humans. But he's here and he's safe, thanks to the kindness and determination of many people who value animals. Welcome to the Ozarks, Nadji.

Help us by “Shopping for SNAP”

As a supporter of SNAP, you may be aware that we participate in several programs that enable us to ‘earn’ money at stores in our area through their help for non-profit groups. The proceeds help us to continue SNAP’s mission with no expenses and very little labor. In 2005, over \$700 was received (enough to spay/neuter 23 cats or 14 dogs). With a greater participation from all our volunteers and supporters, we could at least double that in 2006!

The stores and their programs are as follows:

- ◆ **Best Choice “Save-A-Label Program”** - Save only the UPC symbol from Best Choice products (food, household, health and beauty products). Cut the UPC symbol from labels or cartons (no soda cans, aerosol cans or cigarettes). Best Choice products are available at Ramey/Price Cutter, Summer Fresh, Smiley’s and Harter House.
- ◆ **Summer Fresh Supermarkets “Helping Hand Program”** - Simply save your receipts and turn them in. Liquor, tobacco, money orders, lottery or some deli food items are excluded and the eligible amount will show on the bottom of your receipt.
- ◆ **Ramey/Price Cutter “Community Bucks Program”** - The Springfield locations do not currently issue coupons but both Ozark stores, both Nixa stores, and one store in Republic participate. You receive “community bucks” for purchases of \$25 or more.

Here’s all you have to do: Save the labels and receipts described above and mail them to SNAP at P.O. Box 14354, Springfield, MO 65814 (they can be combined in one envelope). Be sure to write ‘Shopping for SNAP’ on the envelope. Our volunteers will then sort and mail them in for redemption. Please note that Community Bucks and Summer Fresh have expiration dates and will not be redeemed if past that date. If you have any questions, please call us at 417-823-7627. More information is also available at our website (www.snap123.org).



ATTENTION COMMUNITY BUCKS SAVERS: The expiration date on the Community Bucks issued so far this year is June 30, 2006. If you are collecting, please send them in by mid June. We must turn them in to Price Cutter by the end of the month. You can mail them to SNAP or place them in the donation canisters at Divine Veterinary Clinic in Ozark or Cobblestone Veterinary Clinic in Nixa.



Letter from SNAP client

Dear SNAP,

I find myself sitting here watching my Rosie (kitten) play with a milk jug ring thoroughly enjoying herself now, still absolutely kittenish. I wish to thank you for giving Rosie a life, for giving Rosie time to be happy, to be full of play!

Had it not been for SNAP’s help, I do not know how Rosie would be right now. Today she’s very much an active, mischievous, assertive lassie, going on I hope one day to become a real lady. We’re informed she’s gorgeous. Thank you again.

Pat

YES!

I would like to become a member of SNAP to help reduce the number of unwanted animals born in Southwest Missouri. I understand that by becoming a member, I will receive a quarterly newsletter and an invitation to SNAP's annual meeting. (Membership is renewable annually and is tax deductible. Payment may be made by check or money order.)

Name _____ Phone _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____
Email _____

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$15 Student/Senior (60 & over) | <input type="checkbox"/> \$125 Business |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Individual | <input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Lifetime |
| <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 Family | |

OR...

- _____ I want to help! Please send information about becoming a SNAP volunteer.
_____ I want to support SNAP's work with the enclosed tax-deductible donation.
_____ Please make a donation in memory of _____
_____ Please send me information on estate planning .
_____ I would like to "Sponsor-a-Spay." I am enclosing \$ _____ to sponsor:
_____ A specific pet (indicate pet's name) _____
_____ The pet at the top of SNAP's waiting list

MAIL TO: SNAP • P.O. Box 14354 • Springfield, MO 65814 • (417)823-7627
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