

5 years ago Esther Mechler started a mission to make life better for companion animals by reducing the number of animals to an extent where they become scarce. If dogs and cats become scarce people will treat them better and respect them more, and therefore they will be more likely to find good homes. Called SPAY/USA this programme has been remarkably successful in reducing the number of animals killed in US shelters. (Notes taken from Esther Mechler's speech at the International Animal Welfare Conference held in Budapest last October.)



part 2 Neutering

Breaking the cycle of pet overpopulation

Elizabeth Oliver, Director of ARK

EACH DAY 10,000 HUMANS ARE born in the USA - and each day 70,000 puppies and kittens are born. As long as these birth rates exist, there will never be enough homes for all these animals. As a result, millions of healthy, loving cats, dogs, puppies and kittens face an early death as a form of animal control.

SPAY/USA was started with a single veterinarian, who agreed to cooperate and to neuter and vaccinate animals for a low price. His prices could be kept low because of the large number of clients referred to him. In the first year the programme grew to 150 locations nationwide. By the next year, 300, by

the third year 3000 vets in 450 locations cooperated with the scheme. By 1995, 60,000 animals a year were neutered in 800 cities by 5,000 vets representing 10% of the small animal vets in the USA.

In order to make the service efficient and economic, various facilities are used. One is the **SPAYMOBILE**, a mobile clinic adapted from a school bus with the seats removed and outfitted with an operating table, lights, sink, water supply, autoclave and storage space. The **SPAYMOBILE** is able to visit rural areas and neuter animals at home thus saving them and their owners the stress and trauma of

travelling long distances to city clinics.

Another is the **SUPER CLINIC**. At the super clinic, one vet has 4-5 assistants who do all the paperwork, clean/shave the animal and prepare them for surgery. The process is much quicker and more cost efficient than usual. In Las Vegas one **SUPER CLINIC** can alter 60-70 animals a day. As a result the number of stray animals being euthanized dropped from 22,000 to 11,000 in 3 years.

Until recently feral and homeless cats were ignored, left to multiply and die. Now **SPAY/USA** together with another group (Ally Cat Allies) have started a network of volunteer caretakers who trap the cats, transport them to the clinic. Here they are vaccinated, neutered, and ear-notched before being returned to their caretaker who looks after them until they are well enough to be released again.



An unsprayed female dog, her mate and all of their puppies and their puppies' puppies, if none are ever neutered or spayed, add up to:

1 year: 16
2 years: 128
3 years: 512
4 years: 2,048
5 years: 12,288
6 years: 67,000

もし1対の犬がいて、
その間に子犬が生まれて、
その子犬がまた子犬を生んで、
その子犬がまた子犬を生んで、
そのだれもが不妊手術を受けなかったら、
あというまに...

1年間で16匹
2年間で128匹
3年間で512匹
4年間で2,048匹
5年間で12,288匹
6年間で67,000匹にもなってしまうのです。

