

CHARITY SPOTLIGHT

Spay & Neuter — A Pet Cause

Contributed by Linda Vandercook

Many of us look for local charities to support during the year. Whether it's a monetary gift or offering tangible items for their shelves, these donations can help immensely.

The Moore County Citizens' Pet Responsibility Committee ("PRC") is one that might be of interest to you as it was to me. PRC's focus is to reduce pet overpopulation through reduced-cost spay and neuter, along with outreach veterinary clinics and in-school programs.

Pet overpopulation results in two outcomes: 1. Allowing cats and dogs to reproduce, often with little chance to find homes for the offspring and 2. Pets being relinquished to shelters by owners who can no longer keep their animals or who no longer want them. This includes strays and feral animals picked up by Animal Services. Stats are kept primarily on dogs and cats, but other animals do end up at the county shelter such as horses, goats, rabbits, and even bats and opossums.

Almost 3 million pets nationwide are put down annually. For North Carolina, the annual figure is about 10,000. Intakes declined at the Moore County Animal Services in 2020—but these numbers include 9 weeks of closure due to Covid protocols. Unfortunately, euthanasia numbers are holding steady over the past 6 years. Of the 1,932 cat and dog intakes in 2020 by Moore County Animal Services, 689 (36%) were euthanized.

Along with funding from Moore County, PRC relies on businesses and individuals to help offset their costs and make vet services available to county residents. This includes animal medical exams, rabies shots, tick & flea preventatives, and the usual cat and dog vaccinations such as parvo, leukemia, and distemper.

Many pets serviced by PRC during outreach days have had no vaccinations at all, to which rabies is the most important. A rabies 3-year shot costs about \$10 at a low-cost facility (also available at Moore County Animal Services), and it is required in NC. This includes dogs, cats, and ferrets starting at 4 months of age.

Spaying and neutering has the most impact on reducing unwanted and abandoned pets. It is also the costliest of PRC's programs. 70% of its budget goes towards promoting spay and neuter, helping people with paperwork to access these services, holding Pet Care Days to sign up pets to be fixed, and transporting pets from rural areas of Moore County to and from the Spay/Neuter Clinic in Vass.

A \$200 donation to PRC funds the neuter of one large dog (over 75 lbs.) or spaying of two cats or vet fee subsidy for 40 pets at a 'Pet Care Day' function. PRC also happily accepts donations of unopened cat and dog food. Visit PRC at <https://mcprc.org>

Linda is looking for other local charitable endeavors to support and promote. Each organization featured in the Charity Spotlight column receives a \$200 donation. Contact: LindaForWP@gmail.com.

