

Meanwhile,
(NOT!)
Back at The
Ranch.....



Maggie and Smalls, two days old



• W • A • G •

WILLAMETTE ANIMAL GUILD SPAY / NEUTER PROJECT

3045 Royal Ave

Eugene OR 97402

541.345.3566

www.wagwag.org

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Maggie and Smalls at WAG

Maggie, Smalls, and O'Malley

In February, WAG and West Coast Dog and Cat Rescue started working together on a situation in which a woman had died, leaving behind approximately 50 cats on what was to become known as "The Ranch." This woman had fancied herself a "breeder", but the cats were of no recognized breed and were instead bred to meet some standard of her own fantasy. The "cattery" was the worse half of a leaky chicken coop—here were housed about 15 of the chosen ones of both sexes. The rejects were out and about on the large acreage, some feral, some social. There were at least ten cats in the house, also a mix of feral and social. The house itself was filled with junk and encrusted in cat excrement, the rooms ringed with urine that had been sprayed on the walls. The windows were

opaque with dirt, the smell overwhelming.

Actually, what the woman had been most successful at breeding was a particularly virulent strain of upper respiratory infection. Every cat had it. The walls of the "cattery" were streaked with the mucous of many years' worth of sneezing cats. A tragic percentage of the cats also tested positive for FIV (feline AIDS) and FELV (feline leukemia). None had been spayed or neutered.

The first cats removed from the property were two newborn kittens found in the house. Because their mother was feral, WAG Secretary Lisa Wahl took them home to bottle-raise them. Fortunately, their mother was FIV and FELV negative, which meant that these two were, also. Over the next two months many concerned volunteers fed, trapped, transported, and fostered the cats that could be saved. They were all spayed and neutered at WAG. The tame ones were put into the WCDC



O'Malley at WAG

PetSmart adoption program. The ferals were returned to the property, with assurance from the heirs that they would be fed there.

Finally there was only one cat left untreated. Julie McDonnell, President of WCDC, netted him herself. He was brought into WAG to be altered on April 20, as were Maggie and Smalls, the two kittens found in the house. Thus the first and last cats from this exhausting project were altered on the same day! Because O'Malley, as he was later to be known, had been so hard to catch, he was

ear tipped as a feral. But during his foster care he was found to be sweet and loving, so was put into the adoption

program. He was adopted and now lives the good life in his new home, a beautiful, healthy, lucky cat. Of course Maggie and Smalls had no trouble finding a home! They will also be forever commemorated as WAG's 5000th and 5001st surgeries.

Irresponsible breeding is one of the biggest factors of the pet overpopulation problem. In this case, it was combined with animal hoarding, a disturbingly prevalent syndrome that often cannot be addressed until the



O'Malley watching his Kitty Video on his new wide-screen TV

Local news coverage of Maggie and Smalls with their blind stepmother, Cougar, is featured on WAG's website at www.wagwag.org.

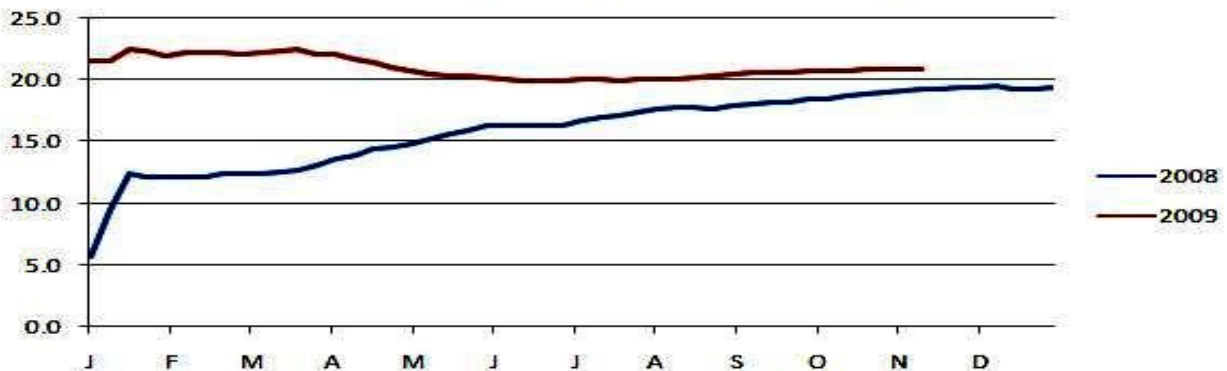
hoarder dies and the heirs want the situation cleaned up, usually at no cost to themselves. This puts a tremendous financial burden on the organizations that choose to take responsibility for the neglected and unhealthy animals involved. The cost of this 50-cat project was entirely covered by WAG and WCDC. Your contributions are used to help us take on these kinds of special situations as well as make sure that every individual who wants to spay or neuter their animal can do so, regardless of his or her ability to pay. You can be sure that your donation goes right to the front line of the fight against pet overpopulation. Donations of any amount are especially appreciated during this time of economic stress. We are a 501 ©(3) organization and your contribution is fully tax-deductible.



O'Malley transformed

We also make good use of the money given to WAG by various charitable foundations that recognize the importance of high-volume spay/neuter: PetSmart Charities, the Handsel Foundation, the Leslie G. Ehmann Trust, the PETCO Foundation, and the Isaac and Leah Potts Foundation have all awarded grants to WAG. Special financial aid listed on our website, such as our current S/N-any-kitten-2-to-4 mos-old-for- \$10 offer, is paid for by these grants.

WAG Average Surgeries per day YTD



This chart shows that WAG is averaging about **20 S/Ns per day** this year. We would like that number to be 23. We get the appointments, but a frustratingly large percentage of our clients don't honor them. Still, WAG expects to have performed over **8,000** spays and neuters by the end of 2009. This means we will have prevented the births of at least **40,000** unwanted animals so far. (This number is based on counting only one litter of 5 per animal—of course many would live on to have more.) Most of these animals would have had short and miserable lives, the cats on the streets and vacant lots of Lane County, the dogs neglected and ending their days at LCAS or Greenhill. **Thank you** for your help in creating and sustaining the WAG Spay/Neuter Clinic, thus helping to prevent these 40,000 little tragedies.

Ever since we first started searching out a veterinarian for the clinic, people have asked, "Why don't you get some new vet just out of school?", the inference being that doing the same thing all day must be easy and boring, so that the only people interested in the job would be new and inexperienced. Nothing could be further from the truth.

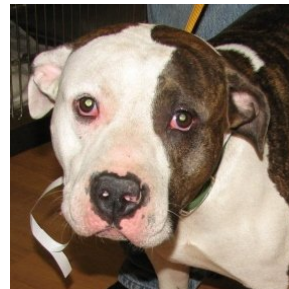
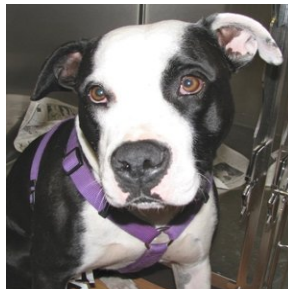
Spay/neuter surgery is hard, skilled work. Any kind of surgery is life-threatening, and every animal is different. Newly-graduated vet students may never have done *any* surgeries the whole time they were in school. Being inexperienced is certainly no asset, as it means they don't know what they're doing. Faced with a pyometra (infected uterus) or a cryptorchid (undescended testicles somewhere in the abdomen), they are stymied. The WAG clinic needs to average 23 animals a day, each one its own potential little crisis, to pay for itself. There are not very many vets, and certainly none are newly graduated, who can perform at this level.

Thus our appreciation for our vet, Dr. Bernie Robe: Dr. Robe had already had 13 years' veterinary experience when he joined WAG in April of 2008. By the time he became our full-time vet in June, he was already well up to speed. This last October, thanks to a grant from PetSmart, we were able to send him for four days' training at the new Humane Alliance facility in North Carolina. This experience has given Dr. Robe the enhanced skill, speed and sense of mission that makes us at WAG feel that our clients could get no better S/N surgery anywhere in Lane County, at any price.



Dr. Robe with Spooky, Wag's 7,000th S/N

It is tremendously difficult to fill in for Dr. Robe when he is out of town—usually we just have to close down the clinic. This year, however, we had three doctors that gave us what time they could: Dr. Dennis Flossi, from El Paso, TX; Dr Steven Frack from Roseburg; and Dr. Tom Fincel of Four Corners Veterinary Hospital in Eugene, who volunteered to do an all-cat day while Dr. Robe was in North Carolina. Thanks to all!



GOOD NEWS FOR DOGS

Two local non-profit organizations, Stop Pet Overpopulation Today (S.P.O.T.) and Spay Ship, a part of Save the Pets, have received substantial grants directed at subsidizing the spay/neuter of dogs here in Lane County. While the funds from these grants last, ANYONE seeking to have a dog altered can do so with no financial barrier. Links to the two participating organizations can be found on WAG's home page at www.wagwag.org.

Yes! I want to help the Willamette Animal Guild Spay/Neuter Project.

Enclosed is my donation for \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone number: _____ Email: _____

Please make checks payable to : Willamette Animal Guild
3045 Royal Ave
Eugene, Or – 97402

Please charge my _____ Visa _____ Master Card _____ Debit Card

Card number _____ Exp Date _____

Signature _____

I do _____ do not _____ require a receipt for tax purposes.

Contributions are tax deductible to the full extent allowed by law.

Donations can also be made via PayPal at www.wagwag.org