

FELINE FIX
by FIVE MONTHS™

it saves lives

Media Kit

Feline Fix by Five Months

is a project of

Marian's Dream

P.O. Box 365

Brunswick, ME 04011

PHONE +1 (585) 210-9238 • www.felinefixbyfive.org

Item	Page
Logo with [™]	1
IPSOS Pie Chart	2-3
Task Force Statement	4
Task Force Endorsements	5
Article: Why The Change	6-7
List of Benefits	8
List of Articles and Blogs.....	9
List of Presentations and Podcasts.....	10
The Queen/The Four Seasons Chart	11
Advisory Panel.....	12-16
Press Release.....	17

For digital files, please go to the Feline Fix By Five web site Media Kit page to download logos for print use in PDF or EPS format; to download a logo for web/social media in PNG format; or to download the e-banner in digital format.

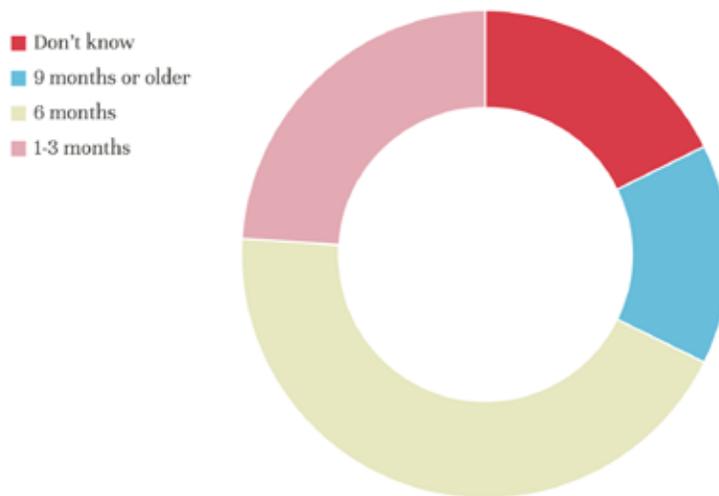
Logo



Banner



Pet owners don't know the appropriate age to have dogs/cats spayed or neutered:



This chart is taken from page 27 of the IPSOS Marketing study commissioned in 2009 and 2011 by Petsmart Charities and entitled: There is confusion among owners as to the appropriate age to have dogs/cats spayed or neutered, with 17% indicating “Do Not Know.”

Nearly as alarming are the 42% who indicate 6 months (by which time cats can have already had a litter and be ready for the next), and worse yet an additional 14% who say 9 months or older.

This chart clearly indicates that $\frac{3}{4}$ of these adults (a sample of 3,000) either do not know, or think that 6 months or later is fine.

2. Veterinarians were not educating the public on Best Age to spay or neuter cats. Many were suggesting six months or older—which most often resulted in unplanned, unwanted litters and overflowing shelters. Many private practice veterinarians still recommend “six months to a year”—or “wait till the first heat.”
3. There are many reasons not to wait till first heat, which includes the greatly increased risk of mammary gland cancer, aggression and spraying in males, the development of unwelcome, hormone-related behaviors, and the risk of accidental litters.
4. On January 15, 2016 a group of prominent veterinarians met at the North American Veterinary Conference in Orlando, Florida and created a consensus document about best practice regarding spaying cats. The document is outlined as follows:
 - A. Recommendations for the optimal age to sterilize cats may differ from the age to sterilize dogs.

- B. Current scientific evidence documents benefits of spaying kittens before the first estrous cycle, including the following:
 - Decreased risk for mammary carcinoma
 - Elimination of reproductive emergencies such as pyometra and dystocia
 - Avoidance of unintended pregnancies that may occur as early as 4 months of age
 - Potential decrease in behavioral problems linked with cat relinquishment.
 - C. Current evidence does not support an increased risk for cats of complications or long-term adverse health effects with pediatric (6–14 weeks) or juvenile (>16 weeks) sterilization.
 - D. More controlled prospective research specifically examining different ages in sterilization in cats is needed. As new information becomes available, the recommended age for sterilization of cats should be revisited.
 - E. There is potential to increase the number of sterilized cats and reduce the unplanned/unwanted litters of kittens if veterinarians routinely schedule this surgery for client-owned cats at the end of the kitten vaccination series. Given the known benefits of sterilization and the lack of evidence for harm related to age at which the procedure is performed, the Veterinary Task Force on Feline Sterilization calls for veterinary practitioners and professional associations to recommend sterilization of cats by five months of age. This provides veterinary practitioners with a consistent message that may increase veterinary visits and spay/neuter compliance while reducing the risk of pet relinquishment and unwanted offspring.
5. The professionals around the table were not acting officially on behalf of the organizations with which they worked—The A.V.M.A., A.A.H.A., A.A.F.P. , The Winn Feline Foundation, the Catalyst Council, the A.A.S.V., the International Cat Association and the Cat Fanciers' Association. It was another 18 months until all of the organizations signed on officially, with board approval. By July 5, 2017 all had signed on. Now, for the first time, veterinarians have a clear message to send to their clients: Fix your felines by five months.

**Veterinary Task Force on Feline Sterilization
Recommendations for Age of Spay and Neuter Surgery**

Current recommendations for the age to sterilize (spay/neuter) cats are arbitrary and inconsistent. Adoption of evidence-based guidelines is expected to limit confusion among cat owners, reduce the risk of unwanted litters, and maximize health and welfare benefits.

A task force of veterinarians and experts selected from private and corporate veterinary practice, feline specialty practice, shelter practice, organized veterinary medicine, feline health research, behavior, and academia was convened to review the currently available evidence for the ‘optimum age for spaying or neutering cats.’ The Veterinary Task Force on Feline Sterilization task met on January 15, 2016 in Orlando, Florida.

The following key findings and proposals emerged from a review of the currently available scientific literature and group discussion:

1. Recommendations for the optimal age to sterilize cats may differ from the age to sterilize dogs.
2. Current scientific evidence documents benefits of spaying kittens before the first estrous cycle, including the following:
 - Decreased risk for mammary carcinoma¹⁻⁴
 - Elimination of reproductive emergencies such as pyometra and dystocia
 - Avoidance of unintended pregnancies that may occur as early as 4 months of age
 - Potential decrease in behavioral problems linked with cat relinquishment.⁵
3. Current evidence does not support an increased risk for cats of complications or long-term adverse health effects with pediatric (6-14 weeks) or juvenile (>16 weeks)⁶⁻⁷ sterilization.
4. More controlled prospective research specifically examining different ages in sterilization in cats is needed. As new information becomes available, the recommended age for sterilization of cats should be revisited.
5. There is potential to increase the number of sterilized cats and reduce the unplanned/unwanted litters of kittens if veterinarians routinely schedule this surgery for client-owned cats at the end of the kitten vaccination series.

Given the known benefits of sterilization and the lack of evidence for harm related to age at which the procedure is performed, the Veterinary Task Force on Feline Sterilization calls for veterinary practitioners and professional associations to recommend sterilization of cats by five months of age. This provides veterinary practitioners with a consistent message that may increase veterinary visits and spay/neuter compliance while reducing the risk of pet relinquishment and unwanted offspring.

#####

July 8, 2016

Individuals who are participants of the Veterinary Task Force on Feline Sterilization:

(The participant titles/affiliations on this list do not imply formal organizational support at this time.)

Kirk J. Breuninger, VMD, MPH, Veterinary Research Associate, Banfield Pet Hospital, Portland, Oregon

Steve Dale, CABC, certified animal behavior consultant, writer/TV-radio host, board member Winn Feline Foundation

Lauren E. Demos, BGS BSc (Vet Biol) BVMS Hons (Vet Virology), Resident, ABVP (Feline), VIN Associate Editor, Feline Internal Medicine, 2016 President Elect, American Association of Feline Practitioners Board of Directors, Veterinary Information Network

Brenda Griffin, DVM, MS, Dipl. ACVIM, Adjunct Professor of Shelter Medicine, University of Florida, Department of Small Animal Clinical Sciences; Regent for Shelter Medicine specialty, ABVP-SMP

Brian Holub, DVM. Chief Medical Officer, VetCor, Hingham, Massachusetts; board member Winn Feline Foundation; medical advisory board Canine Health Foundation

Kendall Houlihan, DVM. Assistant Director, Animal Welfare Division, American Veterinary Medical Association Julie Levy, DVM, PhD, DACVIM. Professor, College of Veterinary Medicine, University of Florida, Gainesville, Florida

Esther Mechler, Marian's Dream: Philanthropy for Animal Advocates

Joan Miller, The Cat Fanciers' Association, Chair, Outreach and Education Program, San Diego, California

Michael R. Moyer, VMD. President and Owner Bridgewater Veterinary Hospital and Bridgewater Consulting, Bensalem, Pennsylvania.

Glenn A. Olah, DVM, PhD, DABVP(feline). Winn Feline Foundation, President, Wyckoff, New Jersey; Albuquerque Cat Clinic, Albuquerque, New Mexico

References

1. Dorn CR, Taylor DO, Schneider R, Hibbard HH, Klauber MR. Survey of animal neoplasms in Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, California. II. Cancer morbidity in dogs and cats from Alameda County *J Natl Cancer Inst.* 1968 Feb;40(2):307-18
2. Hayes HM Jr, Milne KL, Mandell CP. Epidemiological features of feline mammary carcinoma. *Vet Rec* 1981 May 30;108(22):476-9.
3. Misdorp W, Romijn A, Hart AAM. Feline mammary tumors: A case-control study of hormonal factors. *Anticancer Research* 1991;11(5):1793-1797.
4. Overley B, Shofer FS, Goldschmidt MH, Sherer D, Sorenmo KU. Association between ovariectomy and feline mammary carcinoma. *J Vet Intern Med* 2005 Jul-Aug;19(4):560-3.
5. Patronek GJ, Glickman LT, Beck AM, McCabe GP, Ecker C., Risk factors for relinquishment of cats to an animal shelter, *J Am Vet Med Assoc* 1996 Aug 1;209(3):582-8.
6. Looney AL, Bohling MW, Bushby PA, Howe LM, Griffin B, Levy JK, Eddlestone SM, Weedon JR, Appel LD, Rigdon-Brestle YK, Ferguson NJ, Sweeney DJ, Tyson KA, Voors AH, White SC, Wilford CL, Farrell KA, Jefferson EP, Moyer MR, Newbury SP, Saxton MA, Scarlett JM. The Association of Shelter Veterinarians veterinary medical care guidelines for spay-neuter programs. *J Am Vet Med Assoc* 2008 Jul 1;233(1):74-86.
7. Association of Shelter Veterinarians. Position Statement: Early-Age Spay-Neuter of Dogs and Cats. <http://www.sheltervet.org/position-statements>
July 8, 2016

WHY THE CHANGE IN RECOMMENDED AGE OF STERILIZATION OF CATS?

Submitted by: Philip A. Bushby, DVM, MS, DACVS

In June of 2017, the AVMA formally endorsed the consensus document put forth by the Veterinary Task Force on Feline Sterilization for Age of Spay and Neuter Surgery, which recommends cats not intended for breeding be gonadectomized by five months of age. This joined endorsements from other veterinary medical and cat breeding associations including the American Association of Feline Practitioners, Association of Shelter Veterinarians, American Animal Hospital Association, Winn Foundation, Catalyst Council, Cat Fancier's Association and The International Cat Association. Feline Fix by Five (FFF) is a campaign promoted by the Marian's Dream Foundation to share this recommendation that has garnered such broad support. FFF was born out of awareness that cats can be reproductively active by 4 to 5 months of age, yet most veterinarians recommend spay/neuter of cats at 6 months of age or older. The result of this mismatch between age at which cats can become pregnant and the recommended age of sterilization is demonstrated any time one walks into a local animal shelter.

Animal shelters are generally overrun with kittens, the vast majority of which are the result of unplanned and unexpected pregnancies of young cats. A survey conducted in the State of Massachusetts revealed surprising results. While many people believe that pet-overpopulation is the result of pets that are left intact for their entire life, the opposite is true. Cats that were eventually spayed accounted for 87% of all litters born.[1] Cat owners who are unsure of when to have their cat sterilized or simply wait until 6 months of age or later are faced with the dilemma of what to do with an unexpected litter of kittens. Too often those kittens are relinquished to local shelters and too often those kittens are euthanized. The problem was not that the owners refused to spay or neuter their pet; it was that they didn't have it done in time.

Esther Mechler of the Marian's Dream Foundation, who initiated the FFF campaign, has stated that "the number of births prevented—simply by changing the recommended age for spay/neuter of cats from 6 months to between 4 and 5 months—could reduce the numbers of shelter intakes enough to balance the number of potential adopters with available cats and kittens. We could end the overpopulation of cats by this one simple change." [2]

As a profession, we need to recognize that there is, at present, no scientifically sound basis for waiting until 6 months of age or older to sterilize cats and no contraindications for spay/neuter at 4 to 5 months of age. Anesthetic concerns about juvenile surgery voiced in the 60s and 70s are no longer valid. There are many anesthetic drugs and protocols in use today that are safe in cats as young as 6 weeks of age. Old fears that castration of juvenile male cats would predispose to urinary obstruction were disproven in the 90s.[3]

There are numerous known health benefits for spay/neuter in cats, in addition to the population management benefits, and there is "no evidence to suggest that pediatric gonadectomy by 5 months of age is linked to any increased risk of disease." [4] A survey conducted in 2000 of veterinarians who were, at that time, spaying and neutering cats under 5 months of age, confirmed that the surgeries were easier, faster, and had fewer complications than spay/neuter of cats at 6 months of age or older. [5]

So, what should the practicing veterinarian do to make this change. Simply add one more appointment to your standard kitten wellness protocols. Make no changes in current vaccination and parasite control recommendations except add an appointment for spay/neuter two to three weeks after the last kitten vaccination. Owner compliance will be increased, surgeries will be easier, and, in time, local shelters will not be overrun with kittens.

For more information on the AVMA's position on spay neuter go to <http://www.avma.org/spayneuter>.

1. Manning MM & Rowan AN, Companion animal demographics and sterilization status: Results from a survey in four Massachusetts towns. *Anthrozoos* 5 (3).
2. Esther Mechler, Personal Communication, October 25, 2017.
3. Stubbs WP Scrugges SL, et al BMS. Prepubertal gonadectomy in the domestic feline: Effects on skeletal, physical and behavioral development. *Vet Surg.* 1993;22.
4. Dale S. When to Spay/Neuter Cats? Vet Consensus Says Fix by Five Months. *Vet Pract News.* 2016.
5. Land TDVM, Wall SDVM. Survey of the Coalition of Spay/Neuter Veterinarians. *J Am Vet Med Assoc.* 2000;216(5).

PROVEN BENEFITS of Early Spaying

MEDICAL

Kittens spayed before their first heat have a 91% lower risk of developing mammary cancer which takes the lives of an estimated 75,000 cats every year. Spaying also eliminates the risk of pyometra.

BEHAVIORAL

The hormones that develop if kittens are left unaltered lead to nightly territorial fights, cat mating rituals and roaming. These undesirable behaviors often result in relinquishment to shelters. Over 80% of cats who are surrendered to shelters or abandoned are not spayed/neutered. Spaying/neutering prior to puberty eliminates problem behaviors.

COMMUNITY

Well over half the litters that end up in shelters are unintended “oops” litters. Many other litters are abandoned to the streets adding to the free-roaming/feral/community cat populations. When shelters are inundated with kittens, the older cats who may have found homes are often passed over. Cat complaint calls are at, or near, the top of the list in public health and animal control departments, causing increased funding demands. Reducing the unwanted litters born is an important step toward cutting shelter cat-related costs.

Articles

- Fascinating felines: The surprising truths about 5 common cat myths
<https://www.felinefixbyfive.org/fascinating-felines-the-surprising-truths-about-5-common-cat-myths>
- Fix by Five (Catster)
<https://static1.squarespace.com/static/59eb7f7fe9bdfd9e27e926f9/t/59f8547b2774d142a1f40a06/1509446787924/fix-by-fiveCatster-article.pdf>
- The Fix by Five Protocol, Steve Dale Interviews Dr. Brian Holub, Chief Medical Officer of VetCor
- The Queen & the Four (Feline) Seasons
- Hormones are Racing: Early spay & Neuter can prevent Later Heartache, Diana Webster
- How to reduce unwanted litters and end shelter deaths for kittens nationwide
- Making the Case to Your Veterinarian, Richard Speck, DVM
- Spay Cat by Five Months (Huffington Post)
- <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/57db6a1be4b053b1ccf296cc>
- Spay/Neuter: It's Not About Whether, It's Also About When, Peter Marsh

Blogs

- <http://petsweekly.com/all-about-cats/cat-health/1385-feline-fix-by-five> Stacy Mantle
- <http://www.petguide.com/blog/cat/fix-felines-by-five-program/> Amy Tokic April 4
- <http://blog.vet-advantage.com/news/2-7-17#companion>
- http://www.notey.com/@catwisdom101_unofficial/external/14596424/world-spay-day-feline-fix-by-five.html by Layla Morgan Wilde
- <https://catwisdom101.com/world-spay-day-feline-fix-by-five/> by Layla Morgan Wilde
- <http://amyshojai.com/spay-neuter-pets/> Amy Shojai
- <http://www.bjbangs.net/2017/04/06/fix-by-five-could-be-revolutionary-in-reducing-cat-overpopulation/> B.J.Bangs
- http://www.huffingtonpost.com/ruth-steinberger/spay-cats-by-five-months-_b_8815816.html

Presentations and Slide Shows

- Build Your Practice by Offering Early Age Spaying & Neutering, W. Marvin Mackie, DVM; For a copy of Dr. Mackie's speech "Early Age Neutering: Perfect for Every Practice," presented at the North American Veterinary Conference 2000, visit www.ahimsatx.org/
- Countering the Pushback Against Spay/Neuter, Natalie Isaza, DVM
- Making the case to your veterinarian by Dr. Richard Speck: http://www.mariansdream.org/animal_welfare/wp-content/uploads/Docs_Presentation_small1.ppt
- Timely Sterilization Makes Sense for the Practice and the Pets, Roger Johnson, DVM, DACVIM

Podcasts

- <https://www.stitcher.com/podcast/the-community-cats-podcast/e/51574559?autoplay=true>
- <http://www.communitycatspodcast.com/episode-45-esther-mechler/>



The Queen

by Dr W Marvin Mackie, DVM, QuickSpay and consulting, San Pedro, California

I will not recount the number of advantages of feline sterilization (spay/neuter.) Most reading this already know them. But what is not generally known is the female feline reproductive cycle. That cycle, when understood, is the driving force behind the spay by 4 or 5 months of age championed by several profile groups.

Caring pet providers, who do not want to allow the nearly inevitable, unplanned and unwanted pregnancy to occur, must request the fail-safe spay before the predictable breeding season arrives. That means all moms of this past year and all new potential queens by 5 months of age should have their once-in-a-lifetime sterilization surgery.

Let's start with all queens in the non-sexually active state - December. December 21st is the start of the winter season, marking the shortest day of the year. The incremental increasing lengths of daylight that begin after December 21st are being received through the eye and sent by the queen's optic nerve signaling this to the pituitary gland which, in turn, makes a hormone signaling the ovary that it's time to make follicles! The follicles, of course, make the eggs and estrogen. It is the estrogen that makes the queen into what we see: a vocal tom-seeking maniac. The mating

season is on! The toms, of course, are always ready and willing to serve. This magical time will begin toward the end of January and becomes full blown by mid-February. The domestic queen is an induced ovulator, meaning, when copulation takes place the severe stimulation of the mating process causes the follicles to rupture. The eggs and estrogen are then released. Now, two things are certain: she goes out of heat and there is guaranteed timing in which the sperm finds eggs. Thus begins 61 - 63 days of gestation.

The next season (spring, March 20th) begins the gestation/delivery/ nursing season. By this time all unspayed queens are in various stages of the active breeding cycle. Early estrous queens who mated in January, will be delivering their litters starting in mid-March. This is followed by a crescendo of successful matings resulting in more and more females who will be delivering. There are those queens who were kept under house arrest and avoided the male encounter. However, felines not mated often restart estrous within a few weeks for round two. Whenever a queen mates, it is 61-63 days later that an average of 3 to 5 kittens are born. Then, 2 months (8-9 weeks) later the kittens are weaning and the caretaker may decide to keep them or try to re-home them. If unsuccessful, ultimately the heart wrenching decision is made to take them to the shelter. Shelters call May, June and July the kitten tsunami season as there are multiple litters arriving per day! Of course, while kittens are nursing and growing they are a delight to watch. Their placement after the two month post delivery now becomes an acute dilemma for shelters.

Days begin shortening on June 21st which is also the first day of summer and there are kittens and cats of all stages and all ages. Some queens will get pregnant a second time! With house arrest or just luck the first estrous will subside but if mating did not occur, the female's heat will restart and toms have had a second chance. If she appears out of heat it could well be she is actually pregnant in which case, of course, the queen will soon look pregnant (distended abdomen.)

The traditional calendar reports September 23rd as the beginning of fall season. Pretty much by the end of August cycling (periods of heat) has stopped. Closure proceeds normally for the development of the last of this past year's nursing and weaning. Thus, fall is a blessed period of general feline tranquility until the next winter breeding season begins. Kittens are growing and moms gain weight back.

So there's the basic outline of what and when the forces of nature make the queens (young and older) do what they do. Personal experiences may differ somewhat but this outline encompasses the vast majority of them. Some obvious factors may change some of the timing; e.g.; caretakers in the southerly states are going to recognize this pattern; northern states may find the seasons are shorter; whereas in Hawaii the season is almost year round kitten time. Indoor cats with artificial lighting can have their heat cycles affected by their caretakers' personal use of lighting.

Armed with those time frames and the combination of age at a given season we know that young queens can come into estrous as early as 4 to 5 months and for sure by 6 months. This means spay by 5 months is good insurance against "oops" litters. A little thing like "I forgot to make an appointment" or simple procrastination can happen far too easily in our busy lives (see box September 23.)

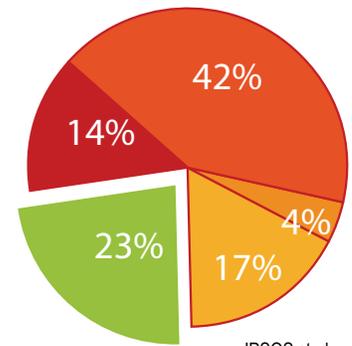
What is absolute is that any of the female kittens born into any year's reproductive cycle will be more than ready to respond to nature's wake-up call by the winter's increasing daylight. There is plenty of evidence that unintended litters are born simply because the queens were not spayed. Don't let your charge be one who adds to the kitten tsunami.

The sheer number of veterinarians who do sterilize cats younger than 6 months and the reported ease of surgery, safety and rapid recovery makes spay at 4 or 5 months of age a sound practice. By performing surgery by 5 months and eliminating all of the "oops" litters, the overbirthing could theoretically be eliminated in one or two years. What a triumph that would be for all concerned.



Nearly **75% of people** either “do not know” or think that 6 months or later is when a pet should be spay/neutered.

- 9 months or older
- 6 months
- any age
- don't know
- 1-3 months



IPSOS study

Spay by 5 months - before winter solstice!

The Kitten Seasons By W. Marvin Mackie, DVM, Consultant



DECEMBER 21

Each day becomes a little longer and it triggers the estrous or “heat.” Some queens will exhibit signs of heat as early as late January. By mid-February, queens 5 months or older are likely to be ready for a tom. Once bred, the clock starts:

- 2 months gestation, then birth
- 2 months nursing, then weaning
- +3 months, kittens mature at a rapid rate

5 months of age (August/Sept)



MARCH 20

Birthing begins with a few litters, then crescendos with activity. Cats are in heat, pregnant, or nursing. Peak time is May, June and July and there is a **shelter kitten tsunami**, considering the weaning time is around 2 months of age.



JUNE 21

Days are getting shorter. Heat is easing with a lot of overlap, and a number of surprised caregivers whose cats have had an “oops” litter are scheduling spays. But the damage is already done. The unplanned litters are now a problem. What is to become of all those kittens?

Moms should be spayed 2 to 3 weeks after weaning (or when the breasts have receded.)



SEPTEMBER 23

The days are now short enough that heat is on seasonal hold. By mid-October heat is down to zero. This year’s kittens are on the edge and not likely to be signaled into heat. Even female kittens in February will probably not go into heat this year, but all unspayed females will do so in the upcoming breeding season.



Fix by Five Months is a program sponsored by Marian's Dream. To read more or make a donation, visit mariansdream.org. Follow us on Facebook and Twitter: @marians_dream



Dr. Philip Bushby, DVM, MS, DACVS, Phil Bushby is a 1972 graduate of the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine, a Board Certified Veterinary Surgeon who served on the faculty at Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine for 36 years. Although he recently retired from Miss State he still holds the Marcia Lane Endowed Chair of Humane Ethics and Animal Welfare at Mississippi State University and works at the College part-time. His primary focus has been spay/neuter, taking junior and senior veterinary students to animal shelters in north Mississippi providing basic wellness care and spay neuter services for animals eligible for adoption for over 20 years. The services significantly

increase the adoption rates at the participating shelters, provide the students with an exceptional surgery experience and sensitize the students to the plight of animals in shelters. His program was honored five years ago to be a featured display in the Smithsonian Institute's folk-life festival in Washington, DC.

Dr. Bushby serves on the Board of PetSmart Charities, Inc., Mississippi Spay and Neuter, and previously served on the Board of the Association of Shelter Veterinarians. He is a member of the organizing committee for the specialty board in shelter medicine and received the ASPCA's Henry Bergh Award in 2008, the AVMA's national Animal Welfare Award in 2012 and the Association of Shelter Veterinarians Meritorious Service Award in 2015.



Dr. Kendall Houlihan, DVM, joined AVMA staff as an assistant director in the Animal Welfare Division in 2014. As the staff member with primary responsibility for topics related to the welfare of companion animals, early spay/neuter and population control of dogs and cats are high priority issues. Prior to working for the AVMA, Kendall worked as a small animal practitioner in the Chicagoland area, so also has an appreciation for related conversations being had among general practitioners.



Dr. Julie Levy, DVM, PhD, Diplomate ACVIM is professor of shelter medicine at the University of Florida. She is a specialist in small animal internal medicine and has published more than 100 scientific papers on the health and welfare of animals in shelters, feline infectious diseases, humane alternatives for cat population control, and contraceptive vaccines for cats. She founded Operation Catnip, a university-based community cat trap-neuter-return program that has sterilized more than 45,000 cats since 1998. In 2014, she joined Dr. Kate Hurley to launch the Million Cat Challenge, a shelter-based campaign to save a million cats in five years.



Dr. Michael R. Moyer, VMD, is the owner of Bridgewater Veterinary Hospital, Inc. and Bridgewater Consulting in Bensalem, e state, and national efforts in veterinary medicine, animal welfare, and animal sheltering.

He has extensive professional volunteer leadership experience with alumni, local, state, and national veterinary medical associations. He has held various elected and appointed positions within these organizations, notably having served as the PVMA's President for the year 2004 and as President of the University of Pennsylvania Veterinary Medical Alumni Society for 2007 and 2008, and is a Past-President of the American Animal Hospital Association. He was awarded the PVMA Veterinarian of the Year award for 2005, the Student AVMA Community Outreach Award in 2010, and the Delaware County SPCA Animal Welfare Leadership Award in 2011.



Joan Miller - Current - Cat Fanciers' Association (CFA) Outreach and Education Program Chair. Free-lance writer for CAT Talk Magazine, media contact and consultant to other cat writers. Over 40 years of involvement with cats including breeding CFA National Award winning Abyssinians, Advisory Board positions with the University of California, Davis, School of Veterinary Medicine and the Cornell University Feline Health Center; Legislative advocate for pet ownership and cat welfare issues. Over 30 years as a CFA Championship and Household pet judge; CFA Allbreed Judge Emeritus; Winner of the 2017 AVMA Humane Award. Former President, Winn Feline Foundation; Former CFA Director/board member for 25

years including CFA Vice President; Former President, National Council on Pet Population Study and Policy.



Peter Keys, artist and a retired United States Marine Corps Infantry Officer who has held leadership positions in four multinational corporations: Procter and Gamble, Johnson and Johnson, Cincinnati Milling Machines and the ABC Sports Network.

Peter worked as a Director for ABC Sports directing sports shows worldwide including Olympic venues. He is an active member of the San Diego Cat Fanciers and is fortunate enough to be the husband of the internationally renowned Joan Miller of pedigreed feline fame, residing in San Diego.



Dr. Lauren Demos, BVMS, 2016 AAFP President Elect spent 6 years of her career working at Western Australia's largest feline-only shelter and welfare organization, Cat Haven, while attending Murdoch University in Perth. She holds a post-graduate degree in Virology, and has completed a research fellowship at the University of Cambridge, in the UK. Currently she is completing the ABVP's feline medicine residency at a private practice in Michigan. She is an Associate Consultant for the Feline Internal Medicine Board on the Veterinary Information Network, as well as serving on the board of directors for VIN. She has been an active member of the AAFP since graduation, completing a Board of Directors Internship, and serving on the board for 2 years prior to holding her current elected officer position. She also serves as the group's liaison to the International Society for Feline Medicine.



Dr. Jane Brunt, DVM, Executive Director, CATalyst Council, Inc., Owner, Cat Hospital At Towson (CHAT), Baltimore, Maryland. Dr. Brunt has devoted her career to cats. After earning both undergraduate and veterinary degrees from Kansas State University (go 'Cats!), she founded Cat Hospital At Towson (CHAT), the first feline-only veterinary practice in Maryland.

Subsequent to data about declining health care for cats and the challenges cats face in animal welfare and sheltering communities, she's served full time as executive director of CATalyst Council, a non-profit coalition which connects people and organizations to transform the health, welfare and value of companion cats. Jane enjoys working with others through many local, state, national and international organizations, advancing the feline-specific perspective in animal health, welfare and the human-animal bond. She remains committed to CATalyst Council and Connecting Cats to Care using traditional methods, and by developing and implementing innovative technologies through existing and new relationships.



Dr. Marvin Mackie, D.V.M In 1976 Dr. Mackie discovered his role: to respond to a growing need within his profession to effectively address pet over-population. Breaking new ground and setting new standards of production, he changed the image and status of the spay/neuter clinic. He was determined to improve surgical procedures and systems to facilitate safe volume sterilization. In 1988 he endorsed early age sterilization; he is often referred to as one of the pioneers of the movement.

Over the years, Dr. Mackie developed and perfected a minimally invasive, safe surgical technique that is now being used extensively. The development of the "Quick Spay" approach is a thorough refining of the efficiency and attention to detail at each of the stages of surgery.

Dr. Mackie has lectured, taught and conducted wet-labs throughout the U.S. and in Brazil, Japan and Australia. His reputation as a spay/neuter specialist has gained him worldwide recognition. Now retired, Dr. Mackie remains involved in veterinary medicine in many ways, including helping organize large scale community clinics in Mexico that can complete 80 to 200 patients per clinic day; enough to have a significant impact.



Dr. Brenda Griffin, DVM, MS, DACVIM A 1990 UGA graduate, Dr. Griffin completed an internship at Angell Memorial Animal Hospital before spending time in private practice, animal shelters, and completing a residency in small animal internal medicine. Since 1999, she has supported training and research in the field of Shelter Medicine. She currently serves as an adjunct associate professor at the University of Florida and as the Regent for the shelter medicine specialty under the auspices of the American Board of Veterinary Practitioners. Her professional interests surround shelter animal behavior and welfare, population health and wellness, and especially

strategies to prevent animals from entering shelters, most notably spay-neuter and community cat programs.



Peter Marsh, J.D. For more than thirty years, Peter Marsh has helped government agencies, foundations, humane organizations, and animal advocacy groups throughout the United States develop and implement animal protection programs. In 1991, he helped found Solutions to Overpopulation of Pets (STOP), a group which spearheaded the passage of a publicly-funded neutering assistance program in New Hampshire. Since then, he has helped put together successful statewide animal-related legislative initiatives in Delaware, Illinois, Maryland, New York, North Carolina, and Vermont.

In recent years, he has written two books about programs to end animal shelter overpopulation in the United States and helped make a documentary film about progressive animal shelters in New Hampshire, his home state.



Esther Mechler received her BA from Bates College with her junior year at the University of Geneva studying with psychologist Jean Piaget. She received her M. Ed from the University of Rochester in 1968 and was Director of Admissions for the University of Bridgeport School of Law for five years prior to founding SPAY/ USA, a national spay/neuter referral service, in 1990. SPAY/USA was acquired by North Shore Animal League in 1993, and Esther served as the program director until 2010. In 1986, she established Marian's Dream [Foundation] as a vehicle for the promotion of programs to benefit companion animals. In 1995, she received the Humane Ethics in Action Award from the Geraldine R. Dodge Foundation and in 2014 was recognized

as outstanding alumna by Bates College for her work in animal welfare.



Jodell Raymond, Executive Director has over 30 years of experience in working in the not-for-profit sector in the areas of Marketing, Communications, Public Relations and Sponsorship Sales. She has served in several marketing communications positions including as the Director of Marketing & Communications for the National Susan B. Anthony Museum & House and The Director of Marketing Communications and Special Events for the Cat Fanciers' Association (CFA) where she was responsible for all external marketing communications and publications and was the Founding Executive Director for the High Falls Film Festival in Rochester, NY. In 2015, she was recognized by the CFA Board of Directors where she earned the Silver Star Award of Excellence.

As President of Black Cat Communications, a marketing communications company which provides marketing and communications for small business, Jodell's client list includes: The Huntridge Foundation -Las Vegas, NV, Vogue/All Creatures Great and Small, Monroe County, FOODLINK, Catholic Family Center, Housing Opportunities, Silver Thread Productions in Los Angeles, CA, East Pattern and Model Corp., FTT Manufacturing, and the Churchville-Chili Central School District. She currently is an adjunct faculty member at Monroe Community College in Rochester where she teaches courses in business, leadership, communications and marketing.

She holds an M. A. L.S. with a degree concentration in Women's Leadership from S.U.N.Y. Empire State College and a B.A. degree in Radio-Television with Departmental Honors in Mass Media from Marietta College, Marietta, OH. She lives in Rochester, NY with her husband and four cats Stiller, Salem, Jacob and Simba.



Patsy Murphy is the executive director of the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland since joining the League in 2010. She earned a law degree from Western Michigan, and holds a B.S. degree in Organizational Leadership from the University of New England located in Biddeford, Maine.

Patsy serves as a director for the Maine Federation of Humane Societies. She is a current Member of the Maine State Bar and has served as an adjunct instructor for law and ethics.

Patsy brings over twenty-five years of business acumen to her role as executive director. She actively participates in various statewide committees and work groups to improve the quality of life for animals and underserved populations in Maine.

Patsy resides in Portland, Maine and shares her home with her husband and two cats, as well as many foster dogs and puppies, cats and kittens who need time outside of the shelter. Patsy has fostered hundreds of animals during her time at the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland.

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Date: November 11, 2017

Contact: Executive Director, Jodell Raymond

Phone: (585) 210-9238 Email: Jodell1@rochester.rr.com

Feline Fix by Five Leads Efforts to Reduce Cat Overpopulation in U.S.

Incorporating the veterinary practice of spaying and neutering cats by five months of age will reduce the numbers of unexpected litters of kittens. At no extra cost to the owner, this one small step is a significant change in the current veterinary approach to feline spay/neuter and a revolutionary step towards reducing cat overpopulation in the U. S.

The goal of the newly created Feline Fix by Five Team is to work closely with the veterinary community to take this message to cat parents and make it a common practice for them to Fix Felines by Five Months or less. Esther Mechler President of Marian's Dream, the organization which is sponsoring the Feline Fix by Five Initiative, said, "*All these years, there has never been this kind of shift in the practice of spay/neuter which resulted in cats ending up in shelters. We now have a problem which we can solve and it will not cost the owners any additional money.*"

While there has been some progress in curbing the extensive domestic cat overpopulation, there's still a lot of work that needs to be done. It is estimated that over four million cats each year are euthanized in shelters across the United States. In addition, approximately 70 % of all cats who enter the shelter system are euthanized. While over 80% of household cats are eventually spay/neutered, many have already had at least one prior litter.

In his book Getting to Zero: A Roadmap to Ending Shelter Overpopulation in the United States (Concord, N.H.: Town & Country Reprographics, 2012, page 41), Peter Marsh, founder of the group Solutions to Overpopulation of Pets, reports that many people think that in the United States most litters of kittens are born to female cats who remain intact throughout their lives and have multiple litters. This is not the case. Cats who remain intact throughout their lives account for less than one fifth of all litters born to household pets in the U.S. More than four out of every five litters are born because of 'spay delay,' when young female cats are not sterilized until they have had at least one litter." A *2015 Catalyst Council Report* cites an American Humane Association Retention Study which states that 41 % of cat owners that adopt their cats from friends, family or a neighbor. These new owners typically have no idea their newly adopted feline can go into her first heat by five-months.

Educating cat parents as to the right time to spay/neuter will lead to having fewer cats who produce litters of kittens that would eventually be surrendered to shelters. Through outreach and education initiatives and partnering with veterinary community to get the word out, Feline Fix by Five is committed to ending the tidal wave of newborn kittens who enter shelters every spring and fall only to be euthanized, reducing cat overpopulation, and elevating the status of cats to the place they deserve. For more information about Feline Fix by Five, visit www.felinefixbyfive.org

###