



Alaska Pet News

by STOP the Overpopulation of Pets, Inc.

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STOP News

Dear Members & Pet Owners: STOP the Overpopulation of Pets has been very successful over the last 5 years in paying for spaying and neutering of pets throughout Alaska. We have been so overwhelmed with requests for assistance and all the various paperwork involved that we haven't had as much success at fundraising lately. Two of our main volunteers also moved out of state, which greatly weakened our volunteer force (we miss you Cindy & Claire!).

We recently completed our 5-year review with the IRS (and we have done an excellent job, thanks to our volunteers and veterinarians, and we passed just fine!) and various other and IRS forms for our well as the huge number have taken up all the volunteers. With no time are nearly out of funds 2005, we spent over only \$12,296, so on second time in 5 years, vouchers. Anchorage Friends of Pets (907- and those who can get area can use the Alaska spay clinic...see links at our Web site for more information or call them.

In 2005, we spent over \$25,000 but brought in only \$12,296, so on March 21, for only the second time in 5 years, we stopped issuing new spay/neuter vouchers.

end-of-year data entries accountant, and these as of vouchers coming in time of our small corps of for fundraising efforts, we for spays and neuters. In \$25,000 but brought in March 21, for only the stopped issuing new pet owners can apply for 562-2535) \$20 coupon, to Anchorage from any SPCA's (907-562-2999)

We do, however, have one \$2,000 grant from PetSMART Charities that will cover full costs of spay/neuters for low-income clients only. You will need to send proof of low-income based on federal or state program participation such as welfare. Mail to STOP along with a self-addressed, stamped envelope and list your information about your pet including dog, cat, male, female, name of pet, etc. if you are eligible for this special voucher.



Cover photos by Adri Holbert.

Most important, can you donate? We are a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, and all donations are tax deductible. We would appreciate any assistance right now! Any volunteer help with fundraising is also needed!

As you know, it is very difficult to get donations for

animals. Thank you, and we apologize for not being able to help you financially at this time. Please do what you can to stop pet overpopulation by having your pet spayed or neutered. You will help save the lives of many pets from being killed at Alaska's animal controls through your ethical decision.



"Blue," one of two pups rescued by Alaska Dog & Puppy Rescue and then adopted by STOP's director. Just an example of the years of love you can adopt from Alaska's animal controls & rescue groups. Today you can save lives by adopting a pet and donating to a humane society such as STOP.

STOP GARAGE SALE - CAN YOU HELP?

STOP Annual Garage Sale - call Lori at 745-5674 if you have items to donate or can volunteer. Will be held June 9 & 10 in Palmer. Remember, all donations are tax deductible and are used to help save dogs and cats through our spay/neuter and educational programs, as well as to help keep STOP going! Please help!

STOP the Overpopulation of Pets, Inc.

PO Box 4083, Palmer, AK 99645

Web site: www.alaskastop.org

E-mail: info@alaskastop.org

Choosing a New Pet

information collected by Carolyn Holbert

There are many things to consider when choosing a new pet. First, one must decide what type of animal will best suit the family. One thing to always bear in mind is that taking an animal into one's home is a lifetime commitment. Pets are not disposable, like stuffed toys, and they can't be exchanged for a cuter variety, like trading in a car. This column will look specifically at one of the most popular pets: the dog.

The first thing to consider is lifestyle, yours and the dog's.

A mostly sedentary family is setting themselves up for trouble if they adopt a dog that needs lots of activity. So, before heading to the shelter or checking out the ads, make a list:

- How much time do I spend at home?
- How much activity am I comfortable with?
- Do I have a fenced yard?
- Why do I want a dog?
- Do I have children & what ages are they?
- Does my house always have to be "perfect," or can I tolerate clutter?
- Can I afford a dog?

The answers to these questions will lead you to the right pet decision. For example, if you are home only a few hours in the evening, then a dog may not be for you (although some pet owners insist that having at least two dogs solves the loneliness issue, and we certainly don't want to discourage good pet owners from adopting pets when so many are being killed because there are not enough homes). Dogs are social creatures with a pack mentality. When you adopt a dog, you become their pack, and if you are not around, your dog suffers emotionally. Dogs need your company. Adopting a puppy, for example, is very labor intensive and demands someone home most all the time, like having a small child. Housebreaking a puppy is not something that can be done a few hours in the evening after work; it is an all day-long and night-long business.

If you love outdoor activity, then an active dog will be a good choice. All dogs need exercise, and some very active breeds need more than the daily short walk. For example, the herding dogs, such as Heelers and Border Collies, need vast amounts of physical exercise. They were bred to work, and they need the activity. A Greyhound or a Whippet would never be a good choice for a person who does not like to go for a good run several times a week. Large dogs tend to need more exercise than small ones, but even small ones like the Jack Russell need lots of exercise. Match your activity level with that of your dog.

Dogs need a safe place in which to spend time. Your home is the best choice, but dogs do need their outside time, both for potty business and for sheer pleasure. It is the law that you keep your dog under control, either by a leash, a fence, or voice control. The latter only works when you are physically with your

dog, so if you ever want to leave your dog out when you are not with it, a fence is a necessity. A free-running dog is a dog that annoys neighbors is at risk for getting hit by a vehicle, and that will cost you in fines when Animal Control is called to get it. A doghouse with a chain is not a long-term solution. If you don't want to spend time with your dog, you don't need a dog. And in Alaska's climate, it is not even safe for your dog to be left outside for hours at a time. Local vets see all too many dogs with frostbitten ears and feet. That coat of hair is not enough to protect the dog from the cold.

Why do you want a dog? If you want one for company and have the time and money, then start your search. This is the best reason for owning a dog: wanting the company and love of your dog. If you want one for safety, don't think you need a hulking

big dog to stand guard. Many would-be intruders are deterred merely by the sound of a barking dog. A big, strong bark is more important than a big, strong dog. The family-friendly retrievers and Labradors have big barks that will deter would-be intruders and have wonderful dispositions that will make them great family members. A trained guard dog does not usually make a good pet, but good pets often make really good guard dogs because they regard their human family as their pack, the house as their den.

Children are always a consideration when choosing a dog. Small, delicate breeds, such as the Chihuahua, usually do not work well with children. These breeds sense the boisterous play of a child could hurt

them. Such breeds do work very well for childless households, however. Older dogs who have already lived with children before are a really good choice here. Very small children could injure, or even kill, a small dog or puppy, by falling onto the animal or by squeezing it too hard. It takes immense time to train a puppy, and if you have very young children, you may not have the time to devote to the children and the puppy. That is a situation not fair to either. If you want a dog who will play and romp with your child, choose a more active breed. Again, matching you and your family to the pet is important.

If you are having a bad hair day, the dog won't care. If your boss screamed at you at work, your dog will still love you. If you put on a few pounds, your dog will never notice. The dog has immense love to give.



Choosing a New Pet

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If you cannot stand a mess in your house and get positively nuts over dog hair on the floor or furniture, you might not make a good pet owner. Some breeds, usually the short-haired and the curly haired ones, do not shed as much as others, but all dogs involve some degree of “mess.” They leave their chew toys on the floor, they do leave hair, and if they are untrained puppies, they will have the occasional potty accident. They slosh water out of their water bowls and walk across the floor with dribbling chins. If you cannot be comfortable with this, don’t get a dog.

How are your finances? No, I don’t mean can you afford to adopt or buy a dog, I mean can you afford to keep a dog? There are vet bills for everything from yearly physicals, shots, and licenses to the various illnesses that any animal will get. Just

like people, dogs get colds, intestinal upsets, broken bones, sprains, even cancer. And they eat. And eat. If you cannot afford to set aside hundreds of dollars per year for veterinary care, do not get a pet. Since all dogs should be spayed or neutered, you will need the money for that as well. An actual injury or major illness can cost thousands of dollars. A responsible pet owner will be prepared to cover the necessary costs of keeping his or her animal healthy.

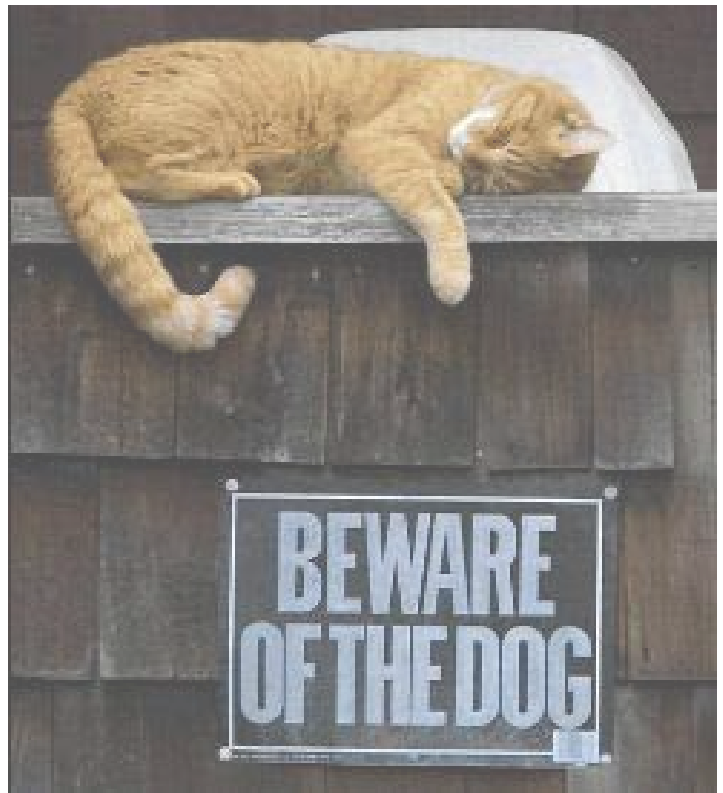
Some breeds have more health problems than others, so avoid a pure-breed dog if you want to minimize your expenses.

Crossbreeds are, in general, genetically healthier than purebreds.



Why should you adopt a dog into your home and into your life? That dog will love you unconditionally. If you are having a bad hair day, the dog won’t care. If your boss screamed at you at work, your dog will still love you. If you put on a few pounds, your dog will never care. The dog has immense love to give. And if you have love to give back, choose a dog from a local shelter. There are thousands of dogs that die, lonely and unwanted, in shelters every year. Most of those dogs end up there as a result of irresponsible owners, owners who did not think about the fit between them and the dog, owners who did not think about the cost of owning a dog, owners who did not keep their dog under control. Most of them are loving, healthy dogs who need someone like you: a loving and responsible owner who is making a deliberate and well thought out choice to add a canine member to the family.

Sources: <http://www.canismajor.com/dog/choose.html> or <http://dogplay.com/GettingDog/choosing.html>



2005 STOP End-of-Year Data

Donations	\$12,289
Expenses	\$25,296
No. of Spay/Neuter Vouchers Sent to Pet Owners	823
Major Areas of Alaska Where Vouchers Used	Mat-Su Borough, Kenai Peninsula, Kodiak Island



STOP’S MISSION: STOP the Overpopulation of Pets is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable corporation dedicated to paying for spaying and neutering dogs and cats in order to eliminate the killing of excess animals in Alaska’s animal control shelters. Our secondary mission is to educate pet owners and potential pet owners about pet overpopulation, pet care, pet-related issues, training, and concerns in order to better the lives of pet owners, pets, and the community. We are hoping that you can help us. All donations are tax deductible.

PLEASE HELP STOP SAVE LIVES!

Tax-deductible donations are greatly appreciated and always needed. Become a STOP member today and know that your financial assistance is going to a worthy life-saving cause.



Membership Application to Join STOP the Overpopulation of Pets



Mail check to:

STOP, PO Box 4083, Palmer, AK 99645

_____ \$25 Individual _____ \$35 Family _____ \$100 Corporate _____ Other

2006 Membership Renewals due now!

Name _____ Email (optional) _____

Mailing Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

You have my permission to use my name in STOP literature and publications.

I wish to remain anonymous, please do not use my name in STOP literature and publications.

All donations tax deductible. STOP is a 501(c)(3) charitable nonprofit corporation. Larger donations accepted.

And many thanks to...

FOSSELMAN AND ASSOCIATES. Fosselman has donated many hours of time helping us do our various governmental forms and tax work. Thanks to them helping with the stacks of paperwork required, we passed our mandatory Federal review for our non-profit status. We are especially appreciative of the hard work done by the Fosselman staff this year as, in spite of the horrible loss of their building due to a fire, they were as efficient and prompt as ever. Fosselman and Associates, we love you and couldn't get along without you.

KASH'S CARPETS (Wasilla). Kash's Carpets donated carpet to us for our efforts in opening a thrift store. Even though the store did not work out long term, the carpet really improved the space for the months we were there. Thanks, Kash's Carpets; we appreciate your efforts on the behalf of local non-profits like ours.

NUGEN'S RANCH THRIFT STORE (Wasilla). Nugen's Ranch donated several pieces of office equipment to us. This enabled us to work more efficiently as, for the first time, more than one volunteer at a time could help out in the office. Although Nugen's Ranch is out to save and rehabilitate human lives through their drug and alcohol treatment programs, we are grateful that they also help out with the animal life-saving work of STOP.

MONARCH SIGNS (Palmer). This business really came through for us when we needed a sign for our store. They designed one just for us, and we loved the dog and cat paw prints that "walked" across the sign. You did a great job, and we highly recommend the quality of your work.

OUR MEMBERS and grantees who continue to support us throughout the years. We could not save lives without you! And our **BOARD MEMBERS AND OTHER VOLUNTEERS** who give so much of their time to help animals. Kudos to all who helped out.



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