

# Spay/Neuter making a difference

What a difference a day makes—and the best of care on AnimalSave’s state-of-the-art mobile spay/neuter clinic.

For Kate, a velvety Lab mix puppy with honey-colored eyes, and her person, Bob Woods, it meant certainty that Kate won’t contribute to the problem of too many dogs for too few owners. Shadow Dance Photography and Studio Nuñez followed Kate through her day to learn more about this extraordinary AnimalSave program and share it here.

What we observed was nothing short of a small miracle, as the tightly-knit, highly-organized team of volunteers, medical professionals, and administrators came together like clockwork to register patients, perform 19 spay-neuter surgeries, provide detailed instruction on post-op care, record data, sterilize equipment, reassure owners, and soothe furry brows.

“I am unbelievably pleased with the care we received,” says Bob. “Kate means the world to me; she’s like my child. It was a little frightening to drop her off, but everyone was so helpful and professional, I don’t believe she suffered at all or will even have a scar. She’s doing fantastic,” he reports.

“Without this program, I would have had to have saved up over several months, possibly putting Kate at risk of having a litter. With this clinic, I was able to get her taken care of. If you need help with your animal, AnimalSave is here for you,” he adds.

We couldn’t have said it better.



**9:00 a.m.** The handoff. Kate relaxes into vet tech Jill Rose’s strong arms. Kate’s surgery today will cost about half the price of private care, thanks to a subsidy by AnimalSave—made possible in turn by your donations.



**8:30 a.m.** Check in. Volunteer Sue Robertson helps Bob register, and confirms that Kate is good to go for her surgery.



**9:05 a.m.** A quick kiss. Tiffany can’t resist Kate’s charm before bringing her to the van.



**9:10 a.m.** Weigh in. Jill weighs Kate to calculate precise dosages of anaesthesia and other meds.



**9:15 a.m.** Are you sure it’s OK? Kate is settled into a large crate, with a little sedative to help her relax.



**10:00 a.m.** With all the animals ready, Dr. Nancy MacFarland studies the reports and plans her work.



**11:00 a.m.** Dr. MacFarland operates on Kate in the van’s state-of-the-art surgery bay.



**1:30 p.m.** A little woozy, but Kate’s fine. Jill checks her vitals and assesses her release time.

## why trap?

entered AnimalSave’s foster programs, where they are tamed and successfully adopted.

Why trap? Humane philosophy aside, statistics show that it’s actually less costly to trap, care for, and release feral cats than it is to resort to euthanasia. (Go to <http://www.guerrillaeconomics.biz/communitycats/> to generate a dynamic report specifically for Nevada County.)

Joyce Karst, in the photo at left, works tirelessly trapping feral cats for people who have seen two cats become 30 in a year’s time.

If you know of a feral cat colony and would like help from AnimalSave’s TNR program, please call our office at 477-1706.



Of the many animals spayed or neutered through the AnimalSave mobile clinic, approximately 20 percent—or 750 animals—have been feral cats.

Thanks to AnimalSave’s TNR (Trap-Neuter-Release) program, they are altered, vaccinated, and returned to safe barn homes or managed colonies. Many kittens from the feral moms have

## within 30 x 12, 12 x 3 x 102 = 18,000 (???)

No, it’s not some new Wall Street numbers game. Instead, it’s the formula for success within an effective spay/neuter program that targets the (square?) root of the pet overpopulation problem by facilitating responsible pet ownership.

Because within the 30 foot x 12 foot confines of the mobile spay/neuter clinic, during the 102 weeks of its operation (since March of 2008), for 3 days a week a daily average of 12 animals have been spayed or neutered. And that equals 18,000? Carolyn Niehaus, AnimalSave’s executive director, explains the math.

“Estimating that half of these animals were females having 2 litters of 5 offspring in a year, we conservatively project that this work has resulted in preventing the birth of 18,000 animals,” she says.

“Since the mobile spay/neuter clinic began operating, we have altered slightly more than 3,600 dogs and cats,” she adds.

“Because AnimalSave heavily subsidizes the cost



of surgery it’s much more affordable, so many more people are able to be responsible about spaying/neutering their dogs and cats,” she says. As an example, depending on the dog’s weight, the owner’s cost for spay surgery at the AnimalSave mobile clinic ranges from \$90 to \$120.

Based at the AnimalSave office at 520 East Main Street in Grass Valley, the mobile clinic serves all of Nevada County and surrounding communities, with visits to North San Juan every third Saturday of each month and a trip to Folsom one Saturday a month.

For details about the clinic’s schedule, fees, and special discounts based on income eligibility, please call 477-1706.



**3:30 p.m.** After receiving instructions for post-op care, Bob makes Kate comfy for the ride home.