

CHANGING LIVES THROUGH RESPONSIBILITY.



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Winter Issue | 2010

Community News



Care. Adopt. Neuter.

(CAN) – are its central tenants that encourage individuals to make personal choices to keep their pets healthy and safe. The campaign provides owners with resources and essential tools to take better care of their pets in hopes of keeping them off of the streets.

News of free spay/neuter services are circulated through door hangers with the help of volunteers going house-to-house. And for that owner that needs a few tips on how to make “Fido” a better-

What’s Up in Our Community?

How is our community managing the abundance of animals sitting in area shelters and the thousands more roaming our city streets?

The Talk About It! campaign is a new bilingual grassroots effort recently launched by the City of San Antonio, Alamo Area Partners of Animal Welfare (AAPAW), and the San Antonio Area Foundation Consortium of Partners. Three core elements – Care, Adopt, and Neuter

behaved pet, training workshops are available through local Pet Fiestas. Pet Fiestas are family friendly with face painting, refreshments, and even weight pulling contests by the Bully Breed Rescue.

If you watch closely, you may see a glimpse of San Antonio Spurs player, Manu Ginobili, promoting responsible pet ownership thru a series of PSAs. His Latino heritage is certain to draw supporters in a city whose population is 60% Hispanic and where more than 44% percent of the population speaks Spanish in the home.

In the future, residents of Bexar County should expect to see a series of billboards, advertisements, and neighborhood events encouraging people to Talk About It! and to spread the word on what it means to be a caring pet owner. “We are very excited about this campaign,” says Dr. Maria Hernandez Ferrier, Texas A&M University San Antonio President and campaign spokesperson. “Not only does the campaign bring information and resources to the public’s attention, it empowers the community to come together and make a difference in the lives of our pets.”

Race for the Rescues Does it Again in 2010!



In our third year, we were blessed with another successful event. Who would have known our small 5k dog walk would have grown from 500 participants to over a 1000 in just two years? Thanks to the support of our community, SNIPSA raised over \$70,000 to continue its rescue efforts. WellMed and the Rapier Family Trust again signed on as our title sponsor while Gunn Automotive lent the use of a sleek convertible to head up the race as our pace car. New this year were team entries, where South Texas Veterinary Specialists captured the win for the largest team. A last minute surprise from Spurs basketball players to distribute winning medals was especially exciting. We were happy to be reunited with so many SNIPSA faces, rescue animals from years ago proudly integrated into their newly adoptive homes. Thank you to all of our sponsors, volunteers, and participants for helping to make our race a success.





SNIPSA Is All Over the Map

When SNIPSA was founded in late 2005, the concept was simple. A small team of animal lovers and veterinarians were going to form a group to rescue, rehabilitate and re-home homeless and abandoned animals in San Antonio. No one had any idea how that one conversation at Central Market would evolve and the many places SNIPSA would go.

Adoptions started right in the Alamo Heights area where the founding members resided. A network of foster homes was recruited and monthly adoption events were held at Starbucks. This was a novel idea at the time; where traditional adoptions had been held at shelters and businesses such as PetSmart.

And with the help of a search engine called "Petfinder," matching adopters with rescued pets was easy. Petfinder utilizes a database where viewers can search a variety of breeds and animals by age, size, gender, and/or location. He can then click on that animal's name and view pictures and a short biography of that animal. Viewers can either submit an online application to adopt the animal or can click on the sponsoring adoption center's website link directly. With more than 3.5 million viewers a month, Petfinder has done an amazing job linking millions of once homeless animals with adoptive families and revolutionized the rescue community.

This is exactly how SNIPSA has re-homed dozens of dogs/cats to 16 different states in the United States. As long as the potential adopter is willing to provide for transportation and passes all other application requirements, we will fly our rescues cross-country. Our goal is to get the animals into a loving home and make room for the next in line at the shelter. So spread the word. Tell your family and friends about SNIPSA and help us continue to send our rescues "all over the map."



SNIPSA Partners with Pearl

Pearl Farmers Market has been an exciting new outlet for adoptions within San Antonio. One Saturday a month, SNIPSA heads down to the refurbished Pearl Brewery and showcases the latest and greatest rescue dogs. It's always a happening scene with folks from all over the city shopping and exploring the different events. For an organization that doesn't have a standing shelter, it affords prospective adopters the opportunity to visit multiple animals in a single setting. They can meet small and large dogs, quiet and energetic. And if we don't seem to have what an adopter is looking for, it is usually just a matter of hours before the SNIPSA network of dog fosters can find the perfect match. Not only is it a great time to indulge our poodles with affection but also a fun means for our rescues to socialize with other SNIPSA buddies. So next time you are in the downtown area, just follow the barking and tail wagging all the way to Pearl! Visit our website for prospective adoption dates. A big thank you to Pearl for supporting the rescue mission in our community.

Saving Lives.



● A dashing success.

Living Life on the Street: Dasher's Story

"He's around the corner," she said as her own dogs barked from the doorway of her house. "One of the guys that lives here in the shelter picked him up, we don't want him."

We turned and headed back down her driveway, past a brand new Corvette and a handful of other nice vehicles, in the direction she had indicated. A guy was standing on the corner and we asked if he knew where the German Shepherd was; with a look of excitement, he walked us a

little further on and pointed at a broken down truck. "He's over there."

From the description the woman had given us earlier, I expected to find a black and tan dog of some sort who was a little underweight. When we walked around the truck, though, we saw what quite literally appeared to be a "rack of bones." He was long, very tall, with coarse remnants of black and tan hair. His most striking feature, however, was his enormous and hairless purple paws. In front of him sat a bowl of some kind of slop, alongside a small bucket of dirty water. He was standing over the bowl, balanced precariously on three bony legs while the fourth bobbed awkwardly. And then, he wagged his tail.

It looked much more like a whip than a tail. But undeniably, it was wagging. Although the food-like substance in front of him was all he had, and all he had been eating for awhile, he didn't defend it at all. As I reached out towards him, he turned towards me, chain rattling

against the bumper of the truck, and gently licked my hand. He smelled awful; fleas were jumping about on his bare skin which was taut against the bones underneath, each bone clearly defined; his rear leg that was able to touch the ground quivered, and yet still, his tail wagged in time with the kisses he was showering upon me.

"Can you help him?" I turned around to see the guy who led me to him still standing there. I would later find out this was sort of a halfway house, and this gentleman had been sharing the little food he had with this dog. I told him I'd do what I could. I snapped a few pictures and promised the guy I'd be back for him – but before I left, he needed a name. I called my mom and asked her if she would mind if I named him after her German Shepherd that had passed away recently; she said she'd be honored, so I hung up the phone and told Dasher that I would be back.

I was only in this neighborhood on this day because I was recruiting people for a SNIPSA Big Fix; and before I had even left Dasher's street, SNIPSA had agreed to take him on, even with the incredible amount of veterinary work he would need. I turned back around, put a leash on him, and unhooked his chain; apparently, though, Dasher had used every last bit of energy he had to greet me, and he didn't have the strength to walk to the car. I found the man that had asked me to help him, let him know he was going to be taken care of, and then I scooped him up and carried all 41 pounds of him to the car.

Over the next few months, Dasher had to endure multiple hip surgeries to repair one previously fractured and another dislocated hip. He was also treated for heartworms and underwent cryptorchid surgery for a retained testicle. Much of his time in foster care was spent too weak to walk and too sick to play, but he made it through on the strength of his amazing disposition. From the days he nearly starved to death chained to a truck, to the day he met his family, and still today, Dasher's tail wags and the kisses never stop. — SNIPSA volunteer



● Glory before SNIPSA.

ONE SONG: Glory

We get one shot at life, one chance to write "our" song. Factors influence our lives in unexpected ways and our song changes directions. This is the story of a once-stray dog whose story went from A Street Car Named Desire to a song of GLORY in one afternoon.

Glory came to SNIPSA after being spotted by a volunteer who was out taking appointments for an upcoming Big Fix event. She couldn't believe her eyes as this helpless creature staggered along the streets. She asked around to see if anyone owned her but she already knew the answer – just one more stray fending for itself.

She loaded her in the car, knowing that it might ultimately lead to her euthanasia, but she couldn't leave Glory on the streets in her condition.

She was emaciated, her skin thick with scale, hair loss over much of her body, she had heartworms, her eyes were filled with mucous, and one could only guess at the number of litters she had whelped.

There was good news for Glory – she's been given a new life – a life filled with good nutrition, proper medical care, and a foster home. It's been just six weeks and look at Glory's recovery. Her hair is returning, she eats 8 – 10 cups of

food a day and is putting on weight. Her heartworms are being treated and before long she will be spayed. Most importantly is the transition in Glory's spirit. She loves to follow her foster mom around, and instead of staggering, she runs and enjoys exploring her yard and neighborhood. She will be ready for adoption soon and may change a family's song. Glory is a wonderful example of how your life's song can change in an instant.



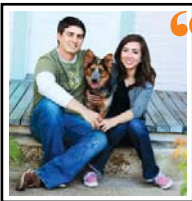
● Glory six weeks after SNIPSA.

SNIP•ITS

The joy of reading heartfelt messages from adopting families is the driving force of fostering – the reason we open our homes to animals in need. In the end we know any sacrifice is worthwhile.



🐾 Wrigley



“While spending time one evening on the SNIPSA website, we saw a picture of Wrigley and fell in love with his mischievous puppy face. We soon met him at a SNIPSA adoption event and within five minutes, we knew this was our dog. We talked to the adoption coordinator and found out that we couldn't bring

him home right away since he was showing symptoms of kennel cough. The SNIPSA staff did an incredible job of keeping us informed on how he was doing, and unfortunately, we found out that he was sick with something far worse – he actually was developing distemper. We spent the next few weeks visiting him and hoping he would get better. One day we asked the staff if we could bathe Wrigley using some of their supplies, and the staff was happy to provide us with whatever we needed. On that day, Wrigley was especially sluggish and had limited energy. After bathing him and letting him eat what little he could, his energy improved and he even began to shake his little butt while we played with him (around this time we gave him the nickname “Wriggle Butt”). Wrigley was special to us and we wanted him to come home soon. The staff was encouraging but forthright about what distemper may entail for our little buddy.

During this time, Michael was planning to propose and was hoping to integrate Wrigley into the proposal surprise. Miraculously, Wrigley's health and strength improved! As a result, Michael contacted the SNIPSA staff to arrange to have Wrigley for the weekend of the proposal. We picked up Wrigley for the day, and he was the perfect decoy to keep me from being suspicious. Wrigley witnessed our engagement and has surely completed our marriage.” — Jessica and Mike



🐾 Kyra

“Kyra (formerly Cinderella) came to our family in May of 2009. We have dogs and were always worried about the dynamic of adding a cat to the pack. She was a beautiful little kitten and had a personality that kept us on our toes and always laughing. She has made three kids very happy! She sleeps with them at night and has her favorite blanket to cuddle on. If it's being washed, she patiently waits until it's

back before she's willing to settle down for the night. She has put all the dogs in their place and will cuddle with them much to their chagrin. Kyra is definitely the ruler of this roost and we wouldn't have it any other way. We all love her and couldn't be happier that she made her way into our hearts and our family.” — Alison and Brad

🐾 Kiwi & Cooper



“Kiwi Sue and Super Cooper came to us from the most wonderful Rescue/Adoption Agency, SNIPSA. Their foster parents Cheryl and Kathy are angels in the animal world and because of them, we have two very special friends in our life. They are a part of everything we do! They love to go for

car rides and “Get the Kids” will put them at the back door in an instant! We do a lot of camping and as soon as the dogs see bags being packed, they wait to see where the next adventure will take them.

Kiwi is Kelsey's baby and she is known in the 3rd grade as the cutest dog in the world! Kelsey makes beds for Kiwi that would be fit for a king and her wardrobe would make any princess jealous! She is a sweet little pup and is happy as long as she is with her people.

Taylor and Cooper are quite the pair whether chasing squirrels in the yard or lying on their backs in the sun. Cooper sits above Taylor on the couch as if to say, “I've got your back”. On road trips, Cooper is quite the copilot – he won't sit anywhere but the console for the first 3 hours of the trip!

We are blessed to have our dogs – their companionship is beyond measure. Everyone that meets them wants to know where we got them – of course we tell them SNIPSA!” — The Nix Family

Content of letters may have been edited due to space constraints.

Visit www.snipsa.org to learn more about SNIPSA's mission or adoption.

Canine Chatter



SNIPSA “Fixes” San Antonio

Our Big Fix clinics have taken off. We find ourselves all over the city partnering with churches whose neighborhoods are home to hundreds of unwanted and homeless animals. The problem – too many dogs and cats left to fend for themselves without proper food and shelter and, most importantly, NOT STERILIZED. SNIPSA knows the story all too well. We receive the phone calls, the pleas to assist with a found or abandoned animal. Unfortunately, we can't help them all and find ourselves at capacity long before we have an available foster. The struggle is no different for other area shelters whose wait lists for shelter space are often weeks to months.

It's a frustrating problem, but there is a solution – more spay and neuter. It is estimated that San Antonio needs to be performing close to 100,000 sterilizations per year to offset the number of animals being born and ultimately euthanized. There are currently six organizations offering low cost/free spay neuter in San Antonio – SpaySA, Animal Defense League, Animal Care Services, SNAP, Humane Society, and SNIPSA. Just over 45,000 surgeries were provided by these groups in 2010, a far cry from what San Antonio needs to be sterilizing to make a significant impact.

To address this issue, a group of like-minded animal welfare organizations have formed a spay/neuter task force. Answers are being sought to questions such as:

- Which zip codes in Bexar County house the largest number of free roaming and unowned pets?
- Where are most of the kittens and puppies being born?
- Where are the owner animal retention problems occurring and why?
- How can we best serve this population of homeless animals that fall victim to our landfills year after year?

As a result of this growing problem, SNIPSA decided to bring help right to the doorsteps of the people that need it most and launched its free spay/neuter outreach program known as “Big Fix” clinics.

How does a Big Fix clinic work?

In the days leading up to a clinic, volunteers go door-to-door distributing bilingual flyers and talking with residents. If we hear or see a dog/cat in a yard, we knock on the door and take the time to visit with the pet owner. We let them know we will be in their neighborhood just days later offering FREE spay/neuter, vaccination, and microchipping services. On occasion we may encounter a person who refuses to neuter his animal because he wants puppies or is under the misconception it will change his animal's personality. But for the most part, we are well received by the public – an answered prayer for residents that have limited financial resources.

The morning of a Big Fix we arrive early to meet folks at the church where they will leave their animals for the day. Volunteers weigh and transfer dogs/cats to kennels and assist owners with paperwork. Within a matter of hours, we have an entire Sunday school classroom converted to a holding area for 175 dogs/cats. Another classroom is transformed to a fully equipped MASH style surgery suite able to accommodate seven veterinarians working at a given time. Our last surgery is typically finished by 5 p.m. Owners are called and discharge begins. Then clean-up starts and we work late into the evening breaking down equipment, bleaching kennels, and restoring order to the borrowed classrooms. You walk away tired and dirty – knowing you made a difference in the lives of people and their pets – and asking “When is the next “Big Fix?”

BECOME A BIG FIXER! (Learn how on page 7.)

What Can You Do?

1. Donations Welcome

SNIPSA is proud of the number of animals we have saved over the past four years. This would not be possible without our volunteers and the financial support of our community and friends.

Getting an animal ready for adoption is not simple. It requires that the animal be spayed/neutered, heartworm tested, vaccinated, micro-chipped, and treated for parasites. SNIPSA also assists a large population of injured and sick animals that have had little prior veterinary care. We are often their first stop and treat heartworm infection, skin and dental disease, and orthopedic injuries. With your support, we can continue our mission of saving animals in need.

2. Foster Families Needed

Foster families are the single most important variable in the number of animals SNIPSA is able to rescue. We do not have a standing shelter and depend entirely on volunteers to open their doors to house our animals. While in foster care we learn a great deal about the animals' needs and behavior – how they get along with cats, other dogs, small children, any escape tendencies, housebreaking, and general temperament. This helps us make a suitable match between the animal and his new owner. SNIPSA strives to find permanent placement for our rescues and our fosters are instrumental in making this happen.

3. Become a Big Fixer!

For less than the cost of catching, housing, and euthanizing ONE animal at Animal Care Services, you can make an impact in your community. By donating \$200 you can become a charter member of our Big Fixer program.

See page 6 to learn more about SNIPSA's Big Fix program.

Follow the progress of our Big Fixer membership drive at www.snipsa.org. The names of each individual and group who become Big Fixers will be listed on our website and will receive updates throughout the year.

If you aren't able to contribute financially, consider donating your time working at a Big Fix clinic. Volunteers are needed to block walk, set up for the event, work registration, cook, clean, wash packs, enter computer data, and load equipment. Please contact snipsabecky@gmail.com for volunteer information.

4.



**Buy a Shirt,
Give a Gift,
Save a Life!**

Orders must be received by December 15th to arrive in time for Christmas!



What better gift to give for the holidays than one that supports the homeless animals in our community. For ordering information, visit www.snipsa.org or complete this form and mail with payment to:

SNIPSA, 6338 N. New Braunfels #185, San Antonio, TX 78209

White short-sleeved tee __YM __YL __S __M __L __XL __@ \$18= _____

Gray long-sleeved tee __YM __YL __S __M __L __XL __@ \$20= _____

Gray hoodie __YM __YL __S __M __L __XL __@ \$35= _____

Call when my order is ready for pick-up. **OR** Add \$7.00 shipping & handling. TOTAL _____

Name _____

Address _____

Phone _____ Email _____

Special Thanks

Your support and belief in our mission has enabled SNIPSA to rescue and rehome more than 3,000 animals.

- Acres North Animal Hospital
- Amy McNutt Charitable Trust/ Courtney Walker
- The Barking Lot
- Branding Works
- Digiprint
- Dr. Stephanie Lisciandro
- George, Kymberly, & Blake Rapier Family Trust
- Kronkowsky Foundation
- Perrin Beitel Veterinary Hospital
- PetSmart Charities
- San Antonio Area Foundation
- Slone + Company Advertising
- South Texas Veterinary Specialists
- Spring Branch Veterinary Hospital
- US Signs
- Veterinary Imaging Center
- WellMed

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For more information on adoption or fostering, please contact Becky Bliss at snipsabecky@gmail.com.



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Visit www.snipsa.org or call 210-237-9400 to learn more about SNIPSA's mission.

Memory & Honor

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