

# Press Release



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## **Humane Society Silicon Valley and South Bay Homeless Cat Coalition To Hold Mass Cat Trapping and Sterilization Marathon**



SANTA CLARA, Calif., Jan. 8, 2007 – Humane Society Silicon Valley (HSSV) and the South Bay Homeless Cat Coalition will hold a "Mass Cat Trapping and Sterilization Marathon" January 13-15. The organizations hope to trap and sterilize 50 stray cats living along the Lafayette Corridor (Lafayette Street/Martin Avenue in Santa Clara). The effort is being funded by a \$2,500 grant from PETCO. Veterinarians from Humane Society Silicon Valley and Peninsula Fix Our Ferals will perform the spay/neuter surgeries in the Humane Society's Medical Clinic.

"Mass Trapping and Sterilization" is a highly efficient method that involves humanely trapping and sterilizing entire feral cat colonies all at once. Under the South Bay Homeless Cat Coalition's trap neuter return or TNR program, homeless cats are humanely trapped and taken to HSSV, where they are evaluated, vaccinated, sterilized and ear-notched for identification. Kittens and tame cats are adopted into good homes. Healthy adult cats too wild to be adopted are returned to their outdoor homes under the care of dedicated volunteers. No more kittens are born and the feral cat population declines naturally.

"TNR is the most cost-effective, humane method of reducing homeless cat populations," said HSSV President Christine Benninger. "Rounding up colonies of homeless cats and euthanizing them does not solve the problem and in fact creates a void for new cats to fill and continue the breeding cycle," Benninger explained.

Furthermore, Benninger says TNR saves money, noting that it cost Santa Clara County taxpayers \$2.4 million in 2005 to have animal control agencies round up, shelter and eventually euthanize 14,000 homeless cats. Benninger hopes the "Mass Trapping and Sterilization" marathon will raise awareness about homeless cats and help organizers recruit volunteers to feed homeless cats, foster kittens and spread the word about TNR. "Euthanizing unwanted homeless cats is a community problem that requires a community-wide effort," Benninger said. Individuals or groups interested in helping with the "Mass Trapping and Sterilization" effort can contact the Feral Cat information Line at 408.727.3383 ext. 762.

The South Bay Homeless Cat Coalition estimates there are 125,000 homeless cats roaming Santa Clara County. Earlier this year, Humane Society Silicon Valley produced a 30-minute documentary on homeless cats and the coalition's effort to reduce cat colonies through TNR. "Cats Without a Home," has aired on two local television stations and been shown throughout numerous Bay Area companies. DVD copies of the film can be purchased at [www.catswithoutahome.com](http://www.catswithoutahome.com)

**About the South Bay Homeless Cat Coalition**

The Homeless Cat Coalition was spearheaded by Humane Society Silicon Valley in October 2004 to develop and implement a homeless cat management program for Santa Clara County. The coalition is comprised of representatives from South Bay animal shelters, cat rescue groups and individual cat caregivers. The coalition's primary goals are to increase the visibility of issues surrounding homeless cats in the community, provide resources to spay/neuter homeless cats and organize a comprehensive community-wide approach to trap, spay/neuter and manage feral cat colonies. The coalition estimates it must consistently alter 4,800 cats per year in order to achieve a 10 percent reduction in shelter cat intakes annually.

**About Humane Society Silicon Valley**

Humane Society Silicon Valley (HSSV) is an independent, non-profit agency offering quality adoptions, medical care and education programs to enhance the human-animal bond. Established in 1929, HSSV has served Silicon Valley for more than 75 years and grown into one of the largest animal shelters on the West Coast, caring for nearly 20,000 animals in fiscal year 2004-2005. To date, HSSV has adopted more than 500,000 animals into permanent, loving homes. HSSV is an "open door" shelter and accepts animals 24-hours a day, seven days a week, regardless of any temperament or health related problems. HSSV's medical center offers affordable spaying/neutering, vaccinations and microchips to the public. More information about HSSV can be found at our website at [www.hssv.org](http://www.hssv.org).

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