

Media contact: Britta Bavaresco, ASAP Co-Founder
(503) 522-9989 brittabava@yahoo.com

Portland Metro Area Residents Band Together To Become One of the Safest Communities for Shelter Pets in the US

Portland animal shelters save an unprecedented 91percent of homeless cats and dogs in 2013

February 25, 2014 : Under the leadership of the Animal Shelter Alliance of Portland (ASAP), the Portland metro area is poised to be named one of, if not the safest major metropolitan city in America for homeless pets. The six largest public and private animal shelters in the Portland/Vancouver metro area saved an unprecedented 91percent of all cats and dogs that came through their doors in 2013. That is nearly double the national average according to the [Humane Society of the United States](#).

Thanks to a strong community effort by veterinarians, rescue groups, adopters, donors and volunteers, participating shelters have decreased euthanasia rates of cats and dogs by 76%, since the alliance formed in 2006. As a result, the Portland community is gaining national attention as one of the largest and most effective animal welfare alliances in the country.

PetSmart Charities, the largest funder of animal welfare efforts in North America, is showcasing the success of ASAP on its [website](#). PetSmart Charities has and continues to fund a large part of ASAP's highly successful low-cost spay/neuter program "Spay & Save". In four short years, the program has altered over 41,000 cats of owners in need of financial assistance as well as stray and feral cats. This in turn has resulted in 35% fewer cats entering the shelters.

"It takes a village," notes Stacy Graham, Executive Director of The Humane Society for SW Washington, "and the people of the Portland/Vancouver area have truly stepped up to help animal shelters save as many homeless cats and dogs as possible. In order for us to continue to lead the nation, we need to stay dedicated to sustaining this huge community accomplishment."

THE FACTS:

- In 2006, 4 out of 10 animals were euthanized in Portland
- In 2013, ASAP saved 91% of the almost 32,000 cats and dogs taken into Portland shelters

Saving over 29,000 cats and dogs last year, means that not only easily adoptable animals such as kittens, puppies, healthy and social animals were saved. ASAP credits their rescue partners, veterinarians, adopters and their unwavering league of volunteers and donors for helping save the lives of the animals that needed a little extra help and placing them into homes as well.

"The people of the Portland Metro area take great pride in being green. They should equally take credit for creating and working on sustaining one of the safest community for pets in the United

States.” says Debbie Wood, Manager of the Bonnie L. Hays Small Animal Shelter/Washington County Animal Services. “Our residents are working on solutions with the shelters - be it getting behavior training or advice to keep pets in the family, getting their animals sterilized to avoid adding to the shelter population, and supporting their shelters through adoption, fostering, volunteering or donating money. But we need to keep this momentum going.”

Since 2006, ASAP has worked diligently toward achieving its goal of saving as many cats and dogs that can humanely and responsibly be saved. ASAP implemented several cutting-edge programs to decrease shelter intake, provide medical and behavioral services to shelter pets, increase transfers of pets between shelters and rescue groups, and encourage adoptions.

“While fewer animals are entering shelters, a good portion of the cats and dogs require additional resources and time,” stresses Michael Oswald, Manager at Multnomah County Animal Services. “Ultimately, they will make fantastic pets in an adoptive home, but many of them need medical attention and behavior training to be at their best.”

“The shelters stretch every year to take care of as many animals as they can. We need everyone in the Portland/Vancouver area to continue to help sustain this effort,” says Karen Green, Executive Director of the Cat Adoption Team. “Come to our shelters and see that we have someone special for you - guaranteed. And if you can’t make a longterm commitment, fostering an animal at home - maybe a mom with kittens, or a dog that needs some extra time - would be an incredible help to a shelter and especially rewarding to you.”

The Animal Shelter Alliance of Portland is committed to maintaining its high save rate. In order to sustain this success and help all the shelter pets that can be helped, the community needs to do three things:

- 1) Adopt from shelters and rescue groups - the national average of people adopting their pets from shelters is only 20-30%.
- 2) Foster shelter pets at home - help with Moms and kittens, or pets that need a little extra time
- 3) Support the shelters financially to enable additional medical and behavioral support

To get involved today, please contact ASAP at www.asapmetro.org or your local animal shelter and become an adopter, volunteer, foster parent or donor.

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Founded in 2006, the Animal Shelter Alliance of Portland (ASAP) is a working coalition composed of the following Portland/Vancouver-area animal shelters and organizations: the Alliance for Contraception in Cats and Dogs; Cat Adoption Team; Clackamas County Dog Services; Feral Cat Coalition; Humane Society for SW Washington; Multnomah County Animal Services; Oregon Humane Society; Portland Veterinary Medical Association; SW Washington Veterinary Association; and Washington County Animal Services. ASAP’s mission is to end the euthanasia of healthy, social, and treatable dogs and cats in our local shelters by collaborating on spay/neuter programs, committing to educational and outreach efforts and promoting humane alternatives for feral cats. For further information, please visit www.asapmetro.org