

"Dedicated to the Advancement of Animal Rights"



International Society for Animal Rights  
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*It is a fact of biological reality that birth of unwanted kittens and puppies will forever swamp humans' ability to care for, warehouse, and kill them. They must never be born.*

Professor Henry Mark Holzer  
Chairman, International Society for Animal Rights

### **ISAR's Quarter-Century Battle Against Dog and Cat Overpopulation**

Helen Jones, a founder of Humane Society of the United States and later founder and decades-long president of International Society of Animal Rights was a Twentieth Century visionary and relentless warrior in the moral crusade for animal rights in the United States and abroad.

Over a half-century ago, after several years with a now-national humane organization she had help found, Helen Jones reluctantly concluded that it had become impotent to properly advance the principle of animal rights. In reaction, she created the not-for-profit corporation that is today International Society for Animal Rights.

When Helen died in the summer of 1998, ISAR's chairman, Professor Henry Mark Holzer, wrote that she

was an indefatigable fighter for the rights of all animals, opposing vivisection, factory farming, overpopulation, zoos, rodeos, circuses, hunting, and every other form of cruelty, abuse, and exploitation.

Helen's was a loud, often lonely, voice—but not for the tired, unsatisfactory idea of animal welfare. No—from the beginning, Helen Jones espoused and fought for the then-radical principle that animals had *rights*. As a friend of her noted not long ago, in advancing the idea of animal rights Helen Jones “provided the intellectual predicate for recognizing that nonhumans had interests *beyond* their admitted interest in not suffering.” He added that “if there is one person who can be credited with making the issue of justice (rather than merely reduction of suffering) front and center in the animal controversy, it is Helen Jones.

Professor Holzer met Helen in 1972. He had brought a culturally and politically sensitive animal rights lawsuit. While every national animal welfare organization disassociated itself from the case, Helen Jones offered to help. That federal lawsuit challenging a loophole provision of the Humane Slaughter Act, in which Helen Jones was herself a plaintiff, became the first reported legal decision in the history of the United States to

refer to the concept of “Animal Rights.” Much of what today the Animal Rights Movement takes for granted is attributable to the vision of Helen Jones. Her groundbreaking contributions include:

- Articulating the difference between animal welfare and Animal Rights;
- Recognizing the role of law and lawyers in the fight for Animal Rights;
- Helping to establish “standing to sue” for animals in federal and state courts;
- Publishing and distributing books on Animal Rights and related subjects;
- Identifying and attacking abuses of animals that no one had addressed before, such as “pound seizure”;
- Initiating National Homeless Animals’ Day, the annual event which today heightens the consciousness of countless Americans to the plague of dog and cat overpopulation;
- Organizing international symposia on the overpopulation problem.<sup>1</sup>

In furtherance of her dedication to seeking justice for companion animals and attacking the overpopulation scourge specifically, twenty-five years ago Helen Jones organized, and International Society for Animal Rights sponsored, the first major conference in the United States to address the problem of dog and cat overpopulation.

“Killing the Crisis, Not the Animals: An International Symposium on Dog and Cat Overpopulation,” was held in Washington, DC, on September 20/21, 1991.

<http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Killing-the-Crisis-Special-Report.pdf>

Among the Symposium’s events were:

- **New Jersey’s State Subsidized Spay/Neuter Program**

Arthur Baeder, III, DVM

Dr. Baeder, a private small animal practitioner, represented the New Jersey Veterinary Medical Association. He has been instrumental in the establishment of the only state-subsidized, low-cost spay and neuter program in the United States.

- **Incorporating Overpopulation into Veterinary Curriculum**

Richard Bachman, DVM

Dr. Bachman is a small animal practitioner. Prior to earning his veterinary medical degree from the University of California, Dr. Bachman established Sonoma County

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<sup>1</sup> For the complete text of Professor Holzer’s eulogy see [http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/1998\\_autumn.pdf](http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/1998_autumn.pdf) Professor Holzer also wrote that “[o]verpopulation of companion animals continues to be a blot on our national character, with its consequences of abandonment, strays, disease, suffering, and, on a scale too large fully to contemplate, euthanasia.

Animal Regulation volunteer program. Currently, he is an advisor and contract veterinarian to the Sonoma Animal Regulation Department. He has 13 years of animal control experience.

- **Early Spaying and Neutering**

Mark Bloomberg, DVM, MS

Dr. Bloomberg is a clinical professor at the University of Florida's Small Animal Clinic Sciences Department. He has participated in early neutering studies at this university and at Florida animal shelters. He will begin shortly an early neutering study with cats. This study will be funded, in part, by the American Veterinary Medical Association.

- **American Kennel Club (AKC); Culpability and Capability**

Eric Dunayer, VMD

Dr. Dunayer is the executive director of the Center for Risk Assessment Alternatives in Washington, DC. Previously he practiced at People for Animals, a low-cost spay and neuter clinic in New Jersey, and was director of Research and Education for the Association of Veterinarians for Animal Rights.

- **Chemical Sterilization Project /New Delhi, India**

Honorable Maneka Gandhi

Mrs. Gandhi is the former Minister of the Environment and Forests in India. During her administration she initiated several measure to protect various animal species. Mrs. Gandhi is a staunch supporter of animal rights and is a representative of the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. She operates the Sanjay Gandhi Animal Care Centre which shelters and provides veterinary care for stray animals.

- **Aggressive Media Messages and Reaching Critical Masses**

Tim Greyhavens, Mitchell Fox, and Laurie Raymond

The Progressive Animal Welfare Society was the second humane society in the United States to bring about the introduction of mandatory spay neuter legislation.

- **Overpopulation and the Media – Keeping the Issue in the News**

Coleman McCarthy

*The Washington Post*

Mr. McCarthy is a nationally syndicated columnist for *The Washington Post*. He is a longtime supporter of animal rights.

- **Animal Overpopulation in Israel and Some Responses**

Nina Natelson, President  
CHAI

Ms. Natelson has worked with various groups on behalf of animals since 1980. She founded Concerned for Helping Animals in Israel (CHAI) after a 1984 trip to Israel during which she witnessed the condition and treatment of animals.

- **Dark Angels**

Ingrid Newkirk, National Director  
PETA

Ms. Newkirk is co-founder of the largest animal rights organization in the United States, People for the Ethical Treatment of Animals (PETA). She was a state humane officer and was previously director of a Washington, DC, shelter and animal control facility. Her reference to “Dark Angels” was to the dedicated, overworked, and courageous men and women (often volunteers) who work in shelters.

- **Making Overpopulation a Political Issue**

Tom Nolan, President  
San Mateo County Board of Supervisors

Mr. Nolan is the author of the landmark San Mateo County mandatory spay and neuter ordinance which he introduced in October 1990. He is currently a candidate for the Democratic nomination to the U.S. House of Representative in California’s 12<sup>th</sup> Congressional District.

- **Non-Surgical Sterilization Update**

Patricia Olson, DVM, PhD  
Department of Clinical and Population Sciences  
College of Veterinary Medicine

Dr. Olson is a veterinary Medical reproduction specialist and clinical professor. She was solely responsible for the coordination of the American Veterinary Medical Association’s special edition (April 1991) of the *Journal of the American Veterinary Medical Association* devoted to dog and cat overpopulation.

- **Feral Cat Population Management in England and North Africa**

Jenny Remfrey, PhD, VET.MB.MRCVS

Dr. Remfrey is a veterinarian and an animal protectionist. Since 1976 she has worked with the Universities Federation for Animal Welfare in Great Britain and with the Society

for the Protection of Animals in North Africa on feral cat behavior and the impact of spaying and neutering programs.

- **Reviewing Trap and Release Population Control – Pros, Cons, Considerations**

Becky Robinson, Louise Holden  
Alley Cat Allies

Ms. Robinson and Ms. Holden are founders of Alley Cat Allies, an organization that advocates humane and innovative feral cat control programs.

- **Municipal Funding and Animals**

Robert Rush, General Manager, City of Los Angeles Department of Animal Regulations

Mr. Rush has been general manager of the City of Los Angeles Department of Animal Regulation since 1968. This is the largest animal care and control program in the world.

- **Mandatory Spaying and Neutering Initiatives**

Kim Sturla, Western Director  
The Fund for Animals

Ms. Sturla was executive director of the Peninsula Humane Society when the historic mandatory spay and neuter ordinance was passed into law. Since the successful passage of the San Mateo legislation, she has accepted a position with The Fund for Animals to help initiate similar measures across the country.

- **Recommitting to a Curative Process**

Michael Weeks, Executive Director  
British Columbia SPCA

The Vancouver Regional Branch of the British Columbia SPCA has operated an impressive low-cost spay and neuter program since 1976.

Helen Jones's opening remarks left no doubt about where International Society for Animal Rights stood:

As far as ISAR is concerned, dog and cat overpopulation is the oldest animal rights issue on the books. Our success in helping to solve this age-old crisis will certainly come to bear on how successful we are in stopping other forms of animal neglect and abuse. Killing animals to manage their population must be scrutinized continually by those of us who are charged with the responsibility of caring for unwanted and homeless animals. The fact is that death is the worst thing that can happen to perfectly healthy animals and it must be considered an extreme "solution."

This international conference is about new solutions, re-commitment to old solutions that are working, and creating networks between various groups and the public to, once and for all, help solve this shameful crisis.

Indeed, building on the precedent-shattering Symposium within six months, ISAR's board of directors had made dog and cat overpopulation in the United States and abroad a priority program of its efforts to advance animal rights. In the spring 1992 ISAR Newsletter <http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Spring-1992.pdf> we wrote that as a natural outgrowth of the Symposium

ISAR has begun a special, ongoing program which will focus exclusively on dog and cat overpopulation. It will provide to others hard-hitting materials for a public information campaign on the tragedy of dog and cat overpopulation, on the cruelty of continuing, deliberate breeding, and on the necessity of low-cost spay/neuter clinics. It will facilitate a strong information-sharing network among grassroots organizations and shelters. It will present media workshops to teach effective interaction with newspapers, radio and television. These workshops will be open both to activists and to the boards of directors of humane societies and animal shelters.

It was in the Spring 1992 Newsletter that ISAR first announced the program that now, a quarter-century later, has consistently focused international attention of the dog and cat overpopulation problem: **INTERNATIONAL HOMELESS ANIMALS' DAY**.

Conceived and commemorated originally in 1992, ISAR's International Homeless Animals' Day is the first and only worldwide event that addresses the urgent need for affordable spay/neuter programs. On International Homeless Animals' Day, ISAR along with animal protection organizations, humane societies, rescue groups, veterinary professionals, caring individuals, public officials, and animal-friendly businesses from throughout the United States, Mexico, Canada and abroad join together to send the spay/neuter and adoption message. This worldwide effort is aimed at halting the euthanasia and suffering of unwanted companion animals. Since its inception, ISAR's International Homeless Animals' Day has continued to grow and gain momentum in the war against dog and cat overpopulation. To date, ISAR's International Homeless Animals' Day observances have been held in all 50 states and the District of Columbia, in over 50 countries, on 6 continents, and on-line.<sup>2</sup>

As central to ISAR's mission is, worldwide Homeless Animals' Day is only one of the overpopulation programs Helen Jones identified that quarter-century ago in Washington, DC. Before and since the two-day Symposium in September 1991 ISAR has fought in many other ways against dog and cat overpopulation, always among those in the forefront of the battle against that immoral and wicked reality. ISAR has worked to:

- Abolish puppy mills, kitten factories, and virtually all breeding of dogs and cats.

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<sup>2</sup> [http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/autumn\\_2014.pdf](http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/autumn_2014.pdf)

[http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/isars\\_model\\_statute\\_regulating\\_dog\\_breeding\\_facilitation\\_and\\_sales.pdf](http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/isars_model_statute_regulating_dog_breeding_facilitation_and_sales.pdf)

- Increase the penalties for abandonment, and thus street-breeding, of dogs and cats.  
<http://isaronline.blogspot.com/2014/06/work-for-enactment-of-isars-mandatory.html>
- Create state and municipal Departments of Animal Affairs.  
<http://isaronline.org/programs/animal-rights-education/model-department-of-animal-affairs-statute/>
- Promote mandatory juvenile and adult spay/neuter through laws and education.  
[http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Mandatory\\_Spay\\_Neuter\\_Monograph.pdf](http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/Mandatory_Spay_Neuter_Monograph.pdf)
- Inform the public of ISAR's programs through broadcast and other media.  
[http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Spring\\_2015.pdf](http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/04/Spring_2015.pdf)
- Prohibit retail sales of dogs and cats.  
<http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/isar-retail-sales-monograph.pdf>
- Educate students about the causes and consequences of dog and cat overpopulation.  
[http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2000\\_spring.pdf](http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2000_spring.pdf)  
(Spring 2006; Page 6; Student Education)
- Reduce state and federal taxes by allowing a deduction for spay/neuter expenses.  
<http://isaronline.blogspot.com/2013/11/isars-model-spayneuter-tax-deduction.html>
- Originate and support new ideas for low-cost spay/neuter.  
<http://isaronline.org/programs/dog-and-cat-overpopulation/high-volume-low-cost-spayneuter-clinics/>
- Secure publication of a United States Postal Service spay/neuter stamp.  
<http://isaronline.org/programs/dog-and-cat-overpopulation/usps-stamp-victory/>
- Subsidize billboard and other public media about overpopulation and spay/neuter.  
[http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/summer\\_2014.pdf](http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/summer_2014.pdf)  
(Summer 2014, Page 1 and 2)
- Foster the continued success of Animal Today Radio through financial support.  
<http://isaronline.org/support-listen-to-and-inform-others-about-animals-today-radio/>
- Prevent animals adopted from shelters from reproducing.  
<http://isaronline.org/programs/dog-and-cat-overpopulation/adoption-sterilization/>
- Prohibit the possession of more dogs and cats than their custodian can care for properly.  
[http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/isars\\_model\\_statute\\_regulating\\_dog\\_breeding\\_facilitation\\_and\\_sales.pdf](http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/isars_model_statute_regulating_dog_breeding_facilitation_and_sales.pdf) (Page 32; 4th paragraph..."Municipalities have enacted ordinances dealing with the number of animals that can be owned...")
- Inform the public about the overpopulation problem, via Public Service Announcements.  
<http://isaronline.org/programs/animal-rights-education/psas/>
- Require the mandatory identification of dogs and cats, to prevent dumping the unwanted.

<http://store.payloadz.com/details/784142-other-files-documents-and-forms-isar-mandatory-identification-statute.html>

- Substitute chemical dog and cat contraception, eventually replace spay/neuter. Page 8 [http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2003\\_spring.pdf](http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2003_spring.pdf)
- Explain the unworkable, but well-intentioned, “no-kill” overpopulation solution. <http://isaronline.org/redemption-the-myth-of-pet-overpopulation-in-america-by-nathan-j-winograd/>
- Support efforts to reduce and eventually eliminate the feral dog and cat population. <http://www.alleycat.org/>
- Incorporate in dictionaries and other research material the words “pet overpopulation.” [http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2006\\_summer.pdf](http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/2006_summer.pdf)

Despite all these accomplishments—unlike in baseball, for example, when a home-run can be seen landing in the far end of the park, or in an election where someone won and the other candidate lost—it is very difficult for Animal Rights organizations like ISAR to see the concrete results of their efforts.

Anecdotally, ISAR does know that breeding has been reduced by laws relating to mandatory spay/neuter, adoption sterilization, retail sales, and abandonment—yet the overpopulation problem continues.

We know that ISAR has raised public awareness of overpopulation because of our use of the Internet, the spay/neuter postage stamp, billboards, and other programs—yet overpopulation persists.

ISAR knows that promotion of low-cost spay/neuter, chipping ID, limitation on the number of companion animals owned, chemical sterilization, and catch-and-release of feral dogs and cats have been effective—yet overpopulation still rages.

This is not to say that we never learn of our successes.

Sometimes we learn that ISAR has indeed made a dent in the overpopulation problem. For example, not long ago we were informed that the City of North Las Vegas, Nevada, had adopted, almost verbatim, our Model Mandatory Spay/Neuter Statute (referred to on the municipal level as an “ordinance.”)<sup>3</sup>

Speaking of good news, ISAR’s 2015 International Homeless Animals’ Day was a roaring (no pun intended) success.

Indeed, it took three pages of our Autumn 2015 Newsletter just to summarize what happened nationally and internationally. And that’s only a summary. We’ve received letters, photographs, hand-written thank you notes, and other recognition of what IHAD has accomplished.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://isaronline.org/another-municipal-adoption-of-isar-model-mandatory-spayneuter-statute/>





## International Homeless Animals' Day® 2015

*International Homeless Animals' Day® (IHAD®) 2015 was commemorated for the twenty-fourth consecutive year on August 15th with observances in more than 35 U.S. states, Canada and involvement in numerous foreign locations including Australia, Belize, Cuba, France, Malaysia, Mexico, Panama, South Africa, and Switzerland.*

Since 1992, ISAR has reserved the third Saturday of August as a platform for thousands of dedicated, humane-minded people to come together in solidarity to enlighten the public about a tragedy that affects all communities, cat and dog overpopulation and its simple solution: spay/neuter. IHAD is often marked with candlelight vigils, blessing of the animals ceremonies, spay/neuter clinics, adopt-a-thons, animal shelter open houses, microchip clinics, marches, speeches given by veterinarians, humane officers, and shelter personnel, and much more.

Twenty-four years since its inception, International Homeless Animals' Day continues to grow and has helped pave the way bringing pet overpopulation to the forefront while opening doors for others who promote spay/neuter days, clearing shelters of adoptable animals into loving new homes, and remembering companion animals who are placed in shelters or left to fend for themselves on the streets through no fault of their own.

Citing a new trend, more humane organizations are taking International Homeless Animals' Day to the next level by not only commemorating the Day itself, but coincide their spay/neuter/adoption outreach all month long.

Last year, ISAR highlighted an IHAD event hosted by Spay/Panama in our Autumn 2014 newsletter. We reported nearly 500 cats and dogs were spayed/neutered in honor of International Homeless Animals' Day in Panama City. This year, ISAR is proud to inform our readers that Spay/Panama has since expanded their IHAD spay/neuter efforts and significantly increased their dog and cat sterilizations to **2,125**.

Here, verbatim, is the report submitted by Patricia Chan, Founder of Spay/Panama of what happened there in honor of International Homeless Animals' Day 2015:

*Panama, like many other Latin-American country has an enormous problem with homeless animals. We dedicated the whole month of August to bring awareness to the plight of Homeless Animals. For 2015 IHAD, we joined forces with the Mayor's Office of Panama District, Fundacion Rayos de Fe y Esperanza, with the local authorities and schools in Burunga and Alcalde Diaz, the residents of several communities, Spay/Mexico and Dr. Marvin Mackie, creator of the Quick Spay Method to:*

- *spay/neuter a total of 2,125 animals (1,196 dogs and 929 cats).*
- *hold several radio/TV interviews on animal welfare.*
- *give a conference on No More Animals Suffering in the Streets at the auditorium of the Mayor's Office of Panama.*
- *meet with the veterinarians in the Chitre area.*
- *give a presentation about the Quick Spay Method to the Veterinary School of the University of Panama, including two surgeries in front of them.*
- *visit two schools, Escuela Union Panamericana in Alcalde Diaz and Escuela Lucas Barcenias in Burunga to talk about humane animal treatment.*



Panama Mayor Jose Blandon attended the No More Animals Suffering in the Streets conference hosted by Spay/Panama.



50 senior veterinarian students watched the Quick Spay Method performed by Dr. Marvin Mackie.

All these activities touched the lives of countless guardians, rescuers, students, professionals, and animals. The people reached through the radio and tv interviews cannot be measured and over 100 people attended the conference on No More Animals Suffering in the Streets. The major spay events had a great impact on two communities, Alcalde Diaz and Burunga. The people that live in these two communities are low-income and cannot afford to spay/neuter their animals in a veterinary clinic, yet they are aware of the life changing benefits of sterilizing their pets. They formed long lines before we set up and in these two communities we treated 1,348 animals.

We were pleasantly surprised that the Mayor Jose Blandon attended the conference No More Animals Suffering in the Streets and gave the welcome note. More so with the local authority Jose Gonzalez Medina from Burunga that understood the need for low-cost massive spay events and is already asking for another spay campaign. This would be unheard of, sometime ago.

At the Escuela Union Panamericana in Alcalde Diaz and Escuela Lucas Barcenas in Burunga, the children were attentive to the talks of humane treatment of animals and were the ones responsible for making their families take their pets to the spay campaigns.

Because we met with the veterinarians in the Chitre area, we will begin training two vets on September 20.

The 50 senior vet students that watched the two surgeries using the Quick Spay Method were eager and focused to learn.

This year, IHAD received participation from many new organizations including several in South Africa. For instance, Animal Allies in Johannesburg held an IHAD Vaccination Day, Spay/Neuter Clinic and Spay/Neuter Educational Campaign vaccinating, de-worming, and flea-treating more than 200 cats and dogs. When asked about their IHAD experience, Karen Chitongo, Manager of Animal Allies, had this to say, "We had a hectic but wonderful day where we saw 200 dogs and about 15 cats. We made a list of all those animals that were not sterilized. To date we have sterilized all the cats and each week did 10 dogs, which comes to 42 so far. We will continue with the sterilizations. The community had a positive reaction towards the day. They do not have means of transport and were very happy that we were helping them at no cost to them. We explained that having their pets sterilized reduces the overpopulation of so many unwanted puppies and kittens. We also explained that fighting amongst unsterilized males is also reduced as well as infections and disease. The animal guardians understood and agreed to have their animals sterilized."

Thanks to the Edenglen Primary School in Edenvale, South Africa, funds were raised while food and supplies were collected in honor of International Homeless Animals' Day for Paws R Us. Speeches from a local K9 Conservation Unit and several members from Paws R Us educated hundreds of students about the



Hundreds of dogs were outfitted with new collars and leashes, vaccinated, de-wormed, and flea-treated during Animal Allies International Homeless Animals' Day observance. Many of the dogs and cats who attended are in the process of being spayed and neutered as a result of this event.





importance their work plays in helping animals. Excited for the opportunity to talk the students about animal issues, Ms. Chantelle Murray, Paws R Us Director, said, “Informing the children of today is beneficial because they are our future society.” We couldn’t agree more!

Even with a modest budget, The Placencia Humane Society, **Belize** joined ISAR for International Homeless Animals’ Day and offered a free spay/neuter clinic, fixing multiple dogs and cats as a result.

ISAR can attest that International Homeless Animals’ Day events *are* making a positive difference in the lives of animals as well as people!

### Special Thanks

ISAR is extremely grateful to all elected officials who have taken initiative to recognize International Homeless Animals’ Day 2015. Special thanks to Pennsylvania Governor, Tom Wolf and Fernandina Beach (FL) Mayor, Ed Boner for shedding light on pet overpopulation and the spay/neuter solution by signing International Homeless Animals’ Day Proclamations.

ISAR would like to sincerely thank all media and individuals who helped ISAR promote its 24th annual IHAD observances through the many advertising outlets including radio and television interviews, newspaper articles, blogs, social networking, YouTube, websites, and much more! ISAR is extremely grateful to all vigil coordinators who generously donate their time, efforts and resources each year bringing awareness of the horrific results of dog and cat overpopulation to the forefront by promoting its important and simple solution: spay/neuter. ISAR strives to one day eliminate the pet overpopulation epidemic but we cannot succeed without the great efforts of our vigil coordinators. Thank you!

Because ISAR is the only national organization dedicated *solely* to working for the day when every dog and cat born will have a permanent loving home – and when our companion animals will be “companions,” not disposable objects left along roadways or abandoned to shelters – it is imperative that we continue our relentless pursuit to educate people of all nations to the pet overpopulation crisis and the spay/neuter solution.

Sincerely,

*Susan Dapsis*

Susan Dapsis, President



Cat's Angels Director Pat Glassbrenner (L) accepts a Proclamation in honor of International Homeless Animals’ Day/Month, highlighting pet overpopulation and animal homelessness, from Mayor Ed Boner. Photo courtesy of Suanne Thamm and Fernandina Observer.

### Duplicate Mailings

As ISAR’s mailing list rapidly grows, it has become more difficult for staff to discern duplicate mailings. If any reader is receiving more than one copy of ISAR’s mailings, please notify us by sending all mailing labels from envelopes containing the same inserts.

Despite ISAR's many programs aimed at the overpopulation problem and the successes of some, the battle against this plague visited on dogs and cats has been, and will continue to be, uphill. While it is true that overpopulation results from stupidity, cruelty, indifference, laziness, distraction, and other irresponsible behavior, there is a more fundamental reason. *The roots of yesterday's and today's overpopulation of dogs and cats are buried deep in the soil of decades-old philosophy.*

### **The Roots of "Unwantedness": Rene Descartes & Overpopulation**

Professor Henry Mark Holzer<sup>4</sup>

Every once in a while the press reports that someone has been charged with cruelty to animals after officials discover a large number of formerly stray cats in a small house or apartment. Or dozens, or scores, of dogs in a backyard, somewhere. Often living without electricity or hot water, and spending her usually meager resources on food for the animals, the poor caretaker can only plaintively lament that "all I am is an animal lover, trying to provide a home for animals unwanted by others." Of course she had tried to place the homeless animals somewhere, but either no one would take them, or the shelter would put them down. Each of us active in the animal rights field knows of many such stories.

The roots of the scandalous overpopulation of cats and dogs, of the overflowing shelters, and of the relentless annual destruction of countless millions of these hapless living creatures, run very deep. But where?

I have been a lawyer for nearly forty years, and was a teacher of law for more than two decades, yet I must acknowledge that lawyers as individuals and contemporary American law as an institution are by themselves impotent to eliminate the barbarism that is euphemistically called "overpopulation." Yes lawyers who are prosecutors can enforce cruelty laws. Lawyers who are judges can treat harshly someone found guilty of abandonment (if anyone ever is.) Lawyers who are in private practice can donate time to help shelters and SPCA's.

But as laudable and important as these kind of efforts are, they consist of little more than plunging fingers into a crumbling dike. Indeed, because of the root cause of the problem, these lawyers and the institution they serve – the legal system – are impotent to eliminate permanently the "overpopulation" problem. And so, the killing goes on.

Especially impotent is the source of law, the political process, which is nothing more than compromise and expediency and merely reflects what usually uninformed voters want at any given moment.

Now, one has a right to ask why two of our principal social institutions – law and politics – can not put an end to this unceasing slaughter, an uncivilized phenomenon which one would expect in some third world backwater, but not in the most advanced nation ever to grace the earth.

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<sup>4</sup> [http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/1996\\_autumn.pdf](http://isaronline.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/01/1996_autumn.pdf)

The answer is not difficult, in principle: legal thought and political action are not primaries, not fundamental, not causes. They are merely consequences. Consequences of philosophy, of morality, of ethics, of ideas. How lawyers, judges and legislators act flows from ideas that they hold, from their values, from their beliefs, and regrettably for two thousand years the dominant ideas concerning non-human animals have been that they have no rights, that they exist for the pleasure of human beings, to be exploited as human-kind sees fit.

Professional philosophers like Tom Regan have been aware of this for years. The Book of Genesis tells us that God granted human dominion over animals, and that after the flood Noah sacrificed animals to the Lord who (so it is written) liked the “sweet smell.” Greece’s, (perhaps the world’s), most influential philosopher, Aristotle, believed and taught that animals existed for the sake of man. Ancient Rome’s attitude toward animals was exemplified by the bloody forerunner to today’s bullfights, the colosseum. Hundreds of years later, drawing on scripture and Aristotelian philosophy, Aquinas restated the proposition that the dominion of humans over animals is complete. As influential as was Aquinas, the philosophical father of animal abuse was probably the renowned philosopher-mathematician Rene Descartes. Animals, he held, were automata – literally. According to Descartes, because animals lacked a Christian soul they lacked consciousness. Therefore, he asserted, animals experienced neither pleasure nor pain. Doubtless, this theory provided Descartes with the rationalization necessary to allow his dissection of unanesthetized animals.

One need look no further than Descartes’s ideas to understand the connection between philosophy and “overpopulation.” Eavesdrop sometime on a shelter’s telephone: “Can you take our cat? We’re moving” – “We have to give up our dog, she’s gotten too large for our apartment” – “We wanted our kids to see the miracle of birth, but now we’re stuck with these kittens.” Though these callers never heard of Rene Descartes, they are acting on the basis of his ideas: animals are inanimate objects, they have no rights, and are as disposable as used napkins.

So, to end overpopulation through politics or law, or any other means, philosophic ideas have to be changed. There must be a new morality regarding animals. Just as slavery here and despotism abroad have rightly been condemned as unacceptable violations of human rights, so too must the abuse of animals be condemned as a violation of their rights.

And just as no-called “higher purpose” or “noble cause” or “benign paternalism” can be accepted to justify or rationalize the violation of human rights, those ideas are equally unacceptable as an excuse to violate animal rights. Just as there can be no real freedom if human rights are violated, we cannot have a just, humane society built on the abuse of animals and on the corpses of the countless “unwanted.”

**So, ultimately, the real answer to the “overpopulation” problem is to implement the principle of Animal Rights. It is an idea whose time has come, and it is the principle for which ISAR stands.**

*Henry Mark Holzer*

Chairman, International Society for Animal Rights

## **APPENDIX OF ISAR OVERPOPULATION PROGRAMS**

*International Homeless Animals' Day*, now not only an important national event, but one observed worldwide underscoring the use of spay/neuter and other ISAR programs in an effort to address the scourge of dog and cat overpopulation.

*Mandatory spay/neuter laws*,<sup>5</sup> applicable to dogs and cats regardless of source in an effort to substantially reduce overpopulation.

*Tax deduction laws*, federal or state in return for spay/neutering dogs and cats in an effort to provide an incentive for reducing overpopulation.

*Adoption sterilization laws*, required for all shelter dogs and cats in an effort to substantially reduce overpopulation.

*Departments of Animal Affairs laws*, at municipal and state levels of government, in order to put all animal-related government functions in a single department, in an effort to substantially reduce overpopulation.

*Mandatory dog and cat Identification laws*, aimed at reducing abandonment of dogs and cats, in an effort to substantially reduce overpopulation.

*Monthly blog*, keeping ISAR's many supporters abreast of national and international progress in an effort to substantially reduce overpopulation.

*Billboards*, placed in sensitive locations carrying the spay/neuter message to riders and pedestrians throughout the United States and abroad, in an effort to substantially reduce overpopulation.

*Animals Today Radio*, ISAR being the principal sponsor of this nationally-heard radio and streaming program, which carries the spay/neuter and other messages to listeners through the United States in an effort to reduce overpopulation.

*Postage stamps*, carrying the spay/neuter message not just in the United States (as the result of ISAR's years-long efforts, but also to other countries and through the United Nations Organization, in an effort to reduce overpopulation.

*Video library*, an Internet resource providing links to, and descriptions of, scores of YouTube videos carrying the spay/neuter and other messages, in an effort to reduce overpopulation.

*Retail sales of dogs and cats prohibition laws*, in an effort to reduce overpopulation.

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<sup>5</sup> All of ISAR's legislative studies and proposals are regularly disseminated to legislators and executive branch officeholders on municipal, state, and county levels.

*Abandonment of dogs and cats*, by creating and strengthening existing laws prohibiting (except to qualified organizations) the abandonment of dogs and cats, in an effort to reduce the overpopulation of dogs and cats.<sup>6</sup>

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<sup>6</sup> These thirteen major ISAR programs are those we consider most suitable for ISAR's capabilities. In making that judgment, we have acknowledged that there are other programs that need attention, ones that other organizations are better equipped in assets, income, personnel, and location to address. Our choice of the "ISAR Thirteen" should not be understood as lessening the importance of other activities: advancing low cost spay/neuter, educating the public about animal rights and all the ways in which they are violated, prohibiting factory farming, illegalizing dog and cat mills, alleviating the plight of feral dogs and cats, and various other issues that can be found under the umbrella of dog and cat overpopulation.