



**Contact: Maggie Brandt**  
314-469-3500  
[mbrandt@standingpr.com](mailto:mbrandt@standingpr.com)  
**Amber Morris**  
314-469-3500  
[amorris@standingpr.com](mailto:amorris@standingpr.com)

## **ST. LOUIS PETLOVER COALITION RAISES AWARENESS ABOUT PET OVERPOPULATION AND IMPORTANCE OF SPAYING AND NEUTERING**

*Founding Sponsor Nestlé Purina Donates More Than \$60,000 to Local Organizations Providing Spay and Neuter Services and Education*

ST. LOUIS (March 16, 2011) – Six St. Louis-area animal welfare organizations will receive donations totaling more than \$60,000 tomorrow to provide spay and neuter services and education. The donations are part of the St. Louis PetLover Coalition’s No Unwanted Litters campaign, which was created to raise awareness about pet overpopulation and the importance of spaying and neutering, as well as to raise funds for four partner low-cost spay/neuter providers that target financially challenged pet families. St. Louis PetLover Coalition founding sponsor, Nestlé Purina PetCare Company, is funding the donations.

Nestlé Purina will award the donations at 12:45 p.m. during their “Building Better Pet Communities” event. The event will feature Nestlé Purina programs that support homeless pets such as Pro Plan® Rally to Rescue®, The One Hope Network by Purina ONE®, Nestlé Purina Community Affairs programs and Nestlé Purina’s support for veterinary universities. It will also feature organizations that help support pets and their communities, such as Delta Society Pet Therapy.

The animal welfare organizations that will receive spay/neuter donations include:

- [BARC St. Louis](#) (Benefitting Animals through Responsibility & Compassion)
- [The Cat Network](#) Inc.
- [Humane Society of Missouri](#)’s SNIP program
- [Metro Animal Resource Services](#) Inc.
- [Operation SPOT](#) (OpSPOT)
- [Saint Louis Metropolitan Spay Neuter Wellness Clinic](#)

“Pet overpopulation is a critical issue for the St. Louis region,” said Liz Rudder, executive director, OpSPOT. “We are excited about the potential for these grants, to make a real and positive impact in the effort to save dogs and cats and make our neighborhoods safer.”

### **The Pet Overpopulation Epidemic**

It is estimated more than **20,000 dogs and cats are euthanized** in the St. Louis region every year due to pet overpopulation. While approximately 25 percent of animals entering our area’s public and private shelters are adopted and a similar number are returned to their owners or transferred, sadly **approximately two in four (44 percent) are euthanized**, according to the Missouri Department of Agriculture.

-more

A major cause of pet overpopulation is pet owners failing to spay or neuter their dogs and cats due to cost or availability. It has been estimated that an unspayed female dog and her mate along with all of their offspring can produce over **65,000** dogs in only six years. The numbers for cats are similar.

Pet overpopulation also poses a threat to our health and safety, including through potential attacks on kids and adults on our streets and in our neighborhoods. In addition, life on the streets can be horrific for these unwanted pets.

### **No Unwanted Litters Campaign**

The St. Louis PetLover Coalition created the No Unwanted Litters Campaign to help reduce the number of pets that enter the shelter system in the first place by increasing funding and regionwide awareness of the importance of spaying and neutering.

Area residents can get involved at [www.NoUnwantedLitters.org](http://www.NoUnwantedLitters.org) by:

- Making a promise to personally commit to no unwanted litters
- Spreading the word by sharing a link to [www.NoUnwantedLitters.org](http://www.NoUnwantedLitters.org) within their social networks
- Making a donation directly to one of four No Unwanted Litters low-cost spay/neuter partner providers, including:
  - [BARC St. Louis](#) (Benefitting Animals through Responsibility & Compassion)
  - [Humane Society of Missouri](#) SNIP program
  - [Operation SPOT](#) (OpSPOT)
  - [Saint Louis Metropolitan Spay Neuter Wellness Clinic](#)
- Communicating the importance of spaying and neutering pets as a No Unwanted Litters ambassador

### **ABOUT THE ST. LOUIS PETLOVER COALITION**

The St. Louis PetLover Coalition was formed in the spring of 2009 when public and private, large and small, city and county animal service providers came together to discuss improving the lives of dogs and cats in our community. Nestlé Purina PetCare Company helped convene the original group to share ideas, begin committee work to achieve goals that no one group can achieve alone, and to develop a community-wide comprehensive animal welfare plan. The St. Louis PetLover Coalition fosters collaborative efforts of local animal welfare groups and the community to promote responsible pet ownership and to increase the save rate of companion animals in our community.

# # #