

Spay/Neuter Stamp Victory



ISAR is pleased to announce a major victory in our long-standing educational campaign for widespread spay/neuter: the United States Postal Service has just announced that in September 2002 it will issue two first-class commemorative spay/neuter postage stamps, one depicting a puppy and another a kitten.

A bit of history. Almost six years ago, when an ISAR member suggested the idea of a spay/neuter postage stamp, our Spring 1996 Newsletter contained the following announcement: "Help Stamp Out Pet Overpopulation. ISAR is asking our members to send cards, letters, or petitions to the [Citizen's Stamp] Advisory Committee, urging them to issue a 32-cent spay/neuter stamp. Let the Advisory Committee know the spay/neuter stamp will enlighten the public regarding the importance of spaying and neutering, and will contribute significantly to ending the dog and cat overpopulation crisis in our country."

ISAR followed up this request to our members with a major essay in our Winter 1998 Newsletter, entitled *Elvis, ISAR and Dog/Cat Overpopulation*. There, we announced that other interested organizations had joined forces with ISAR to push for the commemorative spay/neuter stamp, we advanced the reasons for issuance of such a stamp, we noted that when a commemorative stamp is issued between 80 million and 100 million are printed by the United States Postal Service, and we provided the names of the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee Members.

ISAR updated information about the campaign in our Autumn 1998 Newsletter, and announced our Petition drive for half-a-million signatures in support of the spay/neuter stamp. ISAR-provided Petitions then began circulating throughout the United States, thousands of signatures were obtained, and through a sympathetic Congressional staffer

we kept the government apprised of our efforts. More updates followed in our Spring 1999 Newsletter (the spay/neuter stamp is now "under consideration"), in our Autumn 1999 Newsletter ("the response to our efforts has been overwhelmingly positive, with public representatives at both state and federal levels formally endorsing the stamp."), and in our Spring 2000 Newsletter ("ISAR intends to overwhelm the Citizens' Stamp Advisory Committee with the public's support for the spay/neuter).

Finally on October 17, 2001, the efforts of ISAR and associated organizations bore fruit: the Postal Service announced that we had succeeded. Not only will there be a spay/neuter stamp, but there will be two-one depicting a kitten, the other a puppy. Appropriately, the spay/neuter stamp's unveiling took place on Bob Barker's TV show *The Price is Right*. No one in America has been a more vocal supporter of spay/neuter than Bob Barker.

The moral of this story is that through dedication and persistence gains can be made in the fight against dog and cat overpopulation, and that public education about the importance of spay/neuter is not only possible, but effective. With the success of ISAR's campaign for the spay/neuter stamp we will soon see the printing and use of ten million stamps conveying the spay/neuter message.

But the United States spay/neuter stamp is just the beginning. As ISAR announced in our Autumn 1999 Newsletter, we are also trying to obtain the issuance of a United Nations commemorative spay/neuter stamp which "would act as a roving ambassador, carrying the spay/neuter message throughout the world and underscoring efforts of caring nations dedicated to ending the tragic consequences of pet overpopulation." Soon, Petitions will be available for this campaign.

While ISAR's success this past year in our spay/neuter campaign has been a major achievement, we have been active in other ways as well. For the 10th consecutive year, National Homeless Animals' Day, an ISAR initiated and sponsored event, was observed on August 18th with candlelight vigils. The vigils not only memorialize the animals that have been killed because they were unwanted, but also honor the many people who worked so selflessly to stem an overwhelming tide of cruelty and abuse, the tragic corollary of dog and cat overpopulation. On this day in August, thousands of people joined animal protection organizations from the United States, Canada and abroad to turn the public spotlight on the tragedy of dog and cat overpopulation and the spay/neuter solution. As part of our intense educational efforts, vast quantities of ISAR's Special Reports on various pet overpopulation issues have been distributed throughout the United States, Canada and abroad. ISAR's billboards carry the message "America's Dogs and Cats are DYING for YOU to be responsible" continue to appear along highways through the country.

ISAR's success in the spay/neuter campaign, and our other efforts to reduce pet overpopulation, is made possible by the contribution of those of you who share our values and support our goals. We know very well that in this time of national grief over the terrible events of September 11th and their aftermath there are many competing needs for charitable contributions. All ISAR can ask in this regard is that you in your holiday

giving this year, please find some room for a contribution to our organization, no matter how modest. We are making a difference, and with your help we'll continue to do so, next year and years to come.

Sincerely,
Susan Dapsis, President
Henry Mark Holzer, Chairman

Read the United States Postal Service News Release:
http://www.usps.com/news/2002/philatelic/sr02_057.htm