



**Heaven  
Can Wait**  
*animal society*

## IMPACT REPORT

# Stopping the flow

Celebrating

# 25

*years*  
of spay & neuter

2025

The power of prevention  
in addressing animal  
overpopulation







## 25 Years of Showing Up for Animals

As we celebrate 25 years of service in Southern Nevada, we're reminded that prevention is not only possible—it's powerful. At Heaven Can Wait Animal Society, we focus on stopping the flow of animals into an already overwhelmed system by addressing the root causes of overpopulation: lack of access to basic care, unplanned litters, and unchecked community cat reproduction.

Through our high-volume, low-cost spay and neuter clinic, we serve an average of **14,000 animals each year**—including family pets, displaced animals in need of pre-adoption care, and free-roaming community cats. Since 2020, we've delivered over **50,000 vaccinations** and nearly **7,000 microchips**, helping protect thousands of animals from preventable illness, separation, and suffering.

Our work doesn't replace the urgent need for rescue and sheltering, but it helps reduce the pressure on those systems—especially as most pets entering shelters are not spayed or neutered. **Every animal we spay or neuter helps prevent an average of 10 additional animals from being born into uncertainty.** For every one animal spayed or neutered, three fewer animals enter the shelter system, where they risk illness, stress, or euthanasia. And with each shelter intake costing communities up to \$1,000, the economic impact is just as significant.

Our approach is collaborative. We partner with shelters, rescue groups, community organizations, and local jurisdictions to expand services and reach the animals and caregivers who need us most.

We know we can't solve this alone. And thanks to our donors, volunteers, and partners, we don't have to. Together we're building a more compassionate, sustainable future for our entire community.

With gratitude,

*Rachel Bergren*

**Rachel Bergren**  
Executive Director  
Heaven Can Wait Animal Society





## A System at Its Breaking Point

Across Southern Nevada, numerous factors contribute to an uncontrollable cycle of animal overpopulation that can't be solved without preventative action.



### Care is Out of Reach for Pet Families

Pet families in underserved communities lack access to affordable spay and neuter, which contributes to animal overpopulation and preventable health issues.



### Shelters and Rescues are Stretched Beyond Capacity

Shelters and rescues are overwhelmed by the number of animals entering the system. Space, time, and resources to meet the demand are limited, which leads to excessive euthanasia rates.



### Community Cat Populations are Rapidly Rising

Free-roaming cat colonies are growing exponentially, perpetuating a cycle of uncontrolled breeding, disease, and suffering.



### Prevention Is the Missing Piece

While immediate intervention and rescuing animals is essential, there is a **pressing need to "stop the flow" of animals entering overwhelmed systems.** This is where Heaven Can Wait steps in.

"This is one of those often dismissed but critically needed and essential services... Heaven Can Wait staff are the unsung heroes addressing overpopulation."

**DOUG PARKER**  
Community Cat Advocate

"At Nevada SPCA, we see firsthand the impact of pet overpopulation every single day and we know we can't tackle it alone. That's why our partnership with Heaven Can Wait Animal Society is so vital.

Their high-volume, high-quality spay and neuter program is a cornerstone of progress in our community, helping reduce the number of animals entering shelters like ours and giving us the bandwidth to focus on our mission: placing every animal into a loving, permanent home.

That means shorter stays for those who do come through our doors, better outcomes, and more lives saved. Together, we also work to raise awareness about critical issues like spay/neuter, vaccination, and microchipping, because we know that real change takes collaboration."

**LORI HEEREN**  
Executive Director, Nevada SPCA

"Because of Heaven Can Wait, more animals are **staying out of the shelter system altogether.**"

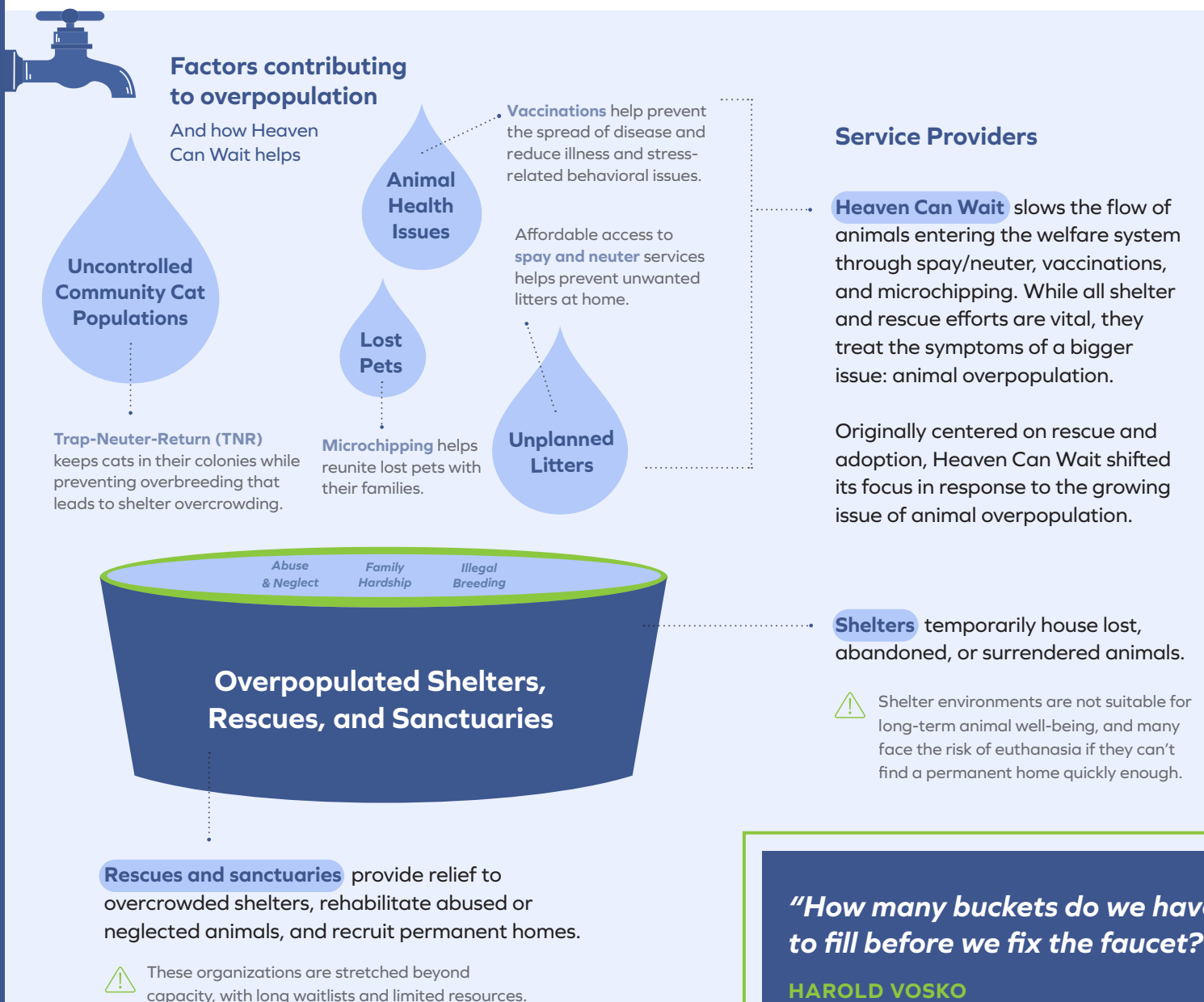




## The Cascading Impact of Foundational Care

Animals enter Nevada's overcrowded animal welfare system for many reasons, such as family hardships like job loss or the inability to find pet-friendly housing, which can lead to surrender or abandonment. They may also be confiscated in cases of illegal breeding, neglect, or abuse. Factors like these cannot be changed overnight.

However, other causes like unplanned litters, unintentional separation from families, preventable spread of disease, and uncontrolled community cat populations can be managed with foundational care (spay and neuter, vaccination, and microchipping).



## A Simple Fix for Overpopulation.

### Spay and Neuter Clinic

By addressing the root cause of overpopulation, we conserve critical resources, improve animal health and quality of life, and relieve pressure on shelters and rescue organizations.

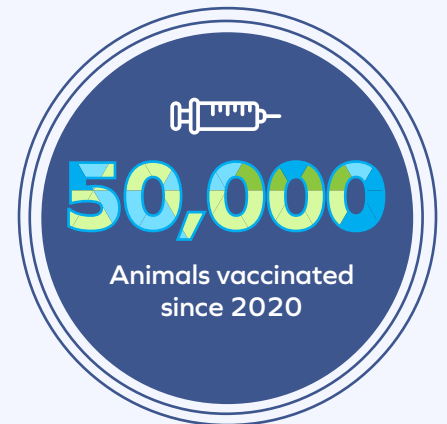
We offer high volume, high-quality, and low-cost spaying and neutering to:

- **Pet families** who need affordable access to foundational care
- **Displaced, surrendered, or neglected pets** in need of foundational care before being placed in foster homes or adopted
- **Community Cats** cared for through Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)

The clinic also provides vaccinations and microchipping to ensure animals are easily identifiable and protected from illness.

Our foundational care services have many benefits:

- ✓ **Keeps pets in their homes**
- ✓ **Prevents medical and behavioral issues**
- ✓ **Prevents unwanted litters**
- ✓ **Improves overall health of cats and dogs**
- ✓ **Reduces shelter intake**
- ✓ **Controls community cat populations**



Every animal spayed or neutered helps prevent an average of **10 puppies or kittens** from being born into uncertain or potentially unsafe conditions.



For every animal spayed or neutered, **3 fewer animals** end up in the shelter system, where they might face stress, illness, or euthanasia.

"As new microchipping ordinances take effect, Heaven Can Wait's support ensures residents can comply without hardship. Together, we're building a more compassionate, sustainable system for pets and the people who love them."

**JIM ANDERSEN**  
Clark County  
Animal Protection Services



## Fewer Litters. Healthier Cats.

### Community Cat Program

Community cats are cats that live outdoors, can be either socialized or unsocialized, and can live in colonies with designated caregivers or be entirely independent. Some have lived without human contact for generations, while others were pets that were lost or abandoned.

These cats face significant risks perpetuated by uncontrolled population growth, including hunger, disease, and injury.

### Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR)

One of the most effective methods for managing community cat populations is Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR). TNR stabilizes cat colonies by stopping further reproduction and improving behavioral and medical health.

Heaven Can Wait works closely with a network of humane trappers, including the Community Cat Coalition of Clark County (C5) and independent service providers.

**50,000** Community cats  
served since 2020

The Las Vegas valley is  
home to an estimated  
**200,000 community cats**

"The Community Cat program is a real life saver. Fewer cats and kittens have to fight and suffer on the street looking for food, water, and shelter. TNR works."

**SUNSHINE HALL**  
Community Cat Advocate

### How TNR works:

- 1 TNR partners humanely catch community cats.
- 2 Our clinic provides spay and neuter surgeries, vaccinations, and lifesaving medical care.
- 3 TNR partners return the cats to their original location to live their lives without overpopulating.



## How Donations Make an Impact

The generosity of our donors and community partners make it possible for us to offer affordable services to support animals and the people who care for them.

### Backing Partners Who Prevent Community Cat Overpopulation

To help community members who are caring for free-roaming cats, our **Community Cat Action Fund** provides subsidies for Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) services.

### Helping Pet Families Access Care When No Other Help Is Available

For pet families who don't qualify for neighborhood-based financial assistance programs, the **Romeo Fund** helps fill the gap. This fund was created to improve pet parent access to foundational care for those in need, regardless of their zip code.

With an average annual budget of \$2.2M, donations to Heaven Can Wait are also allocated towards special medical care, clinic operations, transport vehicles, medical supplies, team training, and more.

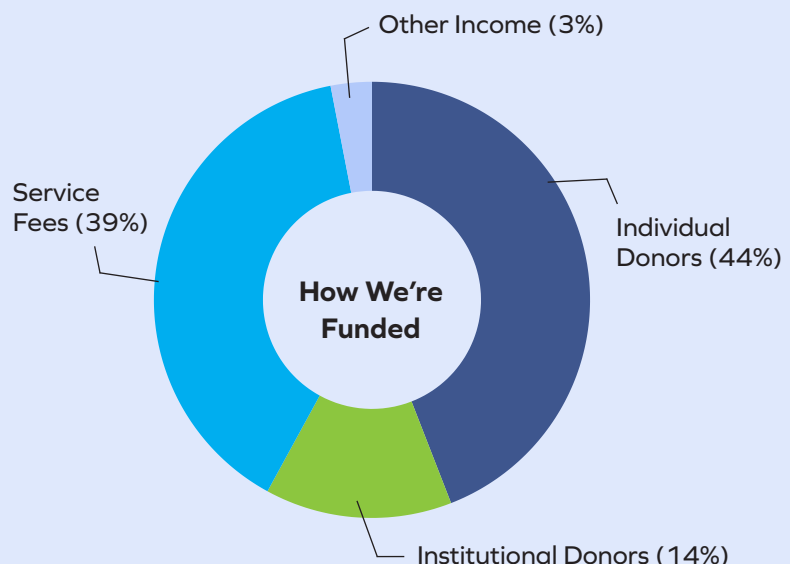
### Strengthening the Animal Welfare System from the Start

Preventive care doesn't just benefit animals—it saves communities money. By reducing shelter intake through spay/neuter and TNR efforts, we free up resources and alleviate pressure on an overwhelmed system.



#### Prevention Pays Off!

Every cat or dog brought into a shelter can cost communities as much as **\$1,000** from intake through adoption.





## A Life Saved by Collaboration

Gummy Bear (or Gummy) is a blind community cat who found himself stranded on a rooftop—hungry, disoriented, and in need of urgent care. Our Community Cat Coordinator came to the rescue and brought him into our clinic. After a thorough exam, it was determined that neither of Gummy's eyes could be saved. The best option for his long-term comfort and health was a double enucleation (eye removal surgery). Thanks to the skilled hands of our veterinary team, Gummy's surgery went smoothly.

True to his name, Gummy Bear is irresistibly sweet. Though he can't see who's offering affection, he soaks up every cuddle with joy and gratitude. Our rescue partners at Amor Peludo helped match him with a forever family. Now, this former free-roaming cat is safe, healing, and thriving in a loving home.

# Gummy

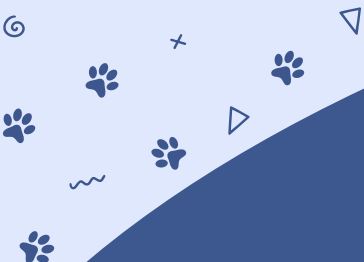
# Gummy

# Gummy

# Gummy



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## Donors & Partners

### Donors that Make Our Work Possible

Conrad N. Hilton Foundation	MGM Resorts Foundation	The Eleanor Kagi Foundation
Engelstad Foundation	Petco Love	– A Lynn M. Bennett Legacy
Gene Haas Foundation	PetSmart Charities	The Grey Muzzle Organization
Greater Good Charities	Resorts World Las Vegas	Walmart Foundation
KJS Family Foundation	San Manuel Gaming and Hospitality Authority	Wynn Resorts Foundation
Love, Tito's	Southwest Gas Fuel for Life	...and many generous individuals
Maddie's Fund	Dave and Cheryl Duffield Foundation	

### Who We Partner With

Amor Peludo	Las Vegas Rescue Center
Animal Protection Services	Nevada SPCA
Community Cat Angels	Noah's Animal House
Community Cat Coalition of Clark County	Street Dogz
Forgotten Dogs Rescue	Vegas Cat Rescue
Hearts Alive Village	Wagging Tails Rescue
Henderson Cats	With Grace
Kiss My Paws Animal Rescue	Safe Harbor Cat Rescue
PALnv (Protecting Animal Life)	The Animal Foundation
Rescued Treasures Cat Cafe	
Las Vegas Valley Humane Society	



"The City of Las Vegas is proud to partner with Heaven Can Wait Animal Society. Their accessible spay/neuter, vaccination, and microchipping services are essential to supporting pet owners and reducing shelter intake. By providing high-quality veterinary care to residents who may not otherwise afford it, they help keep pets healthy and at home, advancing our goals around public health and shelter capacity."

#### RUDY TOVAR

City of Las Vegas  
Animal Protection Services

### Honoring Carol Lisowski

Carol Lisowski's passion for animal welfare ran deep. After moving to a neighborhood where cats were often abandoned, she took in and cared for many and adopted seven. When one of her regulars, Max, disappeared and was found with a broken leg, she realized how few options exist for community cats in need.

Carol was a recurring donor for Heaven Can Wait Animal Society, passionate about expanding access to lifesaving care for pets and community cats. "They shouldn't have to survive on their own," she said. "I just want to know the animals are being cared for."

Carol's volunteer and monetary support helped us ensure so many dogs, cats, and their caretakers get the help they need. Her impact lives on through the lives she touched and the compassion she sparked in others. We are deeply grateful for her legacy of generosity and compassion.



## The Power of Community

After spending five days stranded on a power pole, Amelia got a second chance. Our Community Cat Coordinator sprang into action, contacting NV Energy and animal welfare groups. Paws Patrol LV quickly arrived, joined by NV Energy. As an NV Energy representative climbed the pole, Amelia panicked and fell, but was safely caught by the community of animal lovers waiting below.

Amelia was brought to our clinic for a safe space to recover, receive spay surgery, and get vaccinated and back on her paws.

# Amelia

# Amelia

# Amelia

# Amelia

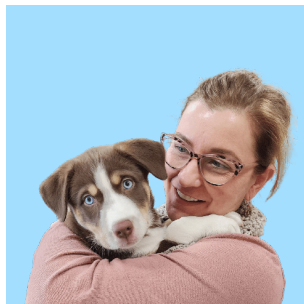


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# Our Team

## Leadership



**Rachel Bergren**  
Executive Director



**Dr. Alyssa Adams, DVM**  
Medical Director

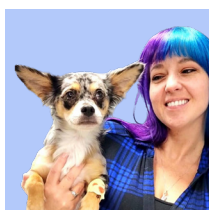
## Board of Directors

Melissa Eure, President  
Mark Debacker, Vice President/Treasurer  
Sarah Ocampo, Secretary  
Joseph Florentino, Director  
Mary Beth Hartleb, Director  
Carolyn Wheeler, Director

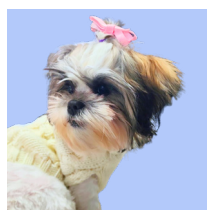
## Administrative Team



**Kristy K.**  
Operations Director



**Kelly Sheehan**  
Communications &  
Development Manager



**Rachel Matters**  
Administrative Coordinator



**Sophia Vanerio**  
Digital Marketing Intern

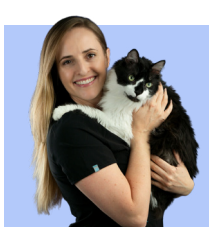
"By far one of the best experiences I've had in all my years of owning animals. So supportive, accommodating and helpful. There was no way I was going to be able to afford three cat's medical needs all at one time! Because of places like this, I was able to give them a forever home."

**JENNIFER KARTLER**  
Heaven Can Wait Client

## Clinic and Programs Team



**Dr. Courtney Bufalino**  
Associate Veterinarian



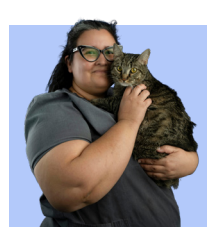
**Dr. Marisa Younanian**  
Associate Veterinarian



**Annika Henry**  
Lead Veterinary Tech



**Kelli F.**  
Veterinary Technician



**Elizabeth R.**  
Veterinary Technician



**Kim Albright**  
Veterinary Technician



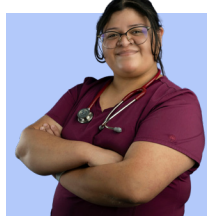
**Jessica Betts**  
Veterinary Technician



**Wendy Cooper**  
Veterinary Technician



**Kim Heath**  
Veterinary Technician



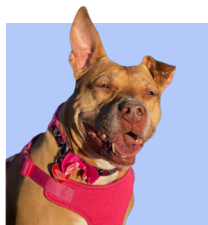
**Jackie Cortez**  
Veterinary Technician



**Veronica A.**  
Veterinary Assistant



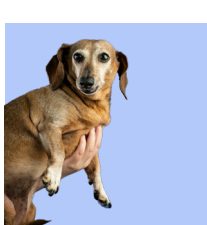
**Camme Tyla**  
Veterinary Assistant



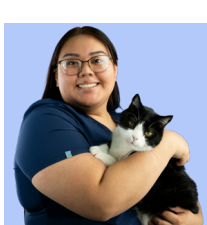
**Nathaly Medina**  
Community Cat  
Coordinator



**Jane P.**  
Data Clerk



**Julie M.**  
Receptionist



**Evelyn Rojas**  
Receptionist





I cannot imagine what our community would look like without the steadfast dedication of Heaven Can Wait Animal Society over these past 25 years. Their unwavering focus on spay and neuter has been nothing short of transformational, not only for countless animals who've been spared suffering, but for the overall health and well-being of our entire community. **Animal welfare is deeply intertwined with human welfare.**

Heaven Can Wait has understood this truth from the beginning, committing themselves to prevention as the most impactful purpose of all.

They've pursued this mission with relentless dedication, even in times when support fell short of the enormous importance of their work. That kind of resilience and commitment is rare and deeply inspiring. We at Hearts Alive Village have been truly blessed by their collaborative spirit. In the midst of an ongoing crisis in animal welfare, it has meant the world to me personally, and to our entire organization, to form bonds that lift each other up and amplify both of our missions. Together, we've been able to do more for the people and pets who need us most, and I am profoundly grateful for Heaven Can Wait's partnership, vision, and extraordinary heart.

### CHRISTY STEVENS

Executive Director,  
Hearts Alive Village



"A small group of people met in 2009 and decided to start a nonprofit that supported TNR. We knew we had to locate a low cost, high volume clinic to spay and neuter the cats. We were referred to Heaven Can Wait. Their clinic has the best veterinarians. As the years went on, more TNR groups got engaged in the process. We became a team."

### DEB WILLIAMS

Community Cat Coalition  
of Clark County





**25**  
*years*  
**of spay & neuter**

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