

# Trap Neuter Return (TNR) MASH at AWA



After a rising second year vet student from Tufts University, Sam D., lost her summer employment opportunity at school due to the pandemic, she reached out to AWA about working with us, how could we say no? When Sam walked into our lives asking to help we felt fortunate, we were figuring out the best way to utilize her skills and experience, then when we found out she loved all things cats and had been involved in TNR spay & neuter clinic programs, it was a no brainer! Along with our Volunteer Coordinator Alicia, our team and Sam developed a piloted program designed to train AWA volunteers to assist with AWA's feral cat spay & neuter events.

Our team was able to put together a MASH style TNR clinic which uses a series of several stations to create a more streamlined flow and increased efficiency. These stations include utilizing trained volunteers to run tasks such as check-in, vaccinations, pre-surgery preparation, surgery, ear tip, recovery, and discharge in order to create an efficient cat-patient flow that allows more cats to be spayed or neuter during each event.

During our first MASH style TNR clinic, held in the beginning of August, volunteers were able to be hands on, observe the actual surgeries, and learn more about how spaying or neutering will help control the feral cat population in our community. AWA now has a group of Volunteers who understand this MASH style TNR clinic and can be leaders in setting up future Volunteer run TNR clinics.

AWA is dedicated to offering these programs to the feral cat community to help reduce the number of kittens born each year.

Unfortunately, Covid-19 had decreased the amount of spay & neuter surgeries we have been able to do each day due to building capacity limitations. Increased expenses for vet supplies and staffing has meant that the cost of performing a feral cat spay or neuter at AWA's Pet Clinic as it has always been done increased the cost to feral cat caretakers who spend days trapping cats and managing colonies. As part of our commitment to eliminating euthanasia as a "solution" to overpopulation we had to come up with a new, sustainable method of providing spay and neuter surgeries to the feral cat caregiver community.

AWA supports the management of free-roaming cat colonies through Trap Neuter Return (TNR). If you are interested in learning more about TNR, AWA hosts monthly TNR Workshops at 6:00 PM on the third Thursday of every month at our Pet Clinic.

