

## **"FREE" PETS – DEATH WARRANTS FOR THE PETS©**

**By: Catherine L. Wolfe, Lawyer and Wildlife Biologist**

The advertisements are everywhere – “free” kittens, cats, puppies, and dogs. Unfortunately, most of the people who place these advertisements are unaware that they are death warrants. And this is also true of people who simply give their pets away “free.”

First, the pets’ lives are endangered by allowing them to be taken and sold for scientific research. Collecting pets for scientific research is a booming business in number of states. People in that “business” make a profit by collecting “free” pets and then turning around and selling them for a profit to research facilities. Most humane societies and animal shelters realize this and have a significant charge for all pets that they adopt out. In that way they screen out people who would otherwise sell the pets for research at a profit. Individuals and organizations looking to place pets in loving homes would be well-advised to do the same. (Note: this is also a good way to screen out potential adopters who would be unable to afford proper veterinary care for the pets).

Second, there is a significant portion of the American population that eat pets – cats, dogs, horses, etc. These are not just people from other countries – **THESE ARE AMERICANS**. In fact, it is an entire subculture, and in these hard economic times, it is growing. Think about it; it is cheaper to get a “free” pet to eat than it is to go to the store and purchase a chicken, or meat. Sometimes it is a matter of people needing to feed their families, and sometimes it is a matter of people just preferring to eat pets. In either case, charging money for the pet will usually prevent the pet from ending up in the roasting pan.

Third, people who allow their pets to reproduce, and then give the offspring away “free,” reduce the number of people who will be adopting homeless pets. People who allow their pets to reproduce need to realize that for every pet they find a home for, a homeless pet will die. They are actually robbing homeless pets of homes, and thereby killing the homeless pets. Sad, but true, and as an aside, this fact applies equally to people who allow their purebred pets to reproduce. For some strange reason, many people believe that just because their pets have traceable heritages, they are somehow exempt from this ugly reality, but they are not. Their actions are just as deadly for homeless pets as the people who allow non-purebreds to reproduce. Why should a “pure-bred” pet have any more right to life than a “non-purebred” pet? People who insist upon having a “designer” dog should adopt one from a pure-bred rescue organization – there are rescue organizations for virtually every breed and they are very easy to locate on the internet. There simply is no good reason for allowing one’s pet to reproduce.

***The answer to all these problems is simple – SPAY AND NEUTER ALL PETS!***

About the Author: Ms. Wolfe is an Attorney as well as a Wildlife Biologist. Ms. Wolfe was a founding member of the Animal Law Section of the Michigan State Bar Association (the first such section in the nation) and subsequently served as Chairperson.

Ms. Wolfe founded Wolfe Pack Press (a 501(C)(3) public charity, [www.wolfepackpress.org](http://www.wolfepackpress.org)) to develop and distribute educational materials to fight animal cruelty. She wrote the book, Get the Edge in Fighting Animal Cruelty Cases, and is a national speaker, having given presentations at the 2005, 2006, and 2007 national conferences of NACA (National Animal Control Association). Ms. Wolfe has also taught the Level II course for animal cruelty investigation certification for ACCI (the Association of Certified Animal Cruelty Investigators) and been a presenter for numerous organizations including the Michigan Humane Society, the Michigan Association of Animal Control Officers, and the Colorado Association of Animal Control Officers.