

For Immediate Release

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On World Spay Day, Woods Humane Society Asks Local Pet-Lovers to Help Spay it Forward

\$25 Donations to Nonprofit's 'Project M.E.O.W.' Provide Subsidized Medical Services for Unowned Community Cats

San Luis Obispo, CA (February 22, 2022) — In honor of National Spay & Neuter Awareness Month and World Spay Day (February 22), [Woods Humane Society](https://www.woodshumane.org) is raising funds for, and awareness about, one segment of the local pet population that needs the community's help most: unowned cats.

According to Dr. Leslie Sklena, Woods Director of Veterinary Medicine, unowned "community cats" are perhaps the most voiceless and helpless of all of the homeless animals in our community. "They go unseen," she says, explaining that some of these cats are feral, while others are friendly neighborhood visitors, roaming freely outdoors. "People don't always get to pet them or cuddle them," she says, but they need help nonetheless.

Thanks to the organization's donor-supported [Project M.E.O.W fund](#), her team at Woods sterilized and treated 1,467 community cats last year alone—a number that represents only a fraction of those in need of veterinary services.

Many of the cats came to one of Woods' two low-cost clinic locations, in Atascadero and in San Luis Obispo, on a monthly Tip It Tuesday, a day devoted to providing community cats with a spay/neuter surgery along with an identifying ear-tip and a rabies vaccine—all for the steeply reduced fee of \$25.



Local Trap, Neuter, Return (TNR) organizations and Good Samaritans bring in the community cats for what is presumably their first and only veterinary appointment of their lives. For this reason, Woods' medical staff takes the time to thoughtfully assess and treat each individual feline. Dr. Sklena's team, for instance, has helped community cats in need of tail amputations or wound sutures before being re-released, and have identified more social cats and kittens that were candidates for Woods' adoption program.

One such unowned cat, Sequoia (pictured above-right), quickly won the hearts of the Woods team recently with her sweet demeanor. Thanks to

Project M.E.O.W., she received extensive treatment for a broken leg that might have otherwise gone untreated, and ended up getting adopted by a staff member.

Woods says that the population of community cats can grow quickly without TNR efforts and subsidized spay and neuter programs: Cats can start reproducing at just five months of age, and can have up to three litters per year. In advance of kitten season, which begins in the spring, and in honor of World Spay Day, Woods is asking the community for help keeping their Project M.E.O.W fund high enough to meet the local need to help cats like Sequoia and thousands of other nameless felines in our county.

Donations to support Project M.E.O.W. can be made at [WoodsHumane.org/donate/project-meow/](https://www.WoodsHumane.org/donate/project-meow/). For more information about scheduling a subsidized surgery for a community cat, visit [WoodsHumane.org/spay-neuter/community-cats/](https://www.WoodsHumane.org/spay-neuter/community-cats/).

Woods Humane Society also provides low-cost medical services for publicly owned pets and for the homeless dogs and cats available for adoption at Woods or at SLO County Animal Services. All told, its clinics altered 6,195 animals last year. **For information about scheduling a spay or neuter surgery for owned pets, please visit [SpaySLOCounty.org](https://www.SpaySLOCounty.org).**

For more event information, visit www.WoodsHumane.org or call (805) 543-9316. **For media inquiries or high-resolution images, please contact Media@woodshumane.org.**

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About Woods Humane Society

Founded in 1955, Woods Humane Society is a privately funded, non-profit, animal sheltering and welfare organization that annually places more than 3,000 dogs and cats into loving homes. All animals are spayed/neutered, vaccinated and microchipped prior to being placed for adoption. Visit www.woodshumane.org to view available animals, donate or learn more. To make an adoption appointment, call Woods Humane Society SLO, located at 875 Oklahoma Avenue in San Luis Obispo, at (805) 543-9316, or Woods Humane Society North County, located at 2300 Ramona Road in Atascadero, at (805) 466-5403.