



## 2018 ANNUAL REPORT

### Our Mission:

The Tuscaloosa Spay Neuter Incentive Program is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization dedicated to reducing the population of unwanted animals in Tuscaloosa. Fewer unwanted animals improves public health; reduces costs of animal control, sheltering, and euthanasia; and reduces suffering and disease in Tuscaloosa's animal population. We have been focused on using trap-neuter-return to reduce the population of feral cats, and educating students and community members about the importance of spay and neuter for all pets since TSNIP was founded in 2013.



As part of "Leave Us Memories, Not Your Pets" Day, Davis Emerson Middle School students visit the University of Alabama. The Davis Emerson students shared information with college students about the importance of spaying and neutering pets, and the plight of abandoned animals. This event was led by Dr. Jeff Parker as part of a semester-long course involving students from UA and Davis Emerson Middle School.



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### **Committees**

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Charity Golden  
James Harper

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Dr. Jeff Parker, Chair  
Nikki Evans

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### **Feral Cat TNR Program:**

Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) is the process of trapping feral cats, having them spayed and neutered (“fixed”), and returning them to their original location. In our program, the cats also receive a rabies vaccine and have their left ear cropped flat. Cats with a cropped (“tipped”) left ear can be identified as already done, so that resources aren’t wasted trapping the same cat over and over. Several research studies and many successful TNR programs in other cities (including Huntsville and Auburn, AL; and Destin, Gainesville, and Jacksonville, FL) have shown that TNR can effectively reduce both the number of feral cats euthanized in shelters and the number of feral cats trapped and brought in through animal control. Following these programs, TSNIP began trapping in spring of 2014. The data from Tuscaloosa’s Metro Animal Shelter shows that cat and kitten euthanasia have dropped by 93% and 82% respectively since then, and that feral cat intake through Animal Control has dropped by 60% as well.

TNR works to control feral cat populations because feral cats are territorial. They also live where they can find food, water, and shelter. This means they often live near groups of people so they can scavenge from food waste or rodent populations. This shows in feral cat intake data from Tuscaloosa Metro Animal Shelter. Many times, an address where several feral cats are trapped will appear again 5-8 months later, with as many or more cats needing to be trapped again. When the cats are trapped and euthanized, that address is still a good location for cats. Soon, new cats move in and start breeding. Cats can have 1-3 litters each summer, with 4-8 kittens per litter. Soon, the people there will have a “cat problem” again. Where there were 3-5 cats, there may now be 12-20 cats. If we use TNR instead, the cats are fixed and brought back. They will stay there, using the food, water, and shelter. New cats are less likely to move in. The cats that are there do not breed. Animal Control does not have to come back out every 6-8 months, new cats do not have to be euthanized. So returning the cat to the original location is a very important part of the process. If the people there were unhappy about cats being present, they usually accept the fixed cats. Once the cats are fixed, they stop fighting, howling at night, and their odor drops by more than 50%. The cats continue to control local rodent and snake populations.



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In 2016, TSNIP hired Ann Holley to work part-time as a trapping coordinator. She arranges surgery appointments with local veterinary clinics and the Alabama Spay-Neuter Clinic in Irondale. She answers phone calls and e-mailed messages from the public, educating them specifically about feral cats and referring them to other programs for help with spay and neuter resources for pet cats and dogs. She manages our trap library and trains volunteers to trap cats on a schedule for their surgery appointments. Ann has been a huge support for our program. She is excellent at listening to people and helping them understand how they can make choices with their pets or nearby feral animals that will help both their pets and their community as a whole. In 2017, we had our first full year with Ann's assistance. Unlike 2014-2016, when we fixed 300-450 cats per year, Ann has helped us fix 809 cats in 2017 and 685 cats in 2018, bringing our total to 2,704 cats fixed by the end of 2018.



Ann Holley addresses a school assembly at Davis Emerson Middle School to explain TNR.



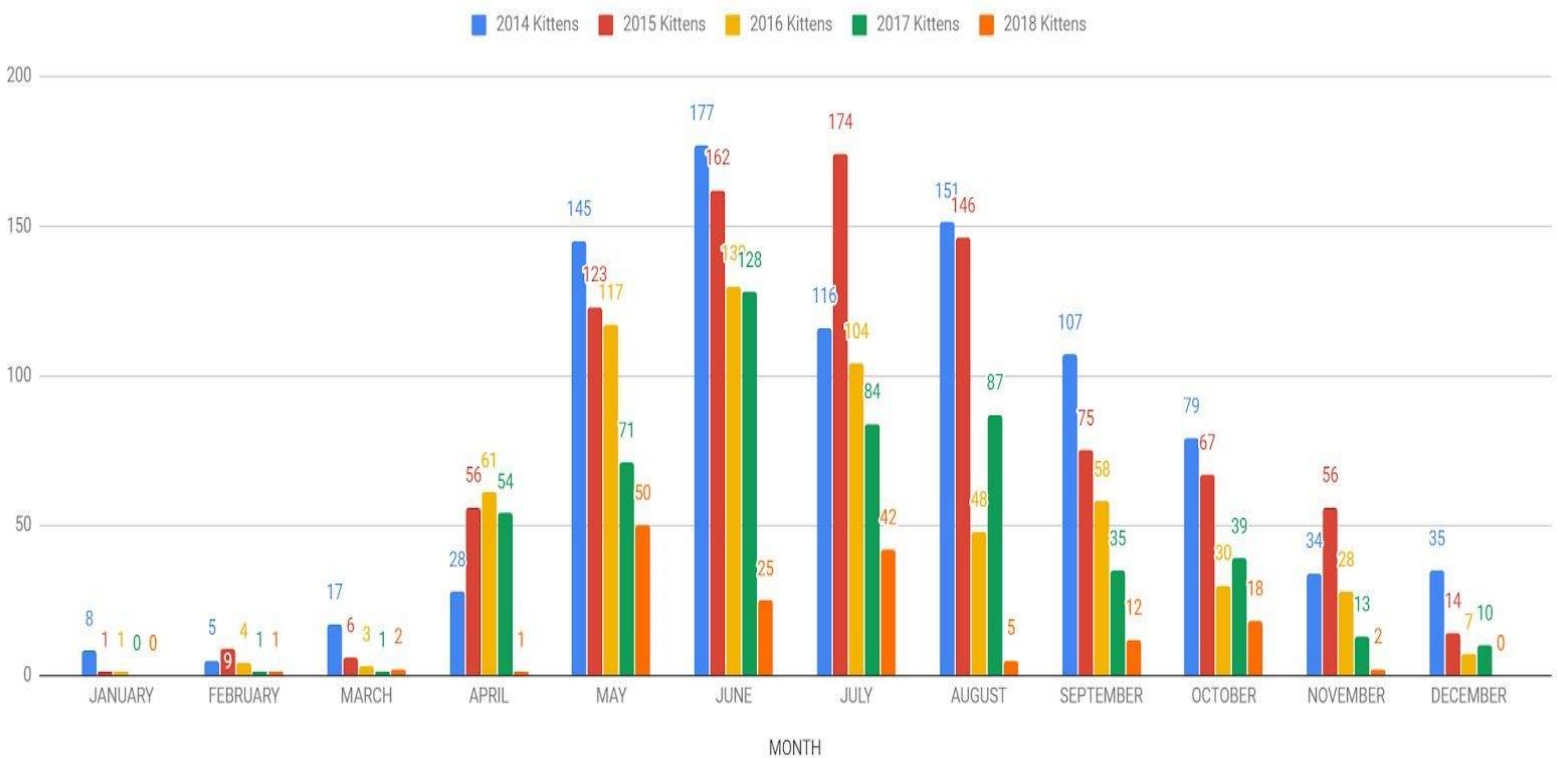
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Please review the following three charts. The first two show monthly euthanasia rates at Tuscaloosa Metro Animal Shelter, for kittens and cats. Cats breed in the summer, so there is a rise in kitten euthanasia every summer, with the peak around June.

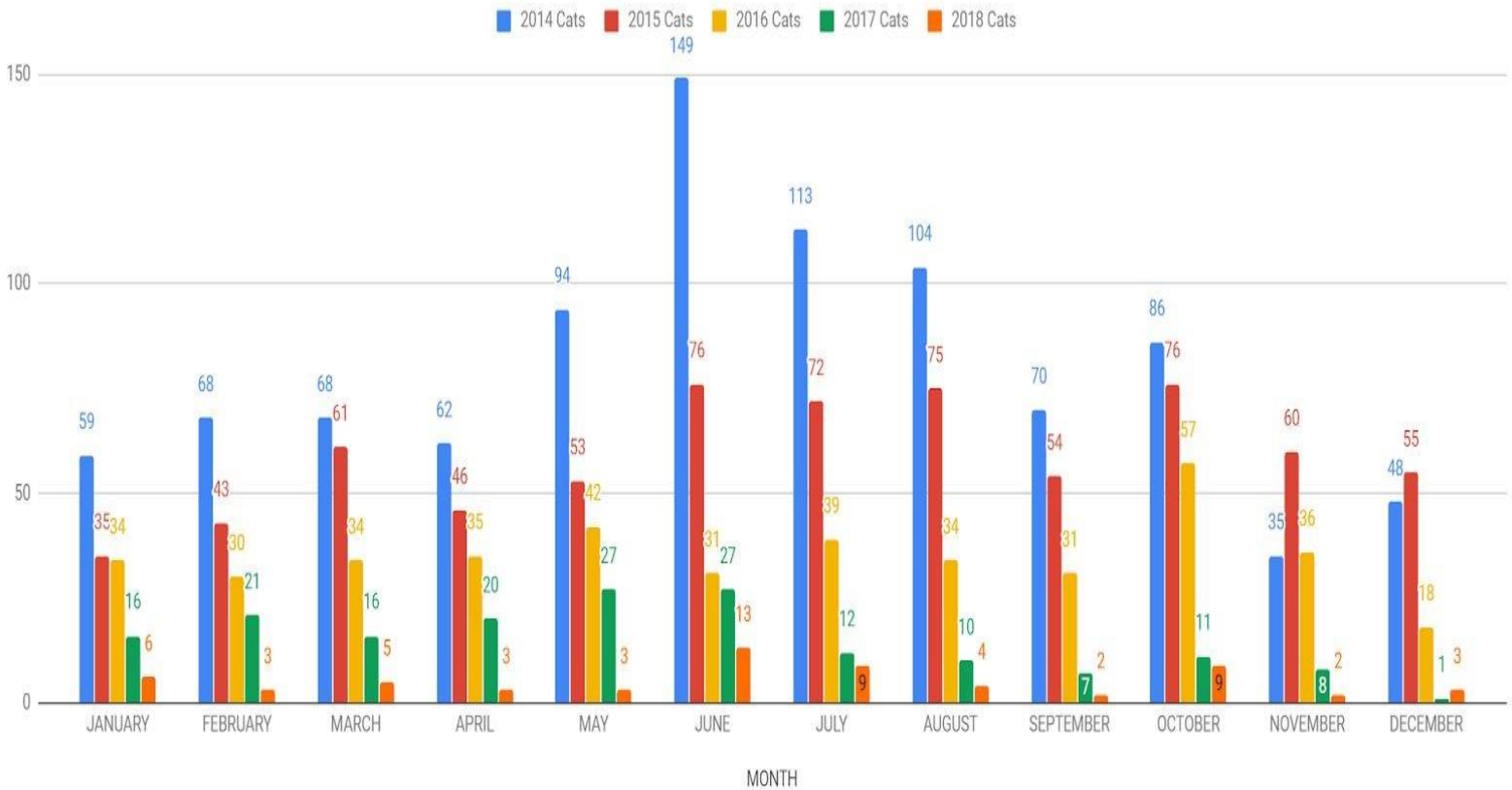
1. Since TSNIP started trapping, this peak in kitten euthanasia has dropped every year. Where Metro Animal Shelter was forced to euthanize more than 100 kittens per month for 5 months of 2014, that was lowered to 4 months in 2015, 3 months in 2016, only 1 month in 2017 with Ann directing trapping, and was 50 or lower in 2018 with her continued efforts.

2014 Kittens, 2015 Kittens, 2016 Kittens, 2017 Kittens and 2018 Kittens



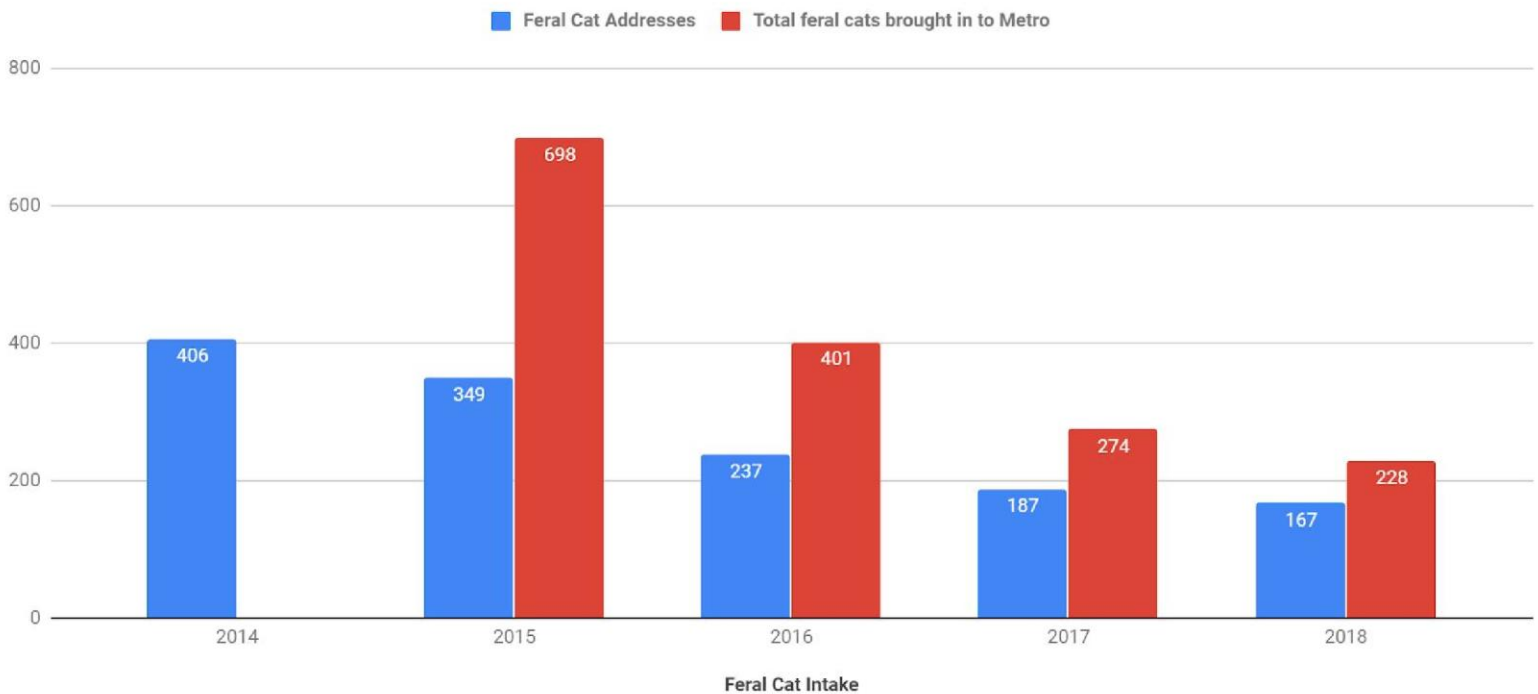
- Similarly, cat euthanasia rates have dropped with each year of TSNIP's TNR program. In 2014, 956 cats were euthanized. This past year, that number was just 62. This is a drop of 93.5% over the previous 4 years, and an impressive 65% drop from last year's total of 176 cats.

2014 Cats, 2015 Cats, 2016 Cats, 2017 Cats and 2018 Cats



3. The third and final chart tracks feral cat intake at the shelter. Cats were not documented as feral or friendly in 2014 at intake, so we do not have a total for number of feral cats brought in that year. There is a clear drop in the number of cats brought in, showing a reduction of the feral cat population in Tuscaloosa. Moreover, there is a clear drop in the number of addresses Animal Control travels to each year to respond to feral cat problems.

**Feral Cat Addresses and Total feral cats brought in to Metro**



TSNIP would not exist without the hard work of concerned citizens, who volunteer their time to monitor and trap feral cats; the generous support of local veterinary clinics, who perform surgical procedures at a discounted rate; the collaboration of Tuscaloosa Metro Animal Shelter and the hard working officers responsible for Animal Control throughout Tuscaloosa and Northport; and especially funding from the City of Tuscaloosa, Tuscaloosa County, and the City of Northport. This funding is key to providing a county-wide TNR program and education for our community. With a consistent presence, we have been steadily reducing Tuscaloosa's feral cat populations and euthanasia rates and plan to continue this work.

Looking forward, we are also exploring ways to provide spay and neuter services to pets in underserved communities in Tuscaloosa County. As long as there are free-roaming, unfixed pets, there will be unexpected puppies and kittens. We collaborate with the rescue community in Tuscaloosa to refer people to resources for spay and neuter help for dogs and pet cats. We will continue our education program to encourage citizens to value spaying and neutering their pets. We are also seeking grants to help improve access to spay and neuter services.



Painting at Tuscaloosa's Metro Animal Shelter (TMAS)! Students from Dr. Jeff Parker's class created murals to brighten the concrete walls and make it more welcoming for adopters.





**Education Program:**

Dr. Jeff Parker developed and leads our education efforts. His Youth Civic Development and Community Engagement class (Psychology 380) at the University of Alabama accepts 20-25 advanced undergraduate college students who mentor local students at Davis-Emerson Middle School and Holt High School in community projects created and conducted by the youth. Together, they investigate the suffering of abandoned animals, and the effects on the people around them. Through outreach events on campus and at public events, they are teaching our community about the importance of spay and neuter for pets as well as feral cats.



Davis Emerson Middle School students visit UA campus for “Leave Us Memories, Not Your Pets” Day. They spoke with Ferguson Center visitors about responsible pet care including the importance of spay and neuter, and planning for pet care at the end of semester breaks.



In 2019, TSNIP partnered with the University of Alabama and Davis Emerson Middle School in their endeavors to educate the Tuscaloosa community on the importance of spay/neuter.

Our 2019 focus was on Education and Community Service to Paint Adoption Spaces.

- Education
  - Pet Supplies Plus, Bark in the Park Booth and River Market events held to educate the community on TNR with the Wheel of Misfortune .
  - Leave us Your Memories, Not Your Pets Day held at the University of Alabama in which University of Alabama students and Davis-Emerson Middle School students talked to UA students about responsible pet care.
  
- Community Service: Paint for Paws
  - Tuscaloosa Metro Animal Shelter - Dr. Parker's students spent their Sunday afternoons painting murals along the inner walls of the original TMAS building to brighten the space and make it more inviting. Paint was generously donated by Sherwin Williams.
  - Humane Society of West Alabama (HSA) has a kitten room in their Cat House adoption center that still had bare walls. The students painted murals along the kitten room to match the murals in the front adoption room, with paint donated by the Paint Spot.



## PAINT FOR PAWS

*We are changing their world. Local high school and college students are giving the Tuscaloosa Metro Animal Shelter a facelift! We are replacing the drab institutional walls with art work and murals. Come out next Sunday Apr 14th at noon and lend a hand (paw?) We are the students of OurCityUnderground sponsored by TSNIP and Sherwin-Williams Paint StoreTuscaloosa #2434*

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@OnAllFours



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Dr. Parker's students work hard to give TMAS a makeover:



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They also worked to beautify the kitten room at the HSWA's Cat House.



Key Financial Data As Of December 31, 2018:

**Funding and contributions received:**

City of Tuscaloosa	25,000
County of Tuscaloosa	25,000
County of Tuscaloosa (2017 awarded in 2018)	25,000
Individual and business contributions	<u>4387</u>

**Total funding / contributions**      \$      **79,387**

**Program expense:**

*Feral cat program:*

Spay / neuter surgeries	\$	36,659
Other veterinary care		229
Traps and supplies		

*Education program:*

Advertising and printing		
Supplies		<u>1420</u>

**Total program expense**      \$      **38,308**

**Administrative expense:**

Accounting services / Payroll processing	21
Bank and other charges	35
Insurance	2062
Payroll expense	15,851
Postage and mailing expense	170
Supplies	88
Administrative Expenses	1240
Telephone answering service	<u>1366</u>

**Total administrative expense**      \$      **20,833**



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