



Decrease their numbers. Elevate their status. End their homelessness.



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Georgia Demonstrates Lifesaving Benefits of Collaboration as United Spay Alliance, DeKalb County, LifeLine Animal Project, Others Host First-in-the-Nation “Canine Wet Lab” High Volume Spay/Neuter Training



Photo credit: LifeLine Animal Project

Assets: [Photos](#)

ATLANTA, Feb. 6, 2025 - This past weekend, a remarkable collaboration of national, state, and local organizations came together for a first-in-the-nation “Canine Wet Lab.” This was a hands-on training opportunity for licensed veterinarians to learn safe, efficient high-quality high-volume spay/neuter (HQHVSN) surgical techniques to improve dog spay/neuter surgery. The team of two veterinary trainers, four trainees, three vet observers, eight veterinary technicians/assistants, and three volunteers facilitated the spay/neuter of 18 dogs from LifeLine Animal Project. Spay/Neuter is a crucial component of dog lifesaving and reducing overpopulation.

This event demonstrates the critical role of these procedures in addressing pet overpopulation, and also highlights Georgia’s commitment to collaboration. The wet lab was the precursor to other upcoming Georgia events, including a “Spayathon” in May and two more wet labs on the horizon.

“United Spay Alliance is thrilled to partner with the dedicated team organizing these wet labs in DeKalb County,” said Brianna Lovell Myers, Executive Director for United Spay Alliance. “What makes this collaboration so incredible is the enthusiasm and shared commitment of everyone involved. DeKalb County stands as a model for the state of Georgia and the nation.”

There is an overwhelming need for spay/neuter services for dogs. National data from [Shelter Animals Count](#) shows 334,000 dogs were euthanized in 2024, only a .6% decrease from 2023. Additionally, dogs of all sizes are waiting

longer in shelters before being placed. In Georgia, dogs are also being euthanized at higher rates than in the past: Last year, 22,000 dogs were euthanized or otherwise died in municipal shelters, a 10% increase over 2023 according to data reported to the Georgia Department of Agriculture. Moving upstream to focus on solutions like spay/neuter is critical to solving the crisis in shelters. While Georgia is facing the same challenges happening across the nation, the state is proactively working toward sustainable solutions.

"DeKalb County is honored to be the pilot for Georgia's first-ever county-led dog spay and neuter training program," said Commissioner Michelle Long Spears. "This initiative represents a groundbreaking partnership between local government and nonprofit organizations, demonstrating how collaboration can create real, lasting change in our communities. By working together, we are setting an example for how municipalities across the state can take proactive steps to address animal wellbeing, reduce overpopulation, and ensure a healthier future for both pets and residents."

"The GVMA is committed to advancing the veterinary medical profession and supporting the veterinarian's role in improving animal and public health," said Dr. Keri Riddick, Executive Director of the GVMA. "This event provided a valuable opportunity to collaborate with our partners, blending continuing education and advocacy, underscoring the importance of fostering relationships with stakeholders across animal welfare and veterinary communities."

"We are thrilled to see so many animal welfare and government organizations come together to make this canine wet lab possible," said Dr. Emi Kooyman, Owner & Veterinarian, Spay Neuter Vets. "High-quality, lower-cost spay and neuter services are essential for controlling pet overpopulation and improving animal welfare, and hands-on training like this ensures more veterinarians are equipped to provide them."

"High-quality, high-volume spay/neuter saves lives, prevents suffering, and reduces overpopulation," said Andrea Peterson, Chief Operating Officer for LifeLine Animal Project. "LifeLine is thrilled to play a part in bringing more of these resources to the community to increase accessibility. "

This event represents a model collaboration between national, state, and local organizations:

Sponsored by the [SoDA initiative and Commissioner Michelle Long Spears](#)

This event is part of the Save our DeKalb Animals (SoDA) initiative, spearheaded by Commissioner Michelle Long Spears of District 2, and the DeKalb County Board of Commissioners. Commissioner Spears has emphasized the importance of animal welfare in DeKalb County, adopting a collaborative, multifaceted approach to address animal services challenges.

Facilitated by [United Spay Alliance](#)

United Spay Alliance is a national, nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote affordable, accessible, and timely spay/neuter services as the key to addressing the problems of overpopulation. To learn more, visit unitedspayalliance.org or follow @UnitedSpayAlliance on Facebook and Instagram.

In partnership with the [Georgia Veterinary Medical Association \(GVMA\)](#)

The GVMA supports the veterinary profession and ensures the highest standards of care for animals. Through continuing education, advocacy, and community outreach, GVMA serves as a vital resource for veterinarians throughout Georgia.

And the [University of Georgia School of Law's Practicum in Animal Welfare Skills](#)

PAWS trains students to work with jurisdictions around Georgia on legal issues involving animals and helps communities implement effective, efficient, and humane solutions to pet overpopulation and improve the standard of care for vulnerable animals.

And the [GA Pet Coalition](#)

The Georgia Pet Coalition is committed to advancing the welfare of pets in Georgia through advocacy, education, and collaboration with various stakeholders. The GPC works to create a state where all pets are healthy, valued, and living in loving homes.

Hosted by [LifeLine Animal Project](#)

A nonprofit founded in 2002, LifeLine Animal Project provides lifesaving solutions to end the euthanasia of healthy and treatable animals in county shelters. LifeLine manages DeKalb and Fulton County Animal Services, where it has sustained no-kill levels, and operates two LifeLine Spay & Neuter Clinics. LifeLine provides services to over 43,000 animals annually and has performed 195,500 free and low-cost spay/neuter surgeries to date, including 61,100 stray/feral cats through its Community Cat program, metro Atlanta's first and largest trap-neuter-return assistance program. LifeLine's community outreach improves the quality of life for animals in the community and helps prevent pet overpopulation. For more information, please visit LifeLineAnimal.org or follow LifeLine on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [X](#).

With trainers & team members from [Spay Neuter Vets](#)

Spay Neuter Vets is dedicated to making spaying and neutering convenient, affordable, and accessible for all pet owners. We remove barriers by offering clear, transparent information, financial assistance, and a streamlined process that lets clients choose their surgery date and package. Our services meet the high-quality, high-volume standards set by the ASPCA Humane Alliance and the Association of Shelter Veterinarians, ensuring the highest level of care for every pet. With over nine years of specialized experience, our certified team focuses exclusively on spay/neuter surgeries to prevent pet overpopulation and reduce shelter euthanasia.