

All About Microchips

A microchip is a tiny computer chip that has an identification number programmed into it. It is encased in smooth, strong biocompatible glass, and is small enough to fit into a hypodermic needle. Once an animal is injected with the chip, he can be identified throughout his life by this one-of-a-kind number. His identification cannot be lost, altered, or removed.

How does the microchip work?

The microchip is generally injected deeply under the skin. It sits safely there, totally inert. A special scanner is used to send a radio signal through the skin of the animal to read the chip. The animal feels nothing as the scanner is passed over her. The microchip sends its number back to the scanner. It appears in the viewing window as, for example, AVID 220*609*321.

How does the scanner work?

Microchips operate by sending and receiving radiowave signals. Therefore they function at a particular frequency. In the U.S. the accepted and used radiowave frequency is 125 kHz. The AVID scanner sends a safe radio wave signal to the microchip. When the chip receives this signal, it sends the microchip number back to the scanner to be displayed in a viewing window.

Does the procedure hurt the animal?

Although the microchip needle is larger than a typical vaccine needle, the general rule is that your animals will react the same way to this shot as any other. No better, no worse. Their physical performance is not impaired, and there is no scarring. You are not injecting any substance that can burn or irritate; the chip is completely biocompatible and non-offensive.

Can the microchip move around?

When properly implanted, a small layer of connective tissue forms around the microchip, preventing movement or migration of the chip. The microchip will not migrate if instructions are followed and implantation is correct.

How long does the microchip last?

The microchip has no power supply, battery, or moving parts. It is designed with an operating life of over 25 years and is guaranteed for the life of the animal. Once injected, the microchip is anchored in place as a thin layer of connective tissue forms around it. The chip requires no care. It does not pass through or out of the body.

Does the animal have to be sedated?

No. Injecting the microchip is just like any other injection or vaccination.



Scanning for a microchip

Where is the injection site?

Dogs and cats are injected between the shoulder blades deep under the skin.

How does a shelter know to call AVID?

Animal shelters and animal control officers are educated about microchip identification and how it works. Shelters use industry-wide, cross-compatible scanners that read all chips operating at a certain frequency. Once a microchip is located in an animal, the appropriate steps are taken. If the animal is registered with AVID's PetTRAC™ Recovery System, the shelter will be given the owner's name. If the animal is not registered, they will be given the name of the veterinarian or the breeder who injected the microchip.

How many brands of chips are there?

The chips most commonly used in the U.S. companion animal industry are AVID and Home-Again™. Shelters know and trust these microchip companies to provide fast recovery services for lost pets. Since the mid 1990's, rescue groups, shelters, and humane societies can use a single scanner to detect any 125 kHz microchip.

How much does it cost?

Veterinarians can set their own prices, but the cost usually runs around \$25-\$65.

-- www.avidmicrochip.com

Animal Placements

In May, June, and July, we placed 36 cats in new loving, responsible homes. Our major expenses for those three months were:

Veterinary fees: \$34,017.91*
Advertising to find new homes: \$187.05
Food, special medicine: \$639.97**
Newsletter "Animal Talk": \$907.31

*These expenses include veterinary care for the dogs of Portland's homeless and a few emergency care visits. We also had expenses for several severely injured pets and very sick ones. All are doing well.

**Most volunteers pay for food and litter for the animals they care for themselves as their contribution to the cause.

What the Numbers Mean

You may have noticed the large vet bills we had this past quarter. It has been a very busy and crisis-filled time. As you read in the Kitty Corner, some of our volunteers have been helping disabled people with strays (and even colonies of strays) that have made a home in their backyards. Even though we got a very good price on all of the spaying/neutering, they did add up.

We also had several eye surgeries, a tail amputation, some major dental work (we had multiple cats with broken teeth), and one dog hit by a car that we helped. And we've been helping a woman in Newberg who has single-handedly taken some strays from several colonies out in the country to get them spayed/neutered. (We don't normally work outside the Portland area, but she is doing amazing work -- all by herself).

Also, this year we have seen the worst kitten season ever, and we are fostering more than we ever have. Because of the quantity of food that kittens eat, we have had to buy quite a bit of kitten food, which can add up.

We know this is a lot of money, and we cannot tell you how much we appreciate your help. We are working to full capacity and could not do it without your support.



VOLUNTEER PROFILE



Marion & Miss Wee

Marion Blum

ARCF Volunteer and Supporter for Over 30 Years

Marion Blum was one of the founders of Animal Rescue and Care Fund, which was established in 1975. She served on the ARCF Board during the early years, working with other volunteers to create the stable organization that it is today and has been an active supporter of ARCF ever since. Marion maintains a lively interest in the affairs of ARCF and is regularly in touch with several of our volunteers.

Marion loves all animals and can't imagine her life without them. She has had cats, but has had small dogs for the last several years. After she retired, her poodles enjoyed many trips to Arizona in the winter and to the Oregon Coast during other seasons. After the death of the last poodle, Marion decided to have just one dog, a lovely Chihuahua named Miss Wee. Marion and Miss Wee are together 24 hours a day, and Marion says they live for each other, and even say their prayers together every night. Miss Wee is very spoiled, which is as it should be. Miss Wee understands what Marion tells her and responds with her expressive eyes. Miss Wee likes company and meeting new people, as long as they acknowledge what a superior dog she is.

In their backyard there is also a resident squirrel named Herman. He lives in a custom-built, luxury "condo" with a large covered porch for his corn on the cob. Being so well fed, Herman is, as you can imagine, very large. His antics provide daily entertainment for Miss Wee, so he earns his keep.

Marion has always had a deep concern for the welfare of animals. She would like to see the enactment and enforcement of stricter laws protecting animals from abuse, and more severe punishment for crimes involving animals. She is glad to see that assisted living centers are allowing pets now and that nursing homes welcome visits from animals.

A special word of thanks to Marion on behalf of the many animals whose lives have been saved by her generosity!

-- Lorraine Jones

The Kitty Corner

What a quarter it has been. Kittens are coming out of everyone's ears and recent phone calls confirm it.

One woman said "Can you send me some coupons? I need to get my four females fixed. I've been doing very well selling kittens for the last few years. Last year we did great. The kids sold some before I even got home from work a few times. But this year I have ten left and no one wants them."

This is the kind of call that just makes rescuers cringe, seethe, spit nails, etc., but it demonstrates that backyard breeders have far less of a market too.

But then I like to think about the people who call and say "I just moved into my house and I've learned there is a mom and kittens in a neighbor's yard. I would be happy to foster if you would help me place them." That person also got all the cats in that yard into the vet for spaying and neutering.

Also this past quarter, a couple of our volunteers have been spending every spare minute helping people who are not physically able to do something about the cat colonies that have grown in their backyards, nearby fields, vacant lots, etc. (in one backyard they went from two to 17 cats in one season).

In partnership with OSNF (Oregon Spay Neuter Fund) and Friends of the Shelter, we have altered 32 cats. Assuming that half of those 32 cats are females, and assuming an average litter size of four kittens and three litters per year, we have prevented the birth of 192 unwanted kittens in the next year alone.

And since those offspring can themselves begin reproducing at the tender age of four months, the flood of kittens could quickly turn into a tsunami.

As most of you know, we are a very small group (approx. 12 core people) and do this work after we get home from our paying jobs. That means we do not have the woman-power to trap on a regular basis and would welcome anyone who would like to become a trapping or transport volunteer.

You will read a number of success stories in our newsletter about the cats we have placed in the most wonderful homes. But we think that every altered cat is a success too. One day I want the cat coordinator to be able to say to everyone who has found a stray "Yes, we can help."

--- Pam Brooks, president

Pet Owner's Guide to Poisons Part I

Pets can be poisoned by many different things: snakes, plants, pesticides, weed killers, lawn sprays, acids, fertilizers, paints . . . the list is endless. Here are a few of those sources.

Japanese Yew – (Emergency!)

Scientific name: *Taxus cuspidus*

Common names: Yew, Spreading English Yew, Canada Yew

Plant with similar toxicity: *Zygadenus nuttiii*,

Common name: Deathcamas

The Yew is an ornamental yard plant, most often used in landscaping around the foundation of a house. It is extremely poisonous and an animal needs to eat only one-tenth of one percent of its body weight to get a toxic dose. (For example, a 50-pound dog would need only 0.05 pounds or less than 2 ounces of the plant to get a potentially fatal dose).

The toxin in the Yew is an alkaloid and works by depressing electrical activity in the heart, which can cause sudden death from heart failure. Clinical signs of toxicosis include trembling, incoordination, diarrhea, and collapse. In cases where animals are found dead it is very difficult to prove the Yew caused the death unless a necropsy (a veterinary term for an autopsy) shows evidence of ingestion. There are no specific blood or chemical tests to determine Yew toxicity.

While Yew poisoning does not seem to be common, the best advice is to know what ornamental plants are present around your house and make sure the Yew is not one of them.

Araceae Family - (Dangerous)

Scientific name: Many, including *Schefflera*, *Dieffenbachia*, *Begonia*, *Philodendron*

Common names: Starleaf, Tuffroot, tuberous begonia, wax begonia, water plant, yellow calla, peace lily, etc.

This family of house plants and ornamentals contains oxalates and causes toxicity by the formation of calcium oxalate crystals in the animal's organs and can cause an acute allergic reaction. Signs include excessive salivation, head shaking, pawing at the mouth, difficult breathing, vomiting, and diarrhea.

Fortunately, the plant causes pain and irritation on chewing and therefore animals rarely eat it in sufficient quantities to cause severe damage. The motivation for chewing on such a plant involves boredom and other psychological factors (recent changes in the household, etc.) so it may be worth noting if an animal begins suddenly eating house plants they used to ignore and discussing the situation with your veterinarian. If you have house plants, be aware of the potential for toxicity and preferably keep the plants away from the pet or switch to safer options.



Isis Ruthie

Once in a while the stars align in the most wonderful and mysterious ways. A woman in Newberg called and said she needed to find a home for a very shy cat. Almost immediately, Sarah called and said she was looking for a very shy cat. Here is the story Sarah wrote:

Tiny little Isis Ruthie came into our home and our hearts last December 30. She was thought to be two to three years old then, but very small for her age. She had apparently once been owned, but was then dumped in a feral cat colony in Newberg. Having established a rapport with and made great pets of three formerly feral cats, I figured we could make friends with Isis as well.

She actually required more patience than the three truly feral cats, having clearly once trusted someone and had that trust broken (she is terrified of human hands unless they are already in contact with her body, gently petting her).

But now she has come around and actively seeks and gives affection, and all four of the humans in our family, as well as our other cat, Alex, are now in love with her. I awake sometimes at 3:00 a.m. to hear Alex and Isis Ruthie chasing one another madly up and down the attic stairs. Isis has even gotten Alex to remember the "let's jump on Mom and Dad's toes in the middle of the night" game.

Thank you, ARCF, for this gift of a life.

Sarah Krakauer and Mel, Ari, and Miriam Kohn

Hi! I'm Otto the Fearless!

When I first arrived at ARCF, I was in rough shape. I had been in several homes, but always got passed off to someone else. I think this is because I had some medical issues and no one wanted to pay for my vet care. Or maybe it's because I have a ton of energy and they just couldn't keep up! Finally, someone called ARF! I mean ARCF! They rarely accept dogs since losing their dog adoption coordinator a couple of years ago, but I was lucky. They took me in and provided me with the care I needed.

Thanks to a few dedicated ARCF volunteers (especially Ronnie!) who took me in, the doctors and staff at Laurelhurst Veterinary Hospital who gave me the medical care I needed, and my foster family who gave me lots of love and time to rest and recuperate, I'm back on my feet. I'm healthy (although one of my legs will always be a little crooked), and I'm happy in my new home with this wonderful family who adopted me.

I hope you will consider joining with ARCF to create more success stories like mine. Please contact us if you have room in your home and your heart to foster or adopt a cat or dog in need.

Love, Otto the Fearless!



MORE SUCCESS STORIES

MURPHY

From one of our adopters:

I just received the newest newsletter, and thought I would send my update from my very successful pet adoption.

Murphy is all settled, and he and my other cat, Puff!, are getting along famously. He is the sweetest little thing I have ever had the pleasure to have in my home. I have enclosed some pictures.

Thanks again!

*Angela Cox
(and Murphy, and Puff!)*



HAVE YOU ADOPTED FROM US?

We are asking all ARCF "alumni" to check in and give us an update on your pets, no matter when you adopted from us. Send us an email, a note, a photo, whatever. If you adopted kittens from us, it would be fun to see baby pictures and grown-up pictures. Email us at arcf@pdx-petadoption.org or write us at P.O. Box 14956, Portland, OR 97293-0956.

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My Cat Recently Started Sneezing. What's Going On?

There are many possible reasons. Here are a few possibilities:

- **Dust, pollen, or other airborne particles:** These can cause sinus irritation in cats, just like they can in people. Sometimes we can unintentionally put a lot of irritating particles in the air by doing things like lighting a candle, turning on the heat or air conditioner after not using it for a season, keeping windows open, dusting, or lighting a fire in the fireplace.
- **Allergies:** Though allergies often cause skin problems in cats, they can also cause a runny nose, itchy eyes, and sneezing. Your cat may be allergic to something new in his diet, a new cleaning product, or something as simple as pollen.
- **Cigarette smoke:** This is actually the most common cause of respiratory problems in cats.
- **Infection:** Has your kitty been boarded or groomed or around new cats lately? She may have picked up an upper respiratory viral or bacterial infection from another cat. Respiratory infections can have effects much like human colds and sinus infections.
- **Dental problems:** The sinuses are closely connected to the roots of the teeth. If a tooth root is infected or inflamed, it can easily cause drainage into the sinuses and lead to sneezing.

This is an incomplete list - there are other things that could be making your cat sneeze as well. If he doesn't seem better in the next few days, take him to your veterinarian for a thorough examination.

Advances in Veterinary Technology Part II

As human medicine advances, veterinary medicine is advancing along with it. Many of the tests and procedures used on people are now available for pets. This is the second in a multi-part series that will present an overview of some the new technology available to veterinarians.

Ultrasound

In ultrasound, a device called a transducer emits very high frequency sound waves into the animal's body and measures when the waves bounce back. A computer interprets the pattern of sound reflection and creates a still or moving image on a monitor. Ultrasound is painless and requires no chemicals, radiation, or entry into the body. It is safe to use on delicate tissue like the retina, the spinal cord, and developing fetuses.

Echocardiography

This is a specialized kind of ultrasound used to view the heart. The transducer is placed in position at an angle designed to bounce sound waves off the walls and valves of the heart in order to examine heart chamber size, wall motion, valve movements, and structural changes in and around the heart, as well as the aorta, carotid (neck) arteries, and renal (kidney) arteries.

Doppler echocardiography, a particular kind of echocardiography, uses the ultrasound to determine the direction and velocity of blood flow within the cardiovascular system. These procedures are designed to investigate cardiac and blood vessel problems like heart murmurs or congestive heart failure.

MRI

Magnetic resonance imaging systems utilize a combination of powerful magnets and radio wave technology to produce images of animals' internal organs and structures. Based on the way atoms in the body respond to radio waves while in a magnetic field, the computer creates a series of images from different angles. MRI systems can make images through bone, and they are more clear and detailed than x-rays, making them particularly useful for pictures of soft tissue, the brain and spinal cord, joints, and the abdomen. They are also used for detecting cancerous growths and tumors.

These procedures may not be available from every veterinarian, but they are becoming more routine in general veterinary practice (with the exception of MRI, available through a referral to a veterinary specialist). Your veterinarian can tell you what procedures are available and how they can help your pet.



Congratulations to ARCF volunteer Carma Crimins for winning the Oregon Humane Society photo contest with her photo of Chance and Eddie. Chance was one of Moses' kittens. (see story on page 7).

Let Us Hear From You!

We want to be more interactive with our readers. Do you have comments, questions, problems, stories, advice? Have you found a new pet-related product that you love? Do your kids have a pet story they'd like to tell us? Let us know! Email us at: arcf@pdx-petadoption.org or write us at: P.O. Box 14956, Portland, OR 97293-0956.

Spay & Neuter Coupons

On request, we can provide coupons for spaying and neutering cats and dogs. These coupons make this procedure very affordable. Several good, full-service vets participate in this program. For coupons please call Pam at 503-284-8768.

Remember: cats and dogs are fully sexually mature at the age of 6 months and can be safely spayed or neutered at that age.

Moses of Belmont Street

Like most of the cats in my life over the years, I did not find Moses, he found me. He turned up at my back door one very rainy night. He was soaked to the skin and extremely skinny. He was very wary of me, so I kept my distance as I put out some food for him that first night. He came back night after night. I fed him, but he wouldn't let me go near him.

A few weeks later, my next door neighbor told me about a cat who had shown up and was hanging around his back door. He didn't know where she had come from, but he discovered that she had given birth to three kittens under an old shed in his back yard.

We found the mother in the street, hit by a car. I buried her in my yard under a rose bush and wondered about her kittens. My neighbor and I looked for them under the shed, but they had disappeared.

A day or two later, I put food out for Moses one evening and went back into the house to watch for him. It was then that I saw the most amazing sight. Moses came into the yard on schedule and by the same route he always took -- crawling under the fence. But this evening he wasn't alone. One at a time, coming under the fence right behind him, were three little gray kittens -- carbon copies of Moses. Their little tails were straight in the air as they fell in single file behind him and marched across the lawn.

He led the three kittens to the plate, and they knew what to do. I was amazed to see that he made no attempt to eat, but waited until the kittens were finished.

He then marched back to the lawn, and one by one he grabbed each kitten and washed it, as mother cats do. When the bathing was finished, it was play time -- he raced around the lawn chasing and tumbling with them. Then, as if on cue, he got up and headed back toward the fence, his three charges right behind him.

This routine continued for the rest of the summer. The kittens grew and were getting to the age that they needed to be neutered. They were also starting to roam on their own, and I worried about traffic on Belmont. I called ARCF and was connected with Carma Crimins, who literally came

to rescue. She helped me trap the three teenage cats, and then she took them to be neutered. Then she took them home to recover, and also to see if she could tame them and then find homes for them. Well, she was VERY successful. In fact, she fell in love with them and adopted all three of them herself!

Over the next five years, Moses became a permanent part of my yard and my life. He never became tame enough to live in my house (with my three other cats), so he lived in the rock garden in the summer, and in a shelter I'd built for him in the winter.

Last year, my brother was diagnosed with cancer. I made the very difficult decision to move back to Connecticut to care for him. There was never any question about my three cats coming east with me, but Moses presented a problem: there was no way I could have confined him in the RV for a week while I drove cross-country. Plus, I was not moving to another house but into an apartment.

Again, Carma came to my rescue. She connected me to a woman named Wilma, who agreed to take care of Moses until I could find a house with a yard in Connecticut.

Unfortunately, my reunion with Moses was not to be. Wilma called one day to tell me that Moses had passed away in his sleep. I was heartbroken, but grateful that he was not alone and that he had been well taken care of. I made arrangements for his remains to be cremated, and I have them here with me in Connecticut. When I return to the west coast, I'll buy a house with a yard -- and find a spot in the sun for Moses.

--Jim Sutherland



Katie Davenport's Patsy left the world after 20 years, feisty to the end.

Kay and Bob David's cat, Harley, will be sorely missed.

Ruth Oium's Slinky, a blind cat who was just a year old, will be remembered forever.

"Domino was a good cat, and we will miss him," said Sally & Paul Needham

Shelby, a loyal dog who was adopted by Ronnie near the end of her life, has left us.

Anna will miss her dear Malteau, who was five years old.



LETTER FROM THE ESTATE OF ELIZABETH L. MARX

May 15, 2007

To Whom It May Concern:

My aunt Elizabeth L. Marx had a dachshund way back when and because of Hitler's invasion of Vienna, Austria she had to leave the country.

She loved this dachshund whose name is incidentally Seppl; I, then a child, was also sometimes allowed to walk him.

When we left, Seppl was sent to the farm where usually he would spend summer vacations when Lisl (my aunt) couldn't take him along, he stayed behind those many years ago in 1938.

Lisl lived a long famous life writing and illustrating 139 children's books.

However she never forgot Seppl; she also never wanted another dog because she could not face another separation sooner or later should this dog and companion become old.

Over the years I replaced this dog with presents of plush dogs and plush animals; they were her best companions until age 95 + when she passed away Feb. 5, 2006.

All her life she spoke to all the dogs that passed her on West End Avenue and made friends of many of them when in her late years she sat on the stoop enjoying a bit of the sunshine while greeting all her friends and neighbors.

As long as I can remember, she supported your organization and when she wrote her last will and testament she remembered you. I as her executor am now able to send you a check with which to continue your good work.

As it says in her will, this is "so you will care for homeless animals."

Sincerely yours,
George L. Medina
Administrator



Call for Volunteers

- Provide transportation. Transport cats to/from vets, pick up and deliver food/litter, pick up and deliver newsletters, etc.)
- Write articles for the ARCF newsletter.
- Do marketing/PR -- figure out ways to get our name out there and known (and then do it).
- Be a foster home or "emergency" foster home. (An emergency home will have the animal for two weeks maximum.)
- Stuff envelopes (for the newsletter).

If you would like to volunteer, please call Pam at 503-284-8768.

YES! I want to help

Animal Rescue & Care Fund depends entirely on your donations to help the animals. Our work includes rescue, medical aid, food and shelter, humane education, neutering/spaying, and more. All workers are volunteers.

Your contribution goes directly to help the animals. All contributions are tax-deductible.

I enclose _____ for humane work.

(\$35 sponsors a cat, but of course, we are grateful for any amount.)

Sponsors can receive a photo and a story about the cat.

I'm interested in receiving a story and a photo.

I'm interested in being a volunteer. Please contact me at _____.

Name _____

Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Mail to: Animal Rescue & Care Fund
P.O. Box 14956
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