

## Rescue Ends Euthanasia in Dogs

**Find out how one rescue put an end to euthanasia.**

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Posted: Sat Mar 10 00:00:00 PST 2001

Near the bright lights of the Las Vegas Strip, a gamble is playing out. More than money rides on the line the stakes are literally life and death.

The field of play lies inside a one-story, tan building that sprawls off the side of a quiet, dusty road on the city's outskirts. It houses an innovative animal shelter that soon might become the first big-city, municipal shelter in the country not to kill any adoptable pets.

The Animal Foundation is the brainchild of Mary Herro, a former real-estate agent turned animal activist. At the foundation's core is a two-pronged attack against the problem of homeless animals: an aggressive adoption program and a low-cost, high-volume spay/neuter clinic.

Although it has held the municipal animal control contract for the past three years, which meant the shelter has to accept all animals brought in, the foundation said the euthanasia rate for adoptable animals those that aren't terminally ill, grievously injured or displaying serious behavioral problems is dwindling.

Through the first five months of this year, 84 adoptable dogs had to be euthanized because they either ran out of time the shelter holds animals for 30 days or the shelter ran out of room. That compares with 278 adoptable dogs in all of last year with the average monthly euthanasia rate dropping to 0.9 percent (or 17 dogs per month) from 1.4 percent (or 23 dogs per month). Herro intends for the rate to drop to zero by next year.

The decline is even more impressive compared with the number of animals arriving. Through May, 8,478 animals came through the doors, on pace to break the 1997 total of 19,761.