

# Commentary on Maui's Humane Society's Recent Ads

**If other open-admission shelters can achieve a 90-plus percent save rate, why can't we do the same on Maui?**

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*Phyllis Tavares - 9th Life Hawai'i Executive Director , Maui Weekly*

Having been bombarded by no less than two full-page ads and one half-page ad, we can only conclude that the conversation going about the island (the world) demanding that a new executive director of the Maui Humane Society (MHS) begin implementing "No-Kill" has struck a raw nerve.

We make the assumption, since the message was from the MHS Board of Directors, that they paid partly or fully for the ads. We, who abhor killing animals as a distinctly failed method of population control, think that the money for all those ads would have been better spent saving animal lives and not defending the killing of animals.

The MHS would have us believe open admission shelters cannot go "No-Kill" because they must take in every domestic animal that is brought to them. How then, do they explain the hundreds of "open admission shelters" that have already gone "No-Kill?" For example, the Nevada Humane Society and municipal shelters in Marquette, Michigan, and Shelby, Kentucky have accomplished "No-Kill." How do they explain that the entire city of Austin, Texas, has gone "No-Kill?" How do they explain that Best Friend's Animal Society is embarking on "No-Kill Utah" (the entire state) and is already heavily involved in "No-Kill Los Angeles?"

As stated in the MHS ad, "Our shelter receives an average of 22 animals a day, 365 days a year. For every single animal that is adopted from MHS, three more animals arrive to take its place the next day."

Multiplying 22 animals by 365 days per years, we arrive at an annual intake of 8,030. If they adopt out and/or return home three animals per day (1,095), that leaves 6,935 that were killed. If they have another 200 dogs and cats onsite and another 100 being fostered, it

results approximately in an 83 percent kill ratio. That means eight out of 10 animals entering MHS do not come out alive.

The point is, why such an abysmal kill rate when other organizations are establishing a 90 percent or more save rate?

Part of the answer is that those other organizations have executive directors who wholeheartedly endorse "No-Kill," believe "No-Kill" is possible and are implementing the "No-Kill Equation."

For detailed information on The No Kill Equation, we suggest you read "Redemption" by Nathan Winograd and also check out [www.nokilladvocacycenter.org](http://www.nokilladvocacycenter.org).

So if other open-admission shelters can achieve a 90-plus percent save rate, why can't we do the same on Maui?

The MHS ad was full of excuses. This is not the time for excuses. This is a call to action to all animal lovers. I started a petition that has received 1,500 signatures from all over the world as well as from Hawai'i. Tourists who come here are appalled at how animals are treated. They call 9th Life Hawai'i; some have said they will never return to Hawai'i because they have learned that many hotels and condos forbid their employees to help cats and are threatened with being fired; others facilities actually set out traps so they can kill the cats.

Regarding a recent letter that apparently stated that the MHS employees who anesthetize and burn animals don't care anymore. It is not that they don't care; it's that they have become desensitized to the carnage. They adjust; they reiterate what they have already been told. There are just too many animals; we have no choice; killing is a kindness and the list of excuses goes on.

As stated by Michael Mountain, co-founder and former president of Best Friend's Animal Society, "If you take killing off the table, if you remove it entirely as an option, you would be surprised at how innovative and motivated people will be to try new methods to save animals."

For example: In Espanola, New Mexico, the local shelter offered free sterilizations and paid people \$10 per dog or cat (up to a maximum of six) to bring their animals in for a spay/neuter procedure. Maybe the money spent on those ads could have been spent on a similar program here.

It's time to think "outside the box." People are tired of the killing. MHS has been killing animals for 60 years. Has that lowered the kill ratio? To do the same thing year after year and expect different results is insanity. It is time for a change. Hiring an executive director who is committed to "No-Kill" and putting a clause in the contract that states this must be accomplished within a year or the contract will not be renewed is a great incentive.

For more information and to help the No-Kill Movement here on Maui, visit [www.9thlifehawaii.org](http://www.9thlifehawaii.org).



If you would like to help, **[please sign the petition to hire an Executive Director who is committed to NO KILL!!](#)**

**Link to the news story:**

**<http://www.mauiweekly.com/page/content.detail/id/532394/Commentary-on-Maui-s-Humane-Society-s-Recent-Ads.html?nav=16>**