Every day is “spay day” for shelters and other animal welfare organizations working to reduce pet overpopulation. But at this time of year, you have a chance to participate in a special spay/neuter event—one that stretches around the world.

Spay Day 2011, sponsored by The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and its global affiliate, Humane Society International, with support from the Humane Society Veterinary Medical Association, is set for Feb. 22. Now in its 17th year, Spay Day promotes awareness of the importance of spay/neuter through events held in the United States and around the world. Organizations participate throughout the month of February by holding spay/neuter clinics, organizing fundraisers, lobbying for political action, spreading the word through educational efforts, and more. Need an idea? Visit humansociety.org/spaydayparticipate.

Groups holding Spay Day events can also benefit from the popular online pet photo contest, which runs from Jan. 19 through March 4. People post photos of their pets online and designate an eligible animal welfare agency to receive the money generated when viewers spend $1 apiece to vote for their favorites. Last year, the contest attracted more than 32,000 photos, raising more than half a million dollars for nearly 300 animal welfare organizations in the U.S. and abroad. To learn more, go to humansociety.org/photocontest.

Spay Day serves to remind you that—as stressed-out and isolated as you may sometimes feel working in the animal welfare field—you’re truly not alone. You’ve got peers around the country and around the globe seeking to create a more humane world for animals, and developing creative solutions to many of the same problems you face.

Part of our job at Animal Sheltering is to highlight such efforts, and we do so again in this issue. In our “101” Department, for example, you’ll find innovative ways to deal with the near-universal problem of shelter noise. We also highlight the work of The HSUS’s Shelter Services team, which performs evaluations around the country to help shelters accentuate their strengths and eliminate their weaknesses.

As always, we’d love to hear about what’s working well in your community, or what problems you haven’t yet mastered. To pose a question, offer a suggestion, or comment about the magazine, drop us a line at asm@humanesociety.org.

—Carrie, James, Jim, and Shevaun Animal Sheltering magazine staff

Mouthpieces Fan
I love the Mouthpieces bits you have printed recently. I hope you will continue with them. I have all of them printed out and hanging around our shelter. They are great!

—Carrie Mooser Animal Control Coordinator New Albany/Floyd County Animal Shelter New Albany, Ind.

Collared, Tagged, and … Outdoors?
We’re pleased that you are helping organizations like ours by preparing pieces that can be used locally (“Love Your Cat? Then Tag Your Cat!”—Mouthpieces, July-August 2010, p. 15).

But why the outdoor, grassy setting? I’m guessing you mean to indicate that the kitten is lost. But to us, the implication is that it is OK to let your cat out if it has a tag, particularly since most people look at the picture and the big print only.

—Jan Shellhammer Editor, Pet Tales Dumb Friends League Denver, Colo.

Editor’s note:
Thanks for the reminder about the ambiguity of images. We’ll continue to keep it in mind!