

Nevada Shines in Survey About Cats and Dogs

I sat with a national expert for veterinary issues recently going over 2018 survey results about Nevadans and pets. He was astonished at the answers on where we get our cats and dogs.



By Mark Robison

“Those are way above the national average,” said Mark Cushing, a Veterinary Innovation Council board member.

We were looking at two questions: Where did you get the cats you currently own, and where did you get your dogs?

“Adopted from an animal shelter or rescue group” was far and away the top answer, at 54% for cats and 45% for dogs. Nationally, these numbers are down in the 35% range, according to the [latest survey from the American Pet Products Association](#).

More Nevadans think of helping a pet in need rather than buying one, which says something about where our priorities lie, and that’s not the only finding where Nevada looks good. The survey – commissioned by Maddie's Pet Project in Nevada and completed earlier this year – also found that Nevadans overwhelmingly think their local animal shelters are a “good use of community resources.”

Almost 60% strongly agreed with this statement and 33% agreed somewhat; only 1% strongly disagreed. For comparison, [Pew Research found](#) that 64% of Americans think NASA is a good use of resources. Nevada shelters, in general, must be doing something right.

The purpose of the survey, which got answers from a representative sample of 1,000 Nevadans, was intended to learn about attitudes toward pets and levels of access to veterinary care. A revealing finding related to access to care found that only 1 in 5 Nevadans has never had a challenge getting veterinary care for a pet.

The survey also included a representative sample of 600 rural Nevadans, basically those living outside of the Las Vegas and Reno areas. One interesting finding is that rural Nevadans are much more likely to say that if they found a stray cat, they would help the animal find a new home: 46% of rural Nevadans said this vs. 27% of Nevadans overall.

Inevitably when the news media have a pet story, a few contrarians will complain that cats and dogs are unimportant. The survey also found that, at least in Nevada, those complainers are very much in the minority: 86% say the well-being of cats is important to them and 97% say the same for dogs. Not many things have such broad support. The well-being of pets might just be that rarest of topics that can bring people together regardless of political leanings.

Mark Robison is Senior Consultant at Humane Network. He was an award-winning senior editor at the Reno Gazette-Journal daily newspaper for many years, and he has been President of CockadoodleMoo Farm Animal Sanctuary since 2007.



