



East Laurel Spay and Neuter

Project #
15-016

County: Prince George's, Anne Arundel, and Howard (expanded to)

Number of Cats Spayed:	162	Number of Dogs Spayed:	0
Number of Cats Neutered:	150	Number of Dogs Neutered:	0
Amount Received:	18,920.00	Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA):	0.00

Project Synopsis:

The goal of this project was to spay or neuter owned cats in the eastern section of Laurel which is defined in the most recent census data as a low income area. This was to be accomplished through a combination of door knocking, handing out flyers, posting flyers at local businesses and through social media. The project was later expanded to also include owned cats of low income families throughout Laurel.



Project Description:

Utilizing the PetSmart Charity's formulas, we estimated that hundreds of unaltered pet cats were living in the target area. This area is a low income area comprised mostly of multi-story apartment buildings. Teams of Laurel Cats volunteers spent hundreds of hours knocking on doors in the target area talking with residents about the benefits of spaying and neutering cats and offering free spaying and neutering to those residents. When owned cats were identified, Laurel Cats volunteers set appointments at the local clinic and made arrangements to transport the cats to and from the clinics for their surgery. Laurel Cats also marketed free spay and neuter through flyers, property managers, local businesses, and social media.

Due to a lower than expected number of unaltered owned cats, Laurel Cats also requested and received a grant extension to allow us to offer free cat spay and neuter to low income residents of other parts of Laurel beyond the initial grant area.

Summary of Approach:

Teams of Laurel Cats volunteers spent hundreds of hours knocking on doors in the target area talking with residents about the benefits of spaying and neutering cats and offering free spay and neutering to those



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residents. When owned cats were identified, Laurel Cats volunteers set appointments at the local clinic and made arrangements to transport the cats to and from the clinics for their surgery. Laurel Cats also marketed free spay and neuter through flyers, property managers, local businesses, and social media.

Accomplishments:

From the beginning of our efforts in the first quarter of 2015, Laurel Cats was able to Spay 162 and Neuter 150 cats. The combined effect of this grant along with a second un-owned cat grant from MDA, additional funding from donors, PG County Councilwoman Mary Lehman have allowed us to make great strides in spaying and neutering cats in many parts of Laurel. We now believe that due to this effort, the City of Laurel as well as the Anne Arundel County parts of Laurel have transitioned from a major cat over population condition to a maintenance phase with very few kittens being born. To-date, only two litters of kittens have been reported in the City of Laurel and no kittens have been reported in the Anne Arundel County parts of Laurel for 2017.

Additionally, education efforts funded by this grant are providing long term benefits with residents of all of Laurel who are now more aware of free and low cost spay neuter options for their cats.

Lessons Learned:

We've found that the formulas promoted by PetSmart charities do not well represent the findings in our community. We noted a strong correlation between the race of the resident and the type of pet they owned, with African American and Latino residents owning only a tiny fraction of the number of cats that Caucasian residents typically own. The PetSmart Charity formulas appear to be calibrated to a community that is far more Caucasian than Laurel.

In Laurel, apartment complexes are largely dominated by African American families. Very few of these families own cats. The vast majority of the cats in these complexes are free-roaming unowned cats, not owned pet cats. Trailer parks in Laurel have a largely Caucasian human population and therefore tend to have a lot of owned cats. The residents of the trailer parks very often are unable to afford to spay or neuter their animals. We also learned that transportation for low income working families to spaying and neutering their cats is as much a barrier as financial constraints. Because of this, we added to our program a transportation component to pick up cats before their owners leave for work and return them in the evening when the owners return from work. We found that setting up spay and neuter appointments and transportation for families requesting spay and neuter assistance as a matter of course was much more effective than merely offering vouchers.

Attachments:

For More Information Contact:

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