



A Bigger & Better Spay Spa & Neuter Nook

Project #
FY16-101

County: Anne Arundel

Number of Cats Spayed:	114	Number of Dogs Spayed:	34
Number of Cats Neutered:	77	Number of Dogs Neutered:	23

Amount Received: \$36,707.91	Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA): 0
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Project Synopsis:

The "A Bigger & Better Spay Spa & Neuter Nook" project was composed of two major components: to increase the surgical capacity of the Spay Spa & Neuter Nook, Maryland's only regional, high quality, low cost high volume spay/neuter clinic. Originally, the clinic had the capacity to spay/neuter up to 6,000 dogs, cats, rabbits and guinea pigs per year. Unfortunately, the demand for the clinic's services was far beyond that capacity, and the clinic was frequently "booked out" 3-4 weeks in advance. The clinic was expanded to add additional space to house animal, and surgical capacity. Most of the funding for this project was used to pay for additional durable surgical equipment, used daily to spay/neuter animals.

The second component of this project was to continue the Spay Spa & Neuter Nook's ongoing mission to low income (and senior citizens) individuals and families in several of Anne Arundel County's most underserved areas: Glem Burnie, Pasadena, Severn and Brooklyn Park.



Project Description:

Rude Ranch Animal Rescue, Inc. (www.RudeRanch.org) is a public non-profit corporation established in 2001. Our original goal was to provide a refuge to abandoned, abused and homeless animals. The focus was to bring in special needs animals from local animal controls and traditional shelters and find new permanent homes for them. Throughout the years Rude Ranch forged partnerships with over 40 animal control agencies and high-kill animal shelters, allowing these agencies to lower euthanasia rates in the area. In the past ten years we found homes for more than 5,000 animals and facilitated the veterinary care and placement for more than 10,000 additional animals.

In October, 2012 we opened the Spay Spa & Neuter Nook, (www.SpaySpa.org) regional a high quality, low cost regional spay/neuter clinic, centrally located in Davidsonville, MD. This clinic was designed to be a high volume spay and neuter clinic (focused only on spay/neuter) with the capacity to perform 6,000 sterilizations



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April - August, 2015: Solicited Bids for veterinary equipment
September, 2015: Final construction inspections, close walls, paint
purchase, delivery and installation of veterinary equipment
October, 2015: Finished purchasing veterinary equipment, and install
Final Construction inspections, fire inspection
November, 2015: (Thanksgiving Week) Removed wall between spaces, framed in opening, trim, painted
Moved existing veterinary equipment into new space, installed/setup
Veterinary inspection
December, 2015 - January, 2016: Began using redesigned clinic.

Approach and Outreach to the citizens and residents of Anne Arundel County was handled in the following manner:

.Initial Setup/Implementation (September 2015)

- ❖ RRAR officers identified potential pickup/drop off locations in target areas. (The Harundale Presbyterian Church & the Ordinance Rd PetSmart were selected)
- ❖ A monthly transport schedule for animals located in these areas was established, including confirming central pickup and dropoff location for each area.
- ❖ Flyers, posters and door hangers were distributed in these areas monthly detailing information about the program, how to make an appointment/register, etc.
- ❖ Anne Arundel Housing and Social Services departments, and other agencies listed in Outreach section also received flyers for distribution and website content.

Ongoing: (September, 2015 - June, 2016)

The program will provide spay/neuter services in the following manner:

- ❖ Informational Flyers, Posters, etc were distributed frequently by AACAC officers, RRAR volunteers and clients of both organizations (Flyers were also mailed to businesses and organizations that distributed large volumes of information) bimonthly.
- ❖ Surgeries for this program were offered any time for clients that could transport their pets themselves. We offered transports to and from the clinic for up to 25 animals once per month.
- ❖ A client had to call to schedule the surgery. While making the appointment, a script of questions was asked. This was to gather needed information to determine eligibility of the client, and the type and general health of the pet. The client was also given instructions for fasting the pet, where to dropoff, etc. If the client did not qualify for this program, we attempted to find another program for funding for the pet. *We used an appointment based system to ensure sufficient space on the transport vehicle, and to make sure we did not schedule too many surgeries in one day.
- ❖ Two days before surgery, a Rude Ranch Volunteer called to remind the client when and where to drop the pet off, needed paperwork, and to prepare the pet for surgery.
- ❖ On the day of the surgery, the pets were be ready to be picked up or to make the return trip to the drop off/pick up site. Spay/Neuter and rabies certificates (if needed) prepared by Spay Spa & Neuter Nook administrative staff were sent with each pet.
- ❖ As each pet was delivered back to its owner, all paperwork, discharge instructions were included. Clients were instructed to call if there are any questions.
- ❖ Costs for the day's surgeries were charged to the grant.

Accomplishments:

We feel we have accomplished much with this project. We spayed 114 cats and 34 dogs, neutered 77 cats and 23 dogs, many more than the original estimates of 100 cats and 30 dogs. (Rude Ranch Animal Rescue provided the additional funding to accommodate these surgeries.) Many of the female cats and dogs we



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spayed had already had at least one litter of puppies or kittens before coming to us. Without intervention these pets would have produced many more unwanted animals.

In addition to a healthier life for the animals altered through this program, we feel that there are additional benefits: one of the most immediate outcomes was a decrease in calls for help with kittens born in neighborhoods and nuisance complaints in general. Although it is too early for to see immediate results this year, we expect to see a decrease in the numbers of unwanted litters of kittens and puppies (and accompanying mothers) turned into AACAC and surrounding shelters and rescues. As a result we expect the overall euthanasia rate to go down. Financially we also expect the costs to run AACAC and other shelters to go down: if less animals are turned in, less resources will be required to care for them. This will benefit the entire county in the long run.

Lessons Learned:

While we feel that the "Bigger & Better Spay Spa & Neuter Nook" project was a success, as with any large project, there were some difficulties. While many people in the Anne Arundel County Government offices were supportive of what we do, it was difficult to obtain any kind of information and advice regarding the permitting and inspection process through the county.

Additionally, we did encounter a few difficulties in terms of the surgeries we provided. Many of the animals we spayed/neutered were older, and had multiple health issues, resulting in more complicated surgeries and higher costs. Many of the animals were not well socialized and difficult to handle.

In addition to a higher than average no-show rate we also experienced problems contacting and maintaining contact with clients. Often, a given phone number would be disconnected the following week, making overall contact, appointment confirmations and followup very difficult. We found that often some of these clients would reactivate their phones again at the beginning of the month and followup then. We also stayed in touch with the local food pantry in that area, as many of the difficult to contact clients visited the food pantry every week. The manager of the food pantry also relayed messages for us.

We did encounter difficulties with clients in terms of drop off and pick up times... many were not able to arrive or pick up on our schedule. We partnered with additional rescues that were working in the Brooklyn Park area to help with transport for these animals.

Attachments:

finalpetlist.pdf

For More Information Contact:

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