MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

County: Anne Arundel; Howard

Number of Cats Spayed:	65	**Number of Dogs Spayed:**	17
Number of Cats Neutered:	66	**Number of Dogs Neutered:**	16

Amount Received: $11,629.48   **Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA): 0.00**

Project Synopsis:
This project funded the spaying/neutering of 100 pet cats and 50 pet dogs owned by residents of Jessup, MD. Jessup is a community with a low median income and many residents cannot afford to have their pets altered, or cannot take the time off from work to transport them to a vet in the area.

Project Description:
Sunshine's Friends Cat Rescue and Sanctuary (www.sunshinescatrescue.org) is a 510(c)(3) non-profit charity located in Jessup, MD. The area is a mix of light industry, warehouses, and residential neighborhoods. This project, which ran from October 2015 to September 2016, sought to spay/neuter 100 pet cats and 50 pet dogs for residents of Jessup. By doing so, we reduced the number of unwanted pets surrendered to local county animal shelters due to overpopulation or inablity to afford veterinary care.

Summary of Approach:
We began with community outreach: partnering with the local community association, speaking at their meetings, and going door-to-door with brochures and door hangers to spread the word about spaying/neutering and vaccinating pets in general, and our project in particular. We partnered with a local veterinary clinic to provide vet services to the pets through an in-kind contribution in the form of substantially discounted services. Our organization also contributed the costs of additional medical care and flea treatment not covered by grant monies if it was a quality of life issue for the animal.

A project coordinator managed our efforts, engaged with the community, and lead the educational outreach portions of the project, making personal connections with pet owners and determining what their needs were with respect to transportation and after-care. Some pet owners took care of their own transportation, but about 60% of the time we picked up the pets, took them to and from the vet and delivered the back to the owners after the procedures. Many owners either did not have transportation, worked odd hours, or could not take time off from work to go to the vet. Including mileage in the grant allowed us to greatly increase the number of animals we spayed/neutered and improved our effectiveness in the target area.

Accomplishments:
During the one year project, we managed to spay/neuter 131 pet cats and 33 pet dogs. We far exceeded our goal for cats, but we overestimated the need for dog services when we submitted the proposal. Realizing this, we shifted our efforts to cats and put the grant money to good use there. We also stretched grant money by scheduling appointments for owners that needed our transportation support so that multiple pets were done on the same day with one round trip. Our outreach campaign, in addition to alerting local residents to our project, had the added benefit of educating them about the benefits of spaying/neutering, including the tendency of the pet to roam in the neighborhood and become a nusiance while looking fo mating opportunities. Some of the residents we helped stated that they were considering giving up their pet(s) if not for our program, mainly because of cats having unwanted kittens and medical care they could not afford.

Lessons Learned:
At first, we blanketted the area seeking pets that needed to be spayed or neutered. Later, we learned to gather information from neighbors and community leaders about residents that had pets and were likely to need our program. We also focused our door-to-door canvassing in lower income areas such as mobile home parks where we found a higher percentage of unaltered pets.

Attachments:
SFCRS-15Q4-status-petcats.pdf
SFCRS-15Q4-status-petdogs.pdf

For More Information Contact:
Name:
Keith Burnham, Director

Organization Name and Address:
Sunshine's Friends Cat Rescue and Sanctuary, Inc.
7406 Belclare Ct.
Jessup, MD 20794
Email: sunshinescatrescue@gmail.com