



Sunshine's Friends Local Pets Spay and Neuter

Project #
17-235

County: Anne Arundel, Howard

Number of Cats Spayed:	53	Number of Dogs Spayed:	13
Number of Cats Neutered:	51	Number of Dogs Neutered:	14

Amount Received: \$9502.32	Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA): \$0.00
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Project Synopsis:

This project funded the spaying/neutering of 104 pet cats and 27 pet dogs owned by residents of Jessup and specific low-income neighborhoods in Elkridge and Hanover, MD. Jessup and the targeted neighborhoods are communities with low median incomes and many residents who 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) has been a 510(c)(3) non-profit charity since 2014; we are located in Jessup, MD. The area is a mix of light industry, warehouses, and residential neighborhoods. This project, which ran from October 2016 to September 2017, sought to spay/neuter 100 pet cats and 25 pet dogs for low income residents in the area. By doing so, we reduced the number of unwanted pets surrendered to local county animal shelters due to overpopulation or inability 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 animals.



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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 75% of the time we picked up the pets, took them to and from the vet and delivered them back to their 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, especially twice in the same day for drop-off and pick-up. 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:

In just 10 months of the one year project, we managed to spay/neuter 104 pet cats and 27 pet dogs. Once the grant money was expended, we continued to fund some spay and neuter procedres for cases of extreme need. We stretched grant money whenever possible by scheduling appointments so that multiple pets were done on the same day with just one transportation 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 unaltered pets to roam in the neighborhoods and become a nusiance while looking for mating opportunities. Some of the residents we helped stated that they were faced with potentially surrendering their pet(s) if not for our program, mainly because of cats having unwanted kittens or medical care they could not afford.

Lessons Learned:

Simply advertising the availability of our program and waiting for pet owners to take the initiative is not enough. We found better success by gathering information from neighbors and community leaders about residents that had pets and were likely to need our program and contacting them directly. 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-16Q4-Cats.pdf (list of animals altered);
SFCRS-16Q4-Dogs.pdf (list of animals altered).

For More Information Contact:

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