



Free Spay/Neuters at HSCC

Project #
19-423

County: Charles

Number of Cats Spayed:	66	Number of Dogs Spayed:	46
Number of Cats Neutered:	55	Number of Dogs Neutered:	26
Amount Received:	13,101.00	Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA):	\$0

Project Synopsis:

The Humane Society of Charles County continued offering free spay/neuter services for both cats and dogs to low income families in certain zipcodes of Charles County. This project was designed to continue the work begun during the 2015, 2016 and 2017 campaigns, continuing to promote the services in the areas targeted in order to provide the low-income families from our county spay/neuter services. The original surgery target for the project was 250 animals, but was reduced to 175, providing a rabies vaccine for the animals when needed as well. The goal of continuing this program is intake prevention at the shelters and to give low income families the ability to provide a healthier life to their owned pets.



Project Description:

The Humane Society of Charles County continued to offer free spay/neuter services for both cats and dogs to low income families in certain zipcodes of Charles County families with pets in Waldorf (20601, 20602, 20603) and Indian Head (20640) and was later expanded into Brandywine (20613), White Plains (20695), and LaPlata (20646). In 2016 this was further extended to low income families with pets in Accokeek (20607), Bryans Road (20616), Nanjemoy (20662), Marbury (20658), Pomfret (20675), and Ironsides (20643). Newburg (20664), Cobb Island (20625), and Issue (20645). The large amount of rural farmland in Charles County, in which owned animals are able to roam freely and often never see a veterinarian, results in many unaltered outdoor pets roaming free. These areas are the most likely to produce unwanted litters of cats and dogs that end up in shelters so the addition of some of the areas such as Nanjemoy, Newburg, Cobb Island, Issue, and Marbury, due to suggestions from our local animal control officers who see great need for those areas to be targeted because of the low income families they work with and/or the number of unaltered animals families own. Maintaining our focus on the same target areas helped us continue to achieve results in intake prevention. Our program goal was reduced to 175 owned animals to provide spay/neuter surgeries and provide rabies vaccines for each animal as needed.



Summary of Approach:

Our project was approached in a similar manner to our previous campaigns where we promote the service for our clinic and the free spay/neuter surgeries on our websites, social websites, outreach programs and through our kennel staff. Any customer interested in the service is directed to our website to submit a request via an online form to our coordinator who can evaluate their application and coordinate their surgery date within a few days. The capacity at our clinic has increased as we welcomed our new Medical Director, who increased both the number of available surgery spaces each surgery day and the size of dogs the clinic can accommodate. The processes of scheduling online appointments was updated as well which made the flow of an already popular project much smoother. All advertising was promoted on our social media and our website to make it easy for more families to have access. Our available surgery slots are filled weeks in advance and frequently have a waiting list. The clinic and kennel staff are trained to direct interested customers to the website to submit an application which expedites the process. All customer vouchers are entered into Clinic HQ and expenses are more easily tracked and managed by the clinic staff, the program coordinator and recapped by the business manager on quarterly reports.

Accomplishments:

The project was delayed until July 2019 due to a restructure of our clinic staff but once our new Medical Director began and adjusted both the clinic work flows, capacities and electronic scheduling for appointments our project saw great success. We provided surgery to 193 animals and 136 rabies vaccines. We had advertising flyers remaining from the previous campaigns so were able to convert the printing funding into surgeries as well. The popularity of the program has increased tremendously due to the new clinic medical staff and service. The request by community members for this opportunity is also increased daily and will hopefully be fulfilled with a new project grant in the future.

Lessons Learned:

The biggest lesson learned is, especially due to the restrictions on clinic time and space during the health pandemic, is the ability to control the show up rate of public customers. The clinic will be scheduling more of the customers with the vouchers in order to keep the flow of the project funds more current. The disbursement of funding need to be maintained electronically in the clinic as well. This project had several issues with incorrect vouchers being applied by front desk staff which made the accurate accounting of available funds difficult at the end of the project. Due to staff errors 13 animals were incorrectly charged to this fund and 28 animals/services needed to be added to the project for this final report. The limits placed on the clinic for surgeries considered "elective" during the Covid-19 Health Pandemic, also delayed the completion of the project as we rescheduled customers appointments for more than 8 weeks and took much of the summer to catch up. We learned that all of the education our outreach programs have offered to our community members has been very successful as customers are very interested in keeping their pets healthy and did not like being put on hold while we waited to be able to welcome them back.

Attachments:

Complete Project list of animals served

For More Information Contact:**Name:**

Christine Gonzales, Executive Director

Organization Name and Address:

Humane Society of Charles County
71 Industrial Park Drive

Waldorf, MD 20602

Email: cgonzales@humanesocietycc.org



MARYLAND DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE
SPAY AND NEUTER GRANTS PROGRAM

