



St. Mary's Spay Neuter Your Pet (Snyp) Program

Project #
20-531

County: St. Mary's

Number of Cats Spayed:	124	Number of Dogs Spayed:	58
Number of Cats Neutered:	79	Number of Dogs Neutered:	42

Amount Received: 22,460.00	Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA): 25.00
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Project Synopsis:

This program targeted low income families in specific zip codes in St. Mary' County. The goal was to provide no cost spay/neuter surgeries to these families to reduce pet overpopulation as well as to reduce the number of unwanted/abandoned animals. We have also found that spay/neuter surgeries assisted in correcting behavioral issues that put animals at risk of abandonment or euthanization.



Project Description:

St. Mary's Animal Welfare League performed this project during the calendar year 2020 and the first quarter of 2021. We are a volunteer-staffed, non-profit operating in Southern Maryland. The project was designed to target areas of St. Mary's County where the population was most dense. Outreach efforts included local public events as well as including information about the program at our low cost vaccination clinics and our adoption events. The St. Mary's County Animal Control officers and local food pantries also helped to spread the word to pet owners in need. Unfortunately due to COVID, all of our outreach efforts became limited as events were cancelled and in-person meetings of allsorts were restricted. Additionally, one of our clinics lost their vet due to retirement leaving the already tight scheduling almost impossible. With the situation changing throughout the year but mostly loosening in 2021, we were able to recover much of our outreach results. Shelter statistics are not tracked by County (our local shelter currently serves two counties, with each of the counties in the planning stages to build their own shelter) so we are not able to specifically identify an impact on the shelter intake.

Summary of Approach:

Outreach programs included providing flyers at our low-cost vaccination clinics (once a month, March through November); program information added to our website; FaceBook ads throughout the year; contacting local Animal Control to encourage them to send folks in need to us for help; flyers at most adoption events throughout the county; program flyers at our Cat Castle shelter which is open to the public every weekend; participation at local events throughout the year providing information about this program as well as our adoption programs; and working with local vets and clinics and food pantries to make them aware of the help available through this



program. While most of these efforts were severely impacted by COVID restrictions, we did manage to reach people in need.

Accomplishments:

We were able to provide 303 spay/neuter surgeries to community members who might otherwise have let their pets remain intact. We developed numerous relationships with community activists and county employees which have made our outreach much more successful. While we cannot obtain county or zipcode level information from our local shelter, we believe we have helped to make a significant reduction in the number of unwanted pets in our area. Where we were able to identify other needs in the families we served, we were able to put them in contact with additional services. This is probably the most fulfilling aspect of the program - that additional services available to community members can be identified as different organizations in the community work together. We have also helped with placement of unwanted animals that we became aware of only as a result of this outreach.

Lessons Learned:

As the only source of spay/neuter assistance in St. Mary's County we have discovered that there are many more people looking for help of this sort than we would have expected. Most of the applicants also need other assistance with their animals and we have been able to put them in touch with other programs to help with food and other medical expenses. This year there were a few challenges with documentation and lack of computer access with the libraries being closed. We managed to work through those challenges with porch pick ups and drop offs as needed. We have implemented additional training re appropriate proof of residency documentation. Volunteer challenges continue as we have had another turn over in our voucher volunteers. We also have an increasing volume of residents seeking assistance for community cats rather than pets. We will continue to investigate sources to assist with those requests.

Attachments:

Complete list of animals spayed or neutered under this program in 2020 and Q1 2021.

For More Information Contact:

Name:

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