



We Pay to Spay

Project #
15-010

County: Caroline

Number of Cats Spayed:	156	Number of Dogs Spayed:	22
Number of Cats Neutered:	109	Number of Dogs Neutered:	15

Amount Received: \$22,150	Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA): \$0
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Project Synopsis:

This Project targeted low income and senior citizen pet owners in Caroline County. No cost spay and neutered surgeries were proposed to be preformed on 175 cats and 50 pitbull type dogs.



Project Description:

The " We Pay to Spay Program" was developed to help spay and neuter cats and pitbull type dogs for low income residents in Caroline County Maryland. The Caroline County Humane Society is an open admission 501c3 humane society who is subcontracted by the county government to serve as animal control. Our approach is "Open heart, Open Door" where no animals is ever turned away at our doors no matter how great the need. Caroline County population is 33,000 people with 15% of the population living below the poverty line. The Caroline County Humane Society brings in over 1800 animals a year through our doors. In fiscal year 2015 1,135 cats and kittens came through our doors. Of the 558 dogs that came into our shelter in FY 15, 60% of those were pitbull type dogs. We decided to target low income owners of these two groups of animals in the hopes to help reduce the numbers of unwanted litter of each.

The project performance period was from January 1, 2015 to December 1, 2015. Our target area was all of Caroline County, but we focused on the two largest townships, of Denton and Federalsburg. Our goal was to spay / neuter 175 cats and 50 dogs. Since these are our two largest areas of intake into our shelter we felt this was were the need was the greatest to help reduce shelter intake. Through attending community events, distribution of flyers, advertisement in print publications and promotion through social media we were able to target low income pet owners.

Summary of Approach:

To help make our project successful we were very aggressive in reaching out to the community in multiple ways. Through print we ran full page or half page advertisement in a free local publication "The Caroline



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SPAY AND NEUTER GRANTS PROGRAM



Review" . This publication is available for free through out our county. We targeted advertisement in Jan, April , June and September.

Through social media, focusing on our facebook page with over 5,200 followers we promoted the program on a bi - weekly basis. We made our application easily accessible by having them available either through our website, at the shelter, handing them out at local adoption events and community events as well as sending them out through the mail .

We also promoted the program at many large community events including school career days, the Strawberry Festival in Ridgley in May, Summerfest in Denton in August and our own Tats for Tails Block Party in October. We also seeked out many areas where we could hang flyers including local stores and post offices. The only pet store in our county, Petco, in Denton allowed us to promote our program through flyers as well as during rabies clinics hosted at there location.

Accomplishments:

Through our "We Pay to Spay Program" we were able to spay and neuter 302 animals. This was 77 animals over and above the 225 we originally projected. Through this program we garnered large amounts of community support. We receive phone calls on a daily basis about the program. Articles have been written on our program, including a mention in the United States Humane Societies Animal Sheltering Magazine. The Caroline County Commisioners office has been extremely pleased with the program.

We were able to successful spay and neuter more animals under the program by using our own on property spay and neuter clinic. Our vets were able to perform more surgeries than originally anniticipate due to their surgery speed.

While we have not seen a drop in our shelter intake yet, we believe we will see a drop going into FY 16 kitten season. We have seen a reduction of euthanisa numbers in our shelter. In FY11 the euthansia rate in our facility was 50%. In FY 15 our euthansia rate with dogs was just 8% and with cats 25%, a huge decrease.

Lessons Learned:

With this being the first year of our project we did learn several lessons. First and foremost we realized that while our shelter intake with pitbull type dogs is very high, there is a great need in the low income community to spay and neuter all types of dogs.

Secondly, we realized instead of a blanket base line of household income to qualify an individual for our program, we need to base our qualifications on a sliding income scale based on number of people in household and household income. For example a house hold of 2 or less would qualify at the \$40,000 level while a household of 5 people would qualify with a higher income or \$55,000.

Finally, we learned to not under estimate our vets that work in on our own sight clinic. They were able to perform more surgeries then originally anticipated.

Attachments:

Complete list on animals spayed and neutered during project period attached

For More Information Contact:

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