



Don't Pay To Spay

Project #
16-106

County: Caroline County

Number of Cats Spayed:	154	Number of Dogs Spayed:	26
Number of Cats Neutered:	127	Number of Dogs Neutered:	35

Amount Received: \$41,058	Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA): 0
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Project Synopsis:

The projects goal was to provide free spay and neuter services to 125 dog and 400 cats to low income families in Caroline County Maryland as well as the zipcodes of 21632 and 21643 in Dorchester County.



Project Description:

The Caroline County Humane Society was established in 1996 as a grass roots organization by a group of concerned citizen in the county. Over the next 5 years the organization grew and opened its brick and mortar facility in 2001. The Caroline County Humane Society is an open admission shelter that is subcontracted by the county to run Animal Control.

The "Don't Pay to Spay" Program spreads through the targeted area of Caroline County as well as two zipcodes 21632 and 21643 in Dorchester County for the time period of January 1st 2016 till October 2016. (when all funds were used.) Due to the high number of unwanted litters in these area and the statistical fact that 85% of all animals entering into the Caroline County Humane Society are unaltered this program is greatly needed. Our orginial intent was to alter 400 cats and 125 dogs. We believe an aggressive approach to spay and neuter will ultimately lower the numbers of animals entering the shelter. In the 8 year period that the Caroline County Humane Society has had an onsite spay/ neuter clinic we have seen shelter intake numbers be reduced by 600 animals. In just the first year of our pay to spay we have seen our intake numbers be reduced by 200 animals. By being aggressive with community outreach about our free spay and neuter program the public has become more aware of the availability of these programs. Our spay / neuter clinics are normally booked 3 to 4 weeks in advance.

Summary of Approach:

Starting in December of 2015 The Caroline County Humane Society began to aggressively advertise our "Don't Pay to Spay Program" through social media, primarily through the shelter facebook page who has over 7,000 followers. Reponse was almost immediate with us booking our January clinics very full.



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Through the months of January and February we began radio advertisement on a local station that extends into both Caroline and Dorchester Counties. We spoke about the "Don't Spay to Pay Program" through multiple radio interviews and began advertising the program in local newsprint. Our focus was advertisement in the Caroline Review, a free publication that is very popular in Caroline County. Again through our advertisement we continued to see increased interest in our program. By late January we were averaging 5 to 6 calls a day in regards to our free spay and neuter program.

During the winter months I spoke personally multiple times to the commissioners of our county during our county budget process. They were extremely pleased about the "Don't Pay to Spay" Program and the partnership between the Caroline County Humane Society and the Maryland Department of Agriculture.

In to the spring months we began to focus our attention in handing out flyers at public events. We were aggressive in pushing the program during event such as our "Motors for Mutts" Car Show and spring adoption events. During the months of April and May we attended 6 career days at local schools where we spoke about the importance of spay and neuter and the availability of free spay and neuter.

Our final advertisement push came in the months of July and August. Here again we focused on radio advertisement and speaking about the program at events such as summerfest where over 7,000 people were in attendance.

By October 5th we had used all the funds provided.

Accomplishments:

During the 2016 program cycle we accomplished the spay and neuter of 342 animals. (281 cats and 61 dogs) through the Don't Pay to Spay Program. As mentioned about we have seen a decrease of 200 animals entering our facility in just the first year of the program. In 2015, 124 puppies entered our facility, In 2016,77 entered a decrease of 47 puppies. While intake of kittens still remains high at 671 in 2016 that was a slight decrease (by 25 animals) from 2015.109 less animals were euthanized within the first year of the program.

Community support and knowledge of the importance of spay and neuter has been increased because of our "Don't Pay to Spay" Program. By speaking about the program we have been able to bring up the subject of why it is so important to spay and neuter your pet. We have also been able to educate people who thought they simply could not afford to spay or neuter their pet so they never had.

We have been able to make our program more successful by reaching out into the community and targeting lower income areas where the program is needed the most. We have worked on being more cost affective in regards to the medical supplies ordered for the program.

Lessons Learned:

Unfortunately, we did not reach our original goal of 400 cats and 125 dogs altered under this year's program. Several unforeseen things took place that caused this to occur. Several of our winters spay and neuter clinics were cancelled due to the weather. Working with a minimal staff we are only able to schedule 1 to 2 clinics per weeks. The weather can greatly impede our clinics.

2 of our fastest vets who work on our clinic were each gone from our clinic for 3 to 4 months during the time of May to September, the peak months of the year. One of my vets was out on maternity leave; the other took some personal time. These two vets' average 25 to 30 animals a clinic spayed and neutered. The vets replacing them averaged 15 to 18 animals in the same length of time, cutting my numbers in half. This was something that was completely unforeseen and out of our control. I attribute the decrease of numbers to this 100%. In 2015 we actually spayed and neutered 53 more animals that we anticipated and this was due to the speed of the vets performing the surgeries.



I plan to address this problem in multiple ways:

a. Going into 2017 our grant was written based on a cost per surgery not a broke down cost i.e. vet cost, cost of medicine, and cost of vet tech. I believe by working on a per surgery cost base we will eliminate the issue of one vet taking longer than another vet to perform surgery. No longer will we be basing our price by the hour but it will be based by the animal.

b. Offering continuing training for our current vets to help expand their knowledge on high quality, high volume surgery

c. Educating new vets on high quality, high volume surgery. Being in a very rural area with a limited number of vets that are able to perform surgery we feel this is a key component.

Attachments:

Below is the break down of the monies spent during the 2016 Don't Pay to Spay Program. Attached is a complete list of all clients and their pets on which surgeries were preformed.

Last Qtr:

Personnel Vets: \$3,349.52
Personnel Vet Tech: \$144.24
Personnel Clinic Coordinator: \$83.11
Printing: Zero
Advertising: \$158
Postage: Zero
Medical Supplies: Zero
Total Qtr: \$3,791.39

Entire Grant:

Personnel Vets: \$16,582
Personnel Vet Tech: \$5,676.00
Personnel Clinic Coordinator: \$3,632
Printing: \$327
Advertising: \$3,650
Postage: \$250
Medical Supplies: \$10,941
Total Grant: \$41,058

For More Information Contact:

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