



Fix Anne Arundel

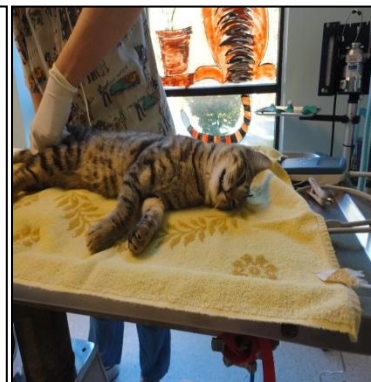
Project #
15-004

County: Anne Arundel

Number of Cats Spayed:	197	Number of Dogs Spayed:	61
Number of Cats Neutered:	163	Number of Dogs Neutered:	50
Amount Received: \$29,275.00		Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA):	0

Project Synopsis:

This project targeted low income pet owners in Anne Arundel County, specifically Glen Burnie, Severn, Pasadena, and Brooklyn Park. The project provided no-cost surgeries to 360 cats and 111 dogs.



Project Description:

Rude Ranch Animal Rescue, Inc. (www.RudeRanch.org) is a public non-profit corporation established in 2001. Our original goal was to provide a refuge to abandoned, abused and homeless animals. The focus was to bring in special needs animals from local animal controls and traditional shelters and find new permanent homes for them. Throughout the years Rude Ranch forged partnerships with over 40 animal control agencies and high-kill animal shelters, allowing these agencies to lower euthanasia rates in the area. In the past ten years we found homes for more than 5,000 animals and facilitated the veterinary care and placement for more than 10,000 additional animals.

In October, 2012 we opened the Spay Spa & Neuter Nook, (www.SpaySpa.org) regional a high quality, low cost regional spay/neuter clinic, centrally located in Davidsonville, MD. This clinic was designed to be a high volume spay and neuter clinic (focused only on spay/neuter) with the capacity to perform 6,000 sterilizations per year, the clinic has the ability to expand to as many as 15,000 within five years. On average the clinic performs 1300 spay/neuter surgeries per quarter. The Spay Spa & Neuter Nook is affiliated with the Humane Alliance and is an NSNRT (National Spay/Neuter Response Team) clinic.

Rude Ranch Animal Rescue (RRAR) performed a year-long project to reduce the number of homeless and unwanted animals turned into the Anne Arundel County Animal Control facility and other shelters in Anne Arundel County MD. This goal would be accomplished through an aggressive, targeted campaign to spay/neuter animals belonging to individuals and families in four targeted areas (Glen Burnie, Severn, Pasadena and Brooklyn Park) of Anne Arundel County that had high owner surrender rates and the majority of



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the residents were on some form of public assistance. Statistically, the higher the poverty rate in a given area, the less likely that pets will be spayed or neutered.

This grant funded the actual cost of the spay/neuter surgeries (and rabies vaccine) for the pets and a transportation component to bring the animals from the targeted neighborhood to RRAR's spay/neuter clinic (The Spay Spa & Neuter Nook) then return to the neighborhood after surgery. We planned to spay/neuter 400 cats and 100 dogs throughout 2015 using funds from this grant.

Summary of Approach:

We implemented this project in the following manner:

Initial Setup/Implementation (November, 2014 - January, 2015)

- ❖ RRAR officers identified potential pickup/drop off locations in target areas. (The Harundale Presbyterian Church & the Ordinance Rd PetSmart were selected)
- ❖ A monthly transport schedule for animals located in these areas was established, including confirming central pickup and dropoff location for each area.
- ❖ Flyers, posters and door hangers were distributed in these areas monthly detailing information about the program, how to make an appointment/register, etc.
- ❖ Anne Arundel Housing and Social Services departments, and other agencies listed in Outreach section also received flyers for distribution and website content.

Ongoing: (January, 2015 - December, 2015)

The program will provide spay/neuter services in the following manner:

- ❖ Informational Flyers, Posters, etc were distributed frequently by AACAC officers, RRAR volunteers and clients of both organizations (Flyers were also mailed to businesses and organizations that distributed large volumes of information) bimonthly.
- ❖ Surgeries for this program were offered any time for clients that could transport their pets themselves. We offered transports to and from the clinic for up to 25 animals once per month.
- ❖ A client had to call to schedule the surgery. While making the appointment, a script of questions was asked. This was to gather needed information to determine eligibility of the client, and the type and general health of the pet. The client was also given instructions for fasting the pet, where to dropoff, etc. If the client did not qualify for this program, we attempted to find another program for funding for the pet. *We used an appointment based system to ensure sufficient space on the transport vehicle, and to make sure we did not schedule too many surgeries in one day.
- ❖ Two days before surgery, a Rude Ranch Volunteer called to remind the client when and where to drop the pet off, needed paperwork, and to prepare the pet for surgery.
- ❖ On the day of the surgery, the pets were be ready to be picked up or to make the return trip to the drop off/pick up site. Spay/Neuter and rabies certificates (if needed) prepared by Spay Spa & Neuter Nook administrative staff were sent with each pet.
- ❖ As each pet was delivered back to its owner, all paperwork, discharge instructions were included. Clients were instructed to call if there are any questions.
- ❖ Costs for the day's surgeries were charged to the grant.

Accomplishments:

We feel we have accomplished much with this project. We spayed 197 cats and 61 dogs, neutered 163 cats and 50 dogs. Many of the female cats and dogs we spayed had already had at least one litter of puppies or kittens before coming to us. Without intervention these pets would have produced many more unwanted animals.



In addition to a healthier life for the animals altered through this program, we feel that there are additional benefits: one of the most immediate outcomes was a decrease in calls for help with kittens born in neighborhoods and nuisance complaints in general. Although it is too early for to see immediate results this year, we expect to see a decrease in the numbers of unwanted litters of kittens and puppies (and accompanying mothers) turned into AACAC and surrounding shelters and rescues. As a result we expect the overall euthanasia rate to go down. Financially we also expect the costs to run AACAC and other shelters to go down: if less animals are turned in, less resources will be required to care for them. This will benefit the entire county in the long run.

Lessons Learned:

Although most aspects of this project went well, we did encounter a few unexpected difficulties. Many of the animals we spayed/neutered were older, and had multiple health issues, resulting in more complicated surgeries and higher costs. Many of the animals were not well socialized and difficult to handle.

In addition to a higher than average no-show rate we also experienced problems contacting and maintaining contact with clients. Often, a given phone number would be disconnected the following week, making overall contact, appointment confirmations and followup very difficult. We found that often some of these clients would reactivate their phones again at the beginning of the month and followup then. We also stayed in touch with the local food pantry in that area, as many of the difficult to contact clients visited the food pantry every week. The manager of the food pantry also relayed messages for us.

We did encounter difficulties with clients in terms of drop off and pick up times... many were not able to arrive or pick up on our schedule. During the summer we partnered with additional rescues that were working in the Brooklyn Park area to help with transport for these animals.

While most of the clients we helped through this grant were grateful, there were also a few difficult interactions. Several clients were suspicious of us and were afraid we were going to take their pets away. Once these clients saw their neighbors pets come back later in the day, they were ok with us taking pets during the next transport. One gentleman accused us of planting a "government listening device" in his cat. We didn't have a solution for him.

Attachments:

petlist.pdf

For More Information Contact:

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