



Sunshine's Friends Pet Project

Project #
18-334

County: Anne Arundel, Howard

Number of Cats Spayed:	69	Number of Dogs Spayed:	14
Number of Cats Neutered:	57	Number of Dogs Neutered:	16

Amount Received: \$11,580.03	Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA): 0.00
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Project Synopsis:

This project funded the spaying/neutering of 130 pet cats and 30 pet dogs owned by residents of Jessup and specific low-income neighborhoods in Elkridge, Hanover, and Severn MD. The targeted neighborhoods have high rates of owner surrender, low-income residents, and unemployment. Many owners cannot afford to have their pets altered, or cannot take off time from work to take them to a vet.



Project Description:

Sunshine's Friends Cat and Dog Rescue (www.sunshinesfriends.org) has been a 510(c)(3) non-profit charity since 2014; we are located in Jessup, MD. The area is a mix of light industry, warehouses, and residential neighborhoods. This pet project, which ran from October 2017 to September 2018, sought to spay/neuter 130 pet cats and 30 pet dogs for low income residents in Jessup and specific neighborhoods in the surrounding area. As part of a multiyear project, we reduced the number of unwanted pets surrendered to local county animal shelters due to overpopulation or inability to afford veterinary care. The project funded the actual cost of the spay/neuter surgeries and rabies vaccines for the pets and a transportation component to bring the animals from the targeted neighborhoods to our partner vet's spay/neuter clinic.

Summary of Approach:

We started with advertising and community outreach: we worked with the local community associations and spoke at their meetings; we posted on our website and social media pages; we went door-to-door with brochures and door hangers; we left these at vet offices and pet stores. We not only spread the word about spaying/neutering and vaccinating pets in general, but also about our project in particular. We partnered with a local spay/neuter vet clinic to provide services through an in-kind contribution in the form of substantially discounted rates. Our organization also contributed the costs of additional medical care and flea treatment not covered by grant monies if pet owners could not afford it.

A project coordinator managed our efforts, engaged with the community, and lead the outreach portions of the project, making personal connections with pet owners and determining what their transportation and after-care



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SPAY AND NEUTER GRANTS PROGRAM



needs were. Some pet owners took care of their own transportation, but about 80% of the time we picked up the pets, took them to and from the vet and delivered them back to their owners after the surgeries. Many owners either did not have transportation, worked odd hours, or could not take off time from work to go to the vet. Including mileage in the grant allowed us to greatly increase the number of animals we spayed/neutered and improved our effectiveness in the target area.

Accomplishments:

In just over 6 months of the one year project, we managed to spay/neuter 126 pet cats and 30 pet dogs. Once the grant money was expended, we continued to fund some spay/neuter procedures and other emergency surgeries for cases of extreme need through our "Hope 4 Paws" program. Some residents that we helped were grateful and stated that if not for our program, they may have had to surrender their pet(s), mainly because of unwanted litters of puppies/kittens or medical care they could not afford.

We also covered medical costs, tests, and flea treatment for pets from our own operating budget. Three cats needed dental work, or wound treatment in order to save their lives and give them a good quality of life.

Lessons Learned:

We increased our outreach activities, especially via social media. People also found out about us and our spay/neuter program when they saw us listed on the Department of Agriculture website. We completed 94% of the cats and 93% of the dogs in our goals in the first 2 quarters. Just two weeks later we finished the entire project because we were aggressive in meeting our goals.

We estimated at 50/50 mix of males and females among the pets needing our services, but we actually spayed more female cats than we neutered males. Since spaying costs more, we used up the grant money after altering only 126 of 130 cats (97% of our overall goal). This was not a factor for dogs but could have been since dogs surgeries are priced based primarily on weight.

Attachments:

- List of pet cats altered
- List of pet dogs altered

For More Information Contact:

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