



Sunshine Keeps Pets Babies and Rabies Free

Project #

21-633

County: Anne Arundel, Howard

Number of Cats Spayed: 96

Number of Dogs Spayed: 30

Number of Cats Neutered: 107

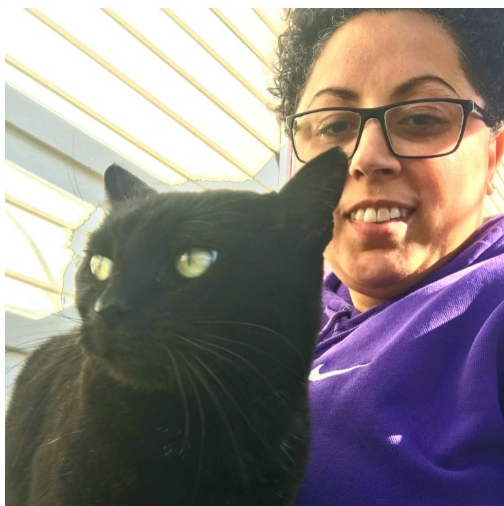
Number of Dogs Neutered: 32

Amount Received: \$15,720.00

Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA): \$0.00

Project Synopsis:

This project funded part of a multi-year effort to reduce the number of homeless and unwanted pets taken in at the Anne Arundel and Howard Counties animal control facilities through a targeted campaign to provide no-cost spay/neuter/vaccination of pets owned by low-income residents of Jessup and parts of Glen Burnie, Elkridge, and Columbia. We were funded to spay/neuter 200 pet cats and 61 pet dogs above and beyond our organization's regular programs.



Maryland Department of Agriculture

Spay and Neuter Grants Program



Project Description:

Sunshine's Friends Cat and Dog Rescue (www.sunshinesfriends.org) has been a 501(c)(3) non-profit charity since 2014 operating within 20 miles of our main location in Jessup, MD. The area is a mix of light industry, warehouses, and residential neighborhoods, and the area along the US Route 1 corridor and southern Baltimore beltway has a higher than average number of low-income residents who need help. This project, which ran from October 2020 to August 2021, sought to spay/neuter 200 pet cats and 61 pet dogs for low-income families within specific neighborhoods/zip codes in the area. As part of a multi-year project, we are steadily reducing the number of unwanted pets surrendered to local county animal shelters due to the inability to afford veterinary procedures. The project funded the cost of the spay/neuter surgeries and rabies vaccines for the pets. We supplied transportation when needed and covered vaccines and additional medical care if necessary to give the pet a good quality of life.

Summary of Approach:

We start with advertising/outreach. We work with community associations, social service and church groups, speaking at meetings and going door-to-door with brochures. We post on social media and provide handouts to our partner vets and pet stores. We spread the word about spaying/neutering/vaccinating pets in general, and about our projects in particular. We use a two-prong approach, covering both pet and feral focus projects to maximize effectiveness. Outreach runs continuously, even if we finish the MDA-funded projects early. We partner with four spay/neuter vet clinics to who substantially discount their rates. Our organization also contributes costs of extra medical care, vaccines, and flea treatment for pet owners who cannot afford them. This increase our effectiveness and keeps more pets with families and out of animal control facilities. We provide transportation to vets to about 80% of pet owners who do not have cars, work odd hours, or cannot take time off from work.

Accomplishments:

In just over 10 months of the planned one-year project, we managed to spay/neuter 203 pet cats and 61 pet dogs above and beyond the procedures and other emergency surgeries we provide through our normal in-house programs. We prevented numerous potential pet surrenders due to unwanted litters of puppies/kittens or medical care that people could not afford. We also used our funds to cover the extra costs for tests, vaccines, and flea treatments for pets spayed/neutered under the project. Some of the citizens with low income were very grateful for the services because they were having to consider surrendering their pet to animal control facility where it could face possible euthanasia.



Lessons Learned:

Due to the continuing limitations due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we decreased our in-person, door-to-door canvassing, but we increased our virtual and social network outreach activities. Restrictions on spay/neuter activities during the early phases of COVID-19 caused severe backlogs for veterinary services. Vet customers seeking spay/neuter surgeries are having to schedule 3 to 4 months in advance, but our close relationships with our vet partners allows us to keep standing weekly appointments for multiple pets.

For More Information Contact:

Keith Burnham

Organization Name and Address:

7406 Belclare Ct.

by appointment only

JESSUP, Maryland 20794

Phone: 410-796-7327

Email: info@sunshinesfriends.org



Maryland Department of Agriculture
Spay and Neuter Grants Program

