

# Kennel Quarterly



Rochester Police Department  
Animal Services Unit

## Adoption Numbers

As with the first quarter, dog adoptions were down and cat adoptions were up for the second quarter of the fiscal year 2003-2004. Of the 780 dogs impounded between October 1 and December 31, 163 were adopted out into new homes. That's 20.9% of the dogs impounded. Last year during the same time period, 183 (24.7%) dogs of 740 total dogs seized were adopted out. With 40 more dogs impounded (5.4% more) Animal Services would have needed to adopt out 193 dogs to match last year's adoption rate for the second quarter.

The story with cats is somewhat the opposite. During this second quarter, Animal Services impounded a total of 643 cats compared to 540 during the same time period last year. That represents a 19.1% in-

crease in cats impounded. Cat adoption numbers also increased from 115 last year to 148 during this year's first quarter. That represents an increased adoption rate of nearly 2% with 23% this year compared to 21.3% last year. These types of increases in adoption rates help offset the impact of increasing numbers of cats impounded. Hopefully the Unit can continue to increase the adoption rate for cats.

The Open House in early November helped raise adoptions and awareness, however the boost in numbers was largely isolated to the days immediately preceding and following the event. Animal Services is planning to focus even more attention on promoting the animal shelter and its adoption

program during the remainder of the fiscal year.



Crowded shelter lobby during open house November 2, 2003.



Animal Services shelter in winter

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## Open House Boosts Adoptions And Awareness

This year's open house, the 3rd annual event at Animal Services, was the best attended and most successful event to date. November 2, 2003 marked the commencement of National Animal Shelter Appreciation Week. The week-long campaign to raise awareness to the life-saving work performed by animal shelter personnel seemed to draw more attention than the previous two years.

The open house is also an opportunity to promote the various services and programs provided by Animal Services. This year we recruited volunteers, promoted pet owner re-

sponsibility via pet care and nutrition seminars, and we promoted our dog training program. We also invited special guests to discuss other animal-related topics. Retired professor Dr. Larry Wallnau, PhD, presented a seminar on service dog laws and etiquette. Local Wildlife Educator and President of Scales & Tales, Tom Hudak, demonstrated and discussed the care and challenges of keeping exotic reptiles as pets.

Adoption numbers for the day were high with two dogs and five cats adopted on Sunday plus another dog and nine more cats adopted on Monday as a result of the event.



Nadia Soto with skink at exotic reptile seminar during open house.

## Shelter Statistics



*“We must all take responsibility to spay and neuter our pets and to encourage others to do the same.”*

	<u>Dog</u>	<u>Cat</u>	<u>Other</u>
<b><u>October</u></b>			
Impounded	273	272	18
Adopted	51	49	3
Redeemed	82	2	0
Transferred	10	30	2
Euthanized	132	265	3
<b><u>November</u></b>			
Impounded	249	215	35
Adopted	53	52	4
Redeemed	70	4	0
Transferred	7	13	11
Euthanized	117	163	14
<b><u>December</u></b>			
Impounded	258	156	23
Adopted	59	47	6
Redeemed	47	1	0
Transferred	16	15	2
Euthanized	125	100	3

Rochester Animal Services temporarily houses approximately 6,500 animals annually. We are committed to reuniting owners with missing pets and to placing animals in new homes, however it is impossible to find homes for all of them. Some animals are euthanized due to illness or injury. Others may display vicious or aggressive temperaments. Currently, the City of Rochester does not authorize the adoption of “pit bulls” from the shelter, so those that are not reclaimed are euthanized or transferred to Lollypop Farm. Sadly, many animals are euthanized because there are just far too many stray and unwanted animals in our community and we do not have space to house them all. We must all take responsibility to spay and neuter our pets and to encourage others to do the same. If the number of animals coming in declines, then we can devote more time and energy to those animals we do shelter, we can increase adoptions and redemptions and decrease euthanasia.

## Another \$2,500 Grant To Help Spay/Neuter Program

In late July, the Animal Services Unit was awarded a \$2,500 grant from the Very Best Pet Network. This is the third grant Animal Services has received for the purpose of establishing a surgical suite within the existing shelter.

The Very Best Pet Network is a cooperative effort among American Humane, Purina, and Wal-Mart, to boost adoptions and provide assistance to new pet owners. American Humane administers the grant and monies may be awarded up to \$4,000.

This grant will be pooled with the \$4,000 Meacham Memo-

rial Foundation grant, money from a previous budget, and over \$10,000 in unsolicited donations toward the purchase of cages, surgical equipment, and construction expenses.

The City has opened bidding for general contractors, electricians, and HVAC contractors. Construction is scheduled to begin in March 2004.

The on-site surgical suite will enable Animal Services to spay and neuter virtually all dogs and cats adopted from the shelter without having to transport animals to and from outside facilities. Only extremely young animals and animals suffering ill-

ness are not able to be sterilized before leaving the shelter. The renovations will also create additional areas for holding and treating such ailing animals. These additional holding areas should enable the Unit to treat more animals for minor illnesses thereby increasing the percentage of animals spayed and neutered prior to leaving the shelter.



## From the Director's Chair

I was surprised to realize that our dog adoption numbers were lower than expected for a second straight quarter. The open house in November seemed a relative success, however the spike in adoptions and publicity for those few days around the event was not sustained. In thinking of reasons why our dog adoptions have declined, there are a variety of potential factors that may come into play.

Perhaps the percentage of "adoptable" dogs impounded has declined. Maybe the personnel shortages are affecting the attention our shelter staff can provide to potential adopters. Or perhaps we have put less effort into advertising and public outreach.

The good news is that we

received another grant for the on-site spay/neuter unit project and construction is expected to begin this spring. Animal Services assisted with the investigation and recovery of another stolen dog. Our Unit and the Police Department are sending a message to the community that we take such crimes seriously and we will pursue them to the fullest extent.

During this second quarter we hired, Deonna Campbell, a new Animal Care Technician leaving only one vacancy. Yolanda Sayres returned from maternity leave also helping to fill some of the voids throughout the shelter. Agriculture and Markets amended Chapter 26 thereby requiring some, breed-specific shelter for dogs left

outside in inclement weather. The new law received a fair amount of media coverage. As a result, Animal Control Officers have responded to a greater number of calls to check the welfare of dogs left outside.

All in all it was a busy and challenging quarter and the coming months will be even more challenging. With the current fiscal climate, I am committed to boosting adoptions, redemptions, licensing, and increasing pro-active enforcement. The spay-neuter project will continue to move forward and we will be working with Humane Society and/or local veterinarians to assist with the program. We will also be exploring the possibility of establishing an animal control



training academy to share our expertise with animal control personnel throughout the north-east..

As always I welcome your comments regarding our programs, services, and procedures and any thoughts about this or any past or future issues.

Chris Fitzgerald

## Another Stolen Dog Recovered, More DNA Testing

On December 30, 2003, Animal Services removed an English Bulldog from a vacant apartment. The unlicensed dog was reportedly abandoned at the location when the tenant moved out. Upon its arrival at the shelter, the Animal Services staff, and Orlando Santos, Yolanda Sayres, and Tom Shannon in particular, noted the breed and recalled the stolen dog report from May 2003. Contact was made with Captain Johnston and Darlene Hoover, the breeder/owner of the missing dogs. Mrs. Hoover provided a description by phone including distinctive markings that helped confirm the bulldog as one of the stolen puppies.

Simultaneously, another individual had come forward claiming ownership of the bulldog. This person did have veterinary records for the dog, however the vaccination were initially given just four days after the

date of the dog theft. Investigators have spoken with that individual and it seems that he may have purchased the dog from someone connected to the dog thieves.

Animal Services was able to release the bulldog to Darlene Hoover based on her purebred license, her stolen dog report, and her description of the missing dog.

Both the RPD and NYS Police Investigators were interested in pursuing further criminal charges for the various suspects in possession of the stolen dog(s). In this case, because of the value of the purebred dogs stolen, the dog theft constitutes grand larceny. Possession of the stolen dogs is also considered a misdemeanor. To that end, DNA tests will again be used to provide conclusive evidence that the recovered bulldog was, in fact, one of the puppies stolen

from the Hoovers in May. A blood sample was taken from the recovered bulldog to be compared with samples taken from the sire and bitch by the Hoover's veterinarian. The samples were sent to Therion International, in Saratoga Springs, New York for analysis. Results are expected in the coming weeks.

Once again this collaborative effort represents a great example of cooperative policing among State Police, City Police, and Animal Services personnel. The incident and subsequent investigation also demonstrate the commitment of the Rochester Police Department and NYS Police to locate stolen dogs, to punish those responsible, and to deter such crimes in the future. Stealing dogs to sell on the street for a quick buck should not be viewed as easy money. Great job to everyone involved!



Stolen English bulldog posing for the camera before being returned to her owners.



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**Get personal. Adopt a pet.**

*Animal Services is a municipal animal care and control unit within the Rochester Police Department that is committed to improving quality of life and safety for city residents, the promotion of responsible pet guardianship, and the reduction of animal overpopulation to reduce animal suffering and euthanasia. Animal Services enforces all New York State and City of Rochester ordinances pertaining to animal control. We operate an animal shelter for stray, injured, menacing, and disowned animals. The shelter serves as a resource for locating lost pets and as an adoption center. We strive to provide the best possible care for all animals in our charge.*

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## Volunteer Corner

During the second quarter, Animal Services was involved in a few events that required volunteer participation. As mentioned earlier in this issue, National Animal Shelter Appreciation week began with an open house on November 2, 2003. Many volunteers attended the event and were essential to providing assistance to the high volume of shelter visitors.

On December 6 and 7, volunteers from Animal Services assisted with the Santa Claws photo shoots at both PETS MART locations. Volunteers worked as photographers, Santa's helpers, or even as Santa to photograph people visiting Santa with their pets! A portion of the proceeds from

the photo sales will be returned to Animal Services. The Unit would like to offer our thanks for those volunteers who helped out with this event and to those who had signed up for the subsequent weeks' photo promotions. PETS MART had to allow other animal welfare groups an opportunity to participate and as a result, Animal Services was only needed for the first week-end.



## New Faces

**Deonna Campbell** was born in Bath, New York. She attended Hammondsport High School. Before joining Animal Services in mid-October, Deonna worked for the Humane Society at Lollypop Farm as an Adoption Counselor. Her experience with animals and with customers make her a great match for our Unit. Deonna has two cats and a turtle. She enjoys woodworking as a hobby and she also devotes some of her free time to helping other area animal shelters. Welcome aboard Deonna!

