

Kennel Quarterly



Rochester Police Department
Animal Services Unit

Dog Adoptions Up, Cat Adoptions Down

Adoptions numbers were up for dogs and down for cats during the first quarter of fiscal year 2004-2005. Animal Services impounded 874 dogs between July 1 and September 30, 2004. That represents a 12% increase from the 780 dogs impounded during last year's first quarter. Of the 874 dogs impounded, 203 (23.2%) were adopted out into new homes. Such numbers demonstrate an increase in the dog adoption rate from the 151 (19.4%) in FY 03-04 and 167 (18.5%) in FY 02-03. There is still room for improvement. More can be done to promote the adoption program and raise awareness about Animal Services. October is Adopt-A-Shelter Dog Month and the shelter is offering a \$15 discount on all dog adoptions dur-

ing the month. Then National Animal Shelter Appreciation Week is November 7-13. These events should help spark some adoption interest.

During this first quarter, Animal Services impounded a total of 1,173 cats. That represents an increase of 130 cats (12.5%) from last year's first quarter impound numbers of 1,043 cats. During the first quarter of FY02-03, the unit impounded 921 cats. Although both dog and cat impound numbers were on the rise, the situation with cat adoptions shows a different trend than that of the dogs. Cat adoptions dropped from 121 in first quarter FY 03-04 to 100 in first quarter FY 04-05. Those numbers represent a 17.4% decline in cat adoptions. The percentage of cats impounded that were adopted

dropped from 11.6% last year to just 8.5% during this year's first quarter. With increasing stray cat numbers and increasing impound rates, Animal Services must continue to increase their cat adoption efforts.

Although it has been stated often in past issues of this newsletter, it bears repeating, that in addition to boosting adoption numbers, the unit must also intensify its outreach and education initiatives. To that end, Animal Services is working on establishing a spay-neuter program for low-income cat owners. Hopefully the program will ultimately result in reductions in the numbers of stray and unwanted cats. That means fewer cats impounded at the shelter, fewer cats euthanized, and perhaps increased cat adoptions.



Animal Services shelter in autumn

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Spay-Neuter Suite Complete, Surgeries Begin at Shelter!

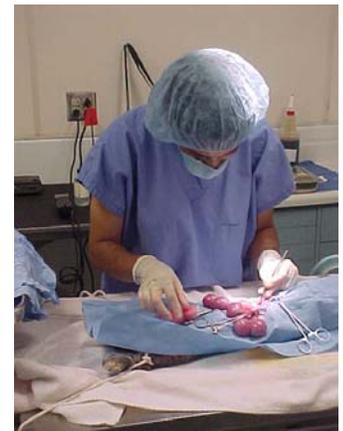
Renovations were completed, equipment and supplies were purchased, and contracts with area veterinary personnel were in place by the end of Fiscal Year 03-04, so that effective July 1, 2004 Rochester Animal Services (RAS) commenced its on-site sterilization program. The first surgeries began July 2, 2004. During the first quarter, the ASU sterilized over 240 animals.

Per Agriculture and Markets Law chapter 387, §377, shelters must provide surgical sterilization for every animal adopted out. Alternatively, shelters can charge a \$35 refundable altering deposit to encour-

age adopters to have the pet sterilized after adoption. Compliance with such deposit-based incentive programs is generally not high, therefore at RAS we provide sterilization surgeries for every animal adopted from the shelter over eight weeks of age and without any medical contraindications.

Discussions have begun on expanding the spay-neuter program to accommodate cats owned by low-income City residents. Cat numbers continue to rise despite the relatively stable or even declining dog numbers. Clearly, stray and feral cats are more of a problem than dogs in Rochester, and therefore, we

need to address the problem at its source, the in-tact, reproductive cat population.



Dr. Price performs a feline spay surgery in the new surgical room.



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

Rochester Animal Services Statistics

	<u>Dog</u>	<u>Cat</u>	<u>Other</u>
July			
Impounded	308	363	35
Adopted	67	27	11
Redeemed	97	7	2
Transferred	12	7	5
Euthanized	125	297	13
August			
Impounded	270	412	12
Adopted	70	45	3
Redeemed	66	4	1
Transferred	5	6	0
Euthanized	132	380	4
September			
Impounded	296	398	12
Adopted	66	28	2
Redeemed	81	3	0
Transferred	3	32	3
Euthanized	132	307	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.

Shelter Prepares For Open House

Animal Services has already begun planning for this year’s open house to kick off National Animal Shelter Appreciation Week. The event is set for Sunday November 7 from 10am – 3pm at 184 Verona Street. This is our fourth annual open house at RAS and it is always a great opportunity to highlight the honorable, lifesaving work that shelters do. With the presidential election in early November, the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has chosen an election theme for the national campaign. Whether “DemoCAT” or “RePUPlican” HSUS reminds

people to “Be Patriotic (and to Elect to Adopt.”

As in the past, Animal Services plans to have a variety of activities and seminars including pet first aid, dog training, pet grooming, service dogs, K9 dogs, and an animal communicator/pet psychic. There will be shelter tours and demonstrations of animal control equipment. During the open house, the Unit also offers discounts on all dog and cat adoptions. This year, there will also be a microchip clinic in which pet owners can bring their pets in to be implanted with an i.d. chip. Rex the Rhino should be mak-

ing an appearance for the Raging Rhinos and some local sports celebrities may pop in too. Animal Services welcomes the public to the shelter to learn about the Unit and about the various programs and services including pet adoption. This year, Animal Services is extending a personal invitation to members of the Rochester Police Department, the Genesee Valley Veterinary Medical Association, the City Clerk’s Office, and City Council. In addition to promoting adoptions, Animal Services wants to celebrate its newly established spay-neuter suite.



From the Director's Chair

As usual, the first quarter continues our busy season with the warmer months resulting in elevated impound numbers, increased calls for service, and more frequent outreach events and festivals in which we participate. During this increased activity period Animal Services has also been operating with a few less people.

As part of our budget submission we removed one vacant Animal Care Technician (ACT) position from our Unit. So instead of the seven ACTs we have had for the past four years, we are now operating with six ACTs. Our part-time receptionist, Victoria Crespo, graduated from MCC and accepted a full-time job in late June. Animal Control Officer (ACO) Tabitha Siard resigned in late April 2004 to relocate to Philadelphia with her husband Greg. That vacancy had come just a few weeks after ACO Matt Leach resigned to accept employment elsewhere. Finally, for those of you who have visited the shelter recently, you may have noted the absence of our full-time receptionist and primary adoption counselor, Sue Filetti. Sue has been out with an injury for several

months and is not expected to return for several more months.

Now for the good news. The busy season is coming to a close and some help is on the way. Tammy Bancroft has been interviewed and recommended to fill the part-time receptionist position. Tammy worked as our part-time receptionist and then as an ACT before leaving for medical reasons. We are anxious to have her back. In lieu of our sacrificed ACT position, a part-time ACT position was created. Andrew Dunning has been interviewed and recommended for that position. Andrew has worked for Lollypop Farm in various capacities for the past several years. Both background investigations have been completed and Tammy and Andrew should be joining our staff in the coming weeks.

Elaine Lalka was promoted to ACO in the spring and should be transitioned to the "road" in the next several weeks. The other ACO vacancy is being held vacant while we explore the possibility of creating a new Veterinary Technician title in its place. A full-time Licensed Veterinary Technician would enable our unit to reduce its professional service expenses and to im-

prove the efficiency of our spay/neuter program.

Having mentioned the spay/neuter program, I would be remiss if I failed to acknowledge our successes thus far. During the first quarter, we sterilized 174 dogs and 66 cats. Compared to last year's first quarter numbers, that is an increase of 76.5% for dogs and 245% for cats. In the first three months we sterilized more cats than we did in the first six months last year.

We are also moving ahead with establishing a low-income spay-neuter program for cats. We decided to focus on cats because their numbers continue to rise each year. The cat population is not regulated like that of dogs. There are few significant ordinances regarding confinement, there is no state mandated licensing, and frankly, people seem to view cats as expendable or disposable. Some of the solutions are to make sterilization accessible and affordable and to promote education about responsible pet care including spaying and neutering and keeping cats in doors.



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

Shelter Offers Dog Training Classes

Animal Services is committed to promoting responsible dog ownership for the benefit of dogs, their owners, and the community. To that end the Unit has developed socialization and obedience classes offered to the public. There is a 4-week Puppy Socialization class for puppies 8-16 weeks old that covers health and behavior issues, house manners and socializing skills. Beginning Obedience introduces dog own-

ers to proper use of equipment, basic commands, and correcting undesirable behaviors. Intermediate Obedience involves fine tuning and introducing distractions to the training and reinforcement processes.

Pamela Kent is the resident canine instructor. Pam was hired as an Animal Care Technician in June 2000 when the RPD assumed control of the Unit. Pam has attended numerous seminars dealing with ani-

mal behavior, temperament testing, and pet nutrition during her more than 16 years in the animal industry. Pam began her career by completing an obedience instructor apprenticeship at Denali Farms Obedience School in 1987. From 1987-1999, Pam owned and operated Blu-Country K9 Specialist. She also provided several classes for BOCES students who were interested in animal-related careers. In



Pam in the park with Ginger

2003, Pam was certified as a Group Class Obedience Instructor by Animal Behavior & Training Associates, Inc. and was qualified as a Canine Good Citizen® Evaluator by the American Kennel Club.

For more information regarding the City's dog training programs call 428-7274 or email Pam at PK1268@cityofrochester.gov.

FELV, FIV, and FIP Part One: Deciphering the alphabet of cat diseases

By Mary Dyroff, DVM (Reprinted from Habitat For Cats newsletter)

FELV, or Feline Leukemia, is a retrovirus that is spread by “cat-to-cat contact,” such as grooming each other, sharing dishes, sleeping in a pile of cats, etc. It can also infect kittens inside the uterus if the mother cat is carrying the virus. A cat whose blood tests positive for FELV may appear to be a picture of health, and may have no symptoms of disease at the time of testing. Some FELV positive cats may live for many years with no symptoms. Other FELV positive cats will already be ill at the time of testing. When symptoms occur, they can vary from mild to severe and can include tumors, blood abnormalities, infections, weight loss, lack of appetite, lethargy, vomiting/diarrhea, sneezing, dehydration, and fevers. Essentially, almost any abnormal symptom in a cat could be FELV related. While there is no effective treatment for the virus itself, the cat’s symptoms can often be treated. All cats and kittens should be tested for FELV. Cats that will be going outdoors or will be exposed to other cats should be vaccinated for FELV. Although no vaccine is consistently 100% effective, the vaccine for FELV has been proven to have a very high rate of safety and protection against the virus.

FIV, or Feline Immunodeficiency Virus, is a lentivirus, or also classified as a retrovirus, that is spread primarily through cat bite wounds, because the virus is especially abundant in the saliva of FIV positive cats. It may also infect kittens in the uterus or through nursing. Like FELV, a cat that tests positive for FIV may or may not be showing any symptoms of illness at the time of testing. Also like FELV, an FIV positive cat may live for years with no symptoms, or with in-

termittent symptoms. When symptoms occur, they can include inflammation of the gums, inflammation of the middle layer of the eye, chronic infections, skin diseases, diarrhea, weight loss, lack of appetite, and cancers, as well as urinary, respiratory, neurological, and reproductive disorders. Once again there is no specific treatment for the virus, but symptoms can often be treated. Although a vaccine for FIV has been developed, its effectiveness against all strains of the virus has yet to be determined. Furthermore, cats that have been vaccinated for FIV will test positive for FIV. These issues differ from FELV vaccine, and so currently FIV vaccination is not as widely recommended as FELV vaccination.

FIP, or Feline Infectious Peritonitis, is a disease that is associated with coronaviruses. It is believed to be spread by “cat-to-cat” contact, or by infection while in the uterus. What makes this disease difficult to assess and difficult to test for is that coronaviruses are present in virtually all multiple-cat environments, and a positive FIP test simply indicates that the cat has had exposure to a coronavirus. Most cats (95%) that test positive for coronavirus, will NOT get the disease FIP. The disease is considered a rare consequence of a coronavirus infection. If a cat does have FIP, symptoms can be as variable as they are with FELV and FIV. There is a vaccine available for FIP, but currently it is not widely administered.

Look for Part Two: “What can I do if my cat tests positive?” in the next newsletter.

New Police Officers Learn About Animal Control

On August 20, Chris Fitzgerald, Director of Animal Services, provided two blocks of instruction to Police Officers as part of their Post Academy training. Police Officers have authority to enforce all animal laws and ordinances but do not get such instruction in regular academy training.

The purpose of the training was to explain the role of the Animal Services Unit within the RPD, to familiarize Police Officers with New York State animal laws and Rochester’s local animal ordinances, and to foster cooperation between Police Officers and Animal Services personnel.

In the first block of instruction, Fitzgerald stated Animal Services’ Mission, illustrated the organizational structure, and covered the major dog control ordinances in Chapter 31 of City Code. The second block focused on Chapter 30 which deals with all other animals besides dogs. Fitzgerald also discussed sections of Agriculture and Markets Law Article 26. This Article deals primarily with animal cruelty laws such as abuse, abandonment, torture, animal fighting, and ear clipping, but also contains laws regarding stealing dogs and unauthorized possession of dogs.

This is the third time that Animal Services has provided instruction during Post Academy training. Once again, the officers were attentive and receptive to the material. The Animal Services Unit hopes this training continues to be a regular component in preparing new police officers for duty.

ANIMAL CARE & CONTROL IN ROCHESTER, NY



ROCHESTER ANIMAL SERVICES
ROCHESTER POLICE DEPT.



Who's Who At Animal Services?

Reggie Reed was hired by Animal Services as an Animal Control Officer in June 2000 when the Rochester Police Department assumed operational control of the Unit. Prior to that Reggie had worked for the RPD for three years in Records. Reggie was originally assigned to second platoon, then moved to first platoon, and will be returning to second platoon in the next several weeks. Reggie is the Shop Steward for the unit.



Andrew Ames was also hired in June 2000 as an Animal Control Officer and has been working the third platoon since then. Andy has had perfect attendance for over four years now.



Edwin Santiago was also one of the original Animal Control Officers hired in June 2000. Edwin has been working the second platoon for the past four years.



Letter to Rochester-Area Veterinarians (reprinted from GVVMA newsletter)

Dear veterinarians of Rochester and Monroe County:

This letter is intended as a notification of the establishment of an on-site spay-neuter program at the City's animal shelter. As you may be aware, we have been working on securing funds and support for this project for the past several years. On July 1, 2004, Animal Services began the new fiscal year with several renovations including pre- and post-operation rooms, an isolation area for sick cats, and a functional surgery room. The primary goal is to ensure sterilization of all animals adopted from the facility. However a secondary and equally important goal is to provide a low-cost spay-neuter clinic for City residents. The number of cats impounded annually by Animal Services continues to rise from 2,700 in fiscal year 2000-01 to over 3,000 in fiscal year 2003-04. Of those thousands of cats impounded, only about 1% are reclaimed by owners. We adopt out about 500 (17%) and transfer a few hundred to other organizations like Animal Service League and the Pet Adoption Network. The rest are euthanized. Last year 2,084 (69%) cats were euthanized at our shelter.

The numbers at Lollypop Farm illustrate the same sobering phenomenon. In 2002, Lollypop impounded 7,673 cats and euthanized 3,542 (46%). In 2003, Lollypop impounded 9,278 cats and euthanized 4,867 (52%). Their numbers for 2004 are following suit with 3,330 (54%) cats euthanized of 6,130 impounded through August. The proportion of cats euthanized is even higher (59%) during peak summer months. A large majority of the cats surrendered to Lollypop Farm come from City residents. For that reason, Lollypop Farm has expressed interest in assisting us with a low-cost spay-neuter program for cats. The low-cost program would be limited to low-income cat owners who reside in the City of Rochester.

I am hoping to gain the support of the veterinary community for this crucial program. The outcome should be reduced numbers of strays, feral, and unwanted cat litters. Ultimately such decreases mean reductions in euthanasia. Another impact we anticipate is increased responsibility among cat owners. Based on information gathered from individuals surrendering unwanted cats at the shelter, most are not regular clients at your practices. These are cat owners who may never have visited a veterinarian. By attracting them to the shelter for a low-cost spay-neuter program, we can ensure the cats are sterilized and vaccinated and encourage owners to follow-up with a veterinarian. Currently, every adoption packet includes a list of veterinary hospitals that honor our Free Health Exam Certificates. So we are already trying to start new pet owners off on the right foot. We also instruct new adopters to schedule an exam with a veterinarian for the removal of sutures 7-10 days following surgery.

In conclusion, I hope that we can all come together in support of this pro-active, humane, and responsible cooperative effort. All parties should benefit from the endeavor whether from reduced numbers of strays impounded at our shelter or from increased clientele at your practices. Certainly the feline community will benefit and we are all here to serve that community and their human companions. If you have any questions or concerns or would like to offer your services and get involved in the program, please do not hesitate to contact me at 428-6898 or email me at cf1274@cityofrochester.gov. Thank you in advance for your understanding and support.

Respectfully,

Christopher S. Fitzgerald, Director



Rochester Police Department Animal Services Unit

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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 ownership, 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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WWW.ROCHESTERANIMALSERVICES.COM

Volunteer Corner

This first quarter was filled with a variety of outreach activities and our volunteers played an essential role in staffing the events. Animal Services had a kiosk at four of the Raging Rhinos home games. At each game we had a group of volunteers providing information and highlighting adoptable animals. Once again these were great opportunities to boost awareness about the shelter, our adoption program, and as an outlet for recruiting new volunteers.

We also were represented with information booths at the major summer festivals including the Corn Hill Arts Festival, the Park Avenue Festival, and the Puerto Rican Festival. With

our personnel shortages during the past several months the volunteer assistance at these festivals was critical to spreading the word and increasing public awareness of our various programs and services.

The Volunteer Recognition Dinner was September 22 at The Diplomat Banquet Center. Assistant Shelter Manager Yolanda Sayres represented Animal Services at the dinner with her son K.K. It was a nice opportunity for Yolanda to express the Unit's gratitude for all that the volunteers do and apparently K.K. was the headliner for the evening.

Animal Services would like to extend a special thanks to Jim and Patti Mistretta for their

faithful commitment to dog walking and for the donated camera battery.

We have already begun recruiting volunteers for the Santa Claws promotion at PETS MART's Greece location this December. There is a sign up sheet posted on the volunteer board at the shelter. If you have any questions regarding this promotion or any other volunteer activities, please contact Orlando Santos at the shelter (428-7274).

For those of you who may be unaware, Yolanda Sayres is leaving Animal Services and will no longer be in charge of volunteer matters. Yolanda was an asset to the Unit and she will be missed. Good luck Yo!



RAS volunteers with Yolanda Sayres, Chief Duffy, and Mayor Johnson at the RPD Volunteer Recognition Dinner 2004.