



## St. Mary's Spay Neuter Your Pet (Snyp) Program

Project #

21-631

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County: St. Mary's

Number of Cats Spayed: 135

Number of Dogs Spayed: 056

Number of Cats Neutered: 79

Number of Dogs Neutered: 34

Amount Received: \$29,225.00

Amount Remaining (to be returned to MDA): \$2,203.00

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### Project Synopsis:

This program targeted low income families in specific zip codes in St. Mary' County. The goal was to provide no cost spay/neuter surgeries to these families to reduce pet overpopulation as well as to reduce the number of unwanted/abandoned animals. We have also found that spay/neuter surgeries assisted in correcting behavioral issues that put animals at risk of abandonment or euthanization.



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## **Project Description:**

St. Mary's Animal Welfare League performed this project during quarters 2 thru 4 2021 and the first quarter of 2022. We are a volunteer-staffed, non-profit operating in Southern Maryland. The project was designed to target areas of St. Mary's County where the population was most dense. Outreach efforts included local public events as well as including information about the program at our low cost vaccination clinics and our adoption events. The St. Mary's County Animal Control officers and local food pantries also helped to spread the word to pet owners in need. The municipal shelter which serves two counties also provided information about this program.

## **Summary of Approach:**

Outreach programs included providing flyers at our low-cost vaccination clinics (once a month, March through November); program information added to our website; FaceBook ads throughout the year; contacting local Animal Control to encourage them to send folks in need to us for help; flyers at most adoption events throughout the county; program flyers at our Cat Castle shelter; participation at local events throughout the year providing information about this program as well as our adoption programs; and working with local vets and clinics and food pantries to make them aware of the help available through this program. Impacts of COVID concerns continued to impact our efforts through the early part of the year but were greatly reduced in the second part of the year.

## **Accomplishments:**

We were able to provide 304 spay/neuter surgeries to community members who might otherwise have let their pets remain intact. We developed numerous relationships with community activists and county employees which have made our outreach much more successful. While we cannot obtain county or zip code level information from our local shelter, we believe we have helped to make a significant reduction in the number of unwanted pets in our area. Where we were able to identify other needs in the families we served, we were able to put them in contact with additional services. This is probably the most fulfilling aspect of the program - that additional assistance needed by community members can be identified as organizations in the community work together. We have also helped with placement of unwanted animals that we became aware of only as a result of this outreach. Additionally we have developed some long-lasting relationships with residents who now look out for their neighbors.



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## Lessons Learned:

We remain the only source of spay/neuter assistance in St. Mary's County and as such we have discovered that the need for help of this sort than we would have expected. Most of the applicants also need other assistance with their animals and we have been able to put them in touch with other programs to help with food and other medical expenses. We continue to address challenges related to transportation and other animal-related needs with efforts from our volunteers. We have implemented additional training re appropriate proof of residency documentation. Our volunteers have now exceeded pre-covid levels which has helped in our ability to respond quickly to requests. We continue to have a large number of requests for assistance for community cats rather than pets. We have not been able to investigate resources for those requests due to other time demands but we hope to focus on that later this year.

## For More Information Contact:

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