



Orange County Animal Services

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Monthly Report Orange County Animal Services February 2006

Departmental Highlights

1. Irene Paul was hired and began her employment as the new Manager of our Animal Control Division. Ms. Paul has a decade of leadership and management experience in the field of animal control and animal services in South as well as North Carolina. She was selected on the basis of a national search that drew candidates from throughout the country. Her selection was based upon her management skills and interpersonal skills, extensive knowledge of animal control and services, and accomplishments.

Also, efforts continued to fill the Animal Care Technician position that will be vacated by the impending retirement of Zandra Talbert. Interviews were conducted with candidates from the certified list, but a final determination is still being made. The intent is to hire someone who has a commitment to customer service as well as animal care experience and skills. It should be noted that Ms. Talbert is a long-term employee who transitioned to the County after her employment with the Animal Protection Society, and who is known for her extraordinary love for cats and other animals. She is expected to announce her retirement date in the near future.

2. In the month of February, there were two (2) positive rabies cases—one for a raccoon and one for a skunk. Those positive tests brought to three (3) the year-to-date number of positive rabies tests for 2006. (The prior positive test in January was for a raccoon.) Last year, by comparison, March 8th was the date of the first of twenty-three (23) positive rabies tests.

Positive tests underscore the importance of effective rabies surveillance and rabies control. These are core services of the Animal Services Department and the provision of these services involves effective coordination with select personnel in the County's Health Department as well as North Carolina Public Veterinarians, among others. Integral to these services is public outreach and education about the rabies virus in relation to responsible pet ownership in our communities and throughout the County.

3. Two low-cost rabies vaccination clinics were held in the month of February. At the first clinic of the year held at the Animal Shelter on Saturday, February 4th, a total of ninety (90) animals—forty-six (46) dogs and forty-four (44) cats—were vaccinated. At the second clinic of the year held at Paws and Claws on Saturday, February 11th, a total of thirty-nine (39) animals—twenty-

nine (29) dogs and eleven (11) cats—received their rabies vaccinations. That was the first clinic held at Paws and Claws, and considering the inclement weather, it was very successful. (As a result of the weather, however, it was not possible to conduct spay/neuter outreach as staff had planned.)

To ensure the continuing availability of low-cost rabies vaccinations for County residents, a work team of staff planned three more clinics for March and early April. These upcoming clinics are:

- Saturday, March 25th, 1:00-2:00 p.m., Hillsborough Courthouse Parking lot, Hillsborough
- Saturday, March 25th, 1:00-2:00 p.m., Piedmont Feed and Garden Center, 4805 Hwy NC 54 West, Chapel Hill
- Saturday, April 1, 9:00-11:00 a.m., Orange County Animal Shelter, Chapel Hill

As has been the case in the past, rabies vaccinations will cost \$5.00 (which must be paid in cash). Pet owners are asked to remember to bring their most recent vaccination record. Dogs must be on a leash and cats must be in a carrier; and pet owners are asked to keep nervous or unsettled animals in their car so that the vet can come to them.

Further information about these clinics is available by calling 245-2075. Also, a complete 2006 low cost rabies vaccination clinic is now available on the Animal Services website at <http://www.co.orange.nc.us/animalservices/clinics.htm> .

4. Training for staff from both our Animal Control and Sheltering Divisions was provided by Cheryl Hoggard, DVM, from the Piedmont Wildlife Center (PWC). Dr. Hoggard reviewed various PWC services and discussed common wildlife concerns in our and other counties in the Piedmont region. She described some basic ways in which to respond to inquiries about young wildlife animals during the spring months as well as indicating how Animal Services staff can refer callers to PWC for further information and assistance. She also described some fundamental considerations in the temporary care of stranded or injured wildlife to ensure their comfort and stability as they were transported to a qualified wildlife rehabilitator. On the basis of her training, more specific website links were made from Animal Services to PWC, and certain documents are being prepared for staff to use in responding to wildlife complaints.
5. Animal Services and Budget staff met to initiate the review of fees charged both through the Animal Shelter and Animal Control Divisions. It is hoped that this fee study can be completed in time to propose fee adjustments as part of the current budget cycle. Animal Services and Budget staff also worked together to review the costs of the contractual services that our department provides to Chapel Hill and Carrboro.

Animal Shelter Highlights

February continues the trend we saw in January that more animals were turned into the shelter than in the previous month last year (284 in February of 2006 and 263 in February of 2005). The placement numbers are higher also (199 in February of 2006 and 163 in 2005) and this increase is sufficient to keep the placement rates higher. The gross placement rate for this month is 70 percent (compared to 62 percent in February 2005); and the adoptable placement rate this month was 81 percent (as compared to 69 percent in February 2005).

Sheltering Activity February 2006

	Dogs	Cats	Others	Total
In Shelter Custody as of February 1 2006	91	77	3	171
				+
Total Admitted Feb 2006	175	100	9	284
Sheltered in Feb 2006	266	177	12	455
				-
Dispositions for Feb 2006 (1)	181	117	6	304
In Foster Homes/Pet Stores	12	6	5	23
Within Shelter	73	48	1	122
Total Within Animal Services custody on March 1 2006	85	60	6	151

Returns: 2 dogs, 0 cat

(1) Includes corrections to previous month

Our sheltering statistics are also tracking the number of animals that are in the custody of our Animal Shelter Division. In the case of the Sheltering Activity Table, it is apparent that the total number of animals in our custody is broken into those animals that are in our custody at the shelter and those animals that are in our custody but either in foster homes or pet stores where they are available for adoption. As is apparent for these figures for the month of February, a significant number of animals – twenty-three (23), more than ten percent – are in our custody but not at the shelter; instead, they are in a foster home or pet stores.

As indicated in a previous monthly report, we will continue to track animals in foster and pet stores in this way in order to develop a richer picture of our shelter activities and services. Ultimately, the intent is to develop more comprehensive statistics of this kind – statistics for the overall number of animals in foster in a given month and ultimately the disposition of the animals that have been in foster homes.

Current trends do continue with the percentages of dispositions. Euthanasia as a percentage of dispositions is still under a third and the largest percentage of dispositions occurs as placements.

Animal Dispositions

	Dogs	Cats	Others	Total	Percent of Total Dispositions
Reclaimed	40	4	0	44	14.47%
Adopted	70	45	4	119	39.14%
Transfers (1)	13	21	2	36	11.84%
Euthanized	55	45	0	100	32.89%
Died	1	0	0	1	0.33%
Other	1	3	0	4	1.32%
Totals	180	118	6	304	100.00%

(1) Transfers are all to APS except: 14 cats, 4 dogs, 2 'other' to rescue
5 dogs, 2 cats surrendered for euthanasia/disposal; 31 cats (69%) feral.

Program Report

1. Volunteering

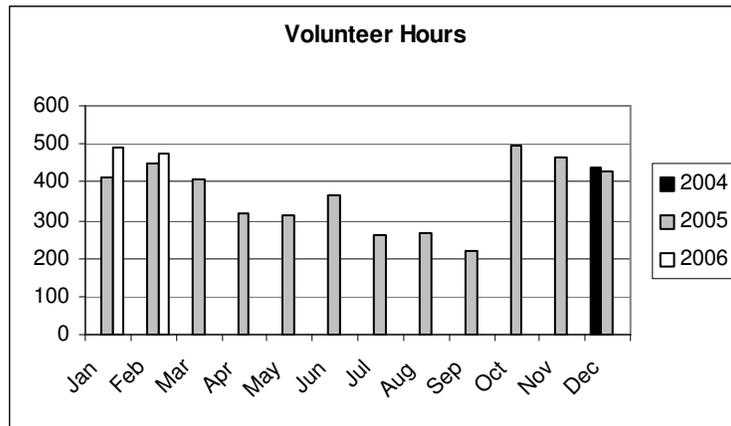
Volunteer Orientations: This orientation is a requirement of the Animal Shelter to protect the health and well-being of both volunteers and animals. A total of 39 people attended the two orientations this month.

Policy Procedures/Animal Handling Training: This is advanced training for volunteers wishing to work with direct handling of the animals, such as dog walking and socialization, cat-room cleaning, and related activities. This month, two were given by our Program Coordinator, an Animal Care Technician, and a senior dog volunteer, on February 11th and 16th. A total of 30 people were in attendance.

Outreach Program: Always presented by volunteers, with occasional assistance from the Program Coordinator, this is a program where we set up a table at a public location, often with select shelter animals, and provide information on adoptions and animal care. This month three programs were held at Pet Supermarket, Triangle SportsPlex, and Phydeaux's pet store.

The volunteer program at the shelter has a new volunteer opportunity called "Puppy Pals" – socialization for puppies. Training is mandatory and is presented by Liz Garman, a shelter volunteer. Three (3) people attended the first training session for this volunteer opportunity on February 11, 2006.

Volunteers: Volunteers this month numbered 65 and volunteer hours totaled 475.75. This is slightly lower than last month's 489 hours, but higher than for the same month last year.



2. Special Events and Community Meetings

Career Day Panel – On Thursday, February 9th, Animal Control Officer Gary Morrison and Program Coordinator Sarah Fallin participated in a panel discussion on careers for the 7th and 8th graders during Career Day at Phillips Middle School in Chapel Hill.

Math and Science School Volunteers – On Sunday, February 19th, five (5) more students from the NC School of Math and Science volunteered at the shelter because the students that came in January had such a positive experience.

WRAL “Pet of the Day” – On Tuesday, February 21st, the Program Coordinator visited WRAL TV with 2 rat terrier mix puppies, for their “Pet of the Day.” Our shelter received an overwhelming number of calls in response to this feature and both of the puppies were adopted.

Science Fair Presentation – On Thursday, February 23rd, Chapel Hill Animal Control Officer Michael Hess and Program Coordinator Sarah Fallin gave a presentation on rabies and proper pet care to the students at Smith Middle School in Chapel Hill during their Science Fair.

Animal Control Highlights

Animal Intake Data shows that Orange County mirrors trends affecting animal sheltering insofar as we impound a large number of unclaimed stray animals and a large number of animals related to or surrendered by their owners. The presence of such animals in our community accounts in no small part for our need to have professional animal control services as well as an animal shelter to provide for the welfare of animal companions as well as to minimize the adverse affects of stray and unwanted animals on members of the public.

Animal intake of stray and surrendered animals also underscores the importance of promoting responsible pet ownership in our communities. While responsible pet ownership begins with matters such as rabies vaccination and licensing, among other legal requirements, it is much broader, including socialization and training, no unwanted offspring, and the formation of a lifelong bond. Promoting such ownership is basic to the various programs our Animal Services Department has and will continue to provide, including public education on health and safety, spay/neuter outreach, and low-cost rabies vaccination clinics.

Animal Intake Data

	<u>Animal Control</u>		<u>From Public</u>		<u>Total</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
	Strays (1)	Surrender	Strays	Surrender	Incoming	
Chapel Hill	20	3	16	14	53	18.66%
Carrboro	8	1	5	4	18	6.34%
Hillsborough	9	6	4	3	22	7.75%
Orange County	90	40	6	21	157	55.28%
Night Deposit	0	0	20	5	25	8.80%
Other County	0	0	0	9	9	3.17%
Total	127	50	51	56	284	100.00%
Strays	178	62.68%	Animal Control		177	62.32%
Surrenders	106	37.32%	Public		107	37.68%

(1) “Strays” under Animal Intake Data also includes impounded animals not surrendered to Animal Services

With respect to rabies control—historically one of the core functions of our own and other animal control programs throughout the United States—we have continued to see positive rabies tests based upon public reporting and our surveillance of possible exposures of people and/or their pets. As noted at the outset in discussing Department Highlights, in February there were two positive rabies cases—bringing to three (3) the total for 2006 (two raccoons and a skunk). As always, any incidence of rabies underscores the need for effective rabies control as it is provided through our Animal Control Division and preventive measures beginning with the vaccination of our dogs and cats.

As can be seen from the following table (Rabies Exposure Investigations), the two positive tests results came from twelve (12) rabies cases our Animal Control Officers investigated in the course of the month. Usually, these are cases involving known or suspected contact between a domestic small animal and a

wild animal such as a raccoon, as well as whether there is an indirect contact between a human and pet member of a household in these situations.

Rabies Exposure Investigations

	Dogs	Cats	Other	Total
Bite Quarantines	10	3	0	13
Exposures Investigated	5	3	4	12
Tested Positive	0	0	2	2

In addition to these “exposure investigations,” our Animal Control Officers are responsible for bite reports involving dogs and cats (as well as others animals) and a human victim. In these cases, it is a legal requirement and public health precaution that a dog or cat biting a human being be contained and observed for a period of ten (10) days—thereby ensuring that the bite victim was not exposed to the rabies virus. As can be seen from the Rabies Exposure Investigation Table, in February there were thirteen (13) such bite quarantines.

Efforts to ensure current vaccination, for the welfare of pets and the people with whom they come into contact, are ongoing and activities in this area are captured by vaccination statistics compiled by our Animal Control Division. As is ordinarily the case, the majority of these vaccinations continue to be performed at veterinary establishments that service pet owners who reside in Orange County. Significantly, more than one hundred animals were vaccinated at low-cost clinics sponsored by the Animal Services Department; and nearly two hundred were vaccinated at our Animal Shelter prior to their adoption or recovery.

Rabies Vaccinations within Orange County

	Dogs	Cats	Total
Vaccinated at Shelter	81	94	175
Vaccinated at Vet Clinics	451	410	861
Vaccinated at Rabies Clinics	74	55	129
Total Vaccinations	606	559	1165

Appendix

Placement Rate: This is a gross statistic which relates the number of animals placed (adopted, reclaimed and transferred) to the number of animals admitted in a given time period. This is expressed as a percentage attained by dividing the number of animals placed by the number of animals admitted.

Adoptable Placement Rate: To gain a clearer representation of the placement program, the animals brought to the shelter that are not part of the placement program are excluded, namely feral cats and owner requests for euthanasia. Since the number of feral cats in particular can vary a great deal from month to month, they can obscure the true effects of the program. The adoptable placement rate is obtained by subtracting the number of feral cats and owner requests for euthanasia from the total intake number before the number of placed animals is divided by it. This yields a more refined statistic since the absent animals are generally not regarded as animals that can be placed in new homes.

Percent of Total Dispositions, which are given in the statistical report, are different from the placement rates in that they do not relate to the number of animals brought into the shelter. They are, as the title implies, the total number of dispositions broken down by category. Their function is to demonstrate the accuracy of the statistics.