



## Orange County Animal Services

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### *Monthly Report* *Orange County Animal Services* *July 2006*

#### **Departmental Highlights**

1. The County has received several proposals in response to the RFP for the design and engineering of the new Animal Services Facility, and these are presently under review. It is expected that a recommendation will be made to the Board of Commissioners sometime in September. The County Clerk's Office continues to accept applications for members of the Design Committee to assist with the design of the new facility. Appointments to this committee are approved by the Board of County Commissioners, who will also provide the committee with guidance on the new facility and its expected place within the county.

The University of North Carolina and the County will be preparing a new lease for the land that the existing shelter is occupying, ensuring that operation of the current shelter can continue through the end of 2009. This is expected to allow a smooth transition between the current shelter and the new facility. While there will be some environmental remediation in the vicinity of the existing shelter that will require temporary changes to both access and parking for several months in the winter of 2007/2008, the University and the county are committed to maintaining continuity of operations until the changeover to the new facility is complete.

2. At the end of July, there had been fourteen (14) positive rabies tests—one (1) skunk, one (1) fox, two (2) bats and ten (10) raccoons. Eleven (11) of these involved definite exposures; however in three (3) cases tests were conducted to be "safe rather than sorry"—insofar as initially it was not possible to rule out an exposure—but it was ultimately determined that there were no exposures in these three cases. In 2005, there were twenty-three (23) positive rabies tests in the County. All but five of those involved raccoons; the remainder included positive tests for two foxes, a bat, a beaver and a dog.

Three low-cost rabies vaccination clinics were held in July, bringing to fifteen the total for the year. At the clinic held at Paws n' Claws Pet Boutique in Rougemont on Wednesday, July 19<sup>th</sup>, a total of fifty (50) animals – forty-one (41) dogs and nine (9) cats – were vaccinated. At the clinic held in the parking lot of the Hillsborough Courthouse, on Thursday July 20<sup>th</sup>, a total of one-hundred eight (108) animals – seventy (70) dogs and thirty-eight (38) cats – were vaccinated. And at the Carrboro Century Center in Carrboro on Saturday, July 22<sup>nd</sup>, a total of one-hundred

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thirteen (113) animals – sixty-three (63) dogs and fifty (50) cats – were vaccinated. This brings the year-to-date total for vaccinations performed by low-cost clinics to 1,246 – seventy percent (871 in number) of these were dogs, while thirty percent (375 in number) of these were cats.

We will be offering three rabies clinics in the month of September: on Wednesday, September 6<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Efland-Cheeks Elementary School; on Thursday, September 7<sup>th</sup>, from 6:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Hillsborough Courthouse parking lot; and on Saturday, September 9<sup>th</sup>, from 9:00 to 11:00 a.m. at the Orange County Animal Shelter. At these clinics 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.

To ensure the continuing availability of low-cost rabies vaccinations for County residents, a work team of staff planned additional clinics throughout the year. A complete list of clinics is available on the Animal Services website at <http://www.co.orange.nc.us/animalservices/clinics.htm>.

3. We are filling four full-time-permanent positions within Animal Services. The Animal Shelter Division is filling positions for two Animal Care Technicians and an Office Assistant, and the Animal Control Division is filling a position for an Office Assistant.

Recently, we have welcomed aboard three new permanent employees at Animal Shelter. Doris (Darcy) Fortenberry began employment as a Health Care Technician on June 19<sup>th</sup>, 2006; Thom Freeman began service as an Office Assistant on July 5<sup>th</sup>, 2006; and Kim Holcomb, previously employed in a temporary position, transitioned into a full-time Animal Care Technician on July 24<sup>th</sup>, 2006. Also, the Animal Control Division has hired a new Animal Control Officer as well. Ashley Powers will be starting services for the county on August 28<sup>th</sup>, 2006.

We continue to recruit for Emergency Animal Rescue Service (EARS) workers on an ongoing basis. EARS provides emergency service within the town limits of Chapel Hill and Carrboro outside of regular business hours. This program is now being supervised by the Animal Control division and coordinated with the Animal Shelter Division as it involves Animal Care Technicians as well as dedicated EARS workers.

4. We have entered into a new contract for Spay/Neuter services with James Miller, DVM, from the newly opened North Churton Animal Hospital. Dr. Miller will be performing sterilization surgeries for shelter animals on Tuesdays and Fridays. We also renewed the contract we had with Marat Dubrovsky, DVM, of Nick's Road Veterinary Clinic, who is now performing surgeries on Wednesdays and Thursdays.

Also, we are also now performing sterilization of select, highly-adoptable animals prior to receiving an adoption deposit. Our rationale is to improve customer service and free valuable space, which is a crucial factor during our summer busy seasons. The normal 2-5 day turnaround between receiving a deposit and the animal going home can now be shortened to less than a day, and this is hoped to permit a greater number of animals to be placed in homes, and to reduce the euthanasia of adoptable animals as a result of space constraints.

5. We have entered into an interim agreement with the Town of Carrboro, at their request, to provide select animal control services, for a period extending from June 19<sup>th</sup> through October 1<sup>st</sup>,

2006. The Town will be considering different options for animal control services in the future, and among them is the possibility of contracting with Orange County Animal Services to provide these services; however, this is one option among several and has not yet been decided upon. Previously, Animal Control services for the Town of Carrboro was provided by an officer under the supervision of their own police department – it was due to the transfer of the person holding this position into another branch of the police department that prompted the examination of the manner in which these services were to be provided. During this interim period, we are still providing Emergency Animal Rescue Service (EARS) coverage to the Town of Carrboro in accordance with a contract for the fiscal year 2006/2007.

**Animal Shelter Highlights**

The comparisons between July 2005 and July 2006 reveal a break in the pattern we have seen in previous reports. The number of animals taken into the shelter has gone up dramatically by almost 100 in July 2006 (481) from July 2005 (383). This is a striking change from the previous months in which the intake numbers have, fairly consistently, been down, and whether this is an anomaly remains to be seen.

The number of animals placed—224 animals this year and 216 last year--is actually slightly higher in 2006 than in 2005. Because of the unusual increase in the number of intakes, however, the placement figures for this July is lower than last July. The gross placement rate for July 2006 is 47 percent whereas it was 56 percent in July 2005. The adoptable placement in July 2006 is 54 percent whereas in July of 2005 it was 65 percent.

**Sheltering Activity July 2006**

	<b>Dogs</b>	<b>Cats</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>
In Shelter Custody as of July 1 2006 (1)	88	180	3	<b>271</b>
				<b>+</b>
<b>Total Admitted July 2006</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>481</b>
<b>Sheltered in July 2006</b>	<b>292</b>	<b>448</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>752</b>
				<b>-</b>
<b>Dispositions for July 2006</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>524</b>
In Foster Homes	7	26	0	<b>33</b>
In Pet Stores	0	2	1	<b>3</b>
Within Shelter	84	106	2	<b>192</b>
Total Within Animal Services custody on August 1 2006	<b>91</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>228</b>

Returns: 7 dogs, 0 cat

(1) Includes corrections to previous months

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 current month, a number of animals are in our custody but not at the shelter; instead, they are in foster homes or pet stores.

As of the end of the month, a total of 33 animals were in foster care or pet stores. It should be said that this figure represents only a snapshot—a picture at a single point of time— of fostering activity done through the County’s Animal Shelter. The actual number of animals fostered in the month of July was 59. This is greater than the number in foster on the final day of the month (the number in the table above ) because some animals that were in foster have been adopted or returned to the shelter for adoption prior to the end of the month. During the month of July, animals were fostered by 13 foster families. Many but not all of the fostered animals were kittens that were fostered in litters—10 litters accounted for 37 foster animals.

As indicated in previous monthly reports, we are tracking animals in foster and pet stores in this way in order to develop a richer picture of our shelter activities and services. Such tracking directly relates to the ongoing review of our foster program under the auspices of the Animal Services Advisory Board. The goal of this review is not only to develop appropriate documentation and guidelines but to define the role of fostering with regard to overall sheltering practices.

**Animal Dispositions**

	<b>Dogs</b>	<b>Cats</b>	<b>Others</b>	<b>Total</b>	<b>Percent of Total Dispositions</b>
Reclaimed	49	7	1	57	<b>10.88%</b>
Adopted	48	62	7	117	<b>22.33%</b>
Transfers (1)	8	42	0	50	<b>9.54%</b>
Euthanized (2)	90	192	0	282	<b>53.82%</b>
Died	4	6	0	10	<b>1.91%</b>
Other	2	5	1	8	<b>1.53%</b>
<b>Totals</b>	<b>201</b>	<b>314</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>524</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

(1) Transfers are all to APS except: 1 dog, 37 cats to rescue/pet store  
 (2) 4 dogs, 4 cats, 1 'Other' surrendered for euth/disp; 54 cats (28%) feral.

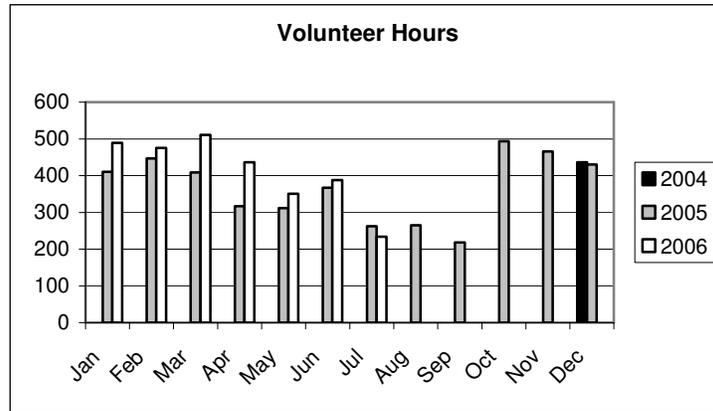
**Animal Shelter--and Services--Program Report**

*Our Program Coordinator, Sarah Fallin, worked only a very small portion of the month of July due to her ongoing medical leave. As a result, volunteer orientations and training sessions were not held, and special events were limited in comparison with a more regular summer month. We are glad to welcome Sarah back to the shelter and her duties with our volunteers in activities such as outreach.*

**1. Volunteering**

*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 four programs were held at Phydeaux’s, Triangle SportsPlex, Carrboro Town Commons, and the PTA Thrift Shop in Chapel Hill.

*Volunteers:* Volunteers this month numbered 36 and volunteer hours totaled 233.5. This is the first time this year that total hours were less than in the same month of 2005, and as the following table shows, July and August and September have been the months with the lowest levels of volunteer activities. The overall positive trend of growth in volunteer hours for 2006 is expected to continue with Sarah’s return .



**2. Special Events and Community Meetings**

*Last Friday an Art walk in Hillsborough* – On Friday, July 28<sup>th</sup>, the Burwell School sponsored “Dog Day Afternoon” featuring a live band and a dog contest, with free water and dog biscuits for contestants. Orange County Animal Services was among the several animal groups that were invited, and met the public from an informational booth.

*AniMall Impact* – On Saturday July 29<sup>th</sup>, we could be found at a foster family drive in the Outlet Mall in Morrisville. Animal organizations set up booths with information about their foster program, in hopes to recruit new foster families. One of our own foster families represented Orange County Animal Services .

**Animal Control Highlights**

Animal Intake Data shows that we are continuing to impound a large number of unclaimed stray animals and a large number of animals released (or surrendered) by their owner. 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. These respective divisions of the Animal Services Department minimize the adverse affects of stray and unwanted animals on our communities, and provide for the welfare of what are sometimes referred to as “surplus” animal companions and place them in new homes to the greatest extent possible.

Of course, animal intakes numbering hundreds each month underscores the importance of promoting pet owner responsibility in our communities and County. While responsible pet ownership begins with matters such as rabies vaccination and licensing, among other legal requirements, in fact, it is much broader. It includes proper husbandry and care; socialization and training; no unwanted offspring; and ultimately, the formation of a lifelong human-animal bond. Thus our staff will necessarily continue to provide public education on responsible pet ownership, perform spay/neuter outreach; and offer 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	22	2	45	32	<b>101</b>	<b>21.00%</b>
Carrboro	9	3	9	14	<b>35</b>	<b>7.28%</b>
Hillsborough	13	5	15	9	<b>42</b>	<b>8.73%</b>
Orange County	149	33	25	21	<b>228</b>	<b>47.40%</b>
Night Deposit	0	0	45	10	<b>55</b>	<b>11.43%</b>
Other County	0	0	4	16	<b>20</b>	<b>4.16%</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>193</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>143</b>	<b>102</b>	<b>481</b>	<b>100.00%</b>
<b>Strays</b>	<b>336</b>	<b>69.85%</b>			<b>Animal Control 236</b>	<b>49.06%</b>
<b>Surrenders</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>30.15%</b>			<b>Public 245</b>	<b>50.94%</b>

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

With respect to rabies control—historically a core function of animal control—we have continued to see positive rabies tests based upon public reporting and our surveillance of possible exposures of people and/or their pets. In July, there were two (2) positive rabies tests for a fox and a bat, bringing the total for 2006 to fourteen (14).

Our own public education activities continue to stress that pet owners not only need to be sure that their pets are vaccinated and licensed but that a dog or cat with a current rabies vaccination must receive a booster shot within seventy-two (72) hours of any exposure to rabies. Unless an exposed pet with a current vaccination receives a booster shot within that time frame, the requirements of North Carolina law is the same as for an unvaccinated animal—namely, euthanasia or a six (6) month quarantine.

In this regard, staff stresses the immediate reporting of any possible contact to animal control and/or public health authorities to ensure the health of all members of a household—human and pet alike. In the event that their pet has possible contact with a raccoon or other wildlife animal, an owner should be sure to contact their Animal Control program right away. Also, if a possible exposure occurs outside regular hours of service, an Animal Control Officer should be reached right away through Orange County’s Emergency Communications (911).

As can be seen from the following table, the two (2) positive tests in the month of July resulted from our Animal Control Officers investigation of twenty-three (23) possible rabies exposures. Usually, these are cases involving known or suspected contact between a domestic small animal such as a dog or a cat 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.

**Bite Quarantines and Rabies Exposure Investigations**

	<u>Dogs</u>	<u>Cats</u>	<u>Other</u>	<u>Total</u>
<b>Bite Quarantines</b>	9	7	1	<b>17</b>
<b>Exposures Investigated</b>				<b>23</b>
<b>Tested Positive</b>	0	0	2	<b>2</b>
<b>Inconclusive</b>	0	0	3	<b>3</b>

In addition to these kinds of “rabies exposure investigations,” our Animal Control Officers are also responsible for bite reports involving dogs and cats (as well as other 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 above Table, in July there were seventeen (17) 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 – 1,358 out of a total of 1,713 vaccinations – continue to be performed at veterinary establishments that service pet owners who reside in Orange County. And another eighty-four (84) animals were vaccinated at our Animal Shelter prior to their adoption or recovery.

More than two hundred and fifty dogs and cats were vaccinated as a direct result of other Animal Services Department activities. More specifically, two hundred and seventy-one (271) vaccinations were given at three low cost vaccination clinics held throughout the County in the month of July.

As a result of July’s activities, so far in 2006 one thousand two hundred and forty-six (1,246) dogs and cats have been vaccinated at low cost vaccination clinics. Seventy percent (n=871) of the vaccinated animals were dogs and thirty percent (n=375) were cats. These are the year-to-date cumulative totals of the fifteen low cost clinics and one rabies vaccination special conducted through the end of July.

#### **Rabies Vaccinations within Orange County**

	<b>Dogs</b>	<b>Cats</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Vaccinated at Shelter</b>	50	34	<b>84</b>
<b>Vaccinated at Vet Clinics</b>	598	760	<b>1358</b>
<b>Vaccinated at Rabies Clinics</b>	174	97	<b>271</b>
<b>Total Vaccinations</b>	<b>822</b>	<b>891</b>	<b>1713</b>

#### **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.

**Exposures Investigated:** This figure refers to the separate and distinct cases investigated by animal control, and does not indicate number of exposed species within each case – a single household may contain multiple exposures among pets and humans, but for our purposes, this counts as one exposure investigation.

**Inconclusive (rabies):** These numbers specifically refer to animals tested by the state lab that could not produce a definitive result, and does not include animals that could not be obtained, or were in inadequate condition, to be tested.