

Kennel Quarterly



Rochester Police Department
Animal Services Unit

Adoption Numbers

Adoptions were relatively stable during the first quarter of fiscal year 2003-2004. Of the 780 dogs impounded between July 1 and September 30, 151 were adopted out into new homes. That's 19.4% of the dogs impounded. Last year during the same time period, 167 (18.5%) dogs of 903 total dogs seized were adopted out. With 123 fewer dogs impounded (13.6% less) Animal Services had hoped to make more of an impact in placing dogs in new homes. Had the Unit matched last years adoption numbers of 167, that would have represented over 21% of the total number of dogs impounded. Clearly more attention must be given to maintaining, if not increasing, the dog adoption rate in coming months.

The story with cats is somewhat the opposite. During this first quarter, Animal Services impounded a total of 1,043 cats compared to 921 during the same time period last year. That represents a 13.2% increase in cats impounded. Cat adoption numbers also increased from 108 last year to 121 during this year's first quarter. However the percentage of cats impounded that were adopted remained constant with 11.6% this year compared to 11.7% last year. With increasing stray cat numbers and increasing impound rates, Animal Services must continue to increase their cat adoption efforts.

Another component of helping to address the abundance of stray and surrendered ani-

mals involves public outreach and education. The Animal Services Unit continues to pursue avenues for promoting responsible pet ownership including spaying and neutering. "We cannot rely on our adoption program alone to reduce the number of homeless animals in our community," said Chris Fitzgerald, Director of Animal Services. "We also cannot expect to euthanize our way out of overpopulation," Fitzgerald added. Simultaneous with promoting adoptions, Animal Services must educate people about the need for spaying and neutering and also be prepared to assist pet owners struggling with relinquishment of their companions. The Unit needs to reach the community at large, not just the visitors to the shelter.



Animal Services shelter in autumn

Inside this issue:

Shelter Statistics	2
ASU Receives \$4,000 Grant	2
Director's Chair	3
Kennel Noise	3
DNA Used to I.D. Stolen Dog	4
New Police Officers Learn Animal Control	4
Who's Who At RAS?	5
Dangerous Reptile Training	5
Volunteer Corner	6

More Training for Animal Services Personnel

This quarter Animal Services personnel continued participation in a variety of training programs.

On July 30, supervisors Tom Shannon, Dan Murphy, and Tim Wensel, Animal Control Officers Fred Parkinson and Bruce Kendrick, Animal Care Technician (ACT) Orlando Santos, and Director Chris Fitzgerald attended Dangerous Reptiles: Identification, Containment, and Transport at the Public Safety Training Facility (PSTF) on Scottsville Road (see Dangerous Reptile Training p.5).

Also on July 30, Shelter Manager Jonelle Lang and ACT Pam Kent headed to Buffalo to at-

tend the Pets For Life training program sponsored by the Humane Society of the United States. The two-day program covered body posture evaluation, temperament testing, in-shelter training (Head Start), post-adoption counseling, and other behavior related topics. Both attendees returned with a lot of great ideas for developing new programs at Animal Services.

Animal Care Technicians Elaine Lalka and Orlando Santos attended American Humane's Shelter Operations School in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania September 18-19. The program covered animal han-

dling and bite prevention, animal capture and control equipment, feeding and nutrition, effective cleaning, disinfecting, and disease control, stress management, and customer service.

September 15-26, Chris Fitzgerald and ACO Denise Lybrand attended Instructor Development School at the PSTF. The two-week course prepared and certified the attendees as General Topics Instructors at Police Academies throughout New York State. This is a first step toward the goal of developing an Animal Control training program through our local academy.

Rochester Animal Services 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>
<u>July</u>			
Impounded	278	371	34
Adopted	56	38	5
Redeemed	82	2	0
Transferred	10	30	13
Euthanized	132	265	18
<u>August</u>			
Impounded	278	348	35
Adopted	56	33	1
Redeemed	73	1	0
Transferred	15	10	18
Euthanized	130	304	9
<u>September</u>			
Impounded	224	324	28
Adopted	39	50	3
Redeemed	60	5	0
Transferred	14	16	14
Euthanized	100	234	11

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 Receives \$4,000 Grant For Spay/Neuter Project



In late July, the Animal Services Unit was awarded a \$4,000 grant from the Meacham Foundation Memorial and American Humane. This is the second grant Animal Services has received for the purpose of establishing a surgical suite within the existing shelter. This most recent award helped the Unit to reach their target and enabled design and construction plans to move forward.

The Meacham Foundation Memorial Grant was established in 1969, in memory of Teresa Meacham, to provide financial assistance to agen-

cies for shelter expansion or improvements. American Humane administers the grant and monies may be awarded up to \$4,000.

The grant will be used along with money from a previous budget and over \$9,000 in unsolicited donations toward the purchase of cages, surgical equipment, and construction expenses.

Preliminary meetings are underway with the City’s Architectural Services to finalize designs and contractors will be identified during the second quarter of this fiscal year. Construction is scheduled to begin

in January 2004.

The on-site surgical suite will enable Animal Services to spay and neuter all dogs and cats adopted from the shelter without having to transport animals to and from outside facilities. The renovations will also create additional areas for holding and treating ailing animals. Hopefully, this will reduce the number of cats that are released with Upper Respiratory Infections and thereby increase the number of cats that are sterilized prior to leaving the shelter.

From the Director's Chair

This first quarter was busy as usual during the summer months, however our adoption numbers were somewhat disappointing. Dog adoptions were down as compared to last year during the same time period and cat adoptions exhibited only a minor increase. With fewer dogs impounded, perhaps we should expect fewer dog adoptions, but I don't. As for cats, the number of cats impounded continues to rise which intensifies the need to increase adoptions and education efforts. We have made large strides in terms of promoting public awareness about our programs and services, but clearly much more must be done.

Along those lines, with the help of the Communications Department, we distributed the first public service announcements for Animal Services to media organizations throughout the area. The six 10-second PSAs cover pet adoptions, rabies vaccinations, dog licensing, dog socialization, exercise for dogs, and pet lost and found services. The idea was to promote responsibility among pet owners in our community and to attempt to reach a broad cross section. Keep your eyes and

ears open for these announcements on local television and radio stations.

The summer festivals provided another outlet for promoting awareness. Once again we attended the Corn Hill Arts Festival, the Park Avenue Festival, and the Puerto Rican Festival. At each event we set up information tables, handed out brochures, magnets, and stickers, and answered questions about our various programs and services. Our volunteers were critical to keeping the tables staffed during these events and they should be commended for their dedication.

We also continued to pursue professional development opportunities for Animal Services personnel. Shelter personnel attended training courses dealing with animal behavior and shelter operations. The majority of the Animal Control personnel attended a full-day program on dangerous reptiles (p. 5). Finally, ACO Denise Lybrand and I were given the opportunity to attend Police Instructor Development at the academy. I'm going to avoid tooting my proverbial horn, but I will say that Denise did an outstanding job. She demonstrated her knowledge of the field and presented

herself and our unit in a professional manner. Congratulations Denise!

We received another grant for the development of an on-site spay/neuter suite at the shelter (p. 2). The \$4,000 award came from the Meacham Foundation Memorial Grant and marks the second grant awarded to our unit toward completion of our project. We are very close to "breaking ground" now.

The most interesting event of the quarter involves a little black pug puppy named Star (p. 4). Star was stolen from her home back in May and was returned to her family in late August with the help of DNA evidence!

In this next quarter we have a variety of public outreach events planned including school presentations and our annual open house on November 2 to commence National Animal Shelter Appreciation Week. This year's open house should be bigger and better attended than the past two. Hopefully we can reach more people, find more homes for our charges, and stimulate responsibility among pet owners.



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

Kennel Noise



The recurring theme in Animal Services has been personnel shortages. Two ACTs left the Unit during the past year, another has been out with an injury, Supervisor Wensel has been battling cancer, and Assistant Manager Yolanda Sayres has been out on maternity leave. Things have been difficult, but the staff has risen to the extra challenge and help is

on the way.

Deonna Campbell was hired as an ACT in mid-October (see New Faces in the next issue) leaving only one vacancy. Another ACT applicant has been selected to fill the remaining spot and should be hired this winter.

Tim has completed radiation treatment and returned to work in October. Welcome back Tim!

We missed you and are glad to see you on the road to recovery.

Finally, in early October, Yolanda gave birth to a baby girl named Kennedy Carrington Torriana Sayres. Both mom and baby are doing well. Congratulations Yolanda!

DNA Helps I.D. Stolen Dog

One more of the 10 dogs stolen from a home in Seneca County on May 23 was returned with the help of State and Rochester Police Investigators, Animal Services, and DNA results. That's right, DNA, deoxyribonucleic acid, was used to aid in a stolen dog investigation!

After the 10 dogs were stolen from Darlene and Jason Hoover in Junius, New York, two adult bulldogs were recovered by RPD Central Investigations Division and the Animal Services Unit. Upon reclaiming their bulldogs from the animal shelter June 20, the Hoovers left pictures and descriptions of the other missing dogs. Those dogs still missing included four bulldog puppies and four pug puppies born March 23, 2003.

On July 1, Animal Control Officers removed a 3-4 month old black pug puppy from a location where Special Investigations

Section officers were conducting a drug raid. On July 2, Assistant Manager Yolanda Sayres noted that the pug puppy seized from the previous night's drug raid matched the general description of two of the missing puppies. Sayres notified Chris Fitzgerald, Director of Animal Services, who proceeded to contact Captain Lynde Johnston at CID. Captain Johnston got in touch with NYS Police Investigator Joel Pinker and Darlene Hoover.

The age and color of the puppy fit the stolen puppy profile, but to be more certain, State Police Investigators decided to compare the puppy's DNA with those of the parent dogs. The Hoovers agreed to the procedure which involved not only taking blood samples from the mother pug and the puppy at the shelter, but also the exhumation and sampling

of the sire who unfortunately had died during the spring.

The DNA results illustrated a strong relationship among the three dogs further adding to the evidence suggesting that the puppy the Hoovers named "Star" was, in fact, the dog recovered from the raid. After several weeks of waiting while "Star" remained at the shelter (with a lot of visitors and special attention), the Hoovers were finally reunited with their missing puppy on August 28.

This was a significant investigation in that it demonstrates how multi-agency, multi-jurisdictional incidents can be successful through cooperation. The case also marks the first time, in Rochester and perhaps in NYS, that DNA has been used in a stolen dog investigation. Everyone involved did an outstanding job and should be commended for their efforts.



Captain Johnston holding "Star" just before she was returned to her home in Junius, NY

New Police Officers Learn About Animal Control

On September 18, 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.

Although the officers were anxious to get out of the classroom and on the road, they were attentive and receptive to the material. This is the second time that Animal Services has

provided instruction during Post Academy training. The Unit hopes to make this a regular component in preparing new police officers.

ANIMAL CARE & CONTROL IN ROCHESTER, NY



ROCHESTER ANIMAL SERVICES
ROCHESTER POLICE DEPT.



Who's Who At Animal Services?

Tom Shannon was born in Rochester. He attended Hilton Central High School. Tom was hired as an Animal Control Officer in 1990 when the Humane Society operated Animal Services under a contractual agreement with the City of Rochester. Tom worked as an ACO for 2-3 years before being promoted to Animal Control Supervisor. When the Rochester Police Department assumed control of Animal Services in July 2000, Tom was hired by the City as Supervisor of Animal Control. He works second platoon (0630-1430 HRS).

Tom is the father of four children, Zach age 16, Jeremia ,13, Sarah, 11, and Waverly, 6. He enjoys refinishing furniture and working on home improvements.

Jeff Leusch was born in Rochester and attended Spencerport High School. After graduating, Jeff enlisted in the Army where he served as a Military Police Prison Guard at Fort Knox. While in the Army, he took courses in Criminal Justice at Eastern Kentucky University. Before joining Animal Services in, Jeff worked as a Telecommunicator for the Office of Emergency Communications (now ECD). Jeff was hired as an Animal Control Officer in June 2000 when the Police Department assumed operational control of the Unit. Jeff works first platoon (2230-0630 HRS).

Jeff also attended MCC's Public Health & Safety program where he was certified as an Emergency Medical Technician. He has worked as an EMT for Rural Metro since August 1996,

part-time since 1999. Jeff is the father of a 13 year old named Jessica.

Sue Filetti was born in Rochester and attended Churchville High School. Before joining Animal Services, Sue ran the billing office at Clifton Springs Hospital. Sue was hired by the Rochester Police Department in August 2000 shortly after the transition occurred. Sue is the only fulltime employee assigned to administrative, clerical, and reception duties at the shelter. She also serves as the Unit's primary adoption counselor.

Sue is the mother of three sons, Ben, 20, Jim, 19, and Nick, 16. She enjoys shopping and woodworking.



Supervisor Shannon (top), ACO Leusch (middle), and Administrative Assistant Filetti (bottom)

Animal Services Gets Hands On Dangerous Reptiles



Timber Rattlesnake on snake hook



Supervisor Tom Shannon restrains American Alligator as Tom Hudak looks on

On July 30, supervisors Tom Shannon, Dan Murphy, and Tim Wensel, Animal Control Officers Fred Parkinson and Bruce Kendrick, Animal Care Technician (ACT) Orlando Santos, and Director Chris Fitzgerald attended Dangerous Reptiles: Identification, Containment, and Transport at the Public Safety Training Facility (PSTF) on Scottsville Road. The program was developed and presented by Tom Hudak, owner and founder of Scales & Tails, a local Wildlife Education organization.

After the incident last fall involving six rattlesnakes and an alligator kept unlawfully at a home in the City of Rochester, Fitzgerald and Hudak agreed that some sort of hands-on training would be helpful. "I wanted to be proactive and not wait for an ACO to get injured before doing something," said

Fitzgerald.

Then in April 2003, there was the incident in Texas where a game warden dragged an alligator behind his truck to the end of the residential street and then shot the animal to the disbelief and horror of on-looking residents. This is the type of negative publicity and unorthodox protocol that Fitzgerald and Hudak hoped to avoid through proper training.

However, Hudak did not want to stand in front of officers describing dangerous animals and instructing on appropriate handling procedures. No, he wanted to bring in the live animals so officers could observe the different species and their varying behaviors, to demonstrate how to restrain the reptiles, and then to give every trainee the opportunity to handle the various snakes, lizards, and

crocodilians. And that's exactly what he did. Some of the species handled included Timber Rattlesnake, Eastern Diamond-back Rattlesnake, Gaboon Viper, Puff Adder, King Cobra, Savannah Monitor, Green Iguana, Gila Monster, American Alligator, and Burmese Python.

The first session was also attended by NYS Department of Environmental Conservation Officers, a Webster Animal Control Officer, and two wildlife rehabilitators from Erie County SPCA. A second session was held September 25 at Gander Mountain in Henrietta. Animal Services sent three more ACOS through the program (Reggie Reed, Hipolito Huertas, and Edwin Santiago). Other attendees included six DEC officers, two Pittsford Animal Control officers, and a US Fish & Wildlife Service Inspector.



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 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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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. As mentioned in the last issue, 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 17 at Dandrea's Restaurant and Party House on Lyell Avenue. It was a nice event and Mayor Johnson and Chief Duffy each acknowledged, thanked, and praised the Department's volunteers for their commitment and dedication to helping our community.

We have already begun recruiting volunteers for the Santa Claws promotion at both PETS MART locations this De-

cember. Last year our volunteer participation earned the shelter over \$900 toward the spay/neuter program. This year we are committed for even more dates and so we are counting on our volunteers to help make this promotion work for our PETS MART partners and for our Unit. 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 or Jessica Robinson at the shelter (428-7274).



Volunteers help take photos with Santa Claws at both PETS MART locations (file photo)