

# Kennel Quarterly



Rochester Police Department  
Animal Services Unit

## Adoptions Down, But So Are Impounds

During the first quarter, Animal Services impounded 751 dogs. Of those, 193 (25.7%) were reclaimed by owners, 158 (21.0%) were adopted, 36 (4.8%) were transferred to other shelters, and 354 (47.1%) were euthanized.

Of the 558 dogs not reclaimed by owners, 326 (58.4%) were deemed not adoptable due to temperament, policy, or medical issues, or were euthanized at the owner's request due to age or medical problems. That means that only 232 were actually available for adoption. Of those, 158 were adopted. That represents a 68% adoption rate for those dogs deemed adoptable.

Counting the 36 transfers, that mark jumps to 83.6%. These figures are more realistic representations of our adoption efforts than the rate reported based solely on impound numbers.

Last year during the first quarter, Animal Services impounded 874 dogs of which 244 (27.9%) were reclaimed,

203 (23.2%) were adopted, 20 (2.2%) were transferred, and 389 (44.5%) were euthanized. The breakdown of adoptable versus non-adoptable dogs for the previous year could not be ascertained via the shelter records management software.

Animal Services also impounded 984 cats during the first quarter of FY05-06. Of those, only 5 (0.5%) were reclaimed by owners, 112 (11.4%) were adopted, 109 (11.1%) were transferred to other animal welfare organizations, and 756 (76.8%) were euthanized.

The adoption program for cats is considerably more challenging. As noted above, the number of cats actually reclaimed by owners is shockingly low. Only 5 cats were reclaimed by owners during the first quarter. A manual search of the records for July 2005 produced the following results: 304 impounded, 112 not adoptable, and 8 owner requested euthanasias. Although only 7 cats were euthanized for space rea-

sons, 128 adoptable cats were euthanized in July. Most of those were related to upper respiratory infections appearing while at the shelter. Therefore, of the remaining 184 cats, 29 were adopted. That represents a 15.8% adoption rate for those cats deemed adoptable.

Last year during the first quarter, the Unit impounded 1,173 cats, of which 14 (1.2%) were reclaimed, 100 (8.5%) were adopted, 45 (3.8%) were transferred, and 984 (83.9%) were euthanized.

From this point on, the Unit will regularly report the adoptable versus non-adoptable figures in addition to the total numbers of impounds and dispositions. This is not being done to manipulate numbers or produce deceptively favorable figures. Animal Services wants to continue to provide full disclosure of their statistics, however these additional measures more accurately represent the successes despite enormous challenges.



Animal Services shelter in summer

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## "LISN" ...It's important.

People are listening too. The Low-Income Spay-Neuter or LISN program has really taken off. Animal Services initiated the program in July 2004 in an effort to help reduce the ever-increasing population of stray and unwanted cats flooding local shelters and rescue groups. During the first quarter of fiscal year 2004-2005, 26 cats were sterilized. This year, during the same months, Ani-

mal Services sterilized 125 cats! That's in addition to the 69 cats sterilized upon adoption from the shelter

During the spring months, the LISN program was expanded to include dogs too. Through the program, six dogs were sterilized during the first quarter. Although the dog population in our community is more heavily regulated than that of the cats, there is still the need to provide

low-cost sterilization opportunities to help owners in need. Animal Services believes that such efforts are helping reduce the numbers of surrendered and stray animals entering the shelter on a daily basis and ultimately reducing unnecessary euthanasia.



Dr. Burns in surgery with a volunteer

## Rochester Animal Services Statistics



*“We must all take greater responsibility for our animal companions.”*

	<u>Dog</u>	<u>Cat</u>	<u>Other</u>
<b><u>July</u></b>			
Impounded	243	304	12
Adopted	44	29	0
Redeemed	73	1	3
Transferred	12	24	5
Euthanized	119	247	0
Sterilized	34(+1)	21(+40)	0
<b><u>August</u></b>			
Impounded	244	358	29
Adopted	56	49	2
Redeemed	52	2	4
Transferred	3	47	5
Euthanized	129	273	18
Sterilized	46(+3)	17(+40)	0
<b><u>September</u></b>			
Impounded	264	322	26
Adopted	58	34	5
Redeemed	68	2	1
Transferred	21	38	13
Euthanized	106	236	10
Sterilized	41(+2)	31(+45)	0

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 humanely euthanized. 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 greater responsibility for our animal companions. That means making sure our pets are licensed, vaccinated, securely confined, and spayed and neutered. 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.

Sterilization figures are separated into adopted pets and owned pets sterilized through the Low Income Spay-Neuter (LISN) program, with the latter presented in parentheses.

## Appreciation Demonstrated at the Shelter’s Open House



This year’s open house was a huge success by all accounts. The annual event was Sunday November 6 and it kicked off National Animal Shelter Appreciation Week. This was the fifth annual open house at RAS, and as planned, it was a great opportunity to highlight the honorable, lifesaving work that shelters do. Shelter representatives estimated attendance at approximately 275 people and 30 dogs. By comparison, last year’s event drew about 150 people and a handful of dogs.

As in the past, Animal Services had a variety of activities and seminars including pet grooming, service dogs, K9

dogs, exotic reptiles, and an animal communicator/pet psychic. During the open house, the Unit also offered discounts on all dog and cat adoptions. There were 13 adoptions completed and lots of waiting lists formed for strays still on hold. There was a microchip clinic to which pet owners brought four pets in to be implanted with i.d. chips. Several pet owners also took advantage of a free nail clipping from Jackie of Uni-Pet Grooming Salon. The Amerks Moose and Rex the Rhino made appearances and mingled with the visitors.

The shelter also received a variety of donations including a

ferret cage, a folding dog crate, mounds of linens for bedding, and over \$500 in unsolicited contributions from visitors, supporters, and from animal communicator, Kathy Smith.

In addition to promoting adoptions, Animal Services also celebrated the first anniversary of the Low-Income Spay-Neuter (LISN) program. While touring the shelter, visitors were invited to peak in and observe the veterinary team at work.

The Unit is hoping to have a similar event in the spring, perhaps in May, Be Kind To Animals Month. Contact the shelter at 428-7274 if you’d like to get involved with such events.

## From the Director's Chair



During the first quarter, Animal Services was relocated within the organizational structure from the Uniformed Operations Bureau, Special Operations Section to the Bureau of Organizational Development and Administration (BODA). I proposed the move in an effort to improve efficiencies in our operations. Ironically, the realignment brought us back to our original Bureau. You may recall that in July 2000, Animal Services was added to the RPD's Administrative Bureau when the Humane Society opted to discontinue their animal control contract with the City. The Administrative Bureau evolved into today's BODA and houses units with functions similar to ours including the Property Clerk, Auto Pound, Technical Services Section, and Victims Assistance Unit.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Captain Robert Johansson, Commanding Officer for the Special Operations Section, for all of his support, assistance, and guidance during our tenure in SOS. It was a pleasure working with you and I hope to keep in touch. Additionally, I would like to thank Commander Russ Coriddi and Deputy Chief Timothy

Hickey for their support at the Division and Bureau levels, respectively.

We now fall under the command of Acting Commander Ed Giblin. Commander Giblin has already visited the shelter, met many of our Animal Services team, and has welcomed us into our new (or old) home. The transition has happened seamlessly and without any problems or changes in procedures. I am confident that BODA is the appropriate location for our Unit and we have already witnessed improved efficiencies in several areas.

Once again we have had to wrestle with personnel challenges as employees have left the Unit, been promoted to higher titles, and while others have been out on medical leave. Shelter personnel have had to take on heavier workloads in jobs that are already extremely demanding both physically and emotionally. Shelter managers have been wearing multiple hats in an effort to fill in wherever needed whether at the front desk or in the kennels. In spite of these challenges, the Unit continues to reunite pets with their owners and find new homes for stray or otherwise unwanted

animals. I appreciate all of your hard work particularly in light of the heightened workload. Additionally, the spay-neuter programs have continued to increase unaffected by the shelter challenges.

The good news is that relief is on the way. Not only are impound numbers declining with the onset of fall and colder weather, but three new employees are being processed for hiring. We have advertised, interviewed, and selected candidates for three shelter positions, a full-time permanent Animal Care Technician (ACT), a full-time temporary ACT, and a part-time ACT. We are all anxious to welcome these new people into our team and get back to a comfortable position in which we will be better equipped to maintain the high quality of animal care and customer service that we have been so proud of.

Also during the first quarter, Animal Control Officers have been participating in a driver refresher course developed specifically for the ACOs by Sgt. Frank DiPrimo. The idea for this training course came directly from conversations I had with ACO Andrew Ames. Given the proportion of their shifts that



ACOs spend driving a van with limited visibility in and urban environment, Ames suggested that we augment the basic defensive driver training with some more practical, hands-on instruction. The reviews have all been favorable.

Although much of the material in this issue pertains to the shelter programs and services, I want the ACOs to know that your continued efforts and commitment also do not go unnoticed. I appreciate all that you do to ensure the safety of our human and animal citizens, to enforce city ordinances, and to educate pet owners on appropriate care and handling. Keep up the excellent work and stay safe.

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 offers socialization and obedience classes 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 owners 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 Cook is the resident canine instructor. Pam was hired as an Animal Care Technician in June 2000 when the RPD assumed control of the Unit and was recently promoted to Assistant Manager. Pam has attended numerous seminars dealing with animal behavior,

temperament testing, and pet nutrition during her more than 17 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 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.

The Unit is currently negotiating an indoor training facility and hopes to begin classes in the coming weeks. For more information regarding the City's dog training programs call 428-7274 or email Pam at [PK1268@cityofrochester.gov](mailto:PK1268@cityofrochester.gov).



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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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## Volunteer Corner

As always, the volunteers were invaluable in helping represent Animal Services at summer events. There were informational booths at the Corn Hill Arts Festival, the Park Avenue Arts Festival, the Puerto Rican Festival, and at four Rhinos soccer games at Frontier Field. Volunteers helped keep the booths staffed, answered questions, and distributed brochures promoting our programs and services. There were some additional events this year that we were unable to attend due to staffing challenges, however Clyde LeFevre from Petpalooza Magazine enabled us to be represented in absentia with poster boards and brochures. Thanks Clyde!

Recently, Animal Services has been promoting the volunteer program more intensely because we have a real need for more people to assist in a variety of capacities. As the number of promotional events continues to grow, so too does the need for more representatives. As a result of recurring staffing challenges, volunteers are also needed to get involved with daily cleaning and shelter maintenance duties. The shelter is also in need of volunteers to take pictures and help update the website on a daily basis. Additionally, the spay-neuter program and clinic need volunteers interested in performing ancillary functions to assist the veterinary team. Such duties

may consist of restraining animals, preparing animals for surgery, or cleaning surgical instruments, cleaning pre-op and post-op cages, and assisting with recovery from anesthesia.

Finally, the shelter always needs people to provide exercise and socialization for the dogs and cats. As the weather gets colder, volunteer numbers tend to dwindle. So if you have warm clothes and want to get involved, don't wait until spring!

Animal Services would like to offer a special thanks to all of the volunteers who assisted with the open house. We could not have done it without you!



Volunteer Veterinary Technician Kristen Benjamin cleans dog's ears after its spay surgery.