

Kennel Quarterly

A Joint Publication of the Rochester Police Department Animal Services Unit and the Verona Street Animal Society, Inc.



Animal Services shelter on Verona Street

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1st Furry Scurry A Hit!

You could not have asked for a more ideal day for the first Furry Scurry and the consensus is that it was an overwhelming success. Temperatures were in the low to mid 60s for the race and then climbed into the 70s for the post-race entertainment and the awards ceremony. There were 184 registered runners for the 10 km road race and 79 dog walkers participated in the 1-mile loop. Runners liked the scenic route through Corn Hill, along the Genesee River Trail, out to the University of Rochester, and back along the trail into downtown, ending back at the animal shelter on Verona Street. Walkers enjoyed the dog-friendly event that was a great opportunity for socializing their pets while raising money for the animal shelter.

Todd Smith, the overall winner, finished in an impressive 33:31. Kathryn O'Neill was the fastest woman finishing in 43:03. As runners finished they grabbed a variety of snacks and refreshments at the food tent and then enjoyed the music of local rock musician, Jennifer Heieck. Christine Webb of 13 WHAM News and Dino Kay of WCMF were the enthusiastic emcees for the event. Christine kicked off the race, Dino started the dog walk, and they tag-teamed during the award ceremony.

The event raised over \$11,000 in walk and race registration fees, pledges, and donations. An additional \$12,300 was raised in corporate sponsorship. The funds will be used to subsidize low-cost spay/neuter

surgeries, to purchase vaccinations and surgical materials for the shelter, and for promoting the mission and programs of Animal Services.

According to Dave Boutillier of Yellow Jacket Racing and Fleet Feet Sports Rochester, "This is going to become one of the most popular races over the next 10 years and runners will want to say that they were there for the first one."

Matt Kellman (38:03), overall masters male winner, said "...a great race, it will get bigger every year! The course is sweet! The park is nice and plenty of parking, great awards - all the good stuff!"

Kathy Blachowski, co-founder of Animal Rescue Coalition Alliance of the Greater Rochester and Finger Lakes Regions, wrote, "It was a great event and I was so happy to see that you had such high attendance. My rottie/boxer mix, Max, was a little anxious at first because there were SO many people and other dogs there, but he calmed down eventually and loved it, and my husband and I also had a wonderful time. Congrats again! And we'll see you there again next year!"

The VSAS Board has reconvened for a debriefing on the Furry Scurry, areas of improvement were identified, and preliminary planning for the 2nd Annual Furry Scurry is underway. We hope to see all of you out there June 28, 2008!

Anyone interested in getting involved with the 2nd Annual

Furry Scurry as a volunteer or as a sponsor, should contact the Verona Street Animal Society at VSASinc@gmail.com or call 585-727-2533.



Todd Smith was the overall male winner at 33:31.



Kathryn O'Neill was the overall female winner at 43:03.



The dog walk attracted 79 dog walkers plus their friends and families.



Shelter 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>
April			
Impounded	211	238	13
Adopted	43	53	4
Redeemed	46	10	0
Transferred	17	48	9
Euthanized	113	103	3
Sterilized (total)	66	72	2
Adoption	35	32	0
LISN	8	37	0
Redemption	23	3	0
May			
Impounded	255	304	9
Adopted	43	50	1
Redeemed	87	3	0
Transferred	9	73	3
Euthanized	113	159	2
Sterilized (total)	65	62	0
Adoption	36	37	0
LISN	6	25	0
Redemption	23	1	0
June			
Impounded	304	298	11
Adopted	46	51	1
Redeemed	64	9	0
Transferred	8	57	6
Euthanized	167	173	2
Sterilized (total)	63	124	0
Adoption	37	46	0
LISN	7	78	0
Redemption	19	0	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 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 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.

Sterilization figures are separated into adopted pets, owned pets sterilized through the Low Income Spay Neuter (LISN) program, and seized pets sterilized upon redemption by owners.



Spay and Neuter Your Pets

Call 428-SPAY / Rochester Animal Services

Robert J. Duffy, Mayor
City of Rochester, NY

From the Director's Chair



As animal care and control professionals, whenever we are introduced to new individuals, they generally have some questions or anecdotes about animals. People may share their experiences with a beloved pet or their frustrations with nuisance stray or wild animals in their neighborhoods. We are often asked questions about the types of animals with which we deal, how many pets we have at home, and how we cope with euthanasia. Some questions are about pit bulls. How many we impound? Are they bad? Why do people have them? Why don't we adopt them out? Occasionally, people inquire about dog fighting and want to know how Rochester compares with other locations.

With the recent indictment of Atlanta Falcons quarterback Michael Vick on allegations of dog fighting, the conversations, questions, and inquiries have shifted primarily to dog fighting. According to the indictment, dogs that did not show enough fighting spirit, or that lost matches, were killed by a variety of methods, including shooting, drowning, hanging, and electrocution. Prosecutors allege that on one occasion earlier this year, Vick himself participated in killing eight dogs.

Virtually everyone agrees that Vick should be punished for his alleged participation in the illegal activities, however the emphasis does not seem to be on the brutality of what he has done. This is not simply a matter of breaking the law as other

sports celebrities have done. Any level of participation in dog fighting is appalling, grotesque, and horrific because of the innocent victims, the dogs, who suffer excruciating pain, torture, and death either from the fight itself or at the hands of their uncaring owners.

At shelters, we often see pit bulls marked with scars consistent with fighting. In general, these dogs are incredibly sweet toward people and seek only to please us. Their owners have taken advantage of this admirable trait and exploited it for their own personal gain and blood lust.

One such female pit bull recently entered the shelter. She had scars consistent with fighting and a large portion of her muzzle was missing, but still she was full of love. When approached at her cage, she would wiggle her hind end into a sit and lean against the door, hoping for even the slightest rub or scratch. Sadly, her fate as with so many other pit bulls was euthanasia.

The charges against Vick include conspiracy to commit interstate commerce in aid of unlawful activities and to sponsor a dog in an animal-fighting venture. If convicted of both portions of the conspiracy charge, Vick could face six years in prison and a \$350,000 fine. However, a plea agreement may reduce his jail time substantially.

In an interview earlier this year, Washington Redskins running back Clinton Portis and a

teammate, offensive tackle Chris Samuels, defended Vick. Portis said that if Vick is charged and convicted of dog fighting, "then you're putting him behind bars for no reason. I don't know if he was fighting dogs or not, but it's his property. It's his dog. If that's what he wants to do, do it." The Redskins and Portis himself later apologized, stating that his controversial remarks about dog fighting were insensitive and that he now realizes he "shouldn't have made the comments." He added, "At that time I had no idea the love people have for animals, and I didn't consider it when I made those comments." Clearly there is a problem when notable figures like Portis do not recognize the inhumanity, not to mention the legal ramifications, of dog fighting.

For wealthy sports celebrities, the dog fighting is clearly not about the money. It seems more related to pushing the limits of "entertainment." Dog fighting goes well beyond the severity of boxing or mixed martial arts. With dogs, the fight is often to the death. That seems to be the appeal.

Unfortunately, dog fighting has become a trendy theme for gritty urban life. Elements of dog fights appear throughout pop culture in rap lyrics, music videos, and advertisements for sporting apparel. Michael Vick's case has already raised awareness about the prevalence and brutality of the clandestine activity.

Hopefully, this attention can be used to help promote humane education and to deter others from participating in dog fighting at any level.

As always, I welcome your thoughts and comments.

Chris Fitzgerald,
Director



Female pit bull impounded at shelter with fighting wounds to head and legs and large portion of muzzle missing.



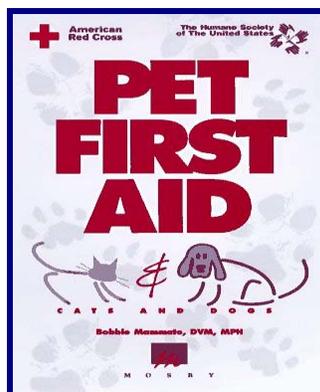
Seamus, Chris, and Rooney

Animal Services aids in dog fighting arrest

August 2007, Humane Society Investigators and RPD officers arrested Ulysees Russell at 803 Maple St. on allegations that he is involved with dog fighting. Much of the information included in the warrant came from an earlier ACO encounter with the dog owner.

In March 2007, City Refuse notified Animal Services that residents at the location were disposing of large quantities of un-

bagged animal feces. ACOs visited the location, spoke with the resident, observed 10 dogs, some with scarring consistent with dog fighting. The owner was issued tickets for unlicensed dogs and for the number of dogs. A report was forwarded to the Humane Society for follow up. Russell was also charged with weapons and drug offenses.



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Certification class and book only \$25
Call 428-7274 to enroll.

Scenes From Furry Scurry 2007



Starting line



Adoptable dog



Jennifer Heieck



Adoptable dog



Kathryn O'Neill



Cooling off after dog walk



Todd Smith



Making friends



Dino Kay, Chris Fitzgerald, Jennifer Brown, Christine Webb



Invisible Fence presents check

Get involved!

Volunteers needed!

Do you have experience in marketing, sales, fundraising, web management, event planning?

Join one of our sub-committees today!



585-727-2533
VSASinc@gmail.com
www.vsas.org

Vets Wanted to Help Rochester's Animals.

The City of Rochester is looking for veterinarians interested in providing assistance with the Animal Services spay-neuter program.

For more information contact Chris Fitzgerald:
cf1274@cityofrochester.gov
or call (585) 428.6898

 City of Rochester, New York



The Society Page

Well we have made it through the first half of 2007 and the Verona Street Animal Society continues to increase efforts to help Rochester Animal Services. In a brief recap, we held our first ever 10k road race and 1-mile dog walk on Saturday June 30th, which was a tremendous success. In addition to raising thousands to support the spay-neuter program at the shelter, hundreds of supporters came out to aid local animals! The Furry Scurry will become an annual event so keep this in mind next June and I hope to see you there.

On another note, most of you are probably aware that the 2007-2008 City budget included proposed cuts to Rochester Animal Services by eliminating the overnight Animal Control shift. Although several shelter supporters showed up, myself included, to speak on behalf of this vital City service, the budget cut still went through. What this will mean for City residents of both the two and four-legged variety is that

there is no longer an ACO on duty during overnight hours. As before, continue to call 911 for emergencies and 311 for non-emergencies. ACOs may be called in under certain circumstances. Police officers may now respond to barking complaints and to calls for dogs chasing or attacking, but calls involving strays will be left for the morning shift to investigate. I find this change very disappointing as a stray will undoubtedly not be in the same vicinity by the next morning, leaving the animal loose and in danger of being stuck by a vehicle. So please, if you ever see a loose animal, make it a priority to report it immediately as the Animal Control resources are now limited and they need as much notification as possible.

This should not however, deter you from calling since it is important that the animal-related concerns are documented, even during the overnight hours. Perhaps with such documentation and a more favorable fiscal climate, the over-

night animal control shift can be reinstated.

My dog, Nanook, was a stray found running loose in the City and I can't even imagine what would have happened if Animal Control had not been on duty to respond to the call placed by a City resident (thank you whoever you are!).

The evening hours are also a potential time for dog fighting rings, as the cover of night helps them hide this brutal blood sport. As a community and as compassionate human beings, we need to report any suspicious activity or noises to 911. Together we can put a stop to this atrocious cruelty. For additional information on dog fighting rings, please go to the Human Society's website at www.hsus.org key word "dog fighting."

Looking forward, the VSAS is planning another fund raiser for the winter months and it is sure to be an unforgettable event. I will give you all the information in our next newsletter installment, or if you can't wait until

then, visit our website at www.vsas.org! So until then, remember to spay and neuter your pets and encourage others to visit this great shelter and adopt a friend for life. Hope to see you at the shelter's annual open house on November 4th!!

Jennifer Brown,
President VSAS





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WWW.VSAS.ORG

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.

Volunteer Corner - Spay Day Volunteers Are Invaluable

One Sunday each month, the Monroe Veterinary Associates send a team of veterinarians, veterinary technicians, and animal care assistants to Animal Services for a Spay Day. During these special spay/neuter clinics, the team performs 25-30 sterilization surgeries as part of the Low Income Spay Neuter program. Obviously the program relies on these trained professionals to continue to work toward minimizing cat overpopulation. However, there is also a whole team of volunteers who give their time and effort to help make these special days possible. One of those volunteers is Merri-Lou McKeever.

Merri-Lou is an asset to Animal Services and to Lollypop Farm through her dual volunteer commitment. She assists in surgery at RAS during the week, has developed a guide for preparing instrument packs, and created instruction sheets and forms used during Spay Days. Merri-Lou recruits and coordinates the volunteer team for each of the monthly Spay Days. She submitted the following in a message to Director Chris Fitzgerald and her words clearly express our appreciation

and respect for the Spay Day crew.

The Spay Day volunteer team who works those special clinics is THE BEST. In the corporate world, they would be highly coveted by all departments because of their dedication, professionalism, and commitment. We are so very lucky to have them.

Some arrive at 7:15 am on a Sunday! Do you know how hard it is to find volunteers to do that? And they do it willingly, with smiles on their faces, and with a sense of fulfillment knowing that they are doing something worthwhile to try to make a dent in the cat overpopulation problem.

The "Dream Team" players:

7:15am - 9am shift: Karen Atkins and Gela Fogle. These women both volunteer at Lollypop Farm in the Cat Room on Sundays, cleaning cages and giving cats hugs and kisses. Yet they still find it in their hearts to come to RAS for a couple of hours on Spay Day Sundays.

8:30am until surgeries are finished: Kristen Benjamin, a Veterinary Technician, is invaluable

in staging, assisting, communicating with the doctors and other vet techs, and in maintaining the drug log. We would be lost without her.

9am until surgeries are finished: Russ Roberts, Mary Abraham (both Lollypop volunteers) and Janet Fradera (RAS volunteer) are the paperwork team. They quietly go about their business without us even knowing they're there. They complete the Rabies Certificates, Spay/Neuter Certificates, and post-operation instruction sheets. The job isn't done until the paperwork is completed. It's a critical step and they are very good at it.

2:30pm - 4pm: Emily Osgood and Joan Alper (both Lollypop volunteers). These people handle the crazy hour when there is a rush of people coming in to pick up their animals. They explain what has happened that day in terms of surgery and vaccinations and how to take care of their pet when they get home. They are cool and calm under pressure answering all kinds of questions with professionalism and positive attitudes. These volunteers provide

clients with their final impression of RAS. Then, they stay and help me finish cleaning cages and setting up the surgery room and clinic for Monday's activities.

There are a couple of other people that have volunteered periodically, but the folks mentioned above are the regulars; they know what they are doing and do it well - without them, the RAS Spay Day Sundays would not be working.

I don't know how to thank them enough. And I fear the day when/if any one of them tells me they can no longer help. We truly appreciate your help.



Dr. Paul Black and team from Pittsford Animal Hospital perform surgeries during June Spay Day at RAS.