

# **Paws and Claws Society**

## *Partners in Prevention Not Destruction*

### **2012 Annual Report**

#### **2012 NO-KILL CONFERENCE**

Paws and Claws Society was again a proud sponsor of the No-Kill Conference in Washington, DC. The No Kill Advocacy Center teamed up with the Animal Law program at George Washington University Law School to bring together the nation's most successful shelter directors and the nation's top animal lawyers. Attendees learned how to use the legal system to save the lives of animals and how to create a No Kill community. For the fourth year, Paws and Claws was happy to participate and sponsor the event.

#### **FOSTER CARE AND ADOPTION PROGRAM**

Our dedicated volunteers play matchmaker to some wonderful people and some equally wonderful pets. They counsel residents before, during and after adoptions, sharing with them many gems of wisdom and pearls of knowledge about pets. Our volunteers serve as ambassadors, educators, counselors, and animal caretakers who nurture abandoned pets, providing them with lots of love and companionship while they wait for a second chance at life.

Some animals arrive at PACS in various stages of neglect and may need more TLC (tender, loving, care) than any shelter is able to give. Our special volunteers provide foster care for these pets; they lavish them with attention until they are whole again and ready to be placed in a permanent, loving home.

#### **PRETTY PETS PROGRAM**

The animals that arrive at PACS are a truly mixed group. They come in all sizes, all ages, all coat types, and all types of condition. There are cats with mats down to the skin, and dogs with toenails that have completely grown into the pads. Some animals have fleas and ticks, while others have spots or mange. Many of the animals need a quick bath, while others need a complete shave. We have no control over the condition of the animals that we rescue, but we want to give them the best possible opportunity for adoption. Improving their appearance can often save their lives.

Homeless animals are bathed, combed, clipped, ears are cleaned and nails are trimmed. We don't look for fancy results, but work hard to make the animals presentable. We know that clean, unmatted animals will appeal to the public and it is the public that will open their hearts and homes to these wonderful pets.

#### **DOUBLE ADOPTION PROGRAM**

First introduced in 1994, our Double Adoption Program is a real win win service. Adopters double their pleasure when they double adopt and two homeless pets find love and companionship. PACS knows that the only thing better than having one pet is having two pets. Today, many individuals have very busy work schedules and, consequently, their pets spend much of their day alone. Many prospective adopters recognize that it could be advantageous to adopt two pets so they have each other for company, but find the initial cost of spay/neuter prohibitive. Our Double Adoption Program make it financially possible for them to adopt two pets by underwriting the cost of the second lower-cost spay/neuter surgery.

### **CIRCLE OF COMPASSION FOR ANIMALS**

The “*Circle of Compassion for Animals*” brings together groups and individuals in a coalition of animal advocates with the expectation of establishing no-kill communities in South Jersey. First introduced in 2006, the “Circle” continues to build on its initial success by expanding the circle of participants each year.

“*Circle of Compassion for Animals*” objectives are to:

1. To increase the placements of adoptable, healthy cats and dogs
2. To reduce the deaths of shelter dogs and cats
3. To reduce the number of stray/feral cats in the county via TNR and placements
4. To increase the number of spay/neuter surgeries
5. To provide appropriate medical treatment, behavior modification and/or foster care to turn sick, injured, traumatized, infant or unsocialized animals into animals ready for placement.

“Circle” partners strive to find loving, permanent homes for all adoptable animals. PACS and their Partners further pledge that adoptable animals will not be killed just because they are homeless at a time when shelters and rescues are full; they pledge to find room at the inn by widening the circle of compassion. “CIRCLE” members may include representatives from local and county government, the veterinary community, animal control officers, businesses, and individuals who work diligently on behalf of animals. PACS offers financial support to “Circle” referred animals, including treatable and/hard to place animals. Support includes reasonable medical care and/or behavior modification training necessary prior to placement.

### **OPERATION CAPE MAY COUNTY OUTREACH**

Beginning in August, 2005, PACS partnered with Cape May County Animal Shelter Alliance, Beacon Animal Rescue, Animal Outreach, Animal Welfare Society, Humane Society of Ocean City, and individual rescuers to provide new and innovative programs and services designed to reduce pet overpopulation, increase adoptions, educate the general public, foster humane legislation, and help caretakers be responsible for their pets. Operation Cape May County was designed to work in concert with PACS spay/neuter voucher and SAFER program. In addition to spay/neuter programs first implemented in 2005, PACS funded in 2008 a new sink and countertop for the county shelter and a medical care facility. During 2009, PACS continued its partnership with Cape May County Special School District in offering its Dog House Building Project. This project brought together students and animal control officers in order to build and offer dog house shelter to animals belonging to low income residents. In 2010, PACS continued its Dog House project and added a Cat House component to the project. PACS also continued its Save a Life Medical Fund for needy animals in partnership with local veterinarians. PACS offered more medical assistance and educational programs in 2012.

**The hard work and dedication of animal advocates in Cape May County paid off. The Cape May County Animal Shelter effectively reached no-kill status in 2010. Congratulations to one and all!! We need to continue with the programs and not let up for a minute.**

**Paws and Claws Society contributions to this achievement are many. PACS Programs implemented in Cape May County began in August of 2005 and have included: PACS spay/neuter voucher program, PACS SAFER (Stray and Feral Eminent Rescue) TNR Program, Cat Spay Day, Spay Your Best Friend, Medical Assistance, Educational Programs of Kind News, Billboards, Library Books, Senior Scholarship Awards, Building and Distribution of dog and cat houses, Fix and Feed Our Pets in Need Program, and several Capital Projects that included a medical facility and a new countertop and sink for the Cape May County Animal Shelter. PACS and our sister organization, the Staats Foundation implemented comprehensive and cohesive programs of spay/neuter, adoption, and education. More than 3500 free spay/neuter surgeries were provided by PACS in Cape May County in just the first 3 years. Surgeries were performed by 11 private veterinarians and 3 clinics.**

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### **FIX AND FEED OUR PETS IN NEED**

For the third year, Paws and Claws partnered with a local Food Pantry to provide pet food and veterinary care for the pets of clients in need of people food.

No one should have to relinquish their pet because they cannot afford to feed it. Paws and Claws is committed to providing pet food - and relief - to pet owners through local food pantry so that neither they, nor their pets go hungry. We maintain a high level of consistency delivering the same kind of food so that pets have a stable diet, which is important to maintain good digestive health.

During this time of economic uncertainty, families especially need the comfort of their pets. To have to take the heart-wrenching step of giving up your beloved pet to an already overflowing shelter would be devastating to the emotional stability of the family, especially the children. Children don't understand recessions and job loss; they only understand that they love their pets. Our pets are part of our families. They make us laugh, they're fun to snuggle and they are a great source of comfort during difficult or stressful times.

Paws and Claws Society provided for more than 3500 pounds of dry pet food each month, plus cases of canned pet food at a cost of more than \$2,000.00 per month. This equates to more than 8800 bowls of food each month to meet the needs of over 300 cats and dogs. **PACS Fix and Feed our Pets in Need Program** insured that your neighbors didn't have to make that impossible choice of feeding their pets or feeding themselves. These pets in need also received routine veterinary care and were spayed or neutered. Several pets even received life-saving surgeries as a result of this program. Participating veterinarians drastically discounted their fees. Our heartfelt thanks to these compassionate veterinarians.

### **GIVE A LITTLE BOWL OF LOVE**

2012 unfolded as another year of great economic uncertainty for many animal caretakers and their beloved pets. Paws and Claws Society continued our commitment to helping caretakers feed their pets. The need was urgent and PACS met that need for the fourth year with the purchase of more than \$20,000 in pet food. PACS commitment to this life saving endeavor insured that struggling cat colony caretakers received the support they and their cats deserve.

### **CAT SPAY DAY**

Paws and Claws Society, in cooperation with veterinarians and clinics in the target area, sponsored its 18<sup>th</sup> annual "Cat Spay Day" to coincide with National Spay Day on the last Tuesday in February. Coupons redeemable for free cat spay/neuter surgery were given to eligible residents. Information about the importance of spay/neuter, free rabies clinics and various humane topics was made available at coupon distribution sites.

### **KIND NEWS**

Paws and Claws Society first offered *KIND News* in 1994 to every child enrolled in the third grade throughout Gloucester County. Later in September, 2006, Paws and Claws Society introduced a formalized program of humane education to the children of Cape May County. *KIND News*, an award-winning newspaper that teaches children respect for animals was made available monthly to more than 3,000 children enrolled in the second, third and fourth grades throughout the county. This teaching tool establishes a classroom theme of kindness, fosters compassion and responsibility, and motivates learning using the high-interest topic of animals. Responsible pet care is one of the main themes of the publication which emphasizes the importance of spay/neuter. Each issue features a KIND Club Project designed to benefit animals. The program also provides each classroom with a poster-sized calendar of humane announcements--a different one for each school day--for students to read. Many years later, the Kind News offering, is still loved and used by thousands of students and teachers.

### **EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM**

An educational component accompanies all programs at all stages using all means of communication available. PACS has identified four steps that residents must climb in order to eliminate the cycle of cruelty caused by pet overpopulation: (1) **STOP AND ADOPT** from your local animal shelter or rescue group; (2) **SPAY/NEUTER** your pets; (3) **SPREAD THE WORD** to friends, family, and others; (4) **SUPPORT** your local animal shelter or rescue group by volunteering your time, talent and dollars.

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### **MEDICAL ASSISTANCE**

PACS is sometimes called upon to provide medical assistance necessary to alleviate the pain and suffering caused by illness or injury. Many times, this assistance means the difference between life and death.

**20 pets received medical care as a result of this program; 4 pets received life-saving surgeries.**

### **SPAY/NEUTER PROGRAM**

"I ask for the privilege of not being born ... not to be born until you can assure me of a home and a master to protect me, and a right to live as long as I am physically able to enjoy life ... not to be born until my body is precious and men have ceased to exploit it because it is cheap and plentiful." Need we say more? Pet overpopulation is a monumental problem. Spay/Neuter is the solution.

**329 cats and dogs were spayed/neutered under this program**

### **CAT LOVERS CAMPAIGN**

PACS has identified unchecked cat reproduction as the number one pet problem in South Jersey (actually in the country). Most of the cruelty endured by cats can be directly attributed to the failure of residents to spay/neuter their cats. These cats produce litter after litter adding to the surplus numbers of unwanted animals. Let's face it; there just aren't enough homes for all the cats being born.

Our "Cat Lovers Campaign" seeks to interrupt this reproductive cycle of cruelty at its roots; with the first cat or cats in the cat lovers' control, before the numbers get out of control. The program reaches out to residents with unaltered cats, educates them on the importance of spay/neuter and, if necessary, assists them physically and financially.

**279 Cats were spayed/neutered ensuring that they will not add to the tragedy of cat overpopulation**

### **SAFER (STRAY AND FERAL EMINENT RESCUE)**

Stray and Feral Eminent Rescue Program is a PAWS AND CLAWS SOCIETY initiative developed and implemented under the auspices of the STAATS FOUNDATION in accord with their plan for a NO-KILL COMMUNITY in Southern New Jersey. This "Stray and Feral Cat Assistance" program certainly epitomizes our philosophy of prevention, not destruction. The SAFER network of local rescue groups and individuals is committed to improving the quality of life for homeless and unwanted felines by providing and finding homes, assisting and educating the community, and controlling overpopulation. The SAFER network advocates compassion towards felines, community support and the belief that felines are life-long companions.

**229 stray or feral cats will no longer contribute to suffering endured by an abandoned cat population.**

*Paws and Claws Society is a 501(c)(3) Federal and New Jersey registered charity operated entirely by volunteers. All contributions are tax deductible to the full extent of the law.*