

**Report to Maddie's Fund  
Lifesaving Award  
Richmond SPCA/Richmond Animal Care & Control Coalition**

**Participating Groups**

Richmond Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Richmond SPCA)  
Richmond Animal Care & Control (RAC&C)

**Richmond SPCA Operating Model**

The Richmond SPCA (Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals), founded in 1891, is a no-kill humane society dedicated to the principle that every life is precious. Our organization saves the lives of more than 3,000 homeless animals each year and cares for approximately 350 dogs and cats every day. As a national leader in humane care and education, the Richmond SPCA is aggressively tackling the problem of pet overpopulation through programs of pet-retention, adoption, education and spay/neuter.

In 1999, the Board of Directors of the Richmond SPCA adopted a long-range plan that focused on proactively working with the community to resolve the pet overpopulation problem and ending the loss of life of healthy and treatable homeless animals. The first goal of this plan was to end the killing of healthy, homeless animals in Richmond as a means of pet population control by 2008. In order to achieve this result, the Richmond SPCA adopted an operating model based on the one that was implemented at the San Francisco SPCA in the 1990s with great success, but had never before been replicated anywhere else in the United States. In accordance with the model, the Richmond SPCA transitioned to being a no-kill, limited admissions humane society; developed new and progressive lifesaving programs and services focused on adoption, spay/neuter, pet retention and Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR); created a state-of-the-art humane center with an on-site free and low-cost, targeted spay/neuter clinic; and began fostering a formal working partnership with Richmond Animal Care & Control (RAC&C).

The Richmond SPCA is now the largest provider of humane education, pet rehabilitation, spay/neuter and other animal-related programs and services in Central Virginia. The organization employs approximately 95 staff members to maintain the operation of our myriad departments, which consist of admissions, adoptions, medical, spay/neuter clinic, volunteers and programs, humane education, behavior and training, retail, animal care/kennels, development, community relations, and finance. The chief executive officer, chief operating officer, chief financial officer, chief education and training officer, director of the adoption center and veterinary services director compose the executive-level organizational management. A cadre of 450 volunteers assists the staff in our day-to-day operations and contributes about 2,000 hours of support each month through a host of activities.

The Richmond SPCA receives pets in one of two ways – either directly as an owner relinquishment or as a transfer from a municipal agency. Our public surrenders occur

through an appointment-based system. We always prioritize the transfer of those pets whose lives are immediately at risk at RAC&C.

All routine veterinary care, diagnostics, rehabilitative care and treatment is provided in-house by our director of veterinary services and medical department, and the organization maintains relationships with area specialists who deliver cardiology, ophthalmology, orthopedic and other services to our pets at no or a significantly reduced cost.

The Richmond SPCA houses about 350 pets daily and adopts approximately 3,000 pets annually. The organization spays or neuters more than 12,000 pets each year (with the majority being performed for free for pets of low-income families, pit bulls and Rottweilers, feral cats and pets belonging to full-time college students), delivers in excess of 11,000 hours of youth humane education and 3,000 hours of adult instruction annually, and rehabilitates more than 1,500 homeless dogs and cats per year.

### **Richmond Animal Care & Control Operating Model**

RAC&C is an open admission shelter located within the City of Richmond. The division is run by the City of Richmond under the General Services portfolio and employs 19 staff. RAC&C acts as a resource for animal information and works to maximize the care and services available for citizens and animals in the community.

The 19 staff consist of an operations manager responsible for the overall management of the division and its community relations and partnerships, one field supervisor who oversees the operations of the Field Service team consisting of six animal control officers, a dispatcher, a shelter supervisor responsible for the operations of the shelter, including building and grounds care with a staff of eight, and one business office supervisor. A team of about 40 volunteers also support the division.

The field division enforces the laws pertaining to animals for the City of Richmond and actively pursues prosecution of all incidents of animal fighting/cruelty, having one of the highest prosecution rates in the state as well as addressing the quality of life issues for both citizens and animals in Richmond. RAC&C does this with a fine balance of educational and outreach services and programs. The officers actively pursue education not only in the field in their day to day operations, but through visits to classrooms and community events to optimize the potential for the well being of animals in our community.

The sheltering division operates the facility, which is open to the public five days a week and which houses approximately 225 animals. The kennel staff cleans and cares for the animals while providing basic vaccinations, medical care and customer service to citizens looking for lost pets and those looking to adopt as well as those in search of general pet care information. The shelter staff also coordinates the placement of all animals, to include our placement partner relations. This team also schedules all surgeries for both our adopted animals and our spay/neuter outreach programs and coordinates volunteer activities.

The shelter contracts with three separate veterinarians to oversee and provide general and emergency medical care to the animals. One part-time shelter vet visits the shelter two or three days per week and provides consulting as necessary, and services are also received from one local vet practice and an overnight emergency treatment center when necessary.

RAC&C's team of volunteers contribute approximately 200 hours monthly through assisting with adoptions, posting animals to the internet, manning off-site adoption stands and educational events, assisting with vaccination boosters, transports, animal grooming and exercise.

The division maintains a relationship with a "friends of" group, the Richmond Animal Welfare Foundation, which is a 501(c) 3 formed to assist the division in raising funds to support activities beyond its City mandate. The foundation provides medical care, staff and volunteer training opportunities and much-needed equipment/renovations for the division on a regular basis.

### **How Adoption Guarantee Status Was Achieved**

Beginning with the adoption of the long range plan in 1999, the Richmond SPCA immediately started planning and implementing programs and services that would help the public embrace the essential role it plays in creating a community that does not have to euthanize healthy or treatable pets to control their numbers. According to the partnership agreement with RAC&C, the Richmond SPCA dedicated its efforts and prioritized resources to provide services that would result in the saving of animal lives (primarily pet-retention programs, publicly available spay/neuter services, humane education, adoption and pet rehabilitation) and stopped euthanizing animals due to reasons of space or length of stay (the organization fully transitioned to a no-kill humane society in January 2002).

Key programs and services that the Richmond SPCA developed and implemented consisted of **Project Safety Net**, which provides resources (such as behavioral assistance in the form of telephone- and Web-based help lines, "manners" classes, foster care, low-cost temporary boarding at a partner facility, re-homing services, in-shelter consultations, and a pet-friendly housing guide) to pet owners so they will not relinquish their pets to a shelter; **Humane Education**, which offers both children and adults information about responsible pet care and ownership while also furthering the bond shared between people and their animal companions; and **Smoky's Spay/Neuter Clinic**, which provides high-volume spay/neuter surgeries in the Richmond SPCA's on site clinic to pets of the public and to feral cats at low- or no-cost coupled with **Trap-Neuter-Return**, which supports feral cat caregivers in trapping, sterilizing and caring for feral cat colonies. From October 2007 through September 30, 2008, the Richmond SPCA will perform more than 12,500 spay/neuter surgeries – a record number for our organization.

In 2006, together with RAC&C, the Richmond SPCA announced the realization of our goal to end the killing of healthy, homeless dogs and cats in Richmond – two years earlier than projected. This goal was achieved through our new and progressive

lifesaving programs and services and through our unique partnership with RAC&C in which each organization maintains distinct roles and responsibilities that has allowed each facility to focus its energy and resources on their respective areas of expertise. This collaboration has created a more effective and efficient model for animal welfare in Richmond.

One of the most important elements to achieving an adoption guarantee status has been aggressive, targeted free- and low-cost spaying and neutering. Beginning in 2004, the Richmond SPCA pledged to perform at least 9,000 of the procedures annually for a minimum of three years. All Richmond SPCA and RAC&C animals are sterilized prior to adoption, and the Richmond SPCA provides free services to pets of low-income families, full-time college students, pit bulls, rottweilers and feral cats. The clinic has grown to become one of the highest-volume spay/neuter surgical sites in the county, performing thousands of surgeries annually, with the majority being performed at no cost to the pet owner.

We are sustaining our adoption guarantee status through a continued emphasis on and promotion of our lifesaving programs and services, twice weekly transfers of animals from RAC&C (and emergency transfers when necessary), increased annual fundraising, paid advertising campaigns promoting adoption as the best option, successful public relations strategies and communications plans that educate the community about our history, our success and our roadmap for the future, and continued high-volume, targeted spay/neuter in our on-site clinic. In 2007, the Richmond SPCA committed to extending the spay/neuter initiative pledging 9,000 surgeries annually for three years to performing in excess of 11,000 surgeries annually through 2010. This will continue to reduce the birth of homeless animals in Richmond and bring our community in closer equilibrium where the number of available homes equals the number of orphaned pets awaiting them.

These same strategies will continue to sustain our adoption guarantee status for the next three years and beyond. The Richmond SPCA has developed a very dedicated and broad base of financial support (corporate, individual and foundation) which has provided the funds necessary to achieve our goals. We have fostered a compassionate community that cares deeply for our homeless animals. Since 2006, The Richmond SPCA and RAC&C have pledged to never again allow a healthy, homeless animal to die in the City of Richmond simply because he lacks a home. This is a promise we made that we stand committed to forever.

### **Shelter Animal Classifications**

The Richmond SPCA and RAC&C have worked together to track our statistics through the Asilomar Accords, and more specifically through the Maddie's Fund Animal Statistics Table. Each year, both organizations complete an animal statistics table in accordance with the Asilomar Accords and our community's definitions of healthy, treatable/rehabilitatable, treatable/manageable, and unhealthy/untreatable animals. Using these national standards, the Richmond SPCA and RAC&C have tracked our success, which has grown from a citywide save rate of 56% in 2001 to 78% in 2007, distinguishing Richmond as one of the top ten safest cities in the nation for homeless

animals. (Please find attached Richmond SPCA and RAC&C shared Asilomar health/behavior classifications for 2008).

### **Sharing our Success with the Community**

The community has played a vital role in our achievement of an adoption guarantee community. Through public education and youth programs, we have nurtured a compassionate, progressive and active community that has responded with open arms to the needs of our homeless animals. The Richmond SPCA received widespread media coverage in 2006 when we first announced our achievement of saving the lives of all healthy, homeless animals in the City of Richmond. We continue to keep the community aware of our efforts through a quarterly newsletter, which reaches more than 20,000 households, a weekly e-newsletter which reaches more than 10,000 people and stories in the news media and on our Web site. We also mail our Animal Statistics table to our entire constituency once a year and make the same table available on our Web site.