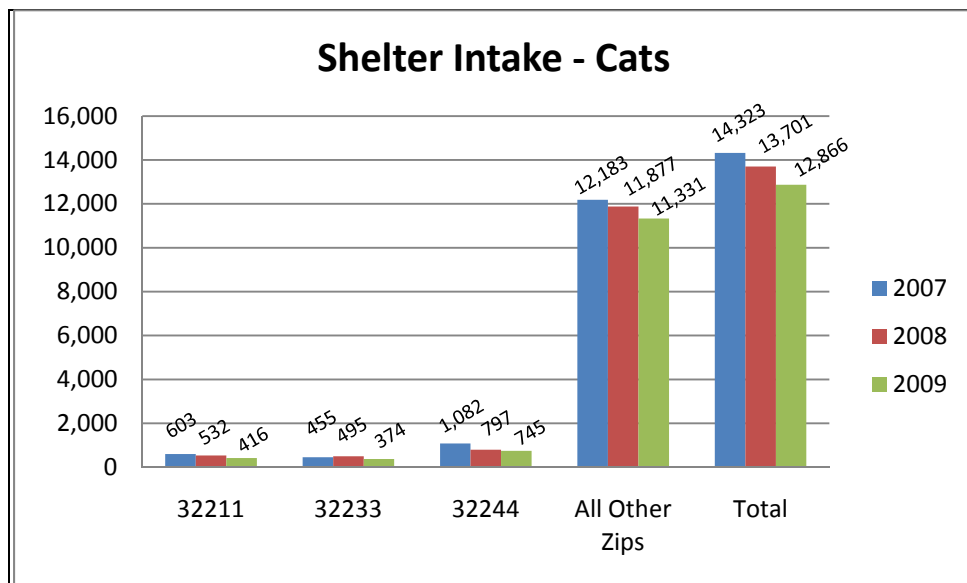


**First Coast No More Homeless Pets, Inc.**  
**Maddie's Orchestrated Feline Accelerated Sterilization Test**  
**January 1, 2008 – December 31, 2009**  
**Final Report**  
**Jacksonville, FL**

**Overview:** January 1, 2008, First Coast No More Homeless Pets was awarded a two-year<sup>1</sup> grant from Maddie's Fund to decrease shelter intake and euthanasia in Duval County by targeting a specific area for spay/neuter surgeries, entitled Maddie's<sup>®</sup> Orchestrated Feline Accelerated Sterilization Test (Maddie's<sup>®</sup> Project). Maddie's<sup>®</sup> Project was initially aimed at three zip codes within Duval County showing the highest intakes of cats at the shelters (32211, 32233, 32244). Demand for services was so great from those three zip codes that without limiting it surgery volume would have been so diluted as to be uncertain of impact on shelter admissions. During the first year, we discovered this was too broad of an area and decreased the target area to just one zip code (32211) for maximum results.

This particular zip code averaged 74 surgeries per month in Year One. But, in Year Two, with increased promotion, outreach and creative advertising, Maddie's<sup>®</sup> Project averaged 180 surgeries a month, culminating in 2,751 total surgeries in zip code 32211. In all, 5,085 surgeries were performed through Maddie's<sup>®</sup> Project<sup>2</sup>. The impact of this tightly targeted program was a 31% drop in shelter cat intakes from zip code 32211 and overall reduction of 28% in shelter cat intakes for all three zip codes. All other zip codes saw a decrease of 7%.



<sup>1</sup> An additional 416 surgeries were performed and paid for through this grant from January – April 2010.

<sup>2</sup> An additional 416 surgeries were performed and paid for through this grant from January – April 2010.

In August 2008, the City of Jacksonville decided that they would no longer kill feral cats brought to the shelter. As a result, Feral Freedom was created, where any feral cat brought to the shelter would be transferred to FCNMHP, altered, and the cat(s) would then be released back in the area in which it was trapped. There has been an average of 400 feral cats per month that have been trapped, neutered and returned since the beginning of the program. Below is a chart that shows the number of felines entering the Feral Freedom Program from the Maddie's targeted zip codes and the adjacent comparison zip codes. This data shows that feral freedom cats from Maddie's zip codes were dramatically decreased from adjacent zip codes. This shows significant progress in the targeted zip codes, especially since the targeted zip codes were selected because they were among the highest for feline intake before the Maddie's program.

**FERAL FREEDOM INTAKE BY ZIP CODES**

Date/Zip Codes	32211	32244	32233	32207	32225	32210	Total
8/2008-12/2008	75	97	50	65	40	165	492
1/2009-12/2009	164	361	64	276	229	504	1,598
1/2010-4/15/2010	31	73	25	64	52	93	338
Totals	270	531	139	405	321	762	2,428

FCNMHP has strived to offer a comprehensive set of neutering programs for all segments of the population that require assistance, especially those contributing the most pets at Animal Care & Protective Services. In pursuit of that goal, FCNMHP is constantly adjusting program offerings to ensure the most effective use of resources. Although the entire set of programs must be considered when deciding which programs had the greatest impact on shelter admissions, it seems obvious from the statistics that targeting neutering resources at geographic areas with excessive shelter admissions certainly does greatly impact shelter admissions from those areas.

In addition to Maddie's Zip Code Targeted programs we also offer the following programs:

- Feral Cat Surgeries at low prices. During most of the time of the Maddie's Targeted programs we also offered \$15 feral cat surgeries. We also maintain a large inventory of feral cat traps to assist with feral cats. This program averaged around 3,000 surgeries annually.
- Our SpayJax program has been providing pets of low income pet owner's free sterilization of their pets for eight years. During the time of the Maddie's Program the

SpayJax program altered around 2,500 felines annually for low income pet owners. (canine surgeries are irrelevant for this purpose)

- Our Spay/Neuter Clinic also offers low cost surgeries for the general public and does a high volume of feline surgeries at low prices. Over the two years of the Maddie's program we provided around 15,000+ low cost feline surgeries.

**Effectiveness:** The goal of the program was to decrease the number of felines entering and dying in Duval County Shelters specifically from the targeted zip codes which were some of the worst for shelter admissions.

A quest that we are all on is finding the pieces of the puzzle that will solve the pet overpopulation problem. Programs such as these should also be judged by their value in finding this much sought after solution.

I feel that this program was a success in meeting both of these goals. Decreases in shelter admissions from all three targeted zip codes were experienced, in addition there is expected to be a residual effect of this program in the coming years which will help to determine its full worth on our efforts.

A few of the questions we can gain some insight into from this program:

- How many targeted surgeries does it take to start to see a decrease in shelter admissions from a particular area?
- How quickly will impacts on shelter admissions be experienced?
- Will these initial impacts continue throughout a multi-year program?
- Will the effects of the programs continue to decrease shelter admissions in future years, even after the end of the program?
- What programs are needed for a comprehensive spay/neuter approach to the pet overpopulation problem?

The first section of this report will present the statistics from the program concerning surgeries and shelter admission statistics. The second section will highlight efforts to promote and market the program; and the third portion will discuss conclusions that can be drawn from the program results and the fourth section highlights what happens after the grant is completed.

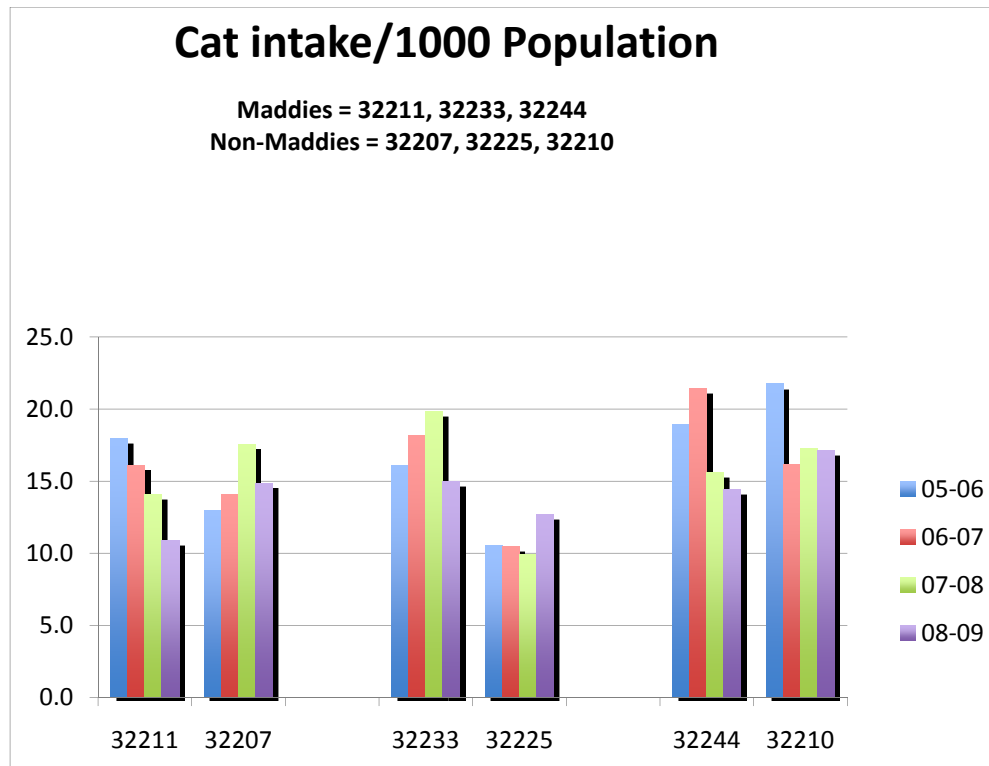
## Part 1: Surgery Statistics and Methods

Using three years of fiscal admissions data we did find substantial decreases in shelter admissions from the targeted zip codes and we also saw a slight decrease in feline shelter admissions from adjacent non-targeted zip codes.

zip code	2007 pop	2007 surgeries	2007 intake	surgeries per 1,000	intake per 1,000
32211	37,394	xxx	603	xxx	16.1
32233	25,100	xxx	455	xxx	19.8
32244	49,965	xxx	1,082	xxx	21.6

zip code	2008 pop	2008 surgeries	2008 intake	surgeries per 1,000	intake per 1,000
32211	37,811	888	532	23.4	14
32233	25,000	807	496	32.2	19.8
32244	51,092	1,236	797	24.2	15.5

zip code	2009 pop	2009 surgeries	2009 intake	surgeries per 1,000	intake per 1,000
32211	38,228	1,863	416	48.7	10.8
32233	24,950	265	374	10.6	15.0
32244	51,656	0	745		14.4



## Part 2: Marketing, Promotion and Outreach

**Marketing and Outreach:** At the start of the program when three zip codes were targeted there was little need for creative marketing/outreach as surgeries were occurring at a rate that would quickly spend all of the grant funds available. The majority of our marketing/outreach efforts were focused on the 32211 zip code after we stopped surgeries in the other two initially targeted zip codes.

In the beginning of the program it was much as if we were “harvesting the low hanging fruit” and easily getting surgeries for people that had been looking for an easy way to sterilize cats but did not have the means for what services were available. The more surgeries we did in the targeted zip code the more difficult it was to maintain that volume.

A listing of some of the marketing/outreach efforts we tested:

**Postcard Mailers:** Direct mail of postcards to every address in the targeted zip codes was our most effective and most used promotional tool. The cost for putting a post card into each address in the 32211 zip code was 21 cents for each address or \$3,308.48 for each mailing. We would mail each house, apartment, mobile home and business a postcard because often it would be employee’s at a business who are feeding the cats in the back, apartment buildings and mobile homes are notorious for feral/community cats as much or more so than single

family dwellings. Over the last year each house in the 32211 Zip Code received a postcard mailing promoting the program five times. A sample of two different postcards are attached, design was donated.

**Door Hangers:** We had designed and printed door hangers promoting the program in the 32211 zip code and used these extensively throughout the final year. The postcard and door hangers we designed similarly to promote awareness of the program. Door Hangers cost .136 cents to print and we used extensive volunteer assistance to hang them. Over the last years each address in the targeted zip code received a door hanger from us twice. The use of volunteer labor was vital in making this feasible. One staff member would oversee volunteers working in teams. A sample of our door hanger is attached, design was donated. (During the months of Jan, Feb and Mar 2010 each house received a door hanger three times)

**Transport/Trapping Assistance:** Through different means at different times transport and trapping assistance were offered through the life of the program with varying degrees of effectiveness.

For a year we employed a full time transport/trapper. The first person hired for this position didn't work out very well and only stayed a short time. This person become afraid of the community and the people in it and was not able to continue in the position. The second person hired for this position was also very compassionate about the issue and was a martial arts trainer who participated in competitions so the security issues were eased.

Both of these people were satisfactory at assisting with transport/trapping when requested by owners/caregivers and we were able to bring in a lot of cats in this manner, however we continually failed to get our staff to go out and just trap cats that were in the neighborhood.

Once we provided assistance to all those requesting it, the challenge came to get those cats that no one claimed or maybe no one in particular was even feeding. The most evasive cats to catch ended up being those cats that didn't have a caregiver and were really living on the fringes, eating from dumpsters and foraging for food the best they could. Catching these cats would involve locating the cats and putting out traps without being able to work with a caregiver. Working with caregivers was helpful as they provided cover for working in a reclusive, and often unfriendly, neighborhood.

In late 2009 we attempted to reach agreements with local nuisance trappers, two of which were located in or near the 32211 zip code. This was not productive as we were not able to pay enough per cat compared to what the trappers were making trapping nuisance wildlife elsewhere. Although all involved wanted the project to work it was not economically viable.

Our most successful attempt at reaching these elusive cats was to reach an agreement with a feral cat group "Mayport Cats" providing a free surgery for the Mayport cats for every two

Maddie's cats brought for surgery. This is having somewhat improved results as this group has members that live in the targeted zip code which is making it easier to work in that neighborhood without the assistance of a caregiver.

**Brochures placed in businesses:** A concentrated effort was made to keep all businesses in the target zip code stocked with brochures/fliers about the program. We made sure to include daycare centers, dentists, doctors, Laundromats, and basically every business in the targeted zip code. This was usually done in conjunction with post card mailers and door hangers to ensure maximum effectiveness.

**Calling all phone numbers:** Purchasing a list of phone numbers for residents in that targeted zip code was easy and inexpensive, costing only \$187 for around 5,000 phone numbers. Of the phone numbers purchased, six volunteers spent a day and called around 1,000 of them with very poor results. We talked to less than a dozen people. The only way that this could possibly be effective is if auto-dialers were utilized for the calling to provide real people for volunteers to talk with. In this day and age it doesn't seem like people answer their home phones.

Much of our outreach efforts depended on having the right staff members (volunteer or paid) in the right positions at the right times. This was difficult to manage. Since portions of the targeted zip code were not only low income but also very high crime it was difficult to find the right people with the compassion for the position and the ability to work in these neighborhoods.

### **Part 3: Conclusions**

This program had the effect on feline breeding in the targeted areas very similar to what a slap in the face has to a person experiencing hysteria! Many of the zip codes in Jacksonville had been experiencing decreases in feline admissions but the targeted zip codes were annually increasing. This trend has been reversed.

Zip code targeted programs do have an impact on shelter admissions from the targeted areas. In all three of the Maddie's targeted zip codes feline shelter admissions decreased. In two of the three zip codes the decreases in shelter admissions were noticed in the year following implementation and in the third zip code decreases started in the second year. One interesting fact is that even after the Maddie's Fund grant ended in two of the zip codes in the first year, we are still experiencing shelter decreases from those zip codes which makes us hopeful that shelter admission decreases will be cumulative and increase each year. If that trend continues then the investment in zip code targeting is justified.

Over the two years of the Maddie's program we experienced a decrease in shelter admissions from the three targeted zip codes of a total of 605 cats. The first two years of the program cost \$338,482.35, reflecting a cost per life saved at \$559. However each year the shelter admissions

decreases continue cuts the cost per cat dramatically. If 2009-2010 decreases meet the 20% projected, than there will be another approximately 450 cats saved this year, bringing the total decrease in shelter admission to around 1055, and bringing the cost per cat to \$321. Each year that decreases continue after the end of the project will decrease the cost per cat.

Zip code targeting is a means to get problem zip codes to “catch up” with the progress that has been made in other areas of town with low income targeted programs. We offer a pretty comprehensive set of targeted spay/neuter programs and this program was able to complement them and to accelerate the results from those programs.

It seems to me that Zip Code Targeted Programs are beneficial at turning around problem areas. It is important that programs to continue helping residents of targeted areas be in place for after the zip targeted program ends. We have accomplished this requirement as we offer free Spay/Neuter to pets of low income pet owners and we also have available low cost programs for those not qualifying for free programs. Low cost is also available for feral cats.

#### **Part 4: What's Next**

We will continue to monitor shelter admissions and spay/neuters in the targeted zip codes. We expect the shelter admissions will continue to decrease and expect to continue to see a steady stream of surgeries from that zip code. A continued decline in shelter admissions in the years after the grant ends will demonstrate the effectiveness and economic feasibility of the program.