

## **Maddie's Pet Rescue Project in Alachua County Project Year One Annual Report**

The Maddie's Pet Rescue Project in Alachua County is pleased to submit this report summarizing program activities, achievements and lessons learned during Project Year One.

### **Background**

Maddie's Pet Rescue Project in Alachua County is a community collaborative effort to end the killing of healthy shelter dogs and cats in the city of Gainesville and the surrounding rural communities of Alachua County, Florida by 2007.

In June 2002, Maddie's Fund awarded a Year One grant to the Alachua County Humane Society as lead agency for the project to support activities designed to increase adoptions, increase spays and neuters, and reduce euthanasia in Alachua County. The other participating organizations at the beginning of the grant included:

**Alachua County Animal Services** (county shelter)

**Gainesville Pet Rescue** (rescue/foster agency)

**Puppy Hill Farm** (rescue/foster agency)

**Haile Plantation Veterinary Hospital** (veterinary clinic-based rescue)

**Helping Hands Pet Rescue at West End Animal Hospital** (veterinary clinic-based rescue)

**Operation Catnip** (private nonprofit trap-neuter-return program for feral cats)

The project also included 23 private veterinary practices in Alachua County that agreed to accept low-cost spay/neuter vouchers and report spay/neuter data to the project.

In 2000, Alachua County's rescue and animal control facilities impounded 11,797 dogs and cats; 8,062 were killed. Of those, approximately 3,664 were healthy and adoptable.

The first year goals of Maddie's Pet Rescue Project in Alachua County were to increase the number of adoptions by 733 over the baseline year; decrease the number of dogs and cats euthanized at Alachua County Animal Services by at least 733 below the baseline year; and increase spay/neuter surgeries over the baseline year by 3,665.

At the midpoint of Project Year One, Maddie's Fund made changes in its approach to funding spay/neuter initiatives. As a result, the spay/neuter component of the project was terminated at the end of January 2003. Maddie's Fund negotiated with the Alachua County Veterinary Medical Association to begin a new spay/neuter initiative targeting low-income Medicaid recipients. Operation Catnip and Alachua County Animal Services remained important partners for planning and guidance, but no longer received monetary benefit from the project.

Although the Pet Rescue project and the Spay/Neuter project are now funded and governed independently of each other, they are both working toward the same ultimate goal: to end the euthanasia of healthy, adoptable dogs and cats in Alachua County.

## Year One Results Summary

	Baseline (2000)	Year 1 (2002/2003)	Change
<b>Impounds</b>	11,797	12,001	Up 2%
<b>Adoptions</b>	2,551	3,367	Up 32%
<b>Spays/Neuters*</b>	2,382 voucher 3,744 clinics	1,423 voucher* 1,182 clinic*	Down 30% (this is a very rough estimate based on a prorated, annualized baseline)
<b>Euthanasia</b>	8,062	6,613	Down 18 %

\* Spay/Neuter component of the project terminated at 7-month mark

## Statistical Analysis

Project performance during the fourth quarter of Project Year One was stellar, offsetting a slow start early in the project year and enabling the partners to exceed all three of their project goals. The partners have learned valuable lessons that will enable them to increase this momentum as we approach the ambitious goals of Project Year Two.

**Impounds:** Continuing the new focus on rescuing animals from the county shelter (ACAS) that began in the third quarter, the no-kill organizations increased their transfers from ACAS by almost 180% over the same three-month period in 2000. Impounds from the general public more than doubled from Fourth Quarter 2000, reflecting the increased capacity of all five no-kill organizations to shelter and adopt out more pets.

Although impounds at ACAS increased slightly during the first half of Project Year One (up 1% in First Quarter and 4% in Second Quarter as compared to the same periods in the baseline year), they began to decrease beginning in Third Quarter (down 10%) and the drop accelerated as the year wound to a close. In the Fourth Quarter, ACAS impounds were down 25% as compared to Fourth Quarter 2000. We hope that this reflects the impact of the Maddie's Pet Rescue Project on the community as a whole, as our efforts at public awareness and increasing the community's capacity for adoption gradually reduce the number of animals that are impounded at ACAS.

**Adoptions:** With one exception, all the partners in the Alachua County project improved their adoption numbers over the baseline year by impressive margins, ranging from a 62% increase at Gainesville Pet Rescue to a staggering 413% increase at West End/Helping Hands. Overall adoptions were up 32% over Year 2000; adoptions at the no-kill organizations were up 157% over the baseline year. The project exceeded its total adoption goal by 83; the no-kill organizations exceeded their collective goal by 267.

The only project partner to drop in adoptions as compared to the baseline year was Alachua County Animal Services, where adoptions fell almost 10%, from 1859 in 2000 to 1675 in Project

Year One. The drop in adoptions corresponded very closely to the jump in transfers (293); from that perspective, the number of animals who were saved at the shelter increased slightly.

Organization	Baseline Adoptions	Year One Adoptions	Change
Alachua County Humane Society	99	385	Up 285%
Gainesville Pet Rescue	355	578	Up 62%
Puppy Hill Farm	105	272	Up 159%
West End/Helping Hands	65	334	Up 413%
Haile Plantation Animal Hospital	68	123	Up 80%
Alachua County Animal Services	1859	1675	Down 10%
Total Adoptions	2551	3367	Up 32%

For information on how over-goal adoption stipends were paid, please see the section describing Partnership, Collaboration and Project Management efforts below.

**Euthanasia:**

Statistics on euthanasia at the end of Project Year One are encouraging. Overall deaths of cats and dogs are down 17%. Euthanasia of healthy, adoptable pets dropped 53% from the baseline year, and deaths of nonrehabilitatable animals fell 47%.

Euthanasia of treatable animals rose steeply, however: a 70% increase. This statistic may be an anomaly, as Maddie’s definitions of these groups may not have corresponded exactly with records kept during the baseline year. Another explanation is that the partners focused on healthy adoptables during Project Year One as per Maddie’s guidelines, whereas in past years they may have rescued more treatable animals, particularly very young puppies and kittens.

Euthanasia of nonrehabilitatable animals at the no-kill organizations exploded from 1 in the baseline year to 17 in Project Year One. This is most likely due to the huge increase in overall rescues and impounds from the public at the participating no-kills.

**Spay/Neuter:**

Because Alachua County’s Spay/Neuter Project was terminated in mid-year, performance never really gained momentum and statistics are unimpressive. We believe that a project with more than 20 participating vet clinics requires time, patience and support before a dramatic jump in

sterilization procedures can be expected. Nevertheless, two Spay/Neuter partners, Alachua County Animal Services and Operation Catnip, did show an increase in procedures during the project period.

Spays and neuters at ACAS climbed 8%, from 986 in Year 2000 to 1066 in the seven months of Project Year One. The increase was almost even between cats and dogs. Operation Catnip also increased procedures, up 7% from 864 in the baseline year to 926 in 2002-2003.

Procedures at the private vet clinics (counting Gallenkamp voucher, other discount and private pay procedures) dropped almost 10% according to figures reported. However, vet clinics were very slow to accept the reporting procedure and the statistics reported are undoubtedly on the low side of actual performance.

Spay/neuter data as reported show that spays and neuters overall were down 5% Alachua County during the first seven months of Project Year One.

# Project Activities: Successes, Challenges and Future Plans

## Partnership/Collaboration/Project Management

The most valuable (and often painful) lessons to come out of Project Year One for coalition members were probably those related to maintaining and nurturing productive, collaborative partnerships. None of the participants were prepared for the strong feelings and often heated conflicts that resulted from bringing a very diverse group of organizational cultures together to work towards a mission in which they all believed passionately.

Some background information on the development of the initial project application will shed light on the complex interagency dynamics with which we are now dealing. The original project proposal to the Maddie's Fund was developed by a collaborative team including leaders from the Alachua County Humane Society, Alachua County Animal Services, Gainesville Pet Rescue, the University of Florida Vet School and representatives of the private veterinary community. As originally envisioned, the project would be administered by this coalition, formalized as No More Homeless Pets in Alachua County, Inc.

Maddie's Fund was interested in funding our project, but needed to select an organization with a long and stable history and fiscal structure as the lead agency to receive the funding. No More Homeless Pets Coalition was too new, and had no experienced administrative staff to appropriately handle a large grant award.

The Alachua County Humane Society was selected as the lead agency with which the Maddie's Fund would contract. Other partners would become participating organizations.

Unfortunately, simultaneous with the Maddie's grant award, the Humane Society underwent a change in board and administrative leadership. A new executive director, who had not participated in the development of the project, arrived just in time to sign the funding agreement with Maddie's and accept oversight of the project.

After the elation of having such a large and innovative project approved, the disappointment among the original partners at the changes in realization of their vision was understandable. Misunderstandings and resentments began to develop, and the project has been dealing with these issues more or less continuously ever since.

A great deal of time, effort and flexibility goes into maintaining any community collaborative effort. The confusion and miscommunication involved in the startup of this project made partnership maintenance practically a full time job!

### **What worked:**

- **Forming a Joint Governance Committee that allows all participating organizations to have a say in how the project is administered.** As a resolution to the initial disagreements, the Humane Society as lead agency agreed to share responsibility and authority for certain grant management decisions with the other project partners, and a formal Letter of Understanding documented this agreement. The Joint Governance Committee meets monthly

to review program progress, data and fiscal reports, and to discuss and give guidance to program activities. The Joint Governance Committee must approve or disapprove hiring decisions relating to project staff.

- **Recruiting an independent contractor to handle fiscal administration and project management.** This approach seemed to allay fears that the lead agency was trying to “take over the whole project” from the original project developers. Because the outside consultant was not perceived to have existing allegiances to any one partner organization, she was able to serve as a mediator and facilitator when disagreements or misunderstandings arose between partners. Other staff (the original Project Coordinator, who left the project in April, and the subsequent Adoptions Coordinator and Project Assistant) were hired for the project as employees of the lead agency. Justified or not, the feeling among partners was that these employees could not objectively serve the project in terms of partnership facilitation and maintenance.
- **Distributing adoption stipends on a monthly basis rather than less frequently.** Monthly adoption stipend payments kept interest up among the partners and allowed them to immediately begin using their stipend money to improve their adoption and organizational capacity.
- **Reallocating unspent funds toward extra adoption stipends.** A slow start to the project, along with structural changes during the second half of the year, left some budgeted staff positions vacant a portion of the time, which resulted in salary and fringe savings. Other events and activities cost less than originally anticipated. As these savings were realized, they were rolled into the adoption stipend budget when it became apparent we would exceed the adoption goals for which we originally budgeted.

### **What didn't work:**

- **Selecting participating organizations with a very disparate level of organizational capacity.** The original developers of the project recruited five no-kill partners that were extremely diverse in terms of their level of organizational development. Two organizations were large, well-funded agencies with a long history of administering complex programs. One was a mid-size pet rescue with a good foundation, ready to grow. Two were tiny, one-to-three person operations based in loaned space at vet clinics, with little to no administrative background and without strong management systems in place. This wide gap in capacity meant that some organizations required a disproportionate amount of technical support and were not able to fully participate in the joint governance process.
- **Not requiring written Letters of Understanding or other formal agreements from participating organizations.** Some of the no-kill partners that were selected for inclusion in the application did not fully understand the amount of data that they would be required to report. It was also not made clear to the participating organizations at the outset that Maddie's expected them to use their adoption stipend money to build organizational capacity, and not just to do more of what they were already doing. Reports were frequently

incomplete, contradictory or late. Some organizations used stipend money to fund day-to-day operations rather than build capacity, and participated minimally in project planning and activities.

- **Expecting partner organizations to use their adoption stipend money for organizational development on their own, without guidance or direction.** The participating organizations were not given clear, explicit direction at the beginning of the project as to their expected use of adoption stipend funds to build organizational capacity. As a result, many of the groups used this significant infusion of new revenue to simply expand on the number of animals rescued, purchase expendable supplies, or purchase veterinary services for animals needing treatment.
- **Distributing adoption stipends based on an equally-allocated baseline.** At the beginning of Project Year One, the partners decided to assign the same monthly baseline to each organization. Each organization received adoption stipends for every adoption after the first 12 each month. Although on paper this averaged out to yield the target adoption goal, in practice the result was that the distribution of funds looked nothing like the budget Maddie's had approved. Gainesville Pet Rescue, the highest-performing agency both in the baseline year and Project Year One, took home a disproportionately large amount of money, while West End//Helping Hands, which performed spectacularly both against its own baseline and against Year One Performance of much larger agencies, did not receive the full amount it qualified for. The impact of this disparity didn't really become clear until close to the end of Project Year One.

### **What's Next:**

- **Technical assistance:** Year Two plans call for a focus on technical assistance to the participating no-kill organizations to help them assess and address their organizational development needs. Project staff will work with the organizations on a needs assessment process and connect them with resources to help build sustainability and stable structure. Some of the partner agencies need basic assistance with incorporation and attainment of 501(c)(3) status; the larger organizations might choose to work on improving written policies and procedures, hiring additional staff, expanding their fostering programs, or increasing space and hours to increase adoptions.
- **Monitoring and improvement plans:** During the first quarter of Project Year Two, the Year One records of all participating no-kill organizations will be monitored for compliance with Maddie's and project requirements. Agencies that display significant need for improvement in recordkeeping and compliance will receive assistance in creating an improvement plan to ensure that they understand and implement any necessary changes. These improvement plans, which will be approved by the Joint Governance Committee and signed by the subject organization, will address the absence of formal, written agreements previously discussed.
- **Corrected baselines:** Baselines have been re-allocated for Project Year Two on an individual basis keyed to each agency's actual baseline year performance.

## **Spay/Neuter**

The Spay/Neuter component of the Alachua County project was short-lived due to the funder's decision to change its approach to spay/neuter nationwide. The spay/neuter project, which began July 1, 2002 and was terminated January 31, 2003, was designed to increase the number of pet sterilizations in the county by making participation in the existing low cost spay/neuter program more financially appealing to veterinarians.

The Gallenkamp Low Cost Spay/Neuter Voucher program had been successful and effective in facilitating low cost spays and neuters in Alachua County for ten years. The Maddie's funding added a stipend on top of the Gallenkamp reimbursement rate to vets that brought procedures performed with vouchers much closer to market rate. Vet clinics were required to meet a monthly baseline of 12 Gallenkamp procedures, then were eligible for the Maddie's stipend for each procedure over 12 for that month.

### **What worked:**

- **Paying vets monthly:** In order to generate interest and buy-in to this procedurally complex program, it was important to show vet clinics some benefit immediately. Clinics which had been complaining about low voucher reimbursement rates for years were happy to receive reimbursements that came closer to covering their costs for performing these procedures.
- **Piggybacking onto existing voucher program:** Because the Gallenkamp program had been recognized and successful for so many years, there was no question of replacing it with the Maddie's program. Vets who had participated in Gallenkamp were familiar and comfortable with the concept of performing voucher procedures and most clinics had longstanding relationships with Gallenkamp program staff. Collaboration with Gallenkamp staff on publicizing the program, gathering data and reimbursing clinics reduced the administrative workload for the clinics and protected community goodwill toward a successful homegrown program.

### **What didn't work:**

- **Not getting signed agreements up front:** Maddie's Project staff worked to make the voucher reimbursement process as user-friendly as possible, but participation still required timely and accurate reporting of specific data. These requirements were not made clear to participating vet clinics prior to the start of the project, and collecting data became a long-drawn-out ordeal every month. Many clinics simply refused to provide data on private-pay spays and neuters, or reported that they did not track that information. Frequently missed reporting deadlines meant that required reports to the funder were late or incomplete. Because the requirements of the program were not agreed to in writing ahead of time, there was very little understanding at the clinic level as to why the reports were necessary or how they were connected to reimbursement payments.

- **Applying the same high baseline to all clinics:** As in the case of homogenous baselines for adoption agencies, what started as a well-intentioned approach to simplifying the reporting and reimbursement process ended up penalizing small clinics by setting the baseline artificially high for their capabilities and capacity. Small clinics got discouraged and dropped out of the project, or never received monetary reward for increases in sterilizations that were proportionally significant.
- **Confusing pay structure:** Vet staff never really were clear on the differences between the Gallenkamp program, the Maddie's program, and Operation Catnip (the feral cat trap-neuter-release program that was also a Maddie's partner). To further muddy the waters, a short-term ACPCA grant put additional spay/neuter vouchers into the community at the same time. Overworked front office staff at clinics quickly became impatient with trying to keep track of which vouchers had been reimbursed at what rate.
- **Equating more money to the vets with increased consumer use of vouchers:** A basic flaw in the original project design seems to be the assumption that if vet clinics got paid more for each sterilization, more pet owners would get their animals sterilized. The cost to pet owners did not go down due to the Maddie's project; because the new project had been grafted onto the existing Gallenkamp program, consumers saw no difference in prices. The Gallenkamp voucher is and always has been very affordable, and was widely available with very few restrictions to qualify. Increasing the reimbursement rate to vets might have made a difference if vouchers were not accepted at many clinics and the increased rate persuaded more clinics to participate, but that wasn't the case.
- **Advertising:** Although considerable time, effort and money was spent advertising the availability of low-cost spay/neuter vouchers and the benefits of pet sterilization, there was no appreciable increase in purchase of the vouchers or the rate of spays and neuters in the community. The vehicles used for advertising and community awareness did not appear to reach the target audience: pet owners who would not have sterilized their pets without knowledge of the voucher program and educational material. No market research was done to determine what the target audience should be and what media would be effective in reaching them.

### **What's next:**

After terminating the spay/neuter portion of the Alachua County Maddie's Pet Rescue Project, Maddie's Fund solicited participation from the Alachua County Veterinary Medical Association to administer a low cost spay/neuter voucher program targeted to Medicaid recipients. This project began in July 2003. The Pet Rescue project partners will support and assist the VMA project as requested (within the parameters of the Maddie's Pet Rescue Project restrictions). We consider the VMA Spay/Neuter project an important partner as we work together to address all causes and effects of pet overpopulation.

## **Adoptions**

The Alachua County Project tried a number of strategies and approaches to increase adoptions both on a project-wide basis and at the individual organization level. Special initiatives included Adoptathons and the Adopt A Pet From Your Vet program. Alachua County Animal Services piloted a special program, New Hope, designed to make it easier and more cost-effective for participating no-kill organizations to transfer animals from the shelter into their adoption programs. Important lessons were learned from both the successes and the barriers encountered during these efforts.

## ***Adoptathons***

In order to increase our adoptions to meet the necessary goals of the Maddie's Project, the no-kill partners and ACAS participated in four adoptathons throughout Project Year One: Special Needs Pets in August, Home 4 the Holidays in late November, Lucky Pet in March, and Smitten With Kittens in June. We also held one mini-thon during High Springs Pioneer Days in May.

## **What Worked:**

- The no-kill organizations planned several weeks ahead on surgery schedules so that they would have a lot of animals ready for adoption.
- The organizations that scheduled multiple adoption counselors to be available to do adoptions at the events had better results.
- Scheduling volunteers to help with set up, break down and others to help during the event.
- Advertising prior to the event was very effective, however, an actual news story seemed to generate the largest turnout.
- Rescue groups that were organized and appeared professional attracted more potential adopters.

## **What Didn't:**

- Groups that brought a small selection of animals did not fare well at adoptathons.
- The Pioneer Days adoptathon was not a success. Although the location (a very popular 50's-themed diner in the Gainesville suburb of High Springs) seemed perfect and the adoptathon was timed to coincide with the Pioneer Days Festival, when more than 20,000 people cram into High Springs to enjoy music, street theater and crafts, in practice this event just didn't work. The opportunity arose quickly and the event was thrown together with minimum time to get buy-in from all the groups. Few animals were brought and there was very little walk-through traffic at the event.

- Selecting event dates and arranging advertising on an event-by-event basis. There was no up-front planning process to select event dates at the beginning of the year, which would have given the participants plenty of time to plan and schedule. Advertising was negotiated piecemeal; a whole year's calendar of dates could have leveraged some steep discounts from media and suppliers.
- We didn't begin to do serious outcome evaluations and cost/benefit analysis of events until the very end of Project Year One. It was difficult to evaluate which strategies were effective and which weren't in the absence of hard data.

### **What's Next:**

- Our recently-contracted PR and Events Coordinator has developed a calendar of event dates for Project Year Two with input from all partners. The calendar includes timetables for advertising, site contracting and supplies purchase and will facilitate efficient, well-planned events. She is in the process of negotiating ad purchases for the entire year. A copy of the PR and Events Plan appears at Attachment A.
- We will expand on the data collection from adoptathons to allow detailed analysis of successful and unsuccessful strategies. In May we developed an exit survey to evaluate the effectiveness of advertising; this survey will be used at all events.
- We are adopting a number of strategies recommended at the recent No More Homeless Pets Conference in Utah, which our Adoptions Coordinator attended. These will include: setting concrete, high adoption goals for each event; encouraging participants to bring twice as many animals as they hope to adopt out; and working towards a streamlined, uniform adoption procedure for all participants.

## **Adopt a Pet From Your Vet Program**

*(Overview and analysis by Cheryl Gibson, Executive Director, Gainesville Pet Rescue)*

Gainesville Pet Rescue was looking for more foster homes in order to save more animals. A program was introduced to our local veterinarians that would help to solve the foster home shortage and hopefully help to place more animals into permanent, loving homes. Each participating veterinary hospital would basically become the “foster home” for one of GPR’s rescued animals.

In the first year, we had 11 veterinary offices participating and we were able to find homes for 106 animals through the “Adopt a Pet From Your Vet” program (APV). We feel that the APV program is really just an extension of our existing foster program. We are quite experienced at placing our animals in foster homes as we have as many as fifty foster families at any one time.

Performance results from the Adopt At Vet program are included in the Data Reports section of this document.

### **What worked:**

- Visiting each veterinary office prior to beginning this program was instrumental in its success. It was very important for the veterinarians and staff to understand that they were acting as a foster home for our pets.
- Having a “contact” person at each vet office was helpful because the regular staff was always changing.
- Developing a weekly schedule so that veterinary offices knew when we would be dropping off a new pet. A staff member/volunteer would transport animals and supplies to the vet offices each week.
- Keeping good records of all the transfers from GPR to Vet offices.
- Quarterly letters were sent to each vet office thanking them for participating in the program and informing them of how many adoptions occurred at their office. A monthly stipend was included based on how many pets were adopted out from their office.
- Signage on all cages at the vet offices explaining what the Adopt a Pet program was all about. Also included was information on the adoption process.

### **What Didn't:**

- Dogs and puppies did not work in this program. Unfortunately it was too difficult for the vet office staff to care for puppies & dogs in their front office, mainly because they were noisy and messy. It was discovered early on that this program was going to work best with cats/kittens.

### **What's Next:**

- GPR will continue to expand and refine this successful program.

### ***Internet Adoptions***

It became very clear to all participating agencies early on that if they were going to increase adoptions they needed to do a better job at updating the agency websites and the Petfinder website. Pet seekers soon discovered that many agencies were updating the websites every week.

### **What Worked:**

- The project purchased easy-to-use digital cameras for each of the participating organizations and provided training to organization staff on how to upload photos to PetFinder and their own websites.
- Getting into the habit of taking each animal's picture when they entered the program took a little time but proved to be successful (GPR).
- We also began teaching several of our volunteers how to enter photos on the GPR website as well as the PetFinder website (GPR).
- Developing an instruction manual on how to take photos, download photos and how to enter them on the websites. This made it easy for volunteers to learn how to do it (GPR).
- Posting very detailed descriptions of animals available helps to weed out a lot of repetitive emailing and makes the service less frustrating for potential adopters browsing for a specific type of pet. (West End)
- Purebred animals get adopted very quickly on PetFinder. (West End)
- As soon as we started posting our animals on PetFinder, our adoptions skyrocketed. People will travel from all over Florida to adopt the one perfect pet they see online. (Haile Plantation)
- Overall, PetFinder is a great system that works very well. (West End)

### **What Didn't:**

- We found it nearly impossible to adopt out regular, non-purebred housecats on Petfinder; there are just too many listed. (West End)

### **What's Next:**

- We will work on posting better, more detailed descriptions and better photos to improve adoptions via the Internet. (West End)

### ***New Hope***

In the early Spring of Project Year One, Alachua County Animal Services piloted a new program to help find permanent homes for animals that could not be adopted during the regular shelter timeline. Many adoptable animals scheduled for euthanasia were designated as “New Hope” animals, with their adoption fee reduced to \$10 for participating no-kill organizations to encourage these animals’ transfer out of the shelter. This reduced rate includes rabies vaccination and license tag, spay/neuter surgery, initial vaccinations, deworming, and heartworm/feline leukemia test.

As with any new program, the New Hope initiative ran into some procedural glitches during the first few weeks as shelter staff and rescue groups got used to the new system. ACAS was very thorough in documenting procedures to all the groups and adapting them as necessary.

To support and leverage the New Hope program, the Maddie’s Project Adoption Coordinator sent out a weekly inventory of New Hope animals with detailed descriptions, including behavioral assessments. These New Hope “reviews” called attention to the special, appealing characteristics of each dog or cat and encouraged the no-kill groups to consider them.

The detailed New Hope Program Guidelines and supporting documents, including sample weekly New Hope reviews, appear at Attachment B.

## Success Stories

While the statistics from Project Year One are important, project and agency staff find the most inspiration in feedback from pet owners about rescued animals in loving, permanent homes. Here are a selection of success stories from the Fourth Quarter of Project Year One:

### *Alachua County Humane Society*

**From:** Christina Elaine Stringer [mailto:stringer@ocean.ocean.fsu.edu]

**Sent:** Monday, July 21, 2003 3:24 PM

**To:** mdunlap@alachuahumane.org

**Subject:** Zeke!

Hello! I wasn't sure who to email with a Zeke update, but since we talked for such a long time, I thought you could let everyone know how things are going.

Zeke is doing wonderfully! I love him more and more each day. He and my other dog, Ginger, are getting along quite well. The first night was a little rough...Ginger wasn't sure what to think about a new puppy that wanted to bark and play all the time. We kept them separated and gradually introduced them, and by the next afternoon, they were playing and living harmoniously. Sometimes Zeke gets a little too excited for Ginger's tastes, but she is not afraid to let him know and he knows when to let her have alone time.

He is behaving quite well and doing well in his crate. He enjoys taking walks and likes to make sure he is right next to Ginger, so he doesn't miss anything! He pulls a little on his leash when walking, but we are working on that. I think that with time and patience, we'll get it taken care of. I'm currently looking for obedience classes that we can attend.

Last night we went to Lake Ella (a city park with lots of ducks, water, and people) and he had a blast. At first he was a bit overwhelmed by the sounds and sights, but he acclimated very quickly. He still seems a little bewildered by ducks though!

We have taken lots of pictures, and as soon as I get them developed I will send them along. I just want to thank everyone at the office for being so helpful last week! I really appreciated the wonderful attitude and helpfulness from everyone there! I am so happy that I have the opportunity to have Zeke as a part of my life. Thank you all so much for entrusting me with such an amazing animal! I will definitely continue to keep in touch and keep you updated on Zeke's progress.

Best wishes,

Christina Stringer

### *Gainesville Pet Rescue:*

Hi!

I adopted kitten Tobi (Templeton's brother) last week, and I just wanted to send you a quick note about him.

Tobi is the sweetest, most easygoing little guy and a nonstop purring machine. He loves to romp and play but is also content to sit on our laps and let us scratch his head. And today I was able to clip all of his front claws in about a minute and a half with only minimal complaining from him after the eighth claw!

Tobi's met our two other pets--Tony, a rat terrier (and previous GPR grad) and Inky, my 18-pound black male cat; and although Tobi is the tiniest by far, he thinks he's a large tiger and stands his ground.

We absolutely adore him and look forward to enjoying him for many years to come.

Thank you so much for all you do!

Amy Martin

### *Haile Plantation Animal Clinic:*

#### **Saved from Solitary Confinement: Bear Finds A New Home**

Bear was brought into Haile Plantation Animal Clinic as a puppy by a person who had nowhere else to take an unwanted litter. Dr. Linda McCollough took in the pups and placed them up for adoption. All of the puppies found homes, but unfortunately Bear was returned to the clinic after being adopted. He was then adopted to another home where he was eventually placed on a chain. He had no contact with the family. The children could not play with him so he was left in the backyard with a life sentence and no parole. Dr. McCollough found out that Bear was a chained dog and had him returned to her. For approximately five months Bear was kept at the Haile Plantation Clinic kennels until he could find a new home.

I was fostering a cocker spaniel for Dr. McCollough and the staff at Haile asked if I would foster Bear. I was happy to help out, and eager to work with Bear as he was timid around people and some objects. Well, my dog Katie and Bear fell in love. They have a great time playing together in the yard, chasing and mouthing each other. I could not have found a more perfect buddy for Katie. Bear is a free spirit and I cannot imagine him living on a chain. Bear has permanently joined our family and I am happy to say that he will NEVER be chained again. I urge everyone I speak to who is looking for a kitten, cat, puppy or dog to please save a life and adopt from a rescue group instead of buying one from a breeder or pet store.

– Sheri Inks

#### **The Golden Girls**

Because we have a house full of rescued kitties, we make frequent visits to Dr. McCollough at Haile Plantation Animal Clinic. On several occasions we saw two dogs in cages in the front waiting area. The dogs had been rescued from lives as breeders at puppy mills and were up for adoption. One was an 11-year-old Pekingese named Moo-Shue, and the other one was a nine-

year-old Shih-tzu named Yoshi. Because of our large family of animals which included a little Yorkie-Poo named Sugar, the thought of adopting these two doggies never entered our minds. Several months went by and each time we went to the clinic, we saw that Moo-Shue and Yoshi were still waiting to be adopted.

On a cold night in February our little dog Sugar slipped into a coma and passed away the next morning. The loss of our little friend was devastating. The silence in our home was unbearable. No more little food dishes on the kitchen floor. No more barking and kissing when we returned home from work. No more buddy to ride with us in the car. And no warm, little fuzzy body snuggled up to us in bed at night.

One month passed and the sadness did not lessen. One morning I told my husband that I needed the presence of a dog in our home. We knew we could never replace Sugar, but perhaps we could give a good home to a special dog in need. It was at that point that I thought of Moo-Shue and Yoshi. They were still at the clinic and nobody wanted them because of their advanced ages. We decided that, if we all got along during several meetings, our home would be the perfect place for these “Golden Girls.”

At the end of March, we took the girls to their new home. This was the first real home they had ever had. They ran from room to room sniffing and chasing cats. We took them for a long walk in the neighborhood and they held their heads up high and walked with a real joy in their step. They ate dinner in beautiful new dog dishes and slept on soft, thick blankets in a large laundry room. We found their favorite thing to do is to go for rides. Each day when we get home from work we load them into our truck and away we go. In fact, if Yoshi slips out the door ahead of us at any time, she runs straight to the truck. In the past week, the girls experienced a weekend at the beach. They ran (Moo-Shue waddled), sniffed and met lots of new people. They had a wonderful time and so did we!

In spite of their advanced ages, they have done quite well with their house training and get along well with our houseguests. They still aren't crazy about the cats but being able to chase them is part of the fun in their lives.

We still miss our Sugar, but the wonderful doggie presence of our Golden Girls has helped us tremendously. We rescued them and they have, in turn, given us tons of joy. Even though they are in their final years, these years will be good ones for them and for us. If it weren't for Haile Plantation Clinic and Dr. McCollough, these special friends would not be part of our family. Because of her dedication, lots of animals have been rescued and have found happy new homes.

– Shelly Whitfield, High Springs, Florida

## **Financial Reports**

Financial reports attached include:

- Maddie's Project Balance Sheet as of June 30, 2003
- Income Statement: July 1, 2002 through June 30, 2003
- Cash Flow Statement: July 1, 2002 through June 30, 2003

## **Data Reports**

Data reports attached include:

- Signed original Monthly Reports for May, June and July 2003
- Fourth Quarter Summary Report for the period May through June 2003
- Annual Summary Report for Project Year One
- Summary of Spay/Neuter data for July 2002 through January 2003.
- Project Year One Performance Report: Adopt At Vet Program

## **Public Awareness/Advertising/Media Coverage**

A report on public awareness and advertising activities, along with a file of publicity materials produced and press clippings, will be forwarded under separate cover by Lisa Horne, the project's Public Awareness/Media Coordinator contractor for the Fourth Quarter of Project Year One.