

**GENERAL MANAGER'S REPORT
TO THE
BOARD OF ANIMAL SERVICES COMMISSIONERS
FOR THE MONTH OF
JULY 2008**

At the meetings on July 14 and July 28, 2008, the General Manager or his designee provided the following updates, summary of activities, and information about events in July.

Announcements:

The Department-wide **Special Pet Adopt-a-thon on July 19th and 20th** was extremely successful. All of the Centers exceeded their goal of 20% more adoptions than the previous weekend. To celebrate this achievement a few department managers paid for a pizza party at each of the Centers for all the employees and volunteers. Several of the local media stations aired the event and continue to do follow up on various animals that came in during the event. The grand total of animals adopted during this time was **539 adoptions**, the most animals adopted during any event. Unfortunately, a total of 316 animals were impounded during this same timeframe.

Response to Overcrowding: There has been a significant increase in the number of animals that the Department is taking in as a result of the housing foreclosure crisis, animals separated from their homes on the 4th of July, and the fact that summer typically is a busy time of year for intakes at the shelters. We are seeing a huge increase in the number of animals, particularly at the East Valley and South LA Animal Care Centers. The GM has been working with the Center Managers to devise a strategy to handle the overcrowding problem.

We have implemented a strategy to put more animals on the 7-day Red Alert to give notice to New Hope organizations that these are the animals most in need of adoption and their resources. After the fulfillment of the 7-day alert, the GM will work closely with the Center Managers to utilize the Minus-1 goal to reduce euthanasia as best we can.

The Humane Society of the US had a meeting at one of our Centers with their team captains to promote **Proposition 2, the Farm Animal Cruelty proposition** to help educate the public.

The *Alive!* Newsletter of the All Cities Employee's Club, will feature 5 adoptable animals from one of our Care Centers each month.

Department Operations & Medical Divisions:

Training

Chameleon Power Users Group (PUGs): We are in the process of identifying 2 adept users at each of our Animal Care Centers who will work together to recommend needed training for staff, suggesting possible software improvements and serving as a resource/expert at their respective Centers, so that we maintain a level of proficiency and excellence in the use of our Chameleon software.

Permit Officers will be participating in a large animal handling training program conducted by LA Zoo.

Bottle Baby Foster and Volunteer Programs

Volunteer Division -The Volunteer Program Manager position has finally been unfrozen and there is a new Civil Service list of candidates. We hope to begin interviewing in the next couple of weeks to finally staff this critical position. The Department commends all the Center Volunteer Liaisons who have really pulled together to maintain their volunteer programs at the Center level.

Bottle Baby/ Foster Program- LAAS has received more than 4,000 unweaned kittens since January 2008. That is an increase of 1,000 unweaned kittens compared to the same 6 month period in 2007. As the kittens continue to be turned in, New Hope/Bottle Baby Coordinators continue to seek more foster parents to foster neonate kittens. New Hope Coordinators continue to recruit more foster parents and conduct orientations. More sustainable kittens and queens with kittens are being sent to Mission center until they are weaned and can be returned to the centers for adoption.

Medical

The two 4th-Year **Students from Western University** have been a tremendous assist to our medical program over the past several weeks. Another student will be starting her four-week session on August 4.

Our fifth Veterinarian, **Dr. Lynn Whited**, started this month and is already making her mark in helping us to treat wildlife in the Centers. We are in the process of interviewing candidates for our Chief Veterinarian position and hope to be able to make our announcement in August.

Monthly vaccine clinic at East Valley. Total: 279 individual vaccinations with 151 patients, 5 microchips and 24 licenses.

Shelter Operations

Small Animal Rescue Team (SART): SART is coming together. The team of ACO's will receive special equipment and training needed to rescue animals from difficult situations such as trapped in a tree, storm drain, bodies of water, etc. This team will also be of value in a disaster situation.

Northeast Valley (Mission): The Department will continue to modify the guidelines for animals transferred to the Northeast Valley Animal Care Center as necessary, to utilize space as best as we can with limited staff.

- Mission capacity was established at 100-120 animals
- Queens with litters and Personal Property, when animals will be kept for lengthy periods of time, are now transferable, as well as evidence animals.
- Mission's current inventory is 96 animals

Harbor: The Harbor Animal Care Center has had the new misting system installed. The misters automatically turn on when the temperature reaches 85 degrees.

South Los Angeles: The South LA Animal Care Center has converted their grooming room into an additional cat room to provide more space for the large number of cats being turned into the Center. South LA staff is planning an adoption event, "Hot Dogs, Kool Cats" in September.

East Valley: The Department is reviewing the rabbit area at East Valley for improvements and is considering converting the reptile room.

West Valley: The West Valley Animal Care Center has moved all of the rabbits back into the rabbit area. We purchased two portable air coolers to adequately maintain the temperature in the rabbit area.

Field Operations

LAX Task Force: The Department has worked with LA County Public Health and Centers for Disease Control (CDC) on the confiscation and disposition of 3 shipments of sick and underage puppies that came into LAX from Korea. A task force that the Department and Mayor's Office has assembled continues to work together on finalizing a protocol for dealing with the flow of animals coming into the City through LAX. We will keep the Commission posted.

Santee Alley Task Force: We are reviewing our Santee Alley enforcement history in an effort to develop a new and more effective enforcement strategy.

Animal Care in Pet Stores: A new protocol, based on new state laws to become effective January 2009, is under review of the City Attorney. When finalized the protocol will be implemented and released to the public so all interested parties in the City of LA will know what the Department's standards are for pet stores and can advise us when pet stores are not meeting those standards.

Permits for Circuses and Exhibitions: In our on-going efforts to reach out to all interested and affected constituencies, we have had meetings with film industry representatives and humane organizations. We still have to meet with exhibitors of animals, and probably consult with USDA and Fish and Game again, before bringing revised policies for your consideration.

Administration

Contracts:

North Central Clinic: FixNation has vacated the clinic (12,000 cats altered).

RFPs

Spay/Neuter Clinic Evaluations: Although the Department has yet to receive a Certificate of Occupancy for most of the new spay/neuter clinics that are in the process of being completed by GSD, we are moved forward on the process of evaluating the proposals. The Department received proposals in May for our Harbor, West LA, North Central, and East Valley Spay/Neuter Clinics. We are in the process of concluding our evaluation of the proposals and we plan to bring recommendations for awards to the next Commission meeting in August. We will also be submitting a request to get the RFP back out on the street as soon as possible to solicit vendors for any remaining Clinics after this process is complete.

Northeast Valley (Mission): We did not receive any proposals for the Mission spay/neuter clinic, because the immediate future of that Center has been unknown, making it a bit of a financial risk for vendors. The Northeast Valley is underserved and difficulty in obtaining the interest of a contractor for the clinic is one of several negative consequences of the City's decision to hold off opening the Center for at least one fiscal year.

Registry Solicitations: We are advertising now for dog and cat breed registries and associations who are applying to be recognized by the Board, as required by the new spay/neuter ordinance. Applications are coming in and we will have a list of registries in August or early September for the Board's review and approval.

Pet Health Insurance: Proposals are in and an evaluation panel meets on July 29, 2008.

Microchip RFP: Two proposals were received. An evaluation panel has been established and they will meet to review the proposals in August.

Spay/Neuter Ordinance

Implementing S/N Ordinance: Staff and the City Attorney's Office are meeting regularly to prepare for the implementation of the City's new s/n ordinance. The ordinance comes with many implementation complexities on an Operations level that we are working through in order to be prepared to implement come October 1st. The Department is also working with an ad hoc committee of PR firms in the community to put together a marketing strategy to help the Department get the word out. The Department has no budget for public relations and we must rely on the kindness of our community volunteers and PR professionals to assist us.

Department has a count down clock on its website, counting down to the enforcement date of the Spay/Neuter Ordinance. We are working feverishly on ensuring the infrastructure exists to implement this ordinance come Oct. 1st.

Other

Fee Study: The Commission approved the department submitting a fee study to the CAO for review in December. We have received some indication that the first level of CAO review is now complete. It is our hope that this means the study will be forwarded to the Finance Committee for approval. The CAO based this year's budget on revenue projections recommended in this Fee Study. We are now into the current budget year and the fee study is still not approved or implemented.

New South LA Center Design: The Department is working with the Mayor's Office, BOE, the architects and staff on the design of the new South LA Center Design to make sure we apply lessons learned from all of our other Center designs.

Licensing: Department representatives met with the Office of Finance on July 17 to establish a process to send late license renewals to an outside agency for collection. On Tuesday, July 22, the Department resumed mailing City Attorney letters (third notices) to dog owners who did not respond to the first 2 renewal notices.

"A House is Not a Home Without a Pet" Gift Certificate Program: After further discussions with the Pet Care Foundation's attorney and the City Attorney, it was decided to make this program available to Real Estate agents directly and let them work out the tax benefits from participating in this program with their own accountants.

New Hope Program Revisions: The approved and revised forms were sent to New Hope partners for them to update their information and begin their monthly reporting beginning with adoptions from June 2008.

Upcoming Department Events:

Creating a Humane LA Public Workshops - The Department is partnering with the Human Relations Commission in scheduling a series of eleven public workshops. Each of the workshops will be held in a different Council District and will be hosted by the respective Council Member. Each workshop will focus on one of the ten components of the No-Kill Equation. Input gathered from these workshops will be rolled into the Department's strategic plan. The last of the series of workshops will culminate in the unveiling of a Department initiative that has been in development for over a year called Creating a Humane LA. It is our hope that the Mayor will host this session. First of the series will be on high volume/low cost spay/neuter and will be hosted by CM Parks on August 6, 2008.

The Big Lick Pet Adoption Event and Ice Cream Party in collaboration with the Found Animal Foundation is scheduled for August 9, 2008 at the West LA Animal Care Center.