

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

At the meetings of February 11, 2008, and February 25, 2008 the General Manager or his designee provided the following updates, summary of activities, and information about events in January and February.

Announcements: The General Manager sadly informed the Commission of the recent passing of Ms. Yvonne Funches, clerk at the North Central Animal Care Center. On February 11, the Commission Meeting was adjourned in her memory.

The Department recently announced the start of the six month pilot program called **Senior For Seniors**. The new program matches senior pets (age 7 +) from Los Angeles Animal Care Centers with senior adults (age 62 +). Senior citizens are then allowed to adopt their new senior companion free of charge. The pet will be spayed or neutered, vaccinated, and microchipped. Senior citizens are allowed one free dog license per year. The Department is working with the Department of Aging and Recreation and Parks to market the program. All Center Volunteer Liaisons are reaching out to senior centers to schedule adoption events.

In March 2007, **the Animal Cruelty Task Force** had conducted a probation search at the residence of Mr. Walter "Randy" Citizen in South Los Angeles. Seventeen adult pit bulls found at his property presenting injuries consistent with dog fighting were taken into protective custody. Citizen was arrested by LAPD and charged with ten counts of dog fighting. On February 8, 2008, Citizen pled guilty to five counts of dog fighting and was sentenced to five years in state prison and is required to make restitution for the care and maintenance of the dogs.

On February 12, the **City Council voted to require sterilization of cats and dogs at four months of age or older**, aimed at reducing the number of stray animals the City's shelters kill each year. The ordinance, passed on a vote of 14-1, also goes after illegal breeding, dog fighting, and hoarding. A Bill signing ceremony by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa is scheduled to take place on February 26 at 9:30 A.M. in the Mayor's Conference Room of City Hall.

Customer Service: The Department has continued to take action to improve our overall customer service standards to the public. The Department staff is currently in the process of developing survey forms to collect valuable feedback. The Department is also working with their HLP Chameleon partners to help identify power users, internal weaknesses, and important processes.

Internship Opportunities: The Department continues to have ongoing discussions with Pierce College about different partnerships that would provide veterinary medicine students with the unique opportunity to assist staff at the shelters with grooming and veterinary technician functions. The Department also continues to work with Western University on developing internship programs. Representatives from Western University would like to come before the Board and present some of their ideas at a future Commission Meeting.

Department Events: On February 23, the Department hosted the Grand Opening of the new West Los Angeles Animal Care Center. The Grand Opening was attended by Mayor Antonio Villaraigosa, Councilmember Bill Rosendahl, City Engineer Gary Lee More, Actor Jason Patric, and Commissioners Irene Ponce and Archie Quincey, Jr.

On February 24, the Department celebrated "Spay Day LA." Partnering with the Amanda Foundation, the Sam Simon Foundation, Dr. Jones at South LA, FixNation, and clinics, the Department opened the facilities of the North Central, South Los Angeles, and West Valley Animal Care Centers and maximized mobile clinic use for free spay/neuter services for dogs and cats. Through their combined efforts, Spay Day LA successfully sterilized 169 animals.

The Department is targeting May 4 to potentially host another "Big Sunday" event, involving the East Valley, North Central, South Los Angeles, and West Valley Animal Care Centers. The Department, in partnership with Councilmember Ed Reyes and LAUSD, is also targeting May 10 to kick off "Be Kind to Animals Week – Humane Education For the Youth." The purpose of the event is to demonstrate to the City's youth the different career opportunities in animal welfare. The Department anticipates over 300 children to attend. Commissioner Irene Ponce is heavily involved in helping to launch the event.