

We're not your father's animal control...

By Ed Boks

Animal Care & Control (AC&C) is the third largest pet rescue organization in the nation, rescuing over 45,000 lost, homeless, neglected, abandoned and abused pets every year in the five boroughs. That translates into nearly 125 pets every day.



Formerly known as the Center for Animal Care and Control (CACC), this agency was at one time considered by many to be the “worst” animal welfare organization in the country. In fact, it was once reported as such by this very newspaper (New York Post) not so many years ago.

In 2003, Mayor Bloomberg decided a change needed to be made but he was restricted by looming budget deficits and antiquated shelters. So, what does a brilliant manager do when faced with these types of obstacles? He assembles perhaps the most effective and professional animal welfare team in the nation. With his new management team, new service philosophy, and new mission, he immediately achieved remarkable results.

In 2004, pet adoptions soared over 100% and AC&C became the number one pet adoption agency in the City. Pet euthanasia plummeted 17% and fewer pets died in New York animal shelters in 2004 than in any other one-year period in New York City history. Amazingly, the Bloomberg administration accomplished all of this with the smallest animal control budget in recent New York City history!

2004 was the first year of a five-year plan developed by AC&C to end pet euthanasia as an acceptable form of pet overpopulation control. In 2005 another 15% decrease is projected. The January/February 05 numbers are in and AC&C is showing a 25% decrease in euthanasia compared to the historic low in the first two months of 04. It is the mission of AC&C to transform New York City into the first major metropolitan “no-kill” community in the United States. (No-Kill is defined as not having to euthanize healthy, well tempered pets just because there are not enough homes for them.)

Admittedly, “no-kill” is an ambitious goal, and AC&C recognizes it cannot be accomplished by one agency alone. Pet overpopulation is a societal problem and it is going to take the entire community to solve it.

Many New Yorkers feel they are unable to make a significant difference in what appears an overwhelming problem, but that is not true. AC&C is a 501c3 animal welfare charity with a contract with the city for animal control services. This special arrangement creates an incredible opportunity for community involvement. The city pays for the “animal control” services provided by AC&C and the public is free to support the humane “animal care” programs that will ultimately make New York City a No-Kill, pet safe city!

Because the City pays for the infrastructure costs of the animal control program, 100% of public donations can go directly to life saving animal care programs. There is no more direct means of ending pet euthanasia in New York City than to help support the life saving programs of AC&C.

New York City residents are uniquely empowered as a community to solve this problem right now. Through this existing public/private partnership New Yorkers can begin to work together today to make New York the first major city in the nation to achieve this historic humane goal.

It's time to end our acceptance of euthanasia as an approved method of pet population control. If you would like more information about AC&C's life saving programs and how your tax-deductible donation will hasten the day when euthanasia becomes obsolete you are encouraged to visit the AC&C website www.nycacc.org or call 212.788.4000.