MADDIE'S®
MILLION PET CHALLENGE

July 2022

Shelter Consult

San Jose Animal Care Services

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Introduction

Maddie's Million Pet Challenge (MMPC) is a collaboration between Maddie's Shelter Medicine Program at the University of Florida, the Koret Shelter Medicine Program at the University of California-Davis, Team Shelter USA and Open Door Veterinary Collective. As part of the mission to create the most impactful animal welfare systems and help the most people and pets, pro bono grants are awarded to organizations who are interested in improving the shelter operation and/or adopting the Open Door access to veterinary care clinic model.

During the onsite visit the consult team was joined by veterinary consultants from the Koret Shelter Medicine Program at the University of California-Davis along with mentees from the Maddie's Shelter Medicine Program at the University of Florida that included a shelter medicine veterinarian from Israel, 2 veterinary residents from the San Diego Humane Society and 3 veterinary students from the University of Florida. In addition, key staff members from the Humane Society Silicon Valley (HSSV) including 2 veterinarians collaborated on this consult. Typical consult activities included meetings and interviews with staff and leadership to discuss high-priority issues and solutions, review of all programming, observation of processes including sanitation, animal handling and care, medical and surgery protocols, assessment of the facility and use of spaces, understanding of intake and flow of animals, length of stay, barriers to live outcome and use of available resources. A 2-hour evening meeting was also held with community stakeholders and advocates to discuss opportunities for continued collaboration.

All recommendations provided in this report are in line with national animal welfare organizations to include the Association of Shelter Veterinarians, the Association for Animal Welfare Advancement, Fear Free Sheltering, Human Animal Support Services, the National Animal Control Association, the Humane Society of the United States, Best Friends Animal Society and the ASPCA (see **Resources**).

In addition to the standard consult processes, the MMPC team went above and beyond to assist SJACS with a variety of overdue tasks in an effort to improve population management and remove bottlenecks that were preventing animals from a live outcome opportunity:

1. Performed numerous physical exams and was able to clear 5 cats from ringworm and cleared many cats for adoption who had been treated for URI (upper respiratory infection)
2. Vaccinated 100 dogs and 30 cats who had not received preventive care on intake
3. Began the process of checking records to ensure each pet had the appropriate preventive care and updated medical records in Chameleon
4. Identified 3 cats and 4 dogs with urgent medical needs and provided list to HSSV for medical transfer consideration
5. Identified 18 healthy, vaccinated and sterilized dogs who could move to adoption, 5 community cat candidates and many cats who were ready for foster or adoption

The report will focus on areas in need of improvement so that all resources are utilized efficiently and in ways to minimize waste and increase impact and should be viewed as the addendum to *The Best Practice*

Playbook for Animal Shelters, written by Dr. Sara Pizano. Many recommendations will be intentionally repeated throughout this report so the interconnectivity of processes and protocols is clear.

The MMPC team would like to thank the SJACS team for inviting us to perform this consult. The team was very welcoming and patient in answering our questions. We commend the staff for their clear commitment and concern for the animals in their care, their openness in sharing their daily routines and ideas with us, and their eagerness to learn about new practices and skills. While there are many opportunities for improvement, there are also reasons to celebrate that must be acknowledged first. This includes but is not limited to:

- Exceptionally caring and thoughtful shelter leadership and staff with an eagerness to improve operations to better serve the people and pets in the community
- Excellent partnership with Humane Society Silicon Valley who are willing to consider helping with aspects of the operation to maximize impact including staff training and providing temporary medical assistance during staff shortages
- Long standing partnership with PAWS for SJACS and San Jose Animal Advocates who work tirelessly to support the shelter and network animals out to rescue
- Steadfast core volunteers bridging the gap to provide daily care for the animals
- Robust transfer program with dedicated rescue partners and animal welfare advocates
- Spacious campus with a variety of housing options that allow for flexible use of rooms as needed
- Two surgical suites to separate public and shelter clinic spaces
- 3 large outdoor play yards and volunteer run playgroups for dogs
- Building designed with separate entrances for intakes and outcomes
- Large flexible meeting space to host training sessions, partner gatherings and vaccine/microchip clinics

Statistics and Trends

Analyzing shelter data and trends is a crucial part of identifying high-risk pets, focusing resources and tracking programmatic successes and challenges. Data and trends tell important stories but are only a part of the overall picture.

Positives

- Live release rate for all pets has remained relatively steady during the 3 years analyzed
- Return to owner for dogs in 2021 was 35%, far above the national average of 22% (cats are in line with the national average with a 2% return to owner in 2021)
- Robust transfer program with 33% of animals entering shelter in 2021 transferred to rescue partners

Opportunities

- Streamline population management and flow of animals through the shelter to reduce length of stay to the right outcome. Length of stay should be tracked in categories to truly understand the impact of any policy or program introduction or change that includes (1) kittens, (2) cats, (3) puppies, (4) small dogs and (5) large dogs.

- Increase assistance to pet owners and Good Samaritans while decreasing shelter intake. More animals are entering the shelter over the counter from the public which indicates there is great opportunity to implement proactive programs with Safety Net, Kitten Diversion and Community Cat Management to productively decrease intake while providing supportive care for both people and pets.
    - The goal for SJACS is to decrease intake of pets with other options so shelter space and resources are reserved for pets with no alternatives such as enforcement/court cases or victims of cruelty and neglect.
- Increase foster care placement program. The current industry standard goal established by Human Animal Support Services (HASS) is to transition to a community foster centric model where 80% of pets in need are housed in foster homes instead of the shelter. On 7/20/22, 518 pets were in the shelter and only 39 pets were listed in foster care (33 cats and 6 pocket pets). Recommendations for increasing foster care placement are outlined on page 31.
- Increase adoption program. In 2021, 17% of animals were adopted from the shelter. There are many strategies that can easily be implemented to increase local adoptions to reduce the reliance on rescue partners. Very few pets are listed as available for adoption and potential adopters are often turned away or leave in frustration due to lack of service.
    - On 7/20/22 there were 557 pets in the care of SJACS; however, only 44 (8%) were listed on the website as being available for adoption (22 dogs, 7 cats and 15 pocket pets).
    - All shelter and foster pets, with the exception of enforcement and other special cases, should be listed on the website and search engines so the shortest length of stay in the shelter can be achieved.
- Increase reunification of lost dogs. A robust community cat program is considered 'return to home' for healthy outdoor cats.

Staffing and Time Management

All sectors around the country are experiencing staffing shortages and issues both attracting and maintaining a stable workforce. SJACS has many key positions either vacant or newly filled by staff members with a steep learning curve and little training or mentorship available. This combination creates a major impact on the ability to maintain capacity for care for both the animals and staff. SJACS is currently searching for a Medical Director, 2 fulltime veterinarians as well as 6 registered veterinary technicians (RVTs) in the medical department as well as trying to recruit many animal care attendant positions in shelter operations and field services. The vacancies in both the medical department and shelter operations have created a huge bottleneck for animals leaving the shelter which in turn has created even bigger issues resulting in increased cost and workload for staff and increased illness to pets. At the time of the visit the negative impacts of these open positions were further compounded by the lack of volunteers able to supplement the staff's daily care activities because of restrictions surrounding the onboarding process.

City leadership needs to acknowledge the huge strain put on remaining staff to provide adequate care. While efforts are being made to address personnel shortages, it is urgent that operational shifts are also

made to ensure that the medical and behavioral needs of animals in SJACS's care are being met. This includes proactive programming that seeks to support animals in the community, minimizes shelter admissions to only those truly in need of and best served by such intake, and moves animals through the shelter to reunification, adoption, transfer or other appropriate outcome as efficiently as possible. Consultants appreciate the staff deficit and understand that some recommendations will not be able to be implemented until staff and volunteer levels have increased. however, there are steps that can be taken now within the current framework to streamline efforts. Urgent efforts should be made to align the in-shelter animal population with the available staff capacity, as well as humane housing capacity (see later sections for additional information on staffing and housing capacity).

SJACS is currently open for intakes from the public Tuesday through Sunday from 7am-5pm (10 hours per day) and 15 hours per day through the field services department. Even though the shelter is officially closed to the public on Monday, staff reports that shelter will intake animals if people ring the bell. The main shelter is currently open for adoptions, reclaims and rescue transfers from 9am to 5pm Tuesday through Sunday (although adoptions shut down at 4pm). The shelter is closed on Mondays for live outcome while intakes are still allowed. The number of hours available for intake of pets far exceeds the number of hours available for live outcome (foster, rescue, adoption, return to owner). This makes operating within Capacity for Care challenging and sets the system up for failure instead of success.

Below is a quick list of recommendations to streamline workflow during this time of extreme staffing shortages. Additional details will be provided in other sections of this report:

- Consolidate intake hours to a 4-hour window Tuesday through Friday to better manage staff time and capacity for care (example: 7am-11am or 8am to Noon). Once intake is closed, shift existing staff to handle other responsibilities in the shelter. Reserve weekends for live outcome only.
- Shift main shelter operations from 9am-5pm to Noon-6pm or 1pm-7pm so working people and families have the opportunity to adopt and/or search for their lost pet. This will also provide more uninterrupted time in the morning for staff to expedite the feeding and sanitation process in a more efficient manner prior to opening
- Utilize former intake space (to the left of the front door) as a kitten resource center (see Foster Care). Implement Wait 'Til 8 program and divert all underage kittens from shelter intake. Wait 'Til 8 means to wait until kittens are eight weeks old before turning them into a shelter. This program is designed to empower Good Samaritans to care for kittens in their home until the kittens are old enough to return for sterilization and adoption (while shelter simultaneously provides necessary medical care and support).
- Temporarily discontinue intake of all healthy outdoor community cats until TNR surgeries can be accommodated
- Implement a 'one touch' approach during feeding/sanitation process (see Sanitation)
- Recruit and encourage volunteers to fill morning shifts at the shelter specifically to walk dogs so that staff can clean while the dogs are out of their kennels
- Recruit field services team to assist with early morning cleaning and feeding so that initial round of care is done prior to Noon. This will allow staff to be able to focus on spot cleaning and

enrichment in the afternoon in addition to assisting customers with adoptions, foster care, rescue transport and other needs.

- Implement 'one touch' approach of providing vaccination and preventive care on intake and discontinue requiring 2 health check exams prior to movement throughout the shelter
- Remove formal behavior evaluations of each animal and instead utilize input from various departments interacting with pet to determine a more well-rounded assessment
- Schedule RVTs on same days as part time surgeon and create surgery schedule so animals can be sterilized and leave the shelter. Prioritize animals that have a live outcome (reclaims, adoptions, TNR community cats). Currently surgeon is being utilized for medicating which is not utilizing his time and specialized skillset wisely nor allowing animals to leave the shelter.

Opportunities

- Increase communication pathways between departments to create a more cohesive unit. Consider implementing standing, short, cross-functional meetings to work through pain points and daily stand ups within the teams to align priorities.
- Analyze current staffing and volunteer work hours to ensure that the basic needs of animals are met each day.
    - Kennel staffing (to provide basic morning sanitation, spot cleaning throughout the day and twice daily feeding only) can be roughly calculated by using the formula: *number of animals in the shelter per day x 15 minutes per animal=number of minutes per day*.
        - At the time of the onsite visit, there were 518 animals in the shelter and only 14-28 animal care attendants and custodial staff scheduled daily to care for them (depending on the day of the week)
        - SJACS is experiencing a high number of daily call outs creating an even bigger staffing shortage
    - It is important to note that this estimate for required care time does not include other basic, necessary aspects of daily care such as positive social contact with people and (especially for dogs) time out of the kennels/cages. Additional time must be consistently and sufficiently allocated for these tasks.
- Assign existing shelter coordinators to lead specific roles instead of having all 4 stretched thin and unable to be effective
    - Kennel Coordinator – responsible for oversight of staff handling daily care, feeding, sanitation, intake, assistance with reclaims and adoptions
    - Foster Coordinator – responsible for creation of foster program for all animals (dogs, cats, pocket pets) with special attention paid to underage kittens as they represent a huge percentage of annual intake
    - Rescue Coordinator – responsible for marketing all pets to rescue (not just behavior and medical cases), liaison with rescues to streamline transfer process
    - Community Cat Coordinator – responsible for expediting eligible community cats through shelter to surgery and scheduling volunteers for a quick return to their outdoor home
    - Special Coordinator (hybrid position) – liaison between field services and citizens, possibly combine with Community Cat Coordinator position and back up to other coordinators

- Create Clinic Manager position in the medical department to work directly under the Medical Director to oversee line staff and clinic operations. This position should be filled by someone with strong organizational and management skills but does require a RVT license. The SJACS team is encouraged to speak with leadership at the San Diego Humane Society to learn more about that position in their hospital.
- Review job descriptions of each staff position to ensure that the workload is clearly defined, evenly distributed, and focused on core responsibilities.
- Continue discussions with union representatives to ensure that all job descriptions are updated to reflect the duties necessary for each position. Perceived union restrictions are creating inefficiencies in operations preventing staff from cross training and completing needed tasks which result in other positions working harder than necessary.
- Create and review with staff standard operating procedures (SOPs).
    - Sample SOPs will be provided, and the Residents from San Diego Humane Society have offered to assist in the creation of SJACS SOPs for review by leadership
    - Have staff sign off that they understand the procedures and hold them accountable when protocols are not followed
- Train staff and supervise closely until proficiency is demonstrated.
    - Create, laminate and post visual instructions in each area providing instructions on how to complete basic tasks such as cleaning and setting up a kennel so that new staff and volunteers can easily complete duties with minimal supervision
        - HSSV has exceptional signage posted throughout their shelter including pictures and step by step instructions for major tasks (recommend sending managers to tour HSSV for ideas)
    - Create short videos for new staff members to watch to reduce training redundancy for coordinator who is assigned to frequently onboard new staff
    - Update training as needed
    - Although supervision may lessen over time, random observation should continue, to ensure that tasks are being performed correctly.
- Recruit volunteers to help in positions throughout the shelter including adoption assistance, enrichment, cleaning, photographing and posting animals for social media, writing animal bios, playgroups, etc., until new positions can be created and hired.
- Once fully staffed, extend hours and keep SJACS open daily (officially open on Mondays) for reclaims, adoptions and rescue transfers so that animals can leave the shelter quickly. Cross train existing animal care staff or core volunteers to process adoptions to allow animals to leave even when the front desk/customer service staff members are off.
- Keeping the shelter open daily will also reduce the stray hold time, decrease length of stay and ultimately decrease the workload of the animal care staff.
- Move towards a system where all non-emergent intakes are scheduled for appointments. Schedule intake appointments for when there is sufficient staff and volunteer availability to handle potential shelter admissions in addition to their other responsibilities. Reserve all other hours for live outcome only. This will give staff more time to focus on pet retention and reunification of lost pets in addition to any unexpected intakes received through field services.

- Have all staff complete Fear Free training which is offered online and at no cost (this should be recommended to volunteers as well and is also free to them) https://fearfreeshelters.com/
- Increase staff development and education through all avenues including webinars, online conferences, in person conferences, visiting other high functioning shelter operations.
    - Provide professional development for coordinator positions, especially in training best practices, population management, and employee relations. Many key staff members have been promoted from line staff positions and have not been provided adequate mentoring and do not have experience with managing people.
    - Provide de-escalation training for all customer-facing staff (support for intake diversion and redirecting in adoptions)
        - HSSV has a staff member with a background in victim's services who might be a resource to the SJACS team
    - Sign up for ASPCApro, Maddie's Fund and Maddie's Million Pet Challenge webcasts which can be viewed online either live or recorded at staff's convenience.
    - Review recent webinar The Future Is Four: The Right Care in the Right Place at the Right Time to the Right Outcome https://university.maddiesfund.org/products/the-future-is-four-the-right-care-in-the-right-place-at-the-right-time-to-the-right-outcome
    - Invite all staff and volunteers to sign up and watch The Big Dog Master Class recordings which address the challenges that shelters around the country are having with large dogs in shelters https://maddiesmillionpetchallenge.org/big-dog-master-class/
- Have key staff such as those involved with adoptions, foster, rescue and admissions/pet retention and lost and found join the HASS Job-Alikes (https://www.humananimalsupportservices.org/working-groups-job-alikes/). Job-Alikes are made up of peers in similar roles, working in organizations around the world, coming together to collaborate and learn how to change the system of animal sheltering in their communities.
- Have key staff such as those involved with adoptions, foster, rescue and admissions/pet retention and lost and found join the American Pets Alive! Shelter and Rescue Support page. This is a great safe space to ask questions of others in the field about specific programs or challenges (such as how to increase foster homes, how to recruit bottle baby kitten fosters, how to set up a community microchip or vaccine clinic, etc.), or requesting handouts and protocols to avoid reinventing the wheel https://www.facebook.com/groups/AmPAShelterRescueSupport/
- Follow or join the Human Animal Support Services (HASS) sponsored by Maddie's Fund. https://www.humananimalsupportservices.org/ The goal is to keep people and pets together. Since the start of the pandemic, they have brought animal welfare organizations, funders and community members together to engage in partnerships that support the bond of people and animals. Weekly zoom meetings are hosted for shelter leaders and staff that share successful shelter strategies to help busy shelters avoid reinventing the wheel. These zoom meetings are recorded and can be watched later. https://maddiesfund-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZAvf-irqzopGtC0P8PzoiB4wJSvf4NSJ4-Q

Volunteer Program

Positives

- Volunteer program in place that has great potential to offset the workload for staff
- Newly appointed volunteer coordinator
- Many dedicated volunteers
- Volunteer handbook accessible on website
- #DoggyDayOut program in place

Opportunities

- Streamline volunteer onboarding process so that people interested in helping can do so with minimal barriers
    - Create welcome video and post on website for volunteers to review before visiting shelter
    - Provide helpful information on the spot that volunteers need to know to start helping today while staying safe (basic dos and don'ts, map of the facility)
    - Create buddy system to partner new volunteer with an experienced one for first several shifts until comfortable
- Create a more inclusive volunteer application. Remove invasive questions such as education level and employment status which do not pertain to a person's ability to volunteer. A more appropriate question might be, 'Do you have any special skills we should know about to help our shelter pets?'
- Eliminate requirements of animal handling experience and instead provide access to animal handling videos and a buddy system to ensure a safe and welcoming experience for volunteers
- Consider allowing a volunteer trial period. The current process of onboarding volunteers is time consuming, and some may not stay after the training which is not an effective use of staff time
- Create volunteer greeter/ambassador positions for Adoptions, Intake, and Foster
- Discontinue having volunteer coordinator meet and assign a level for all animals before volunteers can interact with them and instead use a quick flag system for animals needing behavioral intervention. Any pets not flagged are open to lowest level volunteer; minor flags are open to next level of volunteer, major flags are reserved for highest level of volunteer (HSSV Animal Care and Enrichment Manager has offered to provide guidance).
- Allow volunteers to socialize with kittens throughout all areas of the shelter. Many kittens are being housed in cat rooms for weeks/months that are not accessible by volunteers and are receiving little interaction. These kittens are under socialized and will not be considered ideal candidates by staff for the adoption program once they are of age for sterilization
- Eliminate barriers for dog walking and playgroup program to allow more dogs to have time outside of their kennel
    - At time of visit, there were 186 dogs in the shelter and only 22 available for volunteers to walk
- Research Dogs Playing for Life training opportunities to provide additional coaching for staff and volunteers to expand existing play group program (dogsplayingforlife.com)

    - Have staff and volunteers visit nearby shelters with robust playgroup programs to learn from their staff
- Review Volunteer Integration toolkit to get ideas on removing barriers and expand existing program https://www.humananimalsupportservices.org/toolkit/volunteer-integration/
- Instruct volunteers to either change gloves or wash hands between dogs. Volunteers currently wear gloves while walking dogs but do not change them between pets.
- Expand and promote #DoggyDayOut field trip program encompassing either daycations (single day) or staycations (multiple day slumber parties). Open participation to the general public instead of limiting to existing volunteers. Other organizations have seen huge success in increased adoptions because of this program such as the Kauai Humane Society who allow tourists to 'check out' a dog for field trips https://kauaihumane.org/service/field-trips/. Consultant shared information and SOPs from the staff at Charlotte-Mecklenburg Animal Care & Control in North Carolina who implemented this program several years ago and provided statistics on their success rate.

- Post updated photos and videos from foster care and field trips on website and through social media. 3rd party endorsements are accepted more readily by potential adopters than anything staff might say.

Record Keeping

Recordkeeping and statistics are vital to every sheltering organization. Analyzing data allows the organization to more accurately create a budget, identify areas of need, create model programs and justify staffing and resource requests. It is a way to measure success, determine program efficacy and identify where change is needed. Grant funders look at data to determine the legitimacy of the organization and to maximize the impact of their donor dollars.

The software is the tool that is used to communicate internally and externally in a variety of ways. The use of technology provides opportunities not possible through any other means of communication and SJACS should capitalize on every avenue. Technology provides the most powerful platform to manage the daily operation and analyze trends to create appropriate budget allocations and modify programming in line with intended goals.

SJACS utilizes Chameleon software which is a very good shelter software option; the company reports that most client shelters utilize only 10% of the software potential. While there is opportunity to streamline processes, useful reports are completely dependent on the accuracy of data entry.

Opportunities

- Contact Chameleon to set up training and provide SOPs for all staff so software can be utilized to increase staff efficiency
    - Staff reported issues searching basic fields such as pet name, microchip number and phone number due to staff's lack of training or entering data into the wrong fields. Sample SOPs for step-by-step use of basic entries will be shared
    - If unable to receive assistance quickly from Chameleon, MMPC can connect you with an outside consultant experienced in Chameleon and Crystal report writing who can set up useful reports and provide virtual staff training
    - Connect with other shelters utilizing Chameleon to share helpful reports and information (MMPC can make those introductions)
- Use Chameleon for:
    - reporting of animals with health concerns to the veterinarian for examination and treatment
    - creating a daily treatment and recheck list
    - creating a list of animals needing revaccination, repeat deworming, monthly weights, and monthly topical parasiticides
    - entering of all medical notes, diagnostics, and treatments in real time
    - having all information readily available to all staff members will improve communication and make it more likely that animals will be discharged from the shelter with appropriate medications and recommendations for follow-up.
- Maintain an electronic copy of all protocols, to allow ready access and facilitate updating (sample protocols provided for edit and use at SJACS)
- Record intake and outcome of every animal entering the shelter In Chameleon in real time. This task may seem overwhelming, but will save staff time, streamline efficiency, and allow the organization to run more smoothly.
    - Intake is defined as all animals admitted to the shelter from any source, regardless of their outcome.
    - Outcomes (adoption, RTO, transfer, euthanasia, died, missing) should be recorded in real time.
        - During the consult there were several instances of animals perceived to be lost in the shelter but were later determined to have left via rescue or adoption without an official outcome in the software
        - Track offsite adoptions, such as PetSmart, as a subcategory of adoptions so that you can easily determine how many pets are being adopted offsite versus in the shelter.
- Reconcile inventory **daily** using report from Chameleon (this can be accomplished by having kennel staff from each area reconcile the animals in their section). Discrepancies should be corrected when found. This process should be streamlined as the kennel staff already has a limited amount of time to care for the animals during their shift.

- Physical inventory is currently being handled on a weekly basis by an outside department member who does not understand population management and is unable to recognize when animals are 'stuck' in an unnecessary bottle neck
    - Example: "Ralph" – healthy young adult dog. Returned to shelter 5/17/22 after recent adoption, previously vaccinated and neutered. Has been awaiting health check since 5/17/22 to be cleared to return to Adoptions which did not happen until HSSV staff visit on 6/23/22. This represents 5 weeks of wasted animal care days and increased stress for both overworked staff and Ralph the dog.
- Modify existing inventory report or create new detailed inventory report showing animal ID, location, intake date, status, length of stay (LOS). This will streamline the inventory process and allow staff to quickly verify accuracy and identify discrepancies, while also identifying red flags for animals in need of additional resources
- Ensure each physical matches its profile in Chameleon and that pet's sex is recorded
    - Many animals were listed as receiving hands on medical care by staff yet sex was listed as unknown (this is crucial information when trying to create surgery lists)
- Contact Chameleon to inquire about using scanner/barcode system to verify animal inventory and to log medical treatments
- Contact Chameleon to inquire about using web chameleon and provide staff access to a laptop or tablet to access and update records in real time throughout the kennel areas

- Discontinue the use of the yellow, green & blue paper records and instead record all medical, surgical and behavior notes and procedures in Chameleon in real time.
    - Using paper forms requires a duplication of effort, wastes staff time and information is not readily accessible
        - Treatments are currently conducted via "the green card" -- all of the treatments are written onto the cards and a tech creates a "master list" of treatments by manually transcribing all treatments onto a word document
        - Staff is physically walking through kennels reviewing paper records on each cage to see what is needed
- Discontinue post-it-note system of tech treatments and instead log into Chameleon and print a daily treatment sheet (sample provided)
- Assign names to pets once off stray hold period or at time of intake if no hold is required. Chameleon can automatically assign names to make it easier on staff.
- Discontinue using symbols and characters in a pet's name since the search feature will not allow you to find pet later without the exact spelling
- Review existing status choices in Chameleon (4 primary status used: Available, Evaluation, Stray Wait, Unavailable) and add more to accurately represent the various steps in the flow process. See page 68 of sample SOP provided from Jacksonville Animal Care & Protective Services
- Update kennel statistics report to reflect subcategories of return to owner field so that information can be analyzed at a glance. Return to owner numbers should be tracked in separate subcategories according to intake type: stray, reclaims after confiscation, bite quarantine, owner surrendered pets whose owners changed their mind or enforcement returns.

Admissions/Medical Intake Protocols

Positives

- Newly renovated intake area with separate entrance
- Ample space for medical intake procedures to be done prior to moving pet to kennel
- HSSV coalition partner willing to provide hands on training for new intake procedures
- San Diego Humane Society (SDHS) Residents have offered to assist in writing or editing protocols for review by SJACS staff veterinarians

Opportunities

- Implement vaccination and preventive care protocols at intake for all animals with the exception of those who cannot be handled or are too young, sick/ill or injured (sample protocols provided)
- Identify current employees who can fill the ACA 2 designation and place on an "intake/triage" team and train them to provide initial intake protocols
    - HSSV team has offered to train staff on administering and recording basic intake exams and preventive care
    - Opportunity for SJACS to cover travel fees and expenses for SDHS Residents to train staff on administering and recording basic intake exams and preventive care
    - When the admissions staff takes over these initial responsibilities, Animal Health Technicians will be freed up to do more advanced medical care, such as medicating sick animals or treating cats and kittens for ringworm, as they may be at risk of euthanasia and assisting in surgery
- Eliminate system of Health Checks for initial vaccinations and presurgical exams
    - Reserve health checks for actual medical attention needed and scheduling follow up vaccination/preventive care boosters
    - Healthy animals can immediately be placed on surgery list and will receive an examination by the veterinarian on the day of surgery prior to the procedure
- Eliminate system of formal behavior evaluations and utilize input from staff and volunteers throughout pet's shelter stay (how is the pet on walks, how is the pet in his kennel, how is the pet during a medical exam)
    - This team is strongly encouraged to focus their knowledge and energy ensuring that each shelter pet has ample enrichment. According to the ASPCA (aspcapro.org), formal behavior temperament tests do not elicit correlated behavior in a home.
    - When animals enter the unnatural and unfamiliar setting of a shelter, they often react with Fear Anxiety and Stress (FAS). What is crucial is that any significant behavior traits are recorded in the Chameleon record so that staff can best advise an adopter about any behavior that may be worrisome.
    - As discussed, large dangerous dogs who cannot safely be rehabilitated, may be part of the euthanasia pool and that decision can be made by the daily rounds team. But those cases are not the norm and most dogs showing low level aggression are acting out of fear. Also, when the pet receives a physical exam and preventive care on intake, much behavior information can be observed and recorded and provides the needed information to help place the pet in the right home.

    - All sections of this report are greatly intertwined and in the case of large dogs, exhausting all other Safety Net possibilities is crucial. First and foremost, the work should be done to keep large dogs out of the shelter since they are more difficult to place than small dogs which means they have a longer length of stay. The longer length of stay without ample enrichment often leads to a decrease in mental well-being that translates to undesirable behaviors that decreases lifesaving potential.
- After the physical exam and preventive care, the admissions team should initiate the plan of action that will set the pet on the pathway to the shortest length of stay to live outcome. With the exception of aggressive dogs, severe medical cases or enforcement cases, all pets should be visible on the website until they are placed in their permanent home.
- Create workspace in the newly renovated intake room to provide initial preventive care
    - The intake workspace should be equipped with a computer for data entry, a walk on dog scale that is big enough to accommodate large dogs, a small scale for cats and pocket pets, a refrigerator for vaccines, an exam table and all other intake medical supplies (dewormers, flea prevention, syringes, needles, sharps container, etc).
    - Consider creating enclosed separate intake areas for dogs and cats within the larger space.
        - Admission of cats currently takes place in the general open space of the intake room with no safety precautions and opened doors (creating a flight risk for spooked animals)
        - Dogs are tethered to the walls until a staff member is free to walk them into a kennel
- Identify clean/vacant kennels at either the beginning or end of each day to expedite placement of new intake. This will prevent wasted staff time walking around verifying kennel is empty and clean and spending time setting it up for new pet.

Intake Process

- Intake process should include a full body microchip scan, age determination, sex, weight, general physical assessment, behavior impression, shelter core vaccines, preventive care for internal and external parasites.
- In case of emergency medical concerns, the animal should be taken to the medical staff and intake process will be completed by the medical team.
    - Non-emergency medical concerns should be noted in Chameleon with a request for a medical follow up. Medical staff should not be interrupted with non-emergency cases.
- Vaccinate all dogs and cats more than 4 weeks old at intake (FVRCP or DA2PPv)
    - These core vaccines may be administered by trained lay staff.
- All puppies and kittens should be revaccinated every 2 weeks until they are 5-6 months of age (adult incisors fully erupted)
- All dogs and cats must be vaccinated, including pregnant and nursing animals, animals with mild disease, injured animals, and cruelty cases. No animal should be excluded because the risk for exposure to lethal pathogens such as distemper virus, parvovirus, and panleukopenia virus is too high.

- Animals that are too sick or severely injured to vaccinate should not stay in the shelter, but rather be transferred to a veterinary hospital for appropriate care
- Pregnant and nursing animals should be vaccinated to reduce risk for acquiring disease in the shelter. If the mom gets infected while in the shelter, then her offspring will get infected too.
- The best option for pregnant animals is to vaccinate with a modified live virus (MLV) vaccine and schedule spay surgery as soon as possible to prevent birth
- The safest option for nursing animals is to vaccinate and transfer mom and litter to foster care
- Ensure that animals are receiving the full dose of the vaccine
- These recommendations are supported by the following industry guidelines for vaccination of dogs and cats in shelters:
    - 2010 ASV Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters https://www.sheltervet.org/assets/docs/shelter-standards-oct2011-wforward.pdf
    - 2017 AAHA Canine Vaccination Guidelines https://www.aaha.org/aaha-guidelines/vaccination-canine-configuration/vaccination-canine/
    - 2020 AAFP/AAHA Feline Vaccination Guidelines https://www.aaha.org/globalassets/02-guidelines/feline-vaccination-guidlines/resource-center/2020-aahaa-afp-feline-vaccination-guidelines.pdf
    - 2015 World Small Animal Veterinary Association Vaccination Guidelines http://www.wsava.org/WSAVA/media/PDF_old/WSAVA-Vaccination-Guidelines-2015-Full-Version.pdf
- Provide rabies vaccine at intake to all dogs and cats over 3 months
- Treat all kittens, puppies, and nursing moms with pyrantel and ponazuril at intake and again 2 weeks later. This is efficacious against roundworms, hookworms, and coccidia.
- Treat all adult cats and dogs with pyrantel at intake and again 2 weeks later
- Discontinue routinely using praziquantel unless tapeworms are noticed
- Train staff on how to thoroughly scan pets for microchips as they can migrate in the body (staff observed performing scans that did not include the full body and could potentially miss a microchip)
- Every pet with the exception of neonates, feral cats and dangerous dogs must have a neck band with the ID number that correlates to their Chameleon record to prevent any confusion regarding their identity
    - Staff reported that bands were only placed on cats after they received their initial preventive care (which could be weeks or months after intake). Very few dogs were seen with neck bands.
- Disinfect intake area in between pets

Animal Handling

It should be the goal of every organization to utilize low-stress handling/gentle restraint whenever possible. Restraint with unnecessary force typically creates more stress and fear, resulting in more aggressive behavior and increasing the likelihood of human and/or animal injury. Staff should avoid

creating loud noises when talking, closing kennels, or playing music. Here is a link to a recent ASPCApro gentle cat handling technique webinar: https://www.facebook.com/watch/?v=325246071731586

Recommendations:

- Provide low stress animal handling training to teach staff how to recognize normal vs stressed behavior in dogs and cats.
- Utilize neighborhood cat dens to use for safely handling fractious cats during cleaning and/or transport. When carrying cats in a den, carrier or humane trap, ensure cat remains horizontal and is not tipped on its end or swung around haphazardly.
- As time allows, encourage staff to complete Fear Free training which is offered online and at no cost (this should be recommended to volunteers as well and is also free to them) https://fearfreeshelters.com/

Community Programs, Surrender Policies and Safety Net

Positives

- Some information provided on website on how to rehome your pet through adoptapet/rehome as well as solutions to common issues
- Kitten kits with supplies are offered to Good Samaritans to care for underage kittens in lieu of intake
- Partner with other clinics to provide low-cost vaccines
- Vaccine clinics for pets belonging to unhoused individuals and vets for healthy pets offered (both programs currently on hold due to staffing issues)
- Pet food pantry (program on hold)
- SJACS Low-cost Spay & Neuter Clinic opened Spring 2006 (temporarily closed due to staffing issues)

Opportunities

- Update Pet Surrender tab on website to include resources to help pet owners. The current SJACS page briefly touches on things people can do, but few offer tangible tasks or resources to help and staff is still limited on what they can offer other than to schedule an appointment. The San Diego Humane Society and the Jacksonville Humane Society are two other sample organization's with robust pet retention programs to reference
    - https://www.sdhumane.org/services/give-up-a-pet/
    - https://jaxhumane.org/pet-help/pet-owner-assistance/
- Create comprehensive list of diversion resources and talking points for intake staff. Post information on website and ask SJAA to share on their site as well.
- Have intake coordinators review Human Animal Support Services' (HASS) Case Management, Pet Support Services and Lost Pet Reunification toolkits and implement ideas to provide services to

those needing help with their pets, find a lost pet, or seek pet support services in lieu of shelter intake
    - https://www.humananimalsupportservices.org/toolkit/case-management/
    - https://www.humananimalsupportservices.org/toolkit/lost-pet-reunification/
    - https://www.humananimalsupportservices.org/toolkit/pet-support-services/
- Leadership is encouraged to join Home-Home which is a self-rehoming service branded for SJACS on both the website and Facebook page (home-home.org). Once an owner submits the form and picture a volunteer or staff person can post it on home-home.org which is marketed as another adoption avenue for the public.
    - Leadership should meet with members from San Jose Animal Advocates (SJAA) and explore the opportunity of them signing up for Home to Home. This is a great collaborative opportunity to network more pets and people through their Facebook page which has 11,000 followers. The nominal fee of $50 per month is money well spent when it keeps animals out of the shelter and will result in both SJACS and SJAA having to network fewer animals to rescue.
    - Home to Home also has a new feature for foster parents to post their fosters for additional marketing
- Posting on Home To Home and Adopt a Pet Rehome should be the first step prior to a shelter intake
- Discontinue the intake of healthy underage kittens and instead encourage the public that their 'Mother knows best!'
    - Healthy neonatal kittens should not be removed from the environment unless the Good Samaritan absolutely knows the mother cat has died
    - Update website to provide guidance on what to do if kittens are found. Here are some good resources:
        - Found a Kitten Outside? Here's how to determine what to do http://www.kittenlady.org/casa
        - Identifying Kittens That Need Help (https://ocgainesville.org/kitten-shelter-diversion) this clearly shows the difference between healthy kittens who do not need help and those who do. Print and post this prominently in the lobby for people to see as they are trying to surrender found kittens.
        - What to do if you found a stray cat https://whs4pets.org/stray-cats/
        - Humane Society of Washington County – Mother Knows Best https://www.hswcmd.org/post/mother-knows-best
        - City of El Paso Animal Services https://elpasoanimalservices.org/resources/savethekittensep/

Community Cat Programming

Positives

- Robust community cat program in place for many years supported by stakeholders and residents
- Great potential to decrease the intake of healthy adult community cats (entered in the 'stray' category) and intake of kittens when spay/neuter is appropriately targeted

Opportunities

- Assign one shelter coordinator to oversee community cat program
- Discontinue behavior evaluations on community cats to determine if eligible for program
- All healthy outdoor cats should be sterilized, vaccinated, ear tipped and returned to their outdoor home regardless of if they are friendly or feral
- Implement 3-day turnaround for community cats. All healthy outdoor cats should be placed on surgery schedule at intake (day 1) have surgery (day 2) and be returned to their outdoor home (day 3)
- Continue asking citizens if they will pick up community cat after surgery
- Discontinue requiring citizens to pay for TNR service and instead ask if they would leave a donation
- Update community cat language on website, see sample at El Paso Animal Services https://elpasoanimalservices.org/resources/community-cats/
- Create community cat brochure for display in lobby, area clinics and for field officers to carry in their vehicles (consultants to share samples)
- As staffing allows, reinstitute designated TNR surgery days and invite trappers and caretakers to bring community cats to shelter for sterilization

Sanitation and Safety Measures

Positives

- Using Rescue®, an accelerated hydrogen peroxide product, as primary disinfectant
- Spot cleaning kennels

Opportunities

- Gloves should be worn during cleaning and handling animals, with a glove change between enclosures. Alternatively, hands may be washed between animals.
    - Gloves should be readily visible and available in each housing area
    - Hand soap and paper towels should be visible and readily available at each sink
    - Ensure hand sanitizer (at least 60% alcohol) is available throughout the shelter.
- Rescue® should be used at the proper concentration and contact time as directed by your veterinarian and product guides.
    - Train staff on the proper dilution and contact time of Rescue™ Concentrate based on use (daily cleaning versus outbreak situations). https://learnaboutrescue.com/rescue-concentrate/
        - Provide measuring cups and mark fill line on empty spray bottles
        - Order labels from Rescue® and apply to bottles with date product mixed

        - Order and use test strips on Rescue® to determine existing concentration
        - https://learnaboutrescue.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/11/Reference-Sheet_Rescue-Concentrate.pdf
    - Consider using diluted concentrate when cleaning cat enclosures in place of Rescue™ Wipes and reserve the use of wipes for ease of use on counter tops, clinic areas, etc.
        - Spray product on washcloth to wipe down kennel, use new washcloth for each kennel
        - Some staff were dipping cloths into a bucket of Rescue® to clean vacant cat cages; however, product was not measured
        - A cost comparison analysis should be done between the two product types. Utilizing the concentrate in place of wipes may result in a significant cost savings to the shelter
- Implement system of attaching laminated cage cards to identify if a kennel is clean. Existing QR code system is great in theory, but data oftentimes does not get uploaded until later in the afternoon. This makes it difficult to ascertain which kennels are clean. When an animal is impounded, the intake team looks for an empty kennel space in the Chameleon "visual kennel" window, then physically walks back to that kennel to see if it is indeed empty, and if it is indeed clean (this is not an efficient use of staff time). Other cards can be used to relay information such as pet will be returning from medical or is out on a field trip and not to give away his kennel.

- Create and post the step-by-step sanitation protocol in each housing section. Consider using photos and/or a checklist. This will be extremely helpful for new staff or volunteers so they can jump in and help with minimal supervision while adhering to the proper standards.
    - Focus on optimizing efficiency and reducing animal stress by relying on spot cleaning where appropriate and perform full cleaning and disinfection in between occupants and for other key indications.
- Provide all necessary cleaning supplies either on a cart or cabinet in each holding area so that staff do not have to repeatedly leave the room in search of supplies.
- Consider using a squeegee or individual towels attached to squeegee in place of mop heads to dry floors after cleaning. Each room should have its own cleaning equipment that should not be shared between rooms.
    - Staff observed drying floors in one kennel and using same mop head to dry floors in a neighboring ward
- Provide PPE stations throughout shelter so that staff has the appropriate personal protection equipment needed for handling animals in each room. Develop an SOP for when, why, and how PPE is to be used.

    - Example, PPE other than gloves are not required when handling kittens with URI yet staff has been instructed to fully gown before entering room
    - PPE (including gloves, shoe covers, and gown) should be worn when interacting with kittens diagnosed with ringworm yet that was not observed during on site visit
- Staff should be provided with appropriate animal handling and safety equipment in both the kennel areas and in the outdoor play yards. Safety stations should be established in strategic locations throughout the campus that includes air horns, bite sticks, and hog panels readily available to ensure animal fights can be broken up quickly.

Population Management and Capacity for Care

Population management involves staying within one's capacity for care while delivering critical services (vaccination, sterilization, movement to adoptions) without delay. The number of animals in the shelter should not exceed housing and staffing available to provide humane care to each individual animal.

Figure 1: When there is effective Population Management, this formula remains balanced. Population Management begins once the pet enters the shelter and is intertwined with the length of stay and the number of animals leaving to the best possible outcome. The number of pets entering the shelter and their length of stay (LOS) to a live outcome must remain balanced with the goal of the shortest length of stay for a shelter operation to work within their capacity to care for those pets.

Opportunities

- Apply for the upcoming Population Management and Daily Rounds Bootcamp offered through UC Davis Learniverse. Applications for Bootcamp are due August 8th and online classes start September 6th. https://www.sheltermedportal.com/population-management-bootcamp-info-page/
- Understanding Capacity for Care (C4C) is critical to an organization and may fluctuate as staffing levels shift
    - Functioning well below maximum allows development of upstream interventions to improve performance and outcomes
    - Mostly-empty kennels and cages, most of the time, should be a goal
    - Empty kennels does not mean nothing is happening at the shelter (this is a tough one for some staff to embrace since they are so used to the concept that taking an animal into the shelter is a good thing and the way we as an organization help pets)

- Have staff review the capacity score chart to better understand C4C https://www.californiaforallanimals.com/resources/capacity-score-chart/

- The number of hours available for intake of pets far exceeds the number of hours available for live outcome (foster, rescue, adoption, return to owner). This makes operating within Capacity for Care challenging and sets the system up for failure instead of success (intentionally repeated). The number of hours the shelter is open for live outcome should be convenient and balance the intake hours.
- From the point of intake, each pet should have a plan of action to the shortest length of stay in the shelter. This is the area where leadership must establish the ultimate goal philosophy of placing pets in their permanent homes as quickly as possible or into a foster home that will be their pathway to permanent adoption. A length of stay longer than 14 days is considered long as per industry standards. At SJACS many pets are held back because of medical conditions or behavior issues when they could have been cared for in a foster or adoptive home (or Foster to Adopt).

  Rounds are not currently being done and many animals are falling through the cracks. To ensure that decisions are made in a timely fashion, a team should be assigned to do high-level Daily Population Management Rounds together to create or check on the plan of action for each pet. While this initially sounds and is cumbersome, once everyone in the shelter has a plan, the time spent actually doing rounds is lessened. As a group, if this is not feasible 7 days a week, doing Population Management Rounds at least 3 days a week would still make a tremendous difference.

  Each kennel staff should be responsible for doing daily inventory of pets in their area ensuring that the information in Chameleon is accurate. Any discrepancies should be rectified by the kennel staff or brought to a supervisor's attention. This is crucial and the identification and accurate accounting of pets is a legal requirement for SJACS.

  Each day the team should be asking the questions:

  ⇒ Do you have everything you need including your preventive care, a flattering picture, etc.?
  ⇒ Is your record in Chameleon accurate and up to date when your information was automatically uploaded to adoption search engines?
  ⇒ Do you have a comfortable bed and toys?
  ⇒ Do you need us to schedule something for you like a medical check, a training session or a spay/neuter?
  ⇒ Do you need to go to foster care or to a rescue partner as soon as possible?
  ⇒ If you have been with us for longer than 14 days, have we done extra advocacy for you?
  ⇒ Are we meeting all your medical and emotional needs?
  ⇒ Are you showing signs of severe fear, anxiety, stress and/or frustration and how can we help you?
- The time spent during Daily Population Management Rounds should be kept high level and staff assigned tasks should report back on the spreadsheet during the appointed time frame.

Leadership must then hold staff accountable and may have to serve as a tie breaker when there is a disagreement about a plan of action.

- Minimize Length of Stay (LOS). Even the nicest shelters are stressful places for animals and long lengths of stay lead to negative impacts on physical and behavioral health. Every effort should be made for each animal to have as short a length of stay as possible. There needs to be a sense of urgency among the medical and adoption staff for animals to move quickly through the shelter to the adoption floor, in order to make room for the next wave of animals awaiting intake.
- Fast track pets at intake to their ultimate destination and reduce overall movement of pets within the shelter system
    - Friendly healthy cats and kittens not eligible for TNR should be immediately placed in adoption after receiving their preventive care. Historically, very few cats entering SJACS will be reclaimed and the majority will end up needing to be rehomed (only 2.7% were returned to owner in 2021). Therefore, regardless of the current stray hold, it is best to quickly move these cats to a housing unit in the adoption center where they can be visible and avoid moving them multiple times within the facility from the back holding areas to the front adoption areas.
    - All eligible healthy outdoor cats brought in by the public should immediately be placed on the surgery schedule for TNR for the following day and slated for release the day after (either picked up by the citizen or returned by a field services officer)
- Have rounds team review Amy Schindler's article on Euthanasia in Shelters: Data and Decision Making and accompanying behavior matrix https://iaabcjournal.org/euthanasia-in-shelters/
- Include your veterinarian in all euthanasia decisions involving medical/ behavioral health
    - (S)he should also provide guidance for selection of pre-euthanasia and euthanasia drugs and their proper documentation.

Feline Housing, Husbandry and Enrichment

Positives

- Many cat housing spaces throughout shelter which offers flexible use of rooms as needed
- Cat housing in some areas with portals
- Natural light in adoption area
- Some cat portals on site waiting for installation (unknown number)

Opportunities

- Once lobby renovation is complete, consider using one of the existing meet and greet rooms to showcase any healthy cats and kittens who enter the shelter and are on a path for live outcome regardless of stray hold or sterilization status. The exception would be healthy outdoor cats that are on a path of TNR.
    - Move portalized banks of stainless-steel cages into this room and allow the public to view and interact with cats in their cage. May need to check noise volume once renovation is

complete on the neighboring dog holding area to ensure that cats cannot hear barking dogs
    - There is no need to keep cats in the 'back' of the shelter throughout their stray hold time since the RTO rate for cats is so low
    - Healthy underage kittens can also be showcased in these front rooms as a means of recruiting potential adopters to foster them until they are big enough for surgery (and as a bonus they can have first choice of adoption). Signage can be placed on their cage (and around the kitten hut viewing area) that states "I'm not ready for adoption, but you can foster me until then"
- Take inventory of cat portals onsite and order balance of cat portals needed as soon as possible
    - Schedule install of cat portals immediately
        - Contact UC Davis to inquire if their cat portal expert can assist with guidance on the installation
        - Contact UC Davis team to see if existing fiberglass kennels in cat adoption areas can be portalized
- Purchase clip on coop cups for food/water in stainless cages to maximize floor space and minimize having water bowls tipped

Figure 2: Coop cups attached to the cage prevent spilling and allow for more floor space for cats.

- Cats are grazers and should be provided with dry food ad lib. Canned food should be offered in a separate paper boats twice daily.
- Provide hiding spaces and options for cats. Placing a pillowcase or curtain over one side of the kennel can be helpful in lowering stress.
    - Ask volunteers to assist in making a variety of cat accessory projects https://www.sheltermedicine.com/library/diy-housing-accessories/projects-for-feline-housing/
- Sign up for the Kuranda shelter bed donation program (https://shelterbeds.org/) and/or purchase some for the cat cages
    - These are great for perching and can also double as a hiding spot in cage when a towel or pillowcase is draped over the front and they can hide below
    - Remove all carpeted cat trees from the free roaming cat rooms (noticed in AG and AH) and replace with items such as Kuranda towers which can be disinfected in between use.
    - Recruit a team of volunteers to assemble beds
    - Check with local Eagle Scouts program to see if someone wants to make these beds as a scout project. DIY instructions can be found online

Figures 3-4: Kuranda raised cat bed and tower (https://kuranda.com/cat-products)

- Ask the community to donate shoe boxes and other small boxes for cats to sleep/hide

Figures 5-6: Cats also enjoy sleeping in boxes/beds and using them as perches.

- Fractious cats should be provided with a feral cat den for safe handling and transport. The den should be positioned sideways in the cage rather than facing forward (this can only be done when cat is provided with a portalized cage and access to both sides). In addition to safety, the main purpose of the den is to provide a space to hide where the cat does not feel exposed. Feral cat dens can also be used to safely transport a cat from a humane trap to a cage or to surgery for TNR. Additional dens can be purchased at https://www.livetrap.com/index.php?dispatch=products.view&product_id=30203

Figure 7: This picture depicts the appropriate set up for a cat in a double-sided kennel with a towel lined den, food and water on one side and the litter box in the other compartment.

- Provide toys to all cats (not just those in adoptions). Inexpensive ping pong balls can be purchased in bulk and disinfected and are an excellent addition to the wish list. If toys are donated that cannot be disinfected, they can leave with the adopter or be discarded after use.
- Ask supporters to purchase cat scratchers to provide entertainment for cats in cages
    - Imperial Cat has a donation program where the public can purchase a box of 'scratch n bits' which are leftover cardboard pieces from their larger scratchers and have them shipped directly to the shelter (https://imperialcat.com/giveback.php)

Figure 8: Examples of Scratch and Bits from Imperial Cat (both flat and hanging versions)

Canine Housing, Husbandry and Enrichment

Positives

- Many dog housing wards throughout shelter which offers flexible use of rooms as needed
- 3 ample outdoor play yards
- Double sided kennels with divider doors
- Kuranda beds and blankets provided in some kennels

Opportunities

- Housing capacity should be aligned with staffing capacity
- Feed all shelter dogs a mixture of dry and canned food twice daily with puppies under 8 weeks and special needs pets like those with medical needs or pregnant/nursing 3 times daily. Young, nursing moms and sick animals need more nutritious food and more often.
- Treat all dogs whether in stray hold or adoptions equally, provide enrichment, walks, etc. (with the exception of aggressive dogs)
- Provide puzzle feeders or lick mats for single housed dogs as a means of enrichment
- Provide appropriate toys to all puppies and dogs. Puppies for example need chew toys. Chewing allows puppies to ease teething pain, and it alleviates boredom.
- Provide Kongs to single housed dogs (these can be stuffed with food and sealed with either a dab of peanut butter or honey and frozen)
    - Sign up with Kong shelter donation program if not already enrolled https://www.kongcompany.com/shelter-registration

- A treat cup program is recommended and simple to implement. Staff and volunteers can give a dog a treat when they sit or are quiet and post signs for visitors to do the same. Example of a treat cup container shown below.

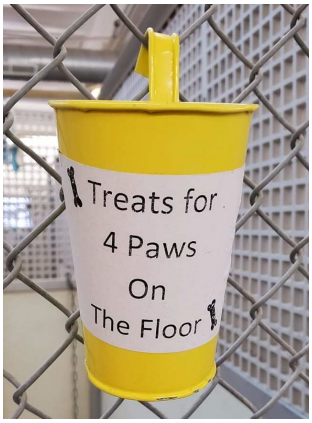


Figure 9: Sample treat cup options

Pocket Pet Housing, Husbandry and Enrichment

Positives

- Knowledgeable volunteers dedicated to assisting with the care and adoption of these pets
- Fresh vegetables and other special diets provided by volunteers

Opportunities

- Discontinue 2-week quarantine of healthy rabbits
- Ensure that pocket pets are available for adoption on the website regardless of sterilization status
- Implement foster to adopt option if pet is awaiting sterilization. Prospective adopter completes adoption application and is allowed to take pet home while awaiting spay/neuter appointment. Adopter does not need to complete any foster training or orientation. Adoption will be finalized once pet has been sterilized.
- Discontinue housing pocket pets in rooms where dogs are present (grooming room)
- Consider temporarily using library/reference room in the front lobby to house birds away from the sight and sounds of dogs.
- Contact Palomacy, a bay area pigeons and dove rescue, or cultivate partnerships with other bird rescues to assist with placement of birds who find their way to SJACS https://www.pigeonrescue.org/
- Consider utilizing one of the front meet and greet rooms for rabbits or other small pocket pets and create healthier housing options for them that adopters can duplicate at home such as portable playpens that can be added to the Amazon Wishlist

(https://smile.amazon.com/gp/product/B07Y1XRLQR?ref=em_1p_2_im&ref_=pe_26384150_647034820).

- Other creative ideas for indoor rabbit housing can be found at https://rabbitrescuesanctuary.blogspot.com/2016/02/housing-your-pet-rabbit-indoor-rabbit.html

Figure 10: Examples of small animal/pocket pet housing options

Shelter Medicine and Surgery

Positives

- Separate onsite surgical suites for shelter and public pets
- X-ray and blood work machine
- 2 dedicated and caring part time staff veterinarians
- Robust partnership with HSSV's medical team
- Low cost spay/neuter program for pet owners and rescue groups (as staffing allows)

MMPC appreciates that SJACS is severely understaffed in the medical department and is currently without a medical director, full time veterinarians and fulltime registered veterinary technicians (RVTs). All positions have been posted and leadership is currently holding interviews as candidates apply. Once the medical director position has been filled, that veterinarian will create and implement medical SOPs tailored to SJACS. Until that time and even with the current constraints, there are many opportunities for those in the medical team to streamline operations and work more efficiently today.

Opportunities

- Use Chameleon for:
  - reporting of animals with health concerns to the veterinarian for examination and treatment
  - creating a daily treatment and recheck list
  - creating a list of animals needing revaccination, repeat deworming, monthly weights, and monthly topical parasiticides
  - entering of all medical notes, diagnostics, and treatments in real time

- Discontinue system of post-it-notes and typing treatments into a Word document
- Implement intake protocol of exam, vaccinations and preventive care provided by trained Animal Care Attendants and discontinue requiring general health checks prior to movement throughout shelter (this will significantly reduce tasks placed upon the medical team which can be handled efficiently by another department)
- Health checks should be reserved for animals in need of medical treatment and diagnostics (such as illness, injury, poor or abnormal conditions). These checks should be requested through Chameleon and the medical team should only be interrupted for true emergencies
- Identify all pets in shelter who need sterilization and create spay/neuter list in Chameleon to understand backlog and formulate a plan
- Schedule surgeries with current part time veterinarian (who is eager to perform surgery) and supporting staff for 3-4 days per week to start chipping away at backlog which will allow animals to leave the shelter more quickly
- Create additional spay/neuter pathways using local veterinarians or other non-profit to increase surgery capacity
- Utilize second part time veterinarian for shelter medicine diagnosis and rechecks and have staff medicate animals in place of the veterinarian
- Collaborate with SDHS residents to have them write any protocols needed which can then be reviewed and edited by SJACS veterinarians.
    - Protcols regarding URI, behavior medications and diarrhea have already been shared. Residents can be reached at askanexpert@sdhs.org
- Discontinue treating URI cats with L-lysine as it has been shown to be ineffective
- Implement 'one touch' method when examining or providing treatment to a pet. At time of care, review Chameleon to see what other preventive care or information is needed and provide in one visit. Many inefficiencies noted while reviewing records such as:
    - a vet looks at just skin, but does not complete the health check or vaccinate so pet is still in limbo and unable to move to adoption
    - Excessive and unnecessary rechecks performed by veterinarian every 2-3 days on pet
    - Staff member gives vaccine but not flea or dewormer and vice versa (pet is being handled by multiple people on multiple visits instead of everything provided at one time)
    - One dog received "clean wound with saline" treatment for 14 days and hadn't been vaccinated since intake 5/11/22 until HSSV staff performed on 7/7/22
    - Many animals receive a variety of care, yet sex and sterilization status of the pet is still unknown or undocumented
- Pets with medical conditions should be available for foster, Foster to Adopt and/or adoption. Technology like Maddie's Pet Assistant and Doobert's FosterSpace can help keep these programs streamlined and organized. These pets do not need to be labeled 'rescue only'.
- Releasing pets with medical conditions will involve releasing fears around trusting foster volunteers and adopters and this is a major self-imposed barrier to outcome. It should be remembered that less than 40% of pets in the U.S. are adopted from shelters and rescue groups meaning most people adopt and care for their pets without ever coming to a shelter.

Live Outcome Programs

Return to Owner

Positives

- Return to owner for stray dogs was 35% in 2021, far above the national average of 22%

Opportunities

- Allow owners to walk through shelter to look for lost pet instead of requiring they look at pictures on website
- Recruit volunteers to escort pet owners if escort is necessary
- Consider setting up a computer or television screen in lobby where people can scroll through Pet Harbor to see pets in shelter (both lost and adoptable)
- Update website with helpful information on what to do if your pet is lost and what to do if you have found a lost pet. See Cabot Animal Services' website:
    - https://cabotanimalsupportservices.com/services/lost-pets/
    - https://cabotanimalsupportservices.com/program/helping-pets-get-home/
    - https://cabotanimalsupportservices.com/services/found-pets/
- Ensure field services officers are scanning pets in the field for microchips with universal scanners and proactively asking citizens in the area if they recognize the animal, in order to return it home rather than bringing it in to the shelter.
    - Offer 'Free Ride Home' program for any pets that are able to be reunited in the field before being brought to the shelter, in lieu of citations.
- Ensure all lost/stray pets are posted online immediately upon intake so owner can reclaim.
- Recruit volunteers with online Lost and Found Facebook groups to cross-post the animals from your website to their page.
- Recruit volunteers from high intake neighborhoods around the city and ask to post lost or found animals from their area to their specific Nextdoor neighborhood. Nextdoor typically will not give shelters access to all of the specific neighborhoods, but you can easily recruit individuals who are willing to help.
- When a lost pet is reunited with their owner at the shelter, remove all financial barriers to reunification
    - Find a means of helping an owner who is unable to pay for up-to-date rabies vaccination, city license, microchip and spay/neuter.
    - Update website to remove harsh language surrounding fees and penalties as this may be a deterrent for some pet owners
- Connect with Lisa Brown at Port St. Lucie Animal Control Division (lbrown@cityofpsl.com) to learn about their reunification program which historically has a RTO rate for dogs of 75%-80%
- Print Guide for Lost & Found Pets poster (which show most dogs are found less than 1 mile from their home) and other info graphics from HASS toolkit and hang prominently in the Admissions

lobby. These can be framed for a more professional look. They are invaluable and will assist the admissions staff when speaking with finders.

- Once better staffed in the medical department, establish microchip and rabies vaccination clinics utilizing per diem veterinarians or local clinics to increase pet compliance and expedite their return home.
    - Connect with team at San Diego Humane Society to learn how they run their vaccine and microchip clinics with minimal staff and volunteers

Foster Care

Positives

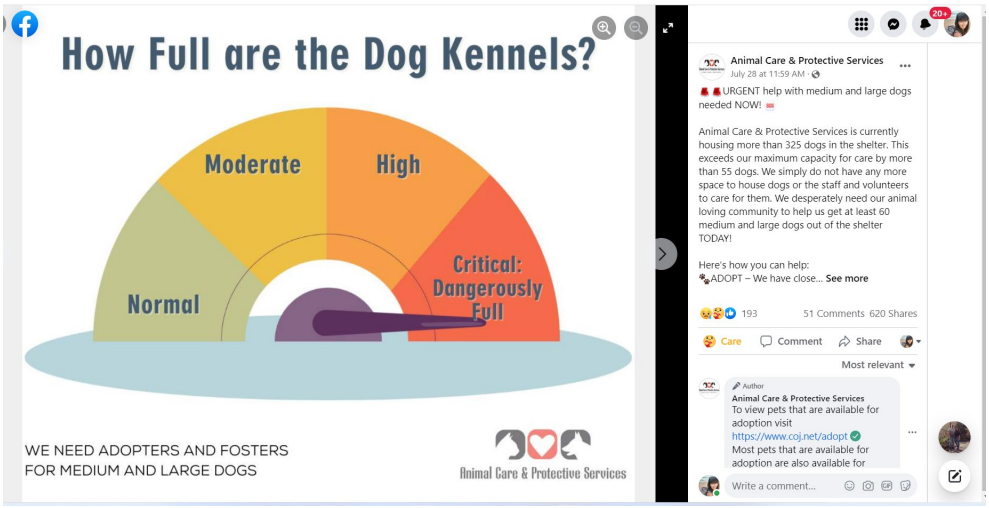
- Foster program in place for underage kittens
- Dedicated volunteers committed to the welfare of underage kittens in the shelter

Opportunities

- Assign one shelter coordinator to dedicated role of foster coordinator
- Foster coordinator should participate in daily rounds to identify pets that may need immediate foster care
- Consider utilizing the foster care program for all animals as a pathway to adoption with a priority still being given to those who are underage or have a medical or behavioral issue. Maddie's Pet Assistant and Doobert's FosterSpace should be researched as they are excellent tools that can help streamline the program. At Animal Care and Protective Services in Jacksonville, Florida, the same 2 foster coordinators managed an increase of foster pets from several hundred to several thousand per year in just one year. However, that shelter and community has robust live outcome programs so pets do not stay in foster care long term.
- Make the fostering process quick and easy. Provide online videos in lieu of in person orientation and/or training classes. Training classes are great for teaching an eager group of volunteers

advanced neonatal kitten care; however, it isn't necessary for the average person taking home a dog or cat (this was proven repeatedly by shelters across the country including SJACS during the initial pandemic shut down and throughout 2020 and 2021).

- Have foster supplies handy at the intake desk to convert finders into fosters on the spot
- Encourage the public to foster healthy dogs without behavior issues, especially those who have been in the shelter for more than 2 weeks



- Don't be afraid to ask the public to help foster dogs who are scared or stressed. Here is a well written plea from Citrus County Animal Services for a dog that is suffering from stress in the shelter. https://www.facebook.com/CitrusCountyAnimalServices/posts/342236441280391

Citrus County Animal Services
Yesterday at 12:57 PM

Layla is suffering from severe stress in the shelter and needs your help! Will you be her hero?

Let's be honest, modern-day dating is a minefield. Finding someone to share your life with can be difficult. Let us set you up with a girl that will change your life. She's kind to everyone she meets, has big dreams, and isn't afraid to eat a burger in front of you. Honestly, she's the perfect balance you can take home to your Mom or run wild with at night.

She has a track record of attracting the wrong type so we're looking to set her up on a blind date. We think she's so special we can't settle for just anyone. We're hoping to help her find someone who shares the same interests, challenges her intelligence, accepts her for her flaws and fairytales, and inspires her to be the best version of herself.

No person is perfect, of course, but here are some must have qualities to win Layla's heart:

1.) She's done playing the field and looking to settle down. She'll need a monogamous relationship where she's your one and only.
2.) She will need someone to both match and balance her sanguine personality type. She has a big personality and has been described as talkative, enthusiastic, active, and social with people.
3.) She enjoys wide open spaces and would be happiest with a fenced yard to run in. Her hound dog nose will take her far, so fences are a must!

Adopt or foster and help get her out of the shelter immediately. Come meet her today!

- Consider using former intake office (to the left of the front door) as the Kitten Resource Center. Or convert the newly created intake area to a multipurpose pet resource and help center and utilize the former intake office for actual animals entering the shelter.

- First stop for all finders bringing kittens to SJACS to receive guidance and resources to foster kittens (formula, food, bottles, scales, etc)
- Utilize space for foster pickups and drop offs, follow up preventive care rechecks and supply central
- Visit HSSV to learn more about their volunteer run FAVS program (Foster Animal Vaccination Station)
- Order Kitten Lady's Orphan Kitten Booklet (this is a free resource) and provide to finders along with supplies http://www.kittenlady.org/booklet

- Recruit fosters on deck to have families standing by to provide immediate foster care to those who need it
- Encourage foster volunteers to find permanent placement
- Waive adoption fees for fosters if they choose to adopt
- If unable to find permanent placement, coordinate foster return with adoption event or offsite partner (such as PetSmart for cats) to avoid shelter intake
- Discontinue only accepting kitten foster applications during Spring and Summer (as stated on website)
  - May 20th request for kitten volunteers posted on Facebook and citizen responded saying they had signed up weeks ago and were never contacted
  - March 17th response to kitten volunteers needed post. I filled out a form to volunteer. And then received an email basically saying you don't need anyone. It said that this is your "offseason" for kittens and you are not scheduling training sessions for volunteers. The email came from the kitten coordinators email address.
- Although staff reported Foster Finder is encouraged, there were many underage kittens on a recent intake list during the consult so this program should be analyzed to ensure staff is taking full advantage of encouraging/supporting Good Samaritans and providing supplies, vaccine and spay/neuter appointments which increase the chances they will foster.
- Information about finding kittens and leaving neonates when not in distress should be a pop up on the website, especially in the spring. Here is a great example from El Paso to use as a reference for SJACS's program https://elpasoanimalservices.org/resources/savethekittensep/
- Encourage the public to foster or adopt sick animals. Asking the public if they have a spare bathroom (for cats) or room on their couch (for dogs) for a pet to hang out while he gets over a cold will often attract multiple people wanting to help.

- Consider implement telemedicine for after-hours foster emergency.
    - Discuss with HSSV their use of VetTriage where DVMs do video calls with fosters to triage the issue and only call staff if the animal needs to be admitted to an emergency hospital

Adoption Program

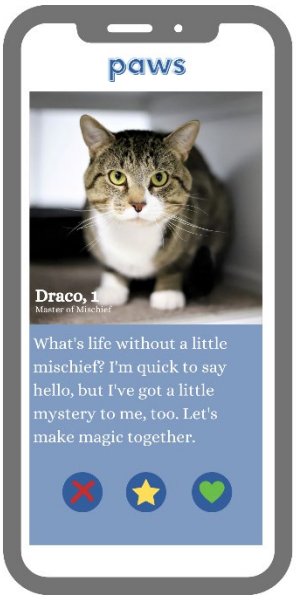
Positives

- Great opportunity to increase local adoptions and reduce dependency on rescue partners
- Partnership with PetSmart to showcase cats for adoption 7 days per week
- Frequent adoption specials
- The public can view some pets on their own throughout the shelter gallery

Opportunities

- Recommend opening 7 days per week for live outcome
- Ensure *all* pets are available for viewing online (with the exception of enforcement or other special cases)
- Fast-track all highly adoptable animals with exceptional personality/appearance regardless of intake date or medical hold status
    - Pets that are underage or not medically ready for adoption can be placed in a Foster to Adopt home where they would get more one-on-one attention
- Implement foster to adopt option if pet is awaiting sterilization. Allow pet to go home that day and return on scheduled surgery date.
    - A1264278 Oatmeal – potential adopters visited 4 times wanting to adopt but was told she was not available due to being intact. Staff was ultimately able to find a solution but this should not have taken 4 visits.
- Discontinue requiring adoption application filled out prior to meeting/interacting with a pet
    - Staff reported this was to ensure adopter did not owe the city money (although they claimed it was not a common occurrence). With the existing staffing shortage, time is being wasted processing paperwork for people who may not adopt a pet, while people who have committed to adopting a pet are leaving empty handed because they are not receiving timely help. This check could still be made once person has found a pet they would like to adopt.
- Increase cat adoptions through PetSmart Offsite Adoption Center
    - Empower Adoption Ambassadors volunteers to complete same day adoption process at PetSmart and other offsite adoption events and discontinue requiring adopters make multiple trips to shelter to finalize paperwork and pick up cat
    - Recruit volunteers to transport cats to and from PetSmart and provide daily cleaning of kennels at store in place of shelter staff
    - Refill empty kennels at PetSmart quickly as cats are adopted
- Recruit Adoption Ambassador volunteers to great and guide potential adopters at SJACS campus
- Provide maps or signage to help guide visitors through adoption pathways
- Allow open selection with foster to adopt options for pets not available due to stray hold or awaiting sterilization. This could be a quick win to start with underage kittens.

- Ensure all pets have a cage card displayed with a photo and their pertinent information
- Have staff or volunteers submit creative bios for the animals up for adoption and include multiple photos. The main focus of the bio should motivate potential adopters to meet this pet.
- Discontinue labeling pets with minor treatable medical issues as special needs (ear infections and giardia are not considered special needs).
- Have staff watch the recent Maddie's Fund webinar to learn the difference between marketing and adoption counseling. 'Marketing is meant to open a door, and adoption counseling is meant to prepare potential adopters for the pet they are adopting. So, what should you include in a pet's marketing and what should you save for the adoption counseling?' This webinar is available on demand and can be watched at any time. https://chewonthis.maddiesfund.org/2021/10/keep-marketing-and-adoption-counseling-separate-while-ensuring-transparency-with-this-webcast/
- Discontinue requiring or encouraging dog meet and greets.
    - Reactions in the unnatural, stressful environment of a shelter are not indicative of behavior or long-term relationships with other pets in the home that take time to develop. Educate adopters on the importance of a gradual, safe introduction and that those relationships can take weeks to months to develop.
- Utilize Canva, which is free to all nonprofits, to generate catchy ad campaigns. Friends of Strays in St. Peterburg, Florida created cute dating profiles for their adoptables using Canva around Valentine's Day and asked people to swipe right.



- Fee waived or as close to free for dogs and cats is considered best practice and will decrease the length of stay (LOS) in the shelter. Offering BOGO specials for cats and kittens will also encourage the adoption of pairs, which is especially important for kittens.
- Create a marketing plan and promote the shy or unsocialized cats available for adoption in the shelter. SJACS currently has many unsocialized kittens who have grown up in the shelter with very limited human interaction. These kittens are not ideal adoption candidates and can also not be returned to their outdoor home. The Humane Society of Vero Beach in Florida has an excellent program called the Purrfect Roommate that SJACS can model https://www.hsvb.org/cats.html.
- Create short videos with tips for the first 30 days of adoption to set the new pet owner up for success. Post these on your website for potential adopters to view. Here are a few examples from The Humane Society Naples, Florida:
    - New Cat Adoption https://vimeo.com/290497848 (this includes an appearance from their veterinarian on medical issues to look out for)
    - New Dog Adoption https://vimeo.com/293404839 (this includes an appearance from their veterinarian on medical issues to look for)
    - Introducing your new cat to your home https://vimeo.com/290495219 (this video starts out the same as the other cat adoption video but then includes different information)
    - Introducing your new dog to your home https://vimeo.com/293402724 (this video starts out the same as the other dog adoption video but then includes different information)

- Ask every person at the time of adoption if they would like to leave a donation to help another pet in need. Grocery stores, gas stations and pet supply stores are all asking customers to make a donation for a variety of charitable purposes at the time of transaction. This has become very normalized in our daily lives so staff should not feel awkward or embarrassed to ask.
- Once fully staffed, consider hosting adoption events in the neighborhoods with high stray dog intake that can be paired with vaccine and microchip clinics, pet food distribution, etc. When animals are removed from a neighborhood (picked up as strays by either field officers or the public) and are not reclaimed, that leaves a void, and those dog owners will get another pet. This is a great opportunity to build relationships and provide healthy, vaccinated and sterilized pets in those communities.
- Send a follow up email or phone call 2-3 days post adoption to inquire how the new pet is adjusting and if the adopter has any questions or concerns. Ask adopter to share a photo with you to post on social media
    - This is a great task for volunteers to assist with and will not only increase the organization's reputation as being helpful and caring but will reduce adoption returns by heading off potential issues.

Rescue/Transfer

Positives

- Robust rescue/transfer program with 33% of all intake in 2021 leaving through rescue

Opportunities

- Assign one animal shelter coordinator to dedicated role of rescue coordinator
- Rescue coordinator should participate in daily rounds to identify pets that may need immediate rescue as well as follow up with rescues who have tagged animals but not yet picked up
- All animals should be available for rescues and adopters on a first come/first serve
- Update rescue agreement to remove barriers to live outcome
    - *#6: Animals on the rescue list or animals that have been available for adoption for at least one full weekend (Saturday and Sunday) are eligible for rescue. SJACS reserves the right to keep animals longer than one full weekend to meet public adoption demands. Any Chihuahua, pit bull, black cat or black kitten may be taken after applicable holding periods.*
        - Remove language in rescue agreement that states animals will be held in shelter for one full weekend before becoming eligible for rescue pull. SJACS's primary responsibility is public and animal safety and not to act as a pet store or adoption agency. SJACS should seek immediate live outcome placement for each animal in the shortest period of time. In addition, with over ±15,000 animals entering the shelter on an annual basis there will not be a shortage of animals needing placement.
        - Remove language from Section 6. that discriminates against breeds and colors of animals. All animals should be valued equally regardless of breed or color.

    - #8: Update language to allow rescues to pull pets in adoptions as long as it does not delay their stay in the shelter
- Discontinue labeling pets with minor medical as rescue only, these pets should also be available for adoption through the public (although rescues could also pull them)
- Respond to rescue emails and inquiries in a timely manner
- Update Chameleon with useful notes and information that will assist rescues and reduce emails looking for basic information (playgroup notes from volunteers, estimated age, sex, sterilization status, weight)

Website and Social Media

Social media and marketing are critical to every organization to get the organization's message out. While SJACS has a high traffic website and over ±30,000 followers on Facebook, there are many opportunities to increase visibility and attract more support. Utilizing online platforms is the best way to reach people in the community who can help you in a variety of ways as adopters, fosters, volunteers, donors, or general supporters. Transparency is key to gaining support and sharing any changes happening in the organization helps people understand the help SJACS is able to provide as well as any needs. In general, the community does not know you need help unless you ask them (and asking for help should not be looked upon as negative). Throughout the pandemic we have seen community members across the country rise to the occasion once shelters started telling them what they needed.

Positives

- Dedicated marketing manager role filled with anticipated start date in August
- Staff and volunteers should be commended for keeping social media active while marketing manager role was vacant for more than a year
- Website is easy to navigate and has helpful content and good photos
- Photos of shelter pets are posted in real time for both new intakes and adoptions
- ±30,000 followers on Facebook
- Recently reinstituted Instagram account
- Easy process to donate a money or goods online to Guardian Angel Fund which helps SJACS pets

Opportunities

- Increase visibility on social media outlets for adoptable pets
    - Go Live on Facebook to show your ±30,000 followers the exciting things happening at SJACS. Consider touring the adoption rooms so people can see the awesome pets waiting to meet them, spotlight your medical team being superheroes, or hang out in the play yard with a couple of dog friends having a good time.
    - Post short videos/Reels/TikToks taken by staff, volunteers, fosters, etc. showing the pet being cute and doing what they love to do naturally (play, nap, do tricks, take a walk in the park, etc.). Videos bring the animals to life and will entice visitors to the shelter as well as gain supporters. In animal welfare we sometimes judge people for not bonding with a pet that they initially meet, yet how are they supposed to fall in love with a picture?

- Capitalize on social media presence using paid ads as well as advertising on other outlets (television, radio, newspaper, digital billboards). Contact City leadership to see if SJACS information can be included in other City-wide avenues (intra-web for city employees, insert in utility bills, etc).

- Update website to add helpful information on living with community cats, what to do if you find kittens, or what to do if you need to surrender your pet (Safety Net) and other valuable resources. See City of Rochester Animal Services' site for ideas https://www.cityofrochester.gov/article.aspx?id=8589936052
    - Pet Assistance and Resources https://www.cityofrochester.gov/PetAssistance.aspx
    - What to do if you've found a pet https://www.cityofrochester.gov/FoundAPet/
    - Surrendering Pets https://www.cityofrochester.gov/BeforeGettingRidOfPet.aspx
- Review information on website for accuracy and make corrections as needed
    - Typo on adoption page under adoption fees (incorrectly listed as spray/neuter surgery instead of spay) https://www.sanjoseca.gov/your-government/departments/animal-care-services/adoptable-pets
- Ramp up SJACS participation on TikTok. Ask your staff and volunteers to create and post short TikTok videos of the animals as they see them being cute or funny or totally normal (this is a growing trend with shelters and videos can be shared on Facebook and Instagram).
    - Have marketing manager review the Maddie's Shelter and Rescue Support recorded meeting from 2/28/22 where KC Pet Project shares how they are using new forms of media like TikTok, Reels, and other social media strategies to expand their reach to more than 3 million followers, connect with younger generations, and even bring in donations for their organization. Katie Grissum, Communications and Design Coordinator at KC Pet Project, and Tori Fugate, Chief Communications Officer, will present tips, tricks, and strategies for creating effective content through storytelling that any organization can use to bring in meaningful results. Link to webinar shared via email with leadership team on 3/10/22.

Field Services

Positives

- Community-minded enforcement approach
- Department received 21,834 calls 2021, majority of calls relate to bite investigations (3,092) second is deceased animal pick up (3,332) third is humane/neglect (1,202)
- Officers attempt to reunite dogs in the field
- Officers entering pet data into Chameleon on intake
- Vehicles equipped with appropriate tools
- Working partnership with Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley (WCSV) to transport all wildlife picked up
- Traps are no longer loaned out to the public for purposes of intake of community cats

Opportunities

- Department provides service in 3 shifts ranging from 7am to 10pm daily with emergencies handled from 10pm-7am. Analyze call volume to determine the number and types of calls received after sunset/dark. Determine how many of these calls are priorities (such as bite cases, pets hit by car or police assists) and could the volume be handled by the on-call officer(s).
    - Having officers responding to non-emergencies after dark until 8, 9 and 10pm may not be productive or safe. Consolidating officers during daylight hours may provide better citizen response time. Hours can be adjusted later in the summer months when there are more daylight hours and shorter in the winter months.
    - Consider providing service Monday through Friday during normal daylight business hours and reserving evenings and weekends for emergency calls only
- In an effort to remove barriers to reunification and keeping pets and people together, there should be no charge for the In-Field Return to Owner service.
- Consider allowing officers in the field to wear a relaxed uniform that is more friendly and less daunting to the public such as a polo shirt and cargo pants. Many residents are intimidated by 'enforcement figures' and may be less likely to engage in a positive manner.
- Have officers participate in vaccination on intake process. If officers are unable to provide preventive care until job description can be revised with the union, have officers assist in restraining pet for technician, weighing and photographing animal prior to placement in kennel
- Review local ordinances and update to allow for a more efficient operation and reduced length of stay for shelter pets (see section on public policy in *The Best Practice Playbook for Animal Shelters).* Some examples include:
    - Language defining community cats and programming and including exemptions from running at large, nuisance and abandonment clauses
    - Removing pet limits
    - Unifying the stray hold period to match California state law of 72 hours
- In 2021, officers responded to 3,332 requests to pick up deceased animals within the jurisdiction. Consider reclassifying a different position requiring fewer specialized skills for this role or discuss with City leadership to have another department such as waste management perform this task.
- In 2021, officers responded to 1,016 requests to pick up wildlife for transport to Wildlife Center of Silicon Valley (WCSV). Consider outsourcing service to WCSV to be handled by a staff member or trained wildlife volunteer responder? Consider working with WCSV to build a network of wildlife volunteers that could respond as needed (similar to the volunteers who assist in returning community cats to their outdoor homes).
- Consider supplying local fire departments, police stations and other community centers with microchip scanners so that there are more self-serve options for finders, especially outside of shelter business hours, who can then more easily reunite a pet with their owner and avoid a shelter intake.
- Due to the age and high mileage of existing fleet, there are not enough working vehicles available to the Animal Services Officers (ASOs). The City is providing a rental van to supplement while ASO vehicles are in the repair shop. Evaluate fleet to determine how many new vehicles are needed and which type would be most beneficial for officers to assist animals (air-conditioned vans with crates versus trucks with boxes built into the back).

- Supply ASO vehicles with pet food and other basic pet supplies (such as collars and leashes) to hand out as needed. The field officers at San Diego Humane Society, for example, carry reusable bags that have been stuffed with basic dog or cat needs to hand out to unhoused people with pets as they interact with them in the field. These items, including the reusable bags, are donated by the public.

Moving Forward

The Maddie's Million Pet Challenge team would like to acknowledge and thank Maddie's Fund for providing this pro bono consult and for the staff and leadership of SJACS for their hospitality and willingness to embrace new strategies and ideas to better serve the people and pets of San Jose.

The MMPC team has the utmost confidence in the SJACS leadership and looks forward to helping the shelter team implement these proven recommendations over the next year.

Resource List

National Animal Welfare Organizations

- Association of Shelter Veterinarians (sheltervet.org)
- Best Friends (bestfriends.org)
- Companions and Animals for Reform and Equity (careawo.org)
- Fear Free Shelters (fearfreeshelters.com)
- Human Animal Support Services - HASS (humaneanimalsupportservices.org)
- Humane Society of the United States (hsus.org and animalsheltering.org)
- Jessica Dolce Compassion Fatigue (jessicadolce.com)
- Maddie's Fund (maddiesfund.org)
- Maddie's Million Pet Challenge team (maddiesmillionpetchallenge.org)
- National Animal Control Association (naca.net)

National Statistics

- Best Friend Dashboards (https://bestfriends.org/no-kill-2025/animal-shelter-statistics)
- Shelter Animals Count (https://www.shelteranimalscount.org/)
- American Pet Products Association Survey 2021-2022: https://humanepro.org/page/pets-by-the-numbers accessed 3/29/22

Guidelines

- *Adopter's Welcome,* by the Humane Society of the United States https://humanepro.org/page/adopters-welcome-manual
- 2020 American Association of Feline Practitioners guidelines (Informational webinar by Dr. Julie Levy, Maddie's Shelter Medicine Program, University of Florida, https://youtu.be/KdsMiZjwdpo)
- Humananimalsupportservices.org https://www.humananimalsupportservices.org/toolkits/)
- Shelter Care Checklists: Putting ASV Guidelines Into Action https://www.aspcapro.org/sites/default/files/aspca-asv-checklist-2014_0.pdf
- The Association of Shelter Veterinarians' 2016 Veterinary Medical Care Guidelines for Spay-Neuter Programs https://avmajournals.avma.org/view/journals/javma/249/2/javma.249.2.165.xml
- The Association of Shelter Veterinarians Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters https://www.sheltervet.org/assets/docs/shelter-standards-oct2011-wforward.pdf

Surrender Prevention and Safety Net

- Those surrendering needed temporary help (https://www.aspca.org/about-us/press-releases/more-1-million-households-forced-give-their-beloved-pet-each-year-aspca)
- Home to Home (https://home-home.org/)
- Rehome by Adopt-A-Pet (https://rehome.adoptapet.com/)

- Rehoming Comparison Tool (https://sheltermedicine.vetmed.ufl.edu/wordpress/files/2021/03/Rehoming-Tool-Comparison-1-27-21.pdf)
- ShelterLuv.com, Points of Care for tracking Safety Net data (https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vBvr9XF42FA)

Foster Care

- HASS Intake to Placement Tool Kit https://www.humananimalsupportservices.org/toolkit/intake-to-placement/
- Doobert/FosterSpace (https://www.doobert.com/)

Community Cat Programming

- Informational webinar by the Million Cat Challenge team: https://youtu.be/9FVHcYTXrgI
- by Dr.'s Kate Hurley and Julie Levy entitled Rethinking the Animal Shelter's Role in Free Roaming Cat Management
- Best Friends Animal Society (https://resources.bestfriends.org/advocacy/community-cats)
- The National Animal Control Association(https://www.nacanet.org/animal-control-intake-of-free-roaming-cats/)
- The Humane Society of the United States (https://www.humanesociety.org/resources/community-cat-program)
- Humane Animal Support Services (https://www.humananimalsupportservices.org/?s=community+cats)

Managed Admission; Appointment Based System

- Best Friends Managed Intake or Admissions Training Playbook https://network.bestfriends.org/education/manuals-handbooks-playbooks/managed-intake-or-admissions-training-playbook)

Portal instructions

- Puppies https://shor-line.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/10/Puppy_Portal-1.pdf
- Cats https://www.sheltermedicine.com/library/resources/?r=cat-portals-order-information-and-instruction-for-installation

Canines (How to help large dogs in shelters)

- Big Dog Master Class https://maddiesmillionpetchallenge.org/big-dog-master-class/#1648138892891-049ac83b-f195

Dog Play Groups

- Dogs Playing for Life (dogsplayingforlife.com)
- Shelter Playgroup Alliance (sheltedogsplay.org)

Adoptions

- Adoptapet (adoptapet.com)
- Adoptimize (adoptimize.com)
- The 2021-022 American Pet Products Association Survey showed that only 40% of dogs and 43% of cats are adopted from an animal shelter or rescue group
- https://humanepro.org/page/pets-by-the-numbers

- Why people went to breeders after shelter/rescue https://moderndogmagazine.com/articles/best-friends-animal-society-survey-exposes-why-people-opt-adopt-or-not/108382.
- Conversations from the Field: Journey to Open Adoptions by Chrissy Sedgley https://youtu.be/TAYAoqjDH4o
- Is Your Adoption Process Really Working by Sue Cosby https://aspca.zoom.us/recording/play/NAvZ9CltEOsAAhmE-V_TcWq1TSn5kAa6n4HgPJMixYyMKBSINpAuxfWSlWPxfnm6?continueMode=true
- Petfinder.com

Shelter Donation Programs

- Kuranda dog and cat beds (Kuranda.com)
- Kong.com
- Cat Scratchers (https://imperialcat.com/giveback.php)

Recommended Reading

- The Best Practice Playbook for Animal Shelters
- Animal Behavior for Shelter Veterinarians and Staff
- BSAVA Manual of Canine and Feline Shelter Medicine: Principles of Health and Welfare in a Multi-animal Environment
- Every Nose Counts: Using Metrics in Animal Shelters
- Field Manual for Small Animal Medicine
- High-Quality, High-Volume Spay and Neuter and Other Shelter Surgeries
- Infectious Disease Management in Animal Shelters
- Infectious Disease Control https://sheltermedicine.vetmed.ufl.edu/shelter-services/disease-management/
- Shelter Medicine for Veterinarians and Staff
- Replacing Myth with Math, Peter Marsh (http://www.shelteroverpopulation.org/Books/Replacing_Myth_with_Math.pdf)
- Reference for Large Scale Social Change Switch by Dan and Chip Heath

Return to Owner (RTO) Research

- Dallas, Texas: https://www.frontiersin.org/articles/10.3389/fvets.2021.669428/full

Rescue/Transfers Research

- Pasco County, FL https://www.humananimalsupportservices.org/blog/county-shelter-transfer-partners/

Staffing

- Field Services https://www.nacanet.org/determining-field-staffing-needs/
- Kennel cleaning and feeding https://www.nacanet.org/determining-kennel-staffing-needs/

Volunteers

- HASS Volunteer Integration https://www.humananimalsupportservices.org/toolkit/volunteer-integration/

Networking and Information

- ASPCApro Newsletter and Blog
- Association of Shelter Veterinarians Private Facebook Group
- Greater Good
- Human Animal Support Services - HASS (https://www.humananimalsupportservices.org/) sign up for weekly Zoom calls and working groups
- HSUS Animal Sheltering Blog
- Maddie's Fund Chew on This Blog
- Maddie's Pet Forum (https://forum.maddiesfund.org/home)
- Shelter Medicine Veterinarians Private Facebook Group
- UF Shelter Medicine Newsletter

Education and Certification

- Compassion in Balance Program (https://sheltermedicine.vetmed.ufl.edu/education/continuing-education/compassion-in-balance-cib-program/)
- Fear Free Shelter Certification (https://fearfreeshelters.com/)
- National Animal Control Association (https://www.nacanet.org/)
- Maddie's University (https://university.maddiesfund.org/)