

Successful Pet Clinics in Tehachapi

I am pleased to report that our May 11th low-cost spay/neuter and vaccine clinic at West Park Activity Center in Tehachapi was a huge success! This clinic followed another successful clinic held on April 6th, and both clinics were a collaborative effort by my office, Kern County Animal Control, and Have a Heart Humane Society.

The conditions at Kern County Animal Control's shelter are unacceptable: extreme overcrowding causes high disease and euthanasia rates. To truly correct the pet overpopulation problem in Kern, we need to get out in our communities, and educate the pet-owning public on the importance of responsible pet ownership. The Animal Control Department has a dedicated team of officers that go into the neighborhoods to educate pet owners on licensing and the importance of spaying and neutering pets, as well as citing those that may abuse pet laws.

Responsible pet ownership can unfortunately present a financial hardship for some families, as spay/neuter surgeries can cost well over \$100. Low-cost spay/neuter and vaccine clinics, like the two we recently held in Tehachapi, are effective methods to promote responsible pet ownership and reduce pet overpopulation. For only \$20, pet owners could have their pets spayed or neutered, vaccinated, licensed and administered a microchip for easy identification by an animal control officer in the field.

The results are in for the two clinics, and here are the totals: 225 rabies vaccinations for dogs and cats, 292 vaccines were given to dogs for distemper, hepatitis, parvovirus, and parainfluenza, 64 vaccinations were given to felines, 66 spay and neuter surgeries were performed, 238 dogs and cats were microchipped, and 184 dogs were licensed.

These clinics could not have been possible without the help of so many people –staff members and volunteers with the Animal Control Department, my office staff, Have a Heart Humane Society and Tehachapi Humane Society all worked hard to serve the residents and their pets. I would like to thank Kohlen's Country Bakery for providing morning pastries, Pacino's for pizza at lunch time, and Albertson's for providing water and ice. We are also grateful to the Tehachapi Valley Recreation & Parks District for letting us use the Activity Center at West Park – without the venue and large parking lot, this could not have happened!

There is more work to be done, but these two clinics have done so much to show that the county and our community are dedicated to improving the lives of animals in Kern County. I look forward to our next pet clinic in Mojave on June 1st.