

# Project Proposal:

## Spay and Neuter Education Program

**Prepared for:** Two Mauds, Inc.

**Prepared by:** Giles County Animal Rescue

**Date:** April 29, 2014



## Executive Summary

Giles County Animal Rescue requests support from Two Mauds, Inc. for a \$1,550 grant for our educational outreach program. This program will teach local elementary students about the importance of spaying and neutering pets and lead to a reduced euthanasia rate of unwanted animals in the county.

Millions of animals are euthanized every year in American shelters, and this problem certainly exists in Giles County. The root of this problem is pet overpopulation, and the simplest thing pet owners can do to alleviate this is to spay and neuter their pets. However, not everyone is informed about the scope of the problem or how critical he or she personally is when it comes to fixing it. That's why we direct our educational outreach program toward elementary school students. Hopefully, they will adopt spaying and neutering pets as a practice they follow throughout their lives, as well as communicating this practice to their friends and families. We plan to visit the three county elementary schools to speak to approximately 400 children per year to teach them the importance of spaying or neutering their pets, using educational coloring books on the topics to keep them engaged. We require \$1,500 to purchase 800 copies of these coloring books, which we will use over a two-year span. We hope that our evaluation of our program will show that it was successful.

Giles Animal Rescue has worked since its birth in 1999 to eliminate irresponsible breeding, irresponsible ownership, and animal suffering through education and humane programs. Our mission is to help homeless, neglected, and abused pets in our county. We hope that this program will be just one more step in fulfilling that mission.

# Introduction

Giles County Animal Rescue plans to educate elementary school students about spaying and neutering animals. Education plays a crucial role in our mission because the students will learn lifelong lessons about animal population control. This effort will ultimately lead to reduced euthanasia rates and an increase in the number of animals rescued.

## Statement of Need

Many children adore their household pet; their dog or cat often grows up with them and serves as companion, confidant, and best friend. However, most children don't realize that one dog that is not spayed/neutered, together with its offspring, can produce 67,000 puppies in six years. In a more severe circumstance, one cat and its offspring can produce 370,000 kittens over the same time period.<sup>1</sup>

Despite the fact that 62 percent of American households have at least one pet (2012), there are still a large number of animals without homes. In fact, approximately 2.7 million pets are euthanized in shelters every year - that's one animal every 11 seconds.<sup>2</sup> While one might think that these numbers come mainly from strays and feral animals, in reality the animals being put down are frequently the offspring of family pets. Animals that aren't in shelters or homes are living on the streets, causing more problems for communities. According to the National Humane Society, there are around seven cats or dogs per person in the United States. Pet overpopulation, which ultimately results in euthanasia, is a serious national problem.

Giles County, Virginia exemplifies the pet overpopulation problem. Since Giles is a poor, rural area, the pet-to-person ratio is believed to be even higher than the national average. Although Giles Animal Rescue has gotten more and more animals rescued over the past few years, the population of cats and dogs still far outnumbers the county's number of possible homes. In 2012 alone, 18 percent of the dogs and 44 percent of the cats brought to the Giles County Animal Shelter were euthanized – 77 dogs and 265 cats. Spaying and neutering animals can be an effective way to steadily reduce the number of animals who contribute to these problems.

It's critical that we educate the public about this Malthusian growth rate. One particularly effective way to achieve this objective is to educate young children about the facts of pet overpopulation and the importance of spaying or neutering.

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<sup>1</sup> Statistics found at [www.peta.org](http://www.peta.org)

<sup>2</sup> Statistics found at [www.humansociety.org](http://www.humansociety.org)

# Project Description

## Goals and Objectives

Our educational program will teach local children about the importance of spaying and neutering animals. By implementing this program, Giles County Animal Rescue has the potential to increase awareness about pet overpopulation and the importance of spaying or neutering. The program has the following objectives:

- To reach approximately 400 students per year by visiting local elementary school classes, specifically grades 2-4
- To teach these students about pet overpopulation and the importance of spaying and neutering pets
- To increase an understanding in regards to the geometric rate of population growth of companion animals
- To decrease the number of unwanted, unloved, and unhealthy companion animals in Giles County

Educating elementary school children in Giles County is essential to reinforce the area's efforts against pet overpopulation. By reaching children first, we can ultimately reach entire families and effectively spread knowledge about spaying and neutering household pets. Just as education about the risks of smoking, the harms of not recycling and other social problems have strong effects on parents of elementary school children that are taught about these problems, we expect to see a similar effect in this area of concern.

## Methods

During this program, Giles County Animal Rescue will interact with three elementary and middle schools in the area: Eastern Elementary/Middle, Macy McClaughtery Elementary/Middle, and Narrows Elementary/Middle. Two Giles County Animal Rescue volunteers will contact the schools and arrange to meet with the school board for approval. Upon approval, the volunteers will coordinate directly with the teachers at each school to schedule class visits for the program.

Volunteers will schedule dates for the 2014-2015 school year, during which time they will teach approximately 400 students (including two grade levels from each school). The classes are approximately one hour in length; volunteers will lead class discussions about spaying and neutering pets and employ coloring book activities to explain and reinforce the importance of animal population control. We will span this project over two years in order to reach the most students in the area, so we will need 800 copies of coloring books. Ideally, the program will reach third and fourth graders one year, followed by second and third the next year. This method ensures that no students are in the same program twice.

## **Staffing and Administration**

The staffing for this project will be entirely volunteers. Two volunteers will be responsible for coordinating with schools, preparing and printing coloring book materials, and teaching the students during each one-hour class period. All of our volunteers are qualified and knowledgeable about the program topics.

Assuming there are about 20 students per class, the volunteers would need to schedule time to visit about 20 classes (10 of each grade level). We believe each visit will last around one hour, so the visitations in total would require about 20 hours of the volunteers' time. Additionally, the volunteers will need to spend more time presenting the materials to the school board to get them approved, as well as organizing their presentation. These efforts will likely take an additional 5-10 hours.

## **Evaluation**

Giles County Animal Rescue volunteers will regularly measure the success of the program in several ways:

- By measuring student engagement during the class sessions
- By talking to teachers regularly about how to improve the program
- By observing the spay and neuter rates in the county before and after the program's implementation

These evaluation measures will be key to our adjustments of the program over the two-year period. For example, if the students are not engaging with our volunteers or understanding the subject, we will adjust the program delivery as needed. The rates of fixing the county's pets depend on multiple factors: cost, geographic location relative to a veterinarian's office, time to make this procedure possible, and an individual's understanding of the prudence of spaying and neutering. We expect to see a change in the number of animals being fixed, but the question of the program's success will turn on the success of educating children with pets and the action of those families.

# Project Budget

## Grant Period

September 2014-June 2015; September 2015-June 2016<sup>3</sup>

## Overview

This budget is based on a two-year time period for our spay and neuter education program. By stretching the program over two years, our volunteers can reach a much larger number of students. The primary material for the program is a coloring book, which will be distributed to 400 students per year. Also, we will print and post informational flyers about the spay and neuter program in local stores, offices, and community centers.

<b>Direct Costs</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Total</b>
Coloring books: Paper, ink, and printing charges	\$750	\$750	\$1,500
<b>Informational Flyers</b>	\$25	\$25	\$50
			<b>Total Budget: \$1,550</b>
<b>Income (In-kind Donations)</b>	<b>Year 1</b>	<b>Year 2</b>	<b>Total</b>
Volunteer hours (including two volunteers per year)	\$0	\$0	\$0
Community Events	\$500	\$500	\$1,000
Recycling Program (Cellphones and Ink Cartridges)	\$500	\$500	\$1,000
CVC Campaign	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$2,000
			<b>Total Revenue: \$4,000</b>

(Include more accurate income amounts for community events, recycling program, and CVC campaign.)

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<sup>3</sup> These time periods are based on the Giles County school system.

# About Giles County Animal Rescue

Giles Animal Rescue, Inc. is a 501(c)(3) charity run entirely by volunteers. The mission of our organization is to help homeless, neglected and abused animals in Giles County, Va. We believe that all creatures should be treated fairly and humanely. We want to work toward eliminating irresponsible breeding, irresponsible ownership, and animal suffering through education and humane programs. We also aim to educate the public about spaying and neutering with the hopes of preventing animal overpopulation.

Giles Animal Rescue was founded in 1999 to help provide public visitation hours to the Giles County Animal Shelter, which is under the jurisdiction of the Giles County Sheriff Department. From 1999 to 2013, our group volunteered at the shelter; during that time, the shelter's euthanasia rate fell from 100 percent to 15 percent for dogs and fell by 50 percent for cats. Also, we are very thankful to have the support of local businesses, veterinarians, and volunteers. Currently, we rely on foster homes and other rescue groups to house the pets we rescue. We make "rescue runs" to take animals all over the state and to various vets' offices. We continue to expand our foster program, volunteer base, home checks, emergency vet care, spay-neuter programs, vaccination clinics, and rescue networks.

We are proud to be managed solely by dedicated volunteers who are passionate about the benefits of animal and community well-being. Our volunteers are very experienced on the topic of spay and neuter and are well prepared to teach this program. We have a history of assisting low-income families with spaying and neutering their pets, and we frequently educate the community on pet overpopulation, adoption, and animal welfare. We also work with local veterinarians on a regular basis to help provide low-cost spay or neuter. In addition, we continue to temporarily house as many pets as possible to address Giles County's pet overpopulation.

Prior to June 2013, our volunteers took pictures of the animals at the shelter and published the photos in local newspapers and various social media outlets in hopes of increasing public interest in the pets available for adoption. In addition, we placed as many shelter pets as we could with other approved rescue groups in more populated areas so that there was a greater possibility of these pets to be adopted. In order to get these animals to other shelters, we needed to organize, finance and provide transportation. With our help, we saved over 85 percent of dogs each year and nearly 50 percent of cats (in 2012).

Our president, Christine Link-Owens, is a senior research specialist at the Virginia Tech Transportation Institute (VTTI). In this position, she is responsible for conducting transportation research as well as working with staff and subjects to analyze data.

(Include 2-3 sentences describing your board members.)

To learn more about us, feel free to visit our website at <http://www.gilesanimalrescue.org>.

## Conclusion

We feel confident that this program will effectively educate children about the importance of spaying and neutering, ultimately ensuring that more pets in the area are spayed and neutered. We hope our educational outreach program will make children more informed about the importance of spaying and neutering their pets. If we are successful, we can continue to educate other sectors of the public about the importance of spaying and neutering, causing a ripple effect that results in lower euthanasia rates in our county. We hope that your foundation sees our closely aligned goals as a promising step in the right direction for animal welfare.

If you would like more information, please contact us at (540) 922-3958 or [gilescounty@gmail.com](mailto:gilescounty@gmail.com). Thank you for taking the time to consider our program.