

The American Sporting Dog Alliance

The Unified Voice of Sporting Dog Owners Nationwide

2007 Chicago Animal Shelter Alliance

Admissions, Euthanasia Rates Plunge

Success Contradicts Push For Forced Spay/Neuter Law As Chicago Almost Arrives At Coveted 'No-Kill' Status

by JOHN YATES

American Sporting Dog Alliance

<http://www.americansportingdogalliance.org>

asda@csonline.net

CHICAGO – (August 4 2008) The most recent data from Chicago animal shelters shows unparalleled success in lowering admissions and reducing euthanasia rates. Admission rates plunged 4.5-percent and it is probable that no healthy and adoptable dogs had to be euthanized in 2007.

Chicago animal shelters are literally knocking on the door of coveted “no-kill” status, which means that no adoptable, healthy or treatable dogs and cats are euthanized. At its current rate of progress, “no-kill” will be a reality in Chicago within two years for both dogs and cats.

A statistical analysis of the past 12 years shows that Chicago has one of the very best sheltering systems in America. The city’s success at reducing the number of unwanted dogs and finding homes for adoptable dogs has been truly noteworthy. No city in America has shown better results.

American Sporting Dog Alliance researchers Margo Milde and Michele Smith obtained official Chicago Animal Shelter Alliance (CASA) statistics for 2007. This information has not been published in Chicago or placed on local sheltering websites. Nor has it been made available to City Council, which is considering a tough ordinance to force people to spay or neuter their pets.

Animal rights groups and aldermen pushing for this ordinance have been spreading disinformation about shelter statistics in order to create the false appearance of a crisis.

The official report tells the truth about the statistics.

The CASA data for 2007 shows a one-year drop in shelter admission rates of 5-percent in the City of Chicago, and an 18-percent drop in the number of cats and dogs that had to be euthanized.

For dogs only, there was an 8.4-percent decline in shelter admissions and a 17-percent decline in the number of dogs that had to be euthanized, the 2007 data shows.

But the best news is that only 445 healthy dogs had to be euthanized in Chicago last year, compared to 736 in 2006. Most if not all of these dogs were euthanized because they had serious temperament problems, such as aggression toward people or other animals, or other severe behavioral problems. Many of them were brought to the shelter by their owners specifically to be euthanized for these reasons.

All of the other dogs that were euthanized were unhealthy due to advanced age, illness or injury, the data shows. Some of them had conditions that could be treated or managed, but the vast majority of these dogs were listed as untreatable.

Thus, for all practical purposes, it is fair to say that no healthy and adoptable dogs were euthanized in the City of Chicago last year.

It doesn't get much better than that!

One of the stated reasons for the forced pet sterilization ordinance that is before City Council now is an alleged over-population of pets in Chicago. The shelter data completely refutes this allegation.

The animal sheltering system in Chicago consists of large operations run by Animal Control, the Anti-Cruelty Society and the Animal Welfare League, backed by smaller organizations such as Chicago Canine Rescue, Felines Inc., Harmony House, Lakeshore, PAWS and Tree House. These city-based groups form CASA, and their statistics are the basis for the 2007 report. They also work closely with several other shelters and rescue groups in the metro area. These non-CASA programs bring dogs into the city shelter system to be euthanized, and also rescue dogs from the large shelters that are easily adoptable.

CASA's success can be attributed to aggressive public education programs, rescue work, foster care, adoptions and subsidized low-cost voluntary pet sterilization. Nationwide, a reported 60-percent of all dogs are spayed or neutered. Other sources peg this number at as high as 75-percent.

These sheltering organizations not only find homes for almost every healthy and adoptable dog in the Chicago metro area, but also rescue thousands of dogs every year from natural disasters like Hurricane Katrina, overcrowded animal shelters in the southern states, and dogs seized from “puppy mills” that have been shut down by the law.

The extent of this “humane relocation” effort is huge. Every Interstate highway has one or more rescue message boards to coordinate transportation for these dogs, and several other websites are devoted solely to this purpose. For example, the I-65 message board lists 3,742 postings to arrange transportation of dogs heading toward Chicago.

Here are some of the highlights of the 2007 CASA report:

- Shelter admissions of cats and dogs dropped from 42,479 in 2006, to 40,555 in 2007 – a 4.5-percent decline. For dogs only, the drop was from 19,544 to 17,904, or 8.4-percent.
- New homes were found for 11,460 cats and dogs in 2007, compared to 11,378 in 2006. For dogs only, adoptions increased from 5,088 in 2006 to 5,113 in 2007, which is almost miraculous considering that 8.4-percent fewer dogs entered the shelter system.
- In 2006, 30-percent of the dogs that entered the shelter system found new adoptive homes. This rose to 34-percent in 2007, for a 4-percent increase. Cat adoptions increased by .3-percent.
- In 2007, 1,107 dogs were reunited with their owners in the shelters. This compared to 1,118 in 2006.
- Of the 6,290 dogs that were euthanized in 2007, 5,041 had to be killed because of untreatable serious medical problems. The report shows that 1,054 dogs were brought by their owners specifically for euthanasia.
- The number of dogs euthanized fell from 8,820 in 2006 to 6,290 in 2007, a 17-percent decline.

The numbers contained in the 2007 report clearly state the continued success of the Chicago sheltering program, and there is no other way to describe that success except to call it phenomenal.

This is nothing new for Chicago. Between 2003 and 2005, the citywide euthanasia rate dropped 12% and shelter admissions fell by 11-percent.

In 1996, 42,561 animals were euthanized in Chicago. The 2007 total of 18,969 shelter deaths is an incredible 79-percent decline since 1996.

The proposed Chicago ordinance is supported by the Humane Society of the United States and other radical animal rights groups. These groups allege that an over-population of pets justifies mandatory pet sterilization.

The facts in the CASA report put the HSUS rationale in its true perspective, which is part of the organization's long-range plan to eliminate animal ownership in America.

Simply put, HSUS is lying.

HSUS and other groups are spreading disinformation in an attempt to pressure City Council to pass an ordinance that would have murderous consequences for animals and harm the lives of many fanciers of high quality purebred dogs and thousands of dog owners.

The data shows clearly that there are not enough adoptable pets in Chicago to meet consumer demand. Virtually every adoptable dog finds a new home. Thousands of dogs are imported from other parts of the country every year, and some are brought in from foreign countries.

The proposed ordinance requires spaying or neutering for all but a few cats and dogs, such as those used for shows, competition or breeding. The license fee for intact dogs and cats is set at \$100 a year for each animal.

Moreover, to qualify for any exemption, the applicant must submit to criminal background checks for every family member.

The American Sporting Dog Alliance urges all Chicago and metro dog owners to take an active role in our efforts to defeat this proposed ordinance.

Please contact local organizers to coordinate your participation and plug into what we are doing. They are Karen Perry (ouilmette4@sbcglobal.net), Margo Milde (mrm1206@yahoo.com) and Michele Smith (msmith@cmscrescue.com).

It is very important for dog owners to contact City Council members before the next committee meeting in September. The aldermen must know the truth about city shelter statistics, if we are to defeat the HSUS campaign of lies, disinformation and distortion.

This ordinance can be stopped if strong opposition arises from every neighborhood in Chicago, and from all segments of the dog community. Letters sent to the aldermen by surface mail are the most effective, followed by faxes and phone calls. Emails are the least effective. Even if they are brief, personal letters are much more effective than form letters.

Here is a link to the web pages of each of the aldermen, where you will find contact information:

<http://egov.cityofchicago.org/city/webportal/portalProgramAction.do?programId=536879154&channelId=-536879035&topChannelName=Government>.

Here is a link to City Council Committees: <http://www.chicityclerk.com/standingcommittee.php>. Tuesday's meeting will involve both the Committee on Finance and the Committee on License and Consumer Protection. This web page gives links to each committee member.

Also, please contact your friends and members and officers of any clubs or organizations you belong to that can help. These include dog clubs, sportsmen's clubs, farmers' groups and firearms rights organizations. Hunters, farmers and firearms enthusiasts know that these kinds of laws stem from animal rights groups that also want to eliminate hunting, raising animals for food and the right to keep and bear arms.

In addition, please join a dog owners' rights advocacy organization that reflects your personal concerns and priorities.

The American Sporting Dog Alliance represents owners, hobby breeders and professionals who work with breeds of dogs that are used for hunting. We are a grassroots movement working to protect the rights of dog owners, and to assure that the traditional relationships between dogs and humans maintains its rightful place in American society and life. Please visit us on the web at <http://www.americansportingdogalliance.org> or contact us at asda@csonline.net.

The American Sporting Dog Alliance also needs your help so that we can continue to work to protect the rights of dog owners. Your membership, participation and support are truly essential to the success of our mission. We are funded solely by the donations of our members, and maintain strict independence.

PLEASE CROSS-POST AND FORWARD THIS REPORT

Have You Joined Yet?

The American Sporting Dog Alliance

<http://www.americansportingdogalliance.org>

Please Email Us At: asda@csonline.net

Copyright © 2007 John Yates. All Rights Reserved.