

# **Animal Shelter Funding**

Does funding affect the adoption and euthanasia rate of shelters?, The possibility of building a fully functioning animal shelter at Rutgers University.

Tag Words: animal shelter funding, animal shelter costs, types of animal shelters/rescues/“pounds”, RU Animal Shelter, Rutgers Shelter.

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## **Summary**

Animal shelters play an important role in the adoption of homeless pets. Without them, there would be animals running loose in neighborhoods around the country, doing damage to personal property and possibly injuring people and other pets. Most shelters receive donations to help fund their operations but others do receive funding from the government and other sources. The amount of funding a shelter receives directly impacts the number of animals that a shelter can take in and therefore how many they can adopt out.

## **Video Link**

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=76dQm9MoigY>

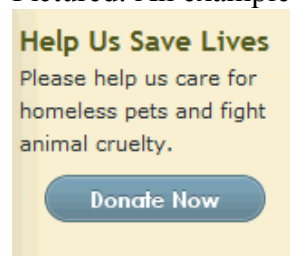
## **The Issue: Animal Shelter Funding**

### Types of Shelter Funding (CG)

Animal shelters and rescues are in a constant struggle to obtain funding to continue their operations. These facilities play an important role in every community because they provide a safe place for animals in need to reside. Animal shelters have a diverse population that comes through their doors. Some animals are strays that need a home, others are being surrendered because their families can no longer care for them. Among these animals, a portion of them comes with medical or behavioral issues that the shelter must take into account when finding suitable homes. All animal shelters must account for these types of animals and be able to plan accordingly. Thus, the funding of the shelters operations becomes very crucial.

There are several types of funding an animal shelter can use to support their operations. The funding can be classified into private and public funding. Private funding can come in several forms. For instance, the municipal government in a particular town, city, or county conveniently runs some shelters. The government covers almost every aspect of the financial responsibilities; everything from dog food to employee salaries to building maintenance is taken care of by private funding. If some of these shelters did not receive this help from taxpayers, they would likely be forced to close their doors and cease operation. There are also independent animal shelters that need to receive funding from outside sources in order to remain open. These types of shelters tend to rely on the goodwill of others to stay in business. Many of these shelters have websites with links that allow people to quickly donate with just a few clicks of the mouse.

Pictured: An example of donation links of shelter websites.



(Monmouth County SPCA)

Other shelters hold fundraisers in order to raise money and/or supplies that they need. For example, the ASPCA is notorious for holding fundraisers to allow the caring public to donate items such as toys, leashes, beds, food, cleaning supplies, towels, etc. There are also events such as dog walks that allow local shelters to acquire donations and support. Almost all independent shelters require donations of some sort from the community in order to cover their operation costs. Another type of funding includes grants for animal shelters to aid in their operations. The American Humane Society was founded in 1877 and offers various programs and resources to protect both children and animals. When it comes to re-homing and rehabilitating those who are sick or injured, the AHA has set up a few grants to help out with funding for animal shelters. The Humane Society of the United States also helps animal shelters in their quest for funding. Through their website, people can donate in a variety of ways, including one time donations and lifelong membership (Warta).

Examples of grants include the Meacham Foundation Memorial Grant. This grant helps shelters that provide sufficient non-profit status. Their purpose is to provide funding for the building and maintenance to enhance the living quality of the shelter animals. For the animals that are victims of abuse and neglect, there is a grant called the Second Chance Fund. The AHA is selective about which shelter receives this very special funding. Finally, the Foreclosure Pet Grant is available to help shelters deal with the influx of animals due to the struggling economy and home foreclosures. Shelters are being filled up with abandoned pets by families who feel they have no other choice, and this grant can be extremely helpful to shelters that are swamped (Warta). In addition to the grants listed, companies such as Petfinder.com and The Petco Foundation provide grants and funding for qualified shelters and rescues.

As discussed, there are several ways that shelters can request funding and donations. The Bergen County Animal Shelter has what they call the Angel Fund. They state on their website that the Angel Fund was established to provide veterinary services to animals in need, above and beyond what can reasonably be expected under normal shelter operations. Contributions to this fund are used specifically for this purpose. [Qualified animals] often require emergency treatment and extraordinary medical care costing thousands of dollars (Bergen County). They also provide services such as rabies clinics and obedience classes to generate revenue. Other shelters are very upfront about their sources of funding, such as the Monmouth County Animal Shelter/SPCA. They state that the MCSPCA is a non-profit organization. We receive no federal, state or local funding. We rely entirely on private donations to fund the many programs we provide right on their website (Germann). In addition, they make you aware of their need for funding by pointing out their budget and increasing operation costs and how much each animal costs to care for. They are able to gain sympathy and make one want to help them out so that an innocent animal can have a home.

Ultimately, there are several ways that these icons of the community are able to generate revenue. With increasing operation costs every year and more and more animals in need of homes, they need to do whatever it takes to cover these increasing costs. Every community understands the importance that the animal shelters play no matter which type of funding they rely on. Municipal shelters are able to receive help from taxpayers, whereas, independent shelters must scrape up any type of funding they can find. That may include, but is not limited to, grants, donations, and fundraising events. Regardless of how they manage to get their funds, they continue to be an important icon in every community.

#### Types of Shelters and Funding Criteria (KL)

All animal shelters share the same fundamental goal, to save the lives of animals that have been abandoned, abused, injured, etc. However, not all shelters achieve this goal in the same way. Some shelters take only certain kinds of animals. They can differ in the way they house the animals, their beliefs and methods in rehabilitating animals, and many other characteristics. Each shelter chooses the way it will operate for a particular reason, perhaps a lack of funding available or extra volunteers that can help care for the animals.

Today, many shelters are trying to move away from labeling themselves as pounds. This term implies a place with small cages that is overrun with animals. It makes people think of a place where animals are euthanized if they cannot be adopted quickly enough just to make room for the next animal to be housed. Many are now labeling themselves as shelter or rescues. Some are

even using these terms if they don't have one physical location where they house the animals.

There are some shelters that take predominantly exotic animals. Sometimes they accept domesticated animals such as cows, sheep, goats, and other farm animals. Others, such as the Popcorn Park Zoo, will take animals such as wolves, tigers, exotic birds, etc that people have tried to tame and keep as pets. If the animals are domesticated such as farm animals are, they could be adopted out again. However, most of the more exotic animals spend the remainder of their lives at these shelters. They do not make good pets so they cannot be adopted out but because they are now used to being provided food and being protected from predation, they can no longer be released into the wild. Some could be sent to zoos but as space at zoos is limited they usually remain at a shelter.

Unfortunately not all animals are suitable to be adopted out to new homes. Places called sanctuaries generally do not find new homes for the animals placed in their care. They will care for the animal for the remainder of its life. A dog or cat may have a medical condition that will cost a new owner a great deal of money and therefore it would be very difficult to find a responsible owner. Some animals, especially dogs, can have some severe behavioral problems that would make them unsafe to place in a home. In a normal shelter, animals such as these may have been euthanized but in a sanctuary these animals will be maintained for the duration of their lives by the staff and volunteers. Many of the exotic shelters fall under the title of sanctuary.

Some "shelters," such as Save the Animals Rescue Team do not have a physical location where they house the animals they are caring for. These groups are called fosters. They place animals in the homes of volunteers where they are looked after until a permanent home is found. The volunteers are responsible for feeding the animals, caring for them, grooming, taking the animal to the vet, and training. They get the animals used to being in a home environment as some come from abusive or neglectful situations and may not know how to act in a household. Volunteers also work on any behavioral issues that the animal may have to help make it more adoptable. Keeping the animals in homes makes them better adjusted as opposed to kenneling them because some animals get overly stressed in a shelter situation, thus making them harder to adopt.

Certain programs will only accept a certain type of animal or even a certain breed of dog or cat. Some will only take small breed dogs while others, such as Shetland Sheepdog Placement of New Jersey, will take only one breed of dog and mixes of this breed. These people are breed enthusiasts and as such they understand the quirks that each breed may have. They are better able to correct any behavioral problems that may exist. Many dogs that are surrendered to breed rescues come to be there because of behavior problems specific to the breed so this specialized knowledge is very helpful. Most of the time breed specific rescues operate as fosters.

More and more shelters are operating as no kill shelters today. These shelters usually take in a smaller number of animals over all but will not euthanize an animal as long as it is deemed adoptable. Unfortunately, there is not set standard as to what is considered adoptable and what is not. Many shelters say that as long as the animal does not have any life threatening medical conditions and passes a behavioral evaluation then it is considered adoptable. However if the animal does not pass these tests, it will be euthanized.

The last shelter type of shelter we will discuss is the one that we will be focusing on for the remainder of our project. It is the typical shelter that most people think of when talking about animal shelters. This shelter houses dogs and cats that are awaiting adoption by a new family. The shelter is responsible for the daily feeding and care of each animal. They groom and bathe the dogs, take the animals to the vet for shots and any medical treatments they may need due to injuries or pre-existing conditions. They will work with behavioral problems as time and staff availability allow. These shelters will typically accept both strays and surrendered animals.

Typical animal shelters generally do not have a large number of permanent employees. They carry out their day to day operations thanks to the time donated by many volunteers. These volunteers are often responsible for care of the animals, walking the dogs to keep them properly exercised, etc. They also clean the facilities where the animals live to ensure proper health and make sure sanitation standards are met. Volunteers may also attend adoption events in the local community with animals from the shelter in order to get the animals seen and hopefully placed in new homes.

#### Operation Costs/Breakdown of Funds (KM)

One of the main issues that animal shelters are facing is the amount of money that is being brought into the shelter through funding and donations, compared to the cost of maintaining the shelter. Unfortunately, the amount of money coming in is not equivalent the amount it takes to run the shelter. The funds are being broken down into three major categories: animals, employees, and shelter maintenance. The Camden County Animal Shelter, Monmouth County SPCA, and the Pearl River Animal Shelter were very open with their operating costs and their numbers will be referenced to give an idea of how much it really costs and what goes into running a shelter.

The main reason for the existence of shelters is to help as many animals as possible. But sadly it is not an inexpensive thing to do, therefore, many shelters have to turn away animals due to lack of funds, or they will have to resort to euthanasia for the reason that the animal is unadoptable and the shelter cannot afford to keep them for the remainder of their life. It is said that the average cost of owning a feline is anywhere from \$491.00 to \$3125.00 for the first year and subsequent yearly cost of \$310.00 to \$1169.00. (Foster & Smith). When it comes to canines the average cost of owning a dog for a first year \$374.00 to \$658.00 ([www.icanimalcenter.org](http://www.icanimalcenter.org)) and following years anywhere from \$287.00 to 2485.00. (Foster and Smith). These costs include such things as spay/neutering, first year vaccines, monthly medications such as flea medicine, heartworm, food, bowls, etc per cat or dog. Animal shelters house multiple felines and canines at a time so these numbers will be multiplied. Many shelters have an average ratio of 691 animals to one employee (Cashion). The total cost of simply animal supplies such as bowls, food, leashes, toys, collars, etc. for the Camden County Animal Shelter (CCAS) was \$35,000. This does not include any form of Veterinary care.

These estimates were taken with the idea that the animal is going to be a companion animal, with proper care and limited medical issues from the start. Many of the animals that come into shelter are in good health but on the other hand many are facing severe medical issues due to abuse and neglect. These animals are placing an even more severe burden on the shelter. For the 2010 year, the Camden County Animal shelter spent \$334,904 on veterinary care for all of their animals.

Although many shelters give it their all to try and save the animal, sometimes it is just out of their control, and some need to be humanly euthanized. Many animals are put down due to aggression towards people, severe aggression toward other animal and incurable illnesses. The yearly expense of euthanasia supplies of one shelter reported approximately \$5,730 (Cashion). The Camden County Animal Shelter estimates around 30% of the animals brought in to their shelter will have to be euthanized. It is important to keep in mind that each individual shelter is different, but this gives a pretty good idea on how much euthanasia costs the shelter.

Not only do the animals take part as a major expense for animal shelter but also cost to run and the maintenance of the animal shelter itself is a key expense. Since they are housing multiple animals they need to make sure that living conditions are suitable. This means that working heating and air condition units are an absolute necessity, along with utilities, feed storage, pest control, dog runs and shelters are just a few of the many things that need to be updated. Pearl River Township animal shelter in 2003 had to update some of their equipment and published the costs. For instance, pest control ran them \$576, new dog runs and shelters \$1,200, feed storage \$1000, A/C units \$700 (Cashion).

So far we touched based on the animal costs of running a shelter along with the shelter maintenance needed to keep a shelter running. But there are many other aspects that are put into running a shelter. It is required by state law for animal shelters to carry liability insurance and workers compensation insurance in case a visitor and/or employee gets injured or bitten by an animal, for the Camden County Animal Shelter insurance runs \$43,313 for the year of 2006. Different kinds of licenses are required to run a shelter such as a kennel licenses, different licenses and fees can cost \$298 and are required to be renewed every few years. (Egan, B).

A common mission of all animal shelters is to give an animal a better life and find them a permanent loving home. Shelters want to be able to take in as many animals as possible and find them homes right away. Therefore shelters need to advertise the animals in order to find them adopters and advertise the shelter itself in order to gain supporters; this can cost up to \$4,931, if not more. Since shelters are also a business there are many odds and ends that are needed to have the business running efficiently for instance postage, which roughly costs \$302, office expenses \$1706, telephone \$4,499 (Egan, B). Many shelters do have a fleet of their own vehicles to transport animals, and pick up abandoned animals as well. Not only is there the cost of purchasing vehicles but the cost of vehicle maintenance.

Without employees a shelter would not be able to run. Many shelters have many different job positions that come together to create a successful organization. Many shelters have their own on-site veterinarians along with executive directors, veterinary technicians, director of developments, general and operation managers, and animal control workers. From a national standpoint the average salary of the Executive Director (non-profit) is \$51,146 and the Director of Development (Non-profit) is about \$43,502. Veterinarian's salaries are around \$67,220 and their technicians receive earnings of approximately \$25,018. General operations manager's salary is \$36,856, operations managers make \$37,871, and animal control officers receive an income of approximately \$30,723 (payscale).

Looking back at the Animal Welfare Society of Camden County, Inc. Their total salaries for the year 2006 were \$308,377. The shelter not only had to pay the salaries of their workers but also for the benefits that the employees received. The total cost of employee benefits was \$19,882, and payroll taxes at \$33,443 (Egan, B). Since these workers will be working with animals with unknown backgrounds they will have to receive preventative vaccines in case they are bitten or scratched by an animal, for instance, a 2-year rabies vaccine. For the Pearl River Shelter it cost their shelter \$720 in 2003 to vaccinate their new employees and those employees whose vaccine expired (Cashion).

Since Camden County, Pearl Rivers, and Monmouth SPCA animal shelter allowed their records to be publically view it allowed for a more realistic analysis of how much really goes into running a shelter. Now the focus is the comparison between the costs they are faced with and the amount of money they are bringing into the shelter. Along with donations, many shelters have other programs that allow them to raise more money for their cause. But do fundraising and donations break even with the amount they are spending to stay opened? The answer to that question is no, therefore many shelters each and every year are in some sort of deficit that never disappears. Monmouth County SPCA stated, "It costs approximately \$250,000 per month to fund all the important programs of the MCSPCA. We need to receive donations of over \$250,000 per month just to maintain normal operations throughout the year. Unfortunately, because the amount we receive usually falls well short of the minimum required amount, we operate at a deficit each and every month" (Germann, J). When it comes to CCAS their total revenue and support for 2010 was \$101,232 in donations and \$48,903 in grants. The shelters total operating costs for 2010 was \$1.2 million. For many shelters the amount of debt they are faced with increases each and every year and piles on the debt they already encompass from past years. For instance, compare to 2010 revenue and total costs for the Camden County Animal Shelter to their 2006 costs and revenue. In 2006 their total revenue reached \$564,380 while their total operating costs were \$548,099. This leaves a change in net assets (deficit) of \$16, 281 (Egan, B).

#### Aspects of Running a Shelter and the Types of Animals and Sources Accepted (AW)

Shelters and rescues constantly face struggles with funding to support the animals and the proper functioning of the shelter. Understandably, the limiting factor in running any shelter is money. Depending on the amount of money received or not received for that matter, shelters are forced to limit their resources and supplies based on what is affordable and in their budget.

Many shelters require potential adopters to go through rigorous testing prior to being eligible to receive an animal from their organization. One such test may be a home evaluation where shelters will either contact landlords or even visit the property where the adopted animal will be living. Most shelters may not perform home evaluations, but there are a number that call references that are provided by the potential adopter such as; friends, neighbors, their veterinarian or anyone else who may provide valuable information as to whether a suitable home will be provided for the cat or dog. Shelters also charge a small fee to adopt an animal. Although these fees are not too high and may not even cover the cost incurred on the shelter for housing and caring for the animal, it gives the adopter a sense of ownership and allows them to feel their new pet is valuable. It is also a small amount of money that can go a long way for an organization rescuing animals. Many of these resources to look into potential adopters may not be an option for many shelters that do not have the time and man power to screen potential

adopters which unfortunately may not guarantee the best home for the adopted pet.

There are a variety of resources that have now become available for shelters to advertise their adoptable animals. One such resource is a website called Petfinder.com. This website is a place to advertise adoptable animals with a picture and their profile (Pet Finder, 2011). Interested adopters can search animals based on a plethora of characteristics included, but not limited to; species, breed, age, location, and even the size of the animal. This valuable resource can only be helpful if those with adoptable animals have the time or resources (internet or computer) to post such information about the animals on the website.

Many other advertisements rely heavily on volunteers whether it is making fliers, walking potential dogs in areas for exposure to interested people or even having events at the shelter or other facilities such as pet stores to “show off” the special animals looking for homes.

Along with advertisements for animal adoptions, shelters also look for donations and promote fundraisers to benefit the shelter as a whole. Money contributed during fundraisers can be the sole source of funds for many shelters open today. Again, a main factor that truly determines the effectiveness of these methods or the possibility of participating in these events is the man power and the money.

Even if a shelter receives funding from local government based on taxes, it is not nearly enough to run a well-functioning kennel with all the proper necessities, resources, employees and supplies. Fundraising and donations are the main source of funds for those shelters as well as those (which are many) that do not receive money from the government. Depending on how well a shelter is at raising funds, has a direct impact on how well they are able care for and adopt out these home-less animals.

Another key factor in a well functioning shelter as mentioned before is volunteers. With regulations based on safety and for insurance purposes, the type and quantity of volunteers can be limited, but all shelters are always welcoming to volunteers and are valuable contributors to the successful functioning of a shelter. Many volunteers are at the core of shelters and without them a shelter may crumble and unfortunately the animals are the main recipients of the repercussions of this occurrence.

Animal Shelters are severely understaffed all due to lack of funds. It had been found that some larger shelters have a staff to animal ration of 1 employee to 600-1,000 animals (Cashion, 2003). It is difficult to imagine that animals are getting the proper care, no matter how efficiently a staff member is working, with the sheer mass of animals one person is responsible for. Without the care and attention these animals deserve, they are not getting an equal opportunity to find a home. Individuals working at shelters must be willing to work with animals, but also willing to get dirty and clean up their messes. Animal shelter staff must be passionate about their jobs and their passion is what must drive them, not their salary (Germann, J). Without much money to support the needs of the animals, the salary of the shelter employees also suffers. Another consideration is the insurance costs must be available when people are working with animals that can unpredictably cause injuries.



Just as people need medical treatment, so do animals. Since many animals brought into a shelter have been without a stable home or even a home at all, they may be in need of a great deal of medical treatment. Such treatment includes medical procedures, medications or even surgeries. Veterinary treatment is a major cost of running a shelter due to the importance of this resource for the well-being of the animals (Best Friends Animal Society).

The number of dogs and cats that are home-less and brought to shelters are produced by animals that are not spayed and neutered. By spaying and neutering animals, the possibility of reproduction is cut out, also bringing down the number of animals that need to be brought into shelters. The sheer costs that must go into spaying and neutering animals, is one of the most expensive aspects of veterinary care, or even of the shelter overall (Humane Society). It should be strongly encouraged for everyone to spay and neuter their pets unless they are knowledgeable and responsible breeders.

Many shelters, especially those who receive funding from local governments or are run by a municipality, only accept animals that are found and captured in their specific region. Some may even charge a surrender fee depending on the rules of the specific shelter. Also, depending on space at the shelter, some citizens trying to surrender an animal may be turned away due to lack of space which unfortunately comes down to funding.

The controversy shelters and rescues deal with on a daily basis is the topic of euthanasia. Ethics comes into question and depending on the beliefs of the shelter and the type of shelter, the number of euthanasia's performed may vary. To many people's dismay, many shelters only euthanize what they may deem as an "un-adoptable" animal, whether it be considered behavioral or medical. Other shelters, especially those that do not have a great deal of funding for the large number of animals they have, may be forced to euthanize due to lack of resources and space, although this fact may not be shared with the public.

Money also must be spent on cleaning and sanitation of supplies to prevent the transfer of parasites and diseases that can affect both humans and animals within a shelter. Other supplies necessary include; leashes, collars, bowls, towels, beds and other such supplies any animal facility must possess. If these items are not donated, a portion of funding must be designated toward the purchase of these items. Also, office supplies and possibly electronics must be obtained by the shelter to run the business aspect of the organization. Unforeseen costs that have not been budgeted for can also impact the functioning of a shelter and may cause funds to be taken away from one cause and put toward another.

Much of running a shelter or animal rescue ultimately comes down to what any business needs to function properly and efficiently and that is money. Money provides shelters with the facilities, the supplies and above all the employees. Depending on the amount of money a shelter has once all the necessities are covered (if they can even cover the necessities), money can be spent on other things to help the shelter run more smoothly including; more staff, better/larger facilities, etc. It is unfortunate that many shelters and rescues do not have the money to even purchase the necessities and will never encounter a surplus of money to spend on anything than what is severely needed. This severe problem of lack of animal shelter funding needs to be addressed and with no time to spare, innocent animal's lives are at risk.

## **The Service Project: Letter**

After doing much research into the varied aspects of running an animal shelter, it has been discovered that administrators here at Rutgers are proposing to build a functional animal shelter nearby George H. Cook Campus in New Brunswick. At this present time, the details concerning the proposed shelter are still being brought together, but with any large project such as this one, the support of the community and donors is a necessity. Our community service project is geared toward helping the dream of an Animal Shelter at Rutgers University to become a reality. Since everything is still on the drawing board, funding for this project is the first and most important building block in this process. As many are already aware, animal shelter funding is hard to come by, especially for one that technically does not even exist. The funds to build the shelter have yet to be determined, but as a group we are proposing donations for the shelter that will be dedicated toward the business end of the shelter. The benefits that will come not only to the animals, but also the students here at Rutgers who will help run this business allowing it to be a valuable resource.

Below is the letter we have composed to accompany a petition that will be submitted to potential donors requesting donations toward the program (once the Animal Shelter has been approved by the necessary Rutgers administrators). The petition can be viewed electronically by accessing the website:

<http://www.petitiononline.com/ruanisce/petition.html> and will be signed by Rutgers Students and the Community. Below is a letter for submission to potential donors.

To whom it may concern:

We are writing on behalf of the Rutgers University community to obtain funding for student programs associated with a proposed animal shelter to be constructed nearby the George H. Cook Campus in New Brunswick, New Jersey. We feel that having a shelter in close vicinity to campus would give the students many opportunities to further their education through hands-on interactions with the animals. The programs could allow for advancement of education for students interested in a variety of fields including; animal fields, business, finance, economics, etc. It would also draw members of the surrounding neighborhood to campus in an effort to adopt animals, helping the school to play a more active role in the community.

There are a large number of Animal Science majors here at Rutgers that would be interested in working at the animal shelter. With a newly formed Companion Animal Science option, there would be ample interest in student volunteer and educational opportunities. Many students currently volunteer at shelters or work in animal clinics in the surrounding area. Having a shelter on campus would create a place for these students to work in the nearby vicinity. It would also allow students, without personal transportation, to gain hands on experience required for graduation. This opportunity would help to cut down on costs, as there would be a decreased need for paid positions with many volunteers willing to care for the animals in exchange for college credits.

Walking around campus, students are likely to see many stray cats and dogs. Being a largely environmental science based campus, many students, faculty, and staff to care for these animals; but the population keeps growing, making this a challenging problem as they have their own monetary concerns in a poor economic environment. Rutgers University is also located close to downtown New Brunswick. There are many stray animals in the city that could be brought to the shelter and cared for in a safe location.

The members of Rutgers and the nearby communities would benefit greatly from the creation of this animal shelter and the programs that can be developed within the shelter. We thank you for your time in reading this letter and reviewing the petition and signatures in support of the project we have provided.

Once the shelter is approved at Rutgers, the letter above, along with the electronically signed petition document provided below will be presented to potential donors interested in making a contribution to the program.

The Rutgers community would benefit greatly from the addition of an animal shelter near campus with programs dedicated to further the education of Rutgers Students. It would allow students to gain hands-on experience that is crucial to the learning experience and having a working shelter near campus would allow them to learn how to work safely with animals as well as how to effectively run a business. This would also positively benefit the homeless animals by providing them a safe place to live and proper care prior to being adopted by members of the community as loving family companions. By signing this petition, you are showing your support in the development of student-based programs working with companion animals within an animal shelter at Rutgers University. You also understand the valuable impact the programs along with the shelter will provide to the students, the animals and the community.

Summary of Larry S. Katz and Julie F. Fagan's Letter to the PETCO Foundation:

Professors Larry S. Katz and Julie F. Fagan have written a letter to the PETCO foundation in order to receive support in their quest to create programs that will bring animals and humans closer together. With the support of the PETCO foundation Rutgers University hopes to create a website that will deal with proper companion animal care, create hardcopy material that can help educate the public about companion animals, create externships for the student of Rutgers, supply funding for student outreach projects, and start the Companion Animal Rutgers Enrichment (CARE) program. Also, in the near future Rutgers would like to create an animal shelter here on campus, which will not only benefit the companion animals but the community and Rutgers students as well.

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Animal shelters across the country struggle to keep up with the demand for housing and care for stray and surrendered pets on a daily basis. It is estimated that between six and eight million animals are put into shelters each year and that only a small fraction of those animals are able to find homes. This puts a great strain on the financial, material, and human resources available to the shelters. They cannot take in as many animals as need space and are sometimes forced to euthanize unadoptable animals.

Stray animals become a problem for everyone in the county. They become a nuisance to homeowners, leaving a mess behind in the form of knocked over trashcans and other such refuse left behind. Stray animals can become a potential hazard to house pets as they are not properly socialized and may attack an unobserved pet in an owner's yard. Some may even carry diseases that can be transmitted to pets, homeowners, and children. If funding for animal shelters were increased, there would be less threat of problem animals in an area. Shelters would be better able to accept animals and provide them with better care while in the shelter. They would have a chance to train the animals and work on any problem behaviors that may stop an animal from getting adopted. Many shelters do great work but increasing their funding would enable them to do more.

Kristen McGuinniss  
Letter to the Editor

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According to the Humane Society of the United States, four million dogs and cats, which is about one every eight seconds are euthanized each year in shelters across the United States. So what's going on? Why are their four millions cats and dogs being put to sleep each year? The answer is simple but complex, animal overpopulation and lack of shelter funding. The universal mission of animal shelters across the nation is to provide a better life for animals in need and find them a forever home. The Humane Society of the United States estimates that approximately 6-8 million dogs and cats enter a shelter each year. Now compare that with the estimated 4 million that are euthanized. That leaves about 2-4 million animals left in the shelters; some may look at them as the "lucky" ones. But are they really lucky? Most of them will be lucky and be adopted into wonderful households, but others will live their life in a kennel.

One of the main causes of animal overpopulation is due to a lack of spaying and neutering. By having the animals intact you are increasing the chances of them reproducing multiple litters over their life span. These litters will then most likely be brought to an animal shelter. The shelter then has to provide care for these animals and all the necessary shots so they will not contract a disease, which isn't cheap. The ASPCA states that the average fertile cat produces 1-2 litters a year that contains 4-6 kittens. While the average fertile dog produces 1 litter per year with 4-6 puppies.

Animals that are brought into shelters come from array of backgrounds. Some in perfect health and a change in their owner's lifestyle have led them to the shelter. On the other hand many that come to the shelters are in terrible health and have been through years of abuse and neglect. For any animal coming into the shelter they will need to be taken care of by the shelters staff. It is estimated that the average cost of care for a cat or dog is around \$700- \$875 annual. These estimates were taken with the idea that the animal is in good health. But not all animals are brought into shelters in perfect condition, unfortunately many are brought barley holding on to life, and the costs of veterinary care to rehabilitate these animals can double or even triple that average cost.

Animal shelters simply do not have the means to take in every animal and find them a good home. Therefore, not only are the unadoptable animals being euthanized but many perfectly good animals as well. Most shelters are non-profit organizations and run strictly on volunteers and donations. Not only do they have the costs of animal care but also the costs to keep the shelter running. How can anyone expect them to keep every animal that comes through the doors of the shelters, when each year they spend more money than what is coming in. They have to make a choice and figure out which animals have the greatest potential of being adopted, this is accomplished through behavior and medical tests. Though many external wounds can be healed the emotional ones cannot leaving some animals aggressive and unadoptable. Those animals are always put down, along with animals that have been there for years and haven't even been looked at or are just too old.

It is a wonderful vision to believe that people will step up and take more responsibility for animals, by getting them spayed/neutered for instance or animal abuse/neglect will end, but unfortunately its not going to happen. Therefore, the best way to help these animals is to provide more funding to the shelters that we heavily rely on to take them in. If shelters were able to

receive guaranteed funding each year they would be able to save to many more animals, and not choose euthanasia because the cost of keeping a particular animal is too great.

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Amy Walters  
Letter to the Editor

FEEDBACK: The South Brunswick Post  
[Feedback@centraljersey.com](mailto:Feedback@centraljersey.com) (no length specifications)  
Animal Control Funding

Lack of funding in local shelters is a big problem many citizens may not be aware of. South Brunswick Township itself does not even have a shelter and limited resources pertaining to animal control.

Our shelter services are shared with Montgomery Township according to the township webpage. This is a problem considering in the year 2010 1,980 dogs and 616 cats were registered and licensed in the township. This does not include those dogs and cats that may not be licensed or even vaccinated for that matter. Our own pet's safety is at risk if there are feral cats and stray dogs running loose.

With the recent purchase of Rocky Top Dog Park bringing in potential revenue for the township, I propose that this money be dedicated toward the control of animals residing within the township. The funding could help keep the animal control department stable and also give greater support to the Montgomery Township animal shelter which houses stray or lost animals captured in South Brunswick Township.

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Casey Goselin  
Letter To The Editor

The Asbury Park Press  
March 23, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

There has been an increasing outcry for help by local animal shelters. The reason for this is due to the lack of funding that each one is currently receiving. Most of the shelters are privately owned and rely solely on public donations, which can be very scarce. Every year, these shelters operate under a severe deficit because they care about the well-being of these animals more than the money involved.

The Monmouth County SPCA, which takes in stray animals and surrenders, is a prime example of the above stated. Their open admissions policy has led to their current population within the

shelter. They currently house approximately 75 dogs and over 200 cats and do not euthanize any adoptable pets. These policies have increased operating costs by 40% alone.

The MCSPCA also provides several programs to benefit the community. These services include low-cost spay and neuter clinics, cruelty investigations, pet bereavement counseling, and many more. It costs the MCSPCA approximately \$250,000 every month to fund all of the beneficial programs they provide. Unfortunately, the amount of donations they receive fall extremely short of these operating costs. Thus, they continue to operate at a deficit each and every month.

There are many shelters across the state of New Jersey that are in the same situation and desperately need help from the community. It is an increasing problem that needs to be brought to light. If you would like to make a donation to the Monmouth County SPCA you can visit their website at: [www.monmouthcountyspca.org](http://www.monmouthcountyspca.org) or mail donations to: 260 Wall Street, Eatontown, NJ 07724. Any donation to a local shelter will be greatly appreciated!