

Grant ID: 153

Title of Proposal: A Spay- Neuter Assistance Program for Underserved Animal Populations
Agency Type: Non-Profit
Total Funding Requested: \$9,000.00
Check Payable To: Animal Guardians of Brevard

Application Information

Demographics

Name of Applicant Agency: Animal Guardians of Brevard
Person Submitting Proposal: Susan L. Goodman
Organization Business Address: 981 E. Eau Gallie Blvd., Ste E, PMB #102
State: Florida
Phone (xxx-xxx-xxxx): 321-759-2999
Cell: 321-779-2303
Website Address: www.animalguardiansofbrevard.org
Position: Director, Treasurer
City: Melbourne
Zip: 32937
Fax: 610-862-5908
Email Address: info@animalguardiansofbrevard.org

Agency Details

Dates of Last Fiscal Year: Begin: 01/01/09 **End:** 12/31/09
Organization Income in Last Fiscal Year: \$28,450.00
Organization Expenses in Last Fiscal Year: \$31,794.00
Number of Paid Employees: Full Time: 0 Part Time: 0
Number of Active Volunteers: 4

Total Volunteer Hours per Week: 70.00

How did you learn of the 2009 Florida Animal Friend grant competition? We are grateful recipients of a previous grant. We had read the program proposal in the print media in 2006 and promoted the petition drive. We also researched it when we renewed our vehicle registrations.

Year(s) of previous Florida Animal Friend grants (if applicable): 2008

Describe your agency:

Services Provided

- Unlimited Intake Shelter
- Limited Intake Shelter
- Foster Network
- Animal Control
- Spay/Neuter Services
- Other Advocacy group with nu

Organization Structure:

- City, county, or tribal agency
- Private nonprofit agency
- Other

List your current board of directors:

Name	Title	Phone	Occupation	Email
Daniel M. Wadler	Director, Secretary	321-779-2303	Engineer (retired)	rvman321@yahoo.com
Dennis L. Peer	Vice President, Director	321-752-0186	Manager (retired)	animalguardian321@yahoo.com
Susan L. Goodman	Director, Treasurer	321-779-2303	Medical Doctor (retired)	animalguardian@cfl.rr.com

Applicant Qualifications

For your organization, in the last complete fiscal year:

0 cats and 0 dogs were admitted.

1320 cats and 929 dogs were adopted.

0 cats and 0 dogs were euthanized.

567 cats and 52 dogs were sterilized.

Briefly describe your animal programs:

The above adoptions were from the local shelter through events organized and facilitated by Animal Guardians. All are sterilized before adoption. Animal Guardians (AG) has four primary programs that address the tragedy of animal overpopulation: Our SPAY NEUTER Program is unique in our area as it is the ONLY program that provides whatever financial assistance is needed for lower- and fixed-income people to get their cats and dogs sterilized. This is achieved through referrals to low-cost clinics and clinics we administer ourselves. While we primarily assist with homed pets, we also assist free-roaming/feral cat caregivers who cannot get assistance through the the local organization whose mission is to respond to such requests (Space Coast Feline Network - SCFN). We have arranged and financed sterilization of over 4000 cats and dogs to date, including 619 in 2009. Our ADOPTION Program arranges and promotes in- and out-of-house adoption events for our local shelter, and transfers to rescue organizations. In 2009, we facilitated adoption of 215 animals (over 1950 to date), and transfer of 55 animals from the shelter to rescue groups (nearly 2150 to date). Our EDUCATION Program provides informative literature and educational displays that we create and distribute for the local shelter and the community. We also enlist media support in disseminating information through Public Service Announcements and investigative reporting. Our SHELTER ASSISTANCE Program has maintained the Petfinder database, cared for animals, assisted clients, contributed to and provided building improvements, and donated equipment and supplies. We have administered the foster and education programs, solicited goods and services for the shelter from the community, and more. We have also had a significant volunteer presence though we have recently scaled this back to concentrate more on spay-neuter.

If your program performs adoptions, are all animals sterilized before adoption?

Yes

If not all, what percentage of animals are not currently sterilized before adoption?

If not all, how are animals selected for sterilization before adoption?

If not all, describe your sterilization policies and procedures for assuring sterilization after adoption:

Give additional background information on your organization's programs as they relate to this application and the qualifications of the personnel who will be in charge of this program. Show that you have the ability to carry ou this program.

Our programs continue to be administered and operated by the same committed people who have made them so successful already. We have backgrounds in management, small business administration, medical practice, and sales. We are well-known and respected within our community. Since its founding in 2002, Animal Guardians has a proven record of delivering desperately needed services to our community with minimal overhead expense. Over 98% of our income consistently goes DIRECTLY into program expenses. Our volunteer experience at the local shelter has been a compelling reminder of how much the work of our organization is needed, and how much suffering and misery it can prevent. We have been local and regional recipients of the prestigious Jefferson Award for Public Service and our founders have been recognized as "Hometown Heroes" by our regional television media. Our President has been a finalist for our local newspaper's Volunteer of the Year Award, and we have received citations and commendations from our community and county commission as well. We believe our record speaks for itself.

If you currently have a program for sterilization of cats and/or dogs, describe your current level of funding and productivity and why additional resources are needed?

From 2007 to 2008, the number of animals sterilized by our program increased 140% from 616 to 1494. In 2009 the number

declined to 619 as demand increased but available funds were affected by the economy. The average cost for all sterilization and related procedures for dogs and cats was \$40. Total program expenses in 2009 exceeded income by about \$3000, which was covered by a balance carried over from 2008. Though we are operating at a loss and resources have been limited, there are currently no alternatives and we will continue our program as long as we can.

Target Population

Geographical target area (name of city, county, etc.):	Brevard County, Florida
Total human population in target area:	535,000
Percent of residents living below poverty in target area:	9.2%
Estimated number of pet cats in target area (human population divided by 3.3):	162122
Estimated number of pet dogs in target area (human population divided by 4.0):	133750
Estimated number of feral cats in target area (human population divided by 6.0):	89167
Number of cats admitted to animal control shelters in the target area last year (if known)	9846
Number of dogs admitted to animal control shelters in the target area last year (if known)	4737
Number of cats euthanized in animal control shelters in the target area last year (if known)	5657
Number of dogs euthanized in animal control shelters in the target area last year (if known)	1951

Please explain if you believe your target area animal population is significantly different than above.
 The feral cat population exceeds 100,000 according to estimates by local Animal Control. Also, the American Veterinary Medical Association's (AVMA) formula for estimating pet populations yields higher numbers for pet cats and dogs than above, but I cannot attest to the accuracy of either estimate.

Please explain what you believe are the most substantial sources of dog and cat overpopulation in the target area:
 For cats, I believe that intact pet cats and feral cats both contribute significantly to the problem. For dogs, backyard breeders may be a major contributor in addition to intact pets.

What kinds of spay/neuter services are currently available in the target area and in what ways are these resources currently insufficient to meet community needs?
 Accessible, affordable pet sterilization services are extremely limited in Brevard County. Aside from Animal Guardians' program, there are just two full-time and two part-time local low(er)-cost clinics. These limited resources must meet the needs of a county that is 72 miles long and populated by over half a million people. No other clinics provide financial assistance. Animal Guardians has the ONLY program that pays for sterilization for pet guardians who want to be responsible, but are unable to even afford reduced rates. The low-cost clinics are sometimes filled days to weeks in advance for cats, and even months in advance for dogs. Delays while awaiting appointments result in frequent unplanned pregnancies which exacerbate overpopulation, and discouraged pet guardians may fail to follow through with sterilization at all. Without help their pets remain intact and reproduce. These pet guardians also frequently retain (intact) offspring of pets they were unable to have fixed resulting in rapidly increasing numbers of animals to be "gotten rid of." It is not uncommon for us to encounter people with more than 8 intact pets. In addition, unsterilized offspring frequently end up with family and neighbors in similar economic situations, so these animals also remain unsterilized and breed uncontrollably. Local private veterinarians provide limited services to rescue groups but virtually none to indigent pet guardians. The only other source of any financial aid for pet sterilization is a \$25 rebate from Brevard County Animal Services. While focusing attention on the importance of spaying and neutering, this program's actual impact is minimized since additional requirements (rabies vaccine, county license) and their associated costs virtually negate the rebate. Unfortunately, there has also been almost no program promotion so that its existence remains virtually unknown to the general public. In addition, a maximum of only 4 animals per household per year are eligible. A few hundred of the cats sterilized to date by Animal Guardians' program were free-roaming cats cared for or trapped by people of limited means who wanted to treat, neuter, immunize, and return them but did not/could not get assistance from our overburdened local feral cat organization (SCFN). While not our primary mission, we are committed to preventing additional births regardless of whether the parents are homed or not. Our veterinarian, Dr. Mengerling, is one of the ONLY vets in the area who does true pediatric sterilization for cats and dogs as young as 2 months and 2 pounds, which is endorsed and promoted by the AVMA.

Most other local clinics will not sterilize a kitten or puppy until s/he is at least four months old, (and none will pay for it). This increases the chance that a pregnancy can occur before the pet guardian follows through or is able to schedule an appointment. Dr. Mengerling is also one of only a few vets who will treat feral cats. The number of people we have already assisted speaks to the need for our services, and without our unique programs there are no alternatives. This situation has been further exacerbated by the severe economic crisis and soaring local unemployment rate. In addition to the growing local population, Brevard has a large "snowbird" population of winter residents. Regrettably, some of these temporary residents get temporary pets, many of whom are not sterilized and are left behind when the people go "home." Some end up in shelters, but many end up living, breeding, suffering, and dying on the streets.

Florida Animal Friend is highly supportive of proposals that are focused on animal populations that are identified as substantial sources of dog or cat overpopulation rather than being diluted over too broad of a geographic area or diverse animal populations. Describe the specific target animal population of the spay/neuter project proposed for this grant:

- Pets in low-income families**
- Especially difficult or unique animal overpopulation sources**
- Pit bull dogs**
- Feral cats**
- Special spay/neuter event**
- Other**

Objectives

What do you hope to accomplish with these funds (objectives should be specific and quantifiable)?

Despite an increase in the area's population and the attendant rise in the number of pets, shelter admissions stabilized in recent years, and actually declined in 2009. We believe that is due, in part, to Animal Guardians' Spay-Neuter program and the thousands of births it has prevented. Also, our assistance allowed several people to keep pets that they were going to relinquish. We believe our efforts will have an exponential effect on the deleterious effects of animal overpopulation if we are able to receive funding and provide services into the future. We can accomplish the following with \$9,000: Spay 111 female cats for \$50 each totaling \$5550, Neuter 66 male cats for \$35 each totaling \$2310, Spay 10 female dogs for \$75 each totaling \$750, Neuter 6 male dogs for \$65 each totaling \$390. These are average costs which depend on the species, size, and sex of the animal, whether in estrus, pregnant, or cryptorchid, and which clinic is most appropriate for the situation.

How does this program increase the number of sterilization surgeries above the existing baseline?

These sterilization surgeries will simply not take place unless Animal Guardians arranges and pays for them. No other organization provides financial help for pets, and SCFN can/does not provide help for many of the feral cats that present for sterilization.

Methods

What criteria will you use to determine eligibility for the program?

Our objective definition of "low income" is income below the poverty line and receipt of government assistance, including SS, SSI, SSDI, Medicaid, Food Stamps, and referrals from county agencies. According to U.S. Census Bureau estimates, approximately 50,000 people with 28,000 pets met those criteria in 2004 (more now due to the economy). We also consider extenuating circumstances such as recent job loss, medical crisis, disability, or other financial emergency; the prevention of unwanted litters is our primary concern.

How will you advertise the program? Explain how the advertising will reach the target audience.

Almost all of our clients are referred by the low-cost clinics, shelters, Animal Services, other clients and their friends, and other contacts within the community. We are listed as a spay-neuter financial assistance resource in several animal welfare-related publications. Our brochures on spaying and neutering, our applications, and other related literature are distributed at several locations. We provide public service announcements and contact information to the local print and broadcast media about animal overpopulation and the need for sterilization and responsible pet guardianship. However, requests for help received far exceed available funds and we are not actively advertising for now.

How will you address barriers to full use of the program such as transportation, illiteracy, and cultural hurdles?

We are unable to provide transportation but this has not been an obstacle to date. We have been reasonably successful in overcoming the cultural and language barriers by working with a client's contacts to inform, educate, and arrange for services.

Does this project involve the transportation of animals by someone other than the client? If so, describe the vehicles, methods for confinement, personnel training, liability releases used to assure the safety of the animals and handlers.

Cats and small dogs may be transported in a van from a convenient, centralized client drop-off point to the clinic location at the veterinarian's home in a rural area. All animals MUST be in safe, secure carriers and are transported by the trained veterinary staff and/or the veterinarian. This provides safety as well as last-minute post-operative monitoring, while thorough post-operative instructions are given and questions answered. All clients are required to sign a hold-harmless waiver.

Veterinary Services

Objectives

What arrangements have you made with veterinarians to perform the surgeries?

One clinic to which we refer clients (SPCA) already charges extremely low fees. It is located in the northern part of the county and clients in that area are sent there. We also encourage other clients, especially if they have multiple animals, to go there if possible. Another low-cost clinic (FATA) gives us a discount of \$10 off every spay and neuter and their rates are significantly lower than those at private veterinarians' offices. Our clinics are operated directly through the veterinarian/owner whose letter of collaboration is part of this application. This clinic charges about the same for cats and a little more for dogs due to higher overhead. Overall our fees average less than one third of the prevailing rates at private veterinarians' offices.

Veterinary Practices

Practice Name	Address	City	State	Zip	Phone	Lead Practice
Brevard Community Animal Hospital	3695 Hield Rd.	W. Melbourne	Florida	32904	321-725-2455	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Florida Aid to Animals	741 Creel St.	Melbourne	Florida	32935	321-242-9826	<input type="checkbox"/>
SPCA of North Brevard	455 Cheney Hwy.	Titusville	Florida	32780	321-267-8221	<input type="checkbox"/>

Fee Range

What is the fee range to be paid for spay and neuter and what is the distribution to be paid by the client vs. the grant program? Keep in mind that Florida Animal Friend grant funds may only be used for costs directly associated with sterilization surgery (including anesthesia and pain control) and not for other items such as vaccines, testing, licensing, and capital purchases.

	Amount Paid by Client	Amount Paid by Project	Total Amount
Range for Male Cats	\$0.00	\$35.00	\$35.00
Range for Female Cats	\$0.00	\$50.00	\$50.00
Range for Male Dogs	\$0.00	\$85.00	\$85.00
Range for Female Dogs	\$0.00	\$125.00	\$125.00

Please check each item below to indicate additional services offered at the time of surgery, whether the client is required to pay for them, and if so what the fee is. For example, if an examination is required for surgery but is not charged to the client it would be marked:

Required Yes, Fee to client No

Required, Optional, or Not Offered

Examination Required Optional Not Available

Rabbies Vaccination if Due Required Optional Not Available

Fee to Client?

No Yes

No Yes \$6.00

Other Vaccination if Due	<input type="radio"/> Required	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Optional	<input type="radio"/> Not Available	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="text" value="\$7.00"/>
Pain Medication	<input type="radio"/> Required	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Optional	<input type="radio"/> Not Available	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes	
Parasite Medication	<input type="radio"/> Required	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Optional	<input type="radio"/> Not Available	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="text" value="\$7.00"/>
Testing	<input type="radio"/> Required	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Optional	<input type="radio"/> Not Available	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="text" value="\$25.00"/>
Licensing	<input type="radio"/> Required	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Optional	<input type="radio"/> Not Available	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="text" value="\$10.00"/>
Ear tipping	<input type="radio"/> Required	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Optional	<input type="radio"/> Not Available	<input checked="" type="radio"/> No	<input type="radio"/> Yes	
Other	<input type="radio"/> Required	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Optional	<input type="radio"/> Not Available	<input type="radio"/> No	<input checked="" type="radio"/> Yes	<input type="text" value="\$10.00"/>

If necessary, please explain the procedures and fees described above:

Animal Guardians pays the fee for sterilization and clients are encouraged to donate whatever they can. We generally do not pay for any services that are not directly related to, or required for, sterilization. However, if inability to pay for a required immunization will prevent an animal from being sterilized, we will pay that fee from private donations. Other services may be provided at the veterinarian's and client's discretion. We are not charged for the physical exam when done in conjunction with sterilization

Is this a voucher program? If so, how will you assure compliance with the program?

No

Other Information

Provide any additional information that will help the grant selection committee understand how the program will operate to achieve its goals.

The local unemployment rate has quadrupled since 2005. Resources for animals have dwindled even faster while relinquishments to shelters are rising. Sterilization is the most humane and cost-effective way to reduce the population of homeless animals. Animal Guardians' program is the only local program providing financial assistance for lower income people who provide safe and loving homes for their pets, and wish to be responsible pet guardians by sterilizing them. We also provide assistance to feral cat caregivers when other resources are unavailable. If we are unable to acquire and maintain adequate funding, there are no other options. A funding shortfall will force us to deny services to people in need, resulting in more of the tragic consequences of animal overpopulation.

Budget

Total number of sterilization surgeries projected:

Cats: 177 **Dogs:** 16

Total budget requested (Budget should not exceed \$25,000): \$9,000.00

Average cost/surgery projected: \$47.00

Describe any expenses that are not included in the grant and how they will be paid for:

If we must pay for a required rabies immunization or heartworm test in order for an animal to be sterilized, we will pay this cost from private donations. All administrative costs, which comprise about 1% of our overall budget, are also paid from private donations.

Timeline

All projects must be completed within 12 months of receipt of funding. Any unexpended funds must be refunded to Florida Animal Friend within 30 days of the end of the project. Requests for time extensions must be made in writing at least 30 days prior to the end of the project. Funding for accepted projects will be available after August 1, 2009.

Projected start date: 09/01/10/ **Projected end date:** 03/31/11

Future Funding

Explain how the organization plans to fund this program in the future. Having plans beyond "seeking funds from other funders" enhances the chances of receiving this grant.

We are seeking other grants (both new sources and previous contributors) and continue to receive private donations with several donors contributing regularly. We are also the beneficiaries of fundraising efforts by some local businesses, and are seeking sponsorship from others. Our volunteer presence and all the other work we have done at our local shelter has resulted in a high level of visibility which brings in donations. Our public service announcements and press releases to the media, and our educational displays and brochures in a variety of public places increase awareness of animal overpopulation. This visibility results in contributions. We continue to regularly bring the issue of animal overpopulation before our county leaders, encourage others to do

so, and promote demand for a comprehensive plan in our community. We hope our leaders will shift funding from population control through euthanasia to population control through prevention of unwanted litters. These efforts have also resulted in donations to Animal Guardians and other organizations dedicated to this goal. However, funding from as many sources as possible will be needed to meet all our requests for assistance and maintain our programs' viability.

Promotion of Florida Animal Friend Spay/Neuter License Plate

Applicants selected for funding are expected to publicize their grant in support of their spay/neuter program via press releases, newsletters, website links, etc. In addition, they are expected to promote the sales of license plates so that additional spay/neuter grants can be funded. Please describe your plan to promote the Florida Animal Friend Spay/Neuter License Plate.

We have promoted the Florida Animal Friend license plate, including website links, on the Home and Resources pages of our website since it was introduced, and will continue to do so regardless of the outcome of this application. We would gratefully and prominently acknowledge grant funding on several pages of our website. Our appreciation for this grant would also be acknowledged through press releases to the media, in our newsletter, and in those locations where we have educational displays or presentations. In addition, we would continue to promote the Florida Animal Friend license plate through example - all vehicles of the Officers/Directors of Animal Guardians have this plate and we all promote it in our daily lives.