Helping People + Helping Pets: A Community Collaboration

PAAW Semi-Annual Meeting
Friday, October 4, 2019
Mission: To promote dignity and respect for aging, and to advocate for independence in the lives of Pima County’s older adults and their families, now and for generations to come.

We are:

The Area Agency on Aging for Pima County

Located in Tucson, Arizona

501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization

Provide Home-Delivered Meals Service through subcontract with Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest
About Cody’s Friends

Cody’s Friends supports the crucial bond between human and animal welfare.

History and Mission

- Started by (then) 5th grader, Cody Allen
- 501(c)3 Non-Profit Organization
- One of 24 national Rescue Bank affiliates
- 35 Donations Stations & ~ 1 Million Lbs.
Pima Alliance for Animal Welfare, an initiative of the Community Foundation for Southern Arizona

Human Animal Bond workgroup:
Exploring the opportunities to embed animal welfare into existing social service organizations, especially those serving low-income seniors and home bound individuals
Why is the Human Animal Bond Important for Older Adults?

“The human-animal bond is a mutually beneficial dynamic relationship between people and animals that is influenced by behaviors that are essential to the health and well-being of both.” - American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)

Companion animals can help to:

- Decrease social isolation (through touch, exercise, attachment)
- Increase self-esteem and self-worth
- Fight against depression; enhance mood
- Add social support
- Provide sense of purpose and love
- Increase heart health, including lowering blood pressure and cholesterol
Community Needs Assessment and Actions

In 2016, PAAW’s Human Animal Bond workgroup conducted a community needs assessment in collaboration with PCOA about the needs of older adults related to their companion animals.

Top identified issues for older adults:
- Pet food delivery
- Transportation to the vet
- Respite services for pets
- Education about available free and low-cost resources for pets

- **Action**: Presentations to older adult agencies about pet resources
- **Action**: Advanced directives for pet owners
- **Action**: Home-delivered pet food for home-bound older adults
The Pet Food Delivery Program

Community Group: gathered community partners

Funders: Meals on Wheels America Bonnie Kay

Meals Providers
- PAAW (PIMA Alliance for Animal Welfare)
- Mobile Meals of Southern Arizona
- PCOA (PIMA County Office of Aging)

Pet Food

Volunteer Training

Bonnie Kay
Considerations for Developing the Program

Program staff time

Volunteer recruitment
- Level 1 fingerprint clearance,
- able to lift pet food, and
- able to drive to client’s homes

Training volunteers
Teach the basics about safely interacting with animals

Potential funding sources
- Community Foundations
- Local Donors
- Grants: Meals on Wheels America, Banfield Pet Charities, PetSmart Charities

Food bagging
Storing food
Lutheran Social Services of the Southwest

- A subcontractor of PCOA
- Home-delivered meals delivered by paid staff
- Volunteers introduced by case manager at first
- Twice a month delivery
- Additional pet services including dog walking, kitty litter and outdoor clean up, transportation to vet/groomer
- Requires fingerprint clearance for volunteers

Mobile Meals of Southern Arizona

- Medically tailored meals
- Home-delivered meals delivered by volunteers
- Once per month delivery
- Delivers kitty litter
- Does not provide additional services including dog walking, kitty litter clean up, outdoor clean up, transportation to vet/groomer

- Pet food delivery through volunteers
- Cody’s Friends for food
- Requires rabies vaccine and licensing
- Uses PCOA’s Helpline as referral
- Funding
Results

Pima Meals on Wheels through Lutheran Social Services

Current Service
Total Dogs: 38
Total Cats: 31
Total Households: 39

Mobile Meals of Southern Arizona

2018
Total Dogs: 59
Total Cats: 48
Total Households: 64

2019
Total Dogs: 107
Total Cats: 68
Total Households: 104

Client Quotes:
“The food makes little guy and me happy.”
“I no longer have to decide between prescriptions and dog food.”
Results

Most service recipients “strongly agree” that:

• “I would have to sacrifice other important budget items in order to provide for my pet(s) if I didn’t have support from the pet program.”

• “I feel more confident about meeting my pet’s needs as a result of receiving services through the pet program.”

• “The pet program has allowed me to maintain companionship with my pets.”

• “Pet program staff and/or volunteers care about the wellbeing of my pet(s) and me.”
National Association for Area Agencies on Aging (N4A) annual conference in New Orleans July 28-31, 2019

• PCOA and Cody’s Friends presented a workshop about the collaboration to leaders of aging organizations across the country

• PCOA was recognized with a 2019 “Aging Achievement Award” for the development of this collaborative program
Contact Information

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