



Animal Services Center

OF THE MESILLA VALLEY

2019 ANNUAL REPORT



The Mission of the Animal Service Center of the Mesilla Valley is to provide safe shelter for all lost, mistreated and abandoned animals of the Mesilla Valley and surrounding communities. The Center utilizes all avenues available to it in placing each animal into a safe, loving and permanent home whenever possible. We strive to meet the highest standards of humane animal care and husbandry, and to promote responsible pet ownership through public education and outreach.

Background

The municipal animal shelter facility located at 3551 Bataan Memorial West, in Las Cruces, NM is the only open admission animal shelter operating in the Doña Ana County area. The facility was built in 1985 and had been operated by a third-party contractor, the Doña Ana County Humane Society (DACHS). The City of Las Cruces (City) and Doña Ana County (County) have been the primary financial supporters of this facility.

On January 29, 2008, the City and County entered into a Memorandum of Agreement to temporarily operate the animal shelter after DACHS notified the City and County that it would no longer operate the animal shelter. The City and County determined that it was imperative that they enter into a Joint Powers Agreement (JPA) to create an independent public agency to provide animal sheltering related services. The JPA was entered into by both Parties on August 4, 2008. This public agency is named the “Animal Service Center of the Mesilla Valley” (ASCMV).

The Board charged with governing this agency consists of local officials from both the City and County.

This will be the eleventh comprehensive annual report released by the ASCMV, highlighting the progress made by the agency towards achieving the community’s euthanasia reduction goals during the past year.



Letter From the Executive Director

It was late 2019. While deep in thought, looking at the numbers on my computer screen, three sharp knocks on my office window, which faces out to the parking lot, snapped me out of my thought cycle. A man was standing there, holding a scraggly dog. The man had a bandana covering his face. He pointed down to the ground and began to talk. All I could hear was a repeated, muffled word “dog... dog.” I leaned forward to see the dog. When the man saw that I understood, he turned and walked briskly away.

I dashed out to the front entrance, picked the dog up and noticed its foot – if you could call it a foot. The bottom half from his elbow down was nothing but brown dried up skin and exposed bone. It was obvious that the foot was dead.

Anger swelled in me that someone could do something as horrible as this! Why did they wait so long? Why didn't they bring the dog to us sooner! Seething, I carried the poor creature to our amazing veterinary staff and then went directly back to review our security cameras. I went back in time and saw the man walk into the frame. He had parked out of camera range. He carried the dog to the center and to my window. He knew this was bad, and he must have seen dumping the dog with us as his only option. Hours later, I was still nursing my anger, staring out at the Organ Mountains in an effort to calm down. It wasn't working.

I was mad at humans in general for the horrible things we do to animals.

But the world has a funny way of moving us from one mood to another. While I stewed, I watched a couple approach the building to sit on one of our blue benches in the front walk area. They had an old dog with them that couldn't walk. The man held the dog close and the woman petted the dog's soft coat. This is a heartbreaking scene that plays out frequently at the ASCMV: This couple had made the wrenching, life-ending decision for their pet. They cried as they stroked their beloved family member's coat. The deep and abiding love they shared with this dog was obvious.

I've seen it happen a thousand times, but my heart always melts with empathy.

Why the opposites in one day? Why the need to see the horrible and the nice within hours of each other? The dichotomy lies in the very mission of the ASCMV; we do a job that others just can't. We have this innate desire to love these homeless animals. We want them all to find homes with people who will take them in like family, and then mourn them when they die. We realize that grief is simply love with nowhere left to go.

Please keep all of this – the good and the bad – in mind as you read this report. We ended the year with an 80.9 percent Live Release Rate. That's incredible when you look at where we have come from. We look forward to 2020 with high hopes and plans to move us even more to our goal of 90 percent live release rate, or better.

Oh, and the little dog with the bad foot? We saved him, too.

For the animals,
Clint

Statistical Report

This report focuses on the following categories:

1. Intake Statistics

- **Methods of Intake**
- **Monthly Intake**
- **Species Intake**

2. Outcome Statistics – Adoptions, Euthanasias, Reclaims by Owners, Rescue Transfers, etc.

- **Overall Outcomes**
- **Adoptions**
- **Rescue Transfers**
- **Live Release Rate**
- **Euthanasias**

3. Public Services and Community Outreach

- **Public Attendance**
- **Pet Sterilization Surgeries**
- **Community Outreach**

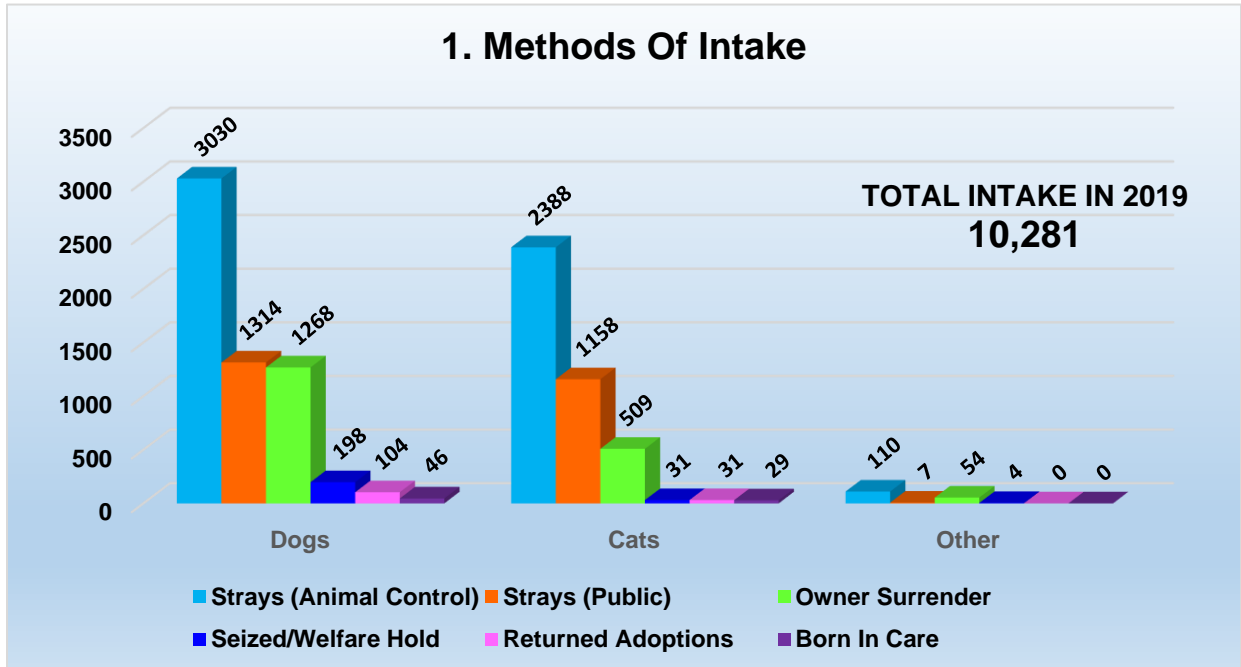
4. Volunteer Program

5. Financial Overview

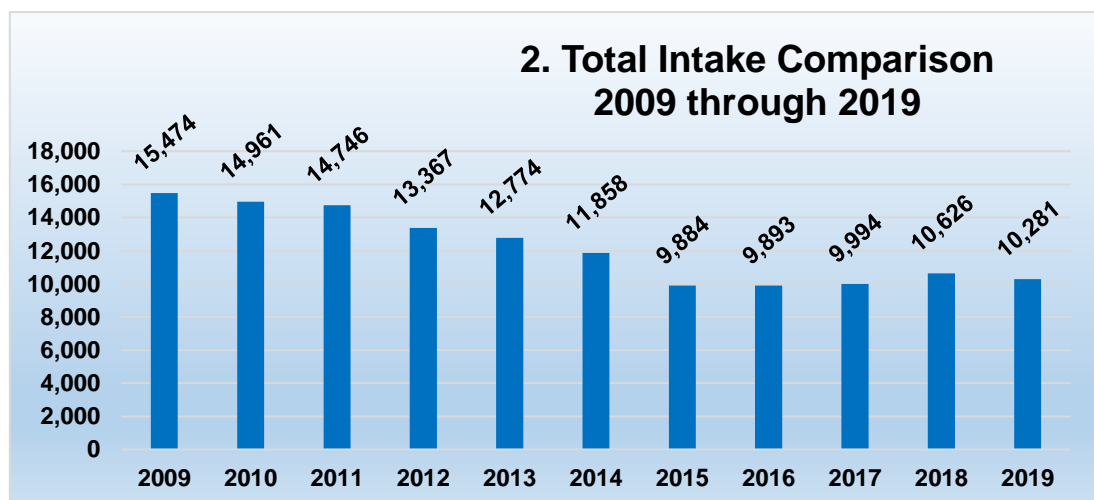
1. Intake Statistics

• Methods of Intake

The ASCMV is the only open-admission shelter in Dona Ana County. As such, animals can enter the shelter through several different means. This includes unrestrained animals brought in by Animal Control or by the public, animals surrendered by their owners (including returned adoptions), animals seized by Animal Control, and those animals that are born while in shelter care.

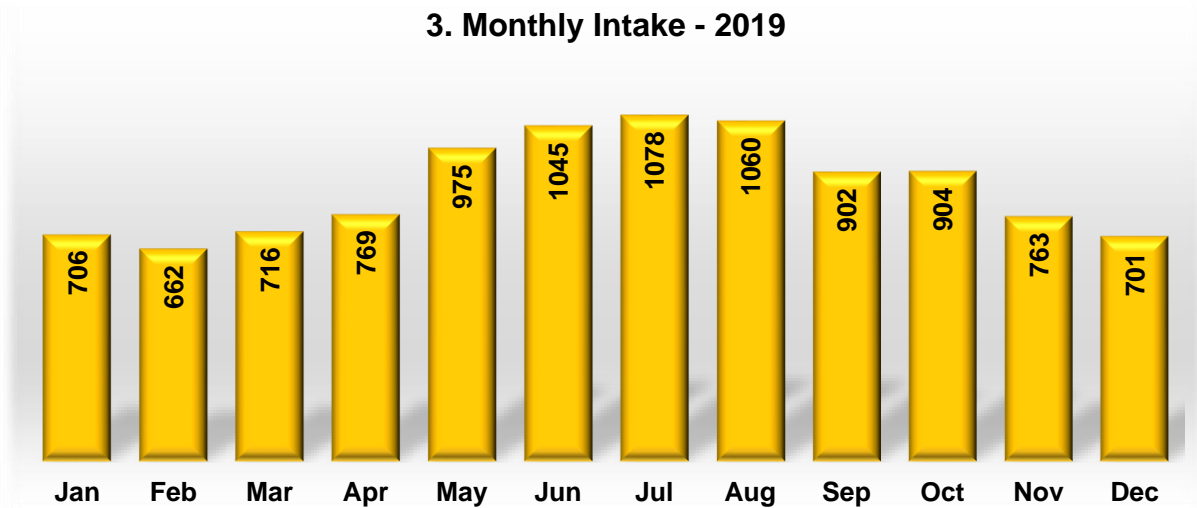


In 2019, a total of 10,281 animals entered the shelter. This was only 345 less animals than in 2018. Traditionally, the number of animals that are brought in from the City of Las Cruces is just slightly more than that of the rest of Dona Ana County.



• **Monthly Intake**

A seasonal pattern was seen in the **monthly intake** numbers over the course of the year, with the months of June, July and August seeing intakes of **over 1000** animals each month. The **highest** intake numbers are typically during the **summer** and **fall** months and the **lowest** during the **winter** months.

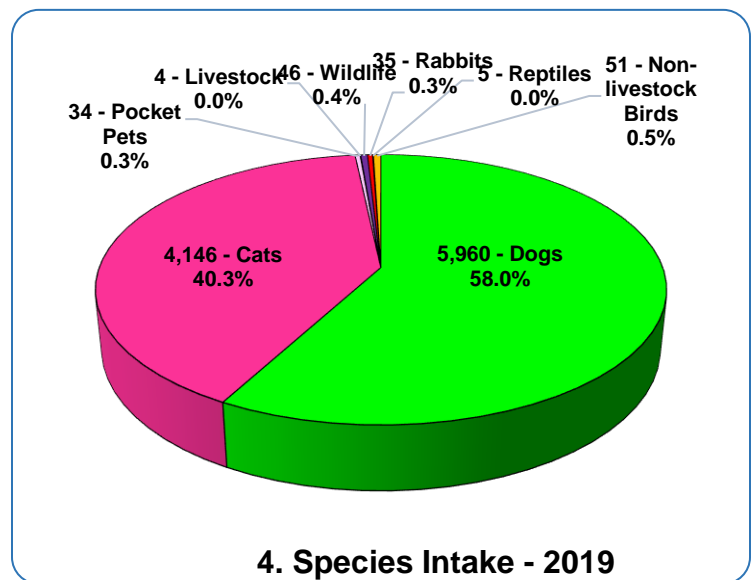


An average of nearly **30** animals was received by the ASCMV **each day**.

• **Species Intake**

Dogs and **cats** are still the main source of intake for the **ASCMV**. The **overall intake ratios** remained nearly the same for other species from **2018** to **2019**.

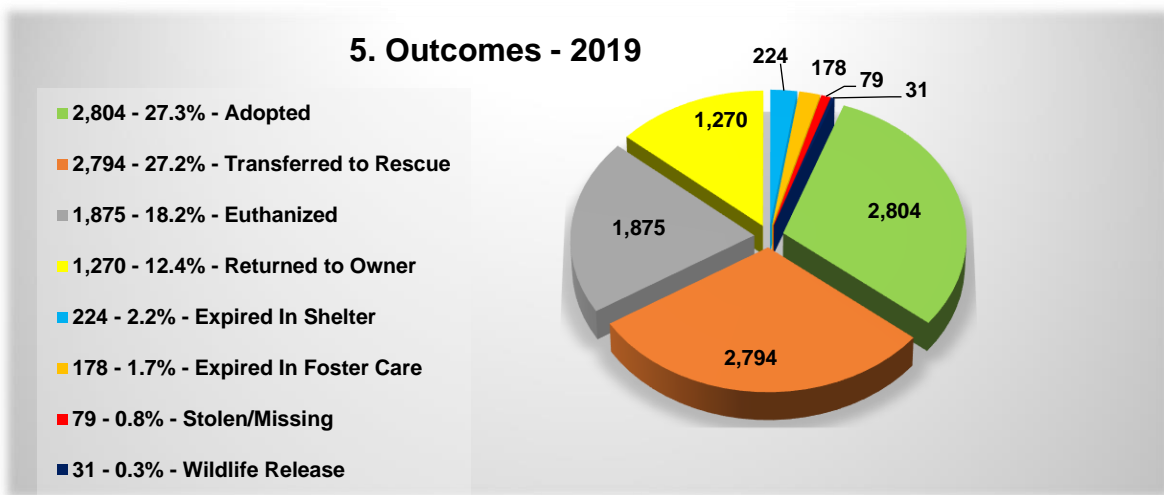
Once again there was a slight **decrease** in the **number of Dogs** received by the ASCMV. However, there was an **increase** in the **number of Cats** received by the ASCMV.



2. Outcome Statistics – Adoptions, Euthanasias, Reclaims by Owners, Rescue Transfers, etc.

There are 4 basic potential **Dispositions** for each animal received by an animal shelter. The most preferable being: **Reclaimed** by the Original Owner (which would arguably include releasing wildlife to their original habitat). Second and third being: **Adopted** or **Transferred** to a reputable Rescue Organization. The last and least preferable: **Death** (which would include Expiring in the Shelter and Euthanasia).

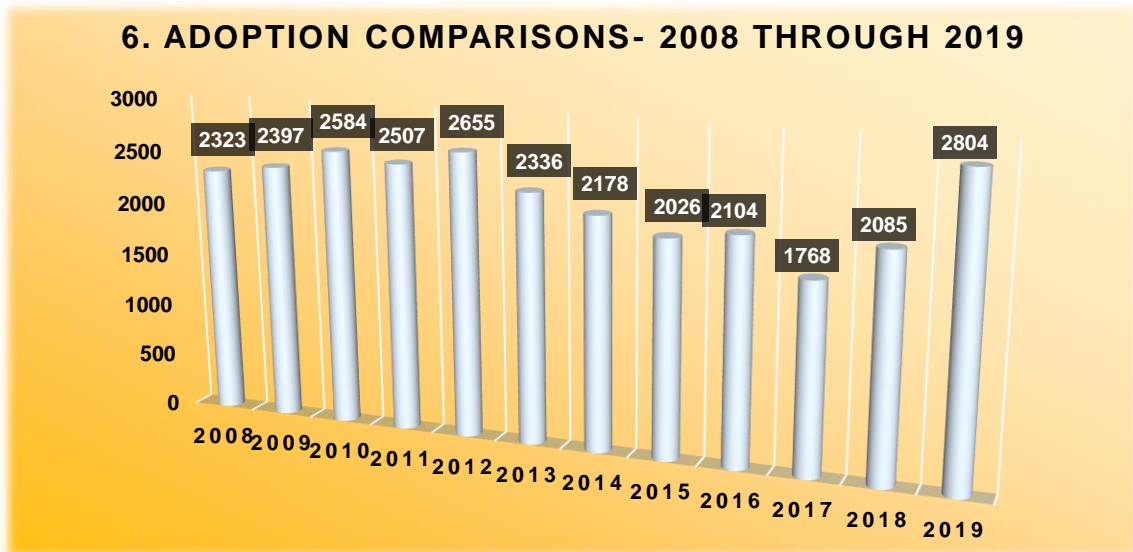
• Overall Outcomes

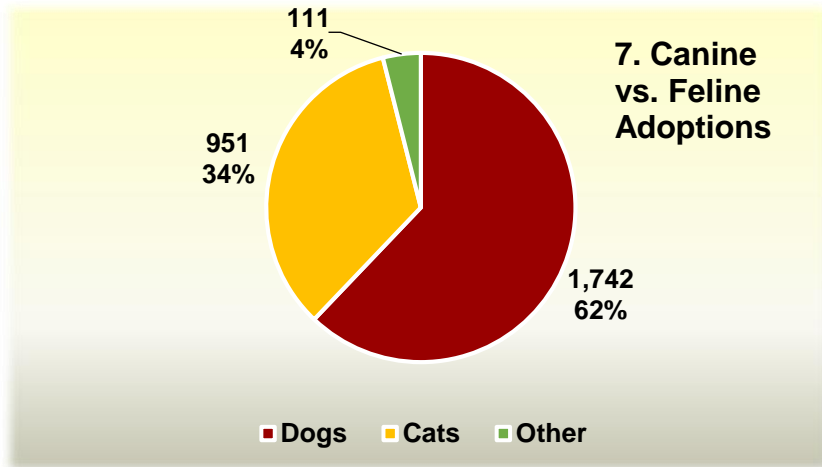


The number of **Euthanasias decreased** in 2019 by 174 animals, and the total number of **Adoptions** increased by over 700. These contribute to **lowering** the **Euthanasia Rate** and **increasing** the **Live Release Rate**.

• Adoptions

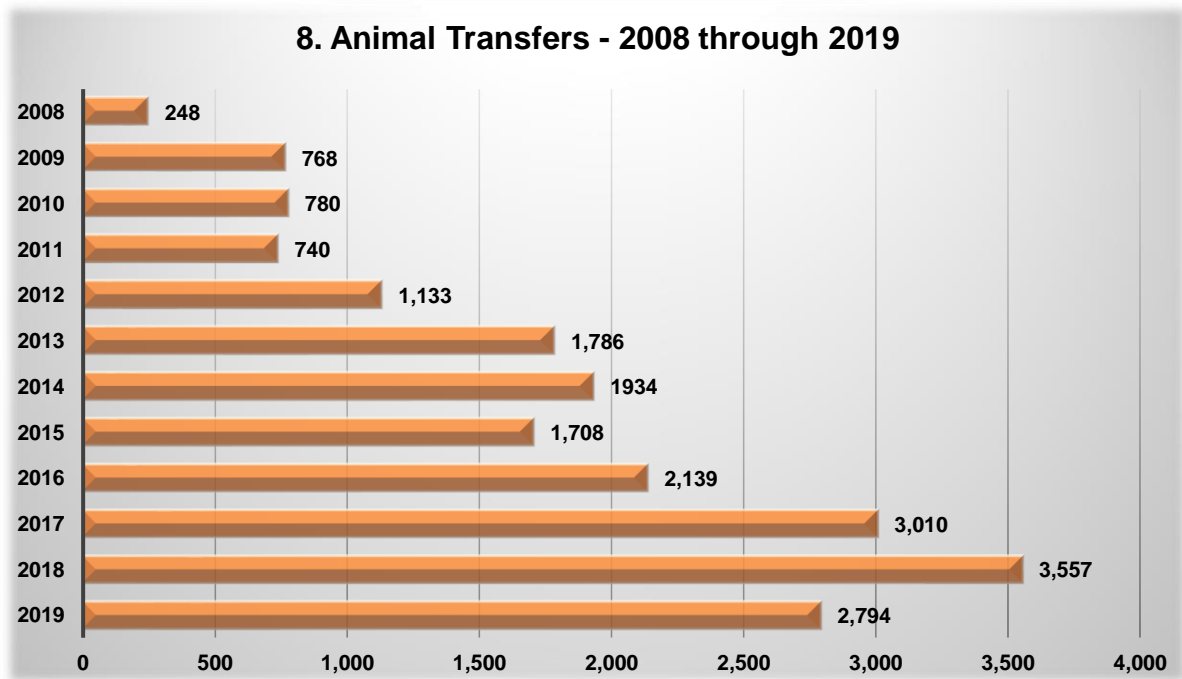
From 2018 to 2019, the number of animals **Adopted** from the ASCMV **increased** by over 700. This is the **highest** number of adoptions in the ASCMV history.





There were nearly twice as many **Dog Adoptions** than **Cat Adoptions**. Fortunately, the adoption number for both **dogs** and **cats** increased in **2019**.

• Rescue Transfers

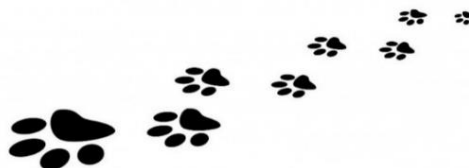
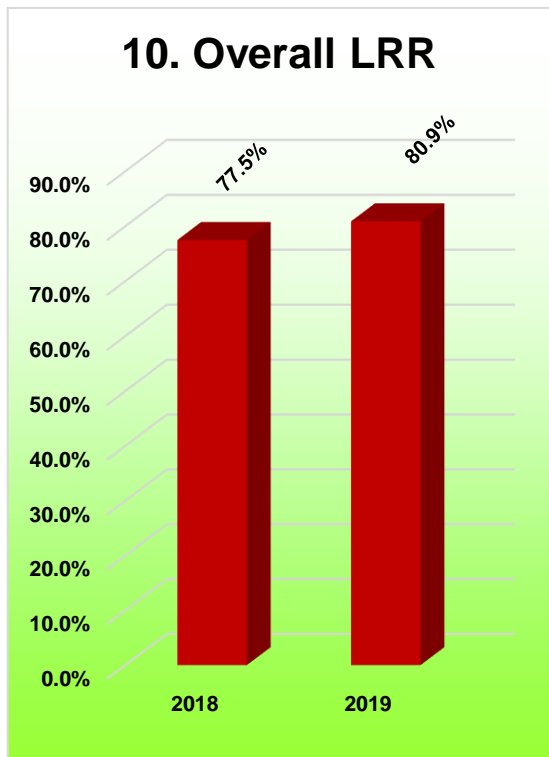
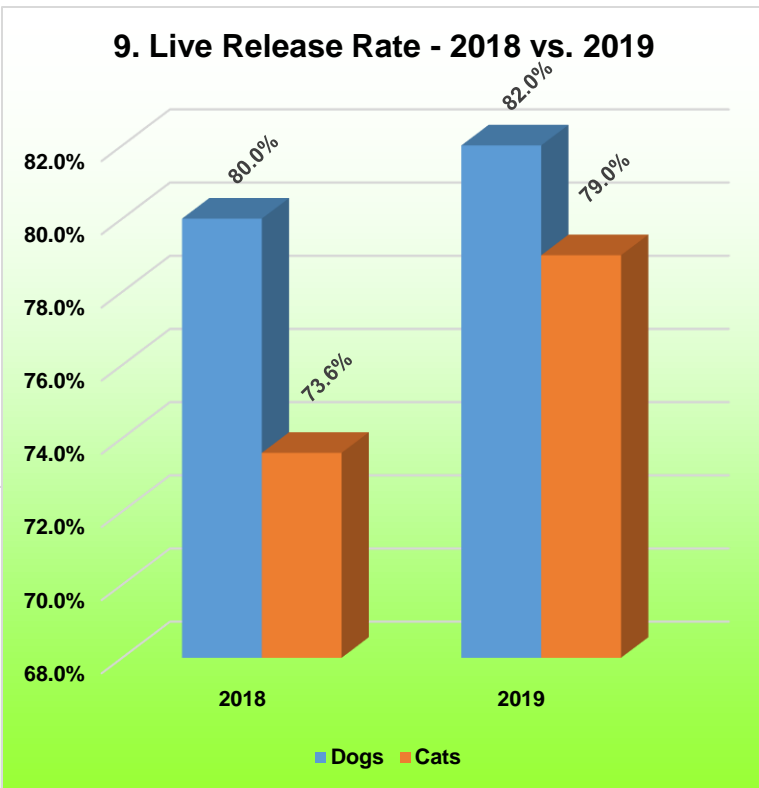


The ASCMV continues to work with **transfer partners** throughout the country. The number of animals transferred out to these other organizations unfortunately dropped, mostly because of the numbers of animals **needing homes**. Many groups were beyond capacity and could not accept additional animals. However, the **ASCMV Transfer Program** continues to increase its number of transfer partners.

• **Live Release Rate**

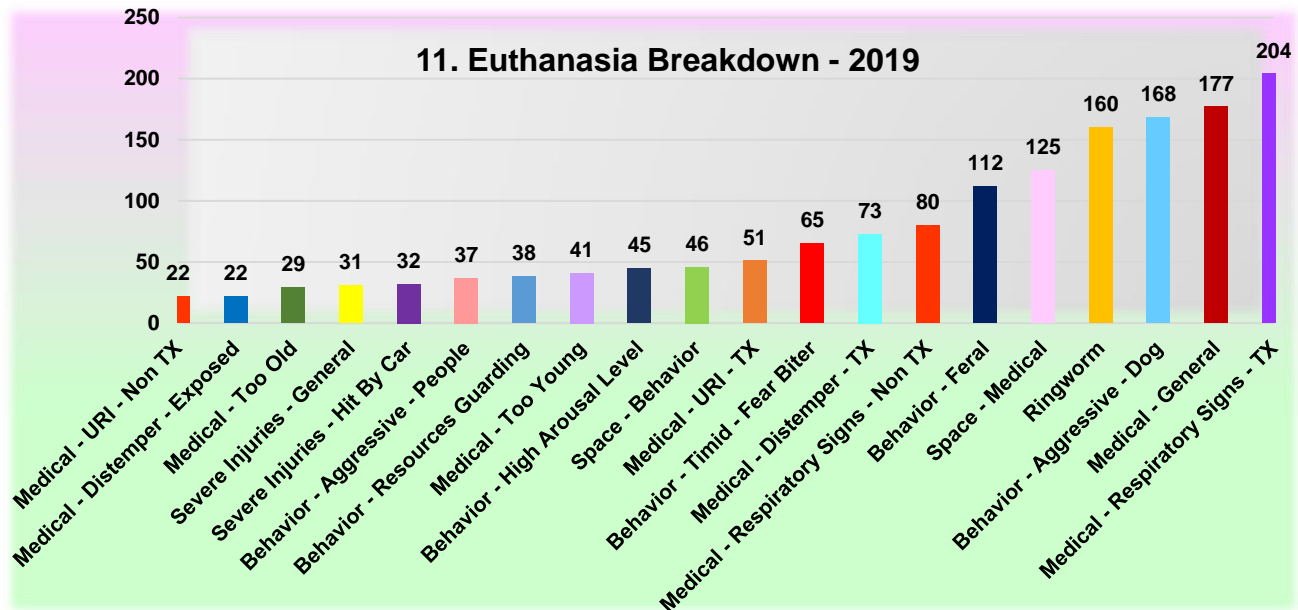
In February of **2014**, the ASCMV began reporting the **Live Release Rate (LRR)** along with the euthanasia numbers in order to give the community a more **positive** outlook on the lives of the animals coming in and out of the shelter. The **Live Release Rate** at the ASCMV continues to fluctuate throughout the year, and correlates to the monthly intake.

- The Live Release Rate **increased** for both **dogs** and **cats** in 2019. Working on a strong **TNR** program for the **Community Cats** will help to increase the LRR for **cats** even more. The overall Live Release Rate **increased** from **77.5%** in 2018 to **80.9%** in **2019**.

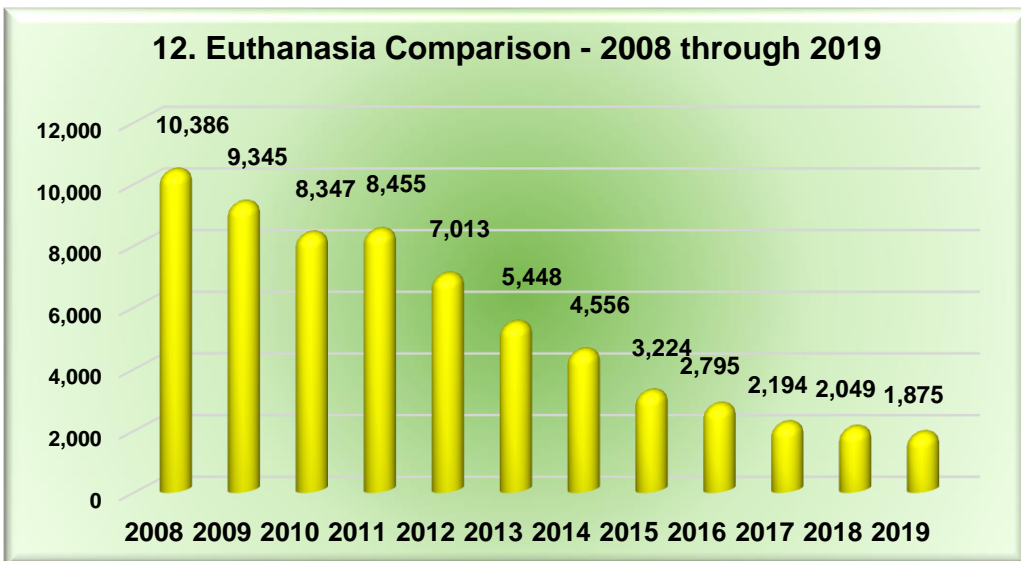


• **Euthanasias**

The **particular reason** for each decision to **Euthanize** an animal at the **ASCMV** is always determined and documented. Depending on the severity of an illness, injury, or temperament issue, the **ASCMV** will isolate and treat such animals, as long as there is space and staff available for such care and treatment. As the animal **intake decreases**, the availability of such **care increases**, and more attention could be given to treating some of the euthanasia reasons below.



Medical issues were the top two reasons for **euthanasia** in **2019**. Animals that were **Euthanized** due to an apparent **Feral** temperament increased, the majority being **feral cats**. The **ASCMV** continues to **support** the implementation of an aggressive **Community Cat Program (TNR)**.



The **number** of animals **Euthanized** **decreased** from **2,049** in **2018** to **1,875** in **2019**.

3. Public Services and Community Outreach

- Public Attendance

The ASCMV averaged over **80** visitors through the facility each day in **2019**. The total number dropped from **35,943 in 2018** to **29,601 in 2019**; a decrease of over **6000** visitors. With the **renovation construction** being completed, the shelter has begun to see an increase in the number of visitors coming in each month.

These numbers do **not** include the attendance of members of the public at **off-site adoption events** and other events not held at the ASCMV facility.



- Affordable Pet Sterilization Surgeries

The **ASCMV's** Medical Team performed a total of **4,575** surgeries in **2019**. This was a **decrease** of about **300** from 2018.

The ASCMV shifted its **focus** from public sterilizations to sterilizing the animals that entered **into the shelter** in 2018. This was in an effort to **lower** the number of **unsterilized** animals leaving the shelter, therefore lowering the number of unsterilized animals in our **community**. Nearly **3,000** of the surgeries were **in-shelter** and **adoption** surgeries.

The ASCMV also continued to assist area **rescue** and **animal advocacy** groups with **affordable** spay and neuter surgeries for the animals that were pulled from the shelter by the organizations.

The ASCMV held two **drive-through vaccination clinics** in 2019 – the first of their kind in this area. The ASCMV staff administered over **1300** vaccinations on those two days, the majority of which were **rabies** vaccines. **175** pets were also **microchipped** at the clinics.

The ASCMV also continued to offer **vaccinations** to animals that were brought in by rescue groups and the public for those animals which underwent **sterilization** at the ASCMV's Medical Facilities. The ASCMV also continued to offer **Affordable Pet Identification Microchips** and **Pet Licensing** to all members of the public. The majority of the microchips issued were implanted on animals that came in for spaying or neutering.

• Community Outreach

Pet-of-the-Week:

In order to promote **Pet Adoptions**, the ASCMV continues to send out **Pet-of-the-Week** information to all local media (newspapers, radio, and television), and posts a bio of the **Pet-of-the-Week** online at **ASCMV.org** and on the ASCMV **Facebook** page. The City and County Information Officers receive the **Pet-of-the-Week** bios and distribute the information through their respective channels as well. The **Pet-of-the-Week** format was updated to give a more **personal** touch to each animal that is highlighted.



Radio:



Local radio stations **KVLC 101Gold**, **KMVR Magic 105**, and **KXPZ 99.5 FM Zia Country** continue to host regularly scheduled spots for the ASCMV to come in and discuss the **Pet-of-the-Week** and other happenings at the ASCMV. Several **public service announcements** have also been playing in order to promote **pet responsibility**.

Publications:

The **Bulletin** continues to publish a weekly promotion for the **Pet of the Week**. We have also been fortunate to have the **Bulletin** publish wish lists on our behalf.

The **Las Cruces Sun News** publishes 6 weekly adoptable pets (3 dogs and 3 cats) both in print and through their social media.

Dog Cruces Magazine and **American Classifieds** have been key publications in helping to educate the community about **pet ownership**, and in promoting the animals here at the ASCMV.

All the publications have assisted in providing remarkable coverage of ASCMV events whenever needed.



Television:

ABC, **FOX**, **NBC**, and **CLC TV** news crews responded to and covered ASCMV press releases for special events or special needs animals.

Social Media:

The ASCMV continued to maintain a **Facebook** page, which promotes many events at the shelter including **Pet-of-the-Week**, **Off-Site Adoption Events**, **Special Adoption Events**, **Rescue Transfers**, **Special Needs Animals**, and **News Articles** related to **Pet Ownership Responsibilities**. A special section called **Daily Stats** continues to give our community a better understanding of what happens at the shelter on a **daily** basis. **Volunteers** also posted information about **lost and found** pets to help reunite animals with their owners.

The local publication **Dog Cruces** continues to work with Animal Control, and posts **found animals** on the ASCMV and Dog Cruces **Facebook** pages.

Lost2Found Pets Las Cruces, which is run by a shelter volunteer, posts all of the shelter intake photos on behalf of the ASCMV in order to assist with reuniting lost animals that enter the shelter.

Two new Facebook groups were also created for the shelter. **ASCMV Volunteers/Fosters** is an open group in order to post volunteering and fostering opportunities at the shelter. **ASCMV Rescue Partners** is a closed group, used to post injured animals in need of immediate rescue.

Special Adoption Events and Programs:

The ASCMV hosted and participated in numerous events such as the **6 Pets of the Month** event, highlighting 6 animals each month; **New Year, New Home** event (all adoptions for \$19); **Meet Your Match** event (all adoptions for \$14); **St. Patrick’s Day** adoption event (all adoptions for \$17); **Mardi-Paws** adoption event (half-price adoptions); **Cinco De Meow-O** adoption event (all cat adoptions for \$5.00); **Cat World Domination Day** adoption event (all cat adoptions free); **Father’s Day** adoption event (free adoptions); **Pet Appreciation Week** (half-price adoptions); **Freedom to Choose** adoption event (choose your own adoption fee); **Tax-Free Weekend** adoption event (free adoptions all weekend); **Back to School** event (all adoptions \$20); **Pit’s For Peace** event; **Black Friday** adoption event (all animals free); **Holiday Food Drive** and **Winter Wishes Donation Drive** (every donation counts towards adoption fees); **Home for the Holidays** adoption event, where all adoptions were sponsored by DACHS; and **Clear the Shelter** event (free adoptions).

The ASCMV participated in **off-site microchipping** events in coordination with other agencies.

The ASCMV participated in the **DACHS Senior Program**, offering free or low-cost adoptions to seniors with adoptable dogs and cats.

The ASCMV also partnered with several businesses to hold both regular and special off-site adoption events. The locations included **Barnett’s Harley Davidson, Coldwell Bankers, Dog Cruces Pet Expo, Crunch Gym, Nissan of Las Cruces, New Mexico State University, Office Max, Order of the Eagles Club, Petsmart, Picacho Peak Brewery, Pitre KIA of Las Cruces, Pitre Jeep** and **Walmart Supercenter**.

The ASCMV continued to host 2 permanent **offsite** cat adoption centers at **Petco** and **Pet’s Barn**.

Education:

The ASCMV participated in the **ACES Program**, sponsored through Dona Ana County, and the **City Impact Project** and **National Night Out** events, sponsored through the City of Las Cruces in order to reach out to educate the community in pet ownership responsibility.

The ASCMV participated in the **Job Shadow** program, and accepted **students** through the **Excel** programs offered through the public schools.

The ASCMV continued a powerful **advertising campaign** with **Wilson-Binkley Advertising and Marketing**, reaching out to the community through **billboards, radio, direct mail, classifieds** and **social media** promoting pet responsibility.



4. Volunteer Program

The ASCMV ended 2019 with **146** active volunteers. Of those volunteers, **74** were **new** volunteers that started since September 2019. The Volunteer Program had a new Volunteer Coordinator that started in September. Volunteers continued to participate in activities including **dog walking**, **transporting** shelter animals, **veterinary assistance**, **off-site adoption** assistance, shelter animal **photography**, **laundry** assistance, **offsite cat care** and **office** assistance.

Volunteers were regularly scheduled to assist in the ASCMV **Adoptable Cat Room** starting in November 2019, and have been enjoying their time **supporting shelter staff** and of course the adoptable cats! Volunteers restarted the bathing program at the end of 2019 and definitely have a good time getting the shelter pups clean! The **Dog Walking Program** and **Dog Photography Team** also benefited from an increase in volunteer support. ASCMV accommodated students from the community from the **ACE** program as well as student volunteer groups from **NMSU**.

ASCMV continued to attend **off-site adoption events** at Petco, Petsmart and the Farmer's Market on a regular basis, and also utilized other off-site adoption event locations. The ASCMV volunteers really helped to support off-site adoption events during 2019.

Another indispensable part of the Volunteer Program is the ASCMV's Foster Program. Under the Foster Program, many volunteers are able to remove an animal from the shelter environment and temporarily place him or her in their own home, while the animal recovers from an injury or illness, or often just until the animal can find his or her new forever home. Many of these Foster Parents are able to not only provide these animals with the additional time and care they need and deserve, but are also often able to promote these animals and actively seek their new forever home. This not only helps those animals placed in Foster Homes, but allows ASCMV staff to focus on and care for other animals as well.

Volunteers at the ASCMV play an extremely valuable role in supporting staff and shelter operations. **We very much appreciate all of our volunteers** and their continued dedication and support of the ASCMV. The Volunteer Program looks forward to 2020 with it's newly formed ASCMV **Educational Outreach Team**, **Enrichment Program** and much, much more!



5. Financial Overview

Since the ASCMV is a JPA, most of the operating funds are from the city and the county. The ASCMV is fiscally responsible in their handling of all monies received. All expenses are carefully evaluated, and there are many: Personnel, utilities, food for the animals, vaccinations, medicines, etc. The budget for the ASCMV runs on a fiscal year, from July to June. The chart below shows the ASCMV budget for the FY18-19.

Animal Service Center of the Mesilla Valley Management’s Discussion and Analysis For the Year Ended June 30, 2019

Table 3 summarizes the variance between the budgeted and actual expenditures for the year ended June 30, 2019.

Table 3
Budgetary Comparison-Aggregate of All Funds
For the Year Ended June 30, 2019

	Budget		Actual	Variance	Percent Variance
	Original	Final			
Revenues					
Charges for services	\$ 328,200	\$ 242,550	\$ 239,499	\$ (3,051)	-1%
Operating grants	27,501	135,000	121,656	(13,344)	-10%
Operating contributions					
Doña Ana County	1,250,000	1,250,000	1,250,000	-	0%
City of Las Cruces	1,250,000	1,250,000	1,250,000	-	0%
Investment income (loss)	17,000	17,000	45,358	28,358	167%
Other revenues	45,000	46,605	53,974	7,369	16%
Total revenues	2,917,701	2,941,155	2,960,487	19,332	1%
Expenditures					
Animal services	2,982,484	2,904,222	2,876,400	(27,822)	-1%
Capital projects	1,184,187	1,233,686	1,163,442	(70,244)	-6%
Total expenditures	4,166,671	4,137,908	4,039,842	(98,066)	-2%
Revenues (under) over expenditures	\$ (1,248,970)	\$ (1,196,753)	\$ (1,079,355)	\$ 117,398	-10%

