

**City of Shavano Park
&
DeZavala-Shavano Veterinary Clinic
Animal Care Partnership**

Letter to Shavano Park Residents

At the February 19th meeting of the Shavano Park City Council meeting, the City Council authorized an agreement between the City of Shavano Park and DeZavala-Shavano Veterinary Clinic for animal care services.

Let me be the first to say how excited and honored we are to be working with the Mayor, City Council, City Manager, Police Department and residents of Shavano Park. Beginning March 1, 2008, a contract began for DeZavala-Shavano Veterinary Clinic to provide housing, basic care, and emergency services for lost pets and strays found in the Shavano Park city limits. This includes checking lost pets for microchips, treating for parasites and making sure they are housed in a clean, safe facility at our clinic. You will no longer need to go downtown to reclaim your pet if it is recovered in Shavano Park. Prior to release, its rabies vaccination status will be confirmed to be sure that it is currently vaccinated as required by State law.

This contract was arranged through the hard work of Shavano Park residents Carol & Sarah Sloan, Michele Ryckman, and Bill Michaels. Sarah Sloan's work with the Shavano Park Pet Documentation Project has laid the groundwork for rapid stray pet identification and return home. The event that she organized this past year will hopefully be the first of many community events where your pet can be registered and micro-chipped. You also can register your pet anytime on the Shavano Park website, in person at Shavano Park City Hall or at our clinic. Bill Michaels' work with the Humane Society of Bexar County gives us a no-kill option for unclaimed stray animals in Shavano Park which are not adopted back out to the community.

The key to making this relationship work for everyone is to have your pet micro-chipped and registered in the Project. The registration is free and only takes a couple of minutes. We can take a digital picture of your pet to attach to your pet's registration file. Micro-chip insertion is quick and relatively painless and can be done at your veterinarian's or our office in just minutes. Micro-chips require a one-time registration fee and can be registered online. This will register your pet's micro-chip in a national database which is manned 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. Micro-chipping is a safe, permanent way to identify your pets.

Micro-chipping and a current Rabies vaccination are now required by the City of San Antonio's Animal Care Services for your pet to be registered in San Antonio. The registration is free for micro-chipped and currently vaccinated pets. A \$50 annual fee will be required for non-neutered pets beginning January 1, 2009. San Antonio's Animal Care Services should be applauded for their effort to make San Antonio a no-kill community by requiring vaccination, micro-chipping, and neutering of pets. Other major cities in Texas and the U.S. are doing the same to try to stop the many

millions of unwanted animals which are killed each and every year. In the past, San Antonio has been a perennial leader in euthanized strays.

Since Shavano Park is outside the city limits of San Antonio, you are not required to register your pet with Animal Care Services. This is why having your pet registered with the Project, having your pet micro-chipped and the chip registered are so important. In our Project, there is also no fee to register. When an animal is found – a picture is taken and the Sloan's will email that picture with information to help find the owner. Please forward your email address to Carol Sloan at CSloan1@aol.com. We want all pets registered regardless of whether they are neutered. However there are many reasons to have your pet spayed or neutered, and I strongly encourage you to do so.

Neutered pets tend to get out of the yard less and have fewer behavioral problems. Spayed females can no longer have unwanted pregnancies and are no longer at risk to life-threatening uterine infections (pyometra). Spayed females are also no longer at risk for ovarian and uterine cancer, and have a greatly reduced risk of mammary tumors. Neutered males are no longer at risk for testicular cancer, and have a greatly reduced chance of perianal tumors and diseases of the prostate.

If you find a stray dog or cat in the city limits of Shavano Park and you are able to keep it contained (fenced yard, garage, carrier), you can call my office at 699-3939, Monday-Friday 7am-7pm and Saturday 9am-1pm, and we will come to pick it up. You can also bring it to our office at 4939 DeZavala Road. If after business hours and on weekends, call the Shavano Park Police Department's dispatch at 804-0110 and they will help you get the animal to our office. Injured pets which require immediate attention will be cared for in 1 hour or less. Non-injured strays or those with conditions which are not life-threatening will be picked up within 2 hours if you call before 10pm, or will be picked up the next morning if after 10pm.

I hope that this arrangement is successful for all parties involved, especially you the residents of Shavano Park. Your pets are cherished members of your family, and the quicker you are reunited the better. We will treat your pets as boarders at our clinic, not as strays that nobody wants. The proximity of our office also means your pets will be home sooner than if picked up by San Antonio's Animal Care Services. If you have any questions about micro-chipping or would like to see our facility, come by and see us anytime.

Sincerely,

David Harrison, DVM
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