

Young Williams Animal Center_TN_**Amy Buttry**, Director of Outreach Programs, CHES, CAET

An interview with Amy Buttry and BPF Director of Field Operations, Kim Alboum

Kim: Give us some tips and tricks from YW for hosting community clinics

Amy: The **location** is very important -

- You need a place that is easy to find and ideally in an area of town where free/low-cost wellness is most needed. We mostly set up in county parks, the local health department and event venues
- Think about proximity to bus stops or walking distance for pet owners without transportation
- The location needs a large parking lot (our mobile clinic takes 6 parking spots just for the vehicle) and you'll need space for cars to line up and circle around.

Kim: When do you hold community clinics?

Amy: We have found great success with Saturday clinics. It can be harder to recruit veterinarians for a Saturday event, but usually easier to recruit volunteers.

Mid-day seems to work well. Ours are usually held from Noon - 3pm. They are first come, first serve and we tell people if there are *in line* at 3pm, we will still get to them.

Kim: Tell me about your staff and **volunteers**

Amy: We use shelter vets and volunteer vets. So far, the vets have been the ones to give the vaccines but next year we are looking into having licensed vet techs or trained vet assistants to give the vaccines under the supervision of a veterinarian.

You need at least 2 vets and a dozen or so staff/volunteers.

Kim: So what worked and what did not work?

Amy: We held one vax clinic at a homeless shelter/camp. It was not well attended, probably because it was difficult to get the word out.

Weather is a BIG ISSUE, but cannot be avoided or predicted as long as the vax clinic is outdoors. We did have to cancel one February vaccine clinic due to the prediction of snow.

- Plan to bring heavy items to weigh down your paperwork and signs in case of high winds.
- Plan for plenty of water available for staff/volunteers and clients' pets in the hot months
- May want a heat source available in cold months
- Have plenty of tents or awnings available in case of rain

We tried pre-registering clients, but we also accept walk-up/drive-up, so the mixture of preregistered and not was too confusing

Sometimes people feel like they have to wait too long, but we try to communicate the expectation ahead of time and we are constantly walking around and talking to them so they know things are moving along

From Young Williams SOP for vaccine clinics:

- **VAX CLINIC PREP:**
- Confirm location with Parks and Rec or property manager
- Recruit vets and volunteers (need at *least* 2 vets and 12 volunteers/staff)
 - **Ideally** have 4 people giving vaccines, 4 handlers, 4 scribes, 3 runners, 1 ASO, 2 checkout vols
- Drive route and establish the client flow
- Advertise event
- See supplies checklist (pg. 4) – pack day before
- **ROLES AND RESPONSIBILITIES:**
- **SET-UP** – staff & volunteers set up tables, tents, water bowls, signs, etc. Prepare syringes. Organize check-out table.
- **CHECK IN**

- Crowd control – point clients in the right direction based on the flow established for the clinic location. Tell drivers to move forward or park if their animal is going to take longer (cats)
- Distribute treatment sheets and car numbers – issue car number and give one blank treatment sheet per animal. Write the car number on each treatment sheet. Car numbers go in windshield where visible.
- Payments – (staff only) review treatment sheets, collect payment via cash or charge
- Petco Love Surveys – ensure that each client (or car) has filled out this survey, it is required for our Petco partnership who is providing the DAPP and FVRCP vaccines for free

- **EXAM TABLES**

- Animal Handler – restrain for vets to give vaccines
- Veterinarian and/or vet assistant – perform *brief* pet exam, administer vaccines
 - Dogs are seen outside or in cars
 - Cats are seen inside the mobile
- Pull vaccines and/or scribe – draw up rabies and mix distemper/parvo vaccines, affix vax stickers and microchip stickers. Issue rabies tags and record tag number, record any notes from the vet

- **CHECK OUT**

- Collect car numbers and treatment sheets – get the red numbers back and collect complete treatment sheets
- Give out preventatives – each pet gets one flea/tick preventative and dogs get one heartworm preventative
- Issue S/N vouchers – if owner qualifies, write owner name and pet name on voucher. Give owner the top copy
- Give out educational materials – we have handouts on spay/neuter, medical issues, training issues, nail clipping, and where to find other pet resources. They all now have QR codes!
- Care Clinic – for owner's with medical needs beyond vaccine wellness, please refer to the Young-Williams Care Clinic at 6400 Kingston Pike. Appointment required: 865-265-1470

- **BREAK DOWN** – at the end of the event, staff and volunteers take everything down and load back into the vehicles

Kim: Tell us about your Street vet program. Are you going door-to-door?

Amy: Yes. Once a month, we travel with a veterinarian to the homes of clients who are homebound within our outreach areas to provide veterinary care.

Kim: What about visiting unsheltered communities?

Amy: Yes. We participate in a program called **VPHO (Vets for Pets of Homeless Owners)** in partnership with the University of Tennessee. Once a month, we take our mobile clinic to a downtown bridge near homeless encampments, where pets are examined, vaccinated, and offered free spay/neuter services.

Kim: This is a growing area that others want to hear about. What services do you provide and what have you learned?

Amy: We provide physical exams, vaccinations, microchipping, and basic diagnostics—primarily for skin and ear infections. We also offer guidance on nutrition, nail trimming, and spay/neuter options. Through this work, we have learned that many of the challenges we face during home visits mirror those in a full-service clinic. Diagnosing certain conditions can be difficult without access to advanced diagnostics such as X-rays or cytology. We treat with basic antibiotics when we can, and recommend over-the-counter treatments and nutritional supplements, such as probiotics to see if there is any improvement. We sometimes have to refer pet owners to local veterinary clinics and point them towards financial assistance (grants, payment options, etc). Additionally, flea, tick, and heartworm prevention are critically important—especially in the South—but the most effective preventative products are often prohibitively expensive for the clients we serve.