

# ANIMAL BALANCE USA

Campaign Report St. Landry, LA  
February 2020

In November of 2019, Animal Balance and The BISSELL Pet Foundation created a partnership with the goal of providing free veterinary care for cats and dogs in St. Landry, Louisiana. The BISSELL Pet Foundation had been working with the shelter in St. Landry to transport dogs and cats out of the shelter for nearly three years prior to the creation of this partnership with no end to the suffering in sight. The Animal Balance USA program provided a light at the end of the tunnel by offering a sustainable solution to the endless stream of cats and dogs entering the shelter in St. Landry. With no access to affordable veterinary care in the immediate area of St. Landry Parish and with over 40% of the population living below the poverty line, providing this service as quickly as possible and at no charge to clients was critical. Transporting animals to shelters in the north as BISSELL Pet Foundation has been doing for the past few years, was a temporary solution, but it was clear that the solution to the problem was a strong, dedicated effort to control the population and The Bissell Pet Foundation was willing to do what it took to make it happen.



Complicating matters in this location was the fact that there had been an outbreak of distemper documented within a few short weeks of the first of six scheduled clinics. Animal Balance and The BISSELL Pet Foundation immediately contacted Dr. Cynda Crawford DVM, a leading expert in infectious disease control, to help formulate a plan so that we could host our clinic as planned. Dr. Crawford and team proposed vaccinating all dogs who were to be sterilized at our clinic two weeks prior to our opening day, which meant that we had to pull together a vaccination clinic in just three days time. Thankfully, our partners on the ground at the St. Landry Parish Animal Shelter and Dr. Kevin Fuselier, a local veterinarian, were able to host a free clinic where the DHPP vaccination was offered, along with rabies vaccinations and microchips. Each client who attended the clinic and anyone who was able to show records of their dog being vaccinated prior were provided with free vouchers to have their dogs spayed/neutered at the Animal Balance clinic in February.



On February 12th the Animal Balance team assembled at the Yambilee Hall in Opelousas, LA to set up for our clinic to begin on February 13th. The facility was massive and made for a perfect

location for our clinic. We were able to utilize the kitchen area for surgical packs, bathrooms for a quiet area to hold cats and had plenty of space in which to set up our surgery and recovery areas. About 140 vouchers were distributed to local residents for free spay/neuter leading up to the clinic. Because we were prepared to offer at least 300 sterilization surgeries, we opted to allow walk in appointments for cat spay/neuter in addition to the appointments already scheduled for vaccinated dogs. Our team was incredibly grateful to the community for allowing us to use this gathering space for our clinic as we could tell it was a very popular venue!

Veterinarians from Spaynation, a high quality, high volume spay/neuter clinic in Lafayette, LA and other local clinics joined us to help with surgery, and a team of veterinary students from Louisiana State University joined us to help with recovery. We were incredibly grateful for the help and support we received from the local veterinary community as due to licensing requirements, we would not have been able to host this clinic without their help. Local residents were very welcoming right from the beginning, bringing us more local food than our team could eat and showing up on time for drop off and pick up of their pets.



We were also thrilled to have the team from BISSELL Pet Foundation, including Mrs. Cathy Bissell, along with the Executive Director of Animal Rescue Corp and his team, join us for our second day of clinic. Discussions regarding training opportunities and partnerships amongst attending organizations were started and plans were made for Animal Balance to begin training members of the Animal Rescue Corp team to run similar MASH style spay/neuter clinics on their own in their home state of TN.



Our incredible team of volunteers from across the country were able to safely sterilize 326 cats and dogs in just three days of clinic. The local community was so kind, welcoming and grateful for our services. We know that this was the first of many clinics which need to be held in this area in order to begin the process of social change for the community of St. Landry, however we are so optimistic that change can be made here. The need is great, and with the help of the community, we can work together to make St. Landry a more humane place for the people and the animals who call this Parish home.