

Pet Adoptions in Gulfport, Miss., Up 57 Percent

The Humane Society of South Mississippi also reported an increase in spay and neuter surgeries.

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Posted: April 23, 2008 2 a.m. EDT

In 2007, the Humane Society of South Mississippi, located in the Gulfport/Biloxi area of the state, experienced a 57 percent increase in pet adoptions, compared to numbers from 2006. The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals announced the statistics this week, also recognizing the shelter's increase in spay and neuter surgeries: up 54 percent compared to 2006.

The increase in adoptions and surgeries reflects the shelter's determined efforts as part of the ASPCA's Mission: Orange campaign, the ASPCA said. "Animals in shelters are obviously most at-risk when it comes to companion animals," said Ed Sayres, ASPCA president and CEO. "With their significant swells in both adoptions and targeted spay/neuter numbers over the last year, HSSM is clearly doing their part to give these animals the second chance they so genuinely deserve."

Workers at HSSM are proud of their accomplishments since joining the Mission: Orange campaign, according to executive director Tara High. "Among our main goals are to increase successful adoptions and to help control pet overpopulation in and around south Mississippi," she said. "These positive numbers have given us renewed inspiration to continue in our mission."

The Mission: Orange campaign is a nationwide effort to create "humane communities" where animal shelters work with local governments and veterinarians to curb euthanasia of adoptable pets. Gulfport/Biloxi is one of these humane communities, as are Austin, Texas; Spokane, Wash.; Philadelphia; and Tampa, Fla.