

ANIMAL Sheltering

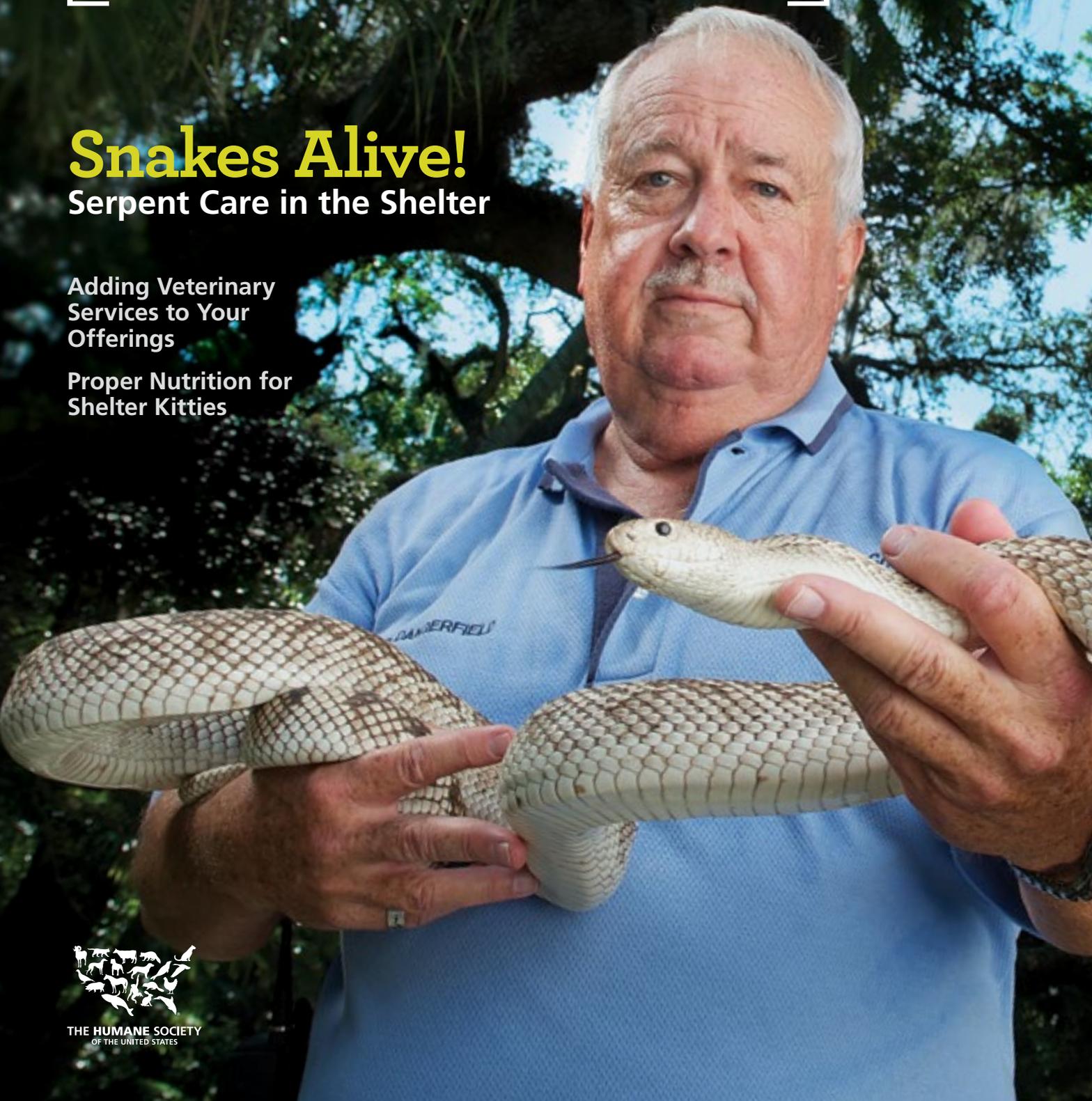
September/October 2011

The Magazine for Animal Care Professionals and Volunteers

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Clinical Trials

Shelters that have expanded their mission to add nonprofit veterinary hospitals find that it's a great way to increase revenue, save sick or injured animals who might otherwise have been euthanized, and make quality vet care affordable for low-income clients. For some shelters, the effect has been transformational, turning around their financial outlook, and changing their perception of themselves in the process.

COVER: AARON ANSAROV



22 | Taking Them In

What happens—or doesn't happen—when an animal enters a shelter can affect an individual pet's ultimate outcome, as well as impacting the health of an entire shelter population. Taking steps such as obtaining a pet's history, performing an intake exam, checking for microchips, and giving vaccinations should be considered the standards of the intake process, according to guidelines developed by the Association of Shelter Veterinarians.



26 | For Goodness' Snake

They're not fuzzy, they're not cuddly, and some of them have a habit of squeezing their meals to death before devouring them whole. In a word, snakes can be frightening. Many snake owners fall in love with the small creatures they see in the pet store but are unprepared to care for the adults. Here's a guide to temporary care and housing for the slithery creatures who, despite their scary appearance, deserve compassion and respect.

Off Leash, p. 60



5 Letterbox

6 Scoop

A California shelter's department head wins recognition as the Animal Control Employee of the Year; a community cat shot through the chest with an arrow survives, thanks to a persistent rescue group and skilled veterinarians; a sudsy fundraiser for a Pennsylvania shelter attracts thousands of thirsty beer lovers; and much more.

20 Coffee Break

In your space, you tell us about the most successful collaboration your shelter or rescue group has ever been a part of—everything from a major, multi-organization cockfighting bust to an award-winning humane education program.

39 The "101" Department

Pets for Life NYC, a New York City-based animal surrender prevention program, preserves the human-animal bond by giving people the advice and support they need before they turn their pets over to shelters. Now the program's coordinators are looking to train shelters, nonprofits, and other animal welfare advocates to create similar pet safety nets in their own communities.

43 Q & A

Believed to be the first resource of its kind, the online Maddie's Animal Shelter Infection Control Tool will help shelters assess their practices and ultimately reduce the spread of infectious diseases. Iowa State University veterinarians Christine Petersen and Claudia Baldwin discuss the innovative new tool.

47 Shelter Medicine

If you think feeding one finicky feline is a challenge, try meeting the tastes and needs of a whole shelter full of kitties. What goes into the food bowl profoundly impacts animal health; it's essential for management of body weight and condition, and good nutrition also supports immune function—so important in a shelter setting. Here's a guide to help you keep your cats well-fed, trim, and healthy.

52 Volunteer Management

In her final column for *Animal Sheltering*, Hilary Anne Hager offers takeaway lessons she's learned during 10 years of volunteer management in animal care environments—key among them that there's no need to reinvent the wheel. There are excellent resources available to volunteer coordinators wanting to transform their programs: books, websites, listservs, and more. All you have to do is reach out.

60 Off Leash

A Florida retiree gives Animal Care Expo attendees the first public glimpse of his collection of rare humane officer badges—an important link to the early years of the animal welfare movement.

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Facebook fans fire off:

When we linked to a recent *Washington Post* story about a feral cat controversy in the District of Columbia, **Kimberly L.** commented: "Is it up to us to decide what a 'good life' is for them? How could we? My personal opinion is we should TNR as often as possible ... if we could 'get them all' there would be an 'end in sight' for feral cats ..."

We asked you about great collaborations, and **Christy H.** threw some love to her local PetSmart: "PetSmart is a very good venue for our group, Friends of the Animals of Jessamine County Inc., to find homes for our dogs and cats! Their National Adoption Weekends are especially good! In addition we can apply for grants and get supplies we need and we get extra money for every adoption we make while set up at one of their stores. We love our PetSmart in Brannon Crossing in Nicholasville, Ky.!"

In response to a note highlighting the extensive Resource Library on *animalsheltering.org*, **Ann G.** wrote: "As a volunteer adoption counselor/foster parent at the Humane Society of Pulaski County in Little Rock, Ark., I have read and enjoyed so many of your great articles! Thank you so much ... I've learned so much from these resources!"

Thank you, Ann! We love hearing from readers and encourage everyone to keep in touch via Facebook and email—join the conversation at facebook.com/animalshelteringmagazine and asm@humanesociety.org.

A Word From Us

If animal shelters had a crystal ball, they probably wouldn't be able to use it. The cats would want to bat at it. The dogs would want to chase it. The hamsters would think it was a fancy new exercise toy.

Besides, predicting the future may be overrated. As a number of thinkers have pointed out, why be satisfied with *seeing* the future when you can actually help shape it?

In our "101" Department ("Start Spreading the News," p. 39) we highlight a Humane Society of the United States program designed to help shelters shape the future by keeping animals out. If we envision a world where animal shelters are a last resort, we need better safety nets to enable and encourage people to hold on to their pets. The Pets for Life NYC program does that—and can help you create just such a program in your community.

As our field comes closer to solving the problems of pet homelessness and euthanasia, some have tried to envision what the animal shelters of the future will look like. Will they be mere way stations for lost pets? Will they expand into community centers for the pet-loving set—places where everyone can come to find a new companion, take a class on dog behavior, get good advice on how to introduce their cats, buy pet supplies? Several shelters around the country are already moving toward this "campus" model of sheltering. Others—like the shelters we highlight in "Clinical Trials" on p. 32—are bringing elements such as veterinary services under the shelter roof, enabling them to treat and save more pets.

We hope you'll find all of our stories helpful in your work to create a brighter future for animals. If you're ever struggling with an issue, drop us a line and we'll try to help!

—Animal Sheltering magazine staff

Outstanding in His Field

California shelter's captain wins Animal Control Employee of the Year



Jeff Christner shot this photo of the massive natural gas explosion and fire in September 2010 in San Bruno, Calif., about 20 minutes after it erupted. The disaster destroyed 38 homes and killed eight people; Christner's help during the event was cited in his nomination letter for the 2011 Animal Control Employee of the Year.

PEOPLE POWER BY JIM BAKER



Jeff Christner's idea of a great leader is George S. Patton, the colorful, four-star general during World War II.

It's not because Patton wore ivory-handled, Colt .45 revolvers, or because he was known to slap shell-shocked soldiers on occasion.

Christner—captain of the Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA's animal rescue and control and humane investigation departments—subscribes to one of Patton's views on leadership: "Always do everything you ask of those you command."

"He wouldn't tell anybody to do anything that he wouldn't do himself," says Christner, who's worked at the San Mateo, Calif., shelter for nine years.

Christner's taken that ethic to heart. Whether it's being the first one through the door at a hoarder's house, or putting himself into a risky position during a complicated effort to rescue a horse whose hind legs had fallen through the deck of a bridge, he's always ready to take the lead.

On Sept. 9, 2010, there was a natural gas pipeline explosion in San Bruno's Crestmoor neighborhood, two miles west of San Francisco International Airport. The catastrophe killed eight people and destroyed 38 homes.

Christner, who lives about five miles from the scene, was the first person from his departments to respond, after he received a frantic call from one of his investigators.

He had just gotten home from working a 10-hour day, but he raced to the fire, and set up an operations center for responders from his

shelter. "I think I worked 17 ½ hours [straight], all told," Christner says. He and his staff then worked through the weekend, rescuing the few pets they could, and sheltering others.

That kind of leadership inspired his staff to nominate Christner for the National Animal Control Association's (NACA) 2011 Animal Control Employee of the Year Award. They kept the nomination a secret; humane officer Chris Wilson wrote the nominating letter.

Christner, 42, didn't know anything about it until he received a letter from NACA saying he'd won. Then his 20-member staff finally 'fessed up, and the news quickly spread through the organization. "Jeff absolutely, 100 percent deserves this award, and we are all proud that he got it," Wilson says.

He received the award in May at NACA's annual conference in Reno, Nev.



Wildlife technicians Patrick Hogan and Marisa Burman and Christner (right) from the Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA give subcutaneous fluids to a fawn who was abandoned by the mother and brought to the shelter by animal control officers.

The award is more than just the recognition of Christner's work and reputation, according to Scott Delucchi, the Peninsula Humane Society's vice president for community relations. "It's also great for the shelter, and for the people in this community, to know that we have folks who have been recognized nationally," he says.

Jamie McAloon Lampman, director of the Ingham County Animal Control Shelter in Mason, Mich., is one of three NACA board members who served on the selection committee for the awards given this year.

The letter nominating Christner impressed the committee, according to Lampman. It described how he always tries to improve his entire department, not just himself, by helping staff to get as much training as possible; his willingness to embrace innovative ideas; and his support during stressful times.

"He was a wonderful candidate, because he was professional, he was compassionate, and he was a leader—and a well-liked leader, so that's pretty exemplary," Lampman says.

Christner downplays getting the NACA honor, saying that the efforts of so many



Christner is known as a leader who'd never ask a colleague to do something that he wouldn't do himself—for example, rappelling 200 feet down a cliff to rescue a fallen dog, as he was preparing to do when this shot was taken.

people in animal control go largely unrecognized. "I know that there's just as many people out there that probably work just as hard and probably did more with less, quite honestly, than what we've managed to do here," he says.

Before Christner started as an animal control officer in 2002 at his shelter, he had no formal experience in the field. The Cleveland native had worked for years as a freight train conductor and in industrial shipping-and-receiving jobs, but he'd always felt pulled toward caring for animals.

He served in the Air Force from 1987 to 1991, performing aircraft radio maintenance at Langley Air Force Base in Virginia. During the first Gulf War, many airmen were shipped overseas, so he was pressed into service as a military policeman for about six months.

That's how he got his first taste of law enforcement, but it wasn't quite his niche. Years later, when he was considering a move to California, he came across a job listing on the Internet for a position at the Peninsula Humane Society.

"It just seemed to be the perfect fit. ... I was like, 'Wow, animal control—I can do that,'" Christner says.

Even though he was embarking on a totally different career path, it didn't take long for him to feel at home in the field. In fact, Christner knew he would like being an animal control officer even before he was offered the job—he sensed it after a ride-along with an officer.

The day started with an aggressive dog call—the dog had to be tranquilized before the officer could load the animal onto his truck—and ended with something more unusual.

"We're in the San Francisco Bay Area—let's leave it at that. There's people who were giving a prayer ceremony over a deceased deer that we had to pick up off their property," Christner says.

"After we got back into the truck, I just kind of looked at [the animal control officer], and she goes, 'That doesn't happen all the time,'" he says, laughing. "It was just such a variety of different types of calls—it was a pretty amazing day." **AS**

Animal Sheltering Online

Your magazine isn't just in print—it's on the Web, too. Check out this issue's online extras.

- We're opening the Mouthpieces department to reader submissions! For more information, go to animalsheltering.org/mouthpieces.
- Visit animalsheltering.org/publications/magazine/coffee_break.html to read more reader responses to our question about the best collaboration you've been involved in.
- Shelters and volunteer coordinators interested in resources for volunteer management can join a listserv, also found on animalsheltering.org.
- And don't forget to "like" us at [facebook.com/animalshelteringmagazine!](https://www.facebook.com/animalshelteringmagazine/)



Their Aim is True

Volunteers, veterinarians pull together and hit the target to save badly wounded cat



Veterinarian Kathleen Fleck of Ocala, Fla., cuddles a recovering Arrow, who still sports a funky, pre-op haircut.

If a cat shot through the chest with an arrow could be said to be lucky, then this cat was lucky.

In March, a resident of Dunnellon—a community in Florida's Marion County—contacted Sheltering Hands, a local rescue group, to report a black-and-white cat with an arrow sticking through his chest wandering the neighborhood. The resident knew the cat to be friendly with children, but she didn't know who owned him.

Marion County sheriff's deputies and the county's animal services department were contacted, but they couldn't trap the injured cat because the length of the arrow sticking through him made it impossible for him to enter a standard trap.

After a week of failed attempts to capture the kitty, Leslie Hinson, treasurer of Sheltering Hands, stepped in and spent several nights trying to coax him into a large dog trap.

Volunteers then took the cat—who by that time had acquired the name Arrow, naturally—to Kathleen Fleck, the president of Sheltering Hands, who is also a veterinarian at Brick City Cat Hospital in nearby Ocala. That's when his luck began to change.

Fleck acted fast. She tried to stabilize the cat, now suffering from widespread infection, and took X-rays to see the arrow's path through his body. His breathing was weak.

Fleck and a clinic technician jumped in the car to transport the failing feline to the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine's Small Animal Hospital in Gainesville, a 40-minute trip. The technician sat in back with the cat and an oxygen tank. He went into respiratory arrest twice. She kept the cat alive by squeezing a bag that forced oxygen into his lungs, through an endotracheal tube that they had inserted earlier.



Arrow awaits lifesaving surgery at the University of Florida College of Veterinary Medicine's Small Animal Hospital in Gainesville.

When the cat arrived at the hospital on March 12, he was in critical condition. Doctors immediately drained infected fluid and air out of his chest, and gave him intravenous fluids and medications to stabilize his blood pressure.

Then they performed a CT scan, which showed that the arrow had passed through his chest between his heart and diaphragm—while missing the cat's major blood vessels and other vital structures. Nor did it penetrate his abdomen, another fortunate break.

With that information, Laura Cuddy, a first-year resident, and Stanley Kim, a faculty member at the veterinary college, went into surgery. They found that the only organ that was damaged was a small portion of one lung, which the doctors had to remove.

"He certainly was *extremely* lucky that it didn't pierce something [else]," Cuddy says.

Once the doctors had determined that the arrow hadn't damaged any major structures, they cut off both ends, then carefully pulled out the remainder of the shaft.

But Arrow wasn't in the clear. Bacteria from the arrow, as well as bits of his own fur, had gotten into his chest, causing an infection that worsened as the shaft stayed in him.

So the doctors removed any dead tissue, flushed out his chest, and inserted two chest tubes to drain off infected fluid. They started him on antibiotics and pain medication, and moved him to the intensive care unit, where he was kept for a while in a Plexiglas "cage," breathing a mixture of 60 percent pure oxygen. Normal room air is 21 percent oxygen;



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the increased percentage helped Arrow breathe without having to work his lungs too hard. He remained hospitalized for a week, his condition steadily improving, and was discharged on March 18 to a Sheltering Hands volunteer, who transported him back to Fleck.

The bill for Arrow's medical treatment came to about \$8,000, but Sheltering Hands has already collected \$7,650 in donations to pay for it.

Fleck says that the injury Arrow suffered is clearly a case of cruelty. "The understanding we have from the neighbors is it was just a young person who was going around shooting birds and anything else with arrows." But lacking proof, local authorities haven't charged anyone.

After his discharge, Arrow lived for a couple of months in one of Sheltering Hands' foster homes, where he gained weight, and his fur began to grow back, slowly erasing the funky patchwork "haircut" he got prior to surgery.

And he has found a home. A local woman whose cat had recently died of cancer contacted Sheltering Hands, saying that Arrow resembled her late kitty, and that she'd like to adopt him. A key factor in the woman's favor was that her mother is a veterinarian, Fleck says, which might come in handy if Arrow develops any health problems later.

The woman is actually adopting two cats from Sheltering Hands: Arrow, and a feline friend from his foster home, an American curl named Curlina.

Medically speaking, everything went right for Arrow. "He could have been killed instantly. He could have died from the infection in his chest. ... He could have died during surgery, or in the immediate post-op period," Cuddy says. "There were a lot of areas where it was touch and go for him, so he's extremely lucky."

Fleck sees the experience as an example of how communities can work together to help animals.

"It took the neighbor [who reported a wounded cat], it took the volunteers with the rescue, it took the local police department, it took the [University of Florida], it takes people who care to provide money. It's just a great example of teamwork." **AS**

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Room at the Inn

A motel-owning couple helps the cats of Florida's Cedar Key



Doreen and Oliver Bauer not only look after the needs of guests at the Faraway Inn, their 12-unit motel in Cedar Key, Fla.; they also provide care for a group of about 70 community cats like this one in outdoor enclosures behind their own home.

Don't get behind Doreen and Oliver Bauer at the supermarket checkout if you're in a hurry. They buy at least 20 large bags of cat food at a time.

But don't feel sorry for the Bauers. They're living their dream.

After many years of vacationing on the Florida island of Way Key, the Bauers bought a piece of paradise there—the Faraway Inn, a 12-unit motel built in the 1940s. In 2000, they moved with their cat to the island's city of Cedar Key.

The Bauers knew from prior vacations that their pet kitty would not be alone.

Although the Bauers were initially consumed with major motel renovations, the huge number of roaming cats in the area always saddened them. "Some of the cats were emaciated; others looked like they had skin issues," says Oliver. Cedar Key was a major port in the 1800s, and it's likely that many cats—who provided rodent control on

the ships that docked there—decided they liked the island as well.

In 2004, the Bauers completed their motel renovations, and then their real work began. With advice and borrowed traps from a source at Operation Catnip—a nonprofit organization offering free spay/neuter and vaccines for feral and free-roaming cats—they trapped 25 cats and drove them to the University of Florida in Gainesville, where Operation Catnip does its work.

Unfortunately, since they weren't in the county served by the group, they couldn't use its services over the long term. The Bauers searched and searched for other options, trying to learn more about the best ways to help. In 2006, their search ended.

Beth Hackney and Kim Glickman were on one of their many vacations to the island and inquired if anyone was helping the cats. An island resident told them that

CONTINUES ON PAGE 12

As you'll see from the poster at right, we're opening the Mouthpieces department to reader submissions! So many shelters and rescues have produced fantastic public service announcements.

If you've created one you'd like to share so that other groups can use it, please submit it to us. We'll use some of the best ones in the magazine. This is from the Coalition to Unchain Dogs in North Carolina, in collaboration with the Triangle Chapter of the American Advertising Federation.

The small print: Submitted PSAs can retain your organizational branding, but you must be OK with allowing other groups to add their contact info so that they'll be able to use the ad in their own communities.

The technical stuff: Our preferred file format is PDF/X-1a:2001 with crop marks at least .125 inches from artwork. Accepted alternate file formats are QuarkXPress, InDesign, Illustrator, or Photoshop. If an ad is submitted in a format other than PDF, graphics and fonts must be included — images must be CMYK and 300 dpi. Line art must be at least 600 dpi. The dimensions must be (or must be adjustable to) full page including bleed: 8.375 inches by 10.75 inches; live area/non bleed: 7.125 inches by 9.5 inches.

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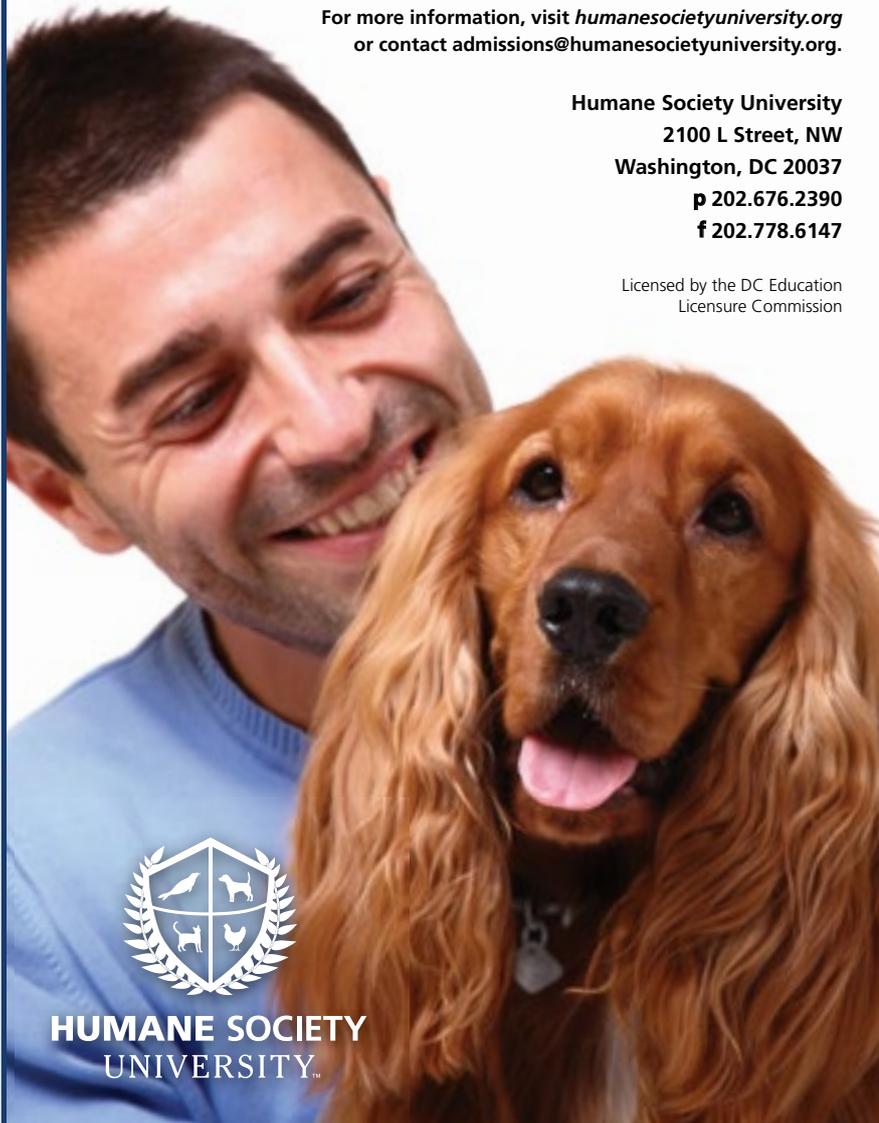
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[scoop]

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 10

Oliver and Doreen were trying to provide some aid. "And that's how we were introduced," says Oliver.

Hackney and Glickman were with Cats Angels Inc. SPCA, an all-volunteer rescue group in Fernandina Beach, about three hours away. "They were just wonderful," recalls Oliver. "They brought traps and showed us how to use them."

They introduced the Bauers to other organizations and arranged for the Jacksonville area River City Community Animal Hospital's mobile spay/neuter clinic to come to Cedar Key. The unit can sterilize 40 cats a visit.

Initially the Bauers trapped colonies weekly and held up to 40 cats at a time at their motel for recovery. Nowadays, they trap cats monthly and make the hour-plus drive to the Humane Society of Florida in Inverness, which has sterilized more than 400 of the cats from Cedar Key. Sometimes the Bauers transport cats to the nearby city of Otter Creek; thanks to its cat-friendly mayor, its town hall serves as a staging area for the mobile spay/neuter unit from River City Community Animal Hospital. The vehicle parks outside the town hall, and, after the mobile team performs the day's surgeries, the cats are returned to the town hall, where veterinarian Kathleen Fleck and other volunteers vaccinate and monitor them during their recovery.

The following day, the Bauers collect the cats from the town hall and put them under their house, which sits on stilts and is high enough for the Bauers to move around without stooping. Cages are lined up on tables, and fans (or heaters, whichever is necessary) are provided to keep the cats comfortable. Several days later, the Bauers return the cats to their caretakers. Those cats without caretakers are integrated into the Bauers' own menagerie—after all, what's a few more?

Fleck formed Sheltering Hands in 2007; the group has since sterilized thousands of roaming cats in the area. She notes that the animal services department for the county has seen a huge decrease in the number of cats coming in. "I like to hope that's because of all of our efforts over the past five years. Without [the Bauers], it wouldn't have been done. There's no question," Fleck says.



Outdoor enclosures serve as shelter for about 70 community cats that the Bauers—with help from other area cat advocates—have had spayed or neutered.



Ramps connect the outdoor enclosures that the Bauers have built for a large group of community cats whom they care for. The ramps also give the kitties access to the Bauers' own home.

Oliver says that motel guests have noticed that there are a lot fewer cats than before, and they're a lot healthier. Some guests and residents have donated generously to the Bauers, but finding homes for the kittens is still a big challenge.

One lucky cat was Turtle. She'd had many litters and was emaciated and practically hairless before the Bauers rescued her. She now reigns as the Faraway Inn's office cat. Other lucky cats came to live at the Bauers' house, a few blocks from the motel. Outdoor enclosures

with ramps allow the cats, now numbering 70, access to the Bauers' house. The Bauers recently purchased the lot next door and expanded the cat enclosures onto that property.

Oliver remembers saying back in 2006, "There can't be more than 200 cats on this island," but as of May 2011, the Bauers had trapped 725 cats.

"For us, it's always just been about the animals," he says. "It's not their fault. They're just doing what comes naturally, and it's up to us to do the right thing." **AS**



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Charity on Tap

Brewfest benefits Central Pennsylvania Humane Society



There's more to the world than Miller Lite. The Pints for Pets Brewfest features a wide assortment of craft beers, allowing attendees to drink to and for homeless animals.

The suds that made Milwaukee famous are paying off in a big way in Altoona, Pa.

That's where the Central Pennsylvania Humane Society (CPHS) has for the past four years held its Pints for Pets Brewfest, a fundraiser that helps the 115-year-old non-profit care for the roughly 5,000 animals who arrive annually.

For a flat \$35 fee, people come to a local minor league baseball stadium to sample craft beers offered by dozens of brewers who've set up booths on the mezzanine. This year's brewfest, held May 7, attracted about 75 brewers and 2,500 beer lovers, and raised about \$65,000 for the CPHS. The brewfest has been the shelter's biggest fundraiser since its inception, says CPHS executive director Mary Anslinger.

"It's a chance for beer connoisseurs to get out and try a lot of different things in one place," says Rick Vanevenhoven, the CPHS board president and Pints for Pets chairman, who spearheaded the fundraiser's development. "... It's really kind of a social activity, and it's definitely for a cool crowd."

Brewfest-goers sip specialty beers with names like Mom's Elderberry Stout and Goose Island while listening to local bands like the Beagle Brothers and enjoying the sight of the Allegheny Mountains beyond the outfield. The brewfest includes two three-hour sessions, one in the afternoon and one in the evening. Pints for Pets has become one of the most popular brewfests in the Mid-Atlantic region partly through attention to detail, Vanevenhoven says. "Not to pat myself on

the back, [but] ours is very well-organized," he explains. On his nine-member committee, which has included the same people for all four years, everyone has an area of expertise and plays a specific part.

One committee member handles media relations, while someone else coordinates the 400 volunteers who work the brewfest. Another member attends other brewfests to recruit brewers, who range from local brew pubs to beer makers in foreign countries. "There are breweries everywhere, and there are brew pubs everywhere," Vanevenhoven says. The brewers represented at the 2011 Pints for Pets ran the gamut from the widely known (Yuengling, LaBatt Blue, Leinenkugel's) to those that are more likely famous in their backyards (Otto's Pub & Brewery, Bavarian Barbarian Brewing, Blue Canoe Brewery). Many of the participating brewers produce craft beers in small quantities, so Pints for Pets is a great marketing tool for them, Vanevenhoven explains; they get to reach nearly 3,000 people at a festival instead of 30 people at a beer dinner.

Organizers recruit enough sponsors to cover the full cost of the brewfest, Vanevenhoven says. "That way we can guarantee that every dime of every ticket sold goes directly to the humane society, which is a very important marketing statement to make."

Vanevenhoven's committee and volunteers run Pints for Pets on behalf of the CPHS but without much involvement from the staff—a nod to the shelter's limited resources, he says. Anslinger says she's happy with that arrangement. The humane society sets up a booth on the day of the event to sell T-shirts, magnets, and tote bags, and to show photos of adoptable cats and hear stories about people's pets. In a move aimed at improving the shelter's outreach, brewfest participants this year could provide their email addresses and be entered into a drawing to win two VIP tickets to next year's event.

"We're very fortunate in that Rick and his strong committee can do this without our involvement, so we can focus on other events and try to make them more fruitful," Anslinger says, noting that the CPHS's other



For benefiting the Central Pennsylvania Humane Society and giving beer connoisseurs plenty to choose from, the Pints for Pets Brewfest gets two thumbs up from volunteer Mike Kutchman, who's manning a table with Jim Fouse.

fundraisers include a July 4 motorcycle run and a Labor Day golf outing.

Sponsors get VIP passes that let them enter the stadium and attend a reception a half hour before the gates officially open—bypassing the line of 1,000 to 1,500 people waiting to get in, Vanevenhoven says. Sponsors are also attracted to the idea of helping the humane society. "A lot of people have a lot of empathy for the animals in the shelter," he explains, "and they're willing to pony up the money."

Pints for Pets has become so popular, he adds, that sponsors and brewers are clamoring to be part of it. "Usually, it's the other way around," Vanevenhoven says. "When we started out, we had to go after them. Now they're kind of coming to us. It makes life a lot easier."

The CPHS rents Blair County Ballpark for the day at a nonprofit discount rate, and Vanevenhoven thinks the stadium is a perfect venue for Pints for Pets. The mezzanine stretches for several city blocks and offers protection from the rain while remaining open to the outdoors. The ballpark sells tickets through its website

that people can print at home. And it's got restrooms rather than port-a-poties—a feature welcomed by beer drinkers everywhere.

With 75 brewers offering approximately three sample beers each in 5-ounce pours, Pints for Pets features "more beer than anybody ... should ever drink," notes Vanevenhoven. But many tasters don't drink the entire sample, opting instead to take a sip and dispose of the rest in a dump bucket.

And the brewfest has not been plagued by intoxicated attendees; Vanevenhoven estimates that five people have been ejected in the event's four years, and no one was removed this year. "We put out about 500 signs around the ballpark saying that intoxicated people will be escorted out," he notes. The ballpark supplies two security officers, who augment two CPHS humane officers who work the event. Vanevenhoven says the officers' mere presence seems to keep people in line—ensuring that attendees stay drunk on the experience of helping pets, without getting as rowdy as a pack of dogs. **AS**

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[scoop]

Rising to the Top

BY JANE LUISO

Humane society and animal control staff often wonder what skills and qualifications are needed to move their careers along and rise from their current positions to become the executive director or chief executive officer. Regardless of where you are in your career, acquiring knowledge and experience in some of the rudiments of business will help you attain that dream job.

These days, boards of directors are increasingly seeking candidates who have solid business skills. Not only do they look for people who have experience within the humane field, but for people who have knowledge in budgeting, investments, fundraising, and leading a team. In fact, agencies are increasingly looking outside the animal welfare field when seeking their next CEO. Why? Because many see their organizations as businesses that should be run in much the same manner as those in the private sector.

So if you are an aspiring president and CEO, what should you be doing to prepare for those positions? The following tips should help you proceed on your path.

- In your current position, do you have any responsibility for the agency's budget? Are you overseeing the budget for your department? If not, see how you can increase that responsibility. Learn all you can about how your department fits into the overall budget of the organization.
- Do you manage staff? This is a very important skill to have when applying for a leadership position. Every organization wants its CEO to have management experience; the CEO leads all personnel and needs a solid footing in handling the complex issues involved in managing people.
- What interactions do you have with your board of directors? Perhaps you



are not entitled to participate at the regular board meetings, but what about board committee meetings? If you have a chance to present and report at these meetings, take full advantage of that. You will have the opportunity to get to know the board members, and develop a rapport, and they'll get to know you and your strengths.

- What type of IT experience do you have? In an ever-increasing technological age, more and more organizations want their presidents to understand social media, Internet marketing, and online fundraising. Do you use an integrated shelter program to track your animals? For fundraising? Learn as much as possible about these programs and use them effectively.

- Do you participate in any type of development activity? Fundraising is one of the most important jobs for an executive director or CEO. So ask to help out at events, and talk to volunteers and donors about your agency. Learn about your direct mail programs, Internet fundraising, and bequest programs.



These are things you may know if you are already an executive. But when you're seeking a new position, highlight your achievements and knowledge of these skills so your résumé will stand out among your competitors. If you are a director of operations or development, or the head of another department, ask to participate in any area in which you feel you do not have the needed experience to take on the most senior role. And finally, regardless of where you are in your career, always have an updated résumé at the ready just in case a position that you truly want suddenly opens. **AS**

Jane Luiso is a consultant with Kittleman & Associates, LLC, and a retired member of SAWA.

**SAWA 2011 Conference
San Francisco, Calif.,
Nov. 13-15**

The Annual Certified Animal Welfare Administrator (CAWA) exam will be held on Nov. 13 in California and Maryland.

See sawanetwork.org for more information.



ADOPTION: Friends of Norfolk Animal Care Center

Show Off Your Stuff!

Animal Care Expo not only brings humane societies, rescue groups, and animal care and control groups together—it gives them a chance to share their best messages.

The Innovation Station allows attending organizations to submit their creative outreach materials for a chance to win prizes. This year, Expo attendees voted for the winners in three categories (adoption, pet identification, and fundraising); the top five vote recipients in each category were named finalists. A panel of judges selected a winner for each category. The winners were:

- Adoption: Friends of Norfolk Animal Care Center
- Pet identification: Anchorage Animal Care and Control Center
- Fundraising: Brother Wolf Animal Rescue

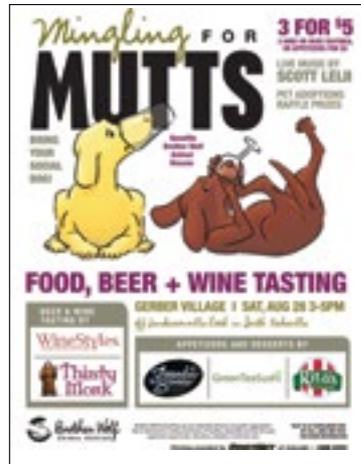
The three winning organizations received a ColorQube 8570/DN printer, plus six months free ink, compliments of the Xerox FreeColorPrinters Program. Also thanks to Xerox, the winning fliers will be professionally edited and crafted into a template for other organizations to use in their own outreach and educational efforts.

If you've produced some great campaign materials, think about entering next year!

The winning flier will be printed in *Animal Sheltering* and made available on animalsheltering.org. Details about the Innovation Station at Expo 2012 in Las Vegas, including how to enter online, will be available in early 2012. Don't miss this opportunity to show off your organization's creative outreach efforts and have a chance to win fantastic prizes! **AS**



PET IDENTIFICATION: Anchorage Animal Care and Control Center



FUNDRAISING: Brother Wolf Animal Rescue

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After a 24-year career in animal control and more than a decade of distinguished service at The Humane Society of the United States, John Snyder, vice president of the Companion Animals section, is entering a well-deserved retirement. Snyder has been a friend and mentor to many in the field, and will be deeply missed. Filling his large shoes will be Betsy McFarland, senior director of Companion Animals, shown here with Snyder at Animal Care Expo. Congratulations!



Homely is where the heart is. It's not just the dogs that are unattractive in a documentary that's making the rounds of independent film festivals this year. *Worst in Show* features the conformation-challenged dogs and their owners who compete in the annual World's Ugliest Dog competition in Petaluma, Calif. Money's not the object in this "beauty" pageant; it's the publicity that comes with winning that can drive owners to indulge in some very bad behavior in their quest to have their pet crowned top dog. (In 2006, someone hacked the contest's Internet voting page and deleted tens of thousands of votes from the front-running contestants.) But underneath the dirt, filmmakers John Beck and Don R. Lewis find plenty of good, clean fun and a heartwarming fact: Almost all the dogs are rescues, adopted for love, not looks. Proceeds from many of the film's screenings are donated to animal shelters and rescue groups. For more information and a schedule of showings, go to worstinshowmovie.com.

It's a bird! It's a plane! It's a ... dog? Nurses at the Shorncliff Nursing Home in Sechelt, British Columbia, were astounded when the object streaking through the sky in May turned out to be a dog—a small, white poodle who suddenly plunged out of the blue and landed on the facility's lawn. Deep gouges and claw marks on the dog's back indicated that a bird of prey had likely carried her off, intending to make a meal of her. But at 18 pounds, the poodle evidently was too heavy for the bird, who eventually had to release her. The bird may have saved her life: Ingrown nails and decaying teeth were clues that the dog had been fending for herself for quite some time. The British Columbia SPCA took over the dog's care, dubbing her "Miracle May" and performing surgeries to remove rotten teeth and fix ribs broken in the fall. At press time, the shelter had a long list of potential adopters eager to give May a loving, raptor-free home.



Word up. Contrary to the old saw about sticks and stones, words can hurt, especially when terms from the bad old days like "pound" and "destroy" are still the official language in laws referring to animal shelters. "Laws that call shelters 'pounds' and suggest that officers 'destroy' animals do not ... recognize the dedicated and caring staff that work at these shelters," says Mark Goldstein, a veterinarian and president of the San Diego Humane Society and SPCA, who felt it was past time to erase the cartoon image of the evil dogcatcher. The

SPCA teamed up with California Assemblyman Nathan Fletcher to sponsor a bill in the legislature to strike the antiquated vocabulary from state laws and replace it with "animal shelter" and "euthanize," modern terms that better express the lifesaving work that shelters do. "This is the tip of the iceberg," says the SPCA's marketing and communications director, Michael Baehr, noting that "from a fundraising perspective, being able to talk positively about the progress we've made ... may even [have] philanthropic benefits."

Tickets to ride. In early May, 46 dogs from shelters in flood-ravaged Arkansas traveled west to find new homes in Kansas and Colorado, while 70 dogs from tornado-damaged areas in Georgia and South Carolina made their way to shelters in New York and New Jersey. The transports launched the ASPCA's National Relocation Initiative, a program designed to give dogs the best chance at

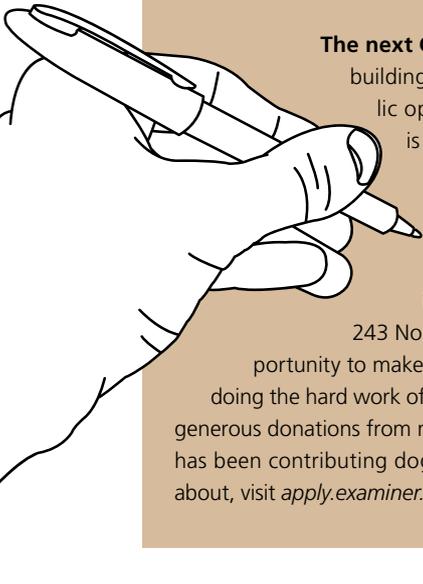


adoption by building a nationwide network of shelters and transporters and moving animals from areas of oversupply to areas of high demand within the network. "Homeless animals shouldn't be dying for space when there [are]...homes in some other state and we just need to get them there ... safely and humanely," says Ed Sayres, president and CEO of the ASPCA. The initiative intends to establish formal collaboration among the organized and grassroots transport systems already in place as well as create a supply-and-demand database of dogs in shelters.

Let's get small. Petco's "Think Adoption First" philosophy encourages customers looking for their next best friend to consider adoption before purchasing, even if it means losing a sale. Stores have long invited shelters and rescues to hold on-site cat and dog adoption events and have even installed Petfinder kiosks on the sales floor to make the search more convenient. Now Petco is looking to take the philosophy to a new level by replacing, where possible, the sale of certain species with homeless ones from local shelters. Currently three Arizona stores have discontinued selling red-eared slider turtles and turned over the space to a reptile rescue group to showcase sliders up for adoption. Petco would like to do the same for gerbils, hamsters, guinea pigs, ferrets, and other small animals. If you've got small animals in need of homes, get more information on becoming a Petco adoption partner at petco.com/adoptions.



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What's the most successful collaboration you've been a part of?

That's the question we asked for this issue's Coffee Break. Have you held a great joint adopt-a-thon? Do you provide your local humane society with field services? Whether you got together with another shelter to respond to a disaster, or joined with a local school district to provide humane education, you told us about your best team efforts.



Young at Heart Pet Rescue recently put together a Super Senior Save rescue mission in collaboration with a local open-door shelter [and] a local animal foundation, as well as a veterinary hospital and grooming/boarding facility, in order to save over a dozen senior dogs and cats at one time. Being a small organization that specializes in senior pets, we can usually only rescue one or two seniors at a time, but with everyone working together, we were able to rescue a dozen senior pets in one fell swoop! Not only did this alleviate some of the space issues at the local shelter, but the mission garnered some local press as well, encouraging readers to go to their local shelter or rescue and check out their senior pets for adoption. It was so successful, we'll be making this a biannual event.

—Dawn Kemper, executive director
Young at Heart Pet Rescue
Palatine, Illinois

In May, our team decided to respond to the growing need for help in the Midwest. Two of our board members, our lead veterinarian, and our veterinary technician volunteered their time for over a week to help animals in a temporary shelter in Kennett, Mo. We also organized transport for over 30 animals back to Ohio to local rescue groups for placement. Some of the animals required medical care before placement, and we raised money to care for them before we placed them for adoption.

—Melanie deHaan, medical director
Shelter Outreach Services of Ohio
Columbus, Ohio

My agency has been participating in the annual Spay Day event since it began in 1995. For the first four years, we partnered with local veterinary clinics and offered surgeries at our clinic, altering 1,271 [pets]. To expand the impact, in 1999 we joined forces with a shelter in the next county, and they recruited even more clinics. By 2011, we had expanded the collaboration to include nine shelters in four counties and over 35 private clinics. Thanks to this amazing collaboration of nonprofit, government, and private businesses coming together to address unwanted litters in the community—6,284 dogs and cats have been spayed/neutered.

—Kay Joubert, director of
companion animal services
PAWS
Lynnwood, Washington

Placing Animals Within Society (P.A.W.S.) Animal Shelter, located in Bryson City, N.C., started a dog transport program called One Step Closer to Home and invited three other rescue foster groups from neighboring counties to participate. All of the dogs were driven up to a receiving shelter, the Connecticut Humane Society (CHS). We all worked together so equal numbers of dogs got on from each group. We also split the costs of van rental and gas among the groups, and we had volunteers from each of the four groups take turns driving each monthly transport from North Carolina to CHS. Together, we did 12 trips and delivered 400 dogs to their forever homes.

—Ellen Kilgannon, executive director
P.A.W.S. Animal Shelter
Bryson City, North Carolina

Our organization worked with the local school board to develop graduate credit classes for teachers in need of continuing education credit. The class topic was the link between child/animal abuse and domestic violence. We brought to our community such wonderful speakers as Barbara Boat [a licensed clinical psychologist and associate professor specializing in child neglect and maltreatment], Temple Grandin [a doctor of animal science and a professor at Colorado

State University], Colman McCarthy [a journalist, teacher, lecturer, and longtime peace activist], and others. The results of this developed into a program called KIND. We won the first national Humane Education Award presented by The HSUS.

—*Barbara Scanlon, retired director
Marshall County Animal Rescue League
Moundsville, West Virginia*

Since January 2009, the Humane Animal Welfare Society (HAWs) has partnered with Greyhound Pets of America/Wisconsin (GPA), housing two or more of its adoptable retired racers at our kennel. The public can view the dogs seven days a week, increasing their visibility. To date, the partnership has helped almost 80 greyhounds find new loving homes.

—*Jennifer Smieja, development coordinator
HAWs—Humane Animal Welfare Society
Waukesha, Wisconsin*

In September 2010, we were involved in the largest cockfighting bust in the state of Florida, with the confiscation of over 670 birds. The Lee County Sheriff's Office found the operation during its undercover work on unrelated charges and called us in for assistance. Seeing the major scope of the case, we called in the ASPCA, which brought along its CSI unit as well as forensic veterinarians from the University of Florida and Sumter [Florida] DART for assistance. Over a period of five months, our agencies planned, coordinated, and executed the removal and examination of the birds. We were able to send some to a rescue organization, but unfortunately the majority had to be euthanized due to their poor conditions and aggressive behavior. Without the assistance and cooperation of these groups, we would not have been able to successfully remove, care for, and examine the birds in three days and stop these individuals from continuing this cruel practice.

—*Gloria Letendre,
supervisor of kennel operations
Lee County Domestic Animal Control
Fort Myers, Florida*

The Animal Shelter of the Wood River Valley, the first no-kill shelter in Idaho, started a partnership with the local food bank, the Blaine County Hunger Coalition, two years ago to provide food for pets belonging to people who are experiencing hunger and food insecurity in our community. This partnership enables people to keep their beloved pets in their homes during times of economic difficulty, rather than being forced to surrender them to our shelter. Since the program's inception, over 10,000 pounds of dog and cat food have been distributed to families and pets in need. The shelter purchases pet food at a discounted rate and delivers it to the hunger coalition for distribution. According to the hunger coalition, another unforeseen benefit of this program is that families who may be reluctant to ask for help for themselves are more willing to ask for help for their pets, thereby alerting the hunger coalition to their situation. Thanks to an increasing need on one side and incredible community support on the other, this collaboration is tremendously successful and continues to expand.

—*Meghan Faherty, adoption counselor
Animal Shelter of the Wood River Valley
Hailey, Idaho*

The most successful collaboration I have been involved with while volunteering at the Arizona Animal Welfare League was the Empty the Shelter event. Our goal was to place nearly 200 animals in permanent homes in 12 hours. With an army of volunteers and the dedicated and tired staff, we did it! The event went so well that we even sent a crew to rescue another 20-plus dogs from the county that were [slated] to be euthanized. Being a volunteer, this event was so fulfilling, especially when I walked the kennel lines that evening and only heard the chirp of the Arizona crickets.

—*Thomas Pierre, clinic volunteer
Arizona Animal Welfare League
Scottsdale, Arizona*

Congratulations to Ellen Kilgannon, whose submission was selected in a random drawing from those published in this issue. Her organization, P.A.W.S. Animal Shelter in Bryson, N.C., will receive a free coffee break: a \$50 gift certificate to a local coffee shop. "Bone" appetit!

Check out the latest Coffee Break question and submit your responses (150 words or less) at animalsheltering.org/coffeebreak or send them to Editor, *Animal Sheltering*/HSUS, 2100 L St. NW, Washington, D.C. 20037. **Your answer may be printed in a future issue of *Animal Sheltering*.** If your response is chosen for publication, you will be entered into a drawing to win a **free coffee break (valued at \$50)** for your organization. Responses may be edited for length or clarity; no donation or purchase is necessary to win. See animalsheltering.org for contest rules, or send an email or letter to the above addresses to request a printed copy.

The ASV Guidelines in Real Life Taking Them In

BY BRENDA GRIFFIN, D.V.M.



In 2010, the Association of Shelter Veterinarians (ASV) released a document several years in the making: *Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters*. Developed by a roster of veterinary experts, the standards are designed to “balance animal welfare science with practical and realistic recommendations for shelters,” and to provide a vision based on the needs of animals, which, the authors noted, remain the same regardless of how individual organizations’ missions and resources may differ. Here, we feature the third in a series of stories using real-life shelter examples to demonstrate how the ASV guidelines can be applied within the sheltering and rescue field to create better and more humane outcomes for the creatures we care for.



A growing body of scientific knowledge indicates that the way a shelter handles animals at intake has a profound impact on their behavior, health, and well-being. In many instances, it will impact an individual animal’s ultimate outcome, and in some cases, it could affect the health of an entire shelter population.

Shelters can be very stressful environments for incoming animals, filled with an assortment of novel stimuli, including strange noises, odors, sights, and other upsetting elements. In addition, the risk of exposure to infectious agents is often high. And when animals are simultaneously stressed and exposed to disease, they are more likely to become ill since stress compromises the immune response.

The ASV Guidelines emphasize that intake is a critical time for animals in shelters, enumerating the practices that are crucial to ensuring their health and welfare as they enter. Here, we explore some of these intake care standards and take a look at how various sheltering organizations have put them into action to improve outcomes.

Top: Jennifer Broadhurst, director of veterinary services at the Jacksonville Humane Society, and Brent Connor, animal admissions counselor, listen to the heart of a newly surrendered beagle during the pet’s intake exam.

Bottom: Broadhurst performs an intake exam on a pup prior to the pet’s admission to the humane society, to determine if the animal is ready to enter a foster home after a brief stay at the shelter.



Background Checks: Obtaining an Animal's History

"A medical [and behavioral] history, if available, should be obtained from the owner at the time of surrender. Any available information should be solicited when stray animals are impounded as well. Ideally, this information should be obtained by interview, although written questionnaires are acceptable."

"History should be used to alert staff to potential problems ... so that proper care can be provided for the animals."

"When available, a good history is extremely valuable, but it can be difficult to conduct a personal interview with every owner who is relinquishing a pet," says Jennifer Broadhurst, D.V.M., of the Jacksonville Humane Society in Florida. "We have forms available, but whenever possible, our goal is to get as much information about each animal as we can by speaking with the owner in person. For this reason, we let the public know that they can relinquish pets 'by appointment only.' This allows us to schedule time to be sure we get this valuable information as well as getting the animal assessed and preventive care completed right as they enter our facility. Of course, we do take walk-ins, but we don't advertise it. Our 'appointment only' policy helps us provide better care for the animals!"

Regardless of whether your shelter uses an appointment system for relinquishments, staff should be available to speak with owners who are surrendering animals; studies suggest that personal interviews may be the optimal way to get the best information. In some cases, offering support or counseling during the interview may even prevent relinquishment (see this issue's "101" on p. 39 for a program that does just that!). In other instances, the information gleaned will be crucial in guiding the care and placement of the animal. Even people bringing in found stray animals may be able to provide useful information to helpful, interested staff.



Looking Them Over: The Intake Exam

"Each animal's individual health [and behavior] status should be evaluated and monitored beginning at intake. ... Each animal should receive a health evaluation at intake to check for signs of infectious disease and/or problems [or behaviors] that require immediate attention."

At Rochester Animal Services in New York, Alissa Kulow, D.V.M., and her staff work together to ensure that all animals are examined as close to their time of arrival as possible. According to Kulow, "Officers impounding animals are responsible for a 'first look' assessment, and any obvious concerns are reported to me. Each day, a shelter staff member is assigned to 'Initial Health Exams' and is responsible for examining all newly admitted animals. Medical/behavioral issues are noted on the vet checklist, and I examine these animals as soon as possible."

In settings in which a veterinarian is not available to examine incoming animals, staff can be trained to perform

basic evaluations including sexing, aging, body condition scoring, and looking for evidence of fleas, ear mites, dental disease, overgrown claws, advanced pregnancy, or other obvious physical conditions. But a formal relationship with one or more veterinarians is crucial and will help to ensure that staff receives the necessary training, supervision, and guidance to perform these exams.



Who Are You? Checking ID

"Every attempt should be made to locate an animal's owner, including careful screening for identification and microchips at the time of intake. Intake health evaluation should therefore include scanning multiple times for a microchip using a universal scanner. Research has shown that the likelihood of detecting microchips increases with repeating the scan procedure multiple times."

"Our animal control officers or the animal care staff impounding an animal carefully and immediately scan with two different scanners, including a universal scanner," Kulow says. "If an ID tag or microchip is found on intake, the receptionist begins calling contact numbers, and a letter is sent to any previously known owner immediately. We scan all animals (strays and 'owner releases') multiple times during their shelter stay—including at intake and always prior to any disposition. Sometimes we find microchips and owners when we least expect it! Nothing is better than that!"

At the City of Arlington Animal Services in Texas, the staff of veterinarian Nancy Carter scans all incoming animals and also takes a digital photograph of each one. The photograph is entered into the computer and posted on the shelter's website immediately, so people can look for their lost pet online without ever coming to the shelter.



Vaccination Collaboration: Making Shots a Priority

"Because risk of disease exposure is often high in shelters, animals must be vaccinated at or prior to intake with core vaccines. Pregnancy and mild illness are not contraindications to administering core vaccines in most shelter settings because the risk from virulent pathogens in an unvaccinated animal would be far greater than the relatively low risk of problems posed by vaccination. Core vaccines for shelters currently include feline viral rhinotracheitis, calicivirus, panleukopenia (FVRCP) for cats and distemper, hepati-



Mary Kay Yunnuzzki, animal admissions counselor at the Jacksonville Humane Society, reviews an animal profile form with an owner who is surrendering a pet to the shelter.

intake procedures

tis, parainfluenza, and canine parvovirus (DHPP)/distemper, adenovirus 2, parvovirus, and parainfluenza virus (DA2PP) and Bordetella bronchiseptica for dogs. The use of modified live virus vaccines (MLV) is strongly recommended over killed products for core shelter vaccines in cats and dogs, including those that are pregnant, because they provide a faster immune response."

Scientific studies have demonstrated that dogs and cats respond to vaccines very rapidly, and many diseases can be prevented when vaccines are administered immediately at the time of intake.

Recognizing that even a brief delay of several hours can make the difference for some animals, Broadhurst and her staff make vaccination at the moment of entry a top priority. "A staff member performs all initial intake assessments and treatments, including vaccination in the shelter's intake exam rooms before an animal is even admitted to the shelter," Broadhurst says. "The staff is absolutely not allowed to put any animal in any housing ward unless it has had its intake done. Any late drop-offs absolutely must have their vaccines given before the staff can go home, even if they need to finish the rest of the intake and computer entry the next morning."

At the City of Arlington Animal Services, officers vaccinate all incoming animals before they place them in holding

areas. According to Carter, dogs receive a *Bordetella* vaccine through the nose and are injected with a DA2PP vaccine, while cats get FVRCP. "The expense of the vaccine is offset by the reduction in disease that we see when all incoming animals are vaccinated," Carter notes. "We know that immediate vaccination is the right thing to do. Housing this many animals without a good intake vaccination protocol to help keep them healthy is simply not something our community would accept."



Be Separation Smart

"Beginning at intake, animals should be separated by species and age as well as by their physical and behavioral health status.

"Young animals (puppies and kittens under 20 weeks [5 months] of age) are more susceptible to disease and so should be provided with greater protection from possible exposure, which can be more easily accomplished when they are separated from the general population.

"Starting from the time of intake and continuing throughout their stay, healthy animals should not be housed or handled with animals who have signs of illness.

"Beginning at the time of admission, separation of animals by species is essential to provide for their behavioral needs as well as proper health and welfare. ... Any animal that is showing signs of stress should be housed in separate, calm, quiet areas beginning at intake."

At the City of Arlington Animal Services, Carter and her staff ensure that incoming animals are properly segregated as they enter the shelter. "Sick/injured animals are brought directly to see me, and the needs of the animal are addressed before they are taken to a kennel area," Carter says. "We have separate areas for cats, dogs and exotics. If I am not in the shelter, or for after hours, I am called and we talk about what the animal needs. Usually, I can instruct the officer over the phone on triage issues to keep the animal comfortable until I or my tech can come see it for further assessment and treatment. Also, we have a bank of small kennels in one of the holding areas to keep small dogs and puppies, so they don't get overwhelmed in the larger runs. Likewise, stressed cats are placed in the quietest areas of the wards."

Intake practices can literally make or break the health of a shelter population. A good history and initial evaluation go a long way toward ensuring the health and welfare of incoming animals. Implementation of effective entry protocols—including immediate vaccination—promotes animal health and helps to mitigate animal stress. Careful inspection of all pets for any possible identifying information will maximize the odds of reunification with an owner. These practices help to ensure that each animal entering the sheltering system receives care promptly, with the ultimate goal of speeding them toward the most positive outcome possible. **AS**



Yunnuzki counsels owners on alternatives to surrendering their pets to the shelter, or schedules appointments for relinquishments so that the shelter can get more information on the animals it takes in.



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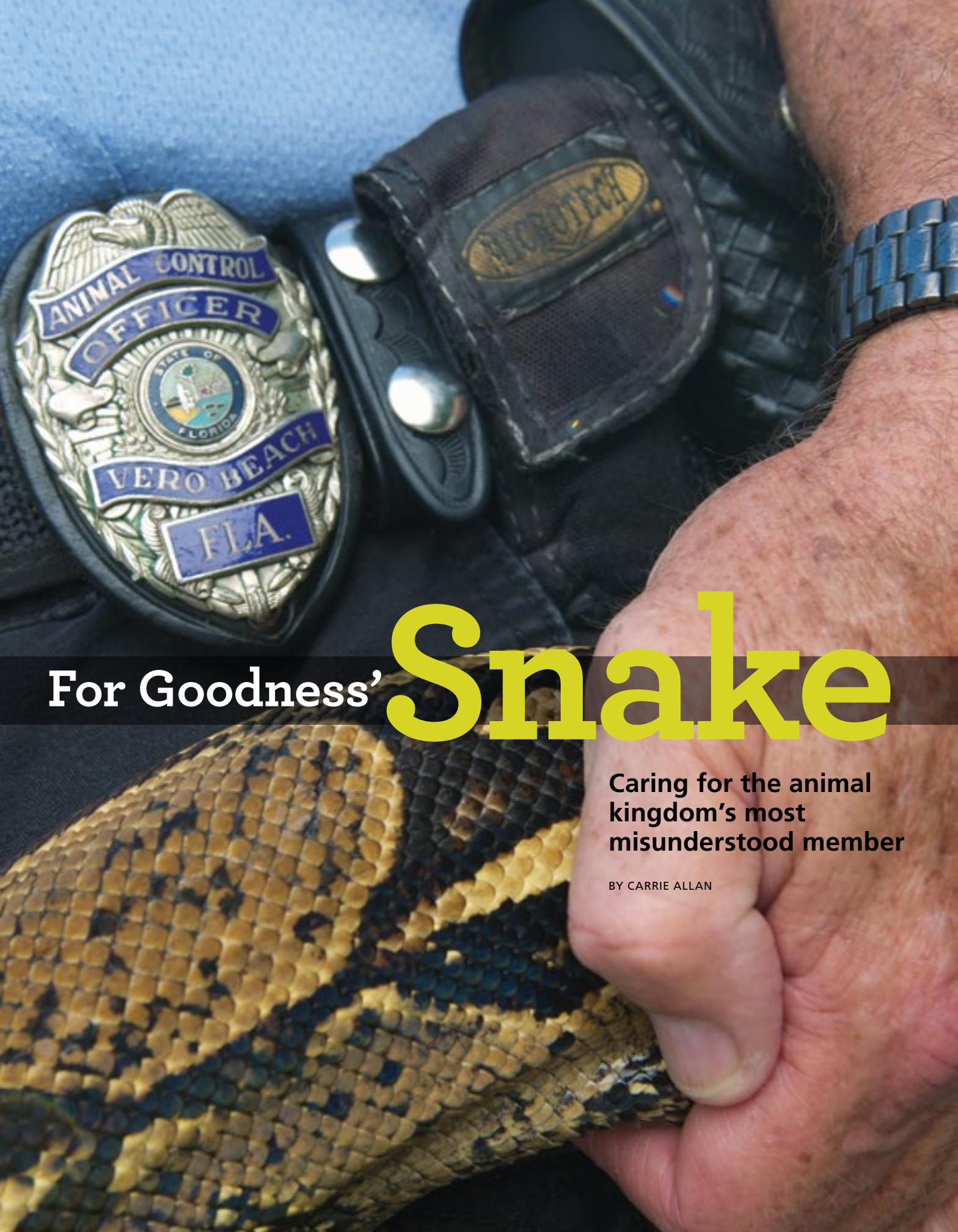
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For Goodness'

Snake

Caring for the animal kingdom's most misunderstood member

BY CARRIE ALLAN

In his time as an ACO, Bruce Dangerfield has saved hundreds of lives. But not everyone is grateful: Many of the lives he's saved belong to snakes.

Dangerfield is a snake aficionado. When he moved to Florida at age 11, he caught a little one, and went around asking what kind it was, only to have four different neighbors give him four different answers. A visit to his school library found few resources to help, either, and so Dangerfield gleaned what he could from the books there, and started learning more from any source he could find.

The snake capture of his boyhood led him to a lifelong interest in herpetology. As the lone ACO for the city of Vero Beach, Fla., Dangerfield now deals with many different kinds of animals, but few are as feared or misunderstood as snakes. In his classes on hunter education and outdoors living, he's often able to teach people about snakes. When they know a little more about the animals, he says, they become less afraid, and less inclined to freak out and do violence to snakes they encounter.

But many people aren't reachable, he says. They're ignorant about snakes, and perfectly happy to remain so—even in his area, which he describes as “the snake capital of Florida” due to its subtropical climate.

“It's amazing to me that most people don't know much at all even about native snakes,” he says. “If I lived in Australia I'd know about whatever we had, kangaroos or whatever. But people don't care; they don't want to know. They're afraid. The only good snake is a dead snake to them.”

Even Dangerfield's nearest and dearest are somewhat on the fence. To help with the workshops he does, Dangerfield keeps about 20 snakes in the garage, caring for them and using them as teaching aides.

“My wife doesn't go in the garage much,” he says dryly.

Unreasonable Hiss-teria

Dangerfield's a regular witness to one of the great remaining biases of the animal-loving world. Some people who'd willingly risk life and limb to save a kitten, who'd weep over an injured dog, will happily run over a snake and then back up again to make sure it's adequately squished.

The fear factor around these legless, slithering, mysterious creatures is ancient (thanks, Eve!) and deeply held—and, in some places, reasonable: In India, hundreds of people are killed by venomous snakes every year.

In the U.S., though, the few available statistics indicate that the number of people killed by snakes is likely comparable to those killed by dogs. And yet the sight of an unexpected snake—sunning on a rock, quietly crossing a trail in the woods—is often enough to elicit shrieks few dogs will inspire.

Dangerfield recalls an incident when he was called to remove a snake. “When I got there, there's five deputy cars there and seven deputies, and they all got their lights going.

HISSEY BIT: Lots of animal equipment catalogs sell snake “tongs” and hooks for handling; these should be used with caution, says Richard Farinato, former senior director for animal care services at The Humane Society of the United States. Tongs can put too much pressure on the animal's body, and if you use a hook, “you better be ready to put your hands under that body ... because if you just lift him and dangle him, you are going to do damage.” It's best to carry a friendly snake by gently grasping the back of his neck (to control his head) and providing support under the rest of his body. Snakes more than 5 feet long should be carried by draping the snake over the shoulders (not, Farinato emphasizes, around the neck).

And it's about a 16-foot Burmese python, about as big around as a normal man's thigh,” he says. “And I put both hands around its neck, and I said, ‘Can someone kind of pull its tail back so it doesn't wrap around me?’ And here's the answers I got from the deputies: ‘Not me.’ ‘Is it poisonous?’ ‘I ain't touching that damn thing.’”



Animal control officer Bruce Dangerfield captured this red-tailed boa constrictor crawling near a highway south of Vero Beach, Fla., in 2008.

With the help of two women—a neighbor and a cruelty investigator from the local humane society—Dangerfield managed to get the enormous snake most of the way into a body bag from a deputy's cruiser, when “the snake jerked loose and it struck up in the air. It had been in the wild for a while and it was pretty ornery. And it struck up in the air about three or four feet with its mouth open. And the deputies all scattered, and one of them turned and ran so fast into his car that he dented the door of the car.”

A 16-foot python? You can probably understand their fear. But even little garter snakes can freak people out.

Snakes have few of the traits most people seek in their animal companions. They're not fuzzy, they're not cuddly (except for constrictors, of course, and their cuddling can be, shall we say, a little too “clingy” for most people's tastes?).

But they do have a strong fascination factor, and that's kept them in the pet trade over the years. Unprepared snake owners, in turn, have kept snakes coming into animal shelters—sometimes in strange circumstances. A few years back, Loudoun County Animal Care & Control in Virginia got a call from officials at nearby Dulles Airport. A passenger had been stopped at security carrying a wriggling tube sock containing his two pet baby sand boas; he'd been planning to take his snakes on a plane. (Samuel L. Jackson could not be reached for comment.) The shelter took the boas in until they could be transferred to a reptile rescue group.



When carrying a snake, support her body and gently control her head to prevent her from escaping or biting.



If you're not sure how to use them, snake tongs can hurt the animal. Snake hooks (such as the one used by Bruce Dangerfield, above) are somewhat safer, but if you know a snake is friendly and nonvenomous, it's better to pick him up by hand and carry him with good support under his body.

Coiled Again

The incident—a pet owner unprepared to provide proper care and transport—is typical of reasons Loudoun County takes in snakes, says behavior enrichment coordinator Jenny Swiggart.

“People go to pet stores and see these small snakes, not thinking about what they’re going to be when they grow up,” she says. “I mean, they sell reticulated pythons at pet stores that are the longest snake in the world, and

HISSEY BIT: That old wives’ tale about a triangular head-shape indicating whether or not a snake is poisonous is not reliable, says Farinato. Learn what snakes native to your area are venomous so that you can identify them. Know which local hospitals have the appropriate antivenoms on hand (not all of them will). If you don’t know what kind of snake you’re dealing with, he says, use extreme caution handling it.

tend to have a reputation for being rather aggressive. And they sell them when they’re a foot long. And people get them home and have to feed mice, but the larger the snake gets, you’re feeding guinea pigs and rabbits. The prey gets bigger as the snake gets bigger. I don’t think people really understand what they’re getting into.”

When your shelter takes in a snake, the most important thing to do is identify its species so that you can be sure it’s not venomous. If it turns out to be, then not only should staff be extremely careful in handling, there may also be local regulations specifying whether or not it can be legally placed for adoption. A local exotics veterinarian should be able to help with identification, if necessary.

A shelter is most likely to see red-tail boas, ball pythons, and Burmese pythons, says Richard Farinato, an exotic animal expert and the former senior director of animal care services for The Humane Society of the United States. There are some regional variations—other shelters have seen corn snakes and king snakes as well. Most pet snakes are captive-bred within the United States—though, he notes, there is still some importation of ball pythons. And, with the exception of poisonous snakes and very large ones, there are few regulations restricting their ownership.

For most shelters—those with limited staff, space, and snake-handling expertise—housing snakes temporarily is the best practice. Working with a good reptile rescue or herpetological society, a shelter can get most snakes into a better situation with serpent experts who’ll understand the animals’ needs and be prepared to house and care for them.

But happily, snakes’ care needs don’t vary hugely among different species, and so with some basic equipment, you can make them comfy during the time they spend with you.

Shelters that take in snakes “need to keep different-sized aquariums and enclosures on hand, heat lamps, along with full-spectrum UV lights,” says Denise McKay, chair of the Safe Haven Society for Reptiles and Amphibians in Halifax, Nova Scotia. Snakes should be housed away from “dogs and cats and other furry things with their funky smells.” This is for the benefit of the snake—who may be stressed by the presence of dogs—and also for the benefit of the other animals, who may not like being stared down and viewed as dinner.

HISSEY BIT: Heating rocks are still sold in some pet stores. But if you get one donated, “the best thing you can do ... is cut the cords off and use them as decoration,” says Susan Nowicke, president of the San Diego Herpetological Society. Manufacturers “say they’ve added safeguards to prevent hot spots, and yet we still have animals coming in with burns. Reptiles don’t have any sensation to let them know they’re being burned through their flesh ... they will literally sit on that hot rock and burn themselves all the way through.”



Caring for snakes can present ethical problems for shelters. Many snakes must eat whole prey, which typically means species you may be adopting in the next room. Happily, their slow metabolisms mean that they may not eat at all during a short shelter stay.

Snakes use rough objects to rub against to help them shed. Signs that a snake is about to shed her skin include a bluish tint to her eyes and a “plastic wrap” feel to her skin. She may also not be interested in food.

Snakes can squeeze through small spaces, so “the most important thing is secure containment with a heat source,” says Susan Nowicke, president of the San Diego Herpetological Society, which helps shelters in San Diego County deal with their reptiles. “That can be done with a Rubbermaid tub. It’s contained, it’s secure, it can be easily ventilated, it can have a water source, it can have everything the animal needs. And the animal actually feels more secure in it because it’s dark and quiet, and it doesn’t see all the activity going on around it.”

Snakes will be most comfortable in a warm room, from 78-90 degrees Fahrenheit, but if you can’t provide that, a heating lamp will help them get tropical; the housing space should have warmer and cooler areas so the animal can move to where she’s most comfortable. Make sure that there are no “too hot” surfaces. A good rule of thumb: “If it’s too hot for your hand, it’s too hot for the reptile,” says McKay.

You can put a heating mat under the tub with some ventilation space—a pencil between the mat and the tub floor, for example. Add a towel and a dog’s water dish big enough for the snake to soak in, and make sure the lid is secure and ventilated.

If you can add a large branch or something else to climb on, even better. Sue Farinato, found of the Maryland-based Wildlife Aid Brigade, recently helped a local shelter revamp the cage where two boas had been living rather unhappily. “Using the same cage, but turning it on its end, I rigged some

branches and a shelf inside ...” she says. “They immediately began climbing and draping themselves over the branches.”

Not-so-Fast Food

If you’re only housing a snake for a few days, he may not need to eat. Unlike gluttonous, warm-blooded cats and dogs and humans, a snake may go weeks between meals. So if you get a snake who doesn’t eat immediately, it’s no reason to panic; if they’re not active and flicking their tongues to scent for food, they may not be hungry. Snakes also take a longer time to adjust to new surroundings, so they may be off their food for a while due to stress.

The food needs of snakes provide further encouragement for shelters to transfer snakes out to rescue groups and herpetological societies that can handle them. Especially for shelters that house and place small mammals, proper snake husbandry can raise some ethical qualms (and perhaps a little case of the shivers). Specifically, many of the snakes in the pet trade eat small mammals (mice, rats, rabbits), and a scenario where a shelter is trying to place live rabbits for adoption in one room while

feeding dead ones to a snake in the next is one of those things that’s bound to make you go “hmmm.”

You can avoid some of that ethical gray area by only feeding snakes in your care dead prey—that’s the standard for captive snakes anyway, experts say.

HISSEY BIT: Is your serpentine visitor shedding? Sometimes it’s hard to tell, but the eyes will become milky, and the “skin will sort of get a melty look when it’s near the final stages,” says Nowicke. “But before that, the best way I can describe it is that the skin will have a dry feel with a little bit of give to it, when normally when you handle a snake the skin is taut and supple. It’s almost like having cheap plastic wrap around the snake.”

THIS PAGE, LEFT: AARON ANSAROV, RIGHT: MARIETJIE/SHUTTERSTOCK.COM. OPPOSITE PAGE, LEFT: SERGEY IVANOV/ISTOCKPHOTO.COM, RIGHT: AARON ANSAROV

Resources

- Check out a video of Susan Nowicke discussing reptile issues and introducing a friendly boa constrictor named Mack at [youtube.com/watch?v=cOeM3N_sL3Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cOeM3N_sL3Y).
- Melissa Kaplan's Herp Care Collection at anapsid.org provides extensive care information about reptiles, including species-specific care sheets for a number of snakes.
- The Ssafe Haven Society for Reptiles and Amphibians maintains some excellent articles on reptile care at its Petfinder page, petfinder.com/shelters/NS17.html.
- The Wildlife Aid Brigade is available to consult on exotics in shelters. Email them at info@wildlifeaidbrigade.org.



A rubber tub can make an excellent temporary holding spot for a snake. Just make sure it has a secure, ventilated lid, and add water and a source of warmth.

"I have no aversion to a snake in the wild killing what it will kill," says Swiggart. "That's nature, it's the wild. But this is not nature—this is a cage." Beyond the icky factor, Swiggart says there are humane problems with feeding live animals. "One of two things can happen. You can have a snake who can miss and [have to] strike a mouse a couple of times. And the death is painful. And vice versa, if you get a snake that is not hungry and you throw in a mouse or a rat or something too large ... there have been instances of the prey injuring or killing the snake."

Swiggart notes that a shelter that needs to house a snake through adoption should not get in the habit of feeding the animal where it lives; the best practice, she says, is to move the animal to another space for its feeding time. Otherwise, she says, they get used to the door opening and food arriving, and that can lead to bites. "Make sure the snake knows you're there, touch them lightly and vibrate the cage, then I will pick them up and move them to another container for feeding." She will use a snake hook and tongs only if the snake is unfriendly.

Some snakes who have eaten live animals in the past—and certain species like ball pythons—may be reluctant to eat dead prey, but they can often be transitioned onto their new chow. Feeder animals can be warmed to standard body temperature, and a snake who is healthy and hungry will usually eat.

Avoiding Snake Mistakes

Loudoun County keeps its snakes and other reptiles in an isolated area of the shelter, primarily for the animals' comfort, but also to avoid the very phenomenon that leads snakes to end up in shelters in the first place: A person sees a snake, thinks it's cool, and decides to take him home with-

out fully understanding what the animal will need. The shelter will list snakes on its website and respond to adoption inquiries, and Swiggart says this helps cut down on people who might try to adopt on a whim.

Novicke says that she expects anyone who wants to adopt a larger snake to demonstrate experience with that kind of animal, "or they have to show a trend of 'I started with a small snake and went to a bigger one,' so they show they've been building up skills and knowledge and have appropriate caging." Her organization will do home inspections for the more difficult placements.

Not everyone who wants a snake should get one. Like any other animal, snakes take commitment to care for properly, and their nature makes them less of a natural fit into the typical household.

Dangerfield, for his part, is not interested in persuading people that snakes make good pets. He'd be happy enough to convince them not to abuse or kill the animals for no reason. He himself has been bitten five times by venomous snakes—including a bite by a timber rattler that put him in intensive care for three days, where he nearly died.

But he holds no grudges, and continues to try to make the case for treating the animals with compassion and respect, and for getting over the fear-based reactions that lead to unnecessary conflicts.

"No snake wants to bite a person; they just want to be left alone," he says. "Biting is a snake's last defense. But for some reason, people think it's macho to kill a snake that's practically defenseless against the intelligence of man, and that's what they do every time they see one. They chop it up and they call and say, 'I just killed this big rattlesnake,' and I'll come and it'll be this beautiful pine snake or something else nonvenomous."

It's behavior he's trying to change, one ophidiophobe at a time. **AS**

HISSY BIT: People constantly exaggerate their encounters with snakes, says Bruce Dangerfield, an animal control officer with the city of Vero Beach, Fla. "People call and say, 'It's 8 feet long and as big around as my arm,' and you get there and it's 2 feet long and big around as a pencil," he says. At one of the classes he teaches on outdoorsmanship, he says, he mentioned this tendency to overstate snake size, and a woman asked him later, "The people who exaggerate the length of snakes—they're all men, right?"

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Clinical Trials

Shelter-based veterinary practices expand access to care and help bring in more funds

BY JIM BAKER

When Karel Minor came on board as the Humane Society of Berks County's executive director in 2005, the Reading, Pa., shelter's finances were in a deep hole.

The shelter had animal control contracts with the state to service about half of the county, and individual contracts with several municipalities, but was only getting about 25 cents on the dollar for the actual cost of its work.

Minor also felt that the shelter had somehow lost its way, drifting from its original mission. The shelter had multiple animal control contracts, but lacked veterinary services to properly treat sick or injured pets; the majority of the animals who entered the shelter were ultimately euthanized.

"The idea was to help them get out, and get the second chance that they needed, and the structure we were in meant that there was simply no way for us to get to that point," Minor says.

So the shelter undertook a multiyear growth plan to try to reevaluate its model, and fix its broken financial picture. In the process, it dropped its animal control contracts (another local organization assumed those responsibilities), and added the provision of nonprofit veterinary services to its mission.

The result has been transformational.

Nine out of 10 sick or injured animals who would have been euthanized in the days before the hospital are now treated and adopted, Minor says. In a fundamental shift, the shelter is also able to use its own resources to keep pets with medical problems from being relinquished due to an owner's inability to afford care, and to heal shelter pets so they can live to find homes.

Treating the Treatable

Take Chief, a beagle who was surrendered because he had a fractured leg. The owner couldn't afford his medical care—even with discounted services—and wasn't in a position to care for him. "In the past, that absolutely would have been a euthanized animal," Minor says.

Instead, the broken limb was amputated, avoiding a lengthy recuperation from the injury—and the dog was adopted by a new owner a few days later. "Now that dog is running around, he's doing great."

In another case, the shelter was caring for a cat with a broken back. Staff managed to get the animal into long-term foster care, and eventually found him a permanent home. It's something "that we never could have managed to do" without access to veterinary care, Minor says. "That [kind of] success really just

Clockwise from bottom left: A pair of Corgis arrives for an appointment at the Idaho Humane Society Veterinary Medical Center. The shelter-based hospital has established a reputation for high-quality care in the local veterinary community.

Heartland SPCA veterinarian Susie Mikkelson spays a dog who came into the organization's low-cost spay/neuter clinic.

Chief was surrendered to the Humane Society of Berks County because his owner couldn't afford medical care for his fractured leg. Before the shelter opened a veterinary hospital, the dog would most likely have been euthanized. Instead, doctors amputated the leg, and he was adopted by a new owner.

At the Heartland Medical Center in Merriam, Kan., veterinary technician Kendra Miller holds an owned pet who has come for an exam, while veterinarian Blake Dickerson makes notes.



Veterinarian Mike Koob listens to the heart of Roman, a poodle mix, during an exam at the Idaho Humane Society Veterinary Medical Center.

changes the culture of the organization.” And for Minor’s shelter, it’s meant a major financial boost, too.

“Last year was our best year ever [financially]—we broke even for the first time in 110 years,” he says, laughing. “And we did not have to take a penny out of the bank. That was pretty astounding.”

The shelter, which has an annual budget that’s approaching \$2 million, is now breaking even because its veterinary services are generating more operational income—a funding stream that wasn’t there before.

“That’s when it really clicked for me, that not only was this good for the mission, but it was good for the financial sustainability of the mission,” Minor says. “And as we did more of it, we realized that this was something that could be replicated.”

In fact, others are doing it too.

Jeff Rosenthal, executive director of the Idaho Humane Society, conducted an informal telephone survey to identify shelter-based veterinary practices in the United States, and find out details about them. Based on his findings, Rosenthal—who co-presented a workshop with Minor on adding veterinary services to shelter operations at Animal Care Expo 2011—estimates that there are 36 full-service, nonprofit veterinary hospitals affiliated with shelters in the United States. Nearly 20 of them participated in his survey, sharing information about the scope of their practice, the size of their staff and budget, and their programs to help low-income clients afford care.

Rosenthal had an ulterior motive in conducting the survey. His shelter is organizing a capital campaign to build an entirely new facility, featuring a 10,000-square-foot hospital, and he thought he could learn from the experiences of other shelters. “I found myself wondering, ‘Maybe I should see how this [sheltering model] is going everywhere else,’” he says.

From his survey, Rosenthal found that it took a lot of hard work for shelters to open their own veterinary clinics, but that all of them—despite the challenges—are benefiting from it now. “Nobody was interested in going back to the situation they had before,” when they had no hospital.

Rosenthal and Minor have become evangelists for the benefits of adding a nonprofit, public veterinary practice to a shelter’s mission.

“When you’re doing veterinary work, you are doing nothing but your mission. You’re helping animals, you’re helping people, you’re going after the underlying causes of animals entering animal shelters,” Minor says. “It actually is a mission-based revenue stream, which has made a profound difference in our organization’s ability to do its work.”

Making It Affordable

Where Minor had to start from scratch to build a shelter veterinary practice, Rosenthal—a veterinarian himself—faced the task of turning around an existing one.

He was hired in 2000 as the Idaho Humane Society's medical director specifically to bring the shelter's public hospital, which opened in the mid-1980s, into order. It originally offered limited services: spay/neuter surgery, vaccinations, and other routine care. "It didn't really have a separate identity; it wasn't really advertised in any way," he says.

At the time, the hospital was losing money, but Rosenthal—named executive director in late 2002—revamped the practice, and made it profitable.

That's a good thing, but Rosenthal stresses that a clinic shouldn't be viewed only in that light. "Whenever we're doing earned-income ventures, we always have the risk of creating something that's profitable but does not achieve impact on our mission," he says. "And that's a failure, so I hope folks are not looking at this as a cash cow, but as a way to expand their mission."

The key to running a nonprofit veterinary hospital that stays mission-based is to establish public financial assistance programs to provide reduced rates so that low-income clients can have access to affordable care. This typically means using a sliding-scale price structure, so that clients who can afford to pay full price for services help to subsidize discounted fees for those who can't.

The price structure should be standardized, so that clients know what to expect to pay. This makes it easier for staff, too, so they won't have to respond to situations on an informal, case-by-case basis.

Models for such sliding scales are usually based on Federal Poverty Guidelines (available at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services website, aspe.hhs.gov/poverty/). People can qualify for discounted fees via proof of public assistance, paycheck stubs, tax forms, etc. Nonprofit veterinary hospitals can also offer payment plans, third-party or interest-free financing for qualifying low-income owners, or maintain a specific, donor-supported assistance fund.

When developing his new pricing structure, Rosenthal surveyed existing clientele about their income and the veterinary services they needed. Shelter-based veterinary hospitals should periodically reassess the financial impact of their programs, and adjust the amount of money being spent on discounted care—such as during a bad economy, when funds are scarce.

Establishing a sliding-scale price structure, offering various payment plans, and checking for proof of income doesn't just help disadvantaged clients—it also helps the organization. "Those are the statistics you're going to want to convey to your donors, to show that you're achieving that mission of helping people that otherwise couldn't be served," Rosenthal says.

That documentation can also protect a hospital's nonprofit status. Demonstrating how much charity an organization provides will help it stand up to inspection by the Internal Revenue Service (IRS).

Most shelters probably lack the space to open a full-service veterinary hospital within their existing facility, but there are other options. If a private veterinary practice is for sale in a community, a shelter could consider buying it. It isn't necessary for a hospital to adjoin a shelter, Rosenthal says, and this is a possibility worth looking into.

Better still, if a shelter's making plans to break ground on a new building, that's the perfect time to create the room necessary for a veterinary hospital. "Most shelters that are now being built, they're adding on extra space" for various programs, Rosenthal says, whether that's for a hospital, grooming services, or retail areas.

His shelter's capital campaign will fund a move into a new building at a different location, featuring a 10,000-square-foot hospital. (Its current practice occupies about 3,000 square feet.)

Meanwhile, staff at Minor's shelter are redesigning a cattery, reconfiguring walls, and moving some sinks in order to gain a few hundred more square feet for its roughly 2,000-square-foot hospital. Down the road, a capital campaign is planned to raise \$500,000 to renovate the shelter's kennels, add more space for overnight hospitalization, and create a radiology suite.

"A good design from scratch is better than a good design that is the best you can manage," Minor says. "But just working with the one we have now, it's entirely functional for us, and it works just fine."



A group of colorfully wrapped kitties recuperates on "recovery beach" after spay/neuter surgery at Heartland Medical Center. Heartland SPCA launched a full-service veterinary hospital in January.

The two executive directors have become evangelists for the benefits of adding a nonprofit, public veterinary practice to a shelter's mission.

Any time a shelter makes plans to open a clinic to offer low-cost spay/neuter surgeries or vaccinations, some veterinarians—worried about losing customers to the new “competition”—will likely express disapproval.

Meeting Resistance from Vets

Opposition from local veterinarians is a shared experience among shelters that have added nonprofit veterinary hospitals to their missions, Rosenthal’s survey revealed.

In fact, all 19 respondents reported that their organizations heard local veterinarians voice concerns, although only three of the shelters said they’d experienced formal challenges to their plans.

“There’s just no way to talk about this without talking about opposition from the local veterinary community. It’s just such a common feature of what happens, and in order to withstand that, the [shelter] board has to get it, and understand that some of this controversy is unavoidable,” Rosenthal says.

In Virginia Beach, Rosenthal says, a local veterinary association took the shelter to court, and then to the state legislature, where it lobbied successfully for a law to prevent the Virginia Beach SPCA from opening a spay/neuter and vaccination clinic. But the law was later invalidated, and the shelter reopened its practice. And a veterinary association took the Michigan Humane Society to tax court, saying that opening a hospital would be outside the shelter’s tax-exempt purpose. The challenge failed; the organization now has three hospitals.

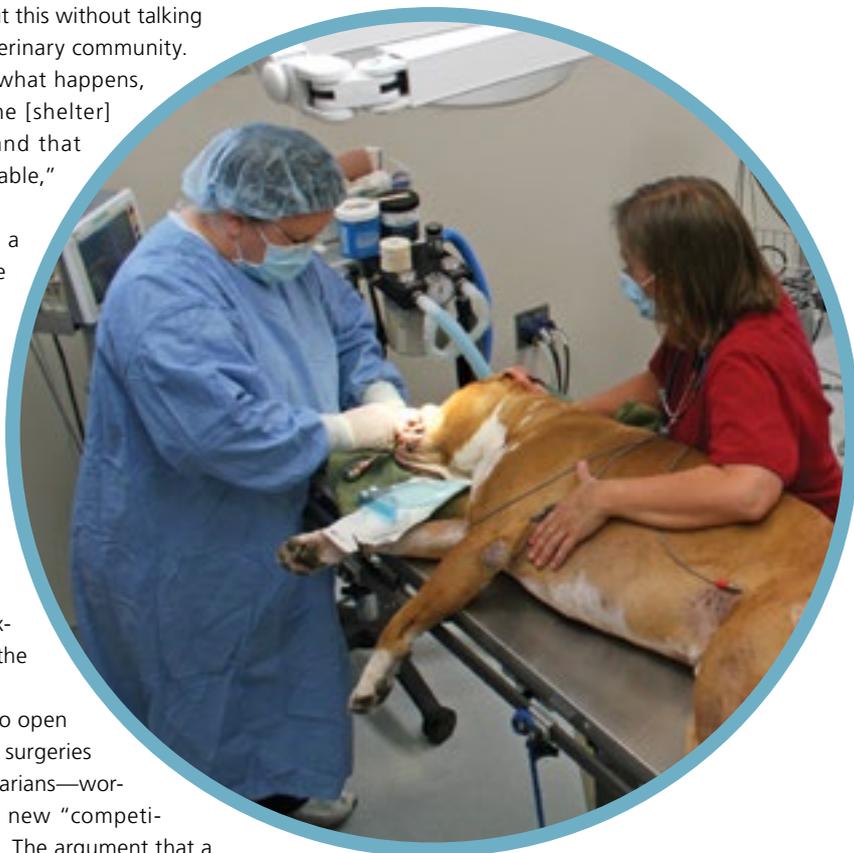
Any time a shelter makes plans to open a clinic to offer low-cost spay/neuter surgeries or vaccinations, at least some veterinarians—worried about losing customers to the new “competition”—will likely express disapproval. The argument that a nonprofit veterinary hospital will serve clients who otherwise couldn’t afford to pay for medical care doesn’t always convince veterinarians who have nearby private practices.

But as common as opposition is to shelters opening nonprofit hospitals, Rosenthal and Minor say, it isn’t monolithic. In Minor’s case, his shelter actually took more heat from veterinarians for his plans to drop all of its animal control contracts.

He made sure the Humane Society of Berks County was straight with local veterinarians, filling them in on the shelter’s project. “We laid some groundwork, where we spent time reaching out in every way, shape, and form possible to the veterinary community, seeking their help,” he says. That way, when the shelter decided to go ahead and open a hospital—as offers of limited support from veterinarians to perform spay/neuter surgeries and treat injured animals weren’t enough—it was no surprise to anyone.

No More Homeless Pets KC (NMHPKC) in Merriam, Kan., followed a similar strategy when it transitioned from its former low-cost, high-volume spay/neuter clinic to launch a full-service, nonprofit veterinary hospital in January.

The organization first sent out letters to local veterinarians, explaining its plan, the reasons for the expanded mission, and asking them to get involved. The results were mostly positive, according to Courtney Thomas, executive vice president of NMHPKC.



At the Idaho Humane Society clinic, veterinarian Mary Fowler, left, assisted by veterinary technician Wendy Guyer, examines a dog’s teeth.

HANNAH PARPART/IDAHO HUMANE SOCIETY

Most of the support from veterinarians in the community came from younger practitioners. “As shelter medicine starts to be part of the curriculum in vet schools now, they understand the tie-in between affordable veterinary care and sheltering, and how both of those are important pieces of the equation in a humane community,” Thomas says. Older veterinarians tended to be more resistant to the organization’s plan to expand its mission, viewing the move as a threat to their livelihood.

(On June 15, NMHPKC and Animal Haven, a private, nonprofit shelter in Merriam, formally announced the merger of the two organizations, forming Heartland SPCA. It has two facilities: Animal Haven’s facility is used for sheltering, and NMHPKC’s facility houses a 12,000-square-foot veterinary hospital. Thomas is now CEO/executive director of Heartland SPCA.)

Turning the Tide

A concern about competition—and being undercut on prices—isn’t always what drives opposition from private practices. Veterinarians in Rosenthal’s community were more concerned about his hospital’s standard of care. Some felt that the animals leaving his shelter, or animals that his veterinary staff had treated, weren’t getting adequate care.

Rosenthal took the criticism to heart, and addressed the concerns, ensuring that there is a staff member present to monitor anesthetic and take records during surgery; spending more money to properly evaluate shelter animals, after complaints about adopted cats having ear mites; and upgrading customer service.

“That’s one of the things I’ve tried really hard to do here at my organization, is just to raise that bar of care as high as we can make it,” he says. “We’re trying to achieve excellence in sheltering, provide the best care possible for the animals. The same thing has to apply to veterinary medicine. Otherwise, it becomes a detriment.”

If a shelter with a public clinic offers the worst care of all local practices, it will not only upset veterinarians and pet owners in the community, it will also create a weakness that both a shelter’s detractors and the general public will react to.

One step Rosenthal took was to earn accreditation from the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA), a status that only 15 percent of veterinary practices in the United States and Canada have achieved. His facility was evaluated on more than 900 standards, and AAHA officials perform ongoing evaluations and site inspections.

Achieving AAHA accreditation, Rosenthal says, has been great for his veterinary hospital, leading to improved teamwork, better organization, and getting more SOPs in place. It’s essentially had the effect of hiring a consultant to analyze the facility top to bottom.

Minor noticed a similar pattern in his community. While some veterinarians were uncomfortable with the idea of increased competition, more wanted assurance that the shelter’s hospital would actually have skilled veterinarians doing high-quality work.

Eventually, the tide of opinion turned in his favor, and veterinarians began to appreciate the role that the hospital plays in their community. “The ones who see that we’re doing good work, that we’re not undercutting their prices, and we’re providing a service to animals that they would *like* to help but they *can’t* help—then I think you start to see some positive returns,” Minor says.

“When you’re doing veterinary work, you are doing nothing but your mission. You’re helping animals, you’re helping people, you’re going after the underlying causes of animals entering animal shelters,” says Karel Minor. “It actually is a mission-based revenue stream, which has made a profound difference in our organization’s ability to do its work.”

Now, he could never imagine going back to the shelter’s previous model, operating without a nonprofit veterinary hospital. Staff members are now able to save sick or injured animals who they wouldn’t have had the time or resources to save in the past. Pets who would have been relinquished because their owners couldn’t afford their medical care can now be treated and sent home again, rather than entering the shelter.

And the feedback from the community has been great. Minor says the shelter’s fundraising has increased, and so has its operating income as a result. The hospital is seeing new clients, too. “People are adopting [from the shelter], and switching vets to come to us, because they recognize that not only do we have good, nice veterinarians who know what they’re doing, but it’s as good a deal as they’re going to get, and as good [a level of] service as they’re going to get elsewhere, and they’d rather give the profit—so to speak—to our mission.” **AS**



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Start Spreading the News

New York-based surrender prevention program can make it anywhere

BY JAMES HETTINGER

Why are you surrendering these animals? Is there anything we can do to help?



The rabbi had a problem with Othello.

Othello is one of his cats, who lives in the Brooklyn brownstone the rabbi shares with his family and three other neutered adopted cats who had started bullying Othello.

In response, Othello had begun to isolate himself from the others and act aloof toward his human family. He took to spraying around the home, and the family members lost patience as they found urine on their furniture, clothes, and walls. A medical exam and bloodwork revealed no medical problem. A veterinarian prescribed Prozac, but Othello, declining to join that nation, refused to take the pills.

At wit's end and in danger of getting rid of Othello, the man contacted Pets for Life NYC (PFLNYC), a New York City-based animal surrender prevention program that in 2009

became part of The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS).

PFLNYC's professional cat behaviorist, Beth Adelman, explained that Othello was clearly being victimized by the other cats. He wasn't using the litter boxes in the home because he felt threatened near them. She devised a plan of action for the family: Confine Othello in a room of his own with windows, a litter box, and food and water dishes. Visit him daily for games, petting, and gentle talking. Provide a synthetic calming scent. Apply an enzymatic cleaner on the areas where Othello had previously urinated.

Two weeks after implementing Adelman's suggestions, the family essentially had a new cat—one who used the litter box in his room and was happier and more social, confident, and relaxed around people. When he acciden-

tally got let out of his room, the new attitude stuck: Othello shed his outsider status and was accepted by his former tormentors. He now interacts with the other cats in a friendly manner, and thinks inside the litter box.

Thus the cat, unlike his Shakespearean namesake, avoided a sad ending. The rabbi told PFLNYC officials that if he had given up Othello, "I would have regretted this decision to the end of my days."

The Missing Piece

PFLNYC aims to short-circuit such regrets by getting people the advice and services they need before they surrender their pets. Increasing shelter adoptions and spay/neuter are important parts of ending euthanasia, but "another essential part of combating pet homelessness ... is to do surrender preven-

tion,” says Joyce Friedman, a coordinator for PFLNYC. “And we feel like that is something that definitely could be done more. It’s sort of the missing piece.”

Most of the problems that prompt people to consider surrendering pets—from litter box issues to a lack of money for pet food or veterinary care—are solvable, Friedman asserts. Many people thinking of giving up their pets are struggling financially, which leads them to think the solutions are too expensive. PFLNYC extends a helping hand by offering a variety of free or low-cost services.

The program connects eligible low-income clients to veterinarians who have agreed to offer care at a reduced cost. “That’s a big issue, obviously, because vet care is so expensive everywhere,” says PFLNYC coordinator Jenny Olsen. She recalls one client who was mulling getting rid of her cat because she couldn’t afford to treat an ear infection.



Do you need some advice for keeping your cat off the furniture?

Would you like to consult with one of our dog trainers or cat behavior specialists?

“Surrendering your animal for an ear infection ... it shouldn’t be that way.”

Affordable behavior training is available through the roughly 15 dog trainers and three cat behavior experts affiliated with PFLNYC. They’ll do free consultations over the phone, which is often all that’s needed to address a problem, particularly with cats, Olsen says. When dog trainers do home visits, they charge the client according to his ability to pay.

PFLNYC provides “a lot of crisis intervention,” Friedman says. Foster care or inexpensive boarding can be arranged for pet owners experiencing crises like homelessness, fires, floods, or extended hospital or rehab stays. The goal is to reunite people with their pets after the crisis has passed.

One case that Friedman and Olsen found particularly gratifying involved Daisy, a Brooklyn woman on disability whose home was damaged in a fire that displaced her and her pets: an elderly blind Chihuahua mix, four cats, and numerous lovebirds.

She found a neighbor to take the birds temporarily, but believed she had no other choice but to bring her cats and dog to a city shelter.

When she visited her animals in the shelter, Daisy was referred to PFLNYC, which stepped in and searched for foster homes for all five animals. One foster mom took in the four cats, and Daisy was able to take them back when she rented a room several boroughs away. The birds remained boarded with the neighbor, and Daisy took a long subway ride daily to care for them. Daisy’s rented room didn’t allow dogs, so her Chihuahua—Paco—stayed with several PFLNYC foster homes for a year.

Eventually, the city completed repairs to Daisy’s home, and she was reunited with her entire animal family. She keeps PFLNYC up-



dated with current pictures of her pets. To further show her gratitude to the program, Daisy adopted two older Chihuahuas who had lost their guardian due to illness.

PFLNYC’s other services include assistance with pet-related landlord-tenant disputes, free pet food and supplies, trap-neuter-release for free-roaming or feral cats, advice about shedding and allergy problems, referrals to low-cost spay/neuter providers and transport to sterilization surgeries, and guidance and support for all sorts of issues—like telling someone how to bottle-feed the newborn kitten they’ve just found.

The program has grown in the four-plus years since Friedman and Olsen met as volunteers who would talk to people in the lobby of an Animal Care and Control of New York City shelter in Brooklyn. Back then, Olsen recalls, the program was essentially run by its founder, who had one low-cost veterinarian and a hot line available on limited days and hours. Today, PFLNYC utilizes about 20 vets, and has two hot lines staffed by volunteers 12 hours a day, seven days a week—handling as many as 500 calls a month. The number of animals that PFLNYC has assisted (by providing services that either prevented surrenders or improved the animals’ care in their homes) grew from 2,100 in 2008 to 4,162 in 2010.

Trying This at Home

Now, Friedman and Olsen are looking to train shelters as well as individual animal welfare advocates and small nonprofits to develop surrender prevention programs in their communities. The idea appears to be striking a chord:



Do you need advice for resolving a pet-related dispute with your landlord?

Their presentation at this year's Animal Care Expo in May drew more than 200 people.

To figure out which services to offer at first, look at the most common reasons for surrenders at your shelter, Friedman advises. If clients' inability to afford veterinary care is a top reason, start recruiting local vets—you might start with those you know have worked with the shelter in the past. You can explain how providing low-cost services might help bring the veterinarians new clients while helping keep pets in their homes. To help sweeten the deal, mention that participating vets will be publicly thanked on the shelter's website or in its newsletter. (PFLNYC can supply drafts of informational and "thank-you-for-joining" letters.)

If behavior problems are driving relinquishments, you might focus first on recruiting a humane dog trainer or cat behaviorist. If you're already affiliated with one, see if she'd be interested in helping with surrender prevention. "Think about your current contacts, introduce them to this innovative-type program, and ask them for further professional trainer contacts," Friedman says. PFLNYC can help with this as well; the program offers free training over the phone to train your volunteers to give basic cat behavior advice to clients. PFLNYC trainers can also reach out to their professional contacts in your locale to talk up the program idea to them.

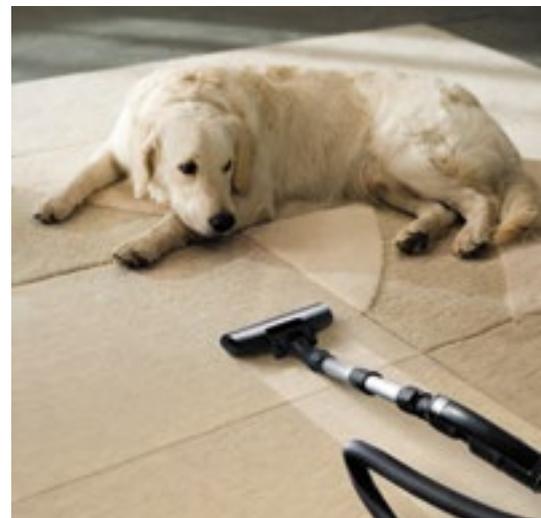
Many law firms do pro bono work and will welcome the opportunity to do it for animals and their guardians, Friedman and Olsen have found. PFLNYC can offer advice on how to recruit lawyers.

To grow your volunteer base, post recruitment fliers at the shelter and anywhere that animal-friendly people gather, including pet stores, vegetarian restaurants, and vets' offices. You can also get the word out through social media such as Facebook and Twitter, and email alerts to local animal advocacy lists.

The preventive nature of the program can help attract volunteers, Friedman notes. While many people see the value of fostering a shelter pet and finding him a new home, that process can seem like an endless cycle, she explains. Some volunteers will find it appealing to attack the roots of shelter overpopulation rather than its consequences. "To keep those animals out of the shelter to begin with is something that's very rewarding."

PFLNYC can guide you through the training of your volunteers and share its volunteer manual, which Olsen says started at five pages and has grown to 82.

A shelter volunteer coordinator is an ideal person for PFLNYC to coach, because similar programs will likely use volunteers. But Friedman and Olsen will mentor anyone who wants to start a program by providing guidance, sending them materials, hosting



Can we help you house-train your dog?

conference calls, and using their contacts with HSUS state directors to help recruit local volunteers.

You don't have to start big. You can make do without an office, but you'll need a flier and a hot line.

The flier (or large poster, if there's space!) can be posted near the shelter's surrender counter, asking people to call the program before they make the decision to surrender their pets. Fliers can also be posted at other shelters and rescue groups as well as supermarkets, Laundromats, doctors' offices, and social service agencies. Front-line shelter staff can also help by mentioning the availability of the program to people coming in to give up their animals.

Initially, you might not have the staff or volunteers to answer the phone live—but that's OK. All you need is one volunteer with a cell phone and a voicemail message telling callers they've reached the pet surrender prevention program, and their call will be returned on the same day. As you recruit more volunteers, calls can be forwarded so that designated volunteers pick up on certain days.

PFLNYC can provide samples of all the necessary materials, including fliers on specific pet issues such as allergies and affordable spay/neuter, applications and agreements for boarding and fostering, and intake forms to help volunteers track each case.

Taking the Show on the Road

Daniela vonArx of Minnesota welcomed the help. She founded and runs Foster My Pet, a nonprofit organization for pet owners in distress and on public assistance in the Twin Cities region.

A native of Switzerland who volunteered at shelters, vonArx says she has plenty of compassion for people who are facing the possibility of surrendering their pets. Working part time at a Twin Cities humane society, she saw people who felt they had to give up their pets, but didn't want to. The idea of breaking the human-animal bond because of temporary problems, problems that can be fixed, "is just something I never wanted to accept as being an answer," she says.



Bullied by his fellow cats and unwilling to use the litter box, Othello was on the verge of being surrendered. But some commonsense advice from a Pets for Life cat behaviorist helped turn him into a happy and well-socialized cat.



Paco, an elderly, blind Chihuahua mix from Brooklyn, spent a year in Pets for Life NYC foster homes after his owner's home was damaged by fire.

Seeing no surrender prevention help available locally, vonArx decided to start her own group—despite having no background in business. She began doing research and sought advice about insurance and legal matters. To file for tax-exempt status, she had to create a business plan, which raised a ton of questions. "I made phone calls to the whole world," she says, seeking advice from veterinarians, pet owners, rescues, and other animal welfare organizations.

In starting a program, you need to utilize more than your heart, she says. "You're going to have to use your head, too."

Many of the calls vonArx receives are from people needing services other than

foster care, such as advice on pet behavior, care, and aggression, and owners' disputes with landlords or neighbors. She tracks every call and follows up on many cases, spending hours on the phone and on the Internet. Her program is evolving into a miniature version of PFLNYC, and she is grateful that someone suggested she contact Olsen and Friedman.

She credits PFLNYC with helping her develop two planned additions to Foster My Pet's services: a helpline that will offer low-cost visits by behavior specialists, and an education program focusing on instructing pet owners in basic animal care and training.

Such services are part of the series of safety nets for animals that The HSUS hopes to create as it works to reduce euthanasia nationwide, says Adam Goldfarb, director of The HSUS's Pets at Risk Program. The first "net" focuses on giving new pet owners everything they need to properly care for their animals, he explains. But if a problem such as a behavioral issue arises and the animal is in danger of being surrendered, a Pets for Life-style program can step in to help the owner find another solution.

"We want to be there for an animal at every phase of their life and provide help for them one way or another," Goldfarb says.

While efforts to reduce euthanasia have traditionally focused on spay/neuter and adoption, Goldfarb notes, "We still need to, and we still can, prevent a lot of those animals from coming into the shelter in the first place." In an ideal future, he adds, shelters would be largely empty transitional facilities, reserved for animals who have experienced a terrible problem like the death of an owner, or who got lost but will soon return home.

Overall, Olsen and Friedman find their work extremely satisfying. "We get a lot of cases, and that can be overwhelming sometimes, but it is very rewarding," Olsen says. "We have a lot of success stories." **AS**

For more information about Pets for Life NYC, visit humanesociety.org/pflnyc. Email Jenny Olsen at joslen@humanesociety.org or Joyce Friedman at jfriedman@humanesociety.org.

Not Just Toolin' Around

Online assessment helps shelters combat infectious disease

It's always helpful to add another tool to your toolbox as you strive to make the animals in your shelter healthier, happier, and more adoptable. And if the tool is free and as close as your computer keyboard, well, so much the better.

In May, Iowa State University's College of Veterinary Medicine and its Center for Food Security and Public Health, supported by Maddie's Fund, launched the Maddie's Animal Shelter Infection Control Tool. The online resource (available at no charge at maddiesfund.org/shelvertool) enables shelters to answer questions about their facilities, protocols, and procedures to see how they contribute to infection control. The tool evaluates a shelter's practices, and offers a variety of resources to help it improve—including "best practice" information and links to articles, signs, and instructional videos.

You might get asked if your staff is trained to recognize common contagious diseases in dogs and cats, or if you immediately squeegee away standing water after disinfecting kennels. The questions cover six categories: animal health; animal husbandry; cleaning, disinfection, and sanitation; emergency management; facility environment; and training and public health. Shelters can also create online training for staff.

Believed to be the first resource of its kind, the shelter infection control tool has stirred excitement among the people managing it, who believe it will help address shelters' hunger for information and ultimately reduce the spread of infectious diseases. In the edited interview below, Iowa State assistant professor Christine Petersen (who unveiled the tool in May at Animal Care Expo) and associate professor Claudia Baldwin, co-directors of the Maddie's shelter medicine program at the university, discuss the new tool with *Animal Sheltering* associate editor James Hettinger.

Animal Sheltering: Why is the Maddie's Animal Shelter Infection Control Tool needed?

Claudia Baldwin: I have been working with shelters and students in shelters for about the last nine years. Being out there in the shelters, it becomes very clear that there's a lot that people are doing that they shouldn't be doing, or they're not doing it the best way possible. We have really focused on parasites and infectious disease in our research. And boy, making just a few changes can make a lot of difference. When I talk on the phone or when I go into a site, often times it's the sanitation/disinfection that's a problem, or the stress level—the facility itself, and how stressful it is for the animals. And by making a few changes, things can turn around. This gives us a lot of information on animal husbandry, which is essential.

Can you give us a thumbnail description of how it works?

Christine Petersen: The idea is that this is a tool that they can use to assess a shelter in terms of its operation and how that affects the way disease can be managed in the shelter at any time. So it is a comprehensive assessment, but it also certainly can help in times of trouble. The way I presented it was to look at how a shelter in the springtime—that's starting to see an influx of more dogs, and also just having more staff and volunteers—[might experience] an increased incidence of kennel cough. The assessment will flag areas in different topics—animal health, the right kinds of vaccinations, having specific disease descriptions and protocols, cleaning and disinfection and sanitation, general animal husbandry.

There are six different topics. You can either do them all at once, which will probably take about two and a half or three hours, or you can do them one at a time. The things that you're doing well, it will commend you for that. And the things that perhaps you should adapt somewhat, you'll get recom-



Iowa State University veterinary professors Christine Petersen, right, and Claudia Baldwin believe the Maddie's Animal Shelter Infection Control tool, which will enable shelters to assess themselves and improve their handling of infectious diseases.

[q&a]



A few changes in the way a shelter approaches such matters as vaccinations can make a world of difference and help increase live release rates.

recommendations on how to do that. It provides you with a list of resources and responses. It tells you, here are some things you might want to think about doing, here are websites, photographs of actual procedures, videos of procedures, handouts, and other things that can be used, both to inform people working in the shelter, but also to train them.

In my presentation, I talked about if you are seeing kennel cough, you probably want to look at what cleaning and disinfection is going on in your shelter, in order to make sure that you are getting rid of those pesky viruses and bacteria that can cause it. Often, implementing some basic vaccination protocols and disease recognition can make a difference in that situation.

Did you have a particular target audience in mind, like big shelters, small shelters, or just anybody and everybody?

Petersen: For larger shelters, most of the information will be familiar, but as a training tool it could be very handy, just because they often have such large staff and volunteer populations. For the smaller shelters, I think that's where it's really going to be important, because often they'll have a veterinarian in the community who's helping them part time, but that veterinarian often will not have [studied] companion animal population medicine. They may not know the things that for most shelter veterinarians are now old hat, like you have to vaccinate on intake.

Would you expect shelters to have a designated person to access the tool, or could anybody on the shelter staff use it?

Petersen: To actually perform the shelter assessment, you need to know a lot about the nuts and bolts of what the shelter has as their protocols and operational procedures. For that I would assume it would be the shelter manager or the person that's in charge of animal health. If the shelter's a smaller shelter but has a veterinarian, certainly the veterinarian might be a good person as well. So the log-in can be shared across two different people. Theoretically, the training tool then could be used by anyone.

The other thing that's completely optional, that people are often reticent about providing, is we do have a part about entering Asilomar Accords data. In order to see if this tool is actually helping anyone, we need to have before-and-after information on adoption numbers, and Asilomar numbers seem to be the most standard way to do that. We're not providing any of the information on a shelter basis to Maddie's. We are just going to break it down as we can,

once we get enough numbers in, so that we can perhaps look at different shelter sizes, and look at different regional areas, and see what kind of changes we see. But we are never going to report it out to a small enough region or type of shelter so that any particular shelter can be identified.

You sense there is a lot of pent-up demand for something like this?

Petersen: I do. Based on what Dr. Baldwin and I see, in talking to our colleagues at Cornell, the University of Florida, and [University of California] Davis, there are just constant requests about how to fix things that are often related to stress, overcrowding, and sanitation and disinfection. So this should allow most shelters to learn about those things without having to get one of us on the phone.

Will you be updating the tool's links to additional websites and resources?

Petersen: Absolutely, so we would love to get feedback if there are any areas that are unclear, if any link is broken, and we will be continually going on and making sure that everything is up to date as much as possible. It's



The new Maddie's Animal Shelter Infection Control tool enables shelters to evaluate their facilities and practices so that animals will be healthier and happier during their shelter stay.

Super Animal Care Solutions

the first tool of its kind, so we're hoping that it is really useful.

It's pretty exciting to finally be able to get something like this out for anybody in an animal shelter. And we believe that not only will it help animal shelters, but anybody who needs to house large numbers of dogs and cats in one place.

Do you have any plans to expand it beyond disease control and prevention?

Petersen: We do. Our content experts went through all of our questions and gave us feedback. And one of the pieces of feedback is, "You guys have great information here, but the one area that you don't talk about a lot is behavior management, and how behavior ties in to infection control." We do say that you need to do enrichment, and you need to think about overcrowding and stress, but we don't really talk about specific ways to assess behavior, and then how to change behavior—because we really think that that's a whole nother tool. So, it's in the works that we put together a behavior tool.

Looking down the road a few years, what is your hoped-for impact in the world of sheltering?

Petersen: Our hope is that basic concepts of hygiene, sanitation, disinfection, and population management would be widely dispersed across the whole sheltering community, so that it's not just the people that make it to Expo or make it to the Society of Animal Welfare Administrators conference that would hold this information, but all the local community shelters would be able to tap in to it, and then we really would start addressing behavioral problems and the slightly more complex issues, and basic infectious disease problems would be eradicated.

Baldwin: If we can eliminate the infections in our shelters, we can increase our live release rates, and that's the bottom line everywhere. **AS**

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Feeding kitties in the shelter

BY BRENDA GRIFFIN, D.V.M.

While shelters can't always feed their cats the equivalent of a five-star meal, providing proper nutrition is a key element of kitty care.

Nutrition has a profound impact on animal health. Not only is it essential for management of body weight and condition, good nutrition also supports immune function—a particularly important factor in a shelter setting. Keeping in mind that cats are true carnivores, it's no wonder that they possess much higher protein requirements than do dogs and humans. They also lack the ability to synthesize essential nutrients like taurine and vitamin A, which would have been present in their prey. This makes it crucial to feed cats only nutritionally complete, commercially prepared feline diets

specifically designed to meet their unique nutritional needs. And of course, clean fresh water should always be available.

That's just the beginning. Here's a guide to help you keep your cats well-fed, trim, and healthy.

Dinner in the Wild

The ancestors of domestic cats hunted to eat, typically feeding many times each day—whenever they captured a bug or other prey. This style of feeding behavior is still preferred by many domestic cats who like to nibble throughout the day and night, consuming many small meals.

That said, most cats are capable of adapting to either free-choice or meal feeding.

There are advantages and disadvantages to each approach.

Free-choice feeding is a method where food is always available, so the animal can eat as much as she wants whenever she chooses. Dry food should be used for this method of feeding, as canned products left at room temperature are prone to spoil.

The major advantage of free-choice feeding is that it is quick and easy: Caregivers simply need to ensure that fresh dry food is always available. Major disadvantages include the fact that animals who are not eating may not be spotted for several days, especially when cats are being fed in a group. Some animals may choose to continually overeat and become obese.





Cats should be weighed at intake and have their body condition scored. Weight measurements should be taken again at routine intervals throughout their stay.

Free-choice feeding is an excellent method for cats who require frequent food consumption. These include kittens up to 5-6 months of age and queens who are in late gestation or nursing. Unlike dogs, who are competitive eaters by nature, cats who are group housed may benefit from free-choice feeding, as it ensures that there will be ample time for all members to eat, provided that dominant members of the colony do not block the access of subordinate cats.

Feeding controlled-size portions of dry and/or canned food may be done as an alternative to or along with free-choice feeding. When used alone, a minimum of two meals should be fed each day. Meal feeding is ideal for any cat who requires controlled food intake, and it allows for monitoring of the cat's appetite. Meal feeding also has the benefit of enhancing caregiver-cat bonding and, when done on a regular daily schedule, provides a pleasant and predictable experience for cats.

Using a combination of free-choice plus once daily meal feeding takes advantage of the positive aspects of both methods, and works well for most cats in the shelter. Typically, dry food is available free-choice, and a small meal of canned food is offered once daily. This combination approach accommodates the normal feeding behavior of cats by allowing them to eat several smaller meals, and allows caregivers to monitor the cat's appetite for the canned food meal. As necessary for the individual cat, some may be fed additional meals of canned food to ensure adequate nutritional support.

Proper Dinnerware

Many cats prefer to eat from shallow dishes or plates, and you should take care to select dishes and bowls that are large enough to easily accommodate the cat's entire face and whiskers. A bowl that's too small can discourage the cat from eating or drinking. Paper plates are ideal for canned foods as

they are sanitary, inexpensive, easy to use, and disposable. In addition to offering food in the usual way, you can also try some methods to encourage "pseudopredatory activity"—this can be used as a source of enrichment for some cats. For example, dry cat food or treats can be hidden in commercially available food puzzle toys, or in cardboard boxes, tubes, or rolling toys with holes, so that the cat has to work to extract pieces of food. This method of feeding may be a very useful addition, especially for those cats housed for more than a couple of weeks.

Which Food Works Best?

Many shelter staff wonder whether to feed a regular commercial brand of cat food or a premium brand diet. Compared to regular commercial brands, premium diets typically are more consistent in their ingredients, have a higher calorie content, and some are more highly digestible, resulting in less fecal output. But such brands are usually more expensive than other commercially available feeds, and the cost may not be justifiable in a shelter setting. Whatever brand is selected, it should be one that has been through feeding trials to validate its nutritional adequacy. You can determine this by checking the label, which should state that the diet is adequate for the life stages indicated based on the Association of American Feed Control Officials (AAFCO) feeding trials.

Although some cats tolerate changes in food without apparent problems, others may experience loss of appetite and/or gastrointestinal upset. For this reason, it is generally best to provide the most consistent diet possible. Some pet food companies offer feeding programs, providing a consistent food for purchase at a special rate for shelters. However, some shelters rely heavily on donations of food. In these cases, shelters should try to request donations of certain brands, which will enable them to provide a consistent diet whenever possible. You can also mix donated foods with the shelter's usual feed to minimize problems caused by abrupt diet changes while taking advantage of donations.

Regardless of food type, proper storage—away from heat and humidity, espe-



A cat's appetite is closely related to his sense of smell, so the nasal congestion that occurs with URI will often result in loss of appetite. Offer these cats canned foods; they typically smell stronger than dry food and are easier to swallow.

cially for dry food—is essential to prevent contamination or spoilage. Foods should be used within their recommended expiration date. Containers for food and water should be kept clean and sanitary—washed periodically with soap and water as needed—and must be completely disinfected or discarded between individual cats or group enclosures. Plastic or metal containers are acceptable.

Both dry and canned products should be stored according to manufacturers' recommendations. Bagged foods can be kept in the original bag (roll the top of the bag down) and placed an airtight container. Partially used canned food should be tightly covered and refrigerated immediately, then used within two to three days of the date it was opened.

Eyeing Your Eaters

Proper nutrition is especially important during times of stress or illness, since malnutrition compromises immune function, making animals more prone to infectious disease. Both appetite and stool quality should be monitored daily, and abnormalities should be tracked. Normal stools should be well-formed and medium to dark brown. Adult cats typically defecate once daily, although healthy adults may defecate anywhere between twice a day and twice a week. Kittens tend to produce a larger volume of stool more frequently, which is often lighter in color and softer formed than that of adults. Simple scales can be used for

How Much Should We Feed?

There are formulas for calculating the daily energy requirements of cats based on their body weight, age, or life stage and activity level (see below). These formulas are meant to serve as guidelines and not absolutes; they are starting points that must be adjusted to suit the unique metabolic requirements of each individual to maintain a healthy body condition. The specific calorie content of various cat foods can usually be found via simple Internet searches. In general, the calorie content ranges from 350-500 kcal per cup for dry food and 120-190 kcal per 5.5-ounce can of wet food. As a rule of thumb, treats should compose no more than 10 percent of the animal's total daily intake.

Life stage and activity level Kilocalories required per day

Very active adult	80 kcal X body weight in kg
Moderately active adult	70 kcal X body weight in kg
Inactive adult	60 kcal X body weight in kg
Kitten 2-5 months of age	250 kcal X body weight in kg
Kitten 5-7 months of age	130 kcal X body weight in kg
Kitten 7-12 months of age	100 kcal X body weight in kg
Adult pregnancy	1.25-1.5 X adult maintenance last trimester
Adult lactation	2-3.5 X adult maintenance

From Linda P. Case's *The Cat: Its Behavior, Nutrition and Health*.

Calculation of Calorie Requirements for Weight Gain

Record baseline body weight and body condition score

- Resting energy requirement at present weight (RER) = $30 \times \text{body weight in kg} + 70$
 $30 \times (\text{PRESENT WEIGHT KG}) + 70 = (\text{RER}) \text{ kcal / day}$
- Daily energy requirements for weight gain (DER) = RER (DESIRED WEIGHT) X 1.3 (WEIGHT GAIN FACTOR)
 $30 \times (\text{DESIRED WEIGHT KG}) + 70 = \text{_____ kcal / day} \times 1.3 = \text{DER for weight gain}$
 - Start feeding at 50-100 percent RER at present weight, divided into 4 meals over the day.
 - Increase amount fed by approximately 25 percent each day to reach DER for weight gain.
 - If cat is doing well clinically after the initial 48 hours, feedings may be increased a little more rapidly.
 - Record body weight daily for the first week, then biweekly or weekly as indicated based on cat's progress.

From *Small Animal Clinical Nutrition*, 4th edition, 2002.



Make sure that any food you provide to cats comes in a container they can eat from—one that's not too deep or narrow for their faces. Cardboard trays and paper plates can work very well.

monitoring appetite (e.g., good, some, none) and fecal scoring charts are available (e.g., the Purina Fecal Scoring System chart; this is available by calling Purina or online at foothill-pethospital.com/fecalscoring.html).

In addition to appetite and stool quality, monitor body weight and condition. These elements, along with a healthy hair coat, are evidence of proper nutritional management. Body condition can be subjectively assessed via a process called "body condition scoring," which involves assessing fat stores and, to a lesser extent, muscle mass. Fat cover is evaluated over the ribs, down the top line, tail base, and along the ventral abdomen and inguinal (groin) areas. Body condition score charts have been established on scales of 1-9. Purina provides a score chart for this as well (purina.com/cat/weight-control/bodycondition.aspx).

Cats should be weighed at intake and have their body condition scored then and at routine intervals throughout their shelter stays. Ideally, body weight should be recorded at intake, and then weekly during the initial month of shelter care. After a month, it can be recorded once a month, or more often as indicated by the animal's condition. This is especially important for cats, since significant weight loss may be associated with stress or upper respiratory infection during the first few weeks of confinement.

On the other hand, in some cats housed long-term, excessive weight gain may occur. Therefore, protocols must be in place to identify and manage unhealthy trends in body weight, since both weight loss and gain can compromise health and well-being.

Sick, or Just Finicky?

Cats may lose their appetite or refuse to eat due to illness or stress. As a result, they risk the development of severe complications. Small kittens (especially those less than 4 months of age) can suffer from hypoglycemia (low blood sugar), resulting in weakness and even death. Hand-feeding (including syringe-feeding) young kittens can be life-saving, provided they swallow the food; in some cases, it may help to jump-start their appetites.

If kittens refuse food for more than a day, seek veterinary attention. If you have the resources and know-how, syringe- or tube-feeding may help, but if additional resources for focused care are not available, consider humane euthanasia to prevent needless suffering. If small kittens don't eat, you need to act fast, because they will go downhill quickly. Adult cats can go a few days without eating, but little kittens cannot.

While they can go longer without food than the youngsters, adult cats who do not eat at least half of their daily energy requirements for several days or more risk developing hepatic lipidosis (fatty liver), a life-threatening condition that causes liver failure and other metabolic problems that can lead to death without aggressive veterinary care. Rapid weight loss is a serious threat to health and welfare, and overweight cats are espe-

cially prone to developing hepatic lipidosis when they don't eat. When adult cats refuse to eat for more than three to five days, they should be examined by a veterinarian. In some cases, force-feeding via syringe can help; however, it is difficult to feed a sufficient amount to meet feline caloric requirements. For example, an average 9-pound cat will require approximately 240 calories per day for maintenance (considerably more than a typical 5.5-ounce can of cat food).

Stress can also induce anorexia, resulting in hepatic lipidosis and liver failure. This is not uncommon, especially when timid housecats are housed in the shelter. This underscores the critical importance of both stress management and weight monitoring.

Appetite and URI: The Connection

A cat's appetite is closely related to his sense of smell, so the nasal congestion that occurs with URI (coupled with a sore throat) will often result in loss of appetite.

To encourage their appetite, cats with signs of URI should be offered canned foods since they typically smell stronger than dry food and are easier to swallow. Selecting fishy smelling food and warming it slightly may help to stimulate the appetite of some cats. In addition, because canned foods are composed of approximately 80 percent water, they help promote normal hydration. It is usually easier to get sick cats to eat canned food than it is to get them to drink water.

Many shelters feed meat-based baby food to cats to stimulate their appetites, but only those foods that do not contain onion powder should be used. Onion powder is a common ingredient in some baby foods and can be toxic to cats, causing serious anemia.

To complicate matters, some cats (particularly adults) develop food aversions when they are ill. This occurs when they are continually offered foods and learn to associate the sight and smell of the food with feeling sick or nauseated. Consequently, they may refuse to eat even once they are feeling better. For this reason, when cats refuse to eat, it may be best to offer them food periodically, but not to leave it in their cage all the time. That said,



Hiding dry food or treats inside a toy—or even a plastic tub, with strategically placed holes—can alleviate boredom and provide cats with stimulation as they try to figure out how to get the tidbits out.

it's important to allow shy cats (who may not eat in front of caregivers) an opportunity to eat in privacy. But leaving food next to them when they are sick may lead to food aversion in some cases.

Too Fat or Too Thin

Cats who are severely obese pose unique nutritional challenges. Deciding whether or not to institute a weight-reduction plan for such cats during their stays requires careful consideration.

To prevent overeating, controlled meal feeding is required for weight reduction. To accomplish this, an obese cat would probably need to be individually housed for at least a portion of the day for individual feeding. But individual cat housing may be very confining, and obese cats may benefit more if they are housed in a colony-style enclosure where they will likely get more exercise. However, this is confounded by the fact that free-choice feeding is generally preferred for colonies. Some combination of confinement for fixed-portion meals and communal housing to encourage exercise is ideal. Sometimes, compatible obese cats can be co-housed to facilitate both exercise and diet restriction.

Reduced-calorie cat foods and formulas for calculating calorie requirements for weight loss are available, but it often takes several months for cats to achieve meaningful weight loss. In addition to the logistical challenges, some obese cats will refuse novel low-calorie food in the shelter—and rapid weight loss is dangerous for obese cats. Obesity does not necessarily hinder a cat's

chances for adoption. Curiously, the popular “fat cat” image may even draw attention to overweight cats! In these cases, weight-reduction plans may best be left for the new owner, who should be educated on the risks associated with obesity for cats (e.g., diabetes) and instructed to consult a veterinarian for a safe weight-reduction plan once the cat has acclimated to her new home.

On occasion, cats who've been victims of starvation may enter the shelter, malnourished and underweight, or even in emaciated body condition. These cats should be examined by a veterinarian, and careful consideration should be given to possible causes of weight loss and poor body condition. If the cat is bright, alert, and readily eats when offered food, an in-shelter feeding program designed for weight gain can be implemented (see box on page 49). Vaccination and parasite control should be performed as usual on entry. In addition, other appropriate documentation (for example, lab work and photographs) should be obtained if the cat is part of a court case. If weekly weight gain does not occur or other symptoms arise, the cat should be further evaluated by a veterinarian. **AS**

Resources

For more on raising kittens in a shelter setting, see “Kittens: Coming Now to a Shelter Near You” in the July-August 2010 *Animal Sheltering*, available at animalsheltering.org/kittenseason.

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Not Like Starting Over

Look at existing models to avoid reinventing your volunteer program from scratch

BY HILARY ANNE HAGER



This spring, after 10 years of managing volunteers in animal care environments, I joined The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) as director of the National Volunteer Center, a new initiative that aims to increase the consistent, professional, and high-level engagement of volunteers across the organization. It's an amazing opportunity to develop, implement, and nourish a volunteer program on a completely different scale, and it's very exciting to be here. I'll be leading the charge internally here at The HSUS, and also continuing our work with those of you managing volunteers in the animal protection field, to provide resources, support, and training as you work to increase the effectiveness of your own volunteer programs.

I've moved from managing a few hundred volunteers in one physical location to working with thousands of volunteers across the country. I'll be involved with everything from providing direct care to animals in our animal care centers to responding to rescue animals from natural and man-made disasters, gathering signatures for ballot initiatives, or helping to keep animals out of shelters by providing counselors and resources to pets at risk. It's quite a change. No longer surrounded by the sounds, smells, and sights of shelters, I'm instead immersed in a cubicle maze in what feels like the nerve center of animal protection. A lot of things feel different, not the least of which is dressing for an office setting instead of wearing clothes that allow me to be prepared for everything from cleaning to animal intake and cat wrangling.

What doesn't feel different is the approach I'm taking as I start this process. I can honestly say that I'm following all of my own advice on volunteer management, which I've shared in this column over the years. I've said it many times, and I'll say it again: Best practices are best practices, whether they're applied in a foster-based rescue group with 10 members, in animal shelters or wildlife rehabilitation centers with hundreds of volunteers, or environments like this, with thousands of volunteers taking countless actions to benefit the animals and make the world a more humane place.

The Takeaways

In this, my final Volunteer Management column for *Animal Sheltering*, I wanted to hit some of the most important concepts we've covered—the most important of which is to not reinvent the wheel. One of the best things about this field is how willing we are to share great ideas and what works. No one should ever feel like they have to come up with something from scratch; the odds are someone has tried what you have in mind, and can give you advice about how to proceed and increase your chances of success.

The first step when undertaking any transformation of a volunteer program is identifying the goals and vision: What does success look like, and how will you know when you get there? In the same way you might identify the mission and goals of an organization through strategic planning, it's useful to think broadly about volunteer engagement, and pull together a team of key players (staff, organizational leadership, current volunteers, past volunteers, and maybe even community members not currently affiliated with the group) to paint the picture of the successful volunteer program in your organization's future.

In previous columns, we've discussed the value of the *Volunteer Management Audit* by Susan J. Ellis (available for sale at Energize Inc.). This tool provides the opportunity for evaluation of your program against best practices and benchmarks of well-run programs so you can identify the gaps and target your efforts. Even after identifying where your program needs shoring up, however, you don't have to move forward alone and make things up as you go. Find organizations that are already doing what you want to do, and network like crazy to see what resources they have to share.

I spend a lot of time online, researching program ideas at shelters around the country. I've come across excellent examples of teen community service projects, cute T-shirt designs, models for court-ordered community service, and great samples of position descriptions for all kinds of interesting volunteer opportunities. When you keep looking for ideas and inspiration, you usually find it everywhere.

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[volunteer management]



Getting a Good Head Start

I'm a big fan of working smarter, not harder. Borrowing inspiration from other groups is a great example of this. The HSUS offers a wide range of resources for volunteer managers, so it's a great place to start.

Betsy McFarland, vice president of the Companion Animals section at The HSUS, literally wrote the book you need: *Volunteer Management for Animal Care Organizations*, available for sale at animalsheltering.org. With detailed descriptions of all the key elements of well-run programs, and sample materials from shelters and groups around the country, this provides a solid foundation for groups of any size and type.

You should also join the listserv for volunteer managers, also found on animalsheltering.org. This allows you to join the conversation of members around the country and around the world, where people share resources, ideas, and proven program strategies. You'll not only have access to the emails and inquiries sent out by other members, but also the rich archive of past exchanges on a variety of topics. You can search by topic and see all the comments about whatever you're hoping to learn, and get contact information for the people who can provide you more information.

Cat Belteau, volunteer coordinator at the Humane Society of Charlotte in Charlotte, N.C., recommends the listserv. "It's a great resource—people are sharing ideas, it's helpful for getting ideas, and allows you to network with people who have similar programs and who may have solutions for similar problems."

The HSUS and its educational affiliate, Humane Society University (HSU), also have a membership with Everyone Ready, an online staff training program for the management of volunteers. Our membership allows people in the animal protection field free access to this incredible resource, which offers both instructor-led and self-paced instruction on topics ranging from orientation, screening, and risk management to meaningful recognition, report writing, and recruiting. Everyone Ready will not only increase the professional knowledge of volunteer managers but give them

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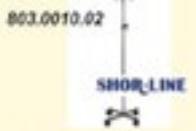
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[volunteer management]

the skills to train the staff and executives they work with to elevate the engagement of volunteers across their organizations.

Everyone Ready is a part of Energize Inc., a one-stop shop for all things related to volunteer management. Everyone Ready members have access to all of the resources Energize makes available, including a huge library of journal articles, a newsletter with current trends and relevant information, and upcoming trainings for managers of volunteers.

HSU offers a certificate program in volunteer management, which represents an excellent opportunity to learn from and with volunteer managers in the field of animal protection. There are five courses: Implementing a Successful Volunteer Program, Training Volunteers and Training Staff to work with Volunteers, Volunteer Recruitment and Screening, Managing Challenging Volunteers and Resolving Problems, and Tools and Techniques to Streamline Volunteer Programs. Each of these courses is instructor-led and lasts four weeks, and provides you with tips, tools, and strategies for creating and sustaining a highly effective corps of volunteers.

Volunteer Program Assessment

Perhaps one of the most powerful tools that The HSUS can offer comes out of our partnership with the Organizational Science department at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte (UNCC)—the Volunteer Program Assessment (VPA).

This assessment system includes a survey that is presented to coordinators of volunteers in organizations, who then can send the survey out to their volunteer group. The survey results are gathered, analyzed, and organized into a report that is presented to the coordinator, showing individual and organizational results, and comparisons to norms from other organizations.

Jonelle Lang, shelter manager of City of Rochester Animal Services in Rochester, N.Y.,

decided to do VPA last year. As a municipal shelter, the Rochester facility struggles with low staffing levels, doesn't have a full-time volunteer coordinator, and at the time, Lang felt her program was a mess. Since the shelter was unlikely to get the funding for a professional volunteer manager, she decided to use the assessment as a tool to turn things around, point her in the right direction, and provide the resources the shelter would need.



The VPA team had the time and resources that she didn't.

Her volunteers loved the opportunity to give feedback, and she had a 50 percent response rate among her volunteer group, which was a pleasant surprise. Later, after she'd received the results and had had a week to review them, she scheduled time with her VPA consultant to go over the results and really get a handle on what the numbers meant.

The next step was to hold a volunteer meeting to present the results and report back. "The volunteers really took to it," Lang says. "While there was nothing too surprising in the report, we got the tools and information we needed to move forward, and the recommendations from the VPA helped us figure out what we needed to do." While the team munched on the food they brought to share, they identified which major components of the program were the priority, and volunteers signed up for the areas that were most meaningful to them.

Since that time, a group of core volunteers has taken over running the program, managing recruiting, orientation, and training, and Jonelle only has to oversee it and handle problems or big questions as they arise. "I'd recommend the VPA to anyone," Jonelle says. "The volunteers felt involved, they felt heard, and they felt validated. This has been a huge time-saver for me, and it's been just great."

Belteau also did the VPA in her shelter, and she says it helped her identify key areas that she needed to address right away. She has seen an increase in volunteer retention and subsequent increases in financial giving, because her volunteers are happier with a program that was able to respond and reorganize to address their concerns.

The HSUS partners with UNCC to offer scholarships to groups that wish to initiate the VPA in their shelters. While the program is free, UNCC only takes on client organizations that apply for the scholarships, and follow the application process through The HSUS and the Society of Animal Welfare Administrators (SAWA). There's often a waiting list of groups that would like to participate. Moving forward, we hope to be able to offer this valuable service to even more groups in need of self-evaluation.

While this is my last column in these pages, I hope to continue to provide support on volunteer management issues when needed. Feel free to email me at hhager@humanesociety.org, and of course, you can read previous editions of the Volunteer Management column at animalsheltering.org. Check back to see what's happening with the development of the National Volunteer Center, and good luck changing the world. **AS**

Hilary Anne Hager is the director of the National Volunteer Center at The Humane Society of the United States.

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The Man Behind the Badge(s)

Florida man amasses huge collection of historic humane officer shields

BY JIM BAKER

Some of them look like sheriff's badges from an old John Wayne flick.

Others resemble the serious, glinting symbols of authority that big-city detectives flash in crime dramas on TV.

Still others bear a state seal, an engraved image of the U.S. Capitol, or words like "Special Police Agent" or "Special Officer."

Whether they're bright and gleaming or dulled and worn by age, the roughly 500 rare badges in Art Sinai's collection of animal control and humane officer badges are really quite beautiful—and they illustrate the rise of the animal welfare movement in the United States.

Sinai, 71, started collecting badges once worn by officers from private humane societies (such as Henry Bergh's ASPCA, founded in New York City in 1866) and state or city animal protection agencies 25 to 30 years ago, after encountering a few of them at a badge collector show.

"Somewhere way back, I got a badge ... that just says 'SPCA No. 1,' and it says, 'Employee D,' and that was my first humane badge. I've never figured out where it [originally] was from," says Sinai, who had a long career in law enforcement, government, and politics in several states and Washington, D.C., before retiring to Boynton, Fla., in 2002.

His initial interest in badges was sparked in 1962, while he was training as a special agent of the U.S. Department of the Treasury, and someone gave him a law enforcement badge from Suriname, a South American country. As he rose through the ranks of various agencies, word of his hobby spread among colleagues, and people started giving him more badges.

"I used to have close to 4,000 badges," Sinai says, a collection that included examples from federal, state, and city law enforcement

agencies. Ultimately, he dispersed that collection, and then the mysterious "SPCA No. 1" badge caught his eye. "I remember picking it up at some badge show for a couple of dollars," Sinai says. He recognized it as a humane law enforcement badge, "and I said, 'OK, that's interesting.'"

Sinai started seeing more such badges at shows in the New York area. "Most badge collectors had no interest in them, and I'd go, 'Wow, they protect animals. You know, that's really neat—that's history,'" Sinai says.

He recently purchased a badge of 1870s vintage from the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children, a separate organization Bergh founded in 1875. (It's also the first child protective agency in the world.) "I've been after one of those for over 25 years ... it cost me several thousand dollars," Sinai says.

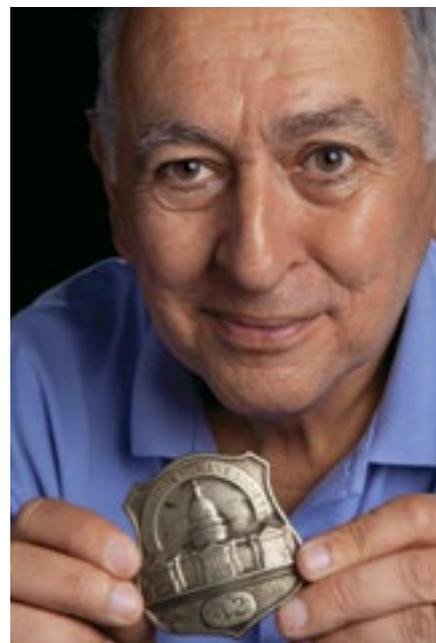
His oldest and, to him, most valuable badge is one from the ASPCA that dates to the late 1860s. "It's one of the biggest badges I've ever seen. It has the seal of the ASPCA in the middle, and on top of it, it just says 'Detective.'"

Another favorite is one from the Washington (D.C.) Humane Society (WHS), which he believes is from the 1870s. The silvery badge—big enough to be a belt buckle—has the raised image of the U.S. Capitol. He notes that WHS was chartered by Congress. "I don't know of any [humane] society like it."

Though he'd been quietly collecting the badges for decades, Sinai only unveiled a selection of them for the first time in May at Animal Care Expo in Orlando, Fla. He and his wife, Christina, had a simple booth in the exhibit hall, with two velvet-line glass cases filled with badges.



Art Sinai's collection of rare humane officer badges preserves an important part of the animal welfare movement's history in the United States.



Art Sinai displays an animal welfare officer's badge from the Washington (D.C.) Humane Society that dates from the 1870s. The badge bears the image of the U.S. Capitol; the humane society was chartered by Congress.

It was also the first time that Bernard Unti—senior policy adviser and special assistant to the CEO/president of The Humane Society of the United States—had met Sinai, or seen any of his collection. The two men had been in contact for about 20 years, as they are both part of a network of people interested in rare and unusual items from the early years of the humane movement in the United States.

"It's a fabulous accumulation of badges," Unti says. "I always imagined it would be excellent, but I was struck by the breadth, the comprehensive quality of it, and the beauty of certain individual badges, which are unique."

But it's more than their rarity that makes them special.

"It's very powerful to consider that these were badges carried and worn by men who—perhaps 120 [or] 130 years ago—were the ones carrying the [humane] cause forward and taking substantial risks, in some cases, to confront cruelty and perpetrators of cruelty," Unti says. **AS**

To learn more about Art Sinai's historic collection of humane law enforcement badges, email him at badges@earthlink.net.

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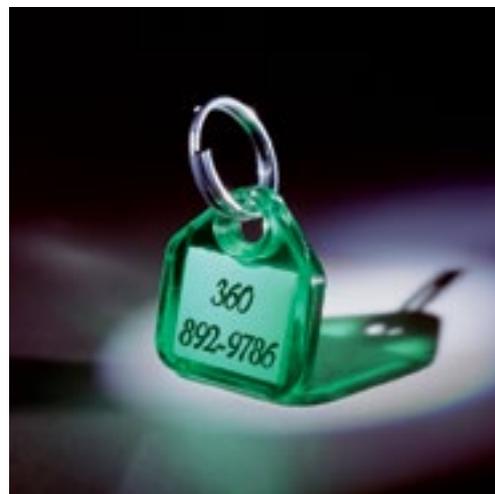
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