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# Shelter Sense™

■ **INSIDE:**

Avoiding Cruelty  
Within Shelters;  
Computer Program  
Suggests Diagnoses;  
Materials for You!

For the people  
who care about  
community  
animal control



## Your Volunteers Need Your Support!

by Debbie Reed

**T**he humane or animal-control organization in your community most likely relies on volunteers to handle some important tasks for which staff members don't have time. In a few shelters, volunteer assistance actually determines whether or not the organization best serves the animals and the community. Nevertheless, consider the last time management and staff reviewed your organization's volunteer program. It is a waste of time and money to enlist the aid of volunteers unless that program is well-organized, well-supervised, and includes volunteer recognition and feedback.

Men and women volunteer their services for several reasons. Some gain satisfaction from contributing their time and skills to a worthy cause such as animal welfare. Others want to gain new

*Continued on next page*



Staff members should support volunteers' efforts and share resources that will help them to do their jobs easily and correctly.

skills or experience, possibly in preparation for a new career. Generally, two types of volunteers come to animal-welfare organizations: those who are sincerely committed to animal welfare and those who simply like the idea of being around cute animals. Since shelter work requires an understanding and dedication to a total program of animal welfare, it is management's responsibility to clearly define the program during the volunteer recruiting and orientation stages and to recognize volunteers for carrying out that program's policies.

Organizations vary in size and budget, yet some are committed to using volunteers wisely. Many sponsor ongoing volunteer programs for children as well as adults. There are important chores, such as bathing dogs and brushing cats, for which teenagers can take responsibility. In the process, they can further shape their values about animals' needs and can pass that information to peers, parents, and others.

Other volunteers can socialize with and exercise the animals and, thereby, help them to enjoy a happier, healthier shelter stay. Responsible volunteers who have had time to observe the shelter routine often can suggest new ways to carry out some aspects of shelter programs and policies.

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## Cruelty Within Shelters Can Be Avoided

by Yuri Kusuda  
 and  
 Debbie Reed

Animal cruelty can occur in any animal shelter, when a shelter worker is unable to withstand job stress, for example, or is mentally unstable. Such incidents could be avoided if management would conduct careful, ongoing employee evaluations and encourage shelter workers to express anxiety and to promptly report unusual behavior by co-workers. Management ultimately is responsible for all activity that occurs in a shelter.

One local humane society was disrupted last December when a male shelter employee reportedly abused 11 cats that were delivered as strays to the shelter in pillow cases. The employee, who had been a worker and euthanasia technician at the shelter for approximately one year, reportedly kicked the full pillow cases and threw one or two of them, containing cats, several times against a wall. The incident was witnessed by a society investigator, who did not report it until three days later. The 11 cats were euthanized later that day.

When the cruelty finally was reported, the shelter's humane officer acted quickly and openly to secure a warrant for the man's arrest and to charge him with animal cruelty. Later that month, a judge sentenced the individual, who previously had no criminal record, to one year of accelerated rehabilitation. He must undergo psychiatric counseling, and if by Jan. 23, 1987, he commits no further violations, all charges will be dropped.

The director of the humane society said there was no previous indication the man had problems. He explained that the staff veterinarian/euthanasia supervisor is in charge of evaluating the shelter technicians on a daily basis and maintaining personnel files. The doctor also trains and certifies the euthanasia technicians.

The humane society's director of public relations said he recognizes the high stress associated with animal euthanasia and that the society is trying to relieve this stress on its workers by cutting down on the number of animals euthanized. Last year, the society reportedly euthanized approximately 28,000 animals, and approximately 300 of these came from local towns. The organization no longer will accept animals from several local towns, a matter of concern to some community members. Nevertheless, the society has not hired someone to replace the convicted employee; it is asking employees to handle the additional responsibilities and is working to prevent further problems within the shelter.

An Ohio man was arrested last December after he tied his Rottweiler to his garage and shot the animal twice at close range.

Kim J. Thompson, age 28, reportedly had worked as a dog warden for the city of Cleveland, Ohio, for nine years. He subsequently was convicted of animal cruelty and illegally discharging a firearm and was dismissed from his job. A neighbor who witnessed the shooting reportedly provided crucial testimony in this case.

Thompson was convicted after he tied Bruno, a 120-pound, three-year-old Rottweiler to his garage and shot him with a Colt .357 Magnum, first in the chest, then in the head. Thompson testified he was putting the dog out of its misery after it drank some

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bleach and ate some fiberglass furnace filters, according to a news report by James Neff in *The Plain Dealer* (Feb. 24, 1986), who attended the trial, and statements made during an interview with Susan L. Gundich, a member of the Animal Control Advisory Board of Cuyahoga County, Ohio, who also attended the trial. Both reported that one of the arresting officers, Alan Cielec, testified that Thompson said the dog had torn up furniture, that this was "the last straw," and that he had a right to shoot his dog. Testimony by a neighbor who witnessed the shooting further convinced Judge Ronald B. Adrine that the dog neither was sick from eating the wrong things nor misbehaving at the time it was shot.

Gundich and Neff said Thompson was found guilty of the charges and sentenced to five days in jail, with one year of probation. After serving the jail sentence, he returned immediately to the shelter to work but was suspended. Gundich said outraged citizens wrote to city officials to urge his dismissal. A registered letter, informing him of pending dismissal from his job, was sent to him on February 27. Although Thompson was given the right to request a hearing, he did not do so, and Gundich said he was officially dismissed in mid-March for "conduct unbecoming to a public service employee; neglect of duty; and absence without leave."

Gundich believes Thompson owns a 13-year-old German shepherd, and she fears he might attempt to adopt another animal. Concerned citizens are monitoring the situation in the hope of preventing further animal abuse.

According to a 1980 study by Charles E. Owens, Ed.D., associate professor of psychology at the University of Alabama, and William Hurt Smith, director of The HSUS Animal Control Academy in Tuscaloosa, Ala., the animal-control profession could be ranked as one of the most stressful in the United States as more research becomes available. Owens and Smith cited euthanasia plus interaction with an often hostile, insensitive public as the two most stressful situations that animal-control workers face. The study states that occupational stress may lead to the development of physical and mental problems. In an article, "Your 'ET.' Has Feelings, Too!!!" which appeared in *Community Animal Control* (July/August 1984), Smith explained how euthanasia technicians particularly can be susceptible to stress-related problems because of the nature of their work, the insensitivity of co-workers who don't perform euthanasia, and a public that cannot or will not acknowledge that it is responsible for animal euthanasia.

Abusive, irritable behavior towards shelter animals, co-workers, friends, and family could often be a sign of job stress. Whether co-worker or citizen, anyone who observes unusual behavior in a shelter worker should report it at once to the shelter supervisor. Ongoing, written personnel evaluations should be standard procedure. Most important, animal-welfare workers, particularly those who perform euthanasia, should be encouraged to vent openly their concerns about animals and their jobs. The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) recommends that euthanasia be performed in the presence of at least two people. Euthanasia technicians should be permitted to attend regular meetings that focus on the human and technical aspects of euthanizing animals. Finally, the public continually should be educated about the roles of a humane society and an animal shelter

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### Teen Board Boosts Local Humane Society



The Gayfers Teen Board sponsors charity events, such as this musical production, to benefit the local humane society.

as well as the need for responsible pet ownership to reduce animal euthanasia.

It is shelter management's responsibility to ensure that its facility provides constant, humane care for animals so that citizens will be confident about adopting or relinquishing animals. This responsibility includes paying careful attention to the mental and physical well-being of shelter employees. ●

The teen board of a local department store has held charity events for the local humane society for approximately eight years, and part of its success results from advance planning. Other organizations should begin now to approach local merchants and other businesses to sponsor events that will gain each publicity and needed funds.

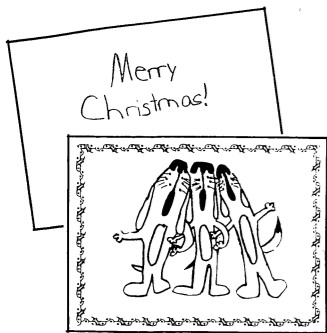
The Gayfers Teen Board of the Gayfers Department Store (Santa Rosa Mall, Mary Esther, FL 32569) sponsors contests and shows to help the Panhandle Animal Welfare Society (PAWS) (628 Lovejoy Road, Fort Walton Beach, FL 32548). According to Lyn Grubbs, Teen Board fashion director, the board sponsors the "Seventeen Show" for PAWS and the local Ronald McDonald House each August. Gayfers has a franchise with *Seventeen*, a magazine for teenaged girls, which advertises the benefit and the store in its August issue. The show highlights teen fall fashions for school, using an eight-scene, choreographed musical production. The store underwrites the show's expenses so that money from the sale of \$2 tickets can be divided by the teen board between the two charities. "We usually have standing room only for our show," said Grubbs, "and if the teen board had to pay for its expenses, we really would not make much money."

Publicity for the show includes approximately 40 minutes on a local radio talk show, including a representative from PAWS and the Ronald McDonald House. A local newspaper takes a publicity photograph before the show begins, and the teen board is featured on the August tray mats in five local McDonald's restaurants.

Another benefit that requires early planning is the Gayfers Teen Board Christmas card design contest and sale. The board contacts local elementary schools in the early fall to ask interested students to draw a design for the current year's Christmas card. A winning design is picked by early October. The card project brings PAWS and Gayfers additional publicity, while raising funds for PAWS. In 1983, the teen board paid \$100 to produce 500 cards and envelopes and made \$200 in sales. The teen board used its own funds to pay production expenses and gave all sales income to the humane society. In 1984, the board gave the shelter \$400. Last year it also gave the shelter \$400 from this project alone.

Cards are sold in the store's fashion office, at its accessory counter, by the PAWS auxiliary, by teen board members and their parents, at the winning designer's school, and by parents of the winner. "Over the past three years, we have had nearly 3,000 cards distributed across the nation at holiday time," said

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Grubbs. The artist, store, and shelter are mentioned on the back of the cards to show that they care about animals. The contest carries the message about caring for animals to grade school children. Grubbs said the board would like to reach the point where it can have 2,000 or 2,500 cards made in packs of 10, increasing its profits and charitable contributions. It hopes to either receive a discount or a donation from the print shop when the 1986 cards are printed.

"Because the teen board is backed by a retail store, we are able to keep and distribute much, if not all, of the money we make on these projects," said Grubbs. "Not all groups can do this unless they find a sponsor that wants the publicity such events bring." Sometimes the teen board holds a bake sale or a car wash, which allows them to set aside \$100 or so from the "Seventeen Show" to use as seed money for the board's various charity projects.

In a recent letter to Grubbs, Richard G. Sigman, PAWS president, wrote, "Thank you for your very generous donation of \$500. This donation was applied to the cost of purchasing resting pads for all of the dog runs. They cost \$40 each and will be with us for a long time as they are practically indestructable and bug proof. Your thoughtful contribution is being recognized by placing a brass name plaque on 13 of the pads, with the inscription 'Gayfers Teen Board.'...The animals love the pads. With the coming of winter, these will keep the animals off of the cold cement floor."

An animal-cruelty case could result in a strong sentence for the offender if well presented in court, as local police officers in North Carolina recently discovered.

Early last winter, following a trail of blood, Police Officer Tim Richardson and Sergeant Frank Watkins of Eden, N.C., discovered a pony being dragged behind a car driven by Billy Ray Carlisle Jr. The pony, tied to the trunk latch of the car, had planted its feet in an attempt not to move. Nevertheless, it was dragged over two miles before the officers saw it and recognized it as Smokey, who belonged to Eden resident Bobby Quesinberry. Quesinberry had left Smokey tethered at a local park to graze. The pony's fetlocks were worn to stumps, and pools of blood and bits of flesh were on the road. Carlisle was arrested and charged with misdemeanor larceny and animal cruelty. Quesinberry, at work at the time of the incident, was contacted and later reclaimed his horse.

Assistant District Attorney for Rockingham and Caswell Counties Doug Osborne said he would drop the larceny charge in exchange for a guilty plea to the animal-cruelty charge. Carlisle complied and, according to Osborne, was sentenced by Judge Robert R. Blackwell to the maximum penalty in North Carolina for animal cruelty: six months in prison and a \$500 fine. After serving one third of his prison term, Carlisle was released, but he cannot leave the area until his fine and lawyer's fees are paid.

Osborne said the two officers presented a very good case for animal cruelty in court. "Cruelty was the strongest point we could prosecute," he said. "This was not a situation where the guy didn't know any better. There is no way that man didn't know he was dragging the pony."

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### Advice on ways to inform and influence local officials

by Yuri Kusuda

Osborne offered some tips on having someone convicted of animal cruelty: "Show there was blatant and intended cruelty. Explain how the incident was not simply a matter of ignorance. Use photographs, especially clear, color photos. In addition, learn the views of your district attorney and local judges. Some law officials are more sympathetic to animal rights than others. You often can set your hearing date for when the judge you want is presiding. For example, in the Eden case, the officers couldn't have chosen a better judge. Before court, sit down with the district attorney and outline clearly what is being presented. A district attorney who believes the case is good could be very helpful, improving the chances for a strong sentence."

Louise Haskins, board member of the Rockingham County Humane Society (Route 5, Box 87, Reidsville, NC 28320) has been in touch with Quesinberry and reported that Smokey is doing fine. He no longer is undergoing veterinary care; however, his feet will never again be normal. ●

An educational seminar for one town's animal-control workers and officials was produced for little expense with the help of local animal experts.

Last year, the City of Fort Wayne Animal-Control Commission suggested to the city council that it establish training workshops and humane education seminars for its animal-control workers. As a result, Bill Fisher, manager of the Fort Wayne Department of Animal Control (2225 Dwenger Ave., Ft. Wayne, IN 46803), and Brenda Surack, assistant manager, organized a two-day workshop in November for employees and local animal-welfare personnel.

City council members were invited to attend, and two out of five animal-control commissioners attended. Local media covered the event. Surack invited local professionals to speak about management, animal care, law enforcement, and more. All speakers offered their services for free.

The workshop was scheduled for 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on a Saturday and Sunday. Saturday's program covered an array of topics, while Sunday's schedule focused on enforcement. Surack said nearly 50 people attended, with a different group of 25 each day. Among the Saturday sessions presented were "Surplus Animals: the Cause and the Solution," "Stress Management," and "Disease Recognition and Handling of Injured Animals." Sunday's sessions included "Police Image and Professionalism," "Search and Seizure," and "Ethical Standards of Law Enforcement."

At the end of each day, participants were asked to complete an evaluation form to rate each session from "fair" to "excellent," give general comments, comment on the length of time spent on each presentation, and make suggestions for future topics. Responses were overwhelmingly positive. Guest speaker Dorothy Frary, a member of the Fort Wayne Animal-Control Commission who is a strong advocate of humane education for both animal-control workers and the public, commended the shelter for its seminar. Surack and

*Continued on next page*

### Man Sentenced for Cruelty to Pony

Fisher plan to organize another workshop this year. Surack said, "The workshop on disease recognition and handling of injured animals drew the most enthusiastic response, so we may repeat it. However, with the wealth of topics out there, we should be able to organize a whole new program next time."

The one-day registration fee was \$10; \$15 for two days. After deducting expenses for coffee, doughnuts, VCR tapes, folders, paper, and pens, the department added \$125 to its education fund. Surack and Fisher suggested that other animal-control agencies considering holding a similar workshop in their area allow plenty of time to organize the seminar and be prepared for numerous details. In addition, Surack and Fisher suggested that a lunch break for participants be longer than one hour to allow time for traveling to and from a restaurant, meal time, and informal conversation. ●

### Cornell Program Helps Diagnose Animal Illnesses

by Debbie Reed

**A** Cornell University computer program that lists clinical signs and diseases of small and large animals can help veterinarians diagnose animal illnesses. Shelter workers also could benefit from this program when handling sick, stray animals before a veterinary exam.

CONSULTANT, the Diagnosis/Sign Search Package, was introduced outside of the University in 1985 by Maurice E. White, D.V.M.; John Lewkowicz; and Michael S. Powers, D.V.M., of the New York State College of Veterinary Medicine at Cornell. The database contains information about diagnosis of approximately 6,000 diseases of cattle, dogs, horses, cats, goats, sheep, and swine that is updated weekly. A description of each disease entered includes identification of affected species, a short free-form message describing important disease features, a brief list of current references describing the condition, and a list of the disease's clinical signs. The database also contains information about approximately 200 diseases that are exotic to the United States plus hundreds of poisonous plants and non-plant toxins. Information on treatment is *not* included.

According to Dr. White, who is associate professor of medicine at Cornell, a clinician who is faced with diagnostic problems must use clinical signs to develop a list of possible causes. The extensive knowledge required in general practice makes it hard for generalists to keep up with current information on rare conditions. CONSULTANT uses a coding scheme whereby each clinical sign is given a three-character alphanumeric code. After entering a password, the program user can ask for possible diagnoses for one or more signs or can retrieve information about a specific disease. The user enters the affected species and signs, then enters the displayed alphanumeric code for each sign. A list of sequentially numbered differential diagnoses for each sign is then shown. The user can see more information about a listed disease by entering its number.

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The strategy recommended is to use only one or a few major signs and scan the long but complete list of differential diagnoses given. Recognizing the presence of multiple disease has been a major problem in all computer-assisted diagnostic systems, according to Cornell University's literature on CONSULTANT. Accurate interpretation by a clinician of the problem and signs is crucial.

According to Mary Stauble, maintenance programmer for CONSULTANT, the program costs \$75 for a password and initial assistance in using it. There is also an access fee of \$12 per hour (clients currently must pay their own long-distance charges). "Most searches can be completed in five to 10 minutes," she said. The computer is on all the time except Sunday mornings. Clients are billed regularly by Cornell University. According to White, 10 veterinary institutions and 150 private practitioners currently use CONSULTANT.

The San Francisco SPCA (2500 16th St., San Francisco, CA 94103) recently began to use CONSULTANT in its animal hospital. According to Dr. John P. Aldridge, chief of staff of the medical care division, it has been most helpful to link up to the database in cases of unusual animal illness. He and five other staff members use the program sporadically. "The health-care field's body of knowledge doubles approximately every two years," said Aldridge. "We use journals and update services to keep up with new diagnoses. The Cornell University program allows us to double-check ourselves. It enlarges our awareness, sort of like having a consultant on staff. It merely suggests a diagnosis, but with it, I feel more confident." ●

*For further information, write John Lewkowicz, CONSULTANT, New York State College of Veterinary Medicine, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853.*



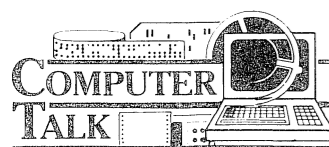
### New Book Discusses Strategies for Organizing Boards

**L**ocal humane societies can develop or maintain effective boards of directors with help from a newly revised book.

*The Nonprofit Board Book: Strategies For Organizational Success*, explains in simple terms the board role, how to organize a board, and the tasks and essential concerns of a board, using firsthand advice from 12 contributing authors. The 240-page, 8-1/2-inch by 11-inch soft-cover book is published by Independent Community Consultants of Arkansas and is designed for board members, managers, and staff. Using the information, organizations could solve board problems, improve board meetings, identify and recruit productive board members, and increase organizational effectiveness. The book includes exercises, meeting designs, worksheets, and self-assessment checklists.

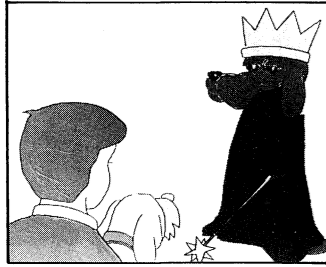
To order, send check or money order of \$24.50 per copy for up to nine copies. Ten or more copies cost \$19.50 each. Enclose \$1.50 per order for postage and handling. Address orders to Independent Community Consultants Inc., P.O. Box 1673, West Memphis, AR 72301. For more information, call (501) 735-8431.

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*A regular column about setting up and using a computer system*

**Video/Slide Programs  
Can Be Personalized**



The Good Woofers explain to Lucy, a dog, and her companion, Joey, the seriousness of this nation's pet overpopulation problem.

A New York SPCA recently produced three illustrated humane education programs, which can be purchased by other organizations in a video or slide format.

The SPCA serving Erie County (205 Ensminger Road, Tonawanda, NY 14150) has shown "The Good Woofers" and "This is a Cat" (versions I and II) to elementary school children at area schools. According to Anne Wadsworth, the SPCA's humane education consultant, most teachers who use "The Good Woofers" rate it "very good" or "excellent." That program is intended for use in larger school presentations. It also is shown in libraries and to Brownies, Cub Scouts, and groups of handicapped individuals who tour the SPCA shelter. "'This is a Cat' is more intense," said Wadsworth, "It is much more effective when shown in a classroom situation where it can be followed by a discussion."

"The Good Woofers," four minutes long, is "narrated" by a dog named Lucy, who compares the love and care she receives from her owners with the lack of care received by the stray dogs she encounters on a walk with Joey, her human companion. The Good Woofers, a magic mutt, appears suddenly to explain to Joey the problem of pet overpopulation. Joey learns that he can help dogs by having Lucy spayed. He also learns other proper pet-care tips. The story ends happily, with Joey's family agreeing to the spay/neuter surgery for Lucy. After children watch "The Good Woofers," a costumed Good Woofers unexpectedly appears on stage to talk further with the children in the audience about pet overpopulation, pet care, and the human/companion animal bond.

"This is a Cat" is available on two levels: kindergarten through grade two, and grades three to five (each level is seven minutes long). The story and illustrations basically are the same on each level, but level II is more explicit about certain topics. The story compares a happy and a sad cat by alternating images and descriptions of the lives of each to show the harsh existence of cats that are homeless or neglected. The program discusses pet overpopulation, proper pet care, and the human/companion bond.

Local humane organizations can purchase the video program or the individual slide programs and can personalize them, as long as the programs still note that they were produced by the SPCA serving Erie County, N.Y. To order, send check or money order, payable to the SPCA, to SPCA Video, c/o Anne Wadsworth, 14 Taft Place, Buffalo, NY 14214. A video tape of all three programs costs \$32 (a preview tape costs \$12). Each slide show includes numbered slides (no carousel) and a synchronized audio cassette. "The Good Woofers" slide show costs \$38; "This is a Cat," levels I and II, costs \$35 each level. Prices include postage and handling. Allow three to five weeks for delivery.

A Florida humane society developed two pet-related "warning" fliers with help from a local car dealer. The organization offers to send sample copies to others who plan summer pet-ownership campaigns.

The Humane Society of Tampa Bay produced a flier to warn pet owners about the dangers of leaving pets in cars during hot weather (Florida experiences near year-round hot temperatures) and another flier that warns about the dangers of transporting pets in

*Continued on next page*

**Summer "Warning"  
Fliers Available**

**THIS IS NO JOY RIDE!**

**The Humane Society of Tampa Bay**  
3607 North Armenia • Tampa, Florida 33607

*We speak for those who cannot speak for themselves*

The Humane Society of Tampa Bay is a non-profit organization dedicated to the welfare of animals. We receive no outside funding from local government or the United Way. **Our existence depends upon your donations.**

the backs of trucks. According to Shelley Delperdang, director of education for the society, the fliers are placed in new Ford car and truck packets given to owners who purchase Fords at Wilson Davis Ford Inc. of Plant City, a Tampa suburb. An extra supply is distributed at the humane society shelter and at various educational booths throughout the community.

"Hot Car - Hot Dog!" and "This is No Joy Ride" identify the humane society, ask for contributions, and, on the back, explain the dangers of handling pets in this manner. The fliers also credit Wilson Davis Ford Inc.

"We were very fortunate to meet Mr. Wilson Davis of Wilson Davis Ford Inc., who shares our concern for pets in hot cars and in the backs of trucks," said Delperdang. "He is most supportive of our society's work." Davis allowed the society to design the two fliers and write the text (helped in part, said Delperdang, by HSUS materials on these subjects). Davis contributed the money to typeset and print the fliers.

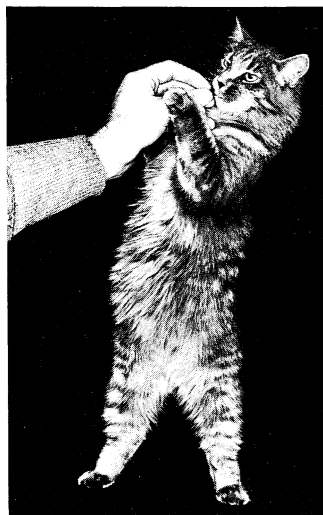
Organizations can order a sample of each flier by writing to Shelley A. Delperdang, Director of Education, The Humane Society of Tampa Bay, 3607 North Armenia, Tampa, FL 33607.

**WARNING**  
Leaving Your Pet  
In A Parked Car  
Can Be  
A Deadly Mistake

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS), as part of its annual "Hot Car" campaign, offers a free set of 500 fliers and five posters to local organizations to help them advertise the danger of leaving pets in cars during hot weather. One request per organization allowed. Send request in writing to "Hot Car," The HSUS, 2100 L St. N.W., Washington, DC 20037. Allow three to four weeks for delivery. (Do not use a post office box number.) ●

## "VOLUNTEERS"

Continued from page 2



Sheltered cats and dogs benefit from the socialization and exercise provided by attentive volunteers.

Volunteers must understand that working with sheltered animals also means working with the public. They must support the need for humane euthanasia of unwanted cats and dogs, and they must agree to carry out the policies of the shelter and to assist the staff where necessary. In turn, staff members must support volunteers and share resources that will help them do their jobs easily and correctly. Volunteer programs should be organized carefully so that staff members and volunteers understand who is responsible for the various duties in the shelter and so that conflict is minimized.

An effective volunteer program, therefore, requires commitment and cooperation among volunteers and staff members. Unhappy volunteers can be ineffective, causing a drain on staff time and precious resources. Some unhappy volunteers leave eventually.

For example, VOLUNTEER - The National Center (1111 N. 19th St., Suite 500, Arlington, VA 22209; (703) 276-0542) is a private, non-profit organization that serves individuals and organizations which are interested in volunteering. In the fall of 1983, the Gallup Organization conducted a national survey on the nature and scope of volunteering in the United States as a public service for VOLUNTEER. A comparison of the 1983 survey results and those of a 1981 survey shows that in 1981, four percent of Americans stopped volunteering because they had a problem with the organization or staff, or a bad experience. Nine percent lost interest, no longer enjoyed it, or became tired. One percent found they had nothing useful to do. The 1983 survey revealed that 28 percent of volunteers aged 25 to 29 spent one to three hours in an average week doing volunteer work, and 21 percent spent more than five hours. Seventy-seven percent of adult volunteers had a college degree. These figures reveal that able-bodied, intelligent men and women are willing to do volunteer work. Nevertheless, they need a sense of recognition and guidance if they are to remain committed to the task.

The Lakeland Animal Welfare Society Inc. (P.O. Box 469, Delavan, WI 53115) is working hard to recruit reliable volunteers. Last year, Carole Atwood was appointed volunteer coordinator for the small shelter and currently works with 15 or more volunteers, some of whom work more regularly than others. Atwood is trying to create and maintain an organized, interesting volunteer program.

Volunteers receive a policy handbook and a simple quarterly newsletter, *Volunteer Voice*. Future activities could include periodic meetings among volunteers to discuss concerns and ideas; mention of a "Volunteer of the Month" in the society's membership newsletter, *Humanely Speaking*; and a volunteer questionnaire that might be featured in the publication each month. Previously, she experimented with a pledge sheet that would allow volunteers to indicate the hours and days per month and the activities in which they would most like to work, such as grooming and exercising cats, or working with puppies as opposed to adult dogs. The pledge sheet wasn't successful. Atwood believes the attempt to pin down specific hours and dates made the volunteers feel pressured.

Not easily deterred, Atwood is trying a new tactic: This month, she telephoned each volunteer to remind him or her of the shelter's needs and to ask for only a one-day commitment to work

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There are many important tasks in the shelter that teenagers can handle.

during the following month. Atwood also sends a brief letter home with new pet adopters, asking them to consider volunteering a few hours of their time to help other sheltered animals. "Organizing volunteers can be really frustrating," she said. "Many come once and never return. Some don't realize the responsibility involved. The key is to find ways to show them how important it is for them to be there."

The volunteer handbook is simply written. It describes the purpose of the volunteer program, the need for euthanasia, the responsibilities involved with walking the sheltered dogs (such as using a poop scoop at appropriate times, petting and talking to the animals, properly returning the animals to their cages, and more), cleaning the kennels, avoiding animal escapes and what to do if one does, attending to the cats, the proper clothes to wear in the shelter, the value of volunteers' observations of shelter business, the need for communication among volunteers and staff members and for setting limits for what one volunteer can do in a given day. After new volunteers read the handbook, they take a short tour of the shelter, usually on an individual basis.

Volunteers are required to sign in on a clipboard when they arrive at the shelter and to indicate upon leaving which animals they worked with that day. The clipboard allows volunteers who work the following day to know immediately which animals were last handled so that they can turn their attention to those that weren't. There is another reason for signing the clipboard, said Atwood. "It is psychologically uplifting to be able to see names of other volunteers and to know that we are not alone in our efforts at the shelter. We like to know that Rusty or Fluffy got out yesterday, even if we could not be there ourselves to help!" At the end of each month, Atwood reviews the clipboard sheets and thanks the volunteers listed there, either with a telephone call or through a mention in the volunteer newsletter.

Lately, Atwood has asked volunteers to inquire upon arrival at the shelter whether or not any dogs or cats need baths or cats need brushing, in case the animals are being adopted that day. "It's fun for the volunteers," she said, "and a nice break from the routine of walking dogs."

The *Volunteer Voice* is a simple, one-page typewritten newsletter, which Atwood would like to publish monthly. Time permits only a quarterly release for now. The publication solicits or welcomes new volunteers, thanks the current ones for their help, reports shelter news, and asks for program ideas. The latest newsletter was reprinted in the March 1986 membership publication.

Recently, the shelter began a monthly bulletin-board display of the names of shelter animals and their adopters plus photographs of some of the adopted animals. Since acceptance of the need for euthanasia often has been difficult for volunteers initially -- the thought of euthanasia even discourages some from volunteering -- the bulletin board boosts morale by reminding everyone that some animals *do* find responsible homes. Atwood might feature individual volunteers on the bulletin board in the future.

Lately, Atwood has been working at the shelter almost daily after teaching at a nearby school for half days. While there, she has

Continued on next page



made certain that each cat and kitten is provided exercise and play time, and she walks most of the dogs outdoors for some exercise and socialization. She has stayed late many evenings to help with end-of-day chores. "There might be others who could use our new handbook," she said. "It is quite specific to our own local shelter, but perhaps some of the general ideas will help others write their own handbooks."

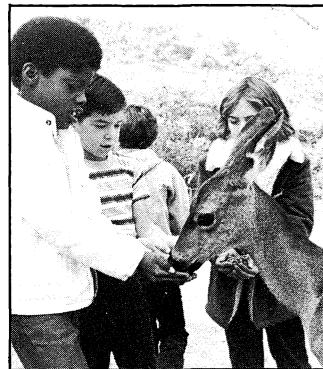
"The Importance of Staff Involvement in Volunteer Program Planning," an article by Myrna Silverman, Ph.D.; Betty Hepner, M.S.W.; Edmund Ricci, Ph.D.; and Rolland Wick, that appeared in the Summer 1984 *Voluntary Action Leadership*, suggested giving paid staff members an opportunity to design and implement a volunteer program that would satisfy their need to create and extend services beyond those currently provided. Doing so would promote a sense of staff loyalty to the volunteer program. By scheduling classes for staff members to sensitize them to and inform them of the value of volunteer assistance, by developing a manual for staff about the volunteer program, and by including in the hiring process a 30-minute session with the volunteer coordinator, staff members could better understand the purpose and potential of volunteer help within the organization. The article also stressed the importance of involving the administration in all decisions regarding program implementation. Although the article dealt specifically with an effort to develop a model volunteer program in four regional hospital centers, the information could be applied to animal-welfare organizations.

The concept of staff involvement in and support of volunteer programs might be foreign to organizations that traditionally consider it the volunteers' responsibility to develop and maintain commitment to the organizations' programs and to cooperate with staff members. These ideals could be achieved more easily when there is staff support and involvement in volunteer programs.

Debra Duel, administrative assistant to HSUS Vice President Phyllis Wright, has been a paid shelter worker and a shelter volunteer. When she volunteered to work at one humane society, she received little support from some staff members for her efforts.

"I was given no training after I arrived at the shelter," she said, "I never was introduced to the staff members so, of course, I introduced myself. I then was given a brief tour of the shelter by another volunteer!" Duel believes such lack of consideration for volunteers discourages some from continuing their work. "When people donate their time, they need staff support and encouragement," she said. "Volunteers also experience the depression and frustration that accompanies animal euthanasia or abuse. It's easy to get burned out and to never return." Fortunately, Duel's previous experience as a paid staff member in a Florida animal shelter, where she handled all adoptions, radio dispatches, publicity, and telephone calls, enabled her to offer some constructive advice to other volunteers, and she knew how to discuss pet care with potential cat and dog adopters.

The Marin Humane Society (171 Bel Marin Keys Blvd., Novato, CA 94947) is sponsoring two two-week summer sessions for volunteers



Young shelter volunteers can shape their values about animals and can pass that knowledge to others.

aged 12 to 15, and the program requires a commitment of time and energy not only by volunteers but by staff members as well!

July and August sessions will run from 10:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., Monday through Friday, with a dog wash held on the first Saturday of each session. In the morning, volunteers will work in the kennels, observe spay/neuter surgeries in the clinic (a voluntary activity), accompany the animal services officer in his or her vehicle, observe at the front receiving desk, and assist at the pet adoption desk. Afternoons will be spent on field trips, at lectures and demonstrations by various animal experts, discussing animal-welfare issues, watching films, and lots more. There is a \$50 charge for this program -- scholarships are available -- and the cooperation among youths and staff members should benefit the youngsters, staff members, and animals!

In its effort to recognize the contributions made by volunteers at local hospitals, the California Hospital Association (1023 12th St., Sacramento, CA 95805-1100) developed a "Recognition Kit" to be used to plan local National Volunteer Week activities, for example, which took place April 21 to 27. The kit contains a sample certificate of appreciation, an attractive button, a list of activities to help recognize volunteers during this time, and a catalog of volunteer recognition items. Some of these items -- notecards and envelopes, a tote bag, a cookbook created by volunteers, a desk note holder and pencil, volunteer theme balloons, and a colorful poster -- easily could brighten a volunteer's spirit despite a long day of cleaning shelter cages! Anyone can order the items listed in the catalog.

It's a small way of saying "thank you" to the many volunteers who help to make shelter life a little easier for the animals, the staff, and the public. ●

For a copy of the California Hospital Association Volunteer Recognition Catalog, write Volunteer Division, California Hospital Association, P.O. Box 1442, Sacramento, CA 95807-1442.



**Veterinarian** needed for county animal shelter. Duties include examination, inoculations, X-rays, spay/neuter and emergency surgeries, and maintenance of shelter animals. Complete medical suite. Staff consists of one veterinarian and three medical technicians. Excellent benefits. Send resume to Bergen County Animal Shelter, 100 United Lane, Teterboro, NJ 07608, Attn: R. Sam Ganguzza, Director, or telephone (201) 646-2710. ●

Only Shelter Sense subscribers may advertise. Ads must be submitted on your organization's letterhead no later than six weeks before month of issue. Please limit to 35 words (including address). Sorry, we cannot print "position wanted" ads.

## **Before Next Fall, Review Your Education Program!**

by Phyllis Wright



**Wright is vice president  
of Companion Animals  
for The HSUS**

**T**he school year soon will end, and students' thoughts will be on vacations and other fun. Nevertheless, if *your* organization is going to be ready next fall with an exciting, hard-hitting humane education program, management and humane educators must begin *now* to review last year's program to see what worked, what didn't, and what can be updated!

Has your organization received feedback from the community regarding humane education? No? Well then, now's the time to mail community residents a brief questionnaire to determine what they know about humane education, how they feel about your current program, and what they'd like to see it include (a *lack* of response will be an important indicator that your program needs to be strengthened!).

After you discover your community's attitude toward humane education, you should begin to develop new educational materials, such as booklets, displays, study projects, films, and videotapes. Did you know that a recent survey revealed that 80 percent of this nation's public schools have videocassette recorders for classroom use? VCRs are easy to operate, relatively low in cost, and can be used with several monitors to present a single show in several classrooms (talk to your area school administrators to see what type of equipment they use).

Now's the time to consider a community fund-raising appeal to help you purchase and produce those exciting, new materials. More than ever, it is important to help your community understand the need for responsible pet ownership, proper animal control, and respect for animals in general. The earlier you plan, the more organized and successful you'll be, and the fewer animals that will suffer. ●

We'd love to hear about innovative, successful humane education programs. Send details and background materials to Deborah Reed, Editor, *Shelter Sense*, The HSUS, 2100 L St. N.W., Washington, DC 20037. By sharing your successes, you can help others who teach children and adults about animals.

## **SHELTER SENSE**

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