October is American Humane's
ADOPT-A-DOG MONTH®

TRANSFER PROGRAMS pg. 3
PIT BULL ADOPTION pg. 19
DOG ENRICHMENT pg. 27

DOGS-ONLY ISSUE!
A NEW FACE, A NEW CHAPTER FOR AMERICAN HUMANE

As many of you know, I have dedicated my career, devoted my passion and lent my voice to the cause of animal welfare for more than 20 years. I am speaking to you now with a new voice: the voice of American Humane. As the new vice president of Animal Protection, I am both honored and excited to be speaking for this organization at this point in time.

My long and varied work in animal sheltering includes my most recent position as vice president at the San Francisco SPCA, as well as director at Sonoma County (Calif.) Animal Care & Control, executive director at the Cleveland Animal Protective League and the Larimer Humane Society in Fort Collins, Colo., and associate director at the Humane Society of Boulder Valley in Boulder, Colo. That background, and those experiences, have given me invaluable insight into the complex issues facing shelters and rescue groups each and every day. I speak your language, I hear your concerns and I know exactly where you’re coming from. I am one of you, and I intend to listen to you and to represent you in my work here on behalf of all animal welfare professionals.

I joined American Humane because I believe we have an important and unique role to play as a national animal welfare organization. No, we’re not the largest, and no, we’re not the most well-known. But we have a long, rich history of protecting animals, coupled with a current-day commitment to regain our relevance with our shelter and rescue constituents. It’s time for American Humane to reclaim its place as an authoritative, approachable, go-to resource that you can rely on when you have a problem, an idea or simply a need to talk with someone who understands and who cares.

With that goal in mind, our focus in the near future will include:

- Strengthening and expanding our operational and leadership training program
- Offering accessible shelter evaluations and strategic planning services
- Working to pass state legislation that will ban gas chambers and pound seizure
- Ensuring that shelter professionals receive the tools and knowledge to perform euthanasia by injection (EBI)
- Creating avenues for animal welfare professionals to share knowledge and resources among themselves, such as our new ShelterPro Clearinghouse at our new one-stop web address for animal welfare professionals, www.shelterpro.org.

This special Adopt-A-Dog Month® issue of Protecting Animals is filled with information, ideas and advice from your peers — and as such, it’s a stepping stone toward my vision of establishing American Humane as the premier knowledge- and resource-sharing organization in our industry.

I invite you to join me in this new beginning for American Humane. Send me an email at doriv@americanhumane.org or call me at (303) 925-9415. We’re listening.

Sincerely,

Dori Villalon
Vice President, Animal Protection
A FOREVER HOME IS JUST A ROAD TRIP AWAY
TRANSFER PROGRAMS ARE TRANSFORMING SHELTER-DOG ADOPTION ACROSS THE COUNTRY

Are you experiencing the “Goldilocks effect” when it comes to your dog population? If you’re in the South or Midwest, you may be lamenting, “Oh my, our shelter has too many dogs, and we can’t find homes for all of them!” If you’re in the North, you may be saying, “Oh my, our shelter doesn’t have enough dogs, and people are buying from pet stores and breeders instead of adopting from us!” Fortunately, more and more shelters are finding a solution that is “just right”: transfer programs.

Transfer programs are popping up all over the country. Dogs in overcrowded shelters in California, Missouri, Tennessee and Kentucky are making road trips to shelters in New England, Oregon, Colorado and Wisconsin where shelter-dog populations are low and demand is high.

Although spay/neuter is the most effective solution to pet overpopulation, only 65 percent of pet owners choose to spay or neuter their dogs, according to a 2009 PetSmart Charities survey. Until we can convince the other 35 percent to spay or neuter and more effectively stem the tide of dog overpopulation in certain geographic regions, transfer programs have proven to be the best method of saving the lives of more shelter dogs.

While moving dogs from one shelter to another is a relatively simple concept of supply and demand, the transport process itself can be far from simple in terms of costs, disease control and ensuring the safety of the animals. We asked seven shelters around the country to tell us about their successful transfer programs.

You’ll find three of them profiled here and the rest on our expanded shelter professionals website at this new address, www.shelterpro.org, where we’ve also posted the National Federation of Humane Societies’ “Best Practices for Companion Animal Transport Programs.”
Rescue Waggin’ Program Fast Facts

- More than 38,000 dog lives have been saved since 2004
- Nearly $600,000 in grant funding has been awarded to participating source shelters
- Operates in 24 states with four regional routes (East Coast, South Central, Midwest and Great Plains)
- 53 participating shelters (85 percent are source shelters)
- Four temperature-controlled Rescue Waggin’ vehicles, each capable of transporting 50 to 60 dogs in individual cages; vehicles have piped-in lullaby music and video cameras that allow the driver to view the animals during transport
- Sponsored by PEDIGREE® and operated by Humane Strategies

PetSmart Charities®
Rescue Waggin’® Program

Susana Della Maddalena, executive director, PetSmart Charities
www.petsmartcharities.org

PetSmart Charities Executive Director Susana Della Maddalena, who helped launch the Rescue Waggin’ program in 2004, says, “The tragedy of euthanasia is compounded when you consider that in many cases, wonderful homes for adoptable dogs and puppies who otherwise might be euthanized are only a day’s drive away. That’s just one of the reasons why we are so committed to our Rescue Waggin’ program. We also know that the capacity-building grants we provide to participating source shelters are making a positive difference and helping them develop long-term solutions to homeless-pet overpopulation in their communities.”

Mike Murphy, interim executive director of Humane Strategies — the nonprofit organization that operates the Rescue Waggin’ program — is responsible for maintaining a balance between source and destination shelters. Not surprisingly, there is currently an overabundance of source shelters and not enough destination shelters, although Murphy says that situation can change based on the needs of each region and the time of year. “In the Great Plains, if we had more source shelters, we could add some now. On the East Coast, destination shelters are typically smaller and can’t handle as many dogs, so we need to bring on larger destination shelters before we add any more source shelters. In the Midwest, we could use both.”

Murphy notes that public enthusiasm for Rescue Waggin’ program dogs can be beneficial to destination shelters. “Once a destination shelter joins the program and word gets out in the media that the Rescue Waggin’ can bring in highly adoptable family dogs and puppies, it increases foot traffic at

A puppy passenger arrives at the Humane Society of Boulder Valley
the shelter, and local dogs who may have been previously overlooked have a chance to be seen. It opens people’s eyes to all the animals there.”

In response to critics who say communities should be helping their own homeless animals first, Murphy is quick to point out that the Rescue Waggin’ program ensures no local dogs are displaced when a destination shelter joins the program. He adds, “I would also say that animal welfare is not a local issue, it’s a national issue. If some shelters can reach out and take the burden off of other shelters (those in the South especially), then it goes a long way to bettering the animal welfare community in general. By working together and using best practices, we can all achieve a lot of wonderful things and save a lot of lives — and that’s our goal.”

To view Rescue Waggin’ program guidelines and apply to become a source or destination shelter, visit www.humanestrategies.org.

Rescue Waggin’ Program Source Shelter:

Barren River Animal Welfare Association, Glasgow, Ky.

Margie Patton, director

www.glasgowanimalshelter.org

Barren River Animal Welfare Association (BRAWA) was one of the first 18 shelters in the Rescue Waggin’ program pilot project when it started in 2004. Since then, it has transferred out more than 2,500 dogs and puppies to destination shelters in Wisconsin and Michigan, including 318 so far in 2010. The Rescue Waggin’ vehicle visits BRAWA once or twice a month.

Director Margie Patton says that prior to becoming a source shelter for the program, only about 13 percent of their dogs and puppies got out of the shelter alive; that number is now over 70 percent. “The euthanasia rate for dogs has plummeted thanks to the Rescue Waggin’ program and the expansion of our shelter. We haven’t had to euthanize a healthy puppy this year at all, and that has been a boon.”

Patton acknowledges that readying dogs for transport is “kind of a process.” BRAWA is required to submit a list of available dogs with photos to the Rescue Waggin’ coordinator and destination shelter the week prior to transport. The destination shelter determines which animals it wants and has room for; BRAWA typically transfers puppies — including larger, older puppies that are most at risk — and as many adults as possible (program-wide, the transfer ratio is roughly 60 percent puppies and 40 percent adults). Rescue Waggin’ program guidelines allow most breeds and breed mixes, but not pit bulls since most shelters have enough of those locally. Program guidelines specify that every dog at the source shelter must be vaccinated on the day of intake,
and the dogs selected for transport must receive a health certificate and be bathed, dewormed, treated for fleas, vaccinated for rabies if 3 months or older, temperament tested if over 6 months old, and not food or dog aggressive. Dogs 6 months or older must also be heartworm tested in all regions except the Great Plains, where heartworm is relatively rare. If destination shelters choose to accept and treat heartworm-positive dogs, they are reimbursed $200 per dog by the program. (Source shelters are reimbursed for all medical requirements.)

Meeting these requirements presented challenges initially, admits Patton. “Having to vaccinate all dogs on intake was daunting, but then we saw that disease went down dramatically, and now we do it for every animal. When your disease rate declines, people are happier to come to your shelter.”

Patton is adamant that the additional work involved in being a source shelter is outweighed by the many benefits. “This program isn’t just about moving dogs and puppies; it’s also about helping shelters become better shelters. They have provided consultation on health issues, disease prevention, fundraising, board development and more — all free — and there are ongoing educational opportunities. We have also received grants from PetSmart Charities of anywhere from $9,000 to $20,000 each year, which have gone toward a new microscope, exam tables, kennel gates and cat condos.

Every level of care we provide has improved since joining the Rescue Waggin’ program.”

Asked what advice she would give to prospective Rescue Waggin’ program source shelters, Patton says, “If you’re not perfect and want to get better — if you have a willingness to work hard and change — it’s a wonderful, supportive program. I can’t say enough good things about them.”

To learn about another successful Rescue Waggin’ program source shelter — Cowley County Humane Society in Winfield, Kan. — visit www.shelterpro.org.

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On the way to a forever home (Humane Society of Boulder Valley)
Rescue Waggin’ Program Destination Shelter:
Humane Society of Boulder Valley, Boulder, Colo.
Lisa Pedersen, chief executive officer
www.boulderhumane.org

Having too few dogs available for adoption is a “problem” most shelters would love to have — but thanks to a strong adoption program and a community that is committed to spay/neuter and medical care for pets, it’s the situation facing the Humane Society of Boulder Valley (HSBV) in Boulder, Colo. It was also the impetus for HSBV to join the Rescue Waggin’ program as a destination shelter in 2006 (although it has been receiving dog and cat transfers from as many as 65 local shelter and rescue partners for the past decade).

The open-admission shelter transferred in 2,826 animals in 2009 (including 300 to 400 cats) — half of its annual intake. Of those, 1,700 were dogs from Utah, Kansas, New Mexico and southern Colorado in the Rescue Waggin’ program. HSBV has an 89 percent live-release rate and an average stay of just 4 to 6 days for dogs and 11 to 14 days for cats.

CEO Lisa Pedersen says that as the only destination shelter in the program’s Great Plains region, HSBV tries to say “yes” to every dog on a source shelter’s availability list. “We see what we already have and what they are offering, knowing that the goal of the Rescue Waggin’ program is to transfer highly adoptable animals who can move quickly through the process. Small breeds are very popular now, and since we don’t typically have them coming in from our community, it’s nice to get small dogs from the Rescue Waggin’ program.”

Rescue Waggin’ program dogs waste no time getting onto HSBV’s adoption floor since they’re evaluated and vaccinated at the source shelter, and spayed/neutered on their first day at HSBV. If an animal happens to exhibit behavioral issues, it is placed in the shelter’s behavior-modification program, which has special protocols for food guarding, object guarding, dog-dog reactivity, fear and separation anxiety.

Unexpected medical problems — such as outbreaks of parvo — happen occasionally, but Pedersen credits the cohort method with holding them to a minimum. “When transfers arrive, our vets examine them for disease right away, and they move as a group throughout the shelter. That has become harder now that we receive 20 to 40 dogs at a time, twice a week; kennel space can become a real bottleneck. But it helps keep them healthy, and shelter medicine is all about herd health.” (Destination shelters are required to report disease data within 10 days after each transfer so that PetSmart Charities can monitor source shelters’ disease protocol.)

So what’s in it for HSBV? According to Pedersen, “We get a great variety of animals in our community, and it’s cool that you can go to a dog park here in Boulder, and someone will say with a great deal of pride, ‘I got my dog from the Humane Society of Boulder Valley, and she came all the way from Kansas!’”

Handoff at the Humane Society of Boulder Valley
“PetSmart Charities also supports source shelters and helps them improve to the point where some graduate from the Rescue Waggin’ program,” she adds. “For instance, vaccination upon intake is one best practice that can dramatically change the health of animals and actually reduce staff workload overall, even though it might seem overwhelming at first. Source shelters that are willing to give it a try find out what a difference it makes.”

"YOU HAVE TO BE WILLING TO LAY OUT A PROTOCOL — AND THEN TO VARY IT"

To succeed as a destination shelter, Pedersen advises, “You need to have a team that is very adaptive. There is a lot of trial and error in this type of program, so you have to be willing to lay out a protocol — and then to vary it. Although PetSmart Charities gives you best practices, you have to make them work in your building.”

Pedersen notes that it’s vital to make your community aware when you are implementing the Rescue Waggin’ program and let people know how it benefits your community. To get buy-in, she offers these suggestions:

- Publicize the Rescue Waggin’ program as a great partnership with PetSmart Charities that saves lives and provides support for both your shelter and source shelters.
- Make it clear that your shelter has the staff, resources and expertise to handle additional animals.
- Share the amazing stories of the animals you receive on your website, in your newsletter and with local media.
- Emphasize that source shelters are doing the best they can, and that you can help take the pressure off them so they can do more with the resources they have.
- Remind people that it’s all about getting the right animal with the right person.

Second Chance Interagency Transfer Program

Oregon Humane Society, Portland, Ore.

Sandra Farnsworth, customer care manager
www.oregonhumane.org

In 2001, the Oregon Humane Society (OHS) established the Second Chance Interagency Transfer Program. The goal of the program is to help shelters in Oregon and southern Washington that have less space, fewer resources and fewer visitors place highly adoptable animals into homes. Currently, OHS works with more than 52 shelters and rescue groups.

The Second Chance program has been extremely successful, having saved more than 17,561 lives to date. In 2009, 10,113 animals were adopted from OHS, of which 2,711 were transfers. As of mid-July 2010, OHS had transferred in 2,199 animals, including 1,531 dogs, plus cats and rabbits. OHS does not take pit bulls, mastiffs or wolf hybrids, and there is a 30-pound weight limit for out-of-state transfers due to the number of large dogs already needing placement within Oregon.

DHLPP and Bordetella vaccines are required for all incoming dogs. The dogs transferred to OHS from within Oregon are not examined by a vet prior to transfer; however, they receive a full examination once at OHS. Dogs transferred from out of state must have a health certificate and rabies vaccination to cross state lines. The transporting shelter covers the cost of the initial vaccinations; OHS then gives a second vaccination upon arrival and covers the expense of microchipping and spay/neuter. Says Customer Care Manager Sandra Farnsworth, “We ask that all medical cases arrive with prior authorization, after which OHS assumes all treatment expenses. We also work with our transfer partners so they can do temperament tests prior to transfer and know what to look for when testing.”

OHS transfers in dogs from California and three or four Oregon shelters on a weekly basis. The longest transport is a 14-hour trip from Los Angeles. The LA driver meets the OHS driver halfway, at which point all the dogs are removed from their crates, given a water and potty break, and then loaded into new crates in the shelter’s vehicle.

When groups of five to 10 dogs arrive, they are processed through admission like all dogs arriving at OHS. For larger transfers of 25 to 45 dogs, a team of well-trained volunteers led by an OHS staff member sets up stations for the new arrivals. One group is dog runners who remove the dogs from the crates, weigh them, bring them to the picture-taking area and then take them for vaccinations and collaring. This group also makes sure
all information is entered into the computer. Once the dogs are in their kennels, a group of senior veterinary students from Oregon State University does an initial health check and red-flags anything that needs immediate evaluation. OHS quarantines animals only if they are showing signs of illness or are under 6 months old and haven’t had a vaccination 10 days prior to transport. Transfer protocols are regularly evaluated to ensure the health of all animals while still trying to maximize the number of lives saved. OHS does regular trainings for its transfer partners to make sure everyone is on board with its transfer policies.

When the program first started, the shelter issued press releases when large transfers occurred, but now they have become routine. Today, Farnsworth says Second Chance program stories are primarily used in communications with donors. “They like the fact that we are reaching out to shelters with fewer resources than we have and that OHS is helping with the pet overpopulation problem. Our community, clients and donors appreciate that OHS has opened its doors to animals facing euthanasia at other shelters. Once they understand the overpopulation problem, they are happy to support our programs by adopting or donating to help us continue our mission of saving lives.”

*To read about the independent transfer program at the Animal Rescue League of Western Pennsylvania, visit [www.shelterpro.org](http://www.shelterpro.org).*
REGISTER NOW FOR AMERICAN HUMANE’S NEW WEBINAR TRAINING:

Safety and OSHA Compliance for Animal Shelters

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 27, 2010

3:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. EDT (12:00 p.m. to 2:30 p.m. PDT)
120-minute presentation plus 30-minute Q&A period

Registration fee: $25 ($20 for American Humane professional members). For an additional $15, webinar registrants can purchase American Humane’s Complete OSHA and Safety Guide for Animal Shelters on CD (regular price $25) at the time of registration.

Instructor: Dena J. Fitzgerald, CAWA, is American Humane’s shelter support program manager. She is a Certified Animal Welfare Administrator (CAWA) with more than 21 years of professional experience in animal care and welfare, and the author of American Humane’s Complete OSHA and Safety Guide for Animal Shelters.

Most animal shelters struggle to achieve OSHA compliance and to understand OSHA regulations as they apply to their agency. Many animal shelters have significant OSHA violations, putting their employees at greater risk for work-related illnesses and injuries. Facilities that are out of compliance are also at risk for being cited and fined should they be inspected by OSHA. This webinar will provide a clear understanding of OSHA’s regulations as they apply to animal care and control agencies, and enable participants to implement these required safety measures in their own shelters. Topics include required OSHA postings, staff training, hazard communication plan, material safety data sheets (MSDS), work-related injuries and illnesses, personal protective equipment (PPE), secondary labels, noise hazards, fire prevention plan, animal handling, zoonotic diseases and more.


For more information, call (720) 274-0027 or email APStraining@americanhumane.org.
Has the flu gotten to you? If not, it’s only a matter of time. According to the Animal Health Diagnostic Center at Cornell University, canine influenza virus (CIV) has been confirmed in 34 states and the District of Columbia. Outbreaks in shelters are becoming increasingly common and, because most dogs are naïve to the virus, virtually all dogs will become infected upon their initial exposure.

American Humane’s shelter support staff consulted several sources to bring you the latest facts on CIV infection and diagnosis. We also interviewed a representative from Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health, makers of the Nobivac® Canine Flu H3N8 vaccine, along with three shelter professionals who are currently using the new CIV vaccine in their shelters.

The following information was obtained from UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program (www.sheltermedicine.org) unless otherwise noted.

**History**

CIV is a highly contagious influenza type A virus — known as H3N8 — that is believed to have mutated from an equine influenza virus at a racetrack in Florida. The disease was first identified in greyhounds after a severe outbreak occurred at several racetracks in 2004.

**Transmission**

CIV is highly contagious; 80 to 90 percent of dogs exposed to the virus will develop clinical signs. Most dogs will exhibit only mild upper-respiratory symptoms, but about 20 percent will develop the more severe form of the disease characterized by a high fever and pneumonia. Exposed dogs that do not develop clinical signs can still transmit the virus. CIV is spread via aerosolized droplets produced during coughing and sneezing, direct contact with respiratory secretions, and contaminated fomites (inanimate objects that can transmit infectious agents). The virus can live for several hours in the environment.

The incubation period for CIV is two to four days. Because peak viral shedding also occurs during the first two to four days after infection, dogs are at their most contagious before they ever show clinical signs. Infected dogs can continue to shed the virus for up to 10 days. As with any contagious disease outbreak, the early recognition and isolation of infected or potentially infected animals is essential in preventing further transmission.

**Clinical Signs**

Most cases of CIV present as mild upper-respiratory infections (URIs). Symptoms include coughing, nasal discharge, low-grade fever, lethargy and anorexia. In some cases, the cough may persist for several weeks. About 20 percent of CIV cases will develop more severe clinical signs, including high fever and pneumonia. These severe cases are most often due to a secondary bacterial infection. Mortality rates from pneumonia average 5 to 8 percent, but the overall mortality rate for CIV infection is less than 1 percent.
Treatment

There is no effective treatment for the canine influenza virus itself. Antitussives are generally ineffective in suppressing coughing and are actually contraindicated when a productive cough is present. Most mild cases should simply be allowed to run their course without administration of antibiotics or other drugs. However, if there are signs of a secondary bacterial infection — such as purulent nasal discharge, productive cough or pneumonia — then antibiotic therapy is indicated. In addition to antibiotics, pneumonia cases also generally require hospitalization and treatment with IV fluids, coppage, nebulization and/or supplemental oxygen.

Diagnosis

Diagnosis of CIV is particularly troublesome because the symptoms of the disease are identical to many other common canine respiratory pathogens, including Bordetella bronchiseptica, parainfluenza, adenovirus and canine herpes virus. A definitive diagnosis of CIV cannot be made based solely on the clinical signs; it is possibly only through laboratory testing. According to Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health, there are currently four types of testing available:

1. Virus antigen (ELISA) immunoassays
   - Obtain nasal or pharyngeal swabs
   - Should be performed within four days of the initial onset of clinical signs
   - False negatives are possible
2. Serology
   - Obtain blood sample
   - Should be performed one week after the onset of clinical signs and then repeated two to three weeks later
   - A four-times increase in the titer indicates a recent CIV infection, while a single positive sample indicates past exposure at an unknown time in a dog unvaccinated for CIV
3. Virus nucleic acid detection by polymerase chain reaction (PCR)
   - Obtain nasal swabs or caudal pharyngeal swabs
   - Most reliable for testing exposed or potentially exposed dogs before the onset of clinical signs
   - False negatives are common if performed after the onset of clinical signs
4. Virus isolation
   - Not practical for routine testing
   - Useful in epidemiologic investigations

Vaccination

Of course, nothing can take the place of good disease-control and sanitation practices in a shelter environment, but these practices are most effective when combined with appropriate vaccination protocols at intake. Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health introduced its Nobivac Canine Flu H3N8 vaccine with conditional licensing by the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) in May 2009. The vaccine was granted full licensure by the USDA in June 2010. The vaccine requires two doses spaced two weeks apart.

The cost of the vaccine — generally in the range of $5.00 to $6.00 per dose — may be prohibitive for some shelters. However, American Humane spoke to three shelter pros who believe the benefits of the vaccine are well worth the cost.

Susan Malcolm, executive director of the Lexington Humane Society in Kentucky, has been using the vaccine for all incoming dogs at her shelter since May 2010. The Lexington Humane Society adopts out about 2,900 dogs per year. They had seen one confirmed case of canine flu last winter, and several other cases had been diagnosed in their community. Malcolm says, “We are thrilled with the results of the vaccine. Since we started using it, we have not had any cases of flu, and we find that dogs who do contract upper-respiratory infections recover more quickly.” Malcolm says that before deciding to implement routine use of the flu vaccine, she did a cost-analysis study and decided the cost of prevention was well worthwhile. “You cannot put a price tag on adopting out healthy animals. How you present animals to your community is so important, and how our staff feels about the level of care we provide is also very important to us.”

Nick Fisher, CEO of the Humane Society of the South Platte Valley in Littleton, Colo., has been using the vaccine on all dogs at intake since his new facility opened in December 2009. Colorado is one of nine states where CIV is considered to be enzootic (affecting animals in a certain area, climate or season). The Humane Society of the South Platte Valley takes in approximately 1,500 dogs per year, including many that are transferred in from local municipal shelters. Fisher built the cost of the vaccine into the shelter’s operating budget from day one and says the decision to use it was a no-brainer: “If I can prevent a serious disease through vaccination, why wouldn’t I?” The shelter has not had a case of CIV since it opened, and Fisher believes the vaccine has also had a “huge impact” on cases of canine URI in general. “It
has reduced the severity and duration of URIs in our facility, even in dogs that are already showing signs of URI when they are transferred in from other shelters. In my old facility, I was used to seeing bad coughs that lasted three or four weeks, and here we see much milder URIs that resolve within about 10 days.”

Kim Pope-Zukowski, shelter supervisor for the City of Aurora Animal Care Division in Colorado, has been using the vaccine at her shelter for almost six months. Aurora’s shelter takes in approximately 2,500 dogs per year. The shelter experienced a severe outbreak of CIV in 2006, when more than 200 dogs contracted the disease. The shelter had to be closed down for two weeks to stop the spread of the virus. About 40 dogs died during the outbreak, and the rest were treated and recovered. Although that incident was the only large-scale flu outbreak at the shelter, CIV has remained prevalent in the community, and it is a constant, looming threat to the shelter’s dog population. Since implementing routine use of the vaccine at intake, the shelter has not had any confirmed cases of CIV. Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health donated an initial 1,300 doses of the vaccine to the shelter, and Pope-Zukowski hopes to secure funding from the City of Aurora to continue the vaccine when that supply runs out. “After losing that many dogs in the 2006 outbreak, I firmly believe anything that can prevent that from happening again is a worthwhile expenditure.”

Resources

American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA) Interim Guidelines for Control of Canine Influenza in Dogs www.avma.org/public_health/influenza/canine_guidelines.asp

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC): Key Facts About Canine Influenza in Dogs www.cdc.gov/flu/canine/

Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine www.vet.cornell.edu/news/dogflu/

Intervet/Schering-Plough Animal Health www.doginfluenza.com

UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program www.sheltermedicine.org


Hot off the Press!

On July 8, 2010, the University of Wisconsin issued a press release stating that research by Dr. Ron Schultz, chair of the Department of Pathobiological Sciences at the University of Wisconsin-Madison School of Veterinary Medicine, has shown that the canine influenza vaccine is effective not only in reducing the length, severity and spread of CIV, but also is protecting against secondary infections. You can read the full press release at www.news.wisc.edu/releases/16109.

Check out the improved and expanded content at our new, one-stop web address for shelter professionals: www.shelterpro.org

http://www.shelterpro.org
Dog adoption room at the Animal Rescue League of Iowa
(Design by Animal Arts)
Larry Gates is passionate about designing shelters that keep animals healthier and happier, with the ultimate goal of “getting critters out the door faster.” A partner and shelter design consultant with architecture firm Animal Arts, Gates works with shelters throughout the U.S. and abroad to do just that. He spoke with American Humane at the firm’s dog-friendly, Boulder, Colo., headquarters about best practices in housing for dogs.

At Animal Arts, the most significant overall development we’re seeing in shelter housing is the change from an engineering approach — where you take care of the most animals with the least amount of effort — to a performance approach, in which the focus is on well-behaved animals that get out of the shelter faster and reinforce the reputation of the shelter in the community. In terms of dogs, you achieve that in two ways: by reducing stress and reinforcing good behavior. Your shelter environment, and specifically your dog housing, can help you do both.

(continued on page 16)
Reducing Shelter Stress:
It’s All About Choice

Just as with cats, stress plays a major role in disease among shelter dogs, including parvo, Bordetella and gastrointestinal disease. Stress can be caused by fear, anxiety, boredom, anger, depression or separation anxiety, so if you can alleviate these at your shelter, you’ll have less disease and shorter stays — which has a huge impact on the size of shelters that need to be built.

The number-one stressor for any captive animal, including shelter animals, is lack of choice. To address this problem, provide your dogs with:

- **Routine.** Set up a routine for your dogs — let them out to run first thing in the morning, play with them at the same time every day — just like you would at home.

- **Comfortable housing.** Kennel or room size matters (and depends on the size of the dog), as does configuration. The worst configuration is a long, narrow space, because dogs need room to back away from each other and to face each other. Square space is better; a circle would be ideal (but isn’t practical). Defensible space, where dogs can get under or behind something, or hop up to see what’s happening around them, is also important. And because sleep deprivation is a stressor, dogs need a space where they can have quiet time and preferably natural light.

- **Exercise and companionship with other dogs.** Dogs need a place where they can run and get up a head of steam. Large, outdoor play areas that are at least 30-by-40 feet are ideal, but regardless of size, provide your dogs with a place to express their intelligence and curiosity. Add some variety to your play area — a water feature, different terrain and textures, and a couple of features that a dog can get on top of or behind — rather than having a plain concrete pad. It’s also important to create an elimination area in the exercise yard, even if it’s just a depressed area in the concrete filled with gravel. Take some dogs there a few times, then the rest will follow — and they’ll all learn it’s OK to go there rather than in their own space.

- **Choice of environment.** Give your dogs separate resting, exercise and elimination areas. They also need some ability to self-regulate — to be able to go on top of or under or behind something.
Reinforcing Good Behavior: 
Real-Life Rooms vs. Runs

In a typical dog run, dogs learn the wrong things — barking, fence fighting, eliminating in their own space — so good dogs become unadoptable. On the other hand, good places reinforce good behavior, so shelters are seeing the benefits of creating a more “normal” living environment for dogs.

One of the best ways to do that is with real-life rooms (or room-style housing) as opposed to runs. A lot of shelters think real-life rooms require too much space, but they actually take up less space overall and the dogs have more individual space than in traditional runs. Real-life rooms cost no more than runs, but they have tremendous advantages: They show better, are quieter (which means the dogs don’t set each other off and the public isn’t subjected to as much barking) and have better disease and odor control because they have individual air supplies. There is also less chance of transferring disease by fomite (an inanimate object, such as a toy or blanket, that can transmit infectious agents from one individual to another) because a spot-cleaning protocol is suitable. That means you spend less time cleaning and more one-on-one time with the animals.

Another innovative option for shelters is village-style housing, which has individual enclosures that open into elimination yards and group yards where dogs can socialize, or they can escape back into the holding area if they want privacy.

Of course, traditional runs have their place at shelters. I’m not a big fan of indoor/outdoor runs, but if you’re going to do it, design the outdoor portion with the same care as the indoor side. We use lots of glass above the 4-foot level and glass doors because it reduces the dogs’ sense of isolation and tends to keep them calmer. Glass is also easier to keep clean than a gate system — if it’s dirty, you know it!

Dog adoption real-life room at the Santa Fe Animal Shelter & Humane Society (Design by Animal Arts)
Down-and-Dirty Details: Noise, Air and Drainage

• **Noise control:** Shelters used to deal with noise by asking how to manage it once it’s been created. Now we ask: How can we stop some of the barking to begin with? Dogs bark for many reasons, such as excitement at feeding time, hearing sounds beyond the range of human hearing, territorial rivalry and people passing by. Options for controlling noise include designing cage walls using layered glass, installing sound-soak panels that absorb noise and reduce echoing, varying the height and angle of ceilings (instead of having a huge, square room), and altering operations to reduce noise from slamming cage doors, intercoms, cleaning equipment, etc.

• **Air handling:** To reduce odors, supply and exhaust air *through* cages and rooms rather than over them; you can increase air flow through each individual unit without increasing the air exchange rate. Also consider air pressure in each area; for instance, it should be positive in surgery and strong negative in isolation and wards to keep disease from spreading. Isolation rooms are frequently forgotten at the back of the shelter, but sick dogs actually need the healthiest environment. Design your isolation rooms just as well as the rest of the shelter, and make sure they have very high fresh-air exchange rates.

• **Drainage:** The best type of drainage system uses individual area drains, where the drain is the same size as the guillotine door and waste washes down without disease transfer. Trenches, on the other hand, never get cleaned and easily transfer disease; they’re not a good solution.

• **Sprayers:** I’m not a fan of high-pressure sprayers because they give staff a false sense of security that things are getting super clean, when it’s actually contact time that counts. Low-pressure wash systems are easier on materials, and you can use cold water with recently developed disinfectants.

For shelters concerned about the expense of implementing these concepts, I would suggest that you can build nicer areas without having to build as many of them, because as a result of these best practices, your animals will tend to stay healthier and leave the shelter sooner.

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**What Is Driving Today’s Shelter Design?**

1. The public is demanding shelters that are more inviting for people and better for animals.

2. Scientific institutions like UC Davis are studying what’s healthy in shelters rather than relying on old wives’ tales or trial and error.

3. Shelters are seeing the value of focusing on animal-care days — and UC Davis is putting the science behind that.

4. There is an increasingly strong emphasis on reducing stress for shelter animals.
BULLIES, BULLIES EVERYWHERE!
ADOPTION TACTICS FOR AMERICA’S MOST MISUNDERSTOOD BREED

Ask shelter professionals to name their greatest dog-adoption challenge, and you will most likely hear the same answer over and over again: pit bulls. The term “pit bull” is often used to collectively refer to any number of “bully breeds,” including the American pit bull terrier, American Staffordshire terrier, Staffordshire bull terrier and many mixed breeds that have a “bully” appearance, many of which may not be pit bulls at all.

Although the American pit bull terrier was first recognized as a breed in 1898, you would have been hard-pressed to find one in an shelter as recently as 25 years ago. However, the breed suddenly experienced a surge in popularity in the late 1980s as an icon of urban culture. Unfortunately for both the breed and animal shelters, this surge has continued to grow and expand across cities and suburbs nationwide, creating a severe pit bull overpopulation problem. At many shelters, pit bulls represent anywhere from 40 to 60 percent of the dog population.

While there are many responsible bully owners, too often the culture of pit bull ownership tends toward individuals who want a “cool”-looking dog, but who do not have a stable residence, do not spay or neuter, do not provide adequate training and often keep the dog chained — all of which lead to owner relinquishments and unclaimed strays.

Although they are inherently sweet, affectionate, highly intelligent dogs that are eager to please, many pit bulls entering shelters exhibit a lack of training and proper socialization. Any 50-pound shelter dog that jumps on people, pulls on the leash, engages in “mouthy” play, has a high prey drive and isn’t housebroken is going to be extremely difficult to adopt out. Combine those attributes with the stigma already attached to pit bulls by the general public, and you have a dog that is virtually unadoptable at most shelters. Pit bull bans also make adoption of these dogs impossible in many communities, forcing shelters to either have a blanket euthanasia policy for them or transfer them to rescues outside their local jurisdiction.

So we posed the question: What are shelters and rescues with successful pit bull-adoption programs doing to rehabilitate these dogs, market them to potential adopters and place them into good homes? We also gathered some examples of community campaigns that are helping stem the tide of unwanted pit bulls by promoting spay/neuter and responsible pit bull ownership.
BAD RAP, San Francisco, Calif.

Donna Reynolds, executive director

www.badrap.org

How many pit bulls do you take in and adopt out each year?

We rescue 40 to 50 dogs a year. Because we’re an education/advocacy group, the dogs we take into our program have an important job to do: They have to serve as ambassadors and tell the stories of other shelter dogs and victims of cruelty that aren’t lucky enough to find help. Dogs are so much better than we are at educating the public, so our job is to help them get to safety, then step out of the way and let them tell their truth.

Do you have more stringent criteria for evaluating pit bulls for adoption? What type of behavior assessment do you use?

Our behavior assessment is very similar to the ASPCA’s SAFER™ assessment tool, although to an outsider it might look like we’re just having a rowdy play session with a dog. We try to keep it fun for both the dog and the tester, and we include a lot of touch, tug, teasing, play and pushing. Basically, we’re looking to see how handleable the dog is and how connected and responsive it is.

Do you have more stringent screening criteria for potential pit bull adopters? Any special post-adoption follow-up?

Since the hardest part of owning a pit bull is dealing with public scrutiny and breed discrimination, we try to make sure that applicants are ready for the flak they’ll get from the world about their pet. They have to come to our training class so they can learn how important good manners are to helping turn the tide on this horrible period of breed prejudice. Most of our follow-up happens in classes where adopters return to train and prepare for the Canine Good Citizen® exam.

What special marketing or adoption programs do you have for pit bulls, and what positive effects are you seeing on adoptions?

When we started BAD RAP 11 years ago, our biggest obstacle to placing dogs was finding independent thinkers who weren’t swayed by negative messaging in the media. Pit bulls and their mixes have become very popular here now, and breed supporters are plentiful. So we have a new challenge: With so many adoption programs promoting pit bulls, we compete with each other for homes. Our group tries to make our dogs stand out from the crowd by giving them good foundation training and helping them improve their social skills (to dogs and sometimes cats) as much as possible. We also offer free training for the life of the dog so homes have a ready support system if they need it. It’s a bit more work, but the benefit has been that we attract some wonderful people who are committed to carrying on the ambassador manners of their pets. More and more therapy-dog homes and families that want to do dog sports are applying.

Do you have community programs to encourage spay/neuter of pit bulls?

Some of our most important work is bringing resources and support to pit bull owners in underserved communities during our quarterly free-shots fairs. Our volunteers provide vaccinations, microchips, spay/neuter vouchers, leashes/collars, training advice and most of all, love and support. Pit bull owners aren’t used to getting much positive recognition from local agencies, especially in poor neighborhoods. With each event, we’re seeing more neutered dogs and our relationship with the communities has deepened. People are more willing to hear your message when you demonstrate that you truly love their dogs and support their right to own them.
Anything else you’re doing specifically to help pit bulls in the community?

Because we can’t rescue all the dogs that end up in shelters, we’re working to give shelter dogs better manners so they become more adoptable. Then once they go home, the dogs attend classes with their adopters and the training relationship they develop helps deepen their bond and commitment level. We do this work with Berkeley Animal Care Services, and it’s become the soul of our organization. Up to 60 dogs and their people show up every week to train; it’s a beautiful sight to behold!

Hello Bully, Pittsburgh, Pa.

Daisy Balawejder, founder and president

www.hellobully.com

Pit Bull Intake and Adoption

We only take in a few dogs a year, and not more than two or three at a time. We rely heavily on top-notch fosters to help us find great forever homes for the dogs we do take in. Rescue is only a small portion of what we do.

Behavior Assessment

Hello Bully is currently working with animal-behavior specialists to develop the first pit bull-specific evaluation that separates behavior issues from temperament issues. We strongly believe that any pit bull up for adoption should have a breed-appropriate temperament, which for pit bulls means the dog is highly friendly and stable with people. We do expect and accept some level of dog aggression, and our criteria is that the dog must be able to focus on a handler with treats in the presence of other dogs.

Adopter Screening and Follow-Up

We do a series of home visits prior to adoption, and as part of follow-up, every family that adopts from Hello Bully has to take an approved obedience class. Establishing that bond in the beginning is a great way to start out on the right foot.

Marketing Pit Bulls

A big part of what we do is community education and awareness, so we attend as many community events in our area as we can. Many people who have negative opinions about pit bulls are just buying into a negative stereotype. Once they actually meet a good pit bull, they often begin to understand that the “problem” we see in the media with pit bulls has very little to do with dogs — and everything to do with irresponsible owners.

Spay/Neuter Program

Hello Bully maintains Pittsburgh’s only free pit bull spay/neuter and vaccine program. Our appointment process is simple, and everything happens in one visit to a participating clinic. In the last two years, we have spayed/neutered and vaccinated nearly 700 pit bulls.

Special Programs

We work very hard to educate and create advocacy in our community. We have a general pit bull education program available on our website called Pit Bull 101. We are currently working on a documentary about pit bulls, as well as an education program suitable for children. Hello Bully also serves as an alternative for families considering surrendering a pet to a shelter by offering training, management or behavior solutions that can help keep the dog in the home.
DuPage County Animal Care and Control, Wheaton, Ill.

Kerry Vinkler, executive director
www.dupageco.org/animalcontrol

Pit Bull Intake and Adoption

Pit bulls are the number-one breed of dog that we take in, so we need to be creative in making them adoptable. We work with a lot of breed rescues, so we don’t keep more than five of any breed on the adoption floor at one time.

Behavior Assessment

We use Sue Sternberg’s Assess-A-Pet™ temperament test, but don’t do anything extra in terms of evaluation for pit bulls.

Adopter Screening and Follow-Up

Our application has additional information on bully breeds, what to expect if you adopt one and how we can help. Adopters have to pay a non-refundable deposit of $50 so they can go to Canine Good Citizen class (the remaining $100 is subsidized by our foundation). The most important thing for our adopters is our help line, which they can call with behavior problems.

Marketing Pit Bulls

We market our pit bulls along with our other dogs on social media and with online specials, as well as through pit bull-related articles in the local newspaper. We also host pit bull-friendly events, such as our annual family reunion for dogs, where pit bulls are the number-one attendees.

Spay/Neuter Program

We have a free spay/neuter program for dogs (not just pit bulls) that targets people in the food-stamp program. We promote it at the food-stamp office, social services and in all areas heavily populated by pit bulls. It’s a high-level program that is low income, not low cost; animal control subsidizes the entire cost of the program, which includes spay/neuter and vaccinations from participating veterinarians. The program has been very successful, with owners being highly responsive. We saw 166 dogs last year, and two-thirds of those were pit bulls.

Special Programs

Our new STAR (Structured Training and Reinforcement) program is a volunteer-based program overseen by our behaviorist. We have selected five pit bulls with very good dispositions that have been in the shelter 30 days or longer (although we will start a dog on the program right away if it has an overabundance of energy and a need for activity). Our behaviorist evaluates each dog to determine its needs, and then a volunteer is assigned to work with a specific animal a minimum of 10 hours per week until that animal is adopted. The dogs receive regimented basic training to reduce the anxiety of being in the shelter and keep them stimulated in their pens, including basic commands and kennel manners. We also provide an enrichment program with interactive food toys, agility training and play groups to keep them socialized and increase their adoptability. We’ll soon be selecting five additional pit bulls for the program that are at risk due to their high energy levels to give them the best chance for a great outcome.

Humane League of Lancaster County, Lancaster, Pa.

Mary Wallick, foster care coordinator
www.humaneleague.com

Pit Bull Intake and Adoption

In 2009, we took in 365 pit bulls — which is only 5 percent of our total dog population, although they account for 35 percent of euthanasia of our total dog population — and adopted out 188 of them. We have no restriction on the number of pit bulls on the adoption floor.

Behavior Assessment

We use a modified version of the ASPCA’s Meet Your Match® Canine-Ality Adoption Program and also give pit bulls a dog-aggression test. Our pit bulls must be dog friendly, which is not required of other breeds. We work with pit bulls to increase their adoptability through obedience training so they learn to sit and stay, walk on a leash, and not jump on people. Those small things go a long way.

Adopter Screening and Follow-Up

The only special condition for pit bull adopters is a waiver stating that if they have a younger child, they need to take the dog to obedience training (so an unruly dog doesn’t knock down the child and get returned to us).

Marketing Pit Bulls

We mainly do educational marketing, although we post informational fliers and posters about pit bulls in our kennel area. Our website highlights one of our adopted pit bulls each month, along with information about things to know before adopting a pit bull, links to BAD
RAP and PBRC, etc. We’re also trying to place more pit bulls and pit mixes with slight behavioral problems due to poor ownership or neglect into foster families, where they are rehabilitated and then put up for adoption.

**Spay/Neuter Program**

This year, the Philadelphia Eagles football team helped fund two low-cost spay/neuter clinics for pit bulls as part of their Treating Animals With Kindness grant. We had 10 dogs at each of those, and the grant covered the majority of the costs involved. We also host several low-cost spay/neuter clinics for all dogs throughout the year.

**Special Programs**

In order to educate the public — many of whom are unsure about the safety of owning a pit bull or are blatantly opposed to the dogs — I put together an hour-long information session consisting of three topics: Myth vs. Fact: The Media Hype Surrounding Pit Bulls; Breed-Specific Legislation; and Breed Ambassadors: Meet Moose, a Pit Bull and K-Pets Therapy Dog. We advertised it through our website, fliers at local pet stores and our e-newsletter. Fifty people attended the session, and based on a survey we took, they particularly liked the informational handouts about pit bulls and how they can get involved in stopping breed-specific legislation. The true hero of the day, however, was Moose, a pit bull adopted from our shelter who is a certified therapy dog at domestic violence shelters and hospices. From this event I created an email list of people who are interested in pit bulls, either getting more breed information, participating in community activities, volunteering to work with pit bulls at the shelter or willing to foster pit bulls. I’m planning another session in October to coincide with National Pit Bull Awareness Day.

**BullsEye Dog Rescue, Puget Sound, Wash.**

Lorrie Kalmbach-Ehlers, president and co-founder

[www.bullseyerescue.org](http://www.bullseyerescue.org)

**Pit Bull Intake and Adoption**

We adopted out about 25 pit bulls the year we started in 2004; now it’s between 50 and 100 a year.

**Behavior Assessment**

We get our dogs only through shelters — no owner releases at all. We see a lot of pit bulls that are not appropriate for our program: they must have no human aggression, not be overly shy, and be resilient, goofy and bouncy like the breed should be.

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Moose the therapy dog
*Photo courtesy of Humane League of Lancaster County*
Adopter Screening and Follow-Up

All our pit bulls are in foster-home situations for a minimum of two weeks, but because of our stringent adoption process, it’s usually more like one to three months. We want to make sure we’re adopting ambassador dogs into ambassador homes so they’ll represent the breed well. Potential adopters have to complete our online application (which is six pages long), then it goes to a board member for review. That is followed by either additional questions or denial and education. If it’s a good candidate, we ask more questions via email and then we call the applicant and have a long conversation. If we think it’s a good match, we set up a meeting with a dog at the potential adopter’s home so we can do a home check at the same time. The home check is required, and we ask everyone living in the home to be there. After that, we have a 24-hour wait period so they can think about it, and then we go through with the adoption. We encourage a trial adoption period of one or two weeks to make sure it’s a good fit for everyone. We also require all adopters to sign up for a training series before adopting a dog (they can go to any trainer who uses positive reinforcement).

Marketing Pit Bulls

In order to reach lower-income people who have the greatest need for information and assistance, we advertise our programs in the pet section of Craigslist and give fliers to area shelters and animal control officers for distribution to anyone who might need help. We also post fliers in lower socioeconomic locations, such as food banks and public health clinics. We’re working on offering free vaccine clinics just for pit bulls in these areas.

Last year, we held our first Pit Bulls on Parade event, which drew about 500 people and 250 pit bulls. It was open to shelters and rescues for adoptable pit bulls from all over the region, and we had sports demos, vendors and free Canine Good Citizen training (and only one out of 51 pit bulls failed!).

Special Programs

We want to do more than just keep putting a Band-Aid on the pit bull problem by rescuing dogs, and we also believe you can’t spay/neuter your way out of the overpopulation problem. While those are both part of the solution, the most important thing is to educate owners and give them the tools they need. Our education program focuses on three areas:

1. The Responsi-Bull Project, a three-part program that offers:

   • Pit-Fix, a free spay/neuter program for pit bulls (we receive funding and services from private donations and grants from Pawsitive Alliance, a local animal welfare organization, and Coalition: HUMAnE, a low-cost, high-quality spay/neuter clinic)

Oct. 23 is National Pit Bull Awareness Day!

For more information, visit www.blessthebullys.com.

Kitzi

Photo courtesy of BullsEye Dog Rescue
• Pit-Ed, a free workshop on how to be a responsible pit bull owner

• Train-A-Pit, a free four-week basic obedience class for those who have completed Pit-Ed. We don’t require that dogs be altered to take this class because the owners can usually be talked into spay/neuter by the end of the four weeks, and we don’t want a barrier up front that keeps ill-trained pit bulls adding to the public misconception of the breed.

In Pierce County, where we have many supporters of this program, we went from 329 to 72 adoptable pit bulls being euthanized in 2009, and it’s also made a huge impact on the number of dogs being dropped off at shelters. We are currently looking for shelters and other organizations in the Puget Sound area to partner with us on this program so we can offer it regionwide.

2. The Responsi-Bull Rescue Program, in which we go to shelters and provide staff training on how to adopt out pit bulls responsibly and how to assess the breed for temperament and correctly identify dogs that are pit bulls. The one-day training session is free, and they can continue to use us as a resource afterwards.

3. The Adopt-A-Bull Program: The Humane Society for Tacoma and Pierce County, which is the largest shelter in Washington, did not adopt out pit bulls for the past 20 years — every pit bull that didn’t have an owner was put down. After three years of talks with management, we helped them institute an adoption program for pit bulls about one year ago. BullsEye does temperament testing on the dogs, after which they go through a foster-home period and are then available for adoption. We’re getting some adopted out now and plan to turn over the entire program to the shelter by 2012. Now that the largest shelter in Washington can say it adopts out pit bulls, it’s made a significant difference in pit bull adoptions throughout the entire state.

Spay & Neuter Kansas City, Kansas City, Mo.

Michelle Dormady, president

www.snkc.net

Kansas City passed a mandatory pit bull spay/neuter ordinance in 2006 that resulted in increased euthanasia of pit bulls. More than 1,800 pit bulls were killed in 2007, although that number declined to 600 last year and it may be reduced by 30 percent this year. While the ordinance is helping reduce the number of strays roaming our streets, many opponents believe that it’s leading to more killing and simply gives Animal Control another reason to pull a dog.

Spay & Neuter Kansas City (SNKC) sat down with Animal Control to discuss the ordinance and what we could do to lower the number of pit bulls being impounded. Animal Control agreed to give all pit bull owners a two-week opportunity to get their dogs fixed. We provide the spay/neuter for free, and if the dog is fixed, the offender’s ticket (which can carry a $500 first-offense fine) is dismissed. The program has been a huge success! Only 78 pit bulls have been impounded on that particular ordinance this year, and most were not being well cared for. All the ACOs have been surprised by the results and are much happier to give out a voucher for a free spay/neuter than to impound a dog.

We don’t wait for pet owners to call us; we go door-to-door through our outreach program. That face-to-face communication is vital in getting through to pet owners who would not otherwise call us. The ordinance gives us a tool to encourage pet owners to comply, because when we tell them what the fine could be, most are very receptive to getting the spay/neuter done. SNKC does not ever turn anyone in for not spaying or neutering their pit bull. We keep the communication door open and want to create trust in our community.

Overall, our program has reduced shelter intake by 35 percent in two years, which has helped decrease euthanasia by 55 percent. Trouble calls to Animal Control have dropped nearly 30 percent.

To read about pit bull adoption at the Humane Society of the Pikes Peak Region and CHA Animal Shelter, visit www.shelterpro.org, our website for shelter professionals.

Ramsey
Photo courtesy of BullsEye Dog Rescue
Full of Pits?

Pit bulls have a reputation for being shelter staff and volunteer favorites, as well as some of the smartest and most interactive dogs on the adoption floor. They’re also typically the dogs that stay longest at the shelter and are the hardest to place in good homes.

So how can you let the public know what shelter staff and volunteers already know: that pit bulls are amazing dogs that make amazing family pets?

Train. Training should initially focus on three vital issues that impede the majority of pit bull adoptions: poor leash manners (especially around other animals) jumping and mouthing. You know the dog isn’t trying to hurt you, but many shelter guests do not.

Exercise. Pit bulls require regular, quality exercise, such as off-leash play in a secure area, running or fetching, all of which can be easily accomplished within a shelter. A tired pit bull shows well to potential adopters; a wound-up one is a turnoff. (Potential adopters should be advised of this exercise requirement.)

Image is everything. To many potential adopters, pit bulls look scary. Avoid reinforcing this perception with skull-motif bandanas, studded collars and choke chains, or names like Wrecker, Damien and Diezel. Instead, highlight the goofy, snuggly side of your bullies with brightly colored scarves, cute collars, sweaters in the winter, etc. Change intimidating names to more approachable names, such as Oliver, Mrs. Wigglebottom or Flash. And be sure to provide toys and a soft place to sleep so visitors see their cuddly, playful personalities.

A picture is worth 1,000 words. Ensure that the pittie pictures you post online or around the shelter do not unintentionally convey a negative image. Avoid photos of dogs pulling the leash like a freight train or standing all squared up like they’re looking to fight, as well as bad angles that make their eyes and teeth look evil. Take your time and get good photos to show off the beautiful bullies you know and love.

American Humane recognizes the challenges shelters face when it comes to pit bull adoptions, and we want you to know we appreciate what you do. Keep up the good work!
MAKE YOUR SHELTER DOGS RICH WITH ENRICHMENT

By Katenna Jones, humane educator/applied animal behaviorist, American Humane

This Adopt-a-Dog Month®, American Humane encourages animal shelters everywhere to put their best paw forward when it comes to enrichment programs for dogs. Regardless of your shelter’s financial status, your staff or volunteer count, or your location, there are numerous ways to enrich the lives of the dogs in your care.

By providing environmental, physical and mental enrichment opportunities for your dogs, you can help:

• Increase adoptability
• Reduce stress
• Relieve anxiety and boredom
• Reduce behavior problems
• Set an example for your shelter visitors
Here are a few suggestions to get your enrichment program started...

Skip the Food Bowls

Dogs are natural foragers and hunters, so tap into their natural instincts by having them work for their food. Your dogs will get a mental and physical workout, and this technique helps keep bored dogs occupied, barking dogs quiet and jumping dogs calm. Try putting meals inside interactive food toys, such as the Kong Wobble, Kibble Nibble, Tug-A-Jug or Buster Cube. Pass out the toys at mealtime, and listen as the kennels go silent with happy dogs. There are a variety of great interactive food toys for dogs; just make sure whatever you choose is washable and durable. Here are some other tips for fun with food toys:

- Make sure the correct amount of food fits inside the toy to avoid under- or overfeeding.
- Supervise the dog initially to ensure he does not destroy and ingest parts of the toy. This can usually be avoided by buying the correct size toy for the dog — large toys are much harder to crush.
- Ensure the dog is able to figure out the toy so she isn’t forced to skip meals. Choose easier toys for less food-motivated dogs (such as the Kibble Nibble, Atomic Treat Ball or Tricky Treat Ball) and keep more challenging toys for highly food-driven, energetic dogs (like the Tug-A-Jug, Kong Wobble or Buster Cube).

Think you can’t afford these cool toys? Think again!

- Recruit volunteers to organize an Adopt-a-Dog Month fundraiser.
- Ask local businesses to sponsor your Adopt-a-Dog Month enrichment program.
- Recruit a local Scout troop, church, school district or other community organization to help.
- Buy toys online and in bulk to save money.
- Display toys and ask visitors to buy a toy for one of your shelter dogs, then let them fill it up and give it to a dog. Tangible donations are very appealing.

For a fun, free option, place pieces of the dog’s kibble throughout the kennel — beneath the corner of the bed, under a stuffed animal and along the wall — anything to keep him moving, looking and thinking. Put some on the floor with the food bowl upside down on it to get dogs using their brains and paws. You can even “stick” kibble to the walls just above nose height with a small smear of peanut butter (just make sure the cleaning products you use are non-residual and safe for dogs).

In addition to feeding dogs via interactive food toys, you can also use meals to train the dogs in your care. Hang a bucket with the dog’s daily meal outside the kennel, out of the dog’s reach. Volunteers, staff and visitors can easily train your shelter dogs to sit nicely, stop barking and remain calm — just for a piece of kibble! For details on this and other great enrichment ideas, we strongly recommend the Open Paw® program; visit [www.openpaw.org](http://www.openpaw.org) to learn more.
Get Them Outside

Every dog needs a minimum of one leash break per day, with regular access to outside potty areas throughout the day. While this may be difficult for some shelters to schedule, it should be at the top of the priority list. Why should you care about dogs messing in their sleeping area?

- Forcing a housetrained dog to “hold it” all day can cause potential medical problems.
- Housetrained dogs who cannot hold it all day can easily lose their housetraining.
- Allowing dogs to continually step in their own excrement can desensitize them to the natural distaste for this, making housetraining incredibly difficult for future owners.
- Adoption of dogs that are difficult to train or not housetrained frequently fail.
- Excrement inside the shelter poses increased risk for disease transmission and is not pleasant to potential adopters.

The Open Paw program emphasizes outside breaks and provides wonderful guidance on this topic. Work with your staff or a group of quality volunteers to establish a safe, consistent dog-walking program and dog potty-break schedule.

Establishing doggie socialization time is another ideal way to allow dogs to engage in and practice vital social skills with their fellow dogs. Group walks and play groups are wonderful exercise options that can teach you a great deal about the dogs in your care and are a critical part of every dog’s life. Many shelters do not allow play groups or are not equipped for them, but whenever possible, we highly recommend this option.

Train, Train, Train

Behavior problems are among the top three reasons for relinquishment to animal shelters, euthanasia and failed adoptions. In order to reduce euthanasia and increase your adoption numbers and success rate, training is critical.

As mentioned above, you can incorporate the dog’s daily meals into your training regimen. Best of all, anyone can help train once you establish a quality dog-training program. Whether it’s quiet training, leash training, manners or agility, you can use those volunteers you never have the right job for: young children, bored teenagers and adults with various physical abilities. These volunteers are ideal for training dogs to sit quietly at the front of their cage, which has been shown to increase adoptability.

Again, the Open Paw program is a great way to start your program. Alternatively, contact a quality local trainer to help out. Many trainers will donate their time or at least offer assistance at reduced rates, and grants may be available to nonprofit shelters to help hire trainers for such programs.

Enrichment is an essential part of the life of any well-adjusted and well-behaved dog. It’s also a great way to set an example for potential dog owners who visit your shelter and to endear your facility to the local community. When you’re done reading this issue of Protecting Animals, look around your shelter to see what you can do to become rich with enrichment!

For tips on clicker training for quiet kennels, visit [www.shelterpro.org](http://www.shelterpro.org).
Dear Mr. President,

Adopt-A-Dog Month is in full swing at our shelter, and everyone has been lending a hand (or paw) to make it a success.

I have been simply amazed at the number of dogs we have been able to find homes for already!

Dogs of every type, size, age, and personality!

However, on behalf of myself and my many constituents, I must implore you to please consider establishing our first ever Adopt-A-Mouse Month!

Hey, Brie! Could you give us a hand?

I’ll be right there!

Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,
Brie

P.S. Happy Adopt-A-Dog Month! :)}
### Animal Protection Training Calendar: October – December 2010

#### ANIMAL WELFARE SERVICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location &amp; Dates</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Euthanasia by Injection</td>
<td>Sacramento, CA — Oct. 18-19 Pasadena, CA — Oct. 21-22 Huntsville, AL — Oct. 28-29 Upper Sandusky, OH — Nov. 3-4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Managing Compassion Fatigue</td>
<td>Huntsville, AL — Oct. 27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Fundraising School</td>
<td>Altoona, PA — Sept. 14-15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Shelter Operations School</td>
<td>Indianapolis, IN — Oct. 7-8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### EMERGENCY SERVICES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location &amp; Dates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Animal Emergency Services</td>
<td>Kersey, PA — Oct. 9-10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disaster Sheltering for Companion Animals</td>
<td>Sarasota, FL — Nov. 20-21</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### HUMAN-ANIMAL INTERACTIONS

#### ANIMAL-ASSISTED THERAPY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Location &amp; Dates</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Handler Training</td>
<td>Denver, CO — Oct. 16-17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Team Evaluation</td>
<td>Denver, CO — Oct. 29-31</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Visit [www.americanhumane.org/proevents](http://www.americanhumane.org/proevents) to confirm dates, get additional dates and register. Interested in hosting an American Humane training in your community? For more information, email training@americanhumane.org.

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**Thank You, Debrah!**

With the arrival of Dori Villalon as American Humane’s vice president of Animal Protection, Debrah Schnackenberg has taken on the new position of vice president of Emergency Services for American Humane. Debrah was responsible for our animal welfare and animal emergency services programs for the past three years, and her leadership, innovation and tireless work on behalf of both programs have been invaluable. We share her excitement about the future as she focuses her efforts on American Humane’s Emergency Services. Thanks, Debrah!
American Humane offers a wide variety of grants to meet the changing demands in animal sheltering and care

**Second Chance® Fund Grant**
If your shelter or rescue group is helping badly hurt animals survive abuse and neglect, American Humane can help you. Our Second Chance Fund grants provide financial assistance to shelters and rescues caring for animal victims of cruelty and neglect.

**American Humane/HomeAgain® Universal WorldScan™ Grant**
Is your shelter short on microchip scanners? Apply for an American Humane/HomeAgain Universal WorldScan grant, and you could receive up to 10 free scanners! This scanner reads all frequencies (125 kHz, 128 kHz and 134.2 kHz) of microchips currently sold in the U.S.

**Meacham Foundation Memorial Grant**
These grants provide financial assistance to nonprofit or public animal care agencies for shelter expansion or improvements to increase the quality of care given to animals. Applications for 2011 grants will be accepted from Jan. 1, 2011, to Feb. 28, 2011.

All grant recipients must be American Humane agency professional members. For details on all these grant opportunities, visit [www.americanhumane.org/grants](http://www.americanhumane.org/grants).