City efforts prove successful

Hot Springs Animal Control

Director Seales says his office is a cool head, a warm heart and a steady hand.

Hot Springs (AR) Animal Control Director John Seales (400 Kimery Lane, Hot Springs, AR 71901) reports good results from three efforts to improve animal control:

- Public image - The Animal Control Department is a separate unit within the city government, and the officers have uniforms. Seales says the well-groomed, uniformed officers are "respected as Animal Control Officers, not dog catchers."
- Law enforcement - When animal control officers spot a free-roaming dog, they follow it to locate the owner, since the dog is generally run home. The owner is given a courtesy warning for the first violation of the leash law. If the owner cannot be located, the dog is impounded and the owner must pay a fine to reclaim it.
- Education - Animal control officers present educational programs in area schools and civic clubs and other groups on proper care for pets and the importance of obeying the leash law. The department also has a section in the Sunday edition of the local newspaper, reporting violations of the leash law and providing animal care tips and other information.


dotkins County SPCA, Ithaca, NY, reports that giving free items to the public brings returns in goodwill and money donations. Too.

The SPCA makes free ID tags for pets, with tags that cost a few cents each and an engraving pencil that cost about $10 at the local hardware store. Executive Director William Brothers says the tags are made for adopted and owner-clawed animals at the shelter, and are also given out at county rabies clinics, shopping centers, fairs and in neighborhoods.

Brothers notes that few people walk away without leaving a donation of 50¢ to $3 for their "free" tag. Also, giving out a tag "can start a one-to-one dialog with the pet owner which can turn into an educational session." The company, "Thousands of pets are now identified in our county helping us to maintain our 60% rate of returning stray dogs to their owners."

Brothers purchases quantities of the aluminum tags from National Band and Tag Co., 721 York St., Newport, KY 41072.

The SPCA officers also carry a supply of inexpensive nylon leads to hand out at no charge. Brothers obtains these leads from KISS Mfg., Route 1, Box 302A3, Franklin, NC 28734. He says they are lighter, less bulky and easier to slip over a dog's head than chain collars. Leash law violators can be given leads which bring the dogs under control and also make for good public relations.

Radio public service announcements can help you get your message to the community. Radio (and television) stations must give a certain amount of air time to PSAs. Remember, however, that radio stations are commercial enterprises. While they may be sympathetic to your cause, they are not obligated to air your announcements. Also, there are many good causes in your area, competing for the public service air time.

To increase your chances of having your messages read on the air, make sure they are of importance to the entire community and are presented in the best possible form. Adapt your message to your audience -- if many people in your area speak Spanish, have your messages translated.

Also, different stations prefer different lengths for PSAs, so you should check this in advance. An announcement with 25 average-length words takes about 10 seconds, 50 words take about 20 seconds and 150 words take about 60 seconds.

The copy should be typed, double or triple spaced, on one side of 8½" x 11" paper. Your organization's letterhead stationery is acceptable. If you use plain paper, type at the top your organization's name and the name and telephone number of the person to contact for more information.

Start the copy one-third of the way down the first page, and leave ample margins. Remember to use a clean typewriter ribbon.

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Materials

A HES (American Humane Education Society) offers a free kit of materials promoting adoptions of "The All-American Matt" and "The All-American Alley Kitten."

The materials tell potential pet owners they get the "best of everything" with the mixed breed animals available at their local animal shelter.

The kit includes ready-to-print advertisements in standard sizes for placement in your local newspaper and magazine and in your organization's newsletter. There is an order form for purchasing posters and "All-American Adoption Certificates," along with a list of suggestions for using the material in the kit.

Write A HES, 350 South Huntington Ave., Boston, MA 02130.

Two free pamphlets are available from The Suncoast Seabird Sanctuary, Inc., 18328 Gulf Boulevard, Indian Shores, FL 33785. They are "Help For Hooked Birds," a brochure on caring for birds caught by fish hooks and lines, and "The Care and Feeding of Orphan Song and Garden Birds." Please send a stamped, pre-addressed business-size envelope for either or both of these publications; larger quantities for organizations are available. (The February 1979 SHELTER SENSE features an article on handling of wildlife by Sue Pressman, HSUS Director of Wildlife Protection.)

AVMA (American Veterinary Medical Association) offers five short brochures in easy-to-understand language on canine heartworm, canine distemper, rabies, external parasites (fleas, ticks, lice, manges, ear mites) and travel with the family pet. For complete information, write AVMA, 950 N. Meacham Rd., Schaumburg, IL 60196.

"Ten Golden Rules For You and Your Pet" is a full color poster available free from Kal Kan, Inc. The 34" x 22" poster illustrates rules such as "know your local leash and licensing laws" and "plan on a birth control program for your pet."

For your free copy, write Harry Webb, Manager of Professional Services, Kal Kan, Inc., 3386 East 44th St., Vernon, CA 90058.