

## Can you tell us about a time when the public came through for your organization in a big way?

*That's the question we asked for this issue's Coffee Break, and you responded with stories of how your communities stepped up in times of need.*



**In October 2008**, we had a fire at our shelter. We were very lucky that with the help of many of our neighbors, we were able to get all of the animals out safely. Many people in our community came forward to provide foster care for our animals—and many of them wound up adopting their fosters! The financial support, as well as donated items to help us get back on our feet, was amazing!

—Susan Frisch, manager  
Dessin Animal Shelter  
Honesdale, Pennsylvania

**Due to budget cuts**, our community discontinued its recycling program. Our league collected aluminum beverage cans, which is a large portion of our yearly budget. We were given the names of local salvage companies who would take the cans if they were paid a fee for the Dumpster and freight. The league did a publicity blitz and used word-of-mouth to let villagers know we were still collecting cans. After only three weeks, the collection bin was full to the top, and we were back in the recycling business. "It takes a village," and ours pulled through for the animals.

—Mary McCullough, vice president  
Hot Springs Village Animal Welfare League  
Hot Springs Village, Arkansas

**Our small mountain town** truly cares about the stray and abandoned pets who are brought into our nonprofit humane society, and the proof is in the food—dog and cat food, that is! The local family-operated newspaper does a tremendous service for our shelter at Christmastime. This service not only benefits the animals but also the community. The advertising department runs a special for ads from businesses or any person who needs to advertise. A discount on your ad placed during the holiday season will be applied when you bring the newspaper an item from the humane society's wish list. It's a win-win situation for all—the animals get food, treats, toys, and even blankets to help at Christmas. Plus all of our friends, family, and neighbors reap the financial savings while helping feed all of our temporary residents at the shelter! *Macon News* lays it on the line for our shelter and our community.

—Sharon Archer, vice president  
Macon County Humane Society Inc.  
Franklin, North Carolina

**A 10-year-old girl and her mom** came to visit the shelter. The city shelter “housed” five cats and four dog runs. They couldn’t believe the cats were in with the dogs in such close quarters that the doors to the cat cages could not be opened fully. They wanted to help because the shelter was so small and overcrowded. The 10-year-old was so motivated by the situation that she rode her bike to a city council meeting, and before all the council people and residents she got up to talk about how bad the shelter conditions were. (Her parents could not attend the meeting, so this gal went on her own.) The girl’s mom canvassed to find a larger building. A local church heard of our plight and offered a building, but it needed to be cleaned. A group of folks from another church offered to help clean it. Everyone pulled together, and there is now a wonderful new cat shelter. We had a contest for the residents of the city to name it, which not only brought in a great donation, but we now have the New Beginning Feline Shelter.

—Judy Burrier, animal control officer  
Independence Animal Control/Shelter  
Independence, Ohio

**In the early hours of May 20, 2010**, a major fire destroyed a large section of our shelter. We lost 15 beautiful cats. However, all of our dogs, as well as a handful of cats, survived. We had a huge outpouring of support from our community, starting with our local city shelter, Berkeley Animal Care Services, which allowed us to house the surviving animals in their facility. Also, several hospitals provided services and care for the dogs and cats suffering from smoke inhalation. By the end of the day, our community had stepped up to foster our surviving dogs and cats, with more foster homes to spare. The support continued, including donations from kids who had sold lemonade to raise money for us. We’re still a long way from rebuilding our shelter, but we would not be where we are today without the support of our community.

—Marta Edmonds, adoption associate  
Berkeley-East Bay Humane Society  
Berkeley, California

**In 2004**, our nonprofit wild animal sanctuary was directly hit by three hurricanes in six weeks. Hurricane Charley was the first one and did almost \$200,000 in damage. Fortunately, we had no animal injuries or escapes, but the sanctuary was devastated. Within weeks after the storm, over 125 new volunteers from all over the country came to help. They left air-conditioned jobs to come to Florida in sweltering summer heat to clean up after the disaster—working long hours in the 95-plus-degree heat with no air conditioning and little shade. Eighty percent of the trees were on the ground. The volunteers were so dedicated—they took time off work, incurred travel expenses and worked harder than many have worked in their lives ... all to help us get back on our feet after the devastating storms to ensure the lifetime care of the animals. We can never thank them enough! (To learn more, visit [peaceriverrefuge.org/hit\\_by\\_the\\_hurricanes.htm](http://peaceriverrefuge.org/hit_by_the_hurricanes.htm).)

—Lisa Stoner, vice president/treasurer  
Peace River Refuge & Ranch  
Zolfo Springs, Florida

**Last June**, we put out a plea for food donations. With our shrinking budget and nonstop influx of animals, our food budget was gone. We never expected the response we got! People came from all over to bring us food! From completely full truck beds to individual bags, we received several thousand pounds of food within a week’s time. It continued to come in weeks later, since local media joined and helped keep the plea going. Many people made comments that they didn’t have much to give but couldn’t stand to think that the animals were hungry. I remember one day where the cars didn’t stop coming all day long! Such a response from our community actually brought tears to our eyes. We always feel we’re forgotten out here, and it really gave us a sense that people do care about what we do for the animals in our community. It was really an amazing feeling.

—Cindy Burnham, manager  
Salinas Animal Service  
Salinas, California

**Congratulations to Sharon Archer, whose submission was selected in a random drawing from those published in this issue. Her organization, the Macon County Humane Society in Franklin, N.C., will receive a free coffee break: a \$50 gift certificate to a local coffee shop. “Bone” appétit!**

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