

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**Congratulations to Ellen Kilgannon, whose submission was selected in a random drawing from those published in this issue. Her organization, P.A.W.S. Animal Shelter in Bryson, N.C., will receive a free coffee break: a \$50 gift certificate to a local coffee shop. "Bone" 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, D.C. 20037. **Your answer may be printed in a future issue of *Animal Sheltering*.** If your response is chosen for publication, you will be entered into a drawing to win a **free coffee break (valued at \$50)** for your organization. Responses may be edited for length or clarity; no donation or purchase is necessary to win. See [animalsheltering.org](http://animalsheltering.org) for contest rules, or send an email or letter to the above addresses to request a printed copy.