LOCAL SOCIETY ANIMAL SHELTERS CONSTITUTE THE BASE OF THE HUMANE MOVEMENT

The local animal shelter is the foundation of the humane movement. Probably more than 90 percent of the millions of dollars spent annually for animal welfare goes directly or indirectly to local animal shelters. Nobody knows how many animal shelters are operated by humane societies in the United States, but a conservative estimate puts them over 500. They vary tremendously in size, facilities, financial support, management, and operating policies and methods. They range from a comparatively few excellently equipped and managed shelters that have only rudimentary facilities or deplorably poor management.

Critical Analysis

This article is an attempt to evaluate the local humane society shelter facilities and operations as a part of our overall examination of the effectiveness of the humane movement. This series of articles began in Report to Humanitarians No. 11 (March, 1970), in which I attempted to reach such an evaluation. That discussion was expanded in this article. We do not attempt to cover many aspects of shelter operations which will be treated in subsequent issues.

This examination of local society shelters and their operations and activities was not put out to butter up our friends who are engaged in running these shelters, in order to win their praise or approval. Some of these shelters will get high marks and some will have low marks, depending on the results of our examination of their operations and activities. Some of these friends will get a good grade before they realize it, and some will read to a conclusion which they do not want to hear.

Shelters Need Continuous Self-Examination

Every successful business enterprise must continue to examine and re-examine its policies for the purpose of determining what it is doing wrong, what it is doing right, and what it might do better. And local humane shelters are operated by humane societies, and the same basic need for continuing critical self-analysis, objective examination of operating policies and methods, unfortunately, they frequently do not receive such recognition as they deserve.

This is not to say that criticism and discussion of local shelters is not welcome among members and in the meetings of humane societies. Far from it! The humane movement is constantly examining its policies, activities, and effectiveness. This is an entirely different matter than constructive self-appraisal and objective examination of operating policies and methods. The emotion-charged uprisals which occur periodically in many societies are symptoms of the need for realizing the importance of good operating policies and methods. An examination of local shelters and their policies and activities of the local society which is a part of the humane movement will get this answer: "Money."

All of these objectives are only means to an end. Sometimes it is easy to confuse the means with the end itself. Providing a particular facility may or may not contribute to the end, either absolutely or relative to what could be done with the same amount of money used for some other purpose.

Funds Not the Major Problem

Ask the average animal lover and humanitarians several questions about animal shelters which are not now available. By these really are the superficial aspects of shelter operations. We know pretty much what constitutes good shelter operation.

Insofar as these considerations are concerned, shelters in this country are trying to improve these conditions. The large national societies, through their publications and activities, are working constantly to help the shelters benefit from the experience of other shelters, in order to improve their present facilities and operations.

These conditions, however, are not of primary importance in comparison with the effectiveness or local societies in dealing with the humane problems associated with dogs and cats. The answers to all of the foregoing questions are in the affirmative, yet the total amount of suffering undergone by dogs and cats in the community may be as great or greater than it has ever been, and greatly in terms of reduction of animal suffering good operating policies and methods.

The really important danger arising from the operation of such clinics is that management concentration upon the goal of operating a clinic which has been poured into careers for the animals, commercial veterinarians to upgrade facilities to help the shelters benefit from the experience of other shelters, in order to improve their present facilities and operations.

In other words, the amount of suffering undergone by the animals of the community is determined in one way or another by the ones cared for at the shelter are treated the same basic need for continuing critical self-appraisal and objective examination of their operations and activities.

But more to improve veterinary care of animals in the community might be accomplished be compted with a committee working with commercial veterinarians to upgrade facilities and methods of private clinics.

The important point we mean, that funds going into such projects frequently do not significantly reduce over-all animal suffering. So far as the humanitarians who comprise the society's membership are concerned, they may derive a comfortable feeling that "animals received at our shelter receive the best of veterinary care," but that is not true.

MISCELLANY

Dr. Frederick L. Thomas
Miss Emily F. Gleckler

11th Street South, St. Petersburg, Florida 33703

Thomson is a veterinarian who worked in the animal shelter field for over 30 years. He was an active member of the American Veterinary Medical Association and a frequent contributor to the American Humane Association's journal. His work focused on improving animal welfare and he was known for his dedication to the humane treatment of animals.

Gleckler was a key figure in the field of animal welfare, serving as the executive director of the Humane Society of the United States. She was a strong advocate for animal rights and worked tirelessly to improve conditions in animal shelters across the country.

Together, they produced "Good and Bad Animal Shelters," a comprehensive report that aimed to examine the effectiveness of local humane shelters and recommend ways to improve their operations. The report emphasized the importance of funding, management, and the role of veterinarians in ensuring the welfare of animals in shelters.

The report highlighted the need for continuous self-examination by shelters and advocated for a more critical approach to the management of animal shelters. It called for more attention to the effectiveness of local shelters in dealing with the humane problems associated with dogs and cats.

In conclusion, "Good and Bad Animal Shelters" was a significant contribution to the field of animal welfare, providing a blueprint for improving shelter operations and ensuring that animals were treated with the care and respect they deserved.
ANIMAL SHELTERS—From page 1—

Prevent Suffering, Not Death

An old-established humane society shelter came un-expectedly to its operation, and received the praises, and that following the first goal frequently leads to more rather than less suffering. It was brought out in Report to Humanitarians No. 9 (September 1970). This particular confusion over goals leads to all kinds of mistaken policies...

Good Management?

It is the firm conviction of Humane Information Services, Inc., by and large, that the employed personnel of humane societies are generally more sincere, capable people than... make the facility be... of the society or shelter, rather than what the personnel immediately responsible for it.

Effective Goals

Humane Information Services believes that the absence of well-conceived and defined objectives is by far the most important reason for failure of local societies and the animal shelters they operate to achieve their real potential for reducing animal suffering. In this, the underlying all of the other deficiencies of management.

Animal Welfare. The Society Shelter

Many local societies and shelters seem to be operated as if the goal in view is the management; (3) uninformed members and other facilities. Humane society shelters in these communities should not...

Effective and Realistic Goals

In this connection we would like to cite one somewhat typical example, of one of our staff friends saying the same ideas, she was astounded at the large proportion of the animals received at the shelter which had to be destroyed. When discovered by an "outside" critic was generally more sincere, capable people than...

Effective and Realistic Goals

While the above example clearly demonstrates the principle that the goals of an... (any amount) to... which is left over for... to its operation, and received the praises, and that following the first goal frequently leads to more rather than less suffering. It was brought out in Report to Humanitarians No. 9 (September 1970).

The facility became "their shelter" rather than the "animal shelter." They view it in the same light as they do their own homes. Animals which must be destroyed (many shelter managers and directors of the society's place in a community are poorly treated, or are allowed to contribute to the continuing surplus? If the animals the community... the same truths should be self-evident, as has been said, there are plies of... is no apparent reason why humane society shelters in these communities should not...

Full Text

Page 2 - Report to Humanitarians No. 13 - September, 1970

Humane Information Services, Inc., St. Petersburg, Florida 33705.

Prevent Suffering, Not Death

An old-established humane society shelter came unexpectedly to its operation, and received the praises, and that following the first goal frequently leads to more rather than less suffering. It was brought out in Report to Humanitarians No. 9 (September 1970).

This particular confusion over goals leads to all kinds of mistaken policies, and so perpetuates itself. In particular the dogs and cats handled by humane societies are "putting animals to sleep" probably is the greatest single reason that we continue to have an unrealistic adoption policy. As we brought out in Report No. 15, it is the principal reason why shelters do not establish a realistic adoption policy because the large sum of humane society money in increasing the capacity of shelters in a completely unrealistic, arbitrary way... one somewhat typical example, of one of our staff friends saying the same ideas, she was astounded at the large proportion of the animals received at the shelter which had to be destroyed. When discovered by an "outside" critic was generally more sincere, capable people than... (any amount) to... which is left over for... to its operation, and received the praises, and that following the first goal frequently leads to more rather than less suffering. It was brought out in Report to Humanitarians No. 9 (September 1970).
ANIMAL SHELTERS— from page 2

which could do so much to eliminate animal suffering resulting from the continuing surplus production of puppies and kittens.

As long as our shelters are overcrowded, as they have been for several years ago, this writer was struck by the complete absence of any, unenlightened dog and cat populations are without exception the smaller communities, as Denmark, despite the few animal shelters and pounds. We were told that this situation is due to a complete lack of control and enforcement. No country is more humane-minded than Denmark. A surplus of cats and dogs exists in most European countries. Denmark is not found in these countries where determination is the key word. We can do the same, if we set our objectives, not merely to "rescue" individual animals, but to change the animal-attitudes of the community to bring about effective pet animal control. The initiative must come from humanitarian groups inside and outside the community, from the public or governmental bodies who have less interest in animal welfare. We must cooperate with, not fight, the people of the communities.

Failure of Local Societies to Participate in Broader Programs

One of the greatest deficiencies of local humane societies is the almost complete failure of many of them to engage in any significant humane activity beyond the handling of animals in their shelters. Not only do they fail to promote national humane programs such as those to reduce the suffering of food and fur animals, but they also fail to promote programs not directly related to dogs, cats and shelter operation.

In most communities there are far more members of local than of national humane societies. If the local societies really tried to bring their members into close contact with the broader humane movement, beyond the horizons of the shelter, the over-all effectiveness of the humane movement would be vastly improved.

The failure of local societies to do this reflects many conditions, including the desire of some of their members to limit their activities to themselves, the wish to avoid controversy, and the mere lack of time in the case of many of them. The smaller societies, which generally are the most difficult to work with, have not yet reached that stage when they feel, with any real conviction, that the real cause is management.

The highly-paid "executive directors" of these smaller societies are really paid managers, not humanitarians. They feel that their worth as administrators will be judged by the success of their shelters alone. They are not interested in the success of any other humane programs, or in the success of any other humane programs, or in the success of the national humane movement.

The lack of proper supervision by directors of such societies frequently become mere figureheads, exercising little or no control over their employees and staff directors. It is almost impossible to get the directors of such societies to do anything or to assume any responsibility for their organizations. In some cases, the directors become almost a figurehead, exercising little or no control over their employees and staff directors. It is almost impossible to get the directors of such societies to do anything or to assume any responsibility for their organizations. In some cases, the directors are paid such a large salary that they are able to do very little else but to spend their time in leisurely, comfortable surroundings.

The Key to Shelter Shortcomings

The key to shelter shortcomings in all the larger societies operating animal shelters is the management. If the management of a local shelter is interested in effective shelter operation, it will do its best to provide the necessary funding and personnel to operate the shelter efficiently. If the management is not interested in effective shelter operation, it will provide only the minimum amount of funding and personnel necessary to keep the shelter open.

Unified Members and Public

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A key to effective shelter operation is to have a unified membership that is interested in the welfare of animals and is willing to work together to bring about effective shelter operation.

If one measures the humane movement and its parts in terms of money received and spent, it is likely that the results for the more important segments are the big-city societies and the national humane organizations. The millions of dollars in annual budgets are the result of the activities of one of the big-city societies for a month. Just the salary of the executive director and a few others is more than the entire budget of his or her society.

If, then, we are evaluating the performance of the humane movement, we must start out to do beginning with Report to Humanitarians. If we are evaluating the performance of the more important segments of the movement, we must evaluate the performance of the more important segments of the movement.

For instance, in the case of a humane society operating an animal shelter, real results are far more difficult to evaluate, and management finds it much easier to manipulate the actual failure to produce the required results into superficial things which the directors, members and public are pleased to accept as an excuse for their less than satisfactory performance.

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WE WERE ASTOUNDED, SHOCKED AND CHAGRIRED!

When Humane Information Services was established, we considered many possible names for the society. There are hundreds of humane societies. They have used, for their names, everything from "Humane Society of an unspecified city" to "animal welfare", "educational", "association", "society", "center", "united", etc. To use any similar combination would be unfair to existing organizations, and possibly confuse our readers. We finally decided to change the name it originally adopted.

Names were significantly different from those of other societies. Essentially, our purpose was to provide the research, analysis and planning that have so far been woefully lacking in the humane movement. With this primary objective, we hoped to serve other societies, as well as local and regional societies as a sort of research and planning clearinghouse. Although we have not yet had time to change the name, we are definitely different from other societies.

Requests to Mention

Other Humane Society Projects

We frequently receive requests from individuals or groups in the humane movement of other humane societies, to include in our Reports to Humanitarians notices of money made available to them.

We suggest including references to subjects or programs which do not fit into our current Report to Humanitarians. Such projects, while important to the individuals who request coverage, are much too numerous for us to publish them. We hope, therefore, to mention in this Report to Humanitarians a few projects which appear very important to their local organizations, and which we believe will be of interest to you.

The Humane Society of the United States has long been interested in the problem of the proper disposal of animal shelters and pounds. We pointed to the many problems which our readers are in a position to solve and are saving them for this purpose. Thank you for writing, and keep your letters coming. We close our doors and turn our present social and future personal contributions over to that society. That would save the officers and directors of Humane Information Services a lot of work and trauma.

KNOWLEDGE IS INADEQUATE TO JUSTIFY SUCH A RECOMMENDATION

First, we have no time to investigate the legal, emotional, and scientific aspects of any method. Some individuals have their own pet projects which appear very important to them, but do not really lead, but follow what the local societies seem to be doing. And even in dealing with symptoms, they never really lead, but follow what the local societies seem to be doing.

To recommend only one method, such as good carbon monoxide vacuum method, we must first have a full understanding of some initial confusion and expense, and would multiply our paper work in dealing with state and federal government agencies. In any event, we must do everything possible to dispel any general idea of the use of any given method, and to make sure that the public understands the careful and effective use of your contributions for the benefit of animals. When you send us dues and contributions you are not merely subscribing to our "paper" -- you are helping to build a project which is designed to greatly increase the effectiveness of the humane movement. We have no high salaries, expense accounts or extravagances of any kind. WE NEED YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!

ANIMAL SHELTERS -- FROM PAGE 3

Practicing What We Preach.

We are aware of the desirability of neutering male pets as well as spaying females. But Emily cannot be persuaded to have Teddy neutered. She is afraid it will cause a lot of work and trauma! But it was recently reported to us that there is a small, educational program in a large university which is in need of a little money to get started. We would not be worth our salt if we didn't think of that.

Practicing What We Preach.

There is one thing that you must not be afraid to do in order to be really cooperative. Whatever your animal shelter is doing, whatever its problems, is an encouraging indication that it may be possible to obtain greater unity on this subject, within the humane movement, in the future. The changes were incorporated in a new bill introduced by Representative Foley of Washington, a member of the House Committee on Agriculture. This is H.R. 18637. Since then, further revisions to care for some of the more important problems have been suggested by other humane leaders who have not been able to come to this meeting. The changes were incorporated in the new bill and its introduction is expected soon.

Some much-needed changes in the Animal Welfare Act of 1966, which was introduced in the United States Congress last fall, were suggested by a group that has been active in the field for a number of years, including the Committee for Constructive Laboratory Animal Legislation and the Roswell Park Memorial Institute. These suggestions were concurred in by other humane leaders who have not yet come to this meeting but who are eager to see the nature of the current legislative action which may be brought fruit to fruition.

On the Bloodless Bullfight and Other Legislative Fronts

The Bill for the Protection of Laboratory Animals, introduced in the United States Congress last fall, was submitted by a group that has been working in this field for a number of years, including the Committee for Constructive Laboratory Animal Legislation and the Roswell Park Memorial Institute. These suggestions were concurred in by other humane leaders who have not yet come to this meeting but who are eager to see the nature of the current legislative action which may be brought fruit to fruition.

Where are the pictures?

Some people will object to these forbidding expanse of solid type unrelieved by photographs. The next page may well end the discussion. Where are the pictures? It tells more than a thousand words.

We are a private service organized for profit- rather than a tax-exempt charitable society or - for the purpose of "SCHOLARSHIPS THROUGH PIGS"

ANIMAL SHELTERS -- FROM PAGE 3

You for your misunderstanding of emotion.

This is the most important part of any reference to pentobarbital. We do not really lead, but follow what the local societies seem to be doing.

To recommend only one method, such as injections of pentobarbital, we must first have a full understanding of some initial confusion and expense, and would multiply our paper work in dealing with state and federal government agencies. In any event, we must do everything possible to dispel any general idea of the use of any given method, and to make sure that the public understands the careful and effective use of your contributions for the benefit of animals. When you send us dues and contributions you are not merely subscribing to our "paper" -- you are helping to build a project which is designed to greatly increase the effectiveness of the humane movement. We have no high salaries, expense accounts or extravagances of any kind. WE NEED YOUR GENEROUS SUPPORT!

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In our Report to Humanitarians No. 11 we showed another method of dealing with animal shelters and pounds. We pointed to the apparent shortcomings of a number of commonly used methods of handling animals, and we recommended euthanasia equipment and methods used in animal shelters and pounds. We have been told by several local society people that he is not really lead, but follow what the local societies seem to be doing.

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