The HSUS Helps You Prevent Suffering

by Lisa Morris

Animal workers' overriding concern is to reduce and ultimately prevent animal suffering -- an admirable goal, but one that sometimes may seem difficult to accomplish.

It seems easier to reduce animal suffering: Help just one homeless or abused animal, and suffering is reduced. Prevention of suffering is the true challenge, however, and for years, The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) has widely assisted local animal-welfare and -control groups with preventing animal suffering and with solving community animal problems.

The HSUS realizes organizations that document their successes and have a forward approach to solving animal problems (as opposed to complaining about their problems) are eventually relied upon as community resources. Local officials and the public respect such groups because they are made up of professionals who solve problems which are usually emotional and politically sensitive. Such public trust and respect only evolves after much hard work, planning, and program accountability by these organizations.

Continued on next page
Based on its expertise, The HSUS Companion Animals Section long ago developed minimum standards for sheltered animal-welfare and -control groups in order to help organizations improve their own basic level of services, to acquaint them with nationally recognized authorities, and to promote public recognition for their hard work and successes. These standards define acceptable animal sheltering, adoptions, rescue, cruelty investigations, and euthanasia, as well as an acceptable humane education program. (The HSUS also promotes minimum standards for humane education agencies and unsheltered animal-welfare organizations.)

Once a humane organization's staff and board of directors (or municipal officials, if it is an animal-control organization) reviews these standards, Companion Animals Section staff members will work with that group over a period of time to meet these objectives, which may take several months, if not years, to fulfill. An important feature of this process is a two-day on-site evaluation by HSUS staff members that includes a careful examination of animal care, facilities, general operations, record keeping, and financial records. At that time, routine animal euthanasia is observed. The HSUS subsequently presents the organization with a written evaluation based on these on-site observations, with suggestions and requirements for change.

The minimum standards are as follows. The agency

1. must not release shelter animals for use in biomedical research unless required to do so by law. The organization also must have a firm policy of opposing seizure of impounded animals;
2. must have a responsible adoption program that includes a spay/neuter requirement. An organization should be able to document that a minimum of 75 percent of all adopted animals have been sterilized;
3. must have a humane euthanasia program, administered by trained, competent personnel, that minimizes the animals' pain, fear, and stress;
4. must have a continual, effective humane education program, a continuous (24 hour) animal-rescue program, and an effective cruelty investigation program;
5. must have a shelter that is operated in conformance with HSUS guidelines and must be responsible for keeping informed and for informing others about state and national animal-welfare issues.

The barn cat deserves respect from the owner it serves! •

This article has been revised from the April 1984 Federation News, a publication of the Wisconsin Federated Humane Societies Inc. (P.O. Box 504, Stevens Point, WI 54481), and is published courtesy of Betty C. Seefluth, the federation president.
A small, rural humane society recently confirmed that every dog and cat it adopted out in 1983 has been sterilized, after its board and staff began a routine review and update of its procedures and realized the need for a strict adoption program and sterilization requirement.

The Walworth County Humane Society Inc. (Route 3, Delavan, WI 53115) discovered in early 1981 that more than half of the animals it adopted out in 1980 had not been spayed or neutered. Despite a requirement that the new owners have their pets sterilized, according to Dani Brellenthin, president of the organization, after only three out of every 10 adopters who had not sent the procedures and realized the need for a strict adoption program and sterilization requirement.

After consulting an attorney about a more complete, binding adoption/sterilization contract, the group introduced its first adoption application and developed a better record-keeping system in 1981.

In late 1981, a second, more comprehensive and informative adoption application was introduced, but the fact that prospective adopters were not always truthful when filling out the application caused continual animal problems. At times, staff members sensed that something was wrong about a pet placement but lacked the time or a system to determine the problem.

In 1982 the society began requiring 24 hours to verify the information on all adoption applications. A third version of the adoption application was introduced, and the new waiting period allowed staff members to uncover past or potential problems with prospective adopters, further protecting the animals in their care.

Staff members eliminated most of the stress they’ve experienced dealing with angry, rejected applicants by introducing a “Dear Prospective Adopter” letter. Given to every adoption applicant, it explains the society’s adoption procedure and lists typical reasons for approval or rejection of an application. Now, prospective pet owners are fully informed of the humane society’s adoption objectives before they fill out the application.

A fourth adoption application is currently in use and has improved record keeping. It consists of a separate, colored application for dogs and for cats and allows space at the bottom to record information from interviews with applicants.

“By taking the time and making an effort to ascertain prospective adopters’ attitudes toward pet ownership, we are not doing, not creating, animal problems,” said Brellenthin. “Our board and staff is committed to the fact that just finding homes for animals does not guarantee a successful adoption program.”

An attractive flier that simply explains the need for animal euthanasia and spay/neuter programs would be useful in shelter waiting rooms and if passed out to community residents.

Why Euthanize Animals? was produced by the Companion Animals Section of The Humane Society of the United States in cooperation with local animal organizations with the difficult task of explaining to an often unsympathetic and uninformed public the need for animal euthanasia and sterilization. Space at the bottom of the flier can be stamped with a local organization’s name, address, telephone numbers, and shelter hours.

A supply of 100 fliers costs only $2.75. To order, send a check or money order in U.S. funds to The HSUS, 2100 L St. N.W., Washington, DC 20037, and indicate PM2031 on your order. Allow three weeks for delivery. UPS cannot deliver to post office box numbers.

A local humane society is managing its growing membership roles and has discarded its manual adoption card-referral system through use of a computer system.

The Humane Society of Charlotte (P.O. Box 221028, Charlotte, NC 28222) is using an IBM PC with double disk drive, 256K, and an Epson printer, according to Patti G. Lewis, president. The group intends to use a word processor program to print its newsletter and a Lotus 1-2-3 program to handle its financial records.

“Because of our growing membership, we recently found it necessary to computerize in order to regain control,” said Lewis. “The humane society’s membership program prints the complete membership monthly, updates donation and membership totals, prints a monthly coupon sheet, prints labels for sending renewal forms, and prints approximately 2,000 labels for a monthly newsletter.

The organization recently began using a customized program for adoption referrals in place of its time-consuming manual card-referral system. “Matching requests from prospective adopters to animals in the card system often meant it took over twenty minutes to go through all the cards looking for one match,” said Lewis.

With the new computer Adoption/Referral Program, a specific type of animal can be located in seconds. This results in finding more homes for animals, which reduces the number of animals dumped beside the highway or otherwise abandoned by people who tire of waiting for space at the society’s shelter. At the time the group computerized, over 800 cats and kittens and over 400 dogs and puppies were listed on cards, awaiting entry into the shelter.

The Adoption/Referral Program consists of a program disk and two data storage disks: one for cats and one for dogs. Easy for a novice to operate, said Lewis, the program disk can be inserted into drive A, the data disk into drive B. Then, simply by pressing a button on the computer, the program automatically begins. After typing the date, one can enter or retrieve information, make adoption assignments, and more, and each step of the program allows the operator to change his or her mind.

There are three different categories of information that can be entered: people with animals awaiting adoption; people wanting to...
adopt a specific type of animal; animals currently within the shelter that are available for adoption. The following information can be recorded for each category:

- a person's first and last names
- home and business telephone numbers
- animal breeding, both pure and mixed
- animal sizes, "small," "medium," or "large"
- animal ages
- whether or not an animal is housebroken or litter trained
- two lines of animal description such as color, habits, temperament, and more

The computer can "find" information that has been entered in several ways, using any combination of the standard formula. For example, Lewis said one can locate all female poodles that are housebroken, or just all female poodles, or just all housebroken dogs.

An added feature is the computer's ability to match animals and people without the presence of a computer operator. Turned on in the morning, for example, the computer provides in just two hours a complete matching for any animal that is ready for adoption within the shelter or within the home of a donor. It also provides a printed list from which to call and inform potential adopters that the type of animal they are seeking is available. Lewis said the same program maintains all the shelter's animal adoption records, including a donor's name, address, and telephone numbers; the type of animal; its inoculation records, heartworm tests, spay/neuter history, identification tattoo number, rabies tag number, medication history, and age; and the adopter's name, address, and telephone numbers.

Although the Adoption/Referral Program was customized according to the Humane Society of Charlotte's specific needs, Lewis suggested that other animal shelters interested in a similar program should contact IBC Inc., P.O. Box 220443, Charlotte, NC 28222.

A Pennsylvania kennel manager has pinpointed a suspected but unconfirmed link between the use of some commercial flea collars and the deaths of several dogs, based on a review of her accurate, yearly records. Her experience exemplifies the importance of maintaining detailed shelter records.

Marion Damroth, who runs The Home of Frosted Sunshine in Shermans Dale, Penn., to raise and breed golden retrievers recently received her kennel records and journal entries back through 1981 and beyond to determine the cause of the recent death of one retriever, previous deaths of two other dogs, and previous unexplained illnesses among others. Although her findings are speculative, her thorough records have led her to believe the animals died or became ill after they were routinely, over the course of several weeks, bathed with a flea shampoo, each given a flea collar, and returned to kennels several hours after flea bombs were set off inside the enclosures. Various symptoms of illness were subsequently noted in the animals including blood in the urine, lack of coordination, vomiting, and physical collapse. Damroth believes her dogs experienced organophosphate poisoning due to the flea-control substances. She explained that compounds in such products seem to inhibit the enzyme that regulates the chemical that transmits nerve impulses through a body. Damroth said a laboratory analysis of blood can establish whether organophosphate poisoning has occurred. She explained that the normal established range of blood cholinesterase level for humans is between .61 and 1.50 (Delta PH), and the lower the reading, the more poisoning has occurred. Feather, her golden retriever who died last August despite veterinary treatment, reportedly had a .39 cholinesterase level.

According to Dr. Michael Fox, HSUS scientific director and director of the Institute for the Study of Animal Problems, the dogs' exposure to the flea-control products followed by their deaths or severe illness could be a coincidence. Since such a connection is difficult to prove at this time, Fox emphasized that animal shelters and kennels must maintain long-term, accurate records concerning the animals in their care. If a pattern of illness emerges, good records can help establish a cause and a remedy.

Nevertheless, Fox believes chronic exposure to pesticides can poison animals and cause them to be more prone to disease. He said certain breeds of dogs and cats are more delicate and, therefore, more susceptible to certain chemicals. He explained that a flea collar is simply one way of encountering toxic chemicals in the environment: Industrial and agricultural residues can be found in water supplies, and some pet foods contain varying amounts of lead. If an animal is receiving heartworm medication, for example, this could compound the effects upon it of other household chemicals such as bug sprays.

Since the pesticide in flea bombs is so concentrated, animals should never be placed in a kennel or room directly after their use. After flea bombing is completed, Fox suggested that the area be vacuumed to remove dead fleas and chemical residue. Flea collars placed in vacuum cleaner bags can kill live fleas on floors, walls, and furniture, preventing them from re-infesting the area.

Fox offered further advice: Animals maintained on a healthy diet seem to better resist fleas. Many pet-supply stores carry a fine-toothed flea comb which allows fleas to be combed out in water when an animal is bathed. Above all, said Fox, when an animal shows signs of illness connected to any commercial product, use of the product should be suspended until it's certain it isn't causing the problem, and a veterinarian should be consulted immediately.

Damroth would like to hear from others who have witnessed unexplained illness in the animals under their care. Write her at R.R. 1, Box 612, Shermans Dale, PA 17090.

Executive director of the Animal Humane Association of New Mexico Inc., in Albuquerque. Responsibilities include fund raising, community education, public relations, shelter and staff management, and clinic operations. Send resume to Michael Rex, MANM Search Committee, 4107 Diets Loop N.W., Albuquerque, NM 87107.
A humane society and a county animal-control department are jointly confronting a recent rabies outbreak that forced a county-wide quarantine after 17 raccoons and a pet cat were confirmed rabid. The society believes its observations during this crisis may help other groups that are concerned about the spread of rabies.

During the past four months, Orange County, Fla., and other central Florida counties have experienced a rabies outbreak, according to Frank R. Andrews, executive director of The Orlando Humane Society Inc. (616 Barry Street, Orlando, FL 32808).

Andrews believes use of humane live traps to catch suspected rabid animals does not target those that are sick and may actually present the community with a false sense of security. Andrews has concluded that sick animals are not likely to seek food or other bait inside a trap. Suzanne Jenkins, veterinary epidemiologist for the Federal Centers for Disease Control (CDC), assigned to the Virginia Department of Health, agrees. Jenkins said, "Loss of appetite is one of the first symptoms of animal rabies."

To date, Orange County animal officers have caught 237 raccoons, which were euthanized to be tested for rabies. Live traps caught 189 of them; only one was diagnosed "rabies positive," and this animal required several tests because the disease was in a very early stage and, therefore, difficult to detect.

The remaining 189 raccoons that were euthanized represent 80 percent of those trapped. Sixteen other rabid raccoons were caught by animal-control or police officers because they showed behavior consistent with rabies such as a staggering gait, extreme lethargy, or unprovoked aggressiveness. Despite Andrews' observations, several neighboring counties are employing live traps to catch suspected rabid animals and to determine the extent of the outbreak in their areas.

Andrews also noted that fewer cats than dogs receive rabies shots despite many owners' attitude that cats should be allowed to stray outdoors where they may likely contract rabies. Low-cost rabies clinics have been held at several locations in the county, and more pets were vaccinated -- 2300 to be exact -- but they were mainly dogs.

According to the CDC, the incidence of rabies in cats has surpassed that in dogs. Andrews believes the problem is that cat owners largely remain uneducated about the danger of rabies, since the cost of a rabies shot does not seem to be prohibitive.

The ten-day observation period for animals that have bitten people is not sufficient for animal-to-animal bites. The young rabid cat found in the county probably was attacked by a raccoon, said Andrews. Although promptly taken to a veterinarian for treatment of its wounds, two months passed before the cat was positively identified as rabid. In the meantime, veterinary personnel and other people were exposed to the sick animal, forcing them to undergo post-exposure treatment. Fortunately, Orlando Humane Society workers and Orange County animal workers previously had received preventive rabies inoculations. Accordingly, Jenkins, if an animal that is bitten by another animal has a current rabies vaccination, it must be receive a booster shot and be confined for three months. If the bitten animal does not have a current vaccination, it must be immediately euthanized or be kept in isolation for six months until it is determined the animal doesn't have rabies.

Andrews believes the public needs reassurance about the improbability of squirrels acquiring rabies. Humane and county officials have received numerous calls about potentially rabid squirrels, he said. According to Jenkins, there never has been a case of human rabies contracted from a squirrel bite in the medical history of the United States, but squirrels can have rabies, although it is rare. "It may be that most rodents are so small, the virulent disease or the trauma of a rabid animal's bite kills them before they can transmit the virus to others."

Across the nation, another pet cat bit four people, causing them to receive anti-rabies treatment, according to a Nov. 9, 1984, Salem Statesman-Journal report, confirmed by a Mr. Paul Greyhavens, general manager of the Humane Society of the Willamette Valley in Salem, Ore., an HSUS-accredited organization.

The cat bit a Yamhill County veterinarian and three other people before it was euthanized and confirmed rabid. It is the first confirmed case of rabies in a domestic animal in Oregon since 1974. "This is a serious problem," said Greyhavens. He emphasized that cat owners must be made to understand that cats are now a serious threat to cats that aren't vaccinated against the disease. A recently improved cat vaccine need only be renewed every three years.

Two people died in 1984 after contracting rabies: a 12-year-old girl in Texas and a 12-year-old boy in Pennsylvania. Neither had a history of exposure to a rabid animal, according to separate reports by the CDC. Local animal organizations must increase their efforts to control the spread of rabies through community education and periodic rabies vaccination clinics. Cat owners need to be fully informed of the danger of allowing their un inoculated pets to stray. Children must understand that they must not touch or pick up a dead or sick animal but instead should have someone call the nearest humane society, animal-control department, sheriff, or police officer for assistance.

Children must also be taught the importance of promptly reporting any animal bites they receive or witness. Many children and adults erroneously believe that the rabies treatment still includes 14 to 21 painful injections of duck embryo vaccine -- an idea which may frighten them into not reporting animal bites. In reality, patients now receive one injection of immune globulin, followed by five shots of human diploid cell vaccine in the deltoid muscle of the arm.

Shelter Sense Is Still a Bargain....

Shelter Sense, now 16 pages long, continues to be a bargain you won't want to miss. And, starting in April, when you subscribe for two years, you'll get the second year for half the price!
New Jersey animal-control officer is boosting his community's image of animal workers while promoting responsible pet ownership.

Norman Billings, animal-control officer for the East Windsor Animal Control Bureau in New Jersey (Police Headquarters, 80 One Mile Road, East Windsor, NJ 08520) for the past nine years, recently made headlines on two occasions.

In September, an apartment building fire left several families homeless. Officer Billings was summoned when a local police officer saw a dog run from the burning building. Risking smoke inhalation, Billings and the building manager searched the apartments for animals. One dog and four cats were saved, including two cats that belong to a resident who did not want Billings to enter his apartment. One of the four cats died despite efforts to save it.

Last spring, Billings awarded 22 certificates to pet owners he saw being kind to their pets and/or obeying animal ordinances. Billings also gave them cents-off coupons for pet food, which he arranged to do with the cooperation of several pet food manufacturers. Over 400 coupons were distributed, and Billings hopes to expand the program in 1985.

Cats may become sick and possibly die after they drink water from toilet bowls that contain commercial cleansers released when the toilet is flushed, according to Jane Harris of New Jersey. Harris recently wrote The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) to say she overheard a woman in a grocery store explain that her toilet bowl cleanser killed her cat.

Harris also warned The HSUS that pet sleeping and eating areas may be dangerous to animals if disinfected with household products containing coal tar, wood tar (including pine oil), and chemicals such as carbolic acid and cresol.

The HSUS emphasizes that household cleaners, paints, shoe polish, antifreeze, and other products that contain chemicals must be stored away from pets at all times. Better to be safe than sorry!

Some young people are learning to work with animals and the public in a new SPCA program that includes classroom- and on-the-job training and requires part-time work during the school year.

The Care Cadets are 12- and 13-year-old boys and girls who began training at the Louisiana SPCA (1319 Japonica Street, New Orleans, LA 70117) last June.
The Heartland Humane Society (S.W. Airport Road, Corvallis, OR 97330), is one of many animal organizations that has improved its operation through planning and determination, to the benefit of the animals it serves.

Formerly known as the Benton Humane Society, the group, headed by Lori Murphy, president, and Margaret Melvin, executive director, has expanded its educational program in accordance with HSUS standards by developing written outlines and materials and by defining educational objectives for area school children, teachers, and the community.

Now, over 90 percent of the animals adopted out by the humane society are spayed or neutered. In addition, the society has been instrumental in developing a low-cost spay/neuter program in which area veterinarians participate and in establishing differential licensing for dogs.

"The Heartland Humane Society should be congratulated for the impact it has had on the community and for the increase in membership as a result of its hard work and dedication," said HSUS West Coast Regional Director Charlene Drennon. "Lisa Morris of The HSUS said, 'The Heartland Humane Society has made great strides in helping to solve the pet overpopulation problem in its area. We look forward to watching it grow further in the coming years.'"
suffering comes after local organizations do their own hard work and commit themselves to that goal. Further, each HSUS regional office serves you by tracking legislation, animal abuse, personnel developments, and organizations' successes within its respective region. You can assist your regional office by informing it about regional animal events and problems as they occur:

**HSUS Great Lakes Regional Office**
735 Haskins St.
Bowling Green, OH 43402-1696
Sandy Rowland, director
(Serves Ohio, Ind., Mich., W.Va.)

**HSUS Gulf States Regional Office**
6262 Weber Road, Suite 305
Corpus Christi, TX 78413
William Meade III, director
(Serves Ark., La., Okla., Texas)

**HSUS Mid-Atlantic Regional Office**
Lamington Road
Bedminster, NJ 07921
Nina Austenberg, director
(Serves Del., N.J., N.Y., Penn.)

**HSUS New England Regional Office**
P.O. Box 362
East Haddam, CT 06423
John DoIt/Illers, director
(Serves Conn., Mass., Maine, N.H., R.I., Vt.)

**HSUS North Central Regional Office**
2015 175th Street
Lansing, IL 60438
Frantz Dantzler, director
(Serves Ill., Iowa, Minn., Mo., Wis.)

**HSUS Southeast Regional Office**
325 John Knox Road
Bldg. E, Ste. 203
Tallahassee, FL 32303
Marc Paulhus, director
(Serves Fla., Ga., N.Car., S.Car.)

**HSUS West Coast Regional Office**
1713 J Street, Ste. 305
Sacramento, CA 95814
Charlene Brennon, director
(Serves Calif., Idaho, Ore., Nev., Wash.)

If your organization would like HSUS assistance with expanding and improving its animal programs, write The Humane Society of the United States, Companion Animals Section, 2100 L St. N.W., Wash., DC 20037, to discuss a possible on-site evaluation. A set of HSUS guidelines for animal-shelter policies, pet adoptions, a humane education program, and cruelty investigation is available for $1. Send a check or money order in U.S. funds to the above address, and indicate AC4002 on your order.

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**REPRODUCIBLE**
A continuing feature to provide animal-control agencies and humane societies with material that will help educate the public on community animal control and responsible pet ownership.

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**You Love This Puppy Today.... Will You Love It Years From Now?**

Becoming a pet owner is a big responsibility. Your dog or cat will depend on you to help it be a happy, healthy member of your family. Are you prepared to give it the companionship, veterinary care, food, and shelter it deserves?

Here are some points to consider:

- Never let your dog or cat stray outdoors. Always walk it on a leash or carry it in a pet carrier. Don't neglect an indoor pet, however. Take a dog for regular walks outdoors. Provide a litter box and play time for cats.
- Give your pet a comfortable collar and an identification tag so that if you should accidently lose your pet, you can find it.
- Make certain your cat or dog receives regular veterinary care, including all necessary shots. Rabies shots will prevent your pet from dying of this deadly disease.
- Have your female dog or cat spayed and the male neutered. The operation will not change your pet's personality. Instead, it will reduce the tragic pet overpopulation and will be healthier for your pet. It is the responsible thing to do.

Years from now, you will be glad you were a responsible pet owner, and so will your pet!

*(Place your organization's name and address here.)*

This message can be clipped out and reproduced in quantity by your local printer for distribution at schools, shopping centers, libraries, and other community locations. Credit must be given to The Humane Society of the U.S. Remember to add your organization's name, address, and telephone number in the space by typing, typesetting or affixing your group's letterhead. You can also purchase advertising space for it in your local newspaper or use it in your organization's newsletter.
In the December/January Shelter Sense, I reminded readers about the expert training in animal control and sheltering at The HSUS Animal Control Academy. Five 1985 Academy sessions offer training in enforcement, animal health, public relations, shelter management, and more. Graduates receive college credit, make new friends, and have the opportunity to share ideas and concerns with colleagues.

Did you know that The HSUS also sponsors regional workshops each spring, which closely focus on local animal issues and laws to help animal professionals solve regional problems?

When planning your 1985 schedule, don't forget to include time to attend a regional workshop. As each workshop nears, the Companion Animals Section will mail a brochure and a registration form to you to fill out and return. Nevertheless, if you would like further information about our workshops, contact The HSUS office for your region, listed below with workshop dates and locations:

**March 14–16**
Wichita Falls, Texas  
Gulf States Region  
(Ark., La., Okla., Texas)

**Contact**
William Meade III, director  
HSUS Gulf States Regional Office  
6262 Weber Road, Suite 305  
Corpus Christi, TX 78413  
(512) 854-3142

**March 29–30**
Huntington, W. Va.  
Great Lakes Region  
(Ohio, Ind., Mich., W. Va.)

**Contact**
Sandy Rowland, director  
HSUS Great Lakes Regional Office  
735 Haskins Street  
Bowling Green, OH 43402-1696  
(419) 352-5141

**May 2–4**
Point Pleasant, N.J.  
Mid-Atlantic Region  
(Del., N.J., N.Y., Penn.)

**Contact**
Nina Austenberg, director  
HSUS Mid-Atlantic Regional Office  
Lamington Road  
Bedminster, NJ 07921  
(201) 234-2260

**May 9–11**
Orlando, Fla.  
Southeast Region  
(Fla., Ga., N.C., S.C.)

**Contact**
Marc Paulhus, director  
Southeast Regional Office  
325 John Knox Road  
Bldg. E, Suite 203  
Tallahassee, FL 32303  
(904) 386-3435

Wright is vice president of Companion Animals for The HSUS