Setting goals and getting to them

by Phyllis Wright

Time management experts tell us that we can get more done by setting goals and objectives for ourselves -- then planning the daily work that will take us to the goals. If you are like many animal agencies or societies, you spend your time on the day-to-day activities - animal pickup, rescue, adoption, record-keeping.

But what are your long-term goals? Are you solving the animal problems in your community? If your shelters are simply "revolving doors for animals" - processing the same numbers of dogs and cats each year - you are not solving your overall problem.

You can bring animal problems in your community under control by implementing three programs: legislation, education and sterilization. They spell LES - less cruelty to animals and less money spent on animal control.

As an example of a good ordinance, in Prince George's Co. (Md.), dog wardens can issue violation notices to owners of dogs running loose, rather than impounding the animals. This system is easier on the animal, places the responsibility properly on the pet owner, and provides revenue for the county.

The Los Angeles Department of Animal Regulation has reduced the number of animals processed through its shelters by 30,000 in the last five years due to three long term efforts - operating spay and neuter clinics, reducing license fees for sterilized animals and educating the public on the responsibilities of a pet owner.

Efforts like these can help you solve the animal control problems in your community, as you set your long-term goals and then plan the steps necessary to reach them.

Our goal in providing this publication is to help you reach your goals.

A six-month trial spay/neuter program for pets from low income families was launched in December by the Orlando (Fla.) Humane Society and the Central Florida Veterinary Association. Low income pet owners applying for the program are asked if they are employed, how many dependents they have, where the animal came from and if it is vaccinated and licensed. OHS Executive Director Dorothy Rodriguez determines then if the sterilization should be partially or wholly paid for by the OHS. A special collection box has been set up for donations to the program.

For their part, the veterinarians are performing the surgeries at one-half the customary price. Their spokesman is Dr. Fred Hall.

Rodriguez praises the veterinarians for their cooperation and stresses that the program is for the unfortunate animal that kind-hearted people have taken in, the animal that otherwise would end up at the shelter. "We are not catering to people who buy dogs as status symbols, no matter what their income."*

If you have a program for adoptions, fundraising, community education or other successful ideas -- or if your community has passed an animal control ordinance that is helping to solve the animal problems -- write us about it. Be sure to include complete information on the steps involved and the results. Each idea will be carefully considered for SHELTER SENSE.

This complimentary issue of SHELTER SENSE will show you what we're about. In it you'll find information about animal control ordinances, shelter construction and training for animal control personnel. The issue includes articles by people in our field that can help you improve your operations.

We've included a reproducible flyer that you can have printed in quantity at your local printshop for distribution to your community -- or placed in your organization newsletter or local newspaper.

Look through the issue -- if you agree that SHELTER SENSE will help you do a better job, start your subscription today at our introductory rate.

Just complete the coupon on the envelope inside SHELTER SENSE and return it with your check or money order to The Humane Society of the United States. A six-issue subscription is $5. Five or more 6-issue subscriptions to the same address are $4 per subscription. (This special multiple rate is for organizations with large staffs where several copies of each issue are needed.)

You will receive SHELTER SENSE bimonthly for a year. You will learn and share with other professionals in the field. And we think you'll enjoy your work more, too.

Sincerely,

Phyllis Wright
Director of Animal Sheltering and Control

In future issues SHELTER SENSE will cover such topics as cruelty investigations ... animal handling ... humane education ... adoption programs ... shelter management ... fundraising. Every issue will be of benefit to you. Start your subscription today.

Pilot spay/neuter program launched

Wright is director of animal sheltering and control for HSUS.