Humane Cat Trapping Is Your Responsibility
by Debbie Reed

The number of stray, domestic cats in the United States troubles people who care about their welfare, and the question of when and how to humanely trap them increasingly concerns animal workers. Trapping triggers controversy over property rights, community responsibility, humane handling and disposition, and more. Once the decision to trap cats has been made, however, organizations must establish a basic trapping policy that is practised regularly by workers and authorized volunteers.

There are between eight and 10 million unowned domestic cats in this country out of a total cat population of approximately 36 million, according to Guy Hodge, HSUS director of Data and Information Services. Since few localities have ordinances that require cat restraint by owners, animal-control officers don't routinely patrol for or impound stray cats. Yet, stray cats may be troublesome. The federal Centers for Disease Control, for example, reports that the incidence of rabies in domestic cats now outnumbers that in dogs. In addition, cats breed frequently,
addition to an ever-burgeoning cat population. Cats tip over trash cans. Cats use sandbox as litter boxes. The list of grievances seems endless. However, stray cats are also helpful. They control rats and other rodents, for example.

Cats are trapped in order to remove this nuisance from communities as well as to protect them and reunite them, if possible, with their owners. Proper trapping protects animals from starvation, disease, exposure, and human mistreatment. The public misconception that cats are independent and can take care of themselves has led many people to readily abandon pets or newborn kittens. Most animal professionals know -- and want the public to learn -- that domestication fostered genetic changes in domestic cats; deprived cats of some of their wild instincts and traits.

Domestic cats cannot survive without human companionship and care for very long. Situations that may require cat trapping are as varied as the cats themselves. A community resident may complain about the cats that continually knock over the trash can at night. A concerned citizen may notice a stray cat growing steadily thin. Feral cat colonies may haunt city alleys. Enclosed municipal property may house a growing number of stray cats.

According to R.R. Reuschling, director of Virginia's Prince William County Animal Control Bureau, in his article, "Humane Trapping," which appeared in the July/August 1983 Community Animal Control, jurisdictions that refuse to budget for or support a humane trapping program by their animal-control department are oblivious to sound and humane animal-control procedures, and elected representatives need to be educated by concerned, humanely-minded citizens. He added that humane live-capture traps are a financial investment that reduces man hours and, therefore, salaries. He believes workers should study the behavior of the species to be trapped, which will likely increase trapping success.

In 1982, Samantha Mullen and other volunteers obtained permission from the Ulster County SPCA (U.P.O. Box 124, Brabant Road, Kingston, NY 12401) to act for the society in capturing wild and domesticated cats that stray onto the Wallkill State Correctional Facility property in Wallkill, N.Y. Most of these cats are caught in humane live-capture traps and humanely euthanized by a licensed veterinarian or trained euthanist.

Advice on ways to influence local officials

by Ann Church

Continued on page 10

Photo Credits:
Cover, HSUS/McNees;
Page 2, HSUS/Will;
Page 9, HSUS/
Peninsula County SPCA;
Page 10, Judith
Halden;
Page 11, HSUS/Garvey

SHELTER SENSE (ISSN 0734-3078) is published by The National Humane Education Center, a division of The Humane Society of the United States, 2100 L St. N.W., Washington, DC 20037, (202) 452-1100.

Subscription rates:
Ten issues - $5.00 (US currency); renewals - $5.00 (US)
additional subscriptions to the same address - $4.00 each (US)

HSUS Vice President, Companion Animals ................. Phyllis Wright
Editor, SHELTER SENSE ....................... Deborah L. Reed
Production Assistant .......................... Lee Manary

©1984, The Humane Society of the United States, all rights reserved.

2/SHELTER SENSE/March '84

Often citizens see a local problem that could be easily solved if only a county or city government would act upon it. Someone may think, "Somebody should write a letter to the City Council and tell them...." Why not let that "someone" be you? Don't be one of many people who hesitate about contacting their local representatives because they are unsure about the "correct" way to correspond with them. In the political field, there is no more effective tool than public opinion.

Here are some guidelines for writing good, effective letters:

* Write legibly; your message is useless if not readable.
* Be concise.
* Send a personal letter -- ten times better than a form letter.
* Include your name and address in order to be taken seriously.
* Early in the letter, state the issue and refer to any specific bill or resolution numbers, if known, or give enough other basic information to insure that the legislator understands the topic you are discussing.
* State specifically what you want; for example, you may want support for a specific ordinance, introduction of legislation, arrangements for hearings, etc.
* Give personal reasons for your beliefs, and relate these feelings as much as possible to events in your and the legislator's district. (For example, there are so many stray dogs around a certain area, you fear children may be bitten; therefore, mandatory spaying and neutering laws are necessary.)
* Be friendly but firm. Do not make threats.
* Address any economic ramifications of the problem, if possible.
* Anticipate any concerns the legislator may have, and address them.
* Mention any positive action this legislator has taken before on any issue.
* Include newspaper articles or other relevant material that explains the issue you are discussing. Do not overload him or her, or the material will not be read.

There are no special rules for writing to legislators. Don't worry about the correct way of addressing them, either. All elected officials may be addressed as "The Honorable," when you know them personally, just call them by their names.

Remember, your message is the most important part of your correspondence. The U.S. Postal Service is very efficient about delivering letters to elected officials, and usually, a letter to any concerns the legislator may have, and address them.

* Mention any positive action this legislator has taken before on any issue.
* Include newspaper articles or other relevant material that explains the issue you are discussing. Do not overload him or her, or the material will not be read.

Ann Church is coordinator of state legislation for The Humane Society of the United States. She worked for former U.S. Sen. Birch Bayh of Indiana for five years. Prior to that, she handled state legislation for an Ohio government department for one year.
American tourists can influence the way animals are treated in many foreign countries if they write foreign officials about disturbing animal conditions they see during their visits. According to Peggy Porteau of the Asociacion De Lucha Para Evitar La Crueldad Con Los Animales, A.C. (Lope De Vega No. 316, Mexico 5, D.F.), tourists should write a brief, polite letter stating their concerns about animal abuse or neglect to officials of the country in which it occurred, no matter what part of the world it is in. A copy should be sent to one of that country’s major newspapers (check a hotel lobby for a newspaper) as well as to the local humane society in the U.S. (We suggest a copy also be sent to the World Society for the Protection of Animals, 29 Perkins St., P.O. Box 190, Boston, MA 02130.) Porteau further suggested visitors ask their hotel manager whom and where to write, which will simultaneously alert the hotel management to their concerns. Don’t worry about writing in a foreign language, Porteau said. Most foreign government offices, especially those that deal with tourism, employ multilingualists who can translate letters written in English.

"Some timid souls may think this is interfering," said Porteau. "This is not so. They will be letting these countries know what they like and what they don’t like. The officials want tourists’ business in the future."

A new four-page brochure about pet loss complements The Marin Humane Society’s euthanasia service, and the group is willing to share the publication’s art and format with other Shelter Sense readers. Produced by the Society’s education department (171 Bel Marin Keys Blvd., Novato, CA 94947), the brochure briefly discusses ways to help one cruelty investigator educate some pet owners and breeders. Barbara Woodall, cruelty investigator for the Humane Society of Seminole County (P.O. Box 784, Sanford, FL 32772-0784), carries a 5" by 7" color photograph of an open wound around a dog’s neck, caused when the animal grew too big for its chain collar, is helping one cruelty investigator educate some pet owners and breeders. Woodall said suspects often do not realize what happens when an animal’s collar is not periodically checked for proper fit. If appropriate, she may cite the federal Animal Welfare Act’s (AWA) “Specifications for the Humane Handling, Care, Treatment, and Transportation of Dogs and Cats,” which says, “If dog houses with chains are used as primary enclosures for dogs kept outdoors, the chains shall be of a type commonly used for the size dog involved and shall be attached to the dog by means of a well fitted collar. Such chains shall be at least three times the length of the dog as measured from the tip of its nose to the base of its tail and shall allow the dog convenient access to the dog house.” Woodall said, "Not one person has refused to place an adequate collar on an animal after these investigations unless the person simply doesn’t care...You would really be surprised how many people don’t realize the damage a chain can do. I strongly suggest all investigators carry such a picture to investigations. They will be amazed at the results."

For a copy, or to inquire about quantity orders, write Bart Campbell, director, Public Relations/Communications, ALPO Petfoods Inc., P.O. Box 2187, Allentown, PA 18001; telephone, (215) 395-3301.

Siegal has authored several well-known books, including Good Dog, Bad Dog and The Good Dog Book. He writes about pets for leading magazines and has appeared on TV.

Join the Newsletter Exchange

YES! Include our organization in the complimentary newsletter exchange, and mail us a free list of other interested groups for our own mail list.

ORGANIZATION NAME

ADDRESS

ZIP

NEWSLETTER NAME

Continued on next page
Organizing A Long-Term Development Program

by Carroll S. Thrift

Second in a series about organizational management

Beginning or revitalizing a fund-raising program is one of the most important steps a non-profit organization can take. It requires devoting extra time, with detailed thought and comprehensive planning, to developing a strong base from which to promote the organization and its many programs. Instead of focusing on short-term fund-raising projects, one must envision a long-term development program that can build upon itself and remain effective for many years to come.

Fund raising is the product of an effective development program and, generally, takes several years to show significant results. Deciding decisions, influencing decisions, planning awareness, and those of other non-profit organizations, may expect to see immediate fund-raising results. They may fail to allow sufficient time to establish a successful development program. Many organizations indicate they are struggling for daily financial survival and can't be concerned with long-term growth.

Ironically, it's usually these organizations that, in past years, have neglected to establish a sound development program to set the stage for organizational growth. Non-profit organizational development can be divided into three areas: planning, public relations, and fund raising (see illustration). In many respects, development can be compared to "marketing" in business and industry. Coordination of all promotional functions is necessary for selling and advancing an organization.

PLANNING

Planning is the basis of a development program -- the road map leading the way to long-range advancement and growth. Although planning may not be the direct responsibility of development, a development program can't succeed without it. It's impossible to implement a public relations program or raise funds without knowing an organization's future goals and objectives. Planning has been described as the rational determination of

* where you are;
* where you want to go;
* how you are going to get there, and
* how you will know when you have arrived.

Planning is the process whereby objectives are established and resources are allocated, and it is oriented to results rather than self-perpetuation. With today's numerous challenges and changes, humane societies that don't plan or effectively manage their operations will either regress or fall altogether.

PUBLIC RELATIONS

Public relations is the backbone of a comprehensive development program, with the same basic goal of advancing the organization. Public relations definitely affects an organization's funding. It makes a difference in attracting volunteers, educating the public, influencing decisions, providing recognition, generating enthusiasm, and stimulating the public's involvement. A successful public relations program creates for the organization a positive image and promotes "goodwill" within the community and among the group's members.

There are two types of public relations programs:

1. Remedial - "fire fighting"
2. Planned - "fire prevention"

With the "fire fighting" program, major time and effort is spent putting out "fires" that result from non-communication and damaged communications. A pertinent example would be the humane society that must constantly defend itself against suggestions of animal-control policies to an uneducated public. The fires continue to break out due to absence of a planned public relations program. This approach is costly and less effective.

The planned or "preventive" program is based on facts, with a definite blueprint to further the organization's goals, and it is directed at desired objectives. Using a planned public relations program, a humane society can, for example, attract volunteers to educate the public and systematically prove the worth of its policies. The planned program is essential for effectiveness and involves four steps:

1. Fact Finding - A systematic search to determine specific facts about the organization and the public with whom the organization is communicating. This research can reveal areas of puzzlement before they create a large body of negative public opinion.
2. Planning - A comprehensive outline of the public relations plan, including statements of problems, goals, objectives, timetables, priorities, preferred media, budgets, personnel requirements, etc.
3. Communicating - Actual implementation of the public relations plan.
4. Evaluating - Formal and informal evaluations of the program and its effectiveness.

It is important for the program's content to convey, over a period of time, the organization's history, ideals, and achievements as well as to publicize its people, policies, services, and future projects.

Continued on next page
New phone books will group all pet listings together, making it
easier for pet owners to locate needed services, as a result of
an agreement between the American Boarding Kennels Association
(ABKA) and the National Yellow Pages Service Association (NYPSA).
The unified listing will include subsections for each specialty
such as "Dog Grooming." Major publishers of yellow pages are
NYPSA members, so the new listing will affect most yellow page
sections throughout the nation. For more information, contact
ABKA, 331 N. Union Blvd., Colorado Springs, CO 80909; telephone,(303) 635-7082.

April is Pets Are Wonderful Month. Sponsored by the Pets Are
Wonderful (PAW) Council, this salute to dogs and cats will be
divided into four specially-themed weeks. Participating humane
societies, animal shelters, veterinary hospitals, and other
organizations can request a free PAW Council kit containing
suggested activities and events as well as innovative publicity
ideas. One suggested event is a pet parade. The humane Society
of the United States reminds participants to keep animals other
than dogs confined to carriers during a parade and to watch all
animals carefully for signs of stress. Write Pets Are Wonderful
Council, PAW Month Kit, Dept. T, 500 N. Michigan Ave., Chicago, IL
60611.

A recent conviction for animal abandonment -- reportedly the first
of its kind in Casper, Wyo. -- was made possible by an imaginative
judge, willing testimony by witnesses, and prompt location of the
couple who abandoned the animals.

According to Cathy English, president of the Wyoming SPCA (335
Lark, Casper, WY 82609) and the animal-control officer for Mills,
Wyo., two stray female, mixed-breed dogs were abandoned by George
"Bobby" Braun and his girlfriend, Rosella Williams, as they
suddenly moved from their rented apartment last August. The
apartment's new tenant surrendered the animals, "Shasta" and
"Jody," to the Casper Humane Society, which English happened to be
visiting. The Society could not house the dogs, so English housed
them at the Mills Animal Shelter.

Soon located, the defendants pleaded not guilty to a cruelty-to­
animals charge but were given a chance to change their plea by the
judge, Steven E. Davidson. The two pleaded guilty on Jan. 4, 1984.
Williams was sentenced to 10 days in jail and a $100 fine
(plus court costs), suspended on the condition that by Feb. 6,
1984, he work for two consecutive days for a community service
organization. Braun received 10 days in jail and a $100 fine
(plus court costs). The jail sentence and $60 of the fine were suspended
on the condition he arrange with English to participate in a
Wyoming SPCA humane-education program no later than Feb. 6,
1984. English used some HSUS films in the program, among other
materials.

"Creative sentencing, such as that given by Judge Davidson, may
ultimately benefit society more than fines or jail terms," said
English. "This kind of sentence may help defendants understand
their responsibility toward all living things and the right to
exist without pain, fear, or deprivation.

Continued on next page
"Trapping," continued from page 2

technician. A small number of semi-domesticated cats are spayed or neutered and returned to the Facility. William C. Quick, superintendent of the Facility, said in a letter to the SPCA, "The program...has been extremely effective....We have been impressed with the level of service...and are grateful to this group for the immense results they have achieved." Mullen and the other volunteers have trapped cats in various other locations and at odd hours. "We’ve been catching cats in some weird places, like the roof of a hotel," she said.

Several companies manufacture safe, humane live traps. For example, the Tomahawk Live Trap Company (Dept. C, P.O. Box 323, Tomahawk, WI 54487; telephone, (715) 453-3550) makes reliable traps and will send product literature upon request. Mullen baits a trap using less than a teaspoon of strong-smelling cat food (she recommends tuna) placed on a pie section of a paper plate. Approximately one tablespoon of food is also placed at the opposite end of the trap, beyond the metal door-tripping plate. Mullen may line the trap floor with newspaper, which entices a shred or trap-shy cat to step directly on the trip plate to trigger. Traps are usually covered with cloth to calm a cat and prevent it from thrashing around the trap and injuring itself. She warns, however, that newspaper lining and cloth trap covers may flap when it is windy and cause confusion. She makes certain the rear trap door is securely latched to prevent the animal’s escape.

Reuschling suggested certain traps could be modified for better trapping results. The No. 107 Tomahawk Live Trap for a cat, for example, may work better when the pedal is moved approximately 4 inches closer to the front and/or if the trigger plate is made 5 inches wider. Since curious cats can trip a trap without entering, he suggested the trap be placed against a wall, post, or other obstacle to block the rear door, while the external triggering device is positioned beside another wall or obstacle. The trap can then be weighted on top with bricks or a heavy object.

Before a volunteer traps cats for a humane organization, he or she must obtain written permission for each trapping case from an authorized representative of the board of directors or from the shelter manager. (A standard form, signed and dated, looks very professional.) This helps protect a volunteer and the organization from being misunderstood by the public. A release form should also be signed by any citizen or organizational representative who requests that stray cats be trapped. People who trap should maintain a log that lists the names, addresses, and telephone numbers of citizens or groups for whom the trapping was done, the dates the property in question was inspected or the trapping was performed, the number and description of animals trapped, and the disposition of the animals (whether euthanized or returned to owners).

Each worker and volunteer who traps stray cats should receive a pre-exposure rabies vaccination, given in a simple series of shots. When a trapper is bitten by a cat, he or she should immediately consult a physician to report the bite and receive treatment, and the animal should be dealt with according to the state law regarding rabies.

Continued on next page

WANTED - Animal-control supervisor to administer entire animal-control program for Prince George's County, Md., outside of Washington, D.C. Significant supervisory experience in enforcement and shelter management required. Salary, $22,541 to $30,185. Apply by March 13 to Recruitment and Examination Division, Prince George's County Office of Personnel, County Administration Bldg., Upper Marlboro, MD 20772.

WANTED - Director of Animal Regulations. Responsible for planning, organizing, directing animal-control program for county and city. Supervise staff of nine, public relations, budgeting, euthanasia. Strong, proven administrative and public-relations skills required. Submit resume, salary history, references to Mesa County Personnel Dept., P.O. Box 897, Grand Junction, CO 81502, by April 20. 40B.

WANTED - Executive director for progressive Tampa, Fla., humane society. Need strong administrative skills; experience in public relations, budget preparation, fund raising. New facility underway; experience here helpful. Write Humane Society of Hillsborough County, 3607 N. Armenia Ave., Tampa, FL 33607. (Mark personnel and Confidential, President of Board of Directors.) To apply, must be committed, ready for permanent Tampa residency.

WANTED - Shelter Manager. Supervise staff of 10 and 170 volunteers. Send resume to Anderson Animal Shelter, 1000 S. LaFox, Elgin, IL 60120. No phone calls, please. 6
Traps must be closely monitored to protect cats from as much fear and physical discomfort as possible. Animals should never be left in traps. They should be removed or humanely euthanized immediately, whether it's night or day. Anything less than this is simply unacceptable and should be reported in instances. Never trap an animal if a cold spell, storm, heat wave, or other weather-related problem is pending. The HSUS recognizes the value of humane, live trapping for animal control as long as it is done by professional animal workers or citizens who have been thoroughly trained and formally authorized to do so. For example, a volunteer who sets live traps during the summer and then goes to the beach if only for a few hours -- has violated trapping ethics. Many people, no matter how well meaning, lack the expertise to humanely trap and dispose of animals. They could trap a rabid animal. Someone who does not, or who improperly tranquilize a trapped cat may try to remove it from the trap and be seriously injured. Unknowledgeable people may trap a stray, but owned, cat and dispose of it illegally.

Mullen may tranquilize unowned or seriously ill trapped cats before euthanizing them in order to reduce unnecessary psychological and physical stress. Only people who are skilled at administering a tranquilizer to an animal should be allowed to do so. Leon Nielsen, author of Chemical Immobilization in Urban Animal Control Work and executive director of the Wisconsin Humane Society Inc. (4151 N. Humboldt Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53212), recommends a combination of two or more compatible or complimentary compounds as, perhaps, the best dosage. (The HSUS recommends a combination of Rompun and Ketamine, also known as Ketaset, Ketalar, Vetalar, Ketact, and Ketaneat.)

Once the decision is made to euthanize a trapped cat, it should be done without removing the animal from the trap. (If there is a legal requirement that cats be held in the shelter for a definite period of time, or if it is highly likely that a cat is owned, take it to the shelter, attend to its basic needs, but don't stress it unnecessarily.) Euthanasia via intravenous injection of sodium pentobarbital may not be advisable for a trapped cat unless a tranquilizer is administered first. If the cat escapes within a confined area such as a veterinarian's office, a blanket can be placed over it to help calm it as it is promptly returned to the trap. It may be advisable to euthanize the animal using an intraperitoneal injection, particularly if it is feral or difficult to handle. Only skilled personnel should do this; otherwise, an intestine or other organ may be inadvertently punctured, causing the cat to suffer. Likewise, intracardiac injections should only be given by highly trained people.

In some cases, a trapped cat may be spayed or neutered and immunized, then returned to its original environment, such as a farm. It is a good idea to establish a system for identifying such animals since they may be trapped again in the future. Some people advocate cropping the tip of one ear. The HSUS strongly objects to this practice because, like tail cropping or declawing, it hurts and disfigures the animal. A more desirable alternative is to secure a tiny button inside one of the cat's ears (similar to a pierced earring) although permanently fastened. Another alternative is "freeze branding," a process that marks an animal's identity. A strong marking program usually paves the way for additional support within a development program such as large gifts, deferred gifts, and special events.

Until communities enact sound cat-restraint ordinances, combined with active spay/neuter programs, stray cats may continue to cause community problems, and the animals will suffer from human neglect and cruelty. A humane, effective cat-trapping policy will help alleviate problems for people and animals.

"Development," continued from page 7

FUND RAISING

Fund raising follows good planning and public relations and reflects good business: preparation, execution, and follow-through. It must begin with a few basic approaches: Programs, or events and then be gradually expanded when these are perfected. It makes sense to be efficient by properly using volunteers' time and getting the greatest return. In other words, "Go where the money is, and maximize your profits."

The long-range development program should promote three primary areas of giving:
1. Annual
2. Planned
3. Capital Drives

Although planned giving and capital drives are important, annual giving and related events are the first and key elements of a funding program.

Annual giving raises basic support money (bread and butter funds) and it develops your organization's credibility. Annual giving can be fun, it's short term and repeatable, it helps funds activities and provides leadership training. An organization increases community visibility through its annual fund-raising program. While continually identifying new donors, the program provides opportunities for donors to increase the size of their future gifts.

Kinds of Annual Giving
1. Membership (most common)
2. Direct mail
3. Gift clubs
4. Memorials/Honors
5. Corporate gifts
6. Telephone solicitation
7. Door-to-door solicitation
8. Special events

Caution: An annual giving program should not be built around special events. Special events can raise money, but they also pose the risk of losing money. Special events should only complement the program.

Membership Development

The membership program is most commonly used by non-profit organizations for annual giving. Membership programs provide goodwill support and are an excellent recruitment tool for broadening the organization's constituency. A strong membership program usually paves the way for additional support within a development program such as large gifts, deferred gifts, and special events. Membership development is an ongoing, yearly function and requires continued efforts.
Spring brings new life! However, while rebirth should be a happy occasion, animal-welfare and -control workers know it won't be for millions of puppies and kittens that will never have a healthy, happy home. The problem can only be solved when all pet owners have their pets spayed or neutered. It's up to you to tell them so.

Local area humane organizations and animal-control agencies could co-fund a large billboard or an advertisement for the local newspaper or radio and TV stations, promoting the need for and benefits of spay/neuter surgeries. Many area veterinarians are willing to cooperate with animal organizations to spay and neuter animals. Besides the additional publicity for you, they'll receive some new clients! Why not set up a payment plan that matches funds with pet owners for the operations, or ask veterinarians to place you on a revolving payment plan?

Pet owners should be told that it is wrong to allow females "one heat" or "one litter" before being spayed. Neutered males will have less desire to roam and will be less aggressive, more gentle. The operations won't change a dog's or cat's basic personality, either. Ideally, animals should be altered when they are still young. Design a special promotion to reach owners of puppies and kittens aged six months to one year.

Gather together your staff, organize your strategy, and send the spay/neuter message to the public. The animals are depending on you!