Serving on a humane society board can be tremendously rewarding. But as one humane society officer put it, “It’s a lot more than bringing cookies to a few meetings.”

“The board is the accountable party,” says Dr. Mark Sills, president of Human Services Institute. (Based in Greensboro, North Carolina, the Institute offers training and consultation for nonprofit organizations.) “The board has the legal responsibility for running the organization and setting the policies.”

Sills observes that newcomers to nonprofit boards sometimes do not grasp the extent of their obligations. “It’s important that boards have clear policies established about what the member’s role is and provide orientation to make sure new members understand the policies.”
As Director, I am the hinge between board and staff.

He adds that misunderstanding of the board member’s role is not limited to new members: “We’ve never trained a board that didn’t have that problem. Some people who are the most experienced are the most confused because they’ve been sitting on poorly run boards.”

PAWS, a humane organization in Lynnwood, Washington (P.O. Box 1037, Lynnwood, WA 98046–1037), is addressing this issue by preparing a manual for boards that parallels the organization’s employee manual, with policies, job descriptions, evaluations, and more.

PAWS Executive Director Tim Greyhavens is also an advocate of professional training for board members. “In a lot of organizations, there are programs and seminars for staff and volunteers, but board members are the least well-trained. A lot of people haven’t served on boards before, and they’re floundering. The organization needs to make board training part of the budget.”

Model for Board Meetings

Human Services Institute has studied hundreds of nonprofits to determine what constitutes a well-run organization. Sills reports, “In the typical well-run nonprofit, boards meet only about four times a year on average, but they have very important meetings.’’

“Before the meeting, the executive director provides statistical information on what services have been provided, the status of the budget, a cash flow analysis, and anything else of relevance to the board’s policymaking role. “The board then spends time discussing the information, reflecting on it, asking questions, thinking about policy implications, and making decisions. These meetings tend to be well structured with a lot of accountability.”

Between meetings, Sills reports, the best-run boards receive regular reports, usually monthly, on finances and programs. “Occasionally, problems arise with staff or funding, and it may be necessary for an executive committee, but not the full board, to meet between full board meetings.”

Building Smooth Relationships

The board’s relationship with the executive director is not limited to new members: “Some people who are the most experienced are the most confused because they’ve been sitting on poorly run boards.”

While board members may rely on information received from officers (see “Three Duties for Board Members”), Sills urges boards to “look for their own information, no matter how good the executive director is. This means listening to the public to see how people perceive the group. What public image does the society have? Are members coming in? Is there a correlation between what they’re hearing in the community and what they’re being told at the society?”

In this and other matters, Sills recommends that the chairman of the board, in particular, “be proactive, and not wait on the executive director to make agendas or provide information. The chairman needs to be actively seeking information and informing the board. It’s very important.”

When Not To Get Involved

Sills cautions against board involvement in daily shelter operations, clear-cut policies defining the working relationship between the board members and staff must exist.

In Fayetteville, Arkansas, board members of the Humane Society of the Ozarks (P.O. Box K-9, Madison, NJ 07940), describes it this way: “The hinge of the relationship is the executive director. The board is responsible for supervising and evaluating the director on a regular basis. The director has the responsibility of explaining the organization mission to the staff. The board maps the mission, and the staff executes the mission.”

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Three Basic Duties for Board Members

H umane organizations are chartered by their respective states, and each state spells out the fundamental duties of board members. In general, directors should ensure that the organization is run in a businesslike manner, with well-thought-out policies and procedures.

HSUS General Counsel Roger Kindler explains that, depending on the law in the state where the humane organization is incorporated, the board of directors can often delegate responsibility to an executive committee between meetings of the full board, and that board members are entitled to rely on information given to them by the organization’s officers.

“Directors have their own lives,” says Kindler, “and they’re not expected to have hands-on control at all times. But they are ultimately responsible for the management of the organization.”

When board members actually work alongside staff in daily shelter operations, clear-cut policies defining the working relationship between the board members and staff must exist.

To prevent confusion, clear-cut policies and procedures govern the board members’ working relationship with the staff.

“One under the policy we have,” says Lib Horn, animal services director, “a board member who wants to make a suggestion about shelter operations can bring it to the shelter committee, which meets every week. Any board member can present something to that committee, and that’s where the decisions are made and sent to the full board for approval.”

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SHELTER SENSE/OCTOBER 1990
The Dues-paying Member

What about the society’s dues-paying members? Mark Sills recommends that the board draw expertise from the membership for committees. “Board members should form the nucleus of any committee, but I encourage nonprofits to involve more people in the function of the organization. It’s also a good way to train people for the board.”

Along this line, Ed Sayres reports that St. Hubert’s Giralda has formed an advisory board, including some of the society’s top donors and most interested volunteers, to help the board. The advisory board “brainstorms and gives us advice primarily on fund development and special events,” says Sayres. “They provide us with community contacts and new corporate relationships and have become a farm team for the board.”

Speaking of Money

One major board responsibility is ensuring adequate funding for the organization. Mark Sills notes, “The board has to carry the ball. They can delegate work to the executive director, and there are certain things the staff is better equipped to do, but the board is responsible.”

Sills adds that certain types of fund raising—such as approaching corporations—are best carried out by the board. The executive director can accompany a board member to a meeting with a corporate executive to provide technical support, but “the most persuasive appeal comes from a volunteer board member rather than paid staff.”

Fund raising is one of the prime duties that the board must carry out.

What About Liability Insurance?

Ed Sayres, president of St. Hubert’s Giralda, says, “It’s a question that we hear from prospective board members, and one that we didn’t hear before. What about liability insurance? It’s a riskier time to be on a nonprofit board.”

Because board fiduciary duties are on the rise, every humane society should have adequate liability insurance. A regular liability policy for the organization will provide coverage in case of lawsuits by other directors or by the society’s members. Such insurance may pay to defend directors and officers against charges of negligence but would not cover intentional misconduct.

Most how to have discouraged some people from serving on nonprofit boards. Many state legislatures have attempted to relieve this problem by providing directors that provide directors of directors’ new degrees of shielding from personal liability.

For more information, contact Dr. Mary Sills of the Humane Society research and program offices. When people ask me how I came to be in the animal business, I tell them it was an accident. I didn’t set out to be in the animal business, but I never regretted the decision. It’s a very responsible job,” says Lib Horn, of the Fairfax County Department of Animal Control (4500 West Ox Rd., Fairfax, VA 22030), which recently received the county’s highest honor for her tireless work on behalf of animals.

“Fund raising is one of the prime duties that the board must carry out.”

Sills does note that some foundations will not make a grant unless all of the requesting agency’s board members are contributors. “But they don’t care so much about the dollar amount as the commitment. Asking board members for a donation is common, but it doesn’t have to be a substantial amount.”

Boards in the 1990s

Mark Sills reports that the nonprofit sector has been the fastest growing sector in the U.S. economy over the last several years. “Government programs developing in the 60s and 70s were shifted to the private sector during the 80s, and the lion’s share has fallen to the nonprofits. They’ve had to raise to the occasion, becoming more sophisticated and more professional.”

Ed Sayres, of St. Hubert’s Giralda, says, “I see a transition between board members who came on ten or twenty years ago because they liked animals and those coming on the board now. “They have different responsibilities now. I don’t want to sound callous, but loving animals is not enough anymore,” says Sayres.

Humane Society Board Member’s Checklist

- Does your organization have a clear statement of purpose?
- Are your organization’s policies set forth in writing and available to all directors and staff?
- Does the organization have adequate insurance?
- Are all documents in order relating to state charters, tax exemptions, permits, and other matters?
- Is there ongoing planning and implementation of fund-raising efforts?
- Do the policies address the underlying causes of animal problems in the community rather than just treating the symptoms?
- Are goals and programs based on a realistic assessment of the animal problems in your community?
- Are there policies for board members’ qualifications and responsibilities?
- Are all board members up-to-date and fully informed on all financial, program, and legal matters?
- Is planning an integral part of the board’s agenda?
- Are board meetings frequent enough and well-run enough for good decision making?
- Does the board have available professional counseling on legal and accounting matters?
- Are all new ideas given a fair hearing?
- Are staff members given enough guidance and information to do their jobs?
- Are there policies and procedures for resolving disputes?

Community Humanitarians Receive Awards

By Geoffrey L. Handy

In two separate awards programs, humane workers at the community level have been recognized by government and veterinary groups. Carol A. Taylor, humane education specialist for the Fairfax County Department of Animal Control (4500 West Ox Rd., Fairfax, VA 22030), recently received the county’s highest honor for her tireless work on behalf of animals.

Taylor was one of seven county government and school employees chosen for the 1990 A. Heath Outham Memorial Award. The honor is given by the county for accomplishments that advance and improve public service to county residents. “The results of Carol’s impact on the community may not be seen for another generation,” said Director Barbara Snow in her nomination.
letter, “for the values a child learns cannot be mathematically calculated.”

Taylor’s varied accomplishments, however, were easy to note. In 1989, she and her canine teaching companion, a mixed-breed terrier named Abbey Schmutz, gave some 250 presentations to over 6,000 schoolchildren. In addition, she adopted 34 elementary school teachers through the National Association for Humane and Environmental Education’s (NAHEE) “Adopt-A-Teacher” program, and distributed her own newsletter to all county schools and many private ones.

Outside the classroom, Taylor co-produced a weekly “Adopt-A-Pet” program with a local television station, spoke at meetings of community groups, coordinated low-cost rabies inoculation clinics, and worked with special-needs groups. Taylor also continued her work with a support group she co-founded three years ago for people grieving over the loss of their pets.

In June 1990, Taylor’s humane education program was also recognized for excellence by the National Association of Counties.

In another awards program, the New York State Veterinary Medical Society (NYSVMS) recently paid tribute to several individuals and one organization involved in local humane work. As part of their 100th anniversary celebration, NYSVMS awarded a Centennial Gold Medallion to 55 persons or groups that had made significant contributions to animal welfare, veterinary medicine, and other animal-related areas.

Five award-winners recognized for their accomplishments in community animal protection were:

- Bessie Baker of the Animal Birth Control Society of Western New York, who directs a low-cost spay/neuter program and was instrumental in establishing an “Emergency Fund” to help those who cannot afford veterinary care for their injured or sick pets.
- Dr. Herbert Barshem, a veterinarian and board member of the Humane Society of Rochester and Monroe County, whose work over the years has resulted in a close working relationship between the humane society and the veterinary community.
- Margaret Geraghty, executive director of the Chemung County Humane Society & SPCA, whose efforts have included setting up a cooperative spay/neuter assistance program (which has also been recognized for excellence by The HSUS), organizing a Certified Euthanasia Technician Training School at Cornell University, and coordinating an annual rabies clinic and education program.
- Frank Rogers, executive director of the Humane Society of Rochester and Monroe County, whose leadership has resulted in the formation of a cooperative low-cost spay/neuter program, an active investigations department, and an “animal lending library,” which brings animals into the classroom to teach children about responsible pet ownership.
- The Central New York SPCA, which plays an integral part each year in NYSVMS’s “Demonstrations in Veterinary Medicine,” an educational exhibit at the New York State Fair that allows visitors to witness the live surgical spaying or neutering of dogs owned by area pet owners.

Civil “Notice and Order” Process Can Help Resolve Dangerous Animal Cases

By M. Kathleen Prevost

On June 11, 1986, Mr. Gregg Roberts sent a letter to the King County (Washington) Executive regarding the vicious tendencies of his neighbor’s German shepherd, Harv. The dog was charging their common fence line and exhibiting vicious behavior towards Robert’s children. Although the dog was maintained inside a fenced yard at most times, it was seen “at large” at least once, chasing and harassing passers-by.

Under King County animal-control ordinance provisions at that time, a humane officer issued a warning notice to the neighbor. Between June 1986 and December 1987, Animal Control received several more complaints regarding the dog’s “fence fighting” behavior. Because the dog was not in violation of the ordinance, i.e., he had not been seen at large by animal control officers or injured anyone, officers could only issue further warning notices in response to these complaints.

On January 30, 1988, Mr. Patrick Monahan was walking his Terrier on a leash when Harv escaped from the fencing and attacked the Terrier, causing severe injuries. Harv’s owner later received a criminal citation, was found guilty of harboring a dangerous dog, and was fined.

The case illustrates problems inherent in the dangerous dog provisions of many jurisdictions’ animal-control ordinances. One problem is that dogs—not the criminal justice system—are usually identified as vicious or dangerous only after they’ve seriously injured or killed a person or other animal. As in the above instance, however, many bite cases follow circumstances that should have given warning that a potentially dangerous situation existed.

Another problem is that even after a criminal court finds a pet owner for the vicious actions of his dog, steps are rarely taken to ensure that the potentially dangerous situation is corrected. Criminal courts are often unwilling to remove an animal from its owner or require that measures be taken to prevent similar incidents from happening again. The use of the criminal justice system to handle dangerous dog cases rarely results in a satisfactory solution. In the long term, this eventually erodes public confidence in animal control or humane agencies’ ability to effectively respond to and abate community complaints.

In 1988, however, King County found a way to effectively intervene in situations involving dangerous and potentially dangerous dogs before serious problems occur or reoccur. It involves the use of civil processes instead of the criminal system.

King County, like most communities, already

Identifying dangerous animals and requiring their confinement are hallmarks of King County’s law.
In King County, a confinement order requiring perimeter fencing could correct this potentially dangerous situation before a serious incident occurs.

had existing civil processes in place to resolve cases involving violations of the county ordinance that lie outside the criminal code (e.g., kennel, taxicab, and property tax violations). So they implemented a dangerous dog section in the county ordinance that expanded the use of the civil “notice and order” process to include animal-related violations.

The result is that they now resolve instead of react to public concerns while protecting the rights of the pet, pet owner, and complainant. The use of civil process in dangerous and potentially dangerous dog cases requires active participation from both the complainant and the pet owner, provides for preventive measures to be put in place, and ensures a better life for the pet through improved confinement and care.

Here’s how the King County notice and order process works: When an animal is declared a dangerous nuisance through citizen complaints or on-view violations, a “notice” of that declaration and an “order” to comply with certain requirements are issued to the owner. Violations range from noise nuisances to dangerous animals. The ordinance limits action on “nuisance” cases, e.g., trespass or barking, to a fine (although the issue violators, a “notice” of that declaration and an “order” to comply with “any act endangering the safety of any person, animal, or property of another, including, but not limited to, biting a human being and attack on a human being or domestic animal without provocation.” This allows action to be taken regarding both dangerous and potentially dangerous animals.

The order usually mandates that the owner of the animal in question satisfy certain general requirements prescribed by the director of animal control. These requirements include confinement, training, control, or removal of the animal from King County. Confinement orders, for example, may require constructing a dog run with shelter suitable to comfortably house the animal when outdoors, allowing the dog off property on leash only (in non-leash law areas), muzzling of the dog when off property, and perimeter fencing. In general, the responding officer recommends confinement requirements and works with the pet owner to implement them.

Once the notice is served, the animal owner has the right to appeal to a five-member board of appeals, which is appointed by the King County Council to rule on a variety of civil cases.

If the notice and order is appealed, the pet owner does not appeal within 14 days, the order goes into effect and the owner has 30 days to comply with it.

If the notice and order is appealed, the pet owner must present his/her case in front of the board. The county presents its own case, including direct testimony from witnesses and complainants. Appeals take anywhere from 30-60 days to be heard. If the appeals board does not agree with the decision of the board, he or she may appeal directly to superior court for relief. Enforcement of the order is stayed during all appeals.

If the order is upheld, animal control officers check compliance with the order through regular inspections of the property and contact with the complainants. Should the pet owner not comply with the order or should further incidents occur, the process then allows for the removal of the animal to another jurisdiction. (King County intends to revise this section to allow for the euthanasia of dogs found to be incorrigible or whose owners refuse to or are incapable of confining or controlling their pets. This approach is more reasonable than moving the animal into another environment.)

It is the element of prescribing preventive measures that makes the civil notice and order process successful. Punishment is not the goal; compliance is. The process allows the owner to keep the pet and makes him or her a participant in the solution to the problem. It outlines the steps and conditions necessary to provide proper care and confinement of a nuisance animal, and gives the animal control agency the power to enforce these conditions.

By requiring the owner to pay attention to his or her pet’s activity, it places the responsibility...
In the Harv case. Although Harv’s owner was found tort in these cases has been lax or irresponsible did nothing to improve his fencing, which left room. Harv was required to be maintained in the responsible ownership. It requires owners to make the proper property on a leash.

The civil notice and order process targets this irresponsible ownership. It requires owners to make changes that will prevent future problems, restore harmonious relations in the neighborhood, and allow the keeping of a pet whose life might otherwise be at risk.

And, in the end, that’s exactly what happened in the Harv case. Although Harv’s owner was found guilty of harboring a dangerous dog and fined, he did nothing to improve his fencing, which left a potentially dangerous situation. Under the newly adopted ordinance section, however, a notice and order of confinement were issued to the owner requiring him to construct a kennel run and improve the perimeter fencing on his property. Harv was required to be maintained in the run while outside and muzzled when walked off the property on a leash.

Harv’s owner complied with the notice without an appeal and constructed the run and fencing. Since then, King County Animal Control has received no further complaints.

How Notice and Order Has Worked in King County

From January 1989 through August 1990:
- Total notice and orders issued: 174
- Orders for confinement: 114
- Orders for removal (for dogs with one prior bite incident): 11
- Cases appealed that were upheld: 56
- Cases appealed that were overturned: 2
- Cases appealed that were modified (orders reduced in severity): 5
- Cases still pending (either being appealed or being given a chance to comply within 30 days to comply with confinement order): 35

You may feel like “barking” at callers, but have your answering machine present a caring message. You may feel like “barking” at callers, but have your answering machine present a caring message. The civil notice and order process targets this irresponsible ownership. It requires owners to make changes that will prevent future problems, restore harmonious relations in the neighborhood, and allow the keeping of a pet whose life might otherwise be at risk.

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The image that bothers me the most informs you are. Your message should also request that callers leave names and numbers where they can be reached. Advise callers that they will be called back as quickly as possible. Clearly state where to call in case of an emergency.

Remember, your answering machine is a valuable tool. Make the best of it. You can project the image of a concerned, caring person in a number of ways. Your recorder can be used to give office hours, adoption hours, or times when dogs are returned to owners. If you’ve recently picked up an injured animal and it’s being held at the vet’s, you can leave a description of the dog or cat and the name of the clinic at the end of your message. You can also remind callers of the beginning of a new license period, or advertise your rabies clinic a month prior to the event.

Don’t be afraid to change your recording. You may choose to advertise a special event or give winter or summer warnings for pets. Record seasonal messages concerning safety for pets at Christmas, the Fourth of July, and Halloween. Give the number to call for low-cost spay/neuter information. You can even end your message by explaining the need to license dogs and put identification on cats. The possibilities are endless, but they all serve to help people realize that you are a loving, caring person concerned about the welfare of animals.

You’ll be amazed at the difference you can make with the help of your answering machine. All it takes is two minutes of your time—two minutes well spent.

The Friendly Answering Machine

By Penny Schiller, ACO for the Town of Yarmouth, Massachusetts

As a member of the Massachusetts Animal Control Association, I hear many answering machine recordings made by animal control officers. It always disturbs me to hear recordings that are not used to their advantage or, even worse, are detrimental to their agency’s image.

The message that bothers me the most informs the complaint will not be acted upon. It’s your rabies clinic a month prior to the event. The study did not count the number of domestic pets that were also killed upon discovery of the smelly bait, but federal officials admit that hunting dogs have fallen victim to the device. In addition to killing untold numbers of animals, these guns pose a threat to the public.

You may feel like “barking” at callers, but have your answering machine present a caring message. The civil notice and order process targets this irresponsible ownership. It requires owners to make changes that will prevent future problems, restore harmonious relations in the neighborhood, and allow the keeping of a pet whose life might otherwise be at risk.

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The message that bothers me the most informs the caller that unless he or she leaves a name, the complaint will not be acted upon. It’s understandable that ACOs or humane officers prefer to have a complete description of every situation reported, including the reporting party’s name, address, and phone number. But many people choose to remain anonymous and may have good reasons for doing so.

Regardless of whether a name and number have been left, there has still been a request for help concerning an injured or abused animal or a violation of state or local law. A dog reported to be abused or running unrestrained is a problem that needs handling whether a name and number are left or not. A loose dog is a loose dog.

I also frequently hear answering machines with rude messages left on them. Many times I have called to speak to an ACO only to be greeted by a recording that sounded as if it was made by an angry drill sergeant. One message actually ended with, “And please, no screaming!”

When deciding what message your department should leave, keep in mind that this is often the first impression you are going to make on the caller. Depending on your message, you can leave a very good impression or a very bad one.

Your message should be clearly spoken, friend-
In November 1989, Humane Society Director Betty Pullen received a call from the Deur/Stap Company, a 12-person marketing communications firm in Grand Rapids committed to helping two non-profits each year with marketing campaigns. Account Supervisor Susan Jerovsek explained to Pullen that Deur/Stap was willing to do the work, and an outside partner, the agency overseeing ADC, would be able to provide additional help.

The two parties soon held a series of meetings so that the company could learn about the humane society's needs and objectives. "The humane society felt that they were misunderstood and that people thought of them primarily as an adoption agency and a place to take unwanted pets," said Jerovsek.

So Deur/Stap came up with public relations materials that stressed the broad number of services provided by the society and the fact that the organization received no tax money. The company designed brochures, posters, T-shirts, and buttons featuring bright, colorful, cartoon-like graphics and the theme, "The Humane Society. It's For Every Body."

"We wanted to produce something positive that would make people smile and feel good when they thought of the humane society," said Jerovsek. "The company said, 'Look, you do heavy enough stuff every day. You need something to lighten up your message.'"

Deur/Stap used its extensive contacts in the advertising industry to get nearly all the materials donated, from paper to printing. The company's own designer, Roger Humesger, created the artwork, and an outside partnership donated its creative renderings of animals dance across all the materials produced for the humane society.

The M-44 cyanide gun does what it is supposed to do—kill coyotes. But the presence of poison guns on these lands has also put people and their pets at risk. These devices are designed to discriminate and evaluations of placement would be safe and effective at targeting coyotes. The presence of poison guns on these lands is now hundreds of miles away but can return the dog with another trucker coming through. All he asks is that the pet owner wire him money for the trip. Of course, once the pet owner sends the money, he never hears from the "trucker" again.

Cats Involved With The Law?

The Companion Animals Division of The HSUS is compiling information on laws and ordinances dealing with cats. If your local Humane Society or animal control has passed or is considering legislation involving cats, we would appreciate hearing from you. Please send copies of legislation as well as any materials, surveys, or other information pertaining to this issue. Please respond to Rita Rindy, HSUS, 5430 Grovenor Lane, Suite 100, Bethesda, MD 20814.

Guide Helps Teachers and Classroom Pets

Should a school teacher have a classroom pet? The answer to this controversial question usually boils down to this: whether or not a classroom pet will backfire depends on the care, commitment, and know-how of the teacher. That's why the Marin Humane Society (171 Bel

Most coyotes aren't livestock killers, but federal measures kill thousands under this guise each year.

with a warning sign, but a child could still pull at the baited tube and be exposed to cyanide. And dogs will discover the scent bait long before the coyotes. Your help is needed to convince the Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 18 49 C St., Rm. 5660, Washington, DC 20240.

Firm Donates PR Materials

It's not every day that a humane society receives a call out of the blue from a company willing to donate its professional marketing services. But much to their surprise and delight, that's what happened to the Humane Society of Kent County (1890 Bristol, NW, Grand Rapids, MI 49504).

The Humane Society of the Humane Society's needs and objectives. "The humane society felt that they were misunderstood and that people thought of them primarily as an adoption agency and a place to take unwanted pets," said Jerovsek.

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"We wanted to produce something positive that would make people smile and feel good when they thought of the humane society," said Jerovsek. "The company said, 'Look, you do heavy enough stuff every day. You need something to lighten up your message.'"

Deur/Stap used its extensive contacts in the advertising industry to get nearly all the materials donated, from paper to printing. The company's own designer, Roger Humesger, created the artwork, and an outside partnership donated its creative renderings of animals dance across all the materials produced for the humane society.

The M-44 cyanide gun does what it is supposed to do—kill coyotes. But the presence of poison guns on these lands has also put people and their pets at risk. These devices are designed to discriminate and evaluations of placement would be safe and effective at targeting coyotes. The presence of poison guns on these lands is now hundreds of miles away but can return the dog with another trucker coming through. All he asks is that the pet owner wire him money for the trip. Of course, once the pet owner sends the money, he never hears from the "trucker" again.

Cats Involved With The Law?

The Companion Animals Division of The HSUS is compiling information on laws and ordinances dealing with cats. If your local Humane Society or animal control has passed or is considering legislation involving cats, we would appreciate hearing from you. Please send copies of legislation as well as any materials, surveys, or other information pertaining to this issue. Please respond to Rita Rindy, HSUS, 5430 Grovenor Lane, Suite 100, Bethesda, MD 20814.

Guide Helps Teachers and Classroom Pets

Should a school teacher have a classroom pet? The answer to this controversial question usually boils down to this: whether or not a classroom pet will backfire depends on the care, commitment, and know-how of the teacher. That's why the Marin Humane Society (171 Bel
Marin Keys Blvd., Novato, CA 94949 has developed a useful new guide for educators called Critters in the Classroom! Guidelines for the Selection, Care, and Handling of Classroom Pets.

This 32-page booklet is geared toward making sure a teacher understands the demands of a classroom pet before he or she brings an animal into the classroom. It even offers alternatives to having a live animal in the classroom.

It then provides guidelines for the selection of a pet, preparing a class for the pet, handling the animal, and necessary supplies. Care sheets for eight common classroom pets are also included.

Written specifically for Marin County teachers by Humane Education Specialist Mickey Zeldes and a nine-member teacher advisory board, Critters in the Classroom! is useful for teachers in any school district. To order the booklet, send $5 per copy plus $1.50 each for postage and handling to Marin Humane Society, Critters in the Classroom!, at the address above. Special rates for larger quantities are available. For more information, call (415) 883-4621 ext. 258.

Resource of Guide Dog Schools

Many animal protection agencies receive questions about seeing-eye dogs and how blind people can obtain a guide dog and the necessary training. Until now, there has been no single source for this information. But guide dog users Edwin Eames, Toni Ann Gardner, and Avrama Gingold have compiled A Guide to Guide Dog Schools, which answers many frequently asked questions and provides information about the programs of the ten schools in the United States.

The introductory chapters in the guide provide an overview of what a guide dog can offer a blind person and answer many general questions about how the schools operate. The remaining chapters describe the individual programs of each school, covering location, cost, schedule of activities, contract obligations, and application procedures.

All ten of the schools mentioned in the guide stress responsible dog ownership to their students and devote several sessions to the care and medical needs of their dogs. Strict, contractual provisions exist for the removal of a dog from a student who does not care for or use the dog properly. Prospective guide dogs are trained by positive reinforcement, and students learn how to keep up this training at home. At this time, none of the ten schools accepts dogs from shelters, although many of the dogs are donated. No information on hearing dogs or other types of assistance dogs is provided.

Printed copies of the guide are available for $5.00. Cassette sets for NSL, four-track, slow-speed players are available for visually impaired persons for $3.50. For more information or to order, write to Dr. Edwin Eames, 3376 N. Wishon, Fresno, CA 93704, or call (209) 224-0544. Checks for orders should be made payable to Disabled on the Go.

Before Flying Freddie to Frisco...

Take care to help make his trip as safe as possible. Even though the federal Animal Welfare Act is designed to protect animals traveling by air, accidents have happened. To minimize the risk to your pet, follow these recommendations:

- Be aware that federal law requires that dogs and cats be at least eight weeks old and fully weaned to travel by air.
- Make sure your pet is healthy enough to travel. Many airlines require a health certificate from a veterinarian issued no more than ten days in advance of the flight.

- If you have a pug-nosed dog, know that air travel can be stress-free for the pet as possible. Book a direct, non-stop flight to minimize mistakes. Avoid booking a flight during times when the temperature will be hot or cold.
- If possible, travel with your pet. You can either take the pet along as carry-on baggage accompanying you as a passenger (but only for small animals), or have the pet flown as excess baggage in the cargo compartment of your flight. Pets can also be transported as air freight through the cargo system (for when the pet travels unaccompanied), but keep in mind that mistakes occur when pets are not on the same flight as their owners.
- Purchase a travel kennel that meets all federal requirements for size, strength, ventilation, and markings. Include a tag on the outside of the carrier with your pet’s name, destination, and the name and telephone number of the person who should be contacted in case of emergency. That information should also be included on an ID tag attached to a collar on the animal itself.

• Make advance arrangements with your airline 24-48 hours before departure so that the airline will expect your pet. If you are flying with your pet, it is a good idea to notify the flight crew that your pet is on board.

• Before shipping, do not feed your animal for six hours. Small amounts of water are all right before the trip.

• Finally, in the event of injury or death to your pet, report the incident to the Animal & Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), United States Department of Agriculture, 6505 Belcrest Road, Hyattsville, MD 20782.

[This space for your organization’s name and address.]

Provided by The Humane Society of the United States.
Board and Staff Work Together

By Phyllis Wright, HSUS Vice President, Companion Animals

This month’s cover article addresses a critical component of any humane society’s efforts to protect animals: the role of the board of directors. A well-informed and educated board can make a great difference in a humane group’s effectiveness in the community.

The board of directors is responsible for setting the policy of the organization, deciding on long-range and short-term goals, and planning activities to reach these goals. In order to meet these responsibilities, board members must be familiar with the day-to-day functions of the staff, including the hard reality of destroying surplus animals.

With this knowledge, the board of directors acts as the steering wheel of the organization. It must continually view the total picture of accomplishments and goals for the future and make decisions that will benefit the most animals with the resources available.

This is rarely an easy task. Give and take must come from both the board and the staff, because the goal of the organization as a whole is to balance the handling of immediate problems with the need to implement effective long-range programs to relieve animal suffering.

Board members are a visible force for an organization’s work on behalf of animals. Community support comes not only from the staff’s daily work but from the relationships board members have with many members of the community. They present the organization to the public, making its accomplishments and goals known. A combined effort including both staff and board members can only foster community support. Working successfully with the board of directors is essential to creating a better world for animals.