I wanted to share a story about a small change at Second Chance Animal Center that we feel has been a positive one for our animals and our staff.

In 2010, we discontinued our use of prong collars. The staff wanted a more humane collar that provided comfort for the shelter dogs and also offered our people a more effective tool when working with dogs who were not accustomed to wearing a collar and walking on a leash. The new collars have been successful, and the staff have used them as educational resources for humane treatment and good dog-walking habits with adopters. The staff encourages adopters to continue to use these collars and offers them at a reasonable price, giving our shelter a small added source of income and ensuring the dogs who leave the shelter have a safe and secure collar.

What has been an added boost for us has been our relationship with the Orvis Co., which has worked closely with staff to provide products to make our dogs’ stays at the shelter more comfortable. When the company offered to assist with donated no-slip dog collars, they took it one step further and agreed to monogram the collars at no charge. With the assistance of Jim Evans, vice president of human resources, inscription ideas were exchanged, which resulted in a message on each collar: “Respect, Love, Adopt.” Our staff feel these three words are so important and want adopters to be reminded of their thoughtful decision to adopt. Additionally it is an opportunity to share an important lesson to those who happen to notice the collar and read the simple but insightful message.

— Doug Radziewicz
Executive director, Second Chance Animal Center, Shaftsbury, Vt.

Facebook fans liked our picture of a happier, hairier Chunk, the dog in the opening spread of “Rescued from Squalor,” our November-December 2010 story on hoarding. (We posted the photo on our Wall, but it also appeared on p. 6 of Animal Sheltering’s November-December 2011 issue.) Chunk, shown above with his new people, seems to be living the high life. “He doesn’t look ‘lost’ anymore,” wrote Gina W.

Facebooker Kary-Ann S. liked the article we posted on spot-cleaning, a better way to clean cat cages that results in less stress (and thus less disease) for shelter kitties. “Great article!” she wrote. “We have this as part of our volunteer training.” Thanks, Kary-Ann—that’s exactly what we’re here for!

“Here for a Reason” (July-August 2011) highlighted the small town of Sulphur, Okla., where a dog had survived a euthanasia attempt and became a celebrity dog with numerous offers of adoption.

The article referenced the networking of animal lovers in that area and their hopes of a new shelter to serve the towns of Sulphur and nearby Davis. Readers might be interested to know more about that network, which has been working hard toward long-range solutions to community companion animal problems during the last few years. The 501(c)3 Davis Oklahoma Animal Volunteers unites animal advocates from Sulphur and Davis in activities to benefit all animals in those localities.

Since 2005, their mobile clinics have spayed or neutered more than 1,600 pets of low-income households. In the past seven months, they have raised $25,000 toward construction of a new animal shelter that will serve both Davis and Sulphur. They raise funds through operation of a thrift shop and an assortment of other projects.

It is an uphill struggle, but the Davis Oklahoma Animal Volunteers, under the capable and energetic leadership of Audrey Ridlehoover, is steadfastly advancing the cause of companion animals in Davis and Sulphur.

— Clova Abrahamson
Bartlesville, Okla.