Innovative Grant from PetSmart Charities® to Help Save More Lives

Imagine being able to plot onto a map all the animals that enter your shelter. Visually tracking trends in your community is now possible with geographic information system (GIS) technology, giving animal-welfare professionals a better, more complete picture of the problems facing cats and dogs in their communities.

PetSmart Charities® recently awarded the ASPCA® (The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals®) more than $231,000 to expand this cutting-edge GIS technology to help animal-welfare groups identify risks and develop life-saving programs to reach at-risk pets in their communities. And through GIS technology, communities can more effectively allocate spay/neuter resources to address these intake numbers.

“This innovative program will allow us to save more lives,” says Dr. Emily Weiss, ASPCA vice president of Shelter Research and Development. “The maps let us see data in new and dynamic ways to better target and focus programming and better measure our impact. By learning where dogs and cats are coming from, and what the demographics of those populations are, we can bring services directly to those locations and stop the flow of pets into shelters.”

For example, visual maps showing where the greatest number of kittens are coming from in a community can help groups target spay/neuter services to reach free-roaming cats and owned cats in these areas. Afterwards, groups can monitor subsequent kitten intakes to evaluate their success.

The PetSmart Charities’ grant will enable the ASPCA to provide up to seven communities with this cutting-edge technology as well as develop online training opportunities and how-to tools for animal-welfare professionals.

“We are proud to partner with the ASPCA in another innovative way that will have a tremendous impact on how we target efforts and funding to save pets’ lives,” says Susanna Della Maddalena, vice president and executive director of PetSmart Charities. “This geographic data will give animal-welfare organizations an invaluable micro view of shelter intake trends and patterns that will help pinpoint the contributing factors and lead to solutions.”

More than 16,051 pets’ lives were saved during PetSmart Charities final National Adoption Weekend of 2011. Read more about the weekend on page 4.
Bones of the Business: Tips for Working Smarter

Creative ways to rethink a specific element of the important work you do. If your organization is stronger, you can do more for the animals!

This quarter’s topic: Positive Customer Service: Helping Pets by Helping People

Challenge: Recent surveys reveal that many people find animal-welfare agencies hard to find, hard to understand, and hard to work with—yikes! Unfortunately, news of one negative experience can spread quickly through the community. Remember, you depend on your community for their support through adoptions, donations, and positive word-of-mouth referrals. So build goodwill through your interactions with the people who visit your agency.

Solution: To help people, we need to communicate effectively. Improve your agency’s customer service skills by thinking about the other person’s perspective. What kind of experience do people have with your organization when adopting, phoning, searching your website, surrendering, volunteering, or even donating to your agency?

Four Elements of Service
1. What you provide to the public—all of your services and programs
2. How you provide it—your procedures, responsiveness and information systems
3. Where you provide it—availability, physical environment and websites
4. Who provides it—the human element: tone, language and approach

Basic Courtesy
• Honor the golden rule. The golden rule still holds true: treat others as you would like to be treated when you seek information or assistance from any business.

• Be responsive. Return calls and emails in a reasonable time. If you can’t respond right away, give an automatic explanation of when they can expect a reply.

• Be easy-access. Current, thorough, and easy-to-use websites and phone systems are vital tools and are usually the first way that people experience your agency. Are you available at the times people need you?

Every Time is the First Time
• Be patient. Most people only have a few interactions with an animal-welfare agency in their lives. So how would they know what you do, how the process works, or what is expected of them?

• Be clear. Even if you’ve heard that question or given those instructions a thousand times, it’s the first time for the person on the other end of the conversation. Avoid jargon and abbreviations and don’t assume people know much about your organization.

Listen with a Stranger’s Ear
• Watch your language. Like all specialized fields, animal-welfare agencies use jargon and abbreviations that don’t make sense to the rest of the world, like TNR. Use “normal” vocabulary when talking to the public and spell out acronyms.

• Watch your tone. Our tone and body language make up at least 50% of how we are perceived. Don’t let your frustrations be visible. Use your body language and tone to indicate that you are listening and care about their concerns.

If you’re a supervisor, listen to how your staff and volunteers communicate with visitors. Have someone listen to and critique you too. We can all use a reminder now and then about how we’re perceived by others.

For an excellent training tool, check out the workbook Animal Friendly, Customer Smart by Jan Elster at ShelterSkills.com.

For more ideas about effective customer service in animal welfare, contact Kit Jenkins, Program Manager, at kjenkins@petsmartcharities.org

Adopting More than 500 Pets in 48 Hours

Looking for a unique way to get pets adopted? The Central Oklahoma Humane Society set up balloons, bright lights and huge tents in a PetSmart® store parking lot to kick off their Midnight Woofness Mega Adoption Event. This 48-hour marathon adoption event kicked off at midnight on Friday, October 14 and continued through 5 p.m. on Sunday, October 16. Twelve adoption organizations participated in what is now publicized as the largest adoption event in Oklahoma history. As a result, 586 dogs and cats found new homes that weekend. Check out the festivities at MidnightWoofness.okhumane.org.

Midnight Woofness was one of more than 60 Community Adoption Events sponsored by PetSmart Charities® in 2011.

People line up to adopt a pet during the Central Oklahoma Humane Society’s “Midnight Woofness.” A record-breaking 586 pets were adopted during the special adoption weekend that ran for 41 hours straight in a PetSmart® store parking lot.
Congratulations to the Virginia Beach SPCA for their Foster-Lite for Community Service program. This expanded initiative addressed several challenges for the agency, from expanding their foster care program and saving the lives of more kittens to addressing community hours for young people.

The Challenges

1. “Most of the public was unaware that unweaned kittens were not accepted by other shelters and that they were routinely euthanized,” says Sharon Adams, Executive Director for the Virginia Beach SPCA. “Our agency tries to provide foster care for them until they are ready for adoption. But we received 271 kittens from May through August—kittens that needed a few extra weeks of care and socializing before being ready for adoption. We needed more foster volunteers to save these lives.”

2. “Students of all ages were asking to volunteer at the Virginia Beach SPCA to get their community service hours for school,” says Stacy Smith, volunteer and Foster-Lite Coordinator for Community Service. “But you have to be 13 years and older to volunteer. So we looked for opportunities to help students fulfill their community hours that didn't involve them coming to the shelter.”

The Solution

Two unlikely problems melded into one wonderful solution for the Virginia Beach SPCA. Instead of relying on the most experienced foster volunteers to take in unweaned kittens ages five to eight weeks old, Smith worked with local schools to recruit other students. Foster families take a foster care orientation program and receive home inspections prior to receiving kittens for their one to four week commitment. Experienced foster volunteers serve as the liaison between the animal shelter, school and families, answering questions and guiding them through the process.

Students in the school also help promote the program and recruit other students. Foster families take a foster care orientation program and receive home inspections prior to receiving kittens for their one to four week commitment. Experienced foster volunteers serve as the liaison between the animal shelter, school and families, answering questions and guiding them through the process.

The Results

- **Saves time.** By allowing experienced foster volunteers to serve as a point-of-contact for families and schools, the shelter receives fewer day-to-day calls with questions about foster care.
- **Builds the foster care program.** Families may only commit for a few weeks, but the shelter expects their experiences to inspire other families to get involved as well as develop future potential foster volunteers.
- **Increases potential adoptions.** When kittens are out in the community, foster families share their experiences with friends, which helps promote the program, entice more potential foster families, and increases adoption overall.

How has your shelter maximized volunteer time and talents? Could other shelters implement your idea for their benefit as well? If so, you could be our next MVP winner! Submit your MVP application by visiting [PetSmartCharities.org/mvp](http://PetSmartCharities.org/mvp) and complete the template as directed. We select a winning agency every quarter. The winning MVP receives a $1,000 award check and is featured in this newsletter. **GOOD LUCK!**

PetSmart Charities® will accept grant applications for our High Impact Spay/Neuter Grants from February 15 through March 20, 2012. High impact spay/neuter programs are those that meet a sufficient spay/neuter capacity and outreach in the community.

The Targeted Spay/Neuter Grant identifies a segment of the community (geographic, demographic or animal specific) that has a critical need for low-cost spay/neuter services. The Free-Roaming Cat Spay/Neuter Grant provides funding, strategic planning and mentoring for a comprehensive Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program for free-roaming cats.

Not sure if your program meets the necessary qualifications? Visit [PetSmartCharities.org/grants/faq.html](http://PetSmartCharities.org/grants/faq.html) to get answers to the most frequently asked grant questions and watch these webinars—PetSmart Charities’ High Impact Spay/Neuter Grants: What Are We Looking For? and Navigating PetSmart Charities’ New Online Grant Application. Both webinars provide invaluable information about the grant process.

If you have a high impact project, visit [PetSmartCharities.org/grants](http://PetSmartCharities.org/grants) when the grant cycle opens on February 15 to prepare your online grant application.
National Adoption Weekend

More than 16,051 pets’ lives were saved during PetSmart Charities® final National Adoption Weekend of 2011. In partnership with nearly 2,000 animal-welfare organizations throughout the United States, Canada, and Puerto Rico, the three-day event was held November 11-13 in more than 1,200 PetSmart® stores. More than 50 PetSmart® locations offered expanded space in their parking lots to help showcase even more adoptable dog and cats.

As the largest funder of animal-welfare events, PetSmart Charities provided increased adoption-reward grants to all participating shelters and rescue agencies. Agencies received $35 for every pet they adopted in stores during the week leading up to and including the National Adoption Weekend.

The event was sponsored by Purina®, Pro Plan®, Tidy Cats®, and PetSmart®

Mark your calendars for next years’ four National Adoption Weekend events

February 10 – 12
May 4 – 6
September 14 – 16
November 2 – 4

PetSmart Charities Quarterly Newsletter Available Online
Download digital issues at petsmartcharities.org/quarterly
Last October, Dawn, a seven-year-old Golden Retriever, quietly boarded a PetSmart Charities® Rescue Waggin® vehicle at the Santa Fe Animal Shelter & Humane Society in Santa Fe, New Mexico.

Six hours later, she arrived at the Humane Society of Boulder Valley in Boulder, Colo., where she walked the red carpet amid applause and cheers. Dawn was the celebrated 50,000th dog saved through the Rescue Waggin' program since 2004.

The Rescue Waggin’ program — a program that transfers dogs and puppies from animal shelters with high pet populations to other animal shelters in other communities where adoptable dogs are more in demand — is the first and largest national pet transport program in the U.S.

Labeled the “gold standard” for pet transport by veterinarians and national humane organizations, the Rescue Waggin’ program has expanded from one site in the Midwest in 2004 to 60 shelters in 22 states today.

Given to her family as a gift, Dawn was relinquished to the Santa Fe Animal Shelter & Humane Society just six months later when things didn’t work out. At seven-years-old, her slightly graying muzzle indicated this was not her first home. According to the Santa Fe Animal Shelter & Humane Society staff, she was a very gentle soul who simply had not found the right home yet.

Fortunately, a Boulder couple looking for an older Golden Retriever was waiting for her arrival at the Humane Society of Boulder Valley. Her picture had been posted on the Humane Society’s website as one of the dogs arriving from Santa Fe on the Rescue Waggin’ vehicle.

“We saw her face and knew she was the one for us,” says her new mom, Christy. “She has turned out to be a really sweet and gentle dog.”

In addition to the transport program which brings dogs like Dawn a new chance at a home, the Rescue Waggin’ program also provides its shelter partners with capacity-building support to expand programs and spay/neuter grants to reduce the number of unwanted litters in these communities.

“Since working with our first shelter in 2004, this has been the culmination of seven years of expansion and collaboration among shelters across the country,” said Susana Della Maddalena, vice president and executive director of PetSmart Charities.

“The success of the Rescue Waggin’ program is evident in the participating shelters’ increased adoption numbers and significant reductions in euthanasia rates. In one case, euthanasia dropped by as much as 50 percent. We are thankful for the cooperation among our shelter partners and look forward to saving even more lives.”

“Thanks to all our Rescue Waggin’ partners who helped the program reach this milestone.

Beginning January 30, 2012, all partners must ensure that all age-appropriate cats and dogs are rabies vaccinated. This policy helps PetSmart® and PetSmart Charities® provide the safest environment possible for pets and people visiting the In-Store Adoption Centers.

We appreciate your support in helping us strengthen this life-saving program. Thank you for your ongoing efforts to save homeless pets. Please watch for an information packet containing details about this and other program improvements that will be mailed to your organization in early January.

Read more about Dawn’s life-saving ride at PetSmartCharities.org/rescue-waggin.
Humane Alliance, ASPCA® and PetSmart Charities® Celebrate 100th Spay/Neuter Clinic Trained

PetSmart Charities® and the ASPCA® (The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals®) celebrated a milestone in 2011 with the Humane Alliance’s 100th training of a spay/neuter clinic.


The Humane Alliance operates the National Spay/Neuter Response Team (NSNRT) — the nation’s only training center for organizations to learn how to open and operate low-cost high-quality/high-volume spay/neuter clinics. To date, the 100 clinics have collectively spayed and neutered nearly two million cats and dogs.

In 2010, the ASPCA and PetSmart Charities partnered to provide $5.2 million in funding to the Humane Alliance through 2015. With this funding, the Humane Alliance will be able to train and facilitate the opening of 80 more high-quality, high-volume spay/neuter clinics across the United States, providing more than 800,000 additional spay/neuter surgical slots.

The Humane Alliance estimates these spay/neuter clinics will collectively prevent an estimated 6.5 million unwanted pet births between 2005 to 2015.

“PetSmart Charities and the ASPCA have been instrumental to the success of Humane Alliance,” says Quita Mazzina, executive director of the Humane Alliance. “Our long-standing partnership allows us to continue to provide the spay/neuter services that pets desperately need as well as the opportunity to train veterinarians in the high-quality/high-volume spay/neuter techniques that help get more pets sterilized every year.”

Adoption alone won’t eliminate homelessness and pet overpopulation. In the U.S., an estimated four million pets are euthanized every year simply because they don’t have homes.

“Preventing the births of millions of puppies and kittens is key to ending the unnecessary euthanasia of pets in the U.S.,” said Susana Della Maddalena, vice president and executive director of PetSmart Charities, Inc. “Making affordable spay/neuter services available in communities across America is a major part of the solution.”

Reaching the 100th clinic is a major accomplishment for the Humane Alliance, the ASPCA, PetSmart Charities and the 100 clinics committed to high-volume spay/neuter programs.

In 2010, PetSmart Charities also provided nearly $5 million in funding for spay/neuter efforts nationwide and more than $1.6 million in funding for 22 clinic openings and expansions.