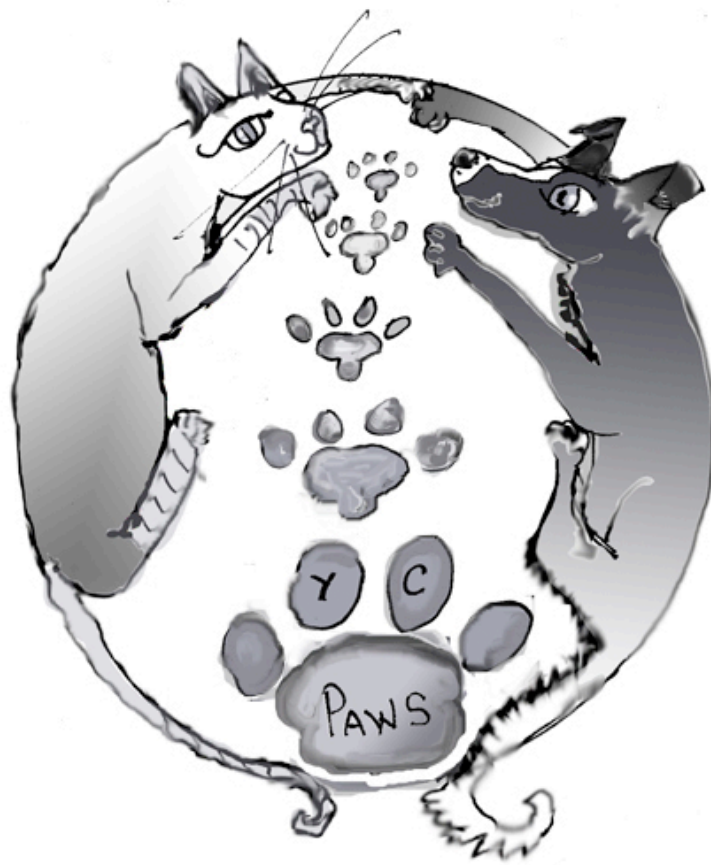# YC PAWS

Resource Binder

Introduction
The guidelines are pulled together from several sources including the HSUS, ASPCA,
KORET Shelter Medicine, OSHA AND YC PAWS

The recommendations in this best practices binder are to assist in making changes to the current animal welfare system as well as to assist in the common goal of sustainable progressive sheltering for the future of Yolo County's displaced pet animals. This binder is a work in progress and will be built upon as we continue to move forward.

The goal is to be a supportive force in offering the best services to the public and displaced animals while addressing the needs of each of the communities in Yolo Co. as it relates to animal services.

The resource binder has chapters that address the many needs and requirements of providing animal services to the public. Each chapter starts with goals and recommendations followed by discussions to support the recommendations.

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Chapter 1
YC PAWS task force development

Goal: Develop YC PAWS to be a strong community driven collective of dedicated animal welfare activists with a shared interest in Yolo County's ability to offer sustainable progressive animal services including low cost no/cost spay neuter programs.

Recommendations:
Put together a committee of members who are willing to commit up to four months and who work well in group settings. It is important to appoint unbiased individuals to the task force.

The task force should include the following:
- Shelter staff representatives
- Members of the advisory board
- A veterinarian with a strong shelter medicine background
- An individual with legal strength
- Public health officials
- County budget officials
- Community members with expertise in short-term and strategic planning
- Those interested in animal protection, but without personal agendas
- A professional facilitator.

Convey the task force's responsibilities, which include:
- Prioritizing each recommendation using a standardized form to rate each recommendation by expected financial/labor cost, time, potential benefits, etc. The recommendations can be divided up among the task force members. This process allows the agency, through the task force, to evaluate the recommendations as they relate to each other.

- Create written guidelines outlining expected behavior and conduct for task force members. These guidelines should include stipulations for missed meetings.

- A memorandum of understanding (MOU) should be created that outlines the above sections and the role and outcome of the task force. All task force members should be required to sign the MOU so it is understood that the task force is to be a professional undertaking.

The American Veterinary Medical Association has a wonderful definition of animal welfare that fits nicely into the mission of YC PAWS. The AVMA, as a medical authority for the health and welfare of animals, offers the following eight integrated principles for developing and evaluating animal welfare policies, resolutions, and actions.

- The responsible use of animals for human purposes, such as companionship, food, fiber, recreation, work, education, exhibition, and research conducted for the benefit of both humans and animals, is consistent with the Veterinarian's Oath.
- Decisions regarding animal care, use, and welfare shall be made by balancing scientific knowledge and professional judgment with consideration of ethical and societal values.
- Animals must be provided water, food, proper handling, health care, and an environment appropriate to their care and use, with thoughtful consideration for their species-typical biology and behavior.
- Animals are cared for in ways that minimize fear, pain, stress, and suffering.
- Procedures related to animal housing, management, care, and use should be continuously evaluated, and when indicated, refined or replaced.
- Conservation and management of animal populations should be humane, socially responsible, and scientifically prudent.
- Animals shall be treated with respect and dignity throughout their lives and, when necessary, provided a humane death.
- The veterinary profession shall continually strive to improve animal health and welfare through scientific research, education, collaboration, advocacy, and the development of legislation and regulations.

The above principles should be held in mind while evaluating the needs and when making improvements to current animal care systems in Yolo County.

Chapter 2
Spay/Neuter Programs

The Yolo county community working together to explore ways to reduce the number of animals impounded and euthanized in shelters by:

• Funding and providing low to no cost spay/neuters for disadvantaged residents in the county wide area - targeted geographical areas for spay/neuter programs include the West Sacramento, Woodland area and rural communities as there are no low-cost spay/neuter resources.

• Providing community education/counseling services to individuals regarding the effects of pet overpopulation on the community, the benefits of spay/neuter, tenets of responsible pet guardianship and the importance of pet identification.

• Promoting companion animal adoption.

Discussion:
Community education programs while seemingly peripheral and beyond the scope of daily duties, are in fact a key tool in the promotion of responsible pet ownership. Education programs on sterilization and animal care lead to reduced intake of animals into the shelter.

Investments in the appropriate programs can serve a shelter's bottom line.
Day to day activities such as impounding animals and answering complaints are reactive ways to deal with overpopulation and animal care issues. Education is a proactive approach to positively affect the workload of the shelter by making the community aware of the problem of animal overpopulation and their role in addressing it.

A responsible pet ownership program is a form of character education that is much more than teaching the proper care of companion animals. It also stresses the importance of respect, compassion, and responsibility in our treatment of all animals and people. Education methodologies vary—they include animal shelter tours, classroom visits by shelter personnel, after-school activities, summer camps, junior volunteer programs, and the distribution of lesson plans and other materials for the classroom. Many of them are very successful without using any animals at all.

The most productive and effective education programs focus their outreach in schools in the zip codes that generate the most calls for service. Evaluation of the areas of the community that generate the most animal relinquishment or where more dog bites are reported is also effective. Changing the attitudes about animals, their care, and explaining why it is important to spay and neuter is critical to changing the animal population reality in any community.

There are currently 8 million dogs, cats, puppies and kittens euthanized in the United States every year simply because there aren't enough homes for all of them. Besides preventing more unwanted puppies and kittens, spaying and neutering your dog or cat prevents diseases and prevents many behavioral problems that occur in unaltered pets. The risk of mammary cancer is greatly reduced if you spay your dog before age one. Also, cancers of the reproductive organs are eliminated. Behavioral problems such as aggressiveness towards same sex dogs, marking or spraying in the house and roaming to find a mate are also eliminated or reduced if you spay or neuter your pet.

To have maximum impact on animal overpopulation, we will want to match the unmet needs in your community with a spay/neuter program that has the elements to address those needs. We will also have to reach the human population whose animals will benefit from your services.

> A: Here approximate numbers, courtesy of Stephen Zawistowski, Executive Vice President, National Programs and Science Advisor at the ASPCA:
>
> - 6,630,000 cats born in homes each year, roughly 18,165 per day (This number does NOT include feral cat births; you can increase this number by 30 to 50 percent to estimate feral cat births.)
> - 6,040,000 dogs born in homes each year, roughly 16,559 per day
> - 4,116,000 people born per year in the US, roughly 11,277 per day
>
> Using these figures, the number of cat and dog births per human birth are as follows: 1.6 non-feral cats per human born 1.47 dogs per human born.

Spay/neuter efforts should be directly tied into the volunteering program by organizing pick up and drop off of animals for surgery. There should be a well-organized team with multilingual volunteers available to assist with education, pick up/drop off of animals and to provide after care instructions. See Appendix 1 "Nine Model Programs for Highly Successful Spay/Neuter " by Best friends Animal Society

The cost of spay/neuter should not create judgment in the staff or volunteers of the shelter as it relates to owners not being able to afford to alter their pet. Many animal advocates can take a hard edge when it comes to the question of the financial ability to care for animals, "If they cannot afford the spay/neuter they should not own an animal". We must as welfare advocates and community members remember that animals bring great comfort and companionship and many who can afford the daily expenses of food and shelter for their pets but cannot afford the expense of surgery or extensive medical care.

Recommendations:
- Create and implement a detailed SOP for the handling, care, housing, and

euthanasia of feral cats in shelter custody.
- Use feral cat dens for safer and more humane handling.
- Provide staff with handling/restraining equipment and training in the use of the equipment.
- Allow cats who are suspected of being feral to calm down in their new surroundings before evaluating them for euthanasia.
- Research the feasibility of holding feral cat spay/neuter days several times a year using staff and/or local veterinarians.
- Provide community education concerning the problem of feral cats and solutions such as trap-neuter-release (TNR). The community must understand the concept of managed colonies so it does not confuse these programs with simple abandonment of cats.
- Keep accurate records of feral cats and kittens handled by the Yolo county, including their disposition. Over time, this data will help determine where resources are currently going and where they might be more useful. For example, has trapping feral cats reduced the number entering the shelter?
- Continue to house stray/suspected feral cats in the Feral/Possibly Feral Room located in the Healthy Cat Room. House all stray feral cats in segregated cages and attempt to keep their environment quiet, with minimal traffic and handling.
- In conjunction with the task force, devise a long-term solution to the feral cat problem in Yolo County. Include the development of an ordinance defining a feral cat colony separate from the ordinance on unrestrained owned cats.

Discussion:

Yolo County is not alone in dealing with feral cats, as it is an issue across the United States. Though neither euthanasia nor TNR alone is the prescription for every community, each has its time and place. In some communities, both approaches are used to address different circumstances. Humane advocates will no doubt continue the debate over feral cat management, but for now many shelters are finding that working with TNR programs is an effective way to build bridges between the animals, the animal care and control agency, and the public.

Most people don't want to trap and euthanize cats and kittens; they just want to prevent more from being born. In some situations where there are concerned citizens that will take responsibility, monitor the colony and provide daily care for the cats, it might be an acceptable policy. It is imperative that all of the surrounding neighbors be consulted and given an explanation of TNR and the possible benefits. If after consulting with everyone, the neighborhood is in agreement, only then might TNR be a reasonable solution. TNR programs and colony management can enhance public safety. Feral cats are naturally inclined to keep away from humans. In addition, when cats are fed away from populated areas, contact is further minimized. Conflicts occur when compassionate individuals begin feeding the cats close to work or home, thus increasing the cats' proximity to people. By using TNR programs and colony management, including a feeding program away from populated areas, reduces the chance of contact by keeping cats away from human population areas.

In a shelter environment it can be quite difficult to determine whether a cat is truly feral

or simply a terrified house pet. All efforts must be undertaken to provide a quiet environment with minimum stimuli during the "cool down" period.

There are many models for Spay/Neuter clinics, getting local veterinarians involved in the mission for a low cost option is imperative. We need to remember that our veterinarians are asked every day to provide free or discounted services by their clients. When a treatable animal is in need of surgery clients often state they just do not have the funds to cover the expense. It is an emotional component of the daily lives of those who work in a vet clinic to see healthy animals faced with limited financial options that ease pain, increase wellness or save their lives and yet those services hang in the balance when finances are limited. This is a fact that many animal welfare advocates do not hold in their minds when they approach veterinarians for low cost spay/neuter services for their community, they already gave at the office, so to speak.

Mobile Spay/Neuter options gives the opportunity for the services to reach rural areas of Yolo County as well as provide services on location in identified areas for spay clinics. There is much discussion around the cost and long-term benefit of mobile services and what the downfall might be to not having a building to house spay/neuter services. Please see Appendix 2 "Mobile Spay/Neuter *2000" from SNAP*

Chapter 3
Health, Wellness and Safety

This chapter will address the many areas of animal sheltering operations from intake to outcome and everything in between. A strong and well-developed relationship is a must between all area animal agencies and a shelter. Bridging support between animal control officers, local police, fostering groups, veterinarians and the community makes for a system of care and welfare that is an umbrella over the entire county. The health and effectiveness of a shelter can be noted by assessing how quickly animals move through the system, the number of direct adoptions from the agency and community involvement such as a large and involved volunteering program. An animal shelter should be the hub for animal wellness, education and support to its community.

Recommendations:
- Develop a written detailed SOP for incoming animal examinations.

- House all incoming animals in a specified area until they have been examined and vaccinated. This will prevent animals from being forgotten inadvertently or missed entirely.

- Evaluate and examine every animal that arrives at the shelter as soon as possible this should be done by an experienced veterinary technician.

- Conduct all incoming animal examinations in a designated examination room or private area, secure and away from the animal housing areas. This will greatly reduce the animals' stress level and therefore reduce the risk of fractious behavior that may result in injury to the animal or handler. Conducting examinations in a secure area will also prevent animals from escaping to the outside or to other areas of the building.

- Each animal should receive a methodical and comprehensive examination. Staff should be thorough in every aspect of the physical examination. Incoming evaluations and examinations should include the following:

- A systematic physical examination to determine if medical treatment or isolation from healthy animals is required, or if there is a condition requiring a veterinarian's attention. This should include taking the animal's temperature.
    1. Estimation of the animal's age
    2. Vaccinations and deworming
    3. External parasite treatment
    4. Weighing the animal
    5. Attention to basic grooming needs
    6. Scanning for microchip identification
    7. Performing diagnostic tests, if indicated (heartworm, fecal, FIV/FeLV)
    8. Application of an identification band to identify the animal internally
    9. Noting any identifying features or abnormalities

- Two well-trained staff persons working together should examine each animal. This helps to eliminate examiners' subjectivity and stress, and makes the process faster, easier, and safer. The staff should be thorough and meticulous in every aspect of the physical examination.

- Document all examination findings (even if all is normal) and any procedures performed, vaccinations given, etc. on the animal's medical record. Documenting an animal's condition upon arrival will also help the veterinary staff determine if a condition was pre-existing or was developed while the animal was at the shelter.

Those at the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program strongly recommend that shelters provide basic prophylactic treatment for the parasites most common to all animals entering the shelter upon intake. See Appendix 3 "Impacts of Shelter & Housing Design on Shelter Animal Health information sheet" UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program

- Once the incoming examination process is complete, animals should be placed in the appropriate housing areas based on their overall condition and classification.

Discussion:
Performing a thorough examination on all incoming animals is essential. The findings of a physical examination will ultimately affect an animal's adoptability and well-being as well as the overall health of the entire shelter population. Keeping the examination room clean, well stocked, and adequately equipped should be a top priority for any shelter.

Discussion:
The information gathered at intake can often make or break an animal's chances for adoption or reclaim. The information provided on the owner surrender form will assist staff in evaluating an animal's health and temperament and ultimately play a role in the final disposition of that animal.

Cage cards that are supposed to "move with the animal" are not reliable methods of identification in a shelter environment. Paperwork can easily be lost, switched, or become damaged or faded and animals of the same breed and color. It is imperative that animals be properly identified in the shelter. Identification is invaluable if an animal was to escape from the shelter, and it also prevents errors such as accidental euthanasia.

Discussion:
Developing a strong lost/found matching program headed by a detail oriented staff member or volunteer should significantly increase the Yolo county's reclaim rate and will benefit the community as a whole. Increasing the reclaim rate improves staff moral, helps to reduce the pressures on holding requirements and other animal care workload, and greatly reduces the impulse of clients to immediately adopt another animal, especially when those stray animals might be returned home. There should be a searchable area on the shelter website for lost and found animals with clear photographs and intake information.

Discussion:
An animal handler's most important tool is knowledge. Personnel trained in animal behavior and humane handling techniques can ensure that they are handling animals in the safest, most humane manner possible. To make quick assessments, staff must be able to accurately interpret the situation and choose an appropriate response within seconds. The more humane and skilled a staff member's restraint or capture technique is the more efficient and effective that staff member will be.

Some training areas in animal handling and restraint may seem elementary—especially for
"seasoned" staff—but if the staff has not been provided with adequate information relating to basic concepts, they will not recognize the underlying reasons for correct animal handling techniques and procedures. As a result of staff's lack of awareness of basic principles, inappropriate techniques will be passed on from each employee generation to the next. The same might be said for many, if not all, aspects of a modern animal care program.

The staff needs to know not only the right techniques, but also the rationale behind them. Control poles, which have become a standard piece of equipment for most animal control departments, are designed as a defensive or protective safety tool for guiding fractious animals, and not for offensive maneuvers against animals, or as a matter of routine, convenience, or speed. The routine use of control poles cannot be substituted for professional animal capture and handling skills. Although staff safety is an important priority, the humane handling of animals must also be ensured, and stress for both the animal and handler should be eliminated whenever possible.

The standard professional animal handling equipment (such as high quality gloves, nets, and caging) can be relatively expensive. However, the proper equipment is well worth the investment for the staff as well as the animals needing care. It is strongly recommended that the shelter invest in its staff by regularly allocating resources and funding for organization wide training opportunities and appropriate animal handling equipment.

Discussion:
The quality of animal care is one of the most important aspects of preventative health care and disease control. Any animal in a shelter environment will experience some level of stress due to the change of environment, separation from family, and the daily handling by strangers. Cats and kittens are particularly susceptible to stress when removed from familiar surroundings. When subjected to the sounds of barking and whining of puppies and dogs, cats can experience extreme distress. See Appendix 4 "Infectious Disease Management in Animal Shelters" Kate F. Hurley and Lila Miller
In order for the animals to maintain their sociability in the shelter environment, some amenities are recommended. These enhancements also signal to the community that the animal caretakers will take extra time to assure that the animals' needs are being met. Shelter animals must be housed in a way that minimizes stress, provides for their specific needs, affords protection from the elements, provides adequate ventilation, and minimizes the spread of diseases.

Aspects of shelter design and animal housing that are thought to have a significant impact on the physical and behavioral health of shelter animals. This information is based on scientific data, expert opinion, and/or the collective clinical impression of shelter veterinarians, especially shelter medicine specialists. Unfortunately, scientific data regarding factors that impact disease levels in shelters are very sparse. The lack of information is due to several factors including, limited available funding and staff to conduct investigations, and the complexities involved in conducting investigations given the variability that exists within and between sheltering organizations. See Appendix 6 "Wellness For The Shelter Animal" By Dr. Kate Hurley

Early in the process of considering a new or expanded facility, it is important to carefully articulate the goals for the project. Consideration should be given to both current and future trends. A good way to start is simply by brainstorming the reasons for the new building: is the hope that animals will be healthier and more comfortable? That the new building will be more efficient and easier to keep clean? That facilities will exist to provide education for the community or shelter staff? Are there special populations that are not provided for by the current building design, such as puppies and kittens, sick animals, mothers and neonates awaiting foster care? Are shelter or rescue transfers anticipated, either as a receiving or source shelter? If so special housing considerations may be indicated. These are just some examples for goals shelters might have for a new building; each shelter's list will be different based on management philosophy, resources and challenges inherent to that particular community.

Once a list of goals have been established, some effort should be made to prioritize the goals. Most often, some compromises are required: each possible investment in the new facility should be considered in light of how much benefit it will have for the highest priority goals. Will additional adoption housing serve the shelter's goals better than an area for animals awaiting foster care or rescue? Will a huge, impressive lobby have more benefit than high quality cat housing? Sometimes shelters are built or expanded with the idea that simply expanding the space and making the environment more appealing on the surface will lead to great gains in saving lives. However, more space alone will not necessarily increase adoptions or reduce euthanasia - if quality and efficiency of the space is not improved, the results of even an enormous investment in facility expansion may be disappointing.

One important preparatory step is to define the required amount of holding spaces for individual animals at any one time. This needs to take into consideration both intake numbers and anticipated holding time per animal (legally required hold time plus time for adoption or other special holds such as for medical treatment). This should be calculated on a monthly basis; sufficient holding spaces must be provided for the maximum number anticipated for a given month (possibly more, depending on anticipated future trends, such as population growth or expanded programs). These spaces may be represented by spaces in group housing or single cages; dogs should be singly housed throughout their stray holding period, and sick animals should always be held individually. See Appendix 5 "ISO Flow Chart" provided by HSUS

The National Animal Control Association (NACA) estimates ten minutes are required to provide daily cleaning and care for one animal. Additional tasks such as laundry, general area cleaning, behavior evaluations, and euthanasia are not included. At minimum, no more housing should be built than staff time will be available for maintenance.

Population trends
Historical trends in numbers of humans in the community and cats, dogs, rabbits and other species entering the shelter should be evaluated as well. In many communities, dog numbers are steadily decreasing while cat numbers are holding steady or even increasing.

There are changes we can make that are free to better meet the goal of healthy and safety. Long-term goal: replace outdated building and follow all recommendations as it relates to public health and safety. Use Koret shelter medicine guidelines for disease prevention.

Immediate goal: Improve conditions as it relates to health and safety and the welfare of animals countywide.

Discussion:
Because day-to-day operational concerns often receive the most immediate attention in shelters, building security, and precautions to ensure staff and public safety often take a back burner. These issues must remain a priority, and any problems must be regularly pinpointed, addressed, and resolved before a crisis occurs. However, efforts should be made to strike a balance between adequate staff safety and unencumbered client/staff interactions. In addition, the safety of the animals in the shelter should be a priority and governmental agencies have an obligation to assure reasonable efforts are made to keep the animals secure.

Recommendations:
Create a comprehensive employee safety manual addressing all safety issues as required by OSHA. Each staff member should receive a copy of this manual and sign a statement acknowledging receipt that will become part of their personnel record. The safety manual should contain, at the minimum, all of the information provided during the safety training sessions as described below.

Each employee should attend safety training specific to the Yolo county shelter at the start of her/his employment. Volunteers should also be required to attend this training. Attendees should be given a written test at the conclusion of the safety training to demonstrate that they have learned and comprehended the material. A record of this safety training and the test should also become a part of each employee personnel file.

The safety training should include the following topics:
1. How to read a Material Safety and Data Sheet (MSDS)
2. Location of emergency exits

3. Emergency evacuation procedures
4. Locations and use of fire extinguishers, eye wash stations, and first aid kits
5. Proper lifting technique
6. How to complete an accident report
7. How to report a maintenance problem
8. How to handle a chemical spill
9. Where to go for emergency medical treatment
10. Use of personal protective equipment (PPE)
11. Proper secondary labeling of hazardous materials
12. Animal handling
13. Fire safety
14. Transmission and prevention of zoonotic diseases

Assign a supervisor to make regular inspections of the facilities and report any OSHA concerns to the safety committee on a weekly basis. It is essential that the shelter management be aware of the personal protective equipment required for use within the facilities and that they maintain staff compliance.

Discussion:
Employee and public safety must be taken seriously in any work environment, and it is the employer's responsibility—and legal and ethical obligation—to ensure the safety and welfare of employees and the visiting public. This is achieved by providing a safe environment, proper training, necessary equipment, and appropriate accountability protocols. To some degree, noise is inevitable in all animal shelters regardless of size. Noise, however, not only presents a danger to staff, it also plays a significant role in forming the public's opinion of an animal shelter. Additionally, the short- and long-term effects—many of which are stress-related—of noise on the animals must also be strongly considered.

The barking of dogs is generally the greatest source of noise, but many other factors also contribute. Advancements in the design of shelters, and the materials incorporated in them, have served to help to reduce the noise in many animal care and control agencies. OSHA has strict regulations regarding acceptable decibel levels protect employees. Their guidelines state that when employees are exposed to 85 decibels or higher on an eight hour time-weight average, ear protection must be available and a general hearing conservation program instituted. To deter long-term hearing loss, Consumer Reports(R) developed a set of recommendations based on the findings of the National Institute on Deafness and Other Communications Disorders, which states the following relating to sound levels:

Discussion:
An animal shelter is no different from other municipal buildings, requiring constant attention and funds to adequately maintain the property. Routine problems, such as drains clogging, guillotine doors not functioning properly, hoses breaking, and light bulbs burning out, commonly occur and must be addressed. The County has a responsibility to ensure that the facility is kept in a manner that is functional, safe, and attractive, and that crucial equipment, such as HVAC systems, is maintained and in good operating

condition.

The difficulties and concerns that result from years of differed and neglected repairs and maintenance have now become quite significant. It seems that a higher price will be paid to make up for years of neglect. Routine inspections will decrease the number of costly repairs that have to be initiated because something was overlooked. It is much more cost effective to have a solid preventative maintenance program in place rather than wait until something breaks or gets worse.

Recommendations:
Complete a full review of air quality and handling requirements for shelters.
Short term and long term plans should be developed to correct the deficiencies. Air exchange, temperature, humidity levels, rate of exchange, direction of flow, and other factors are critical and essential animal care components in an animal shelter.

Review mechanical and "as built" drawings or some engineering studies in order to establish the current HVAC capacity of the systems in operation. Loads should be reviewed based on current use and systems should be evaluated and redesigned to meet current needs.

Discussion:
Even a well-designed kennel or cattery is only as effective as the air circulation and ventilation it employs. Many diseases in a shelter setting are airborne, and when these diseases are spread to other populations in the facility, the entire shelter is put at risk. No amount of cleaning will prevent the spread of disease in the face of an inadequate ventilation system. The inability to control temperature in the shelter may also contribute to serious disease problems. Although there are advantages to having indoor/outdoor kennels and moving fresh air through animal spaces, there are also disadvantages, such as not being able to eliminate moisture and the introduction of dirt, dust, and pollutants. Moisture and dirt can facilitate the spread of certain diseases.

Heating, cooling, and humidity control systems should be serviced regularly as part of a facility's preventive maintenance program. These systems are crucial, not only to provide for the animals' health and comfort, but also for that of the staff and visiting public. A means of circulating the air must always be in operation in all animal housing areas.

Discussion:
Caging, flooring, and lighting are often given less importance as other urgent needs of animal sheltering facilities arise. However, proper caging, flooring, and drainage is a powerful tool in the fight against disease, odors, and safety-related hazards for animals, staff, and the visiting public.

Discussion:
Veterinarians are considered to be animal experts by the majority of the general public, and their participation is critical to successfully resolving community animal control

issues. Providing a high level of health care management of shelter animals and adopting out healthy animals is vital to keeping a good reputation within the community. Veterinarians are increasingly involved in the day-to-day operations of shelters and are being asked to design and comment on policies and procedures that are not strictly medical. Animal shelter practice is a new and unique field of veterinary medicine, and it brings with it topics, procedures, and dilemmas that do not arise in other veterinary practice situations. It is imperative that everyone working in the shelter environment understand the importance of herd management, vaccination protocols, and disease prevention and transmission. The veterinarian's knowledge and experience is an outstanding resource in developing policies and in training personnel.

Recommendations:

Perform an evaluation of the health status of all shelter animals daily, seven days a week. These rounds should be performed by a trained veterinary technician. These health checks are not intended to be a full physical examination, but rather an assessment of each animal in its cage to make sure its health has not deteriorated. This should be an assigned duty with a written checklist of what is being assessed so that the evaluations are performed consistently. Animals found to be exhibiting signs of illness or injury should then be examined by a veterinarian in a timely manner.

Shelter veterinarians should be fully empowered to euthanize animals that they deem to be suffering or a threat to the overall health of the shelter population. These decisions should be based solely on the veterinarians' expert knowledge and not influenced by pressure from management or other staff members who do not hold the same level of expertise.

Implement, as part of the animal health SOP, a specific procedure for staff or volunteers follow to notify the medical staff in writing of a sick or injured animal. This procedure should be failsafe in ensuring that these animals receive medical care in a timely fashion. This could be accomplished by creating a "vet check needed" form, which would include the date and time of the report; reporting staff member's name; the animal's identification, description, and location; and a brief description of the signs or problem. These forms should be easily accessible for all staff and completed forms would be placed in an in-box in the Examination Room. The in-box should be clearly labeled and used exclusively for this purpose. A veterinary technician should be responsible for checking this box frequently throughout the day and examining the animals in a timely manner.

A trained veterinary technician should be responsible for administering all medications and treatments on shelter animals. Medications should be administered consistently and at the same time every day. Animals who are on medication should each have a treatment observation form that is filled out each time the medication is administered.

Treatment Log. One for dogs, one for cats, and one for "other," if necessary.
The treatment logs should consist of a list of each sick/injured animal under treatment, its

identification number, location, and name of medication given, the dosage and times per day. This form should be hung in the examination room and utilized by the staff member responsible for administering medications to make sure that no animal is unintentionally overlooked. The staff member should initial and check off the boxes when each animal on the list has received her or his daily medication. Most shelter software programs are capable of generating a daily treatment log.

Advise adopters of the condition of a potential new pet in order to determine whether they can provide the care required for that particular animal. A hard copy of an animal's medical record must be provided to the adopter, who in turn can present it to her or his veterinarian for ongoing care and treatment.

Discussion:
The duty of caring for Yolo county's stray and homeless animals is a serious one. It brings with it the responsibilities to individually assess the health status and special needs of every animal admitted to the shelter soon after admission and to provide care for those needs throughout the animal's stay at the shelter. Providing a high level of health care management to shelter animals and adopting out healthy animals are vital to keeping a good reputation within the community.

Documenting medical information is imperative. Assessment forms assist staff during the examination process and ensure that they have not overlooked an area or forgotten a step. Documenting an animal's condition upon arrival will assist staff in later determining if a condition developed while the animal was at the shelter or was a pre-existing condition. It is an essential obligation of any animal shelter to provide basic examinations, vaccinations, and oversight of medical issues in a professional manner. A critical aspect of managing the animal population, in addition to using isolation and separation to keep animals as healthy as possible, must include an initial triage, examination process, and immediate vaccinations for all animals upon entry. Decisions should be made within the philosophy of herd management—weighing how decisions affect the entire animal population.

Animal shelter practice is a new and unique field of veterinary medicine, and it brings with it topics, procedures, and dilemmas that do not arise in other veterinary practice situations. It is imperative that everyone working in the shelter environment understand the importance of herd management, vaccination protocols, and disease prevention. Staying in touch with new innovations will help ensure that the veterinary staff is up-to-date, well trained, and able to make necessary modifications to protocols as needed.

There must be a place where all incoming animals are triaged. It should be a priority to completely assess each animal on the day of arrival. After the staff examines and vaccinates an animal, the animal should be placed in healthy hold, quarantine, or isolation depending on the outcome of the examination. The healthy hold area would allow the animal time to acclimate to the shelter and time for the staff to observe and evaluate the animal. If an animal is considered adoptable and healthy after the holding period, the animal would then be moved from healthy hold to the designated adoption

kennels/rooms. These areas would be the only places where the public would be permitted to view adoptable animals. If a stray animal is determined to be aggressive or unpredictable, or it is being held for quarantine, the animal should be housed in the quarantine area, where only the staff has access. Quarantine cages must be marked appropriately so that the staff knows which animals are in quarantine. This area should be an "out of view" area, and the public allowed inside only if escorted by a staff member.

If a sick animal is brought into the shelter and needs to be held for the stray period, or if an animal becomes sick during its stay at the shelter and the agency feels that they have the means to perform treatment, then that animal should be housed in the isolation area. Immediate isolation of animals who are showing signs of illness will minimize the spread of disease and helps to keep the general shelter population healthy.

General Discussion:
The isolation and separation concept of managing the population will provide the staff with space flexibility, protect the public from potential bites, and protect the Yolo county shelter liability. Isolation and separation will also help the staff make better euthanasia decisions and help the shelter present only those animals who have been fully evaluated and chosen for adoption to the public. In order for the isolation and separation concept to work, it must be strictly followed. Some organizations make the mistake of bending the rules by not using space as it is designated. There may be times when the healthy hold area is full and, instead of making the decision to euthanize an animal to create space, some agencies make the mistake of placing a healthy animal in the isolation room. Exposing healthy animals to sick ones negates the logic and benefits that result from the isolation and separation concept. The quality of animal housing is one of the most important aspects of preventative health care and disease control. A shelter, no matter how well equipped, is an inherently stressful place for an animal. Any animal in a shelter environment will experience some level of stress due to the change of environment and routine, separation from family, the daily handling by strangers, loud noises, other animals, and basic confusion regarding their situation. Cats and kittens are particularly susceptible to stress when removed from familiar surroundings and subjected to the sounds of barking dogs. Shelters should make every effort to house animals in a manner that minimizes the stress and provides for their individual needs and comfort.

Recommendations:
Develop specific written feeding protocols for kittens, puppies, cats, and dogs and these protocols should be followed consistently at both facilities. Feed age appropriate foods in order to meet the nutritional needs of young animals. Both canned and dry kitten and puppy food should be available at both facilities at all times.

Feed animals in amounts appropriate to their nutritional needs. The Yolo county shelter staff should be trained to monitor and document the appetite and food intake of shelter animals and to adjust an animal's diet accordingly. Animals who consistently consume the entire amount of food offered to them in a short period of time should be offered a greater volume of food per feeding, and animals without an appetite should be examined by the veterinarian.

Document the body condition and weight of animals upon arrival and monitor it in order to detect nutritional problems. There should be a scale available to weigh every animal upon intake. Staff should also be properly trained to determine an animal's body condition and age upon intake so that the animal is fed appropriately.[80]

A kennel is an extremely stressful environment for an animal and can dramatically impact her/his appetite and dietary needs. It is vital that an animal eats while in the shelter's care, and often inducements are needed to encourage and entice an animal to eat. In general, a variety of canned food for both dogs and cats should be kept on hand to use as needed. For puppies and dogs, dry food (specially formulated for their ages) mixed with enough canned food and a small amount of hot water to make a paste or gravy is usually sufficient to entice reluctant eaters. At times, feeding canned food alone may be necessary. For cats and kittens, chicken baby food or canned tuna can be used to entice the appetite. Only use all meat baby food without onions or other additives.

Develop a written schedule of feeding times for those animals who require multiple feedings according to their age and nutritional needs. Kennel management should ensure that the staff strictly follows the schedule.

Feed puppies less than 12 weeks of age four times daily or every six hours. Puppies 12 weeks to 6 months of age should be fed three times a day or every eight hours. Puppies 6 months to 12 months of age should be fed twice daily.

Feed kittens less than 12 weeks of age, canned food four times daily or every six hours. Kittens 12 weeks to 6 months of age should be fed canned food three times a day or every eight hours, with access to dry food at all times. Cats 6 months or older should have dry food available at all times and should be fed canned food as needed. Since cats, on an average, like to eat many small meals a day, it is advisable to leave dry food available all day long. Take into account that cats with access to "free food" must be monitored to make sure they are eating.

Feed canned cat food separately from dry cat food in order to reduce spoilage. Give cats the option to eat only the type of food (canned/dry) that they prefer. Ideally, any uneaten canned food should be removed or replaced within four hours.

Establish a system by which to monitor the appetites and body conditions of all animals residing in the shelters. Many animals, particularly cats, have difficulty adjusting to life in a shelter and become in appetent. Loss of appetite can lead to serious health concerns, including failure of major organs and death.

Establish feeding protocols for nursing mothers to ensure that they are fed a high calorie, high protein diet three times a day. Kitten or puppy food is usually the appropriate choice for nursing mothers.

Establish protocols to ensure geriatric animals and those with dental problems are fed soft

food accordingly.

Give special care and closely monitor animals who are malnourished or have special health requirements. Unweaned kittens with no mother or surrogate mother should be considered for a foster home, and if one cannot be secured euthanasia may be the most humane solution.

Regardless of their length of stay, all shelter animals should receive a good quality balanced diet that is appropriate for their life stage, health, age, and physical condition. Only products that are made by major pet food companies are recommended.

Discussion:
Establishing a system to oversee dietary habits is of the utmost importance, and staff should be trained to monitor and adjust an animal's diet accordingly. Procedures should include a system that allows staff to monitor food intake, special needs, feeding behaviors, and eliminations of animals. The stress of a kennel environment, combined with her/his health and age at entry, can dramatically impact an animal's appetite and nutritional needs. Observations relating to appetite can provide important feedback that relates to each animal's general health and continued adjustment to the shelter environment. If necessary, nutritional protocols may need modification to allow for extra (or less) food and special diets. When housing multiple dogs in a kennel, consideration must be given to "food aggression." Even dogs that may not be aggressive may display dominance when it comes to food. Multiple dogs or puppies in a kennel can lead to cases of dogs/puppies not being allowed to eat by their more dominant cage mates. Some dogs and puppies may overeat, leaving less than enough for the others. Additionally, free feeding can lead to fights over food at a time when staff is unavailable to intervene.

Discussion:
A zoonotic disease is any disease that may be transmitted from an animal to a human under natural conditions. Zoonotic diseases pose a risk to shelter personnel who work with or around animals. Animals infected with zoonotic diseases may not show any significant signs of illness. In humans, however, the infections may be debilitating. Anyone working with animals should be aware of the potential for zoonotic disease and take commonsense precautions to minimize their risk. Zoonotic diseases can be prevented through a variety of means, including use of protective clothing, prevention of bites and scratches, proper sharps-handling procedures, medical surveillance and vaccination programs, post-injury treatment, and good personal hygiene. All animals, their tissues, and fluids should be treated as if they were infected with pathogens (microorganisms that cause disease). Avoid working with animals if you are ill, especially if you have respiratory problems. A large number of zoonotic diseases are considered potential threats to shelter employees; some are common, and others are very rare. The following are the more common and/or important zoonotic threats:

Bordetella (Kennel Cough)—Bordetella bronchiseptica is a bacterium that is a common

cause of respiratory disease in dogs. It is the most prevalent infection of dogs at a shelter and has been reported to cause mild respiratory infections in people. Disease transmission can be prevented by avoiding contact with the mucous membranes of infected dogs, hand washing, and wearing a respirator when spraying down kennels.

Cryptosporidia—Cryptosporidium parvum is a protozoan, similar to toxoplasma. There is no effective treatment for the disease. Preventive measures include good hygiene such as hand washing and using gloves when handling feces.

Bartonellosis (Cat Scratch Disease)—Cat scratch disease is an infectious illness caused by
the bacteria Bartonella. It is believed to be transmitted by cat scratches, bites, or exposure to cat saliva. This leads to swelling of the lymph nodes (lymphadenopathy) near the site of the scratch or bite.

Tapeworms—Many species of tapeworms that infect animals can be passed to humans, if tapeworm eggs voided in feces enter the mouth and are swallowed. Preventing infection involves recognition and treatment of infected dogs and cats and flea prevention.

Salmonellosis—Salmonella poisoning is one of the most common forms of zoonoses, with
the infection being transmitted directly from animals to humans or indirectly, from infected food products (meat, eggs, dairy products) to humans. Salmonellosis affects all animal species. The transmission of salmonellosis can be prevented through good hygiene,
especially hand washing. Individuals should be especially cautious when handling feces from animals afflicted with diarrhea.

Ringworm—Dermatophytosis, better known as ringworm, is a common fungal infection of the skin, hair, or nails of mammals. It is important to note that this infection is caused by a fungus similar to that which causes athlete's foot in humans, not a worm. The infection can be spread by direct contact with the lesions or spores on the animal or in the environment and by indirect contact, through grooming implements (combs, brushes) or shared equipment such as collars.

Rabies—This virus is transmitted by infected saliva, usually by a bite wound, but virus-laden saliva may also enter preexisting wounds or abrasions. All mammals are susceptible to the virus. According to the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program, infected dogs, cats, and ferrets will show clinical signs of rabies within 10 days of the time the virus is present in the saliva, which forms the basis of the quarantine period.

Toxoplasmosis—All pregnant or potentially pregnant women should take precautions if working with cats. Disposing of cat litter daily and either using disposable litter boxes (which are discarded daily) or disinfecting litter boxes daily will substantially reduce the risk of toxoplasmosis transmission to humans as toxoplasmosis requires at least 48 hours in cat feces to reach an infective stage.

Cheyletiellosis (Walking Dandruff)—A skin rash affecting cats, rabbits, and dogs. Symptoms range from mild scaling and crusting without itching to intensely itchy dermatitis with rash and hair loss. Cats may present without obvious rash but with excessive grooming. Clinical symptoms in humans include an itchy, red, raised rash, most often on arms, legs, or the trunk.

Review the animals currently available for adoption on a daily basis. Monitor their health, temperament, and behavior to ensure they are still candidates for adoption.

Develop criteria that will clearly document the reasons for and numbers of animals being euthanized. Differentiate between those who had potential to be placed if additional resources were available and those who did not.

To evaluate an animal for adoption or euthanasia, shelters should consider not only variables such as age, health, and temperament, physical condition, behavior and available space, but must also address many other questions such as:
- What are the prospects for providing this animal with a quality life?
- Is the animal in pain or distress and is there hope of alleviating this pain to allow for a quality of life?
- Does keeping this animal in her or his present condition present health or safety risks to other animals or people?
- Given the fiscal and practical limitations faced by this organization, does keeping this animal alive reduce that ability to care humanely for other animals?

Discussion:
Euthanasia is a difficult topic, moving toward no kill is everyone's goal. Euthanasia is currently an integral part of shelter population management in animal shelters across the country, but agencies must continue to strive to offer programs that work to reduce the number of animals who become unwanted or displaced. Effectively enforced animal control laws, public education efforts, strong adoption programs, the availability of affordable spay/neuter services, and programs that assist pet owners with animal training or behavior issues are all part of the solution.

A shelter's responsibility is to provide a safe haven for unwanted and lost animals. Animals are individuals, and each should be evaluated on an individual basis prior to euthanasia. While this is often difficult, the volume of surplus animals and lack of appropriate homes necessitates that this be done as fairly and compassionately as possible. This evaluation should be performed by a well-trained and experienced animal care professional in a position of authority, preferably in consultation with other key trained and knowledgeable staff members of the organization. Decisions regarding the adoptability or the euthanasia of animals within the animal shelter are the most difficult for staff to deal with. Progressive and well-run animal shelters follow a standard adhering

to the organization's mission statement. Animals who are sick must either receive appropriate medical attention, or the decision to euthanize must be made in a very timely manner. Treatment for contagious disease must be done in a proper isolation area or out-of-shelter fostering; healthy animals must be protected from contracting a manageable disease. Animals should not wait until near death to have a decision made about their fate.

An animal should not be euthanized simply because the required hold time is up, or simply due to space limitations. Other factors, such as age, health, behavior, and physical condition come into play when determining whether an animal should be placed for adoption. If one (or more) of those factors is an issue, then that is the reason for euthanasia. Unfortunately, in many shelters, it may be the competition for space in the adoption areas that is a determining factor. However, if an otherwise adoptable animal has finished its stray hold, but is being considered for euthanasia due to space, it should be compared to the animals already in the adoption area to be sure that perhaps it is not a better candidate for adoption. Accurately documenting the number of animals euthanized and the reasons for euthanasia is an important management tool. The ability to communicate shelter triumphs (decreased need for euthanasia) or shelter difficulties (increased need for euthanasia or euthanasia of a particular type/species of animal) is extremely important both to elicit public support (fund raising, spay/neuter education, etc.) and to ensure that the shelter remains accountable. Due to the volume of animals received at peak times of the year, there may often be a need to euthanize animals for space. However, by managing the animal population better, staff can make more informed euthanasia decisions based on health, behavior, temperament, physical condition and their potential to be adopted, other than just by hold periods and space. See Appendix 7 "Temperament Testing in the Age of No-Kill" By Nathan Winograd

Selecting animals for euthanasia is one of the most stressful tasks that animal shelter employees face. Those employees entrusted with this responsibility are often uneasy about choosing which animals to euthanize. Yet, the constant influx of animals into shelters makes euthanasia an unfortunate reality. It is important to have clearly documented criteria for choosing animals for euthanasia. All of the following should be taken into consideration:

Age Issues: Animals who are very young when they arrive at a shelter may not have received much needed developmental experiences and may not have the ability to fight off diseases that can exist in a multi-animal environment like a shelter. Animals who are very old may have health problems or may not adjust well to a new home. When creating euthanasia policies with regard to age, these factors should be considered.

Behavior Issues: An animal shelter has a responsibility to protect not only the animals in their care but also the human members of their community. For liability as well as ethical reasons, most animal shelters euthanize any animal that exhibits aggressive or dangerous behavior. Non-aggressive behaviors, such as fearful actions or demeanor, destructiveness, or housetraining difficulties, can be a barrier to an animal staying in a lifelong home. These behaviors should be diagnosed to determine severity and should be discussed with

potential adopters if an attempt is made to place the animal. There is no benefit to adopt an animal that will just be returned to the shelter or resigned to a worse fate (i.e., a cat abandoned outside because he does not use the litter box or a dog tethered in a yard). When developing a behavior assessment program, clear and well-thought-out written policies, procedures, forms, communication techniques, and accountability measures should be implemented. The program must be unique to each shelter's situation, staff time, and expertise.

Health Issues: Shelter medicine experts recommends that animal shelters take every measure possible to offer reasonably healthy animals for adoption to the public. Additionally, while some shelters have separate areas to isolate sick or potentially sick animals, others do not and must euthanize these animals in order to protect the health of the general population. What health-related euthanasia policies your agency adopts will depend upon your own staff, resources, time, and facility restrictions.

Space Issues: Choosing animals for euthanasia because of space constraints can be the most difficult decision involved in the euthanasia process, but it is one that is sometimes inevitable in shelters. Policies based on age, behavior, and health issues should provide some guidance when shelter staff makes these decisions. Staff should also consider the effects of long-term housing on shelter animals and take into account an animal's ability to maintain a condition of physical and emotional wellbeing while staying at the shelter.

Discussion:
Having a verification system in place for euthanasia is essential for any animal shelter in order to prevent errors that may result in the wrong animal being euthanized. An irreversible mistake, such as euthanizing a stray animal before the hold time has expired, can result in tragedy for a pet, heartbreak for a pet owner, and damage to a shelter's reputation. The burden of guilt caused by a mistake such as this will also greatly increase the stress level for staff performing euthanasia. The accurate record keeping of controlled drugs for euthanasia is a serious legal issue for animal care and control. Sodium pentobarbital (Fatal Plus(R)) is a schedule II barbiturate, which means it is a federally controlled substance. It can only be purchased using a DEA registration and order form, and is subject to, and controlled by, federal and state security and record-keeping requirements.

Discussion:
The euthanasia room should be the quietest, most relaxed, respected, and least interrupted room in an animal shelter. Cats and dogs can immediately pick up on the energy in a room. While animals do not "know they are about to be euthanized," they do recognize that they are in an unfamiliar environment; efforts should be made to reduce stress prior to euthanasia. Animals generally will relax and feel more trusting if the environment is pleasant and they are comforted and reassured. For the benefit of both the animals and the staff, a euthanasia room should be made to look and feel warm, comfortable, clean, and peaceful. It should be a medium sized room that is not cramped or so large that an animal

feels like it is exposed and vulnerable. The room should be well-lit. It should have a professional atmosphere—not formal or sterile—just professional. The floors and tables should be easy to clean and they should always be cleaned between animals. If anesthetized dogs must remain on the floor, they ought to be covered. Cats should be in covered cages or carriers. Hanging pictures or posters can help create a comfortable atmosphere. Even the staff's movements will go a long way toward allaying animals' fears; calm, gentle, slow movements are preferred and do much to relax the animals and reduce stress. If a euthanasia room is noisy to the point of distraction, the animals will likely respond in kind. They will become difficult for staff to handle, and the quality of the euthanasia process will deteriorate accordingly.

Discussion:
It is a binding obligation of shelter administrators to evaluate current euthanasia practices and procedures frequently, ensure that animals are being properly handled, and verify that employees are competent, compassionate, and properly trained. Euthanasia should be entrusted to the most conscientious and qualified personnel only; never to a person who is careless, indifferent to animal suffering or untrained in animal behavior and euthanasia techniques. Employees must be able to cope emotionally with euthanizing large numbers of animals while maintaining a concern for the wellbeing of each individual animal. There are many factors involved in providing a good death for an animal. Technical skill and knowledge of the drugs and equipment are a necessity; however, an understanding of the emotional investment each staff member has in the process is equally important. Teamwork, support, patience, attitude and an understanding of one's convictions and personal commitments to their job are all involved in giving an animal a dignified death.

Chapter 4
Community Building and Volunteering

To build a community that supports animal welfare the shelter and its services need to be accessible and the public it serves needs to be aware of its presence. Developing a tight knit outreach to all county areas with input on what services are needed in a must.

The shelter building and services provided

First impressions are lasting, and as visitors approach the shelter, the impression they receive should be warm, friendly, and inviting. A community's animal shelter is the heart of an animal care and protection program. It should help to set the standards within a community. The facilities and grounds should be maintained so that they are attractive and welcoming to the public. The external maintenance levels of the physical building itself can be, or can appear to be, reflective of the strength and level of care of the internal programs, so take the time to attend to the outside as it can help to frame a positive perception as visitors enter the shelter.

An animal shelter is often the first place people seek when they need advice about any animal related situation. Exterior signage should be designed and installed with the intention of directing and welcoming shelter visitors. Visitors should be able to find the shelter, navigate easily into the facility, and locate the help they require. They need to feel that their concerns will be handled with care and that the government has taken the business of animal control seriously. The messages and the quality of the signs, just like the general appearance of the facility, help to frame the visitors' impressions and their interactions with personnel. Take the opportunity to set clients up for a positive experience right from the beginning by providing signs that represent how the County wishes to serve its people and animals.

The ADAAG (Americans with Disabilities Act Accessibility Guidelines) gives civil rights protections to individuals with disabilities similar to those rights and protections provided to individuals on the basis of race, color, sex, national origin, age, and religion. It guarantees equal opportunity for individuals with disabilities in public accommodations, employment, transportation, state and local government services, and telecommunications.

One of the shortcomings in traditional education efforts is when we believe that if we simply tell people the "right" thing to do they will change. Although some do, most do not. Social Marketing is the use of marketing principles and techniques to influence a target audience to voluntarily accept, reject, modify, or abandon a behavior for the benefit of individuals, groups, or society as a whole.

Education or promotion includes public relations (publicity, media relations and community relations), direct marketing (Web site, direct mail), and personal outreach (presentations, one-on-one). Promotion is part of marketing, but marketing includes much

more. Social marketing encompasses analysis, planning, testing, execution, and evaluation of integrated programs designed to influence people to trade their old ideas, beliefs, and behaviors for new ones. Social marketing compliments, but does not replace legislative or legal efforts. Social marketing borrows the techniques that companies use to influence people to buy goods and services. Although there may be some adaptation in a nonprofit setting, social marketing is based on proven approaches.

Business definitions of marketing focus on the principle of exchange. People and organizations freely give something to get something, usually money for a product or service. Social marketing is built on exchange too, because we are asking people to adopt new behaviors and they will expect something in return. They may get physical, emotional, convenience, monetary or other benefits or they may avoid consequences by adopting the new behavior.

Behavior change is the bottom-line for social marketing and for animal protection advocates. Animal rights activist, Henry Spira said, "Bring about meaningful change one step at a time; raising awareness is not enough." If people are aware of the need to spay or neuter their animals, but have not found the time to do so, we have not succeeded. Although compelling education and communications can be highly motivating, promotion is more powerful when combined with appropriate product, price, and place elements. For example, an animal center wants to increase adoptions. The organization launches some topnotch publicity, advertising and direct mail (promotion). However, the shelter has many sick animals (product), the shelter is hard to get to and uninviting (place) and the adoption fee is prohibitive for some community residents who might otherwise provide good care (price). Unfortunately, the animal center will likely fail in its effort to significantly increase adoptions not because of poor promotion, but because of other marketing factors. Note that marketing is not just about the targets for your programs. You can use your marketing mindset to think about achieving behavior change from donors, volunteers, alliance partners, the media, your co-workers and more. Any time you are trying to change someone's behavior; you can use social marketing thinking and actions to get better results.

Recommendations:

Have a big selection of educational materials in the Service Lobbies. Make sure to include information in Spanish and English regarding rabies vaccination, spay/neuter, local and state laws pertaining to animals, responsible pet ownership, behavior and training, list of local veterinarians, and upcoming events. Providing written materials is an easy way to educate the public. Continually develop educational and informational materials for public use, or take advantage of materials made available by national organizations. Be sure that all educational materials are branded with the name and address of the shelter. Assign a staff member or volunteer to stock and straighten the educational literature displays on a daily basis.

In recent years, some public and private non-profit agencies that are interested in both

serving and changing behaviors within their communities, have broadened their traditional education or public information programs to employ strategies that focus more on an understanding of the needs and interests of potential consumers of their message or programs.

Public buy-in is crucial for long-term improvements. The agency's mission, combined with input from the community (in order to understand its needs), should guide the development of programs that will impact positively on community trends. Local animal welfare agencies must pay close attention to:

- The importance of listening to and collecting information about the community
- The need to view community outreach and public engagement as integral to the agency's overall purpose and programs rather than simply as an add-on accomplished via a few public service announcements and/or a presentation for children
- The importance of having a coordinated plan for influencing the community
- A common understanding of agency goals, and the different roles people play in achieving these.

With more people living in less space, and the growing perception of pets as family members or even surrogate children, public expectations concerning animals are changing. Neighborhood disputes, personal responsibility conflicts, maintenance of property values, and various quality-of-life concerns are as much a part of today's animal control issues as vicious dogs and rabies. Consequently, animal sheltering programs are shifting increasingly to a service orientation, designed not only to remove homeless animals from the streets, but also to promote standards for responsible pet ownership, assist in dispute resolution, and work to identify and reduce or eliminate the sources of animal problems in the community and provide education that reaches even the youngest of the members of our communities.

As the Yolo county shelter grows and works to redefine itself in a manner that meets the current and future needs of the people and animals in Yolo county, the guidance and support of the County regarding community outreach will be critical. The following trends are contributing to the evolution of the traditional animal shelter into more of a "community resource center" and a temporary haven for animals on their way back to lifelong homes:

- Returning animals to their original owners. Some shelters are increasing return to owner rates by heightening the visibility of their services, giving "free rides home" to licensed animals, streamlining lost-and-found reports and sharing them with other shelters, microchipping animals to complement license-tag identification, and working with retailers to list lost and found animals at computer kiosks in stores and shelters. In the future, better inter-agency communication and Web site listings will continue to increase the number of reunions between people and their pets, and to decrease the number of animals filling shelter kennels and cages.

- Focusing on population controls. Even in communities where accidental breeding and pet overpopulation are not as severe as they once were, aggressive sterilization programs are still critical to continue the decrease in population numbers. To make a real dent in long-term numbers, a few shelters subsidize spay/neuter surgeries for all pet owners, not just adopters, who would normally be unwilling or unable to pay for the procedure. Mobile spay/neuter clinics are also reaching more pet owners in low income neighborhoods.

- Targeting rental housing. Because "landlord doesn't accept pets" has become a common reason for relinquishment, many shelters are seeking to tear down the metaphorical fences that stand between pets and people in rental units. By providing information and advice to property managers and helping pet owners find appropriate rental housing, shelters can help more people hold onto their companion animals. In terms of adoptions, the numbers speak for themselves. Researchers say that if all rental-housing units permitted pets, about 6.5 million more animals could be placed in new homes.

- Collaborations. Both municipal agencies and private organizations will be more successful if they involve citizens and other animal groups in their programs. Many shelters have already initiated such partnerships, working with breed placement groups to find more homes for animals, partnering with free-roaming cat caretakers to identify and reduce cat colony numbers through TTVARM programs (trap-test vaccinate-alter-release-monitor), and involving volunteers in socializing and training shelter animals. Veterinarians and other animal professionals are working with shelters to identify behavior problems or lifestyle issues while also promoting shelter animals and services.

- Making the case for funding and resources. Effective animal care and control services must begin with sufficient funding from local governments. Staff training, proper equipment, and a sanitary shelter are the basic essentials. But local leaders who truly want to increase the number of animals available for adoption, while decreasing the numbers euthanized, are now recognizing the importance of devoting resources to providing adequate staff and development of innovative programs that increase return-to-owner rates and strengthen people's relationships with their pets.

- Preserving the bond. In seeking to keep pets and people together, some organizations have launched programs that provide temporary assistance to pet owners who are ill or elderly, or to those who have been displaced from their homes. In some areas, victims of domestic violence can turn to shelters for temporary boarding of their pets. In others, pet owners who have lost their jobs or are experiencing other financial setbacks can turn to pet food-banks at local shelters for help. Community organizations have been established specifically to help people living with HIV/AIDS to obtain

veterinary services, in-home pet care, and re-homing services for pets.

- Providing behavioral assistance. Shelters around the country are beginning to stave off relinquishments by providing free or subsidized behavior training and advice. The new push to address such issues as house-soiling and other destructive behaviors includes pet-parenting classes, pre-adoption counseling, and behavior training. Shelter studies reveal a clear need for such programs, indicating that many people who surrender animals are unaware of effective methods for dealing with routine behavior issues.

- Working with sheltered animals. By making animals comfortable during their stay and keeping their minds occupied through light training and stimulating toys, shelters around the country are seeing noticeable differences in the mental health of their furry residents. Dogs that otherwise might languish in their kennels are learning basic commands during walks and feeding times, and are showing off their newfound education to potential adopters. Because the dogs take what they learn with them to their new homes, stress reduction and behavior programs are not only increasing adoptions but also reducing return rates.

- Ensuring the best environment possible. As shelters develop programs and services to extend their outreach to the general public, they are also redesigning their physical structures to make facilities more comfortable for the animals in their care. New designs now include more elements intended to reduce noise, increase sunlight, and add a touch of home to dog kennels and cat rooms. By making use of windows, mirrors, plants, high quality ventilation systems, and sound absorption materials, shelters can create a more relaxing and stimulating environment for animals, employees, volunteers, and visitors.

- Becoming a true community resource. In the same way that shelters have rallied around the spay/neuter message, they are now beginning to market a broader message about the important roles that companion animals play in human lives. Pets have become an integral part of the family in an increasing number of households, but many pet owners still have more casual relationships with their companion animals. Through media campaigns and creative marketing strategies, shelters can raise public awareness of their services and of the value of animal companionship.

Volunteer programs are a must for a shelter of any size as there will always be more need than money with animal welfare programs. A well-managed volunteer program is the foundation for community involvement; it draws a community together as there is a role for any level of contribution.

Volunteers need to know to whom to report within the organization, and that person needs to be available to the volunteer. The community views paid and unpaid staff as

representatives of the organization; therefore, volunteers should be well-versed and trained to handle general questions about the sheltering services and adoption.

Offer all volunteers a formal training class that will give them the basics they need to work in the shelter. Some shelters choose to have a mandatory animal handling class during which all new volunteers learn the basics of the shelter operation and how to handle the animals. Once that training is complete, the volunteers are then trained on their specific job assignment. For example, a dog walker will have different training requirements than a volunteer adoption assistant. It's important to tailor the training to the job that needs to be done.

Meet with staff to determine their comfort level with volunteers. Address any concerns they may have by creating policies that put staff at ease. Allow staff input into the program.

Explore with the County attorney the possibility of a nonprofit raising donation funds specifically earmarked for the program and build a mechanism for the Yolo county shelter draw upon the funds. The shelter's volunteer program will need funding resources—an earmarked budget that includes training materials and recognition options.

Consider conducting exit interviews as volunteers leave the program. This information will assist the shelter managers in improving the program and help to address problems, which may have led to the volunteer's departure.

As the volunteer program grows, consider hiring a part-time volunteer coordinator to oversee the program. Depending on the size of the program, this could become a fulltime job.

Keep in mind that volunteers will need to know much of what the staff needs to know when issues arise or there is a change in shelter policy. Be sure to keep the volunteers informed about current events related to the shelter's operations.

Recommendations:
- Develop an SOP that defines the volunteer program. (Standard Operating Procedure (*SOP*))
- Create a volunteer manual that contains the following information:
- Positions assigned to volunteers
- Job descriptions
- Duties volunteers may and may not perform
- Minimum age for volunteers
- Uniforms, color-coded clothing, name tags
- Volunteer contact with the public
- Volunteer contact with the animals
- Areas of the agency where volunteers are permitted to work
- How, when, and where orientations will be conducted
- Required training specific to each position
- Recording time donated

- Resolution procedures for staff-volunteer conflicts
- Protocol for reviewing and dismissing volunteers
- Actions taken if a volunteer is injured "on the job"
- Insurance coverage for volunteers or separate under the shelter's general policy
- Goals of the agency and goals of the volunteer program
- Services the Yolo County shelter provides
- The agency's philosophy on issues such as intake, adoption, and euthanasia
- General information about the shelter, including operating hours and important phone numbers
- The agency's policies, such as adoption procedures and holding periods
- A brief history of the shelter
- Designate shelter managers to be the primary liaisons for the volunteers.

Recommendations:

Develop written SOPs (Standard Operating Procedure (*SOP*)) for adoption selection criteria that is handled by volunteers and overseen by staff.

Staff and volunteers should evaluate each animal based on a combination of temperament, behavior, and overall health. They should be careful not to make unfounded judgments about what will appeal to the public. Although age, breed, and size may factor into some decisions, people have various types of preferences, and offering a diverse selection is key. In certain cases, factors such as age or color may play a role, but decisions should not be based on a single factor. For example, staff should consider that many people feel that an older animal is the most appropriate choice for their lifestyle.

Develop a volunteer foster program for the animals who cannot be spayed or neutered due to age or weight; place animals in the adoption areas only when they are old enough.

The Yolo county shelter has an opportunity to develop a positive relationship with the media. Identify areas to expand public speaking opportunities. Review the following suggestions on developing relationships with print, radio, and television media:

- Offer the media positive story lines to cover; highlight and accentuate the programs and services that the Yolo county shelter has to offer to the community. This may lessen the impact of negative stories if they occur.

- A regularly published newsletter distributed to staff, media, and supporters would be helpful to the organization.

- To improve outreach to the community, consider inserting flyers in the water bills or other mailers to citizens that would educate on basic animal care, highlighting the importance of spaying and neutering, and information on rabies and licensing.

- Develop a formal marketing plan that targets the population segments that need to be reached. Surveys and other types of input can be used to determine how programs might be designed to motivate for change, and monitoring the outcomes of all efforts should be essential to the overall planning process.

Reach out to the community through various means such as:

- Holding a booth at County special events, local farmers markets, city events and university events.
- Promoting designated animal care events such as Adopt-a-Dog Month, Adopt-a-Cat Month, Animal Shelter Volunteer Appreciation Week, and Spay/Neuter Awareness Week.
- Issuing PSAs (A public service announcement) during seasonal events on care and attention to pets such as messaging about July 4th Fireworks, Christmas, etc.
- Writing letters to the editor of local newspapers and feature stories on volunteering and available animals.
- Increased usage of the Yolo county shelter logo on all forms and educational materials to aid brand recognition among Yolo county shelter clients and the community.
- Local artists should be involved with tee shirt designs and sculpture to generate a new involvement with a new shelter spirit. Promoting animal adoption and volunteering on all logos and tee shirts will increase the new direction of community based animal wellness.

Chapter 5
Data Driven Policy Decisions and Fiscal Considerations

Goal: Reducing costs and fine tuning services to meet current standards in animal welfare programs that are sustainable and community driven as well as community supported.

There are many local governments that believe animal registration programs should be expected to generate a significant portion of the animal control agency's budget. However, that would be the equivalent of saying that revenue from police citations should underwrite the cost of the police department, a totally erroneous assumption. Actually the biggest benefits of a well-run registration program are that animals are identified and hopefully, with the right fee structure, the majority are sterilized. This can save an animal shelter and taxpayers tens of thousands of dollars in reduced response to citizen complaints, numbers of animals impounded, and housing costs. A well-run registration program also expedites the process of returning a lost animal with an identification tag to his or her owner, with a citation when necessary, instead of costly impoundment, transport, and sheltering.

According to the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association's (APPMA) 2007–2008 National Pet Owners Survey, 39.4% of U.S. households own at least one dog and 34% of U.S. households own at least one cat. The average number of dogs owned per dog-owning household is 1.67 and the average number of cats owned per cat-owned household is 2.3. Without some sort of registration via microchip or licensing, the jurisdictions have no way to track pet ownership. An effective registration program encourages the public to comply because they get preferential service if their animal is found by animal control. Mandatory registration is often more successful when promoted as a pet protection service rather than a licensing tax.

Discussion:
Wages and salaries are traditionally the largest percentage of an organization's budget, with over 60% allocated to human resources. This may no longer be appropriate since the animal care profession of sheltering animals and animal control provided by sworn officers often leads to non-sustainable systems of service delivery when these two very different services are still under one agency. Most county agencies have severe budget cuts leaving the animal shelter under staffed as high paid staff positions are intact and direct animal care staff has been let go. The separation of services drastically improves the delivery of services to both systems as animal sheltering is now recognized as more than impounding. Employees expect fair remuneration for the services they perform. However, what is often lacking is the understanding that compensation is affected by many factors: the expectation of fairness by employees, competitive labor market wages, the value of the other benefits provided to employees, the organization's ability to pay, federal and local laws, etc. It is not longer financially sound to have sworn officers operating animal shelters as the wage difference will drain the budget for animal care programs. Often one sworn officer's salary and benefits in the role of animal care director, can financially support a director, kennel manager and two kennel workers salaries in the private sector.

Discussion:
Animal care must be the central focus of the an animal shelter, the shelter must have enough staff to provide at least the basics of food, water, shelter, and health care. Furthermore, the shelter has a responsibility to provide services that ensure public safety and programs that promote adoption and sterilization. Each shelter is different, based on the human population served, the estimated number of animals owned in the community, the size of the area covered, etc.; however, every shelter has an obligation to maintain high standards of service and quality animal care. Volunteers offer assistance and should never be taken into account when covering the basic services of animal sheltering.

Long gone are the days when animal shelters are placed in tucked away areas near municipal services such as the landfill or prisons. Animal shelters are now specialized services that are community driven and placement of the building itself should be considered just as the placement of the public library. To have a successful adoption program and a solid volunteering program the animal shelter should be located where the community can be involved not where most of the impounding animals are coming from. Studies have shown wealthier communities have more available volunteers and more direct adoptions as well as donations made to the shelter than shelters located in an out of the way locations where resources are limited.

 Bridging support of local police agencies where the community can pay for animal licenses will assist with better compliance as compliance and ease of services can go hand in hand. Vaccination and spay/neuter clinics should likewise be reachable to the area with the greatest need for those services. Considering split sites such as a stand-alone spay/neuter clinic at a location that meets the need for accessibility might be not the right location for the best community involvement for the animal shelter. This can be more cost effective as a building can be renovated or retrofitted for a spay/neuter clinic while an outdated animal sheltering building can be more cost effective if built from the ground up.

In order for an organization to achieve its goals, it requires not only a committed staff team but also one that is sufficient in numbers and specifically hired and trained for the required tasks. Although having staff that can 'pitch in' when needed is desirable, a certain amount of staff specialization is essential. Workloads should be distributed equitably. Establishing 40-hour workweeks to cover all areas of a shelter is difficult in itself; scheduling kennel and office staff to cover the work in a facility that provides seven-day-a-week care and accessibility is even more challenging. Creativity in rotating days off or offering a schedule of 10-hour days with four days on and three days off might entice employees to accept scheduling changes.

- Recommendations:
- Divide the total budget into separate cost centers to reflect shelter expenditures and the animal control expenditures. This allows the tracking of expenditures of each program and plan-for future events.
- Review how overtime is spent, particularly review the shelter manager job

descriptions/responsibilities and the after hours' vaccination policy. If shelter managers are routinely expected to work overtime to complete their duties, the job descriptions may need to be revised.

- Create a budget line for kennel staff, separate from field services animal control staff (sworn officers).
- Explore with contracted cities for other departments to remove road kill vs. using high paid officers for this task as this is not the best use of their time.
- Explore methods of collecting donations with the county's finance department:
- Deposit donation monies in a special donation account rather than general revenues
- Roll over donation monies to the next budget year, enabling the Yolo county shelter to utilize it towards special programs or enhanced animal care.
- Explore partnerships to publicize the shelter and generate donations to enrich animal care.
- Explore the financial benefits of separation of services for a contracted county animal shelter and sworn animal control officers.
- It is never cost effective to keep animals that could be moved into fostering/rescue agencies. Animals should be moved through the system from intake to hold on the first day and made available for adoption or rescue placement on the first legal day.

Develop a wish list of select items that can be utilized for direct animal care. Solicit community groups to spearhead campaigns to collect food, bedding, or other essential items.

Several communities will return a registered animal running at large to his home, free of charge for the first violation as a benefit of complying with pet registration laws. However, a registration program must be actively enforced or compliance will be low. Animal registration programs should be managed by the agencies that benefit from them.

The term "client service" is more appropriate than "customer service" for the animal sheltering industry. A customer is someone who pays for goods or services, while a client is someone with whom you build a relationship. Dealing with the public, whether in person or on the phone, is one of the most stressful tasks in a shelter. Without formal training in client service, some staff will try not to engage the public as a way to reduce this stress, or they will handle interactions inappropriately, damaging the agency's reputation in the process.

A citizen's experience with the staff should not leave the impression that the agency is unorganized, unsympathetic, or uncaring. Great public relations and client service begin with the public's initial contact with an agency, and this should be an easy and helpful experience. This is an opportunity to create a new adopter, a new volunteer, a new donor, or a new friend for the organization.

Maintaining client service in animal shelters is difficult because most shelters are understaffed, and visitors are often anxious, excited, or demanding. Regular staff training

in the areas of telephone etiquette and client service is worth the investment of time and money because it helps staff members retain their ability to handle difficult situations. It is important to realize that regardless of how many years an agency has spent on goodwill with its clients, one bad incident can ruin that investment.

Recommendations:
Information on the shelter Web site must be current and easy to navigate. Identify commonly asked questions and other information desired by the public. Design a frequently asked question section and other areas where the public can go 24/7 without having to call, write, or wait until the facility is open. The site can provide important and valuable information such as:
- The shelter's mission statement.
- Listing and directions of the animal shelter.
- Monthly statistics on animal outcomes.
- Yolo county animal laws, state cruelty laws and after hours' policies.
- Information on what to do if they find a lost pet or see one being cruelly treated.
- Information about the services provided by the shelter and a fee schedule of the services.
- Information about low cost spaying and neutering.
- Available animals for adoption.
- Lost and found animal listings with photographs and intake dates.
- Specific volunteer opportunities and a downloadable volunteer application.
- A shelter supply wish list
- Links to rescue agencies.
- Rabies and vaccination clinic information.
- Basic pet care information as well as topics such as disaster preparedness, seasonal hazards, and puppy and kitten care.
- Methods for dealing with behavior problems. (The HSUS Pets for Life Program's CD-ROM that includes handouts on a variety of behavior issues. The shelter may post printable handouts on its Web site.)

Meet with the Webmaster to develop a procedure for updating and adding information to the site. Ideally, once the information has been given to a Webmaster, it should be posted within a reasonable time frame. Or, the Webmaster may prefer that he or she teach a staff person or dedicated volunteer to update the site from the shelter.

Discussion:
The Internet makes an incredible difference in animal sheltering as it brings the shelter and its services to the person. Not only does it allow organizations to have daily contact with donors, adopters, and those looking for lost pets, many shelters around the country have found that showcasing animals available for adoption has dramatically increased adoption rates and has brought much more attention to their facilities. In fact, the ability to showcase animals available for adoption is probably the single most valuable aspect of the Web for the typical animal shelter. With a Web presence, members of the public can learn what services are offered, how they can assist or volunteer, and they can then tell others what they have learned or seen.

Utilizing the Web as a resource can gain efficiencies in the operation of the service. By advertising the Web site on the shelter vehicles and documents, the increased awareness will reduce staff time answering general questions about locations and hours of operation and allow management to utilize staff more effectively.

The benefits of good statistics far outweigh any argument that a brief overview is good enough. The concept that, "The work is not done until the paperwork is completed" has an impact on animal shelters just as on any other business. Animal sheltering is a business whether it is nonprofit or governmental.

Small shelters benefit just as much as large shelters from keeping accurate statistics on every aspect of their work. Numbers tell people who you are and what you are up against.

Tracking animal needs for each community by the utilization of services is a must. To address the needs of each community and better support areas that are not being addressed a clear easy to use system of tracking must be accessible to all cities of Yolo Co. Detailed billable hours and service outcomes need to reviewed monthly. This will allow for trends to be identified as well as services to be streamlined into separate categories, such as sheltering and field service.

Public outreach showing statistics not only show the numbers of unwanted animals in their communities it also brings in support. Monthly newsletters and yearly public reports show the many programs that the shelter offers as well as successful adoptions. Nicely put together and attractive reporting with photographs of adopters and their new pet brings a community together. See Appendix 9 "Charlottesville VA SPCA 2007 annual report"

Goal: Service review as it relates to the needs of Yolo County.

Discussion:
Systems of animal welfare have advanced and evolved, the need for both fast access to quality information and autonomy have made it necessary and challenging to manage information more wisely and efficiently. Information and technology has become an integral part of enhanced lost and found, adoption, rescue fostering placement, spay/neuter programs and licensing programs. Animal welfare agencies continue to move towards the use of animal management systems to track their animals, clients, and activities within the county.

Many software programs offer a range of reports that managers can use to report how well the agency is meeting the ongoing needs, and what they want to achieve in the future. There are many programs that allow for a range of helpful functions such as displaying pictures of animals on the animal's record, visuals of kennel set-ups, and bar coding for tracking animal inventories.

Many of these programs work well for multi program agencies such as community services as well as sheltering and spay/neuter clinics. Staff can view animal inventories in each location; this type of service can achieve efficiencies by reducing the need for each department having dedicated staff for each program or multiple staff in multiple locations

performing the same functions. Take advantage of the free demonstrations offered by some of the software companies. Seek information from other agencies; the administration Society of Animal Welfare Administrators' list server recently provided information about the various software programs available.

Information management is an essential tool in running and evaluating a successful animal welfare program. With the current technology and software available, there is little reason to continue to manage so much information using a paper system or outdated systems.

Discussion:
Record-keeping accuracy greatly improves when animal inventory information is part of a software program designed to track animals. Like most businesses, animal sheltering agencies are expected to maintain accurate records regarding their activities. This includes, but is not limited to, the accurate accounting of all animals received and their corresponding dispositions. An accurate and easy-to-use data collection and analysis system is essential for reporting such information to local government, donors, and other funding sources. In addition, such reporting is essential for assessing the organization's performance, formulating strategic plans, and setting goals. What an agency does is important and need not be overshadowed by how much it does. It is often stated that quality is more important than quantity; therefore, the Yolo county shelter can and should put the numbers it has to work for it in ways that will improve the quality of its work.

Shelters of all sizes benefit from keeping accurate statistics on every aspect of their work. Numbers tell people who an organization is and what challenges it faces. Presented below are reasons to keep an accurate count of the animals an agency handles.

- Accountability: Numbers justify a shelter's existence to government entities and the general public. An agency knows it is productive, but others must know this as well.
- Liability: Proper recording of numbers will show that each animal was kept the legally required amount of time.
- Public Image: Numbers increase public awareness about the magnitude of a shelter's mission.
- Numbers help convey the results of an agency's efforts and also help convey the public's role in generating stray and homeless animals.
- Budgets/Fund-raising: A good budgeting process requires statistics in order to identify needs.
- Numbers assist in planning for the future. Numbers paint pictures that may open pocketbooks for donations.
- Program Evaluation/Planning: Strengths and weaknesses are exposed through statistics.
- Analysis of a shelter's numbers identifies successful as well as ineffective programs.
- Statistical analysis can assist in the design of future programs. Comparison of statistics may expose animal population trends (local, regional, and national).

As Yolo county shelter updates its Ordinances, consider contacting The HSUS for examples of progressive animal-related Ordinances that have been implemented in other areas.

Provide training and develop relationships within the police Departments to better educate police officers on the crime of animal cruelty. Since most forms of animal cruelty are felony offenses, involvement is not only beneficial, it is required to prosecute a felony crime. Yolo county shelter should assign at least two detectives that the Yolo county shelter can work with on criminal cruelty cases and who can provide advice, direction, investigation, and prosecution. Yolo county shelter also needs to allow the humane officers the ability to instruct police officers on animal cruelty and the role that the police department plays in such offenses.

Work closely with the County administrators and attorneys to address the needed Ordinance changes from the suggestions listed above and any other ordinances deemed necessary for revision or inclusion. The Yolo county animal control must be involved in the creation of ordinances that they will be charged with enforcing.

Review ordinances yearly to gauge the effectiveness of the animal control program and to ensure that the mission of creating safe neighborhoods for both people and pets is being met.

In an effort to reduce pet overpopulation, form collaborative partnerships in the county to address the core issues of education and the sterilization of pets.

Discussion:
Animal control laws are really quality of life laws. Communities with good animal control ordinances are generally better places to live because they provide good enforcement policies and procedures and empower enforcement personnel by giving them the tools they need to address the issues. In these places, barking dogs do not disturb the citizens' quality of life, citizens and mail carriers can walk down the streets without fear of being attacked, and public places and parks are not soiled with dog feces. Would ordinance changes reduce the number of animals coming into the shelter or improve citizens' quality of life? If so, they should be addressed. However, it is important to keep in mind that additional ordinances usually have costs associated with them. Lawmakers need to understand that animal control laws are a very important part of the makeup of a good community.

Recommendations:
- Pursue the possibility of allowing license sales revenue to be put into a fund account for the Yolo county shelter to go only toward low cost spay/neuter programs and other programs beneficial to the goals and objectives of the animals in the care of the department.
- Consider providing additional staff that would perform only license registration

through canvassing and enforcement. Areas such as Los Angeles County Animal Control have revenue officers that target neighborhoods to check for current registration and issue citations for non-compliance.

- Make the licensing records available to the ACOs via computer so they have 24-hour access to the most up-to-date licensing information. Computer access would benefit the ACOs as they return or receive animals.
- Implement a stronger differential registration program. Increase the registration fee for unaltered animals to encourage sterilization. This helps serve as encouragement for getting animals sterilized and rewards responsible owners of altered animals with a lower fee. An effective differential registration program will help reduce the number of litters that pass through the shelter.
- Develop and distribute educational materials promoting the benefits of microchipping. The Yolo county shelter and veterinarians should be encouraged to provide affordable microchipping to their clients.
- Develop written SOPs that address the "who, what, why, and how" of using microchip technology. Written SOPs should address training, scanning techniques, scanner maintenance, and tracing ownership.
- Provide information on the Web site concerning the requirements, costs, locations, and incentives for the public to have their animal licensed.
- Work with other animal organizations to assist with neighborhood canvassing and promotional events to increase licenses.
- Generate a monthly license report, which would aid in tracking trends for creating an animal registration marketing campaign.
- Organize a quarterly low-cost rabies vaccination, license, and microchip clinic for residents of Yolo County.

Discussion:

Consistent, clear messages are very important in educating and encouraging the public to do what is right. In most cases, people have not educated themselves about animal laws in their communities. Correct information provided in a neat and concise manner can be very effective in assisting the public and encouraging them to do what is required to correct a situation.

Animal mandatory registration programs are commonly one of the most mismanaged programs of local governments across the United States. They are inherently set up to fail from the beginning because their purpose is often misunderstood.

- As a lost pet recovery service
- As a statistical tool
- Ensures rabies vaccinations
- As a revenue source
- As cat control
- Promotes spaying and neutering
- Helps ensure compliance with local ordinances
- Lowers the burden for non cat/dog owning tax payers

Recommendations:
- A mission statement needs to describe in just a few words the purposes of an organization. The current mission statement describes responsibilities rather than a mission. Ensure that the mission is in keeping with current priorities.
- Post the mission statement in public areas and articulate to staff what the mission is and how it will be achieved. Seek "buy-in" from the staff.
- Develop a three-year strategic plan. Planning is essential to realizing goals that the key stakeholders agree upon. It also facilitates communication and emphasizes expectations.
- The strategic planning team should agree upon key goal areas that represent the overarching needs of the community. Examples include adoption, spay/neuter, animal care, volunteers, human resources, education and outreach, etc.
- Within the agreed-upon goal areas, the strategic planning team should develop goal statements that are still relatively abstract, but that refine the focus within the goal area. For example, a goal statement under the goal area of human resources may be: "to attract and retain the most highly qualified staff and volunteers available."
- Write objectives under each goal statement. These objectives should not be abstract, but should represent measurable and time-specific statements under each goal statement. For example, under the goal statement example given above, an objective might be: "To offer one in-service training day per quarter each year beginning in the first quarter of 2011."
- Develop action plans for achieving each of the stated objectives. The staff that is accountable for the results should do this.
- The strategic plan must be disseminated to the entire staff, and the framework of the plan (without the specific action plans) should be published on the Yolo county's Web site and in any publications sent out by the agency. Those persons responsible for carrying out each element of the plan must be held accountable by management (and ultimately by the community) for achieving results.
- If issues arise that are outside the scope of the plan, they can be incorporated with the consent of the planning team. If they are not urgent, ideas should be parked until the next plan update (ideally at yearly intervals). Any changes to the plan must be compelling enough to justify displacing other objectives within the plan. Simply adding additional work to the plan is unlikely to result in success.

Discussion:

Strategic planning is an effective and essential tool that maps the future of the organization.

There is an old adage, "If you don't know where you're going, how are you going to get there?" Agreed-upon goals and objectives allow the organization to do the following:

- Focus its limited resources, both human and financial, on its real priorities.
- Evaluate the organization's ability to meet those priorities.
- Adjust the activities or programs where changing circumstances dictate. In addition to the goals and objectives, an important component of strategic planning is the development of action plans which provide the detail to the strategic goals and that typically incorporate the following components:

• The specific steps or actions required for each priority.
• Who will be held accountable for seeing that each step or action is completed?
• When are these steps or actions to be carried out?
• What monitoring mechanisms are needed within each step?

Review every potential grant and funding opportunity and gear program development to available funds. There are many start-up grants and grants to fund programs that show a movement to reduction of euthanasia. Most require a total population of 100,000 to qualify for funding. Yolo County should explore each grant and guidelines before writing programs. There is no need to reinvent the wheel, as there are many models that go with the grant funding. See appendix 10 "Maddies Fund Grants" and 11 "Grants for Animal Shelters and Rescue groups 2009" Shelter Source

To build a cost effective animal welfare program all areas of Yolo County need to have input as the service needs for their communities shift and trends are identified. Better community education about services and with low cost/ no cost services will reduce the impact of unwanted animals in Yolo County.

Chapter 6
Sheltering, Rescue Placement and Adoption

We as a community need to be moving toward no-kill sheltering, this does not mean that an animal that enters a shelter is never euthanized, it means that we are taking the necessary steps to provide care and resources to all adoptable animals and provide medical care to all those with treatable illnesses. This goal is a very attainable one, with the support of community members and rescue agencies as well as a well-advertised adoption program.

Properly addressing and assessing the needs of each animal that enters the system will decrease euthanasia within the shelter. This starts with intake information.

Staff and volunteers should be trained to understand and differentiate between an animal's temperament and an animal's behavior. Temperament is an animal's inherent personality, for example an animal may be shy, timid, submissive, dominant, assertive or aggressive. Whereas an animal's behavior is how the animal acts, for example, the animal chews, digs, barks, jumps on people, is not housetrained. Temperament can, to a degree, be modified. For example, a submissive, shy dog can be socialized, but the dog will remain a submissive dog. However, behavior, what an animal does, can be modified and eliminated. An un-housetrained dog can become housetrained, and a dog can be trained to not chew, dig, or jump on people.

Track the reasons for owner surrenders in order to help reduce the relinquishment of pets and to learn more about the animal. Carefully evaluate the reasons for surrender, such as biting, when considering owner surrendered animals for adoption. When the behavior/temperament evaluation program is in place, it should be performed on surrendered animals as well as strays.

The Yolo county shelter should euthanize animals who have bitten out of ***aggression not fear or discomfort***. Adopting these animals out is unfair to both the adopter and the animal, and it can be a liability for the shelter if a human or another animal gets hurt or killed.

A standardized behavior/temperament evaluation program for dogs can provide valuable information regarding:
- A dog's personality and the particular needs related to that personality and breed
- Her/his temperament and any particular problems related to the temperament
- Her/his ability to interact and socialize with people
- A dog's level of submission or dominance
- The training style best suited for the dog
- Food or possession aggression
- Energy and activity level
- Response to physical control and physical examination
- The type of home that would best meet the needs of the individual dog

A standardized behavior/temperament evaluation program for cats can provide valuable information regarding:
- A cat's personality and particular needs related to personality and breed
- Her/his temperament and any particular problems related to the temperament
- Her/his ability to interact and socialize with people
- Her/his response to physical examination
- The cat's comfort level with handling and grooming

The kennel and veterinary staff should pay close attention to the animals available for adoption. These animals should be evaluated every day to ensure that they remain healthy and well adjusted to life in the kennel. If their behavior or health deteriorates, they should be removed from the adoption area. In addition, as new animals arrive, the ones that would be good candidates for adoption should be compared to the ones already available for adoption. When space is limited, the best candidates for adoption should be chosen to occupy the available space in the designated adoption areas.

Discussion:
A temperament evaluation program should be a carefully considered component of a professional animal management plan. Clear and well-thought-out written policies, procedures, forms, communication techniques, and accountability measures should be implemented. Behavioral programs must be unique to each shelter's situation, staff time, and expertise. It would not be prudent or responsible to simply attempt to take and apply an already existing program in an effort to mold it to make it fit.

The behavioral health of an animal in the custody of an animal care and control agency is as important as her or his physical health. A temperament/behavioral assessment of each animal is also extremely crucial to the adoption process and its success. It assists with the determination of the type of home that will best meet the needs of the individual animal. Additionally, it provides potential adopters with information to assist them in determining the appropriateness of a particular animal for their lifestyle. The accurate assessment of the behavioral status of an animal helps a shelter provide adequate care for that animal, improve that animal's likelihood of adoption, and place that animal in an appropriate adoptive home. Additionally, behavior assessments play a key role in enhancing the safety of staff members and the general public.

Recommendations:
Develop and implement written policies and procedures for the adoption process. Identify the written policies and guidelines that are necessary to assist the staff in determining the methods for counseling potential adopters, and the means to determine the appropriateness of an adoption.

Implement a consistent adoption program and counseling process with a full time staff person in charge. In addition, one or two adoption counselor positions could be created to conduct adoptions at both locations. These adoption counselors should have excellent client service skills and have a genuine desire to help people. The adoption supervisor

and adoption counselors would be responsible for working with potential adopters through the entire process. This process would include helping adopters select the right pet for their lifestyle, approving the adoption paperwork, and providing follow-up after adoption to ensure a smooth transition into the new home.

 Make sure that the adoption counseling process ensures that animals are placed in environments compatible with their individual needs and adopters are matched with animals compatible with their lifestyles. The current adoption application can provide a very good basis for the adoption counseling process.

An adoption counseling session should be a relaxed, friendly meeting that results in the best possible match for both the animal and the adopter. Adoption counselors should ask open-ended questions that elicit honest answers from potential adopters. The process should be a counseling session, not a test. The following are some topics and questions that one should cover in an adoption counseling session:

General questions, such as asking why they want a pet, what type of pet they are looking for and why?
- Experience level of the potential adopter
- Household activity level
- Number of people in the household, ages of any children
- Specific to dogs, how often will the adopter be able to provide walks/exercise, how long will the dog be left alone during the day?
- What type of behavior/training problems did the adopter experience with previous pets and how did he/she resolve them?
- Specific to cats, how will the adopter handle scratching behavior? Discuss alternatives to declawing.

 Develop and implement an interactive program whereby staff and volunteers work with the public to match individual animals in the shelter that are known to have the characteristics that a potential adopter is seeking. A person who is active and enjoys running can be directed towards sporting breeds in the shelter. A first time dog owner can be steered away from the dominant, untrained dogs and directed towards the calmer, well-mannered dogs. Animals with special needs, such as a shyness or submissive urination, that were discovered during the behavioral evaluations can be placed with an experienced owner in an environment that will provide socialization necessary to develop the dog's full potential as a companion animal. Create at least one adoption-counseling area where potential adopters can visit with animals and counselors can conduct the adoption process.

Set up a log sheet where staff and volunteers can write their observations about the animals' traits and behaviors. In addition, any temperament evaluation results should always be part of an animal's permanent record.

Make sure that all staff involved in the adoption program is intimately familiar with the animals available for adoption as well as with companion animals in general. It is crucial

that these staff members have the knowledge necessary to make quality lifelong matches between pet and adopter.

Consider promoting the animals who generally get overlooked. See how other shelters around the country have highlighted these animals in the article.

Institute a procedure for checking potential adopters for any history of animal cruelty or neglect to ensure that animals are not placed with known irresponsible or abusive pet owners.

Develop a comprehensive adoption packet for new adopters. Include the following:
- The animal's medical records and information on the free veterinarian examination.
- List the participating veterinarians
- Feeding recommendations
- Potential health concerns
- How to introduce the new pet into the home and to other animals
- Information on training classes and any information from trainers in the community.
- Local animal control ordinances
- Recommended books on behavior and training
- A list of supplies and necessities
- What to do if they lose an animal
- Any coupons or discounts from businesses who support the shelter
- Accept major credit cards and debit cards as soon as possible.
- Explore public discussions on shelter policies regarding issues such as declawing and pets living outdoors.

Discussion:
A good adoption program incorporates policies and guidelines designed to assist with responsible matchmaking. A good decision is one that is based upon information presented by the applicant, the appropriateness of that animal to that home, and an adoption counselor's good judgment and willingness to look at each situation individually.
Part of a progressive adoption program is to teach adoption counselors not to think in terms of "catching potential adopters in a wrong answer." While it is important to have guidelines that are in place to protect the animals and ensure that each adopted animal is placed in a responsible home, it is also important to "make the right match." Staff must be trained to evaluate potential adopters and to teach adopters to be responsible pet owners. Selecting the right staff members to be adoption counselors is crucial. We encourage the organization to look for people who are excellent communicators, who genuinely enjoy talking with people, and who can best help people make decisions regarding the correct type of pet for their family.

A comprehensive and interactive adoption program will better serve the needs and interests of both the animals in the care of the shelter and the potential adopters. The staffing and resources dedicated to implementing a comprehensive adoption program

need expansion in order to meet this goal. However, by identifying what the organization hopes to achieve, the shelter can easily identify the resources needed, work those needs into the organization's list of priorities, and then phase in the various aspects of the program as resources become available.

The purpose of an adoption program, whether conducted by a municipal animal control agency or a private animal-protection agency, should be to find responsible, lifelong homes for the animals in its care. Such matchmaking requires knowledge of both the animals to be placed and their prospective adopters. The goal of any adoption program is not to place as many animals as possible, but to place animals in appropriate homes that provide the animal a safe and caring home for life.

When seeking to place homeless animals into new homes, shelters face stiff competition from pet stores, breeders, and sources of free animals. According to the 2007-2008 survey by the American Pet Products Manufacturers Association (APPMA), 10% of dog owners and 18% of cat owners obtained their animals from shelters. The rest took in strays, bred their own animals, or acquired pets through friends, relatives, breeders, newspapers, and pet stores.

Taking a cue from these statistics, shelters are examining ways to break down historical barriers that stand in the way of relationships with veterinarians, dog trainers, groomers social service workers, breed placement groups, breeders, and neighborhood free-roaming cat caretakers. Not only can these people amplify and complement existing shelter services, they can also boost a shelter's image in the community as a reliable source of new animal companions. Studies have shown that prospective pet owners generally stay away from an animal shelter for a variety of reasons:

- Ignorance of the surplus animal problem
- Impulse buying and impulse accepting
- Perceived quality of animals
- Unfamiliarity with the animal shelter
- Misconceptions about the animal shelter
- Inconvenience of hours and/or location of the shelter
- Complaints of profiling (racial/financial)
- Past shelter animal with undisclosed health issues/behavioral issues

Shelters cannot hope to overcome these obstacles easily however, some problems may have more achievable solutions, perhaps something as basic as noting any improvements made and helping to correct a shelter's lack of visibility (or negative image) in the community. Increasing adoptions, however, demands careful regard for the adoption process in an effort to ensure that healthy animals are placed in responsible homes. Although certain adoption criteria (such as whether or not a landlord will allow pets) are absolute, most are meant to serve as guidelines, enabling counselors to work within each set of circumstances individually. Exceptions to enacted policies can be made by consulting with a supervisor. One of the keys to program success is to have consistent approaches, policies, and procedures in order to avoid any false allegations that the agency is either arbitrary or discriminatory. Evaluation of potential adopters can be based

on three basic criteria: commitment to the life and needs of the animal; compassion and a desire for mutual companionship; and capability of providing the essentials of a healthy, happy life for the animal.

The adoption process should be a positive, friendly, and educational process and never an opportunity to either "get an animal out of the shelter" or for the "adoption police" to find fault with a person's lifestyle. However, there are definitely certain circumstances under which a requested adoption should not occur. Potential adopters often initially view a refusal as a rejection or accusation. Counselors must be not only honest and direct, but also courteous and understanding in order to diffuse a potentially volatile situation. If done appropriately, explaining the rationale for adoption denial can serve as an educational experience, and not a demeaning one. When staff fails to do this correctly, the potential adopter leaves without a true understanding of the message and will simply acquire an animal elsewhere.

Animal shelters should be aware of their legal and ethical responsibilities regarding the adoption of any animal. Good adoption policies will help the Yolo county shelter make the best decisions for the animals being adopted and will assure the community that all potential adopters are treated fairly and equally.

Recommendations:
Follow-up on all adopted animals. When possible, assign a staff person or volunteer who will be responsible for making the calls. One way to do this is to have 31 folders in a file cabinet numbered 1-31, which correspond to the days of the month. If the shelter decides that two weeks, for example, is a good period of time to wait to follow-up, the adopters' paperwork can be put in the numbered folder that corresponds with the date he/she should be called. Every day, the paperwork should be pulled out of that corresponding folder and calls should be made to the adopters. In addition, phone calls are also a friendly way to follow-up on health and behavior concerns and catch problems before they result in an animal being returned.

The HSUS's has free pet behavior tip sheets is available for use at all shelters, which can be used to help counsel adopters on particular behavior issues they may be having with their new pet. The shelter can put their own contact information on the back of these sheets, which can be e-mailed or mailed to adopters.

Maintain a list of area dog trainers and behaviorists that can be given as a reference if an adopter is having a behavior issue with a newly adopted pet. This list can also be used for those who call the shelter and are thinking about relinquishing a pet due to behavior issues.

Recommendations:
Develop written protocols and procedures along with contractual requirements for the qualified groups with whom the shelter desires to work with as a rescue placement.

Develop and document eligibility requirements for breed placement groups and adoption organizations. Once compiled and written, all breed placement policies and forms should

be presented to all interested parties and consistently followed.

Develop and document animal housing and care standards for breed placement partners in order to ensure adequate animal care will be provided. Inspect every placement facility prior to the transfer of animals. If the group has numerous locations, each one should be inspected. Inspections should be done initially and yearly to ensure compliance.

Require that the person picking up or accepting transfer of an animal into a placement group sign an adoption contract. The existing adoption contract specific for a rescue group.

Discussion:
In many communities, animal shelters have forged formal working relationships with placement partners such as with the YCSPCA. In these relationships, animals of a particular breed, type, or special need are transferred between a shelter and a placement group. In order for these relationships to work properly, there must be clearly stated expectations and a written formal agreement executed between all parties. Prior to the release of an animal to a placement partner, a shelter must be assured that the transfer is in the best interest of the animal and community.

It is always preferable for various groups involved in animal care, sheltering, and control efforts within a community to work well together. However, differences of opinion, philosophical disagreements, mission-based differences, and high emotions often stand in the way of complete harmony. Clearly, community opinion is significant to the overall perception of an organization and, ultimately, to the success of its animal cares programs and services.

The Yolo county shelter management should collaboratively develop a detailed written SOP for the foster program. This SOP should address all of the following:
- A record-keeping system to keep track of animals and foster homes
- Criteria regarding which animals are eligible for foster care
- Determining the qualifications required of potential foster care providers
- Soliciting help from community veterinarians
- Orientation and training for new foster care providers
- Determining the source of funding for supplies, vaccines, and medical treatment for animals in foster care
- Providing guidance, instruction sheets, and telephone support for foster care providers
- Monitoring the health and well-being of foster animals by visiting foster homes and calling foster care providers on a regular basis
- Determining the foster care provider's role in assisting with the adoption of the animal
- Determining if there is a need to set a limit on the length of time an animal can remain in foster care and defining this limit if indicated
- Ensure that the Yolo county shelter has the appropriate liability insurance and develops a disclaimer to protect the Yolo county shelter in the event that a foster

animal injures a person.
- As recommended in section 5.5, Sterilization Services, pregnant animals should be spayed prior to giving birth. These animals should not be placed into fosters homes and allowed to contribute to the pet overpopulation problem.
- The records for the animals in foster care should be located in a designated area within the shelter and fully updated on a regular basis with all pertinent information.

Files must be organized to ensure that animals in foster homes can be accurately monitored. Each animal's record should contain the following information:
- Reason the animal was placed into foster care
- Foster home contact information, name, address, and telephone number
- Date the animal went to the foster home
- Expected date of return to the shelter
- Medical information, vaccination schedule, veterinary history
- Any treatment given by the foster care provider
- Documentation of all communication with the foster care provider
- Ongoing progress and status of the animal
- Final disposition
- Ensure that the adoption screening criteria, wording of the adoption contract, and adoption follow-up procedures are consistent for every animal adopted from the
- Yolo county shelter, regardless of whether the animal is physically at the shelter or in a foster home.
- Set limits in the foster program including in each foster home; each foster home must agree to the limits. It is important to set reasonable limits on the number of cats that can be fostered in the program overall and in any one home. The number limit for each foster home needs to take into account the time, standard of care, and resources needed for each animal.
- Ensure that Yolo county shelter staff members who foster animals are subject to the same standards and procedures as all other foster parents.

Discussion:
Generally speaking, fostering is the placement of special-case animals into temporary homes until they are suitable for adoption. A foster care program can increase an animal shelter's responsible adoptions, decrease the numbers of animals euthanized, boost employee morale, and enhance public relations within the community.

All foster programs must have criteria for carefully choosing foster animals and caregivers. Always remember that fostering is not a solution to pet overpopulation or irresponsible pet ownership. It is extremely important to understand that a foster care program cannot save all the animals, replace a cramped facility, or mend holes in organizational policies. However, when a foster care program is managed correctly, it can greatly assist your organization, the animals in its care, and even your community. It can give certain animals an improved chance of adoption, provide a caring home environment for animals, and lift the spirits of staff and volunteers who confront the tragedies of pet overpopulation every day. However, no organized foster program should be based on

emotional impulses. Everyone needs to be on board and everyone involved must agree on the concept as well as the practice. These are difficult concepts, but ones that must be addressed in order to develop realistic expectations for how the program will function successfully. An effective program is more than just getting an animal out of the shelter. To operate a constructive and positive foster care program, time and resources need to be devoted to the program and the shelter must be prepared to provide the oversight necessary to keep the program running effectively.

The foster volunteers can also provide emergency temporary shelter for an animal due to the owners; illness, short-term housing issues, divorce, employment shifts or any life change where the animal may need supportive services that could keep the animal from being relinquished to the shelter by providing fostering until the owner can reclaim the animal.

Chapter 7
Field Services Officers and Shelter Relations

Unifying the systems of animal control and animal welfare programs is vital. Animals who are picked up as stray or confiscated by an animal control officer will need to be dispatched to a shelter. Some animals will be on a quarantine hold such as in the case of a dog that has bit a person, or a court hold such as in an abuse case, while others will be on a mandatory stray hold. Building a fault free system for the intake of animals both from the public as well as Animal Control Officers starts with well-written policies and procedures and guidelines for after hour procedures. See Appendix 8 Smooth Operations by Carrie Allan

Written procedures should be considered works in progress that should be reviewed and updated at regular intervals or when deficiencies are identified. Written procedures ensure fairness, provide for consistency of service, and may help resolve disputes. Humane standards of care must be given consistent attention and skills acquired for the benefit of human safety as well as to minimize suffering and stress on the animals. The daily care and treatment of animals in shelters will always be issues of public concern.

Therefore, it is up to government agencies that are open-admission facilities to ensure the highest standards of care for all animals at all times. Training of staff is vital in maintaining a productive work environment. With the many changes in technology, laws, capture and restraint methods, client service, and equipment it is vital that the shelter keeps up with these changes so that they give their citizens the best possible product. Citizens expect trained professionals serving their community. It is vital that the staff attend animal related training from outside sources in order to stay abreast of changes and new ways of doing things.

Develop a "Workplace Culture Agreement." Shelters and animal care and control agencies employ people from many walks of life—individuals with different views, personalities, and work ethics. Although the alternative would probably seem pretty dull, sometimes all that diversity can be a recipe for conflict. But the road to a healthy work environment can start with a simple document that describes the ideal interactions among staff.

Goal: Offer efficient and effective communications and dispatch, between Animal Control
     Officers, shelter staff and the community.

Recommendations:
- Create written SOPs addressing the process of taking and dispatching calls.
- Hire and train permanent dispatchers to cover all shifts, so that the chief ACO may perform duties more in-line with her job description.
- Provide dispatchers with supplementary training in ordinances so that callers can be better advised of the level of service and/or results that they may expect.

- Maintain statistics on incoming calls based upon geographic area and type of complaint. Management should review these statistics to determine what kind of educational or enforcement programs may benefit the areas, and then designate work teams to spend time in the areas focusing on problem resolution.
- Utilize the voicemail system during business hours so that citizens may leave non-emergency messages. Where voicemails can sometimes be frustrating for citizens, a busy signal in today's age of telecommunication technology is completely unacceptable.
- Develop clear protocols and matching forms that address all aspects of animal hand off from animal control officers to shelter staff.
    1. Release of animal liability forms
    2. Officer and shelter staff communication logs.
    3. Animal hold department forms: stray, confiscation, bite dog/rabies hold.

- Monthly meetings should be set up to address the flow of animals and responsibilities, short-term/long-term goals, animal outcomes, monthly statistics and addressing of any current community trends, public relations and identified crisis management. The meetings should include the following participants:
    1. Shelter Manager
    2. Volunteer Manager/Coordinator
    3. Member of the Yolo County board of Supervisors
    4. Lead Animal Control Officer
    5. Sheriff Staff Assistant
    6. City Officials of Yolo County
    7. Shelter Veterinarian
    8. Others by need or invitation (for example, health department official, specialist in an area of need….)

Shelter staff and ACO's should develop a form to identify and report potential abuse, neglect, kitten or puppy mills or dog fighting for any owner relinquished animals dropped off directly to the shelter.

Shelter staff and ACO's should develop a form for animal transfer of liability when animals enter or leave the shelter with either party. There should be clear communication logs kept between shelter staff and ACO's regarding any noted information of importance regarding an animal's health or behavior.

Written policy should include scanning all dogs and cats for microchips upon impoundment in the field. Staff should be trained on how to scan animals for microchips, including animals in humane traps. Procedures should be put in place outlining weekly checks on the scanners to ensure they are working properly.

Provide ACOs with educational information to distribute to the public. The HSUS can provide free for the use pamphlets describing how to live humanely with wildlife

neighbors and alternatives to trapping; brochures about barking dogs, understanding why they are barking, and solving barking issues in a humane manner; information on low cost spaying and neutering, proper shelter, and humane restraining techniques. ACOs should distribute a synopsis of local animal control laws as well as pertinent state cruelty laws.

Continue to build the relationship between the Yolo county ACOs and local police officers through good communication and cross training. Some communities have a representative of animal control address the police officers somewhere in the cycle of training once every year or two. The purpose is to explain animal control's role, abilities, answer questions, and thank everyone for their continued support.

Have officers provide follow-up calls for the Yolo county shelter on verification of warnings and cruelty calls. ACOs stated that a large number of calls that they have difficulty responding to are follow-ups on verification of warnings on rabies vaccination/license and ensuring that proper shelter/food/water have been addressed by irresponsible pet-owners. Shelter staff could become familiar with the County and animal control laws by doing some of these follow-up calls for the ACO's. The community would begin to take animal control laws more seriously if they see the shelter staff is also involved in enforcing them.

Discussion:
It is imperative that the shelter area police and animal services have a good working relationship. Due to the dangers that ACOs may face, they need to have confidence that, if needed, their police department can respond in a timely manner and provide assistance, and that a transferred animal is in good care at the shelter.

Recommendations:
Create written SOPs for all aspects of emergency/after hours' procedures. The SOPs should include an emergency call-out list which specifically details which calls are considered an emergency. This list should be provided to police and fire dispatch so that they will know which after hours' calls are considered emergencies. For instance, a stray dog wandering around a neighborhood, a barking dog, and a stray dog under a house is not an emergency; however, a stray dog hit by car is. An animal threatening a human is also an emergency. If police officers are provided with this list, they can make decisions without contacting animal control.

Discussion:
Traditionally, animal control problems are more likely in the evening hours when more people are "out and about" and are noticing strays and unconfined animals; commuter traffic results in an increase of accidents involving animals; people returning home find their own animal missing; and d) persons returning home find notices of animal control violations and then contact the agency to discuss the complaint. Adjusting the hours and the current shifts for the majority of staff would allow for greater flexibility and better response time for the public. As an additional benefit, there may also be savings in overtime costs and less staff burnout.

Discussion:
Employees performing duties other than those for which they were hired and are being compensated is a disservice to the animals, community, and the employees. In a civil service environment, employees may perform job duties below their grade; however, this is a financial drain given that a lower grade employee would be compensated at a lower pay level. Highly skilled employees performing duties beneath their skill level may also affect morale. Furthermore, the care of the animals and services provided to the citizens of
Yolo County may be compromised.

The primary purpose of a job description is to identify the essential functions of a position. According to the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC), essential functions are those tasks or functions that are fundamental to a particular position. Having clear and concise job descriptions is key to recruiting and hiring staff. Listing the skills and attributes that are sought will help make the hiring process more objective. At a minimum, job descriptions should include the basic skills required, the duties and responsibilities, and reporting structure. Job descriptions also provide measurable standards by which to determine qualifications.

Discussion:
Monthly statistics should be shared by all parties, contracted cities, shelter staff, local police departments and Animal control. Proper enforcement of local animal control ordinances and state laws depends on detailed records management in a way that makes the history of a person or an address readily accessible. If the use of multiple programs is a must then it is important to alleviate as many redundant aspects of the work as possible in order to save time, which could then be reinvested in the animals and citizens.

The daily log forms can be one of the most important tools in evaluating productivity and ensuring accountability. Miles driven, travel time between calls, time spent on each call, animal intake, number of euthanasia's etc. are clear indicators that can be used to measure area needs and trends.

Remember that organizational changes do not implement themselves, people make them happen, for effective day-to-day management to occur one does not simply make staff adhere to organizational plan and priorities, but one must ensure that workplace goals are completed together, one step at a time with a sustainable, community driven countywide plan.

Appendix

Appendix
1 "Nine Model Programs for Highly Successful Spay/Neuter by" Best friends Animal Society
2 "Mobil Spay/Neuter 2000*" from *SNAP*
3 "Impacts of Shelter & Housing Design on Shelter Animal Health information sheet" UC Davis Koret
   Shelter Medicine Program
4 "Infectious Disease Management in Animal Shelters" Kate F. Hurley and Lila Miller
5 "ISO Flow Chart" HSUS
6 "Wellness For The Shelter Animal" By Dr. Kate Hurley
7 "Temperament Testing in the Age of No-Kill" By Nathan Winograd
8 "Smooth Operations" by Carrie Allan
9 "SPCA 2007 annual report" Charlottesville VA
10 "Maddies Fund Grants"
11 "Grants for Animal Shelters and Rescue groups 2009" Shelter Source