



509 Centennial Blvd., Voorhees, NJ 08043 – www.awanj.org

Adopter Support, Adopter Incentive, Collaboration & Effective Marketing

Biscuit wasn't a special dog. Biscuit hadn't been the victim of abuse. She had all of her limbs and eyes and although she wasn't keen on other dogs, she wasn't particularly behaviorally challenged. Biscuit's problem was that she had been at the shelter, plain, large, ordinary, adult, brown dog that she was, for almost a year. All efforts at promoting her on television and special events got her no leads until Biscuit's plight became the focus of the Animal Welfare Association's (AWA) bi-weekly e-newsletter with "studio" quality photos, followed up with an email link to a short video featured on our website. Her adoption fee was reduced and she was made available for "sleepovers". While many AWA email newsletters are filled with stories of desperate cases and their happy endings, we emphasized that Biscuit's case was the most pressing at the shelter with plain, honest language and an attached flyer that our supporters could print out and distribute to help Biscuit get adopted.

The email was one of the most successful emails in our recent history with more than 200 people accessing Biscuit's flyer in less than 24 hours. Biscuit was adopted on her second "Sleepover". The email and the support Biscuit received represented a dramatic change in adoption strategy for AWA. Through comprehensive, multi-faceted outreach to potential adopters, AWA saw a 31 percent increase in dog and cat adoptions in less than one year's time. Whereas AWA used to send out an occasional email about a specific event, emails are now sent out on a schedule and feature a special animal. The emails have pictures, often taken by volunteer aspiring professional photographers, and even YouTube.com videos such as a short one we created about Bobbles, a puppy with a neurological condition that impaired his motor skills.

In conjunction the with email promotion, other incentives such as reduced fees have been exceptional motivators as many adopters come to the shelter specifically because they want to 'save' the

life of a homeless animal. “Free to a Great Home” is a program that offers animals older than eight years of age or those who have medical or behavioral conditions that will likely burden an adopter with an additional expense or responsibility, to adopt a best friend at no fee. Additionally, discounted adoption fees apply to “Super Pets,” all animals that have been in the shelter for more than thirty days and special pricing is used as a marketing tool such as reduced adoption fees for black (*or partially black!*) animals on Black Friday weekend.

When adopters just aren’t sure about a particularly challenging animal – special pricing or not – we offer “Sleepovers.” Dogs that don’t show well in the kennel either from overstimulation or excessive shyness have the opportunity to shine with one on one attention in a home environment in what we consider a short-term foster care situation. In the first three months of the program, seven out of eight “sleepover” dogs were adopted.

For even more challenging cases, we turn to our adoption partners for help. Cares 4 Pets, a not-for-profit animal rescue organization that specializes in pit bulls and bully breeds is an example of that type of partner. With their help and expertise, follow-up care and medical assistance for adopters, pit bulls that are housed and adopted through AWA have dedicated and specialized advocates, above and beyond what our organization is able to provide. Cares 4 Pets volunteers assist with home visits, behavior advice and support to ensure that even challenging bullies will be adopted. In exchange we offer assistance in return such as accepting kittens were saved by a dog rescue or even the use of our spay/neuter clinic for our partner agency’s animals. These types of adoption partnerships have saved lives and found homes for many difficult to place animals including nippy small dogs, senior cats with medical issues and shy animals.

One plan of attack simply isn’t enough. Our multi-faceted strategy works to recognize each individual animal’s challenge and overcome it through *adopter incentive, adopter support, collaboration and effective marketing*. The response to the program has been overwhelming and has allowed many senior and hard to place animals to find homes faster.

★ [Animal Welfare Association](#) to suecosby

April 8, 2008

*Welcome to Animal Tales Online!***Biscuit needs your help**

Biscuit doesn't have a broken leg and she doesn't have mange.

She wasn't the victim of abuse and she has all of her limbs.

She's not a unique color, a baby puppy or a petite lap dog.

What makes Biscuit a special case, a dog who is in urgent need of your help?

Biscuit is the dog who has been at our shelter the longest and she needs your help to find a home!

Here at AWA, Biscuit is able to stay until she finds a home. She has comfy blankets, volunteers and staff who give her walks but it all pales in comparison to the comfort of a loving home. While other dogs come and go, Biscuit remains. While attention is lavished on the young puppies and the sick and the injured, Biscuit is patient.

How You Can Help Biscuit

It is costly to keep animals until they are adopted but your donations help us get the job done, even for those like Biscuit who wait quietly without great fanfare. You can [sponsor Biscuit](#) or you can help promote Biscuit for adoption. [Click here](#) for a flyer that you can post at work or share with friends to help spread the word about Biscuit or come to the shelter and spend the afternoon as a volunteer taking Biscuit for a walk.

Biscuit's need is urgent! Please help Biscuit find her "happily ever after" ending.

Reminder - Last Call for Tortilla Press Cantina!

Time is running out! Reserve your table today at the Tortilla Press

DONATE NOW**FORWARD**

Biscuit posing for the camera (and a treat!)

Congratulations to the top team and top participant so far in our race for the Paws & Feet pledges!

Top Team:

[Bank of America](#)
[Chiwow-wows](#)
(\$560.00)

Top Participant:

[Paula Dean](#)
(\$827.00)

Register online today to take

Animal Welfare Association Adoptions (FY08)

