Partnering with the Community:
Foster Care Volunteers are Life Savers!

Brenda F. Barnette, CEO

The Seattle Humane Society

▪ Private Open-Admission Shelter.

▪ 4,881 adoptions last fiscal year, on target for over a 15% increase this year.

▪ 88.6% Asilomar Live Release rate for FY 08-09 and 90+ so far this year.

▪ 2,775 in house spay/neuters; 1,508 public spay/neuters; 659 life-saving surgeries.

▪ Behavior department temperament tests dogs and is starting to test cats too.

▪ Staff of 70 with over 1400 volunteers.

▪ Older facility being upgraded to provide enriched environment for our shelter guests when money is available.

▪ There is are two public shelter in King County that we try to help

and one in the City of Seattle.

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Prior to 2006 was a different view of sheltering:

Standards of care were minimal.

Poor morale among staff and volunteers.

Resistant to change.

Did not trust volunteers with responsibility.

Killed cats because of age.

Campus in state of disrepair.

Animals had no enrichment programs except walks for some dogs.

Live save rate was 77.6%.

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We brought on new leadership, improved staff morale and started trusting our volunteers,

Our Dilemma

- Not ready for large Capital Campaign.
- Economy took a downturn.
- Public shelter desperately needs our help.
- Holding space for animals limited.
- Huge spay/neuter bottleneck in our tiny and outdated veterinary clinic.
- Moose and his friends were still counting on us.

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Month	# Dogs				# Cats/Others			
FY	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
April	10	35	22	108	110	105	131	219
May	12	29	24	121	94	111	177	368
June	12	26	38	118	97	200	235	359
July	11	28	53	102	144	203	337	365
August	24	21	44	77	112	213	263	328
September	14	24	46		145	209	253	
October	25	21	69		127	129	275	
November	25	39	57		79	221	175	
December	26	23	40		83	164	97	
January	31	47	54		49	120	113	
February	25	36	131		42	68	120	
March	23	31	126		55	109	121	
FYTD Total	69	139	181	526	557	832	1143	1639
FYTD % Change		50%	23%	66%		33%	27%	30%

# Shelter Guests Who Benefited From Foster Care
Calculated monthly

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Month	# Volunteers				# Days			
FY	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10	2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-10
April	185	175	242	361	1055	1004	1860	2827
May	213	290	240	469	1310	1817	1718	3645
June	216	279	274	477	1299	2182	2295	4671
July	228	292	289	392	1594	2703	2864	3911
August	232	299	286	372	1780	2571	2569	3302
September	233	306	291		1732	2274	2212	
October	233	315	310		2121	2768	2613	
November	227	163	305		1829	2482	2447	
December	252	312	288		1937	2121	1889	
January	250	237	303		1757	1995	1626	
February	272	255	385		1661	1445	2011	
March	279	276	409		1921	1877	2503	
FYTD Total	1074	1335	1331	2071	7038	10277	11306	18356
FYTD % Change		19%	0%	36%		32%	9%	38%

Volunteers = number available to foster
Days = number of days animal in foster home

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Foster Volunteers
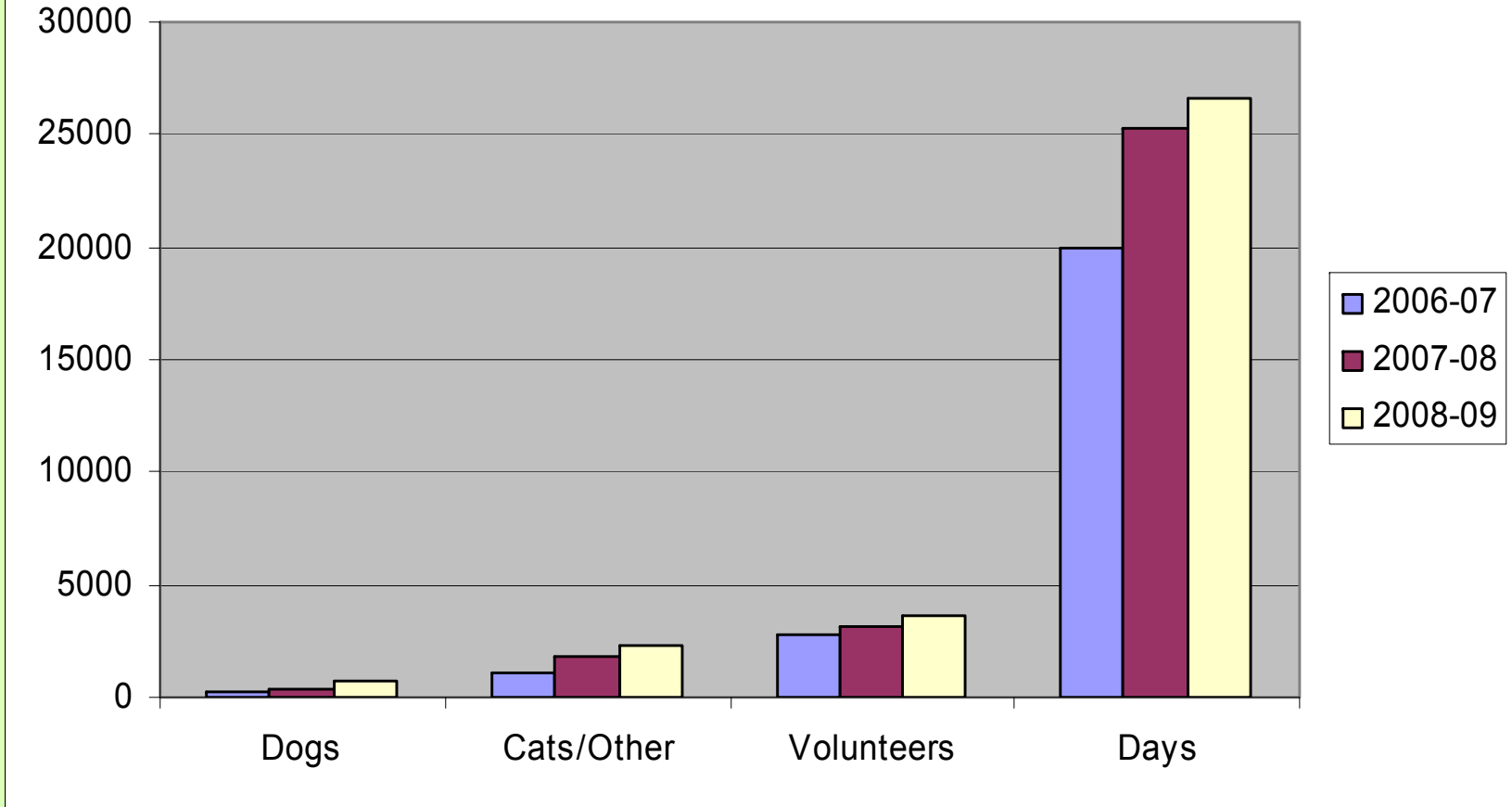
Create a Sense of Urgency

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American Eskimo Puppy Mill Dogs

Discussion and support group

Sunday, July 26th
4 – 5:30pm in our auditorium (driveway B)
13212 SE Eastgate Way
Bellevue, WA, 98005

If you are an American Eskimo Puppy Mill dog foster parent, new or interested adopter please join us to discuss the special needs of these dogs and how to best socialize them and help them settle into your home.

Topics will include:
Leash training
Housetraining
Socialization with people and other animals
Teaching your dog to accept and enjoy handling
Share your experiences and knowledge with other foster parents and adopters

There will be plenty of time for questions and discussion.

Please RSVP, light refreshments will be provided.
humane@seattlehumane.org
425-641-0080

Adoption-related and other questions should be directed to 425-649-7562

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Like cats, Volunteers are COOL! You don't have to pay them. They clean up after themselves (if you train them). They say good things about you to their friends…….and they are worth a fortune.

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FY 2008-2009

Number of Animals	3,001
Number of Animal Day in Foster care	26,607
Average Hours/day per pet	3
Total Hours of Foster Care	79,821
Value of Volunteer time per hour *	$20.25
Value of animal care from Foster Volunteers	$1,616,375.25
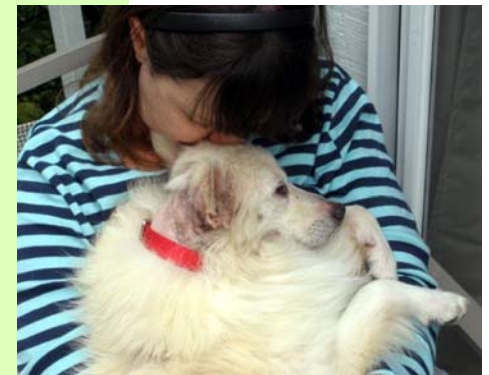
* From Independent Sector/Research for Value of Volunteer time per hour for 2008.

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Questions I asked our team:

1. What are the key things that make our foster program successful?

2. What were the biggest hurdles to overcome or best lessons learned?

3. How would you like to enhance our foster program?

4. What other information should I share with a group starting a foster program?

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1.What are the key things that make our foster program successful?

- Board and Senior Management support.
- Provide orientation/training for Foster Volunteers.
- Provide dedicated staff who build relationships with the foster families.
- Give Foster Volunteers phone numbers/email to get help quickly.
- Provide supportive vet services.
- Treat your Foster Volunteers like the life savers they are.

2. What were the biggest hurdles to overcome or best lessons learned?

- It's great to be organized, but it helps to be able to go with the flow.
- Prioritizing animals on campus, send out the animals with the most need first.
- Know what your foster parents can handle.
- Start them off with someone relatively easy.
- Make sure they take breaks when they need it!

3. How would you like to enhance our foster program?

- More foster parents!
- More accessible medical resources like customer friendly exam rooms or equipment to loan like scales for weighing puppies and kittens.
- Continuing education so some foster volunteers can take more challenging shelter guests.

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4. What other information should I share with a group starting a foster program?

Work to develop a diverse range of Foster Volunteer abilities/experience.

No delay between sign up and getting a foster pet. Be ready to send a foster animal home as soon as the volunteer has completed orientation.

Create a sense of urgency around the need for foster volunteers.

Does Foster Care *Really* Make A Difference?
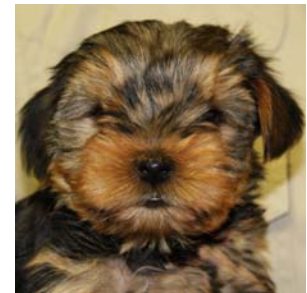
Fiscal Year	Incoming	Outbound Alive	Put to Death	Live Save Rate	Received Foster Care	Volunteer hours
2000-01	5482	4332	1090	79.90%	unknown	58,578
2001-02	5513	4255	1223	77.70%	748	59,209
2002-03	6749	5140	**1585**	76.40%	704	59,200
2003-04	6814	5215	**1562**	76.90%	1010	55,200
2004-05	7170	5499	**1635**	77.00%	1232	59,700
2005-06	6686	5115	1463	77.80%	1019	71,800
2006-07	6275	5192	1020	83.30%	**1375**	80,300
2007-08	4965	4200	660	86.00%	**2212**	100,683
2008-09	6260	5428	669	88.60%	**3001**	111,823

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Fiscal Year 2009-2010

Month	Live Release Rate	Incoming	Adoptions	Put To Death	Total Animal Inventory	Foster Care Animals
April	87%	519	356	55	538	327
May	90%	785	454	57	740	469
June	91%	524	461	49	688	477
July	90%	593	466	56	693	467
August	95%	596	598	34	598	405
YTD Total		3,017	2,335	251		**2,145**

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Things I have come to believe to be true:

"People give to organizations that meet needs, not to organizations that have needs."
Kay Sprinkel Grace, CFRE, author and organizational consultant

The real path to greatness, it turns out, requires simplicity and diligence…. A culture of discipline is not a principle of business; it is a principle of greatness.
Jim Collins, author of Good to Great and the Social Sector

"Do a good job.
Tell people about it.
Ask for help."
Richard Avanzino

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