



The Pet Rescue Foundation

NONPROFIT MANAGEMENT FOR PET RESCUE ORGANIZATIONS

Part Five: Community Awareness & Public Relations

For more information on these
and other nonprofit
management topics, contact:

Jeannette Peters
Nonprofit Management
Consulting, LLC
jp@getfunded.org
352-371-7412



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In this section:

- ◉ Overview of Community Outreach
- ◉ Newsletters
- ◉ Membership Campaigns
- ◉ Annual Reports
- ◉ Press Releases



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Community Outreach

- One of the most important responsibilities of the Board of Directors is to enhance the pet rescue organization's public image.
- Each Board member should proactively promote the organization within his or her circle of contacts.
- Board members should respond to requests from the Executive Director to make presentations or help the organization make needed contacts.
- The Board should also select an official spokesperson for the organization.



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Community Outreach

- ◉ The Board (in an all-volunteer organization) or staff should develop a marketing plan for the organization, and make sure there are adequate resources to support the plan, and that the plan is being implemented. The marketing plan should address, at a minimum, the membership campaign, the newsletter, press releases and the annual report.
- ◉ The Executive Director (or Outreach Chair, in an all-volunteer organization) should provide Board members with information (talking points, fact sheets, etc.) to use in promoting the organization.
- ◉ While the Executive Director may handle day-to-day public relations, care should be taken to ensure that the Board members are very visible in the media and at events and presentations.



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Newsletters

- ◎ Your organization's newsletter is a crucial outreach strategy. Through the newsletter, you can keep your members and the community informed about your organization's activities, successes and needs.
- ◎ The newsletter is also a great way to recognize and thank individual donors, Board members and volunteers with a short article and photo that lets the community know about their outstanding contributions!
- ◎ You can get started with easy-to-use newsletter templates in Microsoft Publisher or online.



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Newsletters

- ◉ Publish at least quarterly; monthly is better.
- ◉ Develop an extensive email list and publish your newsletter electronically as well as in print. Harvest email addresses from all events and contacts.
- ◉ Develop a Newsletter Subcommittee to share the burden for developing content.
- ◉ Make it easy for readers to become members and donors by including membership and donation forms in every issue. Many organizations also include a response envelope to make it even simpler to send money!



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Newsletters

- ◉ A monthly Pet Spotlight is a great way to get attention for your harder-to-place animals with a photo and appealing story.
- ◉ You can cut the costs of many of your day-to-day supply needs by printing a monthly Wish List. Let your supporters know you need paper towels, blankets, copy paper, furniture or computers.
- ◉ Always include an events calendar far enough in advance to allow volunteers to sign up.
- ◉ Your newsletter is a great way to show your community the impact you are having by posting monthly adoption and rescue statistics!



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Membership Campaign

- ◉ It's important to include an annual membership campaign in your strategic plan. All-volunteer organizations should set up a separate Board committee for this important task.
- ◉ Set concrete organizational goals for new memberships and renewals each year. Many organizations set individual membership recruitment goals for each Board member as well.
- ◉ Strategies for recruiting members include direct mail, personal contact and group speaking opportunities.
- ◉ Develop a system for renewing existing memberships.
- ◉ Include an opportunity for renewing members to contribute beyond their annual dues!



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Annual Reports

- ◉ A well-designed Annual Report can be one of your most valuable public relations tools. It reminds your community of the important work you are doing, and provides information on what you have accomplished during the past year. It's also an opportunity to recognize your donors and supporters.
- ◉ Use the Annual Report to generate media coverage when the report is released, then as a public relations tool all year. Send it to all your members and funders.
- ◉ The Annual Report shows your financial supporters what they are getting for their money: results.
- ◉ Include achievements, challenges and plans for the upcoming year. Use lots of charts and photos!



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Annual Reports

- ◉ The Annual Report is where you should publicize your year's statistics. Show how many adoptions, shelter transfers and spays/neuters your organization has accomplished in the past year, preferably with baseline statistics to demonstrate that your performance is improving each year.
- ◉ When your performance in a given area has not measured up to your goals or has fallen, make sure your Annual Report describes honestly what happened, the cause, and what your plans are to address the issue in the next year. When your community sees that you understand and are addressing your challenges, they are more likely to provide the help and resources you need.



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Press Releases 101

- What is a Press Release?
- A press release is a document or statement issued to the media. Other target audiences might be government decision-makers and the public. Editors can use press releases as the starting point for a story or for background leading up to an interview. Sometimes smaller media will publish your press release verbatim.



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When should you issue a press release?

- ◉ Media advisory: upcoming event
- ◉ Publicizing success (statistics)
- ◉ Publicizing awards or funding
- ◉ Publicizing a specific need
- ◉ Issuing awards (for example, Pet-Friendliest Business Awards)
- ◉ “Opportunities for Action” – community news (usually negative, such as a hoarding case or dogfighting bust) that make your organization’s ongoing message and mission timely to news editors.
- ◉ Disaster response (for example, your Executive Director is arrested for embezzlement)



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Press Releases 101

- ◉ Develop a professional-looking format for press releases that complies with standard news style. You can check online for excellent suggestions on how to format your release to maximize the chance that it will get read and used.
- ◉ Make sure you include accurate contact information at the top of the press release so reporters can follow up for more information.
- ◉ Write your release in “inverted pyramid” style: put all the important information up front in the first paragraph, because often that’s as far as an editor will read. This is not the time to build suspense or for a surprise ending!



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Sample Press Release

(on organization letterhead)

PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact: Jeannette Peters

Office: 555-123-4567

Pager: 555-987-6543

ABC Pet Rescue Hits Adoption Milestone

A record number of Springfield's homeless pets found their forever families last year, as ABC Pet Rescue announced that annual adoption goals had been exceeded by 20% for a total of 1,500 adoptions during 2007.

"We're so proud of our community for making room in their hearts for these cats and dogs," said ABC Executive Director Louis Wu. "Thanks to the generosity of animal-loving Springfield residents, we are on our way to becoming a community that guarantees a home to every pet."

Due in part to the dramatic increase in adoptions, euthanasia at Jones County Animal Control also hit a record low. Only 100 dogs and cats were euthanized during 2007, most of which were unhealthy and not rehabilitatable. This represents a 60% drop in pet deaths as compared to 2006.

For more information about ABC's adoption program or the pet rescue initiative in Jones County, contact Louis Wu at 555-123-4567 or visit www.abcpetrescue.org.

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What's next?

In Parts Six through Eight of this Nonprofit Management Series you can learn about:

- ◉ Human Resources: Staff and Volunteers
- ◉ Assessment and Evaluation
- ◉ Administrative Tasks/Meeting Management



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Questions or Comments?

For more information about these topics:

Download the complete
Nonprofit Management series at
www.maddiesfund.org

or contact Mary Ippoliti-Smith at

Maddie's Fund
2223 Santa Clara Ave., Suite B • Alameda, CA 94501
510-337-8970 • smith@maddiesfund.org