

APPENDIX I

Adoption Programs

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When I started at Lynchburg Humane Society (LHS) in 2009, the staff didn't trust the community, and made it very difficult to adopt. The front-desk staff member was unfriendly, and they had many barriers that made adoption hard for even the best of homes. Some of these barriers were not adopting puppies or kittens to families with kids under four years of age, requiring everyone in the family to meet the new pet, not allowing more than five pets in the home, requiring every pet in the home to be fixed, and requesting landlord and vet checks. All the while, they were euthanizing 51 percent of the pets at the shelter and wouldn't adopt out pit bulls.

These barriers were policies that were strictly enforced. At a fundraising party in 2009, one of the potential donors told me that LHS wouldn't adopt a kitten to her. She said the reason was because she had unaltered Afghan hounds in her home. The staff at the shelter denied her adoption because she had unfixed dogs at home; that was the policy, and they didn't make exceptions. After being at the shelter for just one day, I came in and changed everything overnight. We got rid of all adoption policies, and began our open adoptions program.

A successful adoption program starts with the staff's attitudes and general feelings about the community at large. You can set up a good program by following certain steps, but if staff members don't believe that most people are good and will do the right thing, or if they don't have a welcoming way of communicating with the public, then you will ultimately fail in your venture. Every adoption counselor needs to trust people, and see the good in community members. They have to want to provide a pleasant and happy experience for adopters. If you can start with that base, all else will fall into place.

Adoption policy guidelines

Each organization needs to establish policies about the topics discussed below. For LHS, the policy is often a jumping-off point, giving us guidelines to ask more questions to see if a particular pet will work in the environment presented.

Outside dogs. Are dogs living outside 24/7 as a general rule something your organization is OK with? Every situation is different, and so is every dog. Occasionally, a dog prefers to be outside and enjoys living in that environment. Factors to consider: Are there any other dogs living with that pet who will offer companionship? How much time does the family spend outside giving the dog attention? If the dog appears to want to come inside, how might the family be able to accommodate that desire? What measures do they have in place for the cold and hot weather months? Will the dog be safe outside? Oftentimes, when talking to people about why they may want their dog outside 24/7, you have the opportunity to discuss alternatives (taking care not to be judgmental, of course).

Chaining dogs. Is your organization OK with dogs being chained for any period of time? In Lynchburg, it is part of our contract that dogs not be chained 24/7. Chaining 24/7 is a hard “no” for us, and there are no exceptions. However, we are OK with short periods of tethering (less than four hours at a time), to allow the dog some outside time or bathroom breaks. When dogs are tethered, they must be provided with basic necessities, such as access to water and shelter. Also, before your organization makes a decision about whether to allow tethering, check local laws. Some municipalities have banned tethering of dogs.

Guard dogs. The concept of having a guard dog for a business or a home has generally become a thing of the past. The days of the junkyard dog are gone, due to the development of cost-effective technology and better security systems. In their homes, people want a dog who will scare away intruders, but will still be safe for the whole family.

People do make these types of requests, however, from time to time. If those situations come up, is your organization OK with a dog living at a business site? For us, it comes down to knowing if the dog’s needs are going to be met in that type of environment. We have seen a number of dogs living in warehouses, where they receive attention all day long; at night, the environment is climate-controlled, very comfortable and safe.

Outdoor-only and indoor-outdoor cats. Because so many cats are dying in shelters, we are completely fine with cats living outdoors or being indoor-outdoor pets. When it comes to young kittens, however, we have a few stipulations. We prefer that they live inside until they are completely vaccinated and bonded with the family. And even adult

cats need time to become acclimated to their new environment before allowing them outside.

Pet ownership history. While a past failed relationship between a person and a pet may raise red flags, it should not by itself prevent an adoption. To get more information, ask simple open-ended questions such as “What has changed in your circumstances?” or “What, if anything, would you have done differently?” By keeping an open mind and allowing people to explain, you might learn that they have already thought about the problem and have found solutions.

Regarding checking with a potential adopter’s veterinarian, we do not require it, and only use it as a tool to find out more about the person’s pet history if we have concerns. If a potential adopter has no history of pet ownership, a discussion on expectations may help start the relationship off well. In addition, more follow-up support may be needed after the adoption.

Giving pets as gifts. There are many myths surrounding the concept of adopting a pet as a gift for someone, and I am here to tell you that adopting pets as gifts is not a bad thing necessarily. It should be judged on a case-by-case basis; having a blanket policy is not conducive to helping pets find homes.

A 2013 study¹ done by the ASPCA about the concept of pets as gifts debunked the myth that animals who weren’t specifically chosen by their new owners may be considered less valuable. According to the ASPCA, “When asked if obtaining a pet as a gift increased, decreased or had no impact on the love (for) or attachment to the pet, 96 percent (of respondents) thought it either increased or had no impact.”

Landlord checks. Doing a landlord check doesn’t sound like such a bad idea, but when you think about the following, you might reconsider it as a general practice. The busiest times of the week in a shelter are usually after 5 p.m. or on weekends. These are also the times when many leasing agencies are busy, and therefore aren’t available to answer our questions about whether a potential adopter is allowed to have a pet. The result is a delay in the adoption process. Our job is to place pets in good homes with people who will care for them and make them members of the family; it is not our job to be the “police” for landlords.

When I was at the Richmond SPCA, we stopped the practice of checking with every adopter’s landlord. We still checked on those adoptions we were not certain about, or if we felt that we needed more information, but checking on everyone stopped. The staff was not happy with this decision, but we decided to try it and track it for six months to see if the number of returns went up. We were pleasantly surprised to find that very few people had to return their newly adopted pet because of landlord issues.

In 2016, out of 3,324 adoptions at LHS, only 11 were returned because of landlord issues. Most people know if they can have a pet or not, and most people will be responsible. When an organization has to make life or death decisions based on the amount of space and time available, I feel that it's critical to take away the time barriers and get pets into homes quickly.

Declawing. Declawing² is a terrible thing for cats, but when having to choose between declawing and dying in a shelter, most would agree that dying is worse. At LHS, if adopters want to declaw a cat, we take the time to educate them on the serious nature of declawing and on better ways of dealing with the behaviors they are trying to curb, but we don't prevent them from adopting. When the national save rate for cats is much higher, we may adopt a stronger no-declawing approach.

Pets and kids. As a parent, I can tell you that there is nothing more insulting than someone telling me what my kids can or can't handle. That being said, I would want to know if the dog I'm interested in adopting isn't going to do well with kids and will cause harm. At LHS, if we know that a particular dog will be difficult to have in a family with kids, we explain the observed behavior to the potential adopters and allow them to read the behavior memos (even showing them the behavior if needed). Using that strategy, most people will come to the right decision for their family. Another great technique is to ask open-ended questions about how they plan to deal with the behavior in question and letting them think it through.

In some facilities, staff will suggest that the kids meet the pet. In some cases, this is a good idea, but it's not a practical blanket policy. We deal with this issue on a case-by-case basis, and allow the adopter to put the pet on hold (we have a \$25 fee for a 24-hour hold) if the adopter wants to return with his or her family so they can meet the pet.

In addition, we advise against setting strict policies concerning the age of the kids versus the age of the pet (for instance, no kittens or puppies can be adopted by families with kids under the age of four). We suggest placing puppies and kittens with families so that the pets get exposed to kids, and the kids get exposed to pets. It is a win-win for everyone.

In summary, before you set up barriers to adoption, ask yourself these questions: "Am I creating a policy based on a few bad situations, or based on the greater good?" "Am I making policy decisions based on fear or fact?" Going back to the example I gave about the Richmond SPCA: When we changed our landlord policy, the fear was that we would see a huge number of pets returned. The facts did not substantiate this fear, but rather showed us that it was just that — a fear, not reality. Set policy based on fact and faith, not fear or myths.

Adoption questions and forms

There are many different things you want to learn about a potential adopter. For LHS, the top questions we want answers to are these:

- Will the needs of the pet be met?
- Will the needs of the adopter be met?
- Will the pet be a good match for this household?

When designing your adoption forms, you'll want to ask questions that are geared toward learning what you can about the home. At LHS, instead of relying on the form, we prefer to have an open and honest conversation with the potential adopter. A simple statement such as "Tell me about your household and how the pet will spend its day" is a great starting point for open discussions.

With that said, when we get busy, the form becomes necessary because it is at least a jumping-off point for future conversations. The top of the form asks for basic information: the date, the adopter's name, address, phone number and email address. We do not ask about employment or require references. Here are some of the questions we have on our dog adoption form:

- My dog will mostly be an inside / outside dog (circle one).
- When the dog is outside, how do you intend to keep the dog confined to your property?
- What, if any, difficult pet behaviors have you dealt with in the past?
- What do you like about this dog's personality?
- It is most important to me that my dog: _____.
- What will be the living situation for the pet when you are not home?
- How many hours per day will the pet be left alone?
- About my household: I rent / own / live with relatives / other (circle one).
- In my home, there are: _____ adults, _____ children (ages? _____), _____ children who visit often.
- Have you owned a dog or other pet before? When? Where are they now?
- What pets are currently in your household?
- How much do you expect to pay per year for basic medical expenses?
- Is there anything else you want us to know?

On the cat adoption form, we do not ask about the living situation for the cat when the adopters are not home, nor do we ask how they will contain the cat or how many hours the

cat will be left alone per day. We do ask this question: “How long will you give the cat to adjust to its new home?”

At LHS, we do not discriminate or turn people down for an adoption because of race, sex, age, color, religion, gender, gender expression, national origin, disability, sexual orientation, military status, or the way the person looks or dresses. We treat each person and each pet as an individual, and only require things like a meet-and-greet with resident pets if the pet is one that we have concerns about. If we feel uncomfortable about an adopter or just need more information to make our counselors feel better about the adoption, we do check with the potential adopter’s landlord or veterinarian; we just don’t make it mandatory for every adoption. Also, we’ve found that it’s always helpful to consult with another adoption counselor or supervisor before making adoption decisions.

Holds

In the past, I worked for an organization that had a policy of “first come, first served.” If a highly adoptable dog came into the shelter on a stray hold, there would be a frenzy at the time the pet became available for adoption. A line would form at the door, and we had many a verbal fight in the lobby. Confusion always ensued. At LHS, to help eliminate the chaos and confusion, we offer holds for a small fee.

Stray hold. Someone can put a hold on a dog or cat before the stray hold period (7–10 days) is up. The cost is \$25 (you can set any fee you want) and that fee is refundable if the pet’s owner reclaims him or her before the hold period is up. If the stray hold is up and the original owner is not found, the fee is non-refundable. We also take second holds in case the people who placed the first hold decide they no longer want the pet.

Adoption holds. LHS wants the adoption experience to be as pleasant and stress-free as possible. We allow potential adopters to place a 24-hour hold on pets so that they can take their time making adoption decisions, introduce family members and other pets, and research breed traits. Holds may be placed over the phone or in person, and in the case of a “tie,” the individual who physically visits the shelter and the animal is awarded the first hold on the pet. Adoption holds may only be placed during business hours by speaking with a team member and paying the hold fee. First hold is \$25; second hold is \$15. The first-hold fee is non-refundable, and is not applied to the adoption fee. The second-hold fee is refundable, but only if the pet is adopted by the first-hold person.

Foster to adopt. If we have a promising potential adopter who is not yet 100 percent sure about adopting and we think it is a great fit, we suggest foster-to-adopt. We allow that person to take the pet home for a period of time (ranging from a few days to a week) and try it out. If it doesn’t work out, then the individual can find another pet who might

be a better fit. Having a foster-to-adopt program not only helps adopters, it reduces the staff's anxiety about returns. The adopters fill out an adoption form and sign a foster-to-adopt contract.

The adoption process

Here are some tips for making the adoption process go smoothly:

- Be respectful of the adopter's experience and knowledge, and assume that both of you come from a place of wanting to help homeless pets.
- Take a conversational approach, asking open-ended questions such as "What are you looking for?" or "What's your lifestyle?"
- Have a discussion, rather than setting up barriers that applicants must overcome in order to adopt a pet.
- Focus on achieving success, and creating a relationship with the adopter.
- Look for a way to approve an adoption, not turn one down.
- Treat each potential adopter and pet as individuals.
- Use policy guidelines to encourage discussion and educate, not as inflexible mandates.
- Emphasize the resources that your organization can provide to help solve any problems that arise.
- Emphasize that post-adoption contact from the adopter is welcome and returns are acceptable.

During the adoption process, always disclose any behavioral and medical information and past history that you have about the pet, so the adopter can have the fullest possible picture of the pet. Your adoption staff should take care to talk about any medical challenges or behavioral difficulties in a matter-of-fact way, being careful not to discourage potential adopters, but ensuring that they understand and are comfortable with the information. Even though we can't predict completely how pets will behave in a home, we can at least provide the information we have so that adopters can make a sound decision on what they are able or willing to handle.

We like to print out the intake memos and behavioral and medical information to allow adopters to read them and then sign off that they were given the information. This strategy covers your organization in the future if a problem arises and the adopter says he/she was not told. In some more serious cases, we have behavior or medical disclosures created for adopters to sign, giving full information about any medical or behavioral problems we have encountered.

Here are the criteria that we think make a successful adoption:

- The match is suited to the individual pet and family.
- The pet is afforded appropriate veterinary care.
- The pet's social, behavioral and companionship needs are met.
- The pet has a livable environment (including appropriate food, water and shelter).
- The pet is respected and valued.

Note: It is unrealistic to think that the shelter failed when an adoption doesn't work out. Don't beat yourself up; animals and people behave differently at home than in the shelter. Look at returns as an opportunity to find a better match for the family and the pet, and to learn new information about the pet.

Declining an adoption

There will be times when your staff feel that a prospective adopter isn't suitable for the pet that he or she is interested in, or that the needs of the pet will not be met in the potential home. These types of conversations are difficult for anyone, even our most seasoned counselors. We suggest that counselors consult with a supervisor or lead person beforehand to discuss the adoption and have a clear message on why the adoption was declined.

Being honest without being judgmental is hard to do, of course, but we feel that it's the best way to handle these types of situations. At LHS, we try to make it about the pet, not the people, and that seems to help considerably. Here's an example of how that conversation might go:

"We are sorry, Mrs. Jones, but we feel that Fluffy will not do well living outside all the time. Based on his previous living experience, we believe that being outside will result in behavior problems, leading the two of you to become unhappy."

You can also see these situations as opportunities to educate people and help them become better pet owners. Again, try to do so without sounding judgmental. People don't care how much you know until they see that you care about how they feel. Here's an example:

"Mrs. Jones, we don't feel comfortable with a dog being left outside on a tether for 24 hours a day. Most people don't know this, and I didn't know myself before I started working here, but tethering can cause some behavior problems, depression and frustration for the dog. There have been a lot of studies done that show that tethering dogs for long periods of time can result in them developing some major aggressive and adverse personality traits. I know you love your pets, and I just wanted to make sure you had this information."

Customer service basics

The foundation of any successful adoption program is striving for clear communication and positive interactions with potential adopters. Below are some tips for providing good customer service to people coming to your facility.

1. Greet

- Make and maintain eye contact.
- Smile and welcome them to set a positive tone.
- Say your name clearly.
- Be professional and polite, but friendly.

2. Offer to help

- Ask how you can help: “How may I help you?” “What can I do for you today?” “Have you been helped?” “Can I answer any questions for you?”
- Be willing to either help them directly, find someone to help them or at least point them in the right direction.

3. Listen

- Next, allow them to ask their question, tell their story or express their frustration. Be patient and wait until they are done before you respond.
- Be attentive and ask questions as needed to determine exactly what they want or need.

4. Empathize and acknowledge

- Focus on their problem, instead of your policies or procedures. This is especially important when emotions are high.
- Thank them for doing the right thing, don’t be judgmental, appreciate the steps they have already taken, be sympathetic. Say things like “I know that can be confusing,” so they know you understand.

5. Problem-solve (only after doing the previous four steps)

- Focus on what you can do, instead of what you can’t do.
- Try to be involved, diplomatic and patient.
- Discuss their other options. Be creative about finding solutions.
- Offer to follow up, when appropriate, and then do so.

One of the biggest customer service failures is not explaining the “why.” (Why is the cat not available for adoption yet? Why can’t the prospective adopter visit with a particular dog? Why are you deciding to decline their adoption?) When staff take the time to care about the potential adopter and feel comfortable explaining the “why,” these types of interactions usually go much more smoothly. This issue can originate with upper management. Does

your staff feel comfortable explaining the “why” or asking why themselves? They must be able to ask those questions in their own environment so they can better answer the “why” questions from customers.

Tips to promote positive interactions with customers:

- Have a cheerful, positive approach. Be friendly and welcoming.
- Listen attentively and try to establish a rapport with the customer.
- Be aware of your tone of voice and body language, which help set the tone for the conversation.
- Agree with customers and look for opportunities to praise them.
- Keep in mind that how you say something is just as important as what you say.
- When making comments, expressing reservations or giving advice, be careful not to sound judgmental or condescending.
- Know the pets in the shelter to help make good placements.
- Know the answers to frequently asked questions, and if you don’t know, find out.
- Treat others the way you would like to be treated.
- Treat each customer like he or she is the first customer of the day.
- If you’re having a bad day, do not allow your frame of mind to affect the way you treat a customer.
- Remember that every interaction with a customer is an educational opportunity.
- Do not use animal shelter jargon or codes when giving answers.
- Be flexible; strive for a positive solution; look for ways to say yes.
- Be responsive to criticism and be willing to change based on feedback.
- Be truthful and know your facts.
- When things get contentious, go get help.

When things go wrong

Interacting with the public is not always an easy pursuit. Sometimes you are pressured for time and sometimes the customer is particularly abrasive. Here are some suggestions for effective communication to help you and your staff through the rough times:

- **Zip your lip:** Be quiet, listen, and permit them to vent.
- **Mirror the customer’s responses:** Re-phrase or mirror back what the customer has said. This lets them know that you are listening and you hear them, and also helps ensure that you do understand their concerns.
- **Provide clear information and choices:** “This is what I can and can’t do for you.” Put your cards on the table; give the choices that will help diffuse the situation. Whenever

possible, offer choices because having a choice helps put angry customers back in control, at least from their perspective.

- **Be cooperative:** Be willing to consider the other person's position, and to recognize that you could be wrong. Invite customers to discuss the issue rather than challenging them, and leave room for choice. If you or the organization did something wrong, admitting to it helps diffuse the situation. If possible, find something to agree with them on, which makes them feel like you care.
- **Remove the audience:** Ask the angry customer to step into an office or a private room, away from other customers and staff.
- **Be empathic:** Say things like "I understand why you are upset" or "I agree with you; I would be upset as well." Let customers know you want to help fix the problem.
- **Have self-control:** If you lose control of yourself, you lose. Some ways to help stay calm are to identify your triggers, slow down your responses, take a time-out, put yourself in the customer's shoes for a moment, and use humor (when appropriate).
- **Use "we":** Replacing "you" and "I" with "we" can give the impression that you are on the same side as the customer.
- **Replace some statements with questions:** Asking questions helps you to control the interaction, shows that you are interested in the customer's situation, and may help you gather information.
- **Avoid sounding routine:** Nothing will make someone angrier than feeling like you are not sincere. Try not to sound like you are following steps.
- **Refer the customer to a supervisor or another staff member:** Hostile customers tend to treat people whom they think have status and power with more respect and politeness. Plus, if you suggest that they speak to your supervisor, it may diffuse the situation, and they could become more cooperative.

Irate people want to know the following:

- Someone is listening.
- They are understood.
- They are important and appreciated.
- They are going to be helped.
- They are talking to the right person.

Some tips for interacting with an irate or angry person:

- You cannot win by also being irate; the one who stays calm has control.
- Don't take things personally.
- State your point of view briefly and nonjudgmentally.
- Say what you mean, and mean what you say.

- Do not withhold important information.
- Use personal experiences.
- Try engaging the person in problem-solving.
- If you must say no, give a clear explanation and provide an alternative.

Marketing basics

There is so much to share about marketing pets for adoption. Here are a few of the basics.

Adoption write-ups. Every pet deserves to have a good adoption write-up. These write-ups can appear on the pet's cage or kennel, on your organization's website, and on your social media channels. At LHS, our write-ups are 100 percent positive. We address any issues when we are speaking to prospective adopters face-to-face or on the phone, so that we can completely explain the pet's needs.

Don't be afraid to create descriptions that make people laugh or bring positive attention to the pet. If you can't be fun and creative, be simple. You know what people want to know, so state it simply: "He's house-trained, has lived with kids and cats, and has played well with other dogs while here in our shelter." For examples of adoption write-ups from LHS, go to our website at lynchburghumane.org.

Adoption promotions and goals. One summer, LHS had a promotion called Summer of 1,000 Lives, and for that summer, the entire community knew that our goal was to save 1,000 pets. We created an entire media plan, including radio, social media, TV and web ads. We even put up a thermometer on Main Street in Lynchburg showing the progress being made. We had a banner in the adoption lobby and took photos of the adopters with their new pets in front of the banner, with our current count displayed. The community really loved this program because we had a measurable goal, and it was easy for them to understand and get behind. The promotion was so successful that we have continued to count the adoptions we have each year.

The Summer of 1,000 Lives contained a public-facing goal, but at LHS, we also set internal adoption goals each year for the entire staff and all the departments. If we don't meet our goals, that's OK, but it sets up clear expectations. Our adoption staff has also created some mini-goals for themselves. They might pick five pets per week, for example, to focus on and then try and get them adopted. They have created a little competition around this, and it has resulted in some fun marketing ideas and sales pitches for these pets from the adoption staff.

Social media. When interacting with the public on social media, keep your posts positive. Bashing the public only makes people want to stop listening. For example, when

a 13-year-old dog is surrendered by his owner, don't talk about the shortcomings of the owner. Instead, talk about how wonderful the dog is, and how much he would love a new home. You want to persuade the community to be on your side and to help you, and being negative about the plight of animals just makes them tune out.

In addition, never make assumptions about a pet's past. If you know the facts, share them, but don't make things up based on assumptions. Spreading false accusations will only diminish your organization's credibility and will create drama where it isn't needed. You want to empower the community to help your organization, not feel sorry for you.

Staying positive on social media doesn't mean you shouldn't highlight a medical or neglect case from time to time. We use social media to raise funds to assist in the recovery of the pet, or to show how much the community's support has helped a particular pet.

Every shelter becomes full at some point, but instead of posting something like "URGENT: Dogs in Danger," focus on promoting an adoption special with a catchy name. It is OK to communicate that your shelter is near capacity, but the message needs to be hopeful and engaging so the public wants to help, not turn away. At LHS, we offer a promotion called the Spaced Out Special, or we'll have Free Cat Friday specials throughout the summer months. One great way to move pets out the door is to offer low-fee or fee-waived adoptions.

Here are some other ways to engage the public:

- Create fun contests. We do a lot of caption contests — posting a funny photo of a pet and asking people to comment on what they think the pet is thinking or saying. The comment with the most "likes" wins the contest, and we'll give the winner a free T-shirt or bumper sticker.
- Ask the public to guess a number, and give a prize to the person whose answer is closest without going over. For example: "Out of the 675 stray cats that LHS took in last year, how many went back to their original owners?" People will be floored by the low number of cats who end up going back to their homes. This "numbers game" allows you to educate the community while creating some buzz around your operations.
- Name stray pets after local celebrities or people who frequent your social media pages. When a local TV news anchor heard about LHS naming a group of puppies after their news crew, the channel picked it up as a story. Do the same for prominent community members. They get a kick out of it and many of them enjoy promoting the pets themselves, which brings more people to your page.
- Nothing gets attention like a cute video of a pet. There are so many easy video editing applications available these days, so it doesn't take much time to produce something compelling and upload it to your social media page.

Final thoughts

Don't be afraid to change things swiftly. You will fail from time to time, but having open communication with your staff so they can voice their frustrations and fears, and you can offer possible solutions to problems, will make your operations and programs run more smoothly. Empower your staff to make some decisions, and to be OK with failing as well. Making mistakes is how we learn and move forward.

Keep your thinking solution-based; if one potential solution doesn't work, try something else. If a staff member is not on board with the changes after a period of time, let that person go. Negativity breeds negativity, making change harder and shifting the focus away from saving lives.

It's important to recognize that we need the public's help to save the lives of pets in our communities. We need to stop blaming folks and start asking them to be part of the solution; we must help them to be responsible, and help them resolve their animal-related problems. When your organization needs help, don't be afraid to ask for it, but do so in an empowering manner, and be clear about what you need.

Look to other fields for inspiration and ideas. The social media arena, for instance, is changing fast, and it's a powerful tool for animal welfare. Keep an eye on trends, and be quick to adopt new, creative ideas.

Finally, be sure to make decisions based on fact, not fiction or myths. Don't get trapped in misconceptions and old ways of doing things. Instead, challenge yourself and your staff to look at statistics, try new strategies and track the results. The worst thing that can happen is that the new ideas don't work, and you have to try something else. Now adopt out some pets, and get your community excited!

NOTES

1. E. Weiss et al., "Should Dogs and Cats Be Given as Gifts?" *Animals* 3, no. 4 (2013): 995–1001. For more information: aspcapro.org/research/pets-gifts-0.
2. For more information about declawing: bestfriends.org/resources/cats/cat-declawing-price-convenience.