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Thanks go to the following organizations for their help with providing information for this report:

City of Arlington Community Services Department
City of Arlington Animal Services Division
Friends of Arlington Animal Services

City of Fort Worth Animal Care and Control (Fort Worth, TX)
City of San Antonio Animal Control (San Antonio, TX)
City of Seattle Animal Shelter (Seattle, WA)
Dumb Friends League (Denver, CO)
Multnomah County Animal Services (Portland, OR)
Save-A-Life, Inc. (Savannah, GA)
Tri-City Animal Shelter (Cedar Hill, TX)

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“The way to get a good idea is to have a lot of ideas.”

Linus Pauling, Chemist and Nobel Laureate

INTRODUCTION

The City of Arlington and the Institute of Urban Studies (IUS) in the School of Urban and Public Affairs at UT Arlington entered a contract in May 2010 under which the parties agreed to collaborate on a five-year strategic plan for the Arlington Animal Services Division (AAS). It was agreed that, as a first step, IUS would undertake a best practices benchmarking study. Benchmarking is a process by which the best practices of others in the same business are identified and evaluated for possible adoption where the result would be better performance. The aim of benchmarking as an element in strategic planning for Arlington Animal Services was to identify unique and interesting animal service programs in use elsewhere in the state and nation. Study results would then be compiled into a report that would be made available to division staff and advisory committee members in advance of the strategic planning retreat.
Arlington Animal Services...

Continues to be a highly regarded shelter by citizens with dedicated staff

Maintains high levels of service for key animal service activities while being fiscally responsible

Most operations subject to current city budget constraints

Staff is looking for ways to minimize budget impact while raising money, building community support and encouraging volunteerism

(scheduled mid-August 2010). The object of preparing and circulating the report was to raise the level of possibility thinking among retreat participants by providing them with a wealth of ideas, some of which might be incorporated into the annual work program of AAS.

The approach taken by the study team was shaped by several considerations. One consideration was that AAS already is a highly regarded animal care and welfare organization. Despite the budgetary effects of a poor economy, AAS remains fiscally responsible while maintaining exemplary levels of service in its shelter operations, animal care and control activities, adoptions, and community involvement. Anything unique and interesting we were likely to discover from our investigations of other programs would have to be classified as little more than “icing on the cake.”

Also the study team recognized that Arlington’s animal services program is a line item in the city budget. Therefore, it is vulnerable to hiring freezes, salary caps, and other cost-cutting measures faced by other city departments. And, if we are to believe many of our most influential economists, this is a situation that is not likely to change for years to come.

It cannot be overstated that virtually any initiative has a direct or indirect budget impact. The current line item budget for AAS covers just
the basics at best, and is expected to be smaller next year. This even has consequences for programs and activities that were viewed as not having any effect on the budget. For example, while volunteerism is viewed as a method of increasing assets of an organization, there are hidden costs associated with volunteers such as the dedication of staff resources and time. Accordingly, special attention was given in the study to best practices that have been initiated with minimal budget impact and that have been successful in raising money, building community support and encouraging volunteerism.

Benchmarked organizations identified for the study were selected based on the criteria shown below.

- **Suggested by Arlington Animal Services.** During the process, IUS interviewed animal and community service leaders and received further recommendations for contacts with exemplary local and national animal welfare and services organizations.
- **Mentioned as a notable organization by the Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) and SPCA International.** IUS reviewed articles and publications produced by both SPCAI and HSUS such as the Shelter-of-the-Week section and the magazine Animal Sheltering to find best practice examples.
- **Participant in the Asilomar Accords.** The Asilomar Accords were created...
by a group of industry leaders such as HSUS and ASPCA “for the purpose of building bridges across varying philosophies, developing relationships and creating goals focused on significantly reducing the euthanasia of healthy and treatable companion animals in the United States.” IUS looked at members of the Asilomar Accords as a basis for consideration of industry best practices since these organizations follow standards in tracking statistics such as adoptions and euthanasia rates at their shelters.

- **Availability of key contacts in benchmark organizations.** IUS included best practice models from of organizations that were accessible by telephone or email. After conducting research on key organizations, IUS contacted leaders of those organizations to get insights that were not available through second-hand sources.

The best practices benchmarking study has been completed, and this report describes dozens of model programs that are worthy of classification as “best practices.” For convenience in reading the report, the best practices identified by the study team are grouped into four categories: 1) increasing the visibility and awareness of shelter activities; 2) raising money through grants, donations or special gifts; 3) developing spin-off and support services for volunteers; and 4) achieving cost saving and operating efficiencies without sacrificing animal welfare and services.

**FOUR TYPES OF BENCHMARKS**

1. VISIBILITY & AWARENESS
2. RAISING MONEY
3. SERVICES FOR VOLUNTEERS
4. COST SAVING AND OPERATING EFFICIENCIES
In each category we have included Arlington Animal Services programs of real merit that are deserving of the “best practice” designation. Other programs are described in detail with a rationale for its inclusion and contact information provided for readers who might wish to read more about the program. Program information that we found particularly interesting but too extensive to describe in the body of the report can be found in an Appendix.

Our thanks to Lee Hitchcock, Mike Bass and Jay Sabatucci for the time and effort they have taken to provide the study team with information on the history and operations of AAS and suggestions on locating the organizations that have proven to be fruitful sources of best practice information for this study.
“Keeping on top of the latest techniques and technology makes us an outstanding organization.”

Nicole Schimming, Humane Education Manager, Dumb Friends League

VISIBILITY AND AWARENESS

Practices that increase the visibility and awareness of shelter activities within the community and beyond: This category contains organizational benchmarks that excelled in providing information to customers, donors, staff, and other agencies through the use of mass-media, educational programs, or events. Currently, Arlington Animal Services (AAS) engages in many of these activities and performs many of them well. However, the vignettes below illustrate new ways AAS may engage its clients that may improve efficiency and effectiveness without a substantial burden to the budget.

E-newsletters, local newspapers, etc

While newsletters and reports may take a great deal of time to produce, the benefit of keeping key donors and officials informed of animal shelter activities may outweigh the costs. The City of Arlington Animal Services (AAS) has a link on its website to the CatWatch newsletter by Cornell University College of Veterinary Medicine. Below are a few examples of animal shelters that have their own newsletters to communicate with
Newsletters and reports may take time to produce, but the long term benefit of keeping key donors and officials informed of animal shelter activities may outweigh the costs.

- The **Tri-City Animal Shelter and Adoption Center**, a collaboration of the cities of Cedar Hill, Duncanville, and DeSoto (Texas), communicates with its citizens through the e-newsletter on its website and the local newspaper e.g., posting their *Pet-of-the-Week* in the local newspaper. For more information, [http://www.cedarhilltxgov.org/index.aspx?NID=1020](http://www.cedarhilltxgov.org/index.aspx?NID=1020)

- The City of **San Antonio Animal Care Services** department has a *Paws* e-newsletter which is distributed monthly on the website. At times, print copies are issued at events. The department also has another newsletter targeted for internal staff to keep them abreast of shelter-related issues. For more information, [http://www.sanantonio.gov/animalcare/?res=1680&ver=true](http://www.sanantonio.gov/animalcare/?res=1680&ver=true)

- The **Digital Dish** is a monthly e-newsletter put out by the **Humane Society of Boulder Valley (HSBV)** that informs readers of upcoming events, new programs, and stories about HSBV. The annual report is posted on the HSBV website to inform readers of the high points of the year. Both publications keep donors, committee members, and customers apprised of changes at the shelter. For more information, [http://hsbv.boulderhumane.org/hsbv/go.asp?mode=pubs](http://hsbv.boulderhumane.org/hsbv/go.asp?mode=pubs)
Radio

AAS currently maintains a pet of the week program and other programs that bring attention to adoptable pets.

- What makes Multnomah County Animal Services in the Portland area different is the use of the air waves as a tool of outreach. The county program partners a local radio station to broadcast a pet of the week live with a simulcast via webcam on the station’s website. This program brings attention to pets and gets outside organizations involved in and aware of animal welfare activities. For more information, http://www.k103.com/pages/pages/petoftheweek.php

Blogging

AAS does not currently use a blog and it may not be practical to allocate resources for this in a time of severe budget restraint. However, it is a tool used by many benchmarked organizations and may be useful in the future. An example of a quality blog is “Walk the Blog” published by the CEO of the Humane Society of Boulder Valley (HSBV). The blog is organized so that supporters in the area can subscribe to or visit to get information about programs, education, or past and present events. The blog is an inexpensive way for HSBV to announce and shape important events and get feedback on
Social Media and Networking

AAS is helping to bring attention to other organizations using social media and networking tools like Facebook, Twitter, or YouTube. However, it is missing an opportunity to publicize the great work being done at its own shelter.

- A superb example of an organization using social media is the Humane Society of Boulder Valley (HSBV). Hosted by the HSBV, the free and low maintenance use of Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube pages allows customers and volunteers of the animal welfare organization to post information about pets. These social networking tools are used to post events, bring attention to adoptions, and generally keep people informed. For more information, http://twitter.com/humaneboulder; http://www.facebook.com/pages/Boulder-CO/Humane-Society-of-Boulder-Valley/84603385014
TV Shows on Public Access Channels

The City of Arlington has a cable public access channel (Channel 16). Other city animal services have utilized such an opportunity to produce animal services TV shows where they showcase the animals that are up for adoption and other shelter activities. Below are a few examples of animal shelters that use public access TV channels to host animal shelter shows.

- **Prairie Paws Adoption Center** in Grand Prairie, TX, streams programming on GPTV (Grand Prairie TV) Channel 16. Owned and run by the City, Prairie Paws talks about adoption and other pet issues. A short clip on its website is used to advertise the TV show.

- The City of **San Antonio Animal Care Services** department uses TVSA Channel 21 to host a show called Pawsitively Pets. The show airs three times a week: Tuesdays at 9.30am, Wednesdays at 9.30pm, and Fridays at 2.30pm. It is a half-hour show that is available on basic cable promoting shelter activities and ends with showcasing adoptable pets. The goal of the show is to increase responsible pet ownership. The Public Information Officer (Lisa Norwood Tel: 210-207-3338) runs the show (i.e., films, edits and decides content of the show). The city’s studio and video equipment is available free-of-charge to air the show.

“We are able to meet our goal of encouraging responsible pet ownership through our TV show at a cost of little to none.”

- City of San Antonio, Public Information Officer, Lisa Norwood
Where to look for a lost pet or what to do with a stray can be frustrating for a citizen. AAS addresses this issue through its lost and found process. On the city’s website, the process of finding lost pets is explained. Additional photos of strays and a link to lostandfound.com is provided to help citizens locate pets.

- Dumb Friends League in Denver, Colorado goes a step further with its Lost & Found Instructional Video. The video, along with other pointers, explains to citizens what to do if a pet is found, where to look for the pet, or if necessary, how to release a pet to the shelter. This three-minute video is a simple, interactive tool that could be used to better inform citizens and save staff from having to field questions from confused pet owners. For more information, http://www.ddfl.org/lostpets.htm

**Websites**

The AAS website carries a lot of information on shelter programs and events. It also makes use of links to other websites that may be of interest to the public. In addition, there is a picture slideshow of recent events, list of services offered, Pets-of-the-Week section and a Tips-for-Your-Pet section, among others.
The AAS website reflects the shelter's exemplary programs...but the design may overwhelm first-time visitors.

While the AAS website reflects the shelter’s exemplary programs and services, it is not used to promote with pride its state-of-the-art facility. People who have never visited the animal shelter may be unaware of this gem. The use of pictures and text on the website that explicitly reflects the facility will enhance the public view of AAS. Another thing of note is the excessive use of text on the AAS web pages. An alternative is to reduce the amount of text and provide links that take visitors to different pages of the site. The over-use of text on each web page may discourage visitors from looking at the website for shelter news, activities, and information that may not otherwise reach a wide audience.

Below are some examples of animal shelter websites that carry information on shelter programs and events and use graphics and attractive pictures that pull visitors into the site. Exemplary websites use less text, particularly on the home page. These sites make more use of graphics, colorful pictures and short video clips. They use links that permit viewers to navigate elsewhere on the site for detailed information.

- The Tri-City Animal Shelter website prominently features its state-of-the-art facility. Creative words are used to describe the facility, shelter events and services. The website repeats reference to the quality of its facility and uses pictures of work spaces in various parts of the facility to leave the impression that animal care and welfare is

- The Prairie Paws Adoption Center in Grand Prairie, TX also has an interesting website. Attractive colors and pictures are evident everywhere, and the site is easy to navigate. For more information see [Appendix 1](#) or, [http://www.gptx.org/index.aspx?page=66](http://www.gptx.org/index.aspx?page=66)

- The City of Austin Animal Center website has good face quality, and its links-to-content are exemplary. Use is made of colorful pictures, logo and graphics, short video clips of adoptable animals, minimal text and content on the front page, generous links leading to more content and more pages. Austin’s website is visually attractive with appealing content. For more information see [Appendix 1](#) or, [http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/health/pets/](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/health/pets/)

- Organizations such as the Humane Society of Boulder Valley, San Francisco SPCA, and the Seattle Animal Shelter do an excellent job of organizing data on their home pages to display only the most relevant shelter activities. For more information, [http://www.boulderhumane.org/hsbv/index.asp](http://www.boulderhumane.org/hsbv/index.asp); [http://www.seattle.gov/animalshelter/Default.asp](http://www.seattle.gov/animalshelter/Default.asp); [http://www.sfspca.org/](http://www.sfspca.org/)

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### Visibility and Awareness

City of Arlington | Animal Services Division

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**Austin Animal Center**

- links-to-content and draws out important website information.

- Austin Animal Services runs the largest pet shelter in Central Texas, providing shelter to more than 73,884 animals each year and working to reunite hundreds with all Austin and Travis County. The Animal Center is an open admission facility, so a pet will be turned away. We attempt to find homes for every animal, but we cannot guarantee that an animal will not be humanely euthanized at the shelter.

- The Austin Animal Center website has good face quality, and its links-to-content are exemplary. Use is made of colorful pictures, logo and graphics, short video clips of adoptable animals, minimal text and content on the front page, generous links leading to more content and more pages. Austin’s website is visually attractive with appealing content. For more information see [Appendix 1](#) or, [http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/health/pets/](http://www.ci.austin.tx.us/health/pets/)

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Source: City of Austin Animal Services
Community Involvement and Educational Programs

AAS invites the local community to participate in animal shelter events. An example is the annual Animal Essay Contest where school-age children participate in writing essays. The top three essays from participants at grade levels 1-5 are awarded prizes for their participation.

Another example is an AAS program that is part of is Arlington’s Summer Youth Employment Program. The Community Services Department at the City of Arlington works in partnership with youth to help build safe, attractive and engaged neighborhoods. The Summer Youth Employment Program was designed to strengthen partnerships with young citizens in the community by providing learning experiences and meaningful career opportunities. Some of the activities for youth include learning how to handle cats, learning about responsibility, having fun working on the computer and learning about the City of Arlington.

AAS also involves and educates youth on pet and other issues through two other programs, the Youth Pet Grooming Academy and the new Home School Program. Youth Pet Grooming Academy is $10 per child with the money going toward the municipal general fund. The program has two sessions and is a partnership with Dog Scouts of America. In the first session, kids learn how to groom pets in the class including what tools you need, how to clip nails, and what to wear and why you should wear it when
grooming. The *Home School Program* is in its first year and it has successfully reached out to home school kids to teach them about the importance of animal services and other city department’s roles are in helping pets.

Below are programs by animal care organizations in the areas of community involvement, education and promotion.

- **The American Veterinary Medical Association (AVMA)** in partnership with *Auxiliary to the American Veterinary Medical Association* involves the community by calling for posters to be displayed at a National Pet Week event. Each year, the *Auxiliary to the American Veterinary Medical Association* holds a contest to select the official poster for National Pet Week. The winning poster is posted on the association’s web site throughout the week of the event. Citizens of all ages are invited to participate in the contest, and a cash reward of $300 is given to the winner. For more information, [http://www.petweek.org/index.cfm](http://www.petweek.org/index.cfm); [http://www.avmaaux.org/](http://www.avmaaux.org/); [http://www.avma.org/animal_health/default.asp](http://www.avma.org/animal_health/default.asp)

- Additional ways to include youth in animal education are offered by the **Humane Society of Boulder Valley (HSBV)**. This organization has year-round daytime and summer camp opportunities for area youth with the purpose teaching responsible pet guardianship using hands-
on and experiential learning activities. These programs are paid for by participants, donations, and sponsorship of youth. They include scouting programs, the Teen Animal Ambassador Club (Ages 12-14), Furry Fuzzy Story Time (Ages 1-5), Camp Muddy Paws Summer Day Camp, and other year-round day camps. What makes HSBV’s activities stand out is their focus on education at an early age about humane animal practices and the use of creative funding mechanisms such as sponsorship and donations to involve a large cross-section of the youth population. For more information, http://www.boulderhumane.org/hsbv/go.asp?mode=humeed
Older Pet Adoption Events

AAS is currently involved in adoption events such as Adopt-a-Thon at the Rangers Ballpark in Arlington. This event does an excellent job of bringing attention to healthy pets that need homes and increasing adoption outreach. Typically, when pet owners look at adopting a pet, most of the attention goes to the younger pets, which can be a problem for a shelter.

- **Dumb Friends League** in Denver, Colorado does an excellent job of bringing attention to older pets by incentivizing older pet adoptions. The June adoption program is meant to help more pets find home. The League offers a $50 off coupon for cats and dogs one year of age or older. The Days of Summer program offers free adoption during the summer months for cats six years or older. The Purrs for Pops program is a 50% discount program for the adoption of cats that are one year of age or older provided a youth brings dad along. Empty Nest is an adoption program for cats one year of age or older at half the regular price during the month of August each year when kids are headed back to school. Finally the 100 Cents program is a celebration of the shelter’s 100 year anniversary by offering the adoption of any cat one year of age or older at half-off the regular price.
Pet Calendars

The Arlington Loves Pet Calendar is produced annually by the Arlington Animal Services Advisory Board with the help of volunteers. The calendar, which is priced at $10, does a great job of fundraising and brings general awareness of the shelter through its sales.

- Dumb Friends League (DFL) in Denver also publishes a calendar, but its calendar is used to promote DFL’s pet photo contest. The entry fee is $35 per photo and includes mailing a full-color calendar to each purchaser. Photos of cats, dogs, other small mammals and birds are eligible, and all applicants have an equal chance of their pet being featured as the “pet of the month.” This format is effective for involving a large number of people and giving them a feeling of connection with shelter programs. The shelter allows people to pay the entry fee and sign-up for the contest online or by mail. For more information, visit [https://secure2.convio.net/ddfl/site/Donation2?df_id=3400&3400.donation=form1](https://secure2.convio.net/ddfl/site/Donation2?df_id=3400&3400.donation=form1)
Pet Alert Sticker Program

Currently, AAS uses a pet alert sticker program as a fund raising tool for the shelter. Decals can be purchased at the Arlington Animal Services Shelter at $5 for a package of two. Proceeds benefit the purchase of new diagnostic medical equipment for animals.

- Oakland Park Fire-Rescue uses the program not only to aid firefighters in identifying the number and species of pets inside houses during an emergency. But, firefighters keep the alert stickers in their vehicles for distribution, and stickers can be picked up at any fire station in Oakland Park. It is estimated that approximately 700 stickers have been given out since the program was launched in July 2007. This variation would be an opportunity for AAS to collaborate more with the Arlington Fire Department and build greater awareness. For more information,
  http://www.aspca.org/pet-care/disaster-preparedness/
  http://www.petalertdecal.com/home.htm

Source: ASPCA, Pet Safety Alert, Inc.
Pets are Welcome Program

The For Your Pet information is a great service provided by AAS. Information on caring for pets, disaster preparedness, and monitoring pet behavior is invaluable for any pet owner. However, one topic AAS might consider is how to live and travel with pets. Moving and traveling with pets can be difficult for any pet owner, and for property managers, finding responsible tenants with pets also can be a challenge.

- The Dumb Friends League's Pets Are Welcome (PAW) Program offers invaluable information for tenants, travelers, and property owners on how to live with pets. This information includes finding pet friendly rentals and hotels in the area, checking out pet policies, how to move with a pet, and how property owners can go through the process of establishing a pet-friendly environment. Arlington has numerous apartments and hotels that could benefit from guidelines on how to live with pets to ease the tension between landlords and renters.
Español

- “Si tiene más preguntas...” Dumb Friends League of Denver has set up a webpage in Spanish to communicate salient information about its shelter including who to call or email with questions or issues. AAS could help inform and educate its Spanish-speaking population through a basic web page focused on issues such as spay and neutering, adoptions, and euthanasia. For more information, http://www.ddfl.org/Spanish.htm

Pet License Promotion

- The new Burien Animal Care and Control in the City of Burien, Washington provides free pet licenses during the month of July each year. Senior citizens can obtain permanent (lifetime) licenses for their altered pet for a one-time charge of $15. For more information, http://www.burienwa.gov/index.aspx?NID=884
Using Search Engines to Increase Adoptions

AAS currently links to other helpful organizations such as ASPCA and homeagain.com, and maintains a presence on petfinder.com. One way for AAS to boost adoptions is to increase its web presence through linking to other local groups and using key words to distinguish its organization for web searches.

- Danielle Hamilton, writing for animalsheltering.org, suggests that organizations can boost adoptions by setting themselves apart from other internet search results that may take people to Freecycle, Craigslist or the newspaper classifieds. By focusing on specific keywords related to the organization, users interested in rescue and welfare operations will find AAS before finding the puppy mills.

Additional Resources

To learn more, check out these guides to search engine optimization.

“Beginner’s Guide to SEO”
guide.seomoz.org/article/beginners-1-page

“Search Engine Optimization”
en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Search_engine_optimization

Webmaster Help Center
http://www.google.com/support/webmasters

Animal Sheltering Story
RAISING MONEY

“Our organization is actively involved in all sorts of shelter activities and helps the Tri-City Animal Shelter meet some of its pets’ short term and long term needs by providing food and monetary contributions on a regular basis.”

Stacey Copeland, Board Member, Friends of Tri-City Animal Shelter

Practices that offer alternative ways of raising money and donations: Raising money and establishing funding contains organizational benchmarks that excel in creating avenues for patrons to donate, finding or creating funding sources. Currently, Arlington animal services (AAS) engages in activities that create additional money and funding for shelter activities. However, the vignettes below illustrate new ways AAS may balance or supplement its budget.

Friends of ...... Animal Shelter

The Friends of Arlington Animal Shelter raises money and brings awareness to AAS activities. However, there is little information online about the activities of this organization. Below is an example of an animal shelter that creates awareness about the shelter activities through the use of its website.

- The Tri-City Animal Shelter and Adoption Center has a non-profit partner, Friends of Tri-City Animal Shelter. The Friends organization has an active calendar with year round events that are publicized on its own website. Memberships and fundraising efforts support pet education for
citizens of Cedar Hill, DeSoto and Duncanville, assist with the (off-site) adoption process, supplement the needs of the shelter, and provide monetary support for animal health and the adoption process. The Friends group brings attention to fundraising events. One of these is a fall gala that raises money for major shelter projects intended to enrich the lives of the animals and provide financial support for shelter employees. The Friends organization on occasion provides food for pets at the shelter and is in other ways actively involved in shelter activities. The Friends website is used to show the full range of Friends contributions to the shelter and has a link to the Tri-City website. For more information, http://www.friendsoftri-cityanimalsshelter.org/

Grant & Service Support

The AAS staff and the Friends of AAS are alert for new sources of funding and services to support animal welfare activities. One example is its partnership with Respect A Bull, a program dedicated to rescuing, rehabilitating and re-homing Pit Bulls. Through this partnership AAS hosts the Fix a Bull event where the first 50 pit bulls to show up are spayed or neutered for free, vaccinated for free, get a free microchip, and licensing. Additionally, pet owners must attend one pit-bull class session.
The City of Fort Worth Animal Services department also conducts free spay-neuter surgeries for pit bulls through a grant offered by PetSmart charities. In addition to surgery, services provided include rabies vaccination, licensing and microchip. However, citizens have to meet certain conditions in order to qualify for these forms of free assistance. The animal must be pit-bull canine and the owner must be a recipient of verifiable government assistance, e.g., welfare, unemployment, disability, food stamps, WIC, etc. Online registration is available for this service.

The City of Fort Worth Animal Services department has an interesting financial support arrangement with Joe’s Crabshack, a local restaurant. Eat at Joe’s Crabshack on the first Thursday of any month and 10% of your food bill is donated to CLASP (Cowtown Loves Animals Shelter Pets). CLASP is a volunteer-run program that works with and donates money to the animal shelter. For more information, http://www.respectabull.com/

Additional Resources

To learn more, check out these guides to grants.

The Grants Program Management Office of the Federal Government
www.grants.gov

“Comprehensive list of grants available to non-profits”
www.foundationcenter.org

“Grants specific to animal welfare and service groups”
http://grants.library.wisc.edu/organizations/animals.html

“Potential animal group funders”
http://fundsnetservices.com/animals.htm

“How to write a successful grant”
mcf.org/mcf/grant/writing.htm

“Checklist of items needed in almost any grant”
http://www.iusb.edu/~sbres/workshop/ProposalCheck.html
Simplified Online Donation Process

Currently, the AAS posts a donation form on the website in PDF format. The form can be filled out and mailed with a payment to the Animal Services Center. Patrons may designate how they want their donations to be applied, e.g., pet food, a memorial brick, or in memory of a loved one.

- Many of the nationally, benchmarked organizations such as City of Seattle Animal Shelter, Multnomah County, Dumb Friends League, and Humane Society of Boulder Valley have streamlined and simplified the donation process by allowing their patrons to pay online. These organizations are taking advantage of a process that was adopted years ago by retailers to eliminate print and mail expense and speed up the payment process. In addition, they offer donation options such as pledging reoccurring gifts to the shelter, donating surplus cars and sponsoring a cat or dog at the shelter. For more information,
  - [https://secure2.convio.net/ddfl/site/Donation2?df_id=1160&1160.donat](https://secure2.convio.net/ddfl/site/Donation2?df_id=1160&1160.donation=form1)
  - [http://www.co.multnomah.or.us/dbcspets/donate.shtml](http://www.co.multnomah.or.us/dbcspets/donate.shtml)
Endowments provide...

- A continual and dependable source of additional funding
- Benefactors the guarantee of how their money will be used
- Ongoing recognition to the organization and contributors

**Endowments and Giving Clubs**

An endowment is a source of money made available to an organization by a benefactor who asks that the principal remain intact with only the income being used to support specified or non-specified activities of the organization. Organizations like AAS are eligible to receive endowments and can benefit immeasurably as endowment recipients. Grant programs like the Arlington Tomorrow Foundation that donates to local programs like AAS and community giving clubs, are places to start looking for this funding.

- The **Dumb Friends League** (DFL) in Denver, Colorado HOPE is the recipient of an endowment to which donations can be made by shelter patrons and benefactors. The endowment called the **Helping Our Pets Endowment Fund (HOPE)** provides an endless source of support for the shelter. Gifts made to the endowment are pooled to earn annual interest and investment income. The income can be spent for current needs while the principal remains untouched. To support endowment giving and other donations, DFL has established donation levels from $350 up to $2,500. Each level brings with it a different level of patron recognition and benefit. Other forms of donation include the “Promise wall,” “Tribute bricks,” “Memorial Garden,” and the “Buddy Wall.” For more information, [http://www.ddfl.org/friendship.htm#hope](http://www.ddfl.org/friendship.htm#hope); [http://www.ddfl.org/remember.htm#gift](http://www.ddfl.org/remember.htm#gift)
Thrift and gift stores are opportunities to raise money and involve volunteers in the shelter.

Shelter Gift & Thrift Shop

Some shelters use thrift and gift stores as opportunities to get volunteers and citizens involved and make them aware of animal welfare activities.

- Two organizations, Dumb Friends League (DFL) and Humane Society of Boulder (HSBV) use gift shops to raise money for their operations. DFL, in conjunction with the Humane Society of Denver, uses an online gift shop that sells promotional items such as dishes, mugs, bumper stickers, and shirts.

- HSBV has two brick and mortar stores. One HSBV store is a thrift and gift shop that accepts donations such as furniture, books and antiques, and these are resold to raise money. The Thrift & Gift Shop is staffed primarily by dedicated volunteers. The money resulting from sales is used to pay for shelter programs. The other store located in the lobby of HSBV sells fun and unique items for dogs and cats at retail prices. For more information, [http://www.boulderhumane.org/hsbv/go.asp?mode=sonnyside;](http://www.boulderhumane.org/hsbv/go.asp?mode=sonnyside;) [http://www.boulderhumane.org/hsbv/go.asp?mode=thrift;](http://www.boulderhumane.org/hsbv/go.asp?mode=thrift;) [http://www.cafepress.com/dfl_shop](http://www.cafepress.com/dfl_shop)

Source: Humane Society of Boulder Valley
SERVICES FOR VOLUNTEERS

Practices that allow new ways to make better use of volunteers and support the AAS mission: This section contains organizational benchmarks that excel in making more efficient and effective use of volunteers and that involve pet owners in their operations. Currently, Arlington Animal Services has over 400 volunteers. However, the vignettes below illustrate new ways AAS may organize and use their services.

Volunteer Coordination

Committed and well trained volunteers can perform many shelter tasks thereby reducing operating expense and releasing paid staff to do what their experience and training has prepared them to do. Currently, AAS staff share the responsibility of coordinating volunteer activities in the absence of a volunteer manager assigned exclusively to AAS.

- Owing to the service of a full-time volunteer coordinator, the City of San Antonio Animal Care Services (ACS) department enjoys a well-structured and managed volunteer program. The coordinator is

“Our volunteer and foster care programs have enabled us to double our adoption rate without expanding the shelter.”

Don Jordan, Director, Seattle Animal Shelter
responsible for maintaining an online volunteer handbook that stipulates what is expected of a volunteer, shelter operations and regulations, dress code, etc. The coordinator is responsible for the conduct of four volunteer orientation classes each month. The coordinator has been instrumental in raising money for volunteer activities and supplies by the design, production and sale of t-shirts to volunteers and others. The price is $10 for one shirt and $15 for two.

The San Antonio ACS has about 50 regular volunteers and additional volunteers that can be called in for special events and projects. In the month of May 2010, ACS volunteers contributed over 1200 work hours, which is equivalent to seven full time employee hours. For more information, [http://www.sanantonio.gov/animalcare/GetInvolved.asp](http://www.sanantonio.gov/animalcare/GetInvolved.asp)
A partnership with UTA allowed AAS to include new groups of volunteers.

**Partnerships to Involve Pet Owners and Volunteers**

AAS involves volunteers in their day-to-day operations and has formed partnerships with other organizations. One example is the partnership of AAS with The University of Texas at Arlington to host a donation drive benefiting shelter animals. UT Arlington students contribute time and energy on behalf of shelter animals after being trained about shelter services and responsible pet ownership.

- The City of Sacramento Animal Care Services, in collaboration with the Sacramento County Public Law Library, invites local pet owners to participate in what is called a series of pet-centric events. The Sacramento County Public Law Library hosts the event, *Come Together, Pet Lovers: A Legal Romp*, to benefit the city's animal shelter. The Legal Romp includes a series of classes on various topics such as emergency pet preparedness and estate planning for pets. A reception dubbed the "Yappy Hour" benefits the shelter as well. The Yappy Hour festivities included music, readings by local celebrities, book signings, an address by a nationally recognized author and animal adoptions sponsored by the City of Sacramento Animal Care Services. In addition, free emergency pet preparedness kits are given away to the first 100 participants at the Yappy Hour.
The Burien Senior Program Pet Grooming Project is a partnership between the **City of Burien Washington’s Senior Program** and the **Veterinary Careers Program** at the Puget Sound Skills Center. For nearly two years, students from this program have commuted each month to the Burien Community Center to provide for the basic grooming services for the pets of senior citizens at no cost. The services provided consist of nail trims, shaving, teeth brushing, and ear cleanings on both cats and dogs. Such dedicated service benefits both the students who provide the service and senior citizens, many of whom are on fixed incomes and might not be able to afford such services in the retail marketplace. The program, just beginning its third year, is immensely popular with students and the senior citizens who benefit from the service.

**ORGANIZATIONAL PARTNERSHIPS THAT MAY PULL IN OTHER VOLUNTEERS**

- Schools & Colleges
- Libraries or museums
- Senior services or non-profits
- Sierra Club’s or other outdoor groups
**SHELTER VOLUNTEER TYPOLOGY**

- **Core Volunteers:** The shelter’s go to, trained people who commit to the shelter every week for a period of time.
- **Secondary Volunteers:** Casual volunteers who support core volunteers and staff.

**Core & Secondary Volunteers**

AAS has an extensive volunteer training program. Currently, the City has over 400 volunteers who go through training based on ASPCA standards on an as-needed basis. Like most animal welfare organizations, AAS has a group of core volunteers and secondary volunteers. Core volunteers are known as “go-to” people. They spend time at the shelter every week and may have worked there for years. Secondary volunteers, while they provide invaluable support, cannot commit the same amount of time as the core group. One issue with secondary volunteers is spending time and money training people who cannot commit the time needed to repay the expense.

- Several of the benchmarked organizations such as the City of Fort Wayne Animal Care and Control, Dumb Friends League, and Humane Society of Boulder Valley deal with this issue by establishing commitments core volunteers must agree to. These vary from one year to six months and one to three hours per week. Secondary volunteers are given opportunities to help with other activities that do not require much training such as working in the gift shop or on organized donation drives. The benefit of this policy for AAS is better use of volunteer and staff time and of budget funding.
Advocacy from DFL volunteers has helped secure money for the State of Colorado’s Pet Overpopulation Fund


Pet Advocacy

- The State of Colorado has established a pet overpopulation fund dedicated to pet sterilization. This fund has been used by the state to reduce euthanasia rates and increase pet education. Dumb Friends League gets volunteers involved in this initiative for the promotion of pet-friendly legislation by registering them for e-mail updates when important bills are filed. Volunteers are encouraged to write their representatives about bills awaiting legislative action. For more information, http://support.ddfl.org/site/PageServer?pagename=TA_Take_Action

Volunteer Opportunity Listing

AAS dedicates a page on its website to volunteer opportunities. The webpage contains a sign-up form, stories of volunteers and upcoming events for volunteers.

- Multnomah County Animal Services posts specific volunteer opportunities on its web page. Much like advertising a job, the volunteer listing describes specific shelter needs to acquaint
Volunteer videos on public access is a creative way to involve and celebrate your volunteers

Volunteer videos on public access is a creative way to involve and celebrate your volunteers

prospective volunteers with the work to be done before they actually volunteer. For more information, https://ec.volunteernow.com/recruiter/index.php?class=OppSearch&recruiterID=1227&act=search_all

Volunteer Videos

- Multnomah County Animal Services also has numerous outlets for volunteer involvement including its Animal Magnetism cable television programming. Partnering with Metro East Community Media (Public Access), the shelter enables volunteers to post “campy, fun” videos of their pets on television and You Tube. Volunteers are involved in sending in segment ideas or videos of their pets being silly. For more information, http://www2.co.multnomah.or.us/aspnet/ytpets/AnimalMag.aspx

Volunteers Used to Supplement City Animal and Park Services

- Since 2007, the Mountlake Terrace Off Leash Dog Group (MLT D.O.G.) in Washington State has worked diligently to turn its dream of an off-leash dog park into reality. Volunteer workers were often seen after work and on weekends preparing the site for public use. The volunteers worked diligently removing brush, debris or spreading bark and creating pathways throughout the site. In addition, to the volunteers, an Eagle
Scout candidate provided his services by constructing a storage shed, installing waste dispensers, signs, kiosks and benches. Fencing and gates were installed by a private contractor. The final cost for this project was within the original budget, and the Off Leash Dog Park opened on March 16, 2009. The park is open from dawn to dusk and has become a popular amenity within the city’s park and recreation program. For more information, [http://www.mltdog.org/](http://www.mltdog.org/)

**“Becoming a Better Foster Care Parent” (Volunteer)**

The foster care program at AAS is designed to “improve the survivability and adoptability of ‘special needs’ pets, decrease euthanasia and increase placement of animals into loving, responsible and permanent homes.” Toward this goal AAS provides volunteers with orientation and information to prepare potential “parents” for this responsibility.

- To help AAS and other shelters, the **Humane Society of the United States** (HSUS) offers literature on foster care fundamentals, how to become a successful parent, and how to know if you are ready to be a parent. This sort of information may help AAS efforts to place pets in homes that are ready. For more information, [http://www.animalsheltering.org/resource_library/search_results.html?librarytopic=foster_care_programs](http://www.animalsheltering.org/resource_library/search_results.html?librarytopic=foster_care_programs)
COST SAVINGS & OPERATING EFFICIENCIES

Practices that improve animal service effectiveness and efficiency to allow staff by allowing their time on animal welfare issues: Effective and efficient operations examines how AAS can trim the budget, without sacrificing the level of service. AAS has streamlined some services, created partnerships, and used volunteers. However, the vignettes below illustrate new ways AAS may improve operations.

Importance of Partnerships and Cost Savings

AAS strives to provide efficient and effective services to its citizens, for instance, working to educate youth in responsible pet ownership. The organizations below have come up with creative ways of using partnerships to save shelter costs.

“Vets come and go, but we have a core of vets who have been with us for as long as I have been with the organization (10 years).”

Karen Hickman
Business Manager, Save A Life, Inc.
OTHER TIPS TO SAVE THE BOTTOM LINE

• Ask vendors or suppliers for deals or discounts
• Consider non-traditional supplier sources such as hotels or motels that throw out towels and bedding
• Ask local retailers if they will donate damaged stock such as bleach or detergent

• To save money, Montgomery County Animal Rescue Center in Dayton, Ohio partners with other area shelters to joint-purchase sutures for spay and neuter surgeries. Because of this effort, a total savings of $8,000 has been achieved.

• Oakland Animal Services uses its nonprofit support from the Friends of the Oakland Animal Shelter to buy microchips, medical equipment, pet beds, and new flooring not in the shelter’s budget.

Using Committees

With the upcoming strategic planning retreat, AAS will be looking for ways to save money and resources. Typically, the outcome of a strategic plan a committee or committees may be formed to investigate the best way to achieve the organization’s priorities.

• The Loudoun County Animal Care and Control in Waterford, VA formed a committee to look for strategies to save money on shelter operations. The results of the committee investigation turned up that implementation of simple policies such as turning off lights and computers not in use, not wasting food when feeding animals, reusing and recycling items, and developing creative adoption promotions to placed animals in good homes quicker has allowed the shelter to cut its budget without cutting service.
"Going Green on the Cheap"

The new AAS shelter is undoubtedly more energy efficient than the previous shelter; however, there’s always room to improve efficiencies. Below are a few green ideas that have been implemented by other shelters.

- **Energy Star compact fluorescent light bulbs.** They use 75 percent less energy than standard incandescent bulbs and last up to 10 times longer.
- **HVAC filters.** Changing them every month can maintain clean air and improve the efficiency of heating and cooling.
- **Recycling program.** Recycling paper, glass, aluminum, and plastic can be good for the environment and the shelter’s pocket book.
- **Shades on windows.** Shades can lower cooling costs during hot Texas summers.
- **Simple weather stripping.** Placing this around doors can prevent energy from escaping.

The Kansas Humane Society recycling program raised more than $62,000 in 2007 with twenty recycling bins around Wichita.

*Source: Kansas Humane Society, Humane Society of the United States*
Free Spay and Neuter Partnership

AAS currently offers spay and neuter services and for a very reasonable fee, and has partnered to lower these costs with other organizations, but what other programs may exist that could help?

- The City of San Antonio Animal Care Services (ACS) has a partnership with South Park Community Link Service to offer free spay and neuter services to citizens. This service is on-going, year round, and it is funded through the city general fund and grant money. The goal of the service is to educate citizens on the need for spaying and neutering animals. ACS offers online pet registration to make the process easier for citizens. In addition, ACS has a partnership with SpaySA, a non-profit organization that provides low-cost spay-neuter services, vaccines, and education on responsible pet ownership. Furthermore, ACS has an Ask-the-Vet program, a free consultation for citizens to post questions about their pets on a web page and receive an answer from a licensed veterinarian.

San Antonio’s partnerships with the City and local non-profits have allowed them to offer free and low-cost spay-neuter services and education.
**Partners in Adoption**

AAS currently partners with local shelter and rescue organizations to get pets adopted and placed in loving homes. Many of the benchmarked organizations use similar partnerships.

- **The Humane Society of Boulder Valley** is a member of the Pet Smart Rescue Waggin'® Program. By participating in the program, the society can increase the number of healthy pets that get adopted by taking them where a need for pet adoption may arise.

- **To increase its adoption visibility,** **Dumb Friends League (DFL)** established partnerships with local businesses to have temporary off-site locations. Throughout the year the DFL Pet Care-avan will visit festivals, markets, and events to get pets in healthy, happy homes. For more information,

  - [http://www.petsmartcharities.org/agencies/rescuewaggin.php](http://www.petsmartcharities.org/agencies/rescuewaggin.php);
  - [http://www.ddfl.org/offsite.htm](http://www.ddfl.org/offsite.htm);
Fort Worth’s “Pets Are Worth It” program focuses on education and enforcement to increase the number of responsible pet owners and lower long-term code compliance costs.

Source: Fort Worth Animal Care and Control

Partnerships for Pet Owner Education and Awareness

To help with its education mission, AAS partners with the Texas Coalition for Animal Protection (TCAP). TCAP is a nonprofit that serves to increase public awareness and understanding of issues affecting animal welfare. One specific program is Low Cost Pet Sterilization that offers discounted sterilization and vaccination services the second Friday of each month at AAS.

• The City of Fort Worth, TX is developing a program named PAW – Pets Are Worth it, an education program that emphasizes the need for and benefits of responsible pet ownership. The city partners with area animal welfare organizations and the Fort Worth Community Relation department’s Neighborhood Education Office to provide an education outreach program targeting school-age children. The program’s focus is education and enforcement including why it is important to license pets, the need for vaccinations and proper medical treatment, advantages of having pets altered and how to safely and humanely protect pets with adequate enclosures and shelter. For more information, http://www.fortworthgov.org/animals/paw/
Online pet licensing and renewals on the shelter’s website could save staff time and increase license compliance numbers.

**Online Pet License Renewal Payment**

Posting the cost of pet licenses online is a convenience for pet owners and avoids the unnecessary time for the AAS staff to answer individual questions on the telephone. Currently, AAS partners with **Pet Data, Inc.** to provide online licensing help through the agency’s website.

- **Multnomah County Animal Services** and the **Seattle Animal Shelter** take this a step further by allowing pet owners to renew and register online. Additionally, the Seattle shelter offers listings of vet locations throughout the city where licenses can be purchased. For more information, [http://www.co.multnomah.or.us/dbcs/pets/license.shtml](http://www.co.multnomah.or.us/dbcs/pets/license.shtml); [http://www.seattle.gov/animalshelter/licenses.htm](http://www.seattle.gov/animalshelter/licenses.htm); [http://www.petdata.com/cs/arl/](http://www.petdata.com/cs/arl/)

**Flexible Payment Plans**

- Paying to restore or maintain a pet’s health can be financially burdensome when the full cost has to be paid in a lump sum. The **Humane Society of Boulder Valley** helps customers manage these costs through the use of **CareCredit**. CareCredit is not a program of HSBV, but is an online credit program that offers convenient options to consumers paying with credit cards, cash or checks. CareCredit allows a pet owner to pay for the treatment services in installments instead of a lump sum
The benefits of a feral cat trap & release program include...

- Casting new light on animals that were once ignored
- Preventing removed & euthanized cat colonies from being replaced by new feral cats
- Keeping feral cat populations down, saving shelter resources
- Providing an alternative to placing feral cats in shelters to be euthanized

and without incurring interest charges. For more information, 
www.carecredit.com/

Feral Cat Reduction Program

For citizens to catch feral and stray cats, AAS offers traps that can be picked up for a $50 deposit. The benefit of having these traps is to reduce the cat population in the city. However, feral cats are still a burden on AAS staff, and citizens may not be willing to catch these cats if they believe they will be euthanized.

- The Humane Society of Boulder Valley offers a Trap-Neuter-Release program package. This program allows citizens to catch feral cats that will be fixed and then released. For a $45 fee, the shelter will perform a spay or neuter surgery. Feral cats must be inside their traps when they are brought to the clinic for surgery. In addition to the sterilization surgery, one ear is tipped (notched horizontally) while the animal is under anesthesia. The ears are tipped to help easily identify the animal as a feral cat at a distance, limits the re-catching of cats. For more information,
http://www.boulderhumane.org/hsbv/go.asp?mode=sn_info
**Strategic Planning and Focus Groups**

Arlington Animal Services, like numerous other animal welfare organizations, is facing budget cutbacks. **Multnomah County** used strategic planning to address budget issues.

- **Multnomah County Animal Services** has been more proactive in cutting its budget. Through the use of strategic planning and focus groups, concentrating on animals that can be saved, and conducting behavior assessments on incoming animals, the organization has found ways to balance the budget without cutting service. For example, one issue was the low compliance and loss of funding from pet owners not paying for pet licenses. To solve this problem, the shelter re-branded the license program as a pet registration program that would add value to participants. Additionally, the shelter added the *free ride home* program similar to the AAS program. Pet owners who comply receive benefits such as a free ride home for lost pets or discounts on other fees. For more information, [http://www.co.multnomah.or.us/dbecs/pets/Portland/Final%20Report%20-%20Recommendations.pdf](http://www.co.multnomah.or.us/dbecs/pets/Portland/Final%20Report%20-%20Recommendations.pdf)
Spay and Neuter Voucher Program

AAS has used a voucher program in the past, but it was not used by many of the customers. The program below is an example of a program that was successful and recognized for its spay and neuter voucher program.

- **Save-A-Life, Inc. (Savannah, GA)** is a private shelter that primarily rescues animals from the Chatham County Animal Control shelter. It also operates an impressive and effective low cost spay/neuter voucher program called Save-A-Life, Inc. The organization offers discount vouchers to the public to promote spaying and neutering. The vouchers are redeemable at a number of local participating veterinary clinics. In addition, Save-A-Life underwrites additional veterinary charges on the spay/neuter vouchers. Save-A-Life is a non-profit organization licensed by the state of Georgia as an animal welfare organization. The organization provides a free spay-neuter voucher with each unaltered pet it adopts. It also sells a spay/neuter voucher to any pet owner that can be used at any of their participating vet partners. The vouchers are not needs-based, but owners are asked not to purchase vouchers if they can afford local vet prices. Save-A-Life is an SPCA International Shelter-of-the-Week organization. For more information, [http://www.savealifepets.org/](http://www.savealifepets.org/); [http://www.spcai.org/programs/shelter-of-the-week.html](http://www.spcai.org/programs/shelter-of-the-week.html)
Relying on Private Funding and Partnerships

- **Suffolk Humane Society (Suffolk, VA)** is the only humane society in Suffolk, the largest city in land area in the state of Virginia. Suffolk Humane Society is a non-profit organization that is funded entirely through private donations. It has no paid staff and is managed solely by dedicated volunteers. The society receives no government subsidies to support its efforts. Founded in 2007, Suffolk Humane Society has grown to over 200 members and volunteers who help with the society’s many programs and events as well as volunteering with Suffolk Animal Control. In its first year of operation, Suffolk Humane Society boasted spaying and neutering over 900 dogs and cats. The society has greatly increased adoptions of animals at Suffolk Animal Control.

- **Suffolk Humane Society** has joined forces with the *Virginia Beach SPCA Neuter Scooter*. Through this partnership, Suffolk pet parents have access to low-cost spay and neuter surgeries, heartworm testing, FeLV/FIV testing, vaccinations, micro-chipping and registration, and heartworm and flea preventatives. The Neuter Scooter also welcomes feral cats who test negative for FeLV/FIV.

- **Suffolk Humane Society** also partners with *Suffolk Meals on Wheels*. Through this program, pet food is donated to Meals on Wheels recipients who need help caring for their pets. This past year, more than

**HOW SUFFOLK (VA) HUMANE SOCIETY MANAGES ITS BUDGET**

- All funding comes from private donations
- Partnerships for low-cost spay-neuter
- Food donations from Suffolk Meals on Wheels
850 pounds of pet food was delivered to residents for their pets. This important program helps keep pets with their loving families and out of the shelter. They also work with the Chesapeake Square PetSmart to feature adoptable cats and kittens in the store. In addition to these many programs and events, the Suffolk Humane Society regularly promotes featured pets-of-the-week in local newspapers. Suffolk Humane Society is an SPCA International Shelter-of-the-Week organization. It was featured on the SPCAI website and received a $1,000 grant.

Is AAS ready for a behavior program?

Some of the benchmarked organizations investigated used behavior programs. These ranged from pet training classes to behavioral therapy. The benefit of these behavior programs to AAS is better placement of pets and helping pet owners with behavior problems. However, if the shelter is not prepared, these programs can be costly in time and money to implement.

- **Humane Society University** offers a free 2-5 hour online course for an organization to assess its readiness to implement a behavior program. The course would allow AAS to look at this option without major investment of scarce funds. For more information, [http://www.humanesocietyuniversity.org/coursesandprograms/professionalstudies/courseinfo/coursepage.html?sectionID=135](http://www.humanesocietyuniversity.org/coursesandprograms/professionalstudies/courseinfo/coursepage.html?sectionID=135) or to look at a
Continuing education and assessment can help the staff cross-train for different jobs and analyze whether a new program can or should be added.

strong behavior program visit

http://www.arlboston.org/site/PageServer?pagename=behavior_PBC_overview

**Free Continuing Staff Education**

AAS is currently involved in providing free continuing education to staff through the Texas Department of Health Service. Another potential opportunity is listed below.

- The Texas Veterinary Medical Association (TVMA) offers free online courses to animal shelter employees and volunteers. One of these is a free online course on micro-chipping offered through the American Animal Hospital Association (AAHA) website. For more information, http://www.tvma.org/Media_Room/documents/MicrochippingFactSheet.pdf; http://www.arlingtontx.gov/animals/pdf/events_TCAP.pdf
BENCHMARKING AS AN EXERCISE IN CREATIVE THINKING

Benchmarks are sometimes defined as best-in-class practices within a particular service area. A municipal program like Arlington Animal Services can benefit by regularly comparing the way it does business with relevant benchmarks. In so doing, program managers and stakeholders may see opportunities to take advantage of what has been learned elsewhere to make a good program like AAS function even better in the future. It is this potential of benchmarking to reveal opportunities and inspire creative adaptation that makes studies like these so valuable as preparation for an exercise in strategic
thinking and planning. It is with that in mind that this report has been prepared specifically for the consumption of advisory board and staff members of Arlington Animal Services in advance of its 2010 strategic planning retreat.

The collection of animal service programs and practices presented in this report is not exhaustive. Far from it. Without question, there are many other interesting and unique things being done out there that were not discovered by the study team during its investigations. On the other hand, there is much to ponder here. If, while thumbing through the pages of this report, you read something that causes you to exclaim: “Wow! That’s something we should talk about during the retreat,” then the report has achieved the purpose intended for it.

We hope you have enjoyed reading this report and have been inspired by the many creative ideas that grace its pages. Strategic planning, if it is to be worthwhile at all, must be an exercise in creative thinking guided by a vision of success. The ultimate value of this report can be measured only by its usefulness to you and your colleagues as you think about and plan for the future of this fine organization.
References


City of Arlington | Animal Services Division

References


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APPENDIX A:
WEBPAGE LAYOUTS
Humane Society of Boulder Valley Social Media and Website:  http://www.boulderhumane.org/hsbv/index.asp