

Proceedings of the Conference

Challenges of Animal Protection on Island Nations With Special Emphasis on Dogs and Cats

A Humane Society International Project
sponsored by The Pegasus Foundation
with additional support provided by Counterpart International

The Fontainebleau Hilton, Miami Beach, Florida
April 2, 2002

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The Program

Welcome and Introductions

- Paul G. Irwin, President and CEO, HSUS/HSI
- Andrew N. Rowan, Ph.D., Vice President, HSI
- Neil W. Trent, Executive Director, HSI
- Peter A. Bender, Executive Director, The Pegasus Foundation

Impact of Companion Animals on Islands and Issues and Problems in Their Management

- **Dogs** Joy Leney, Regional Director, Europe and Asia, World Society for the Protection of Animals
- **Cats** Gary J. Patronek, VMD, PhD, Director, Center for Animals and Public Policy, Tufts University

The Pan American Health Organization's Perspective

- Albino J. Belotto, Coordinator, Veterinary Public Health, PAHO

Case study

- Abaco –Kathleen J. Hargreaves, President, Spay Neuter Incentive Program, and William J. Fielding, The Research Unit, College of the Bahamas

Humane Capture of Stray Dogs, a workshop presented by Dave Pauli, Director,
HSUS Northern Rockies Regional Office

Case studies (continued)

- Cook Islands – Cathy Sue Anunsen, President, Esther Honey Foundation
- Hawaii – Pamela Burns, President, Hawaiian Humane Society
- Bali – Putu Listriani, D.V.M., Director of Veterinary Medicine, and Sherry Grant, Director of Operations, Founders, Yudisthira Bali Street Dog Foundation

Round table discussions

Including information on Turks & Caicos stray animal control project – Mark R. Johnson, D.V.M., Executive Director, Wildlife Veterinary Resources, Inc.

Wrap-up

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INTRODUCTION

Considerations for Humane Animal Control on Island Nations

In Europe and North America, the main approach to companion animal welfare problems caused by too many dogs and too few homes has been to promote some version of “legislate, educate, and sterilize,” otherwise known as LES. This approach, developed by Phyllis Wright (former vice president for Companion Animals of The Humane Society of the United States) and launched in the early 1970s, has had considerable success in the United States where the number of dogs and cats handled and euthanized by shelters has declined dramatically. The available evidence indicates that the absolute number of dogs and cats euthanized annually in American shelters has fallen by around fifty percent since 1970 and the percentage of dogs and cats relative to the owned population has declined by about 75% since 1970 (Irwin, 2001).

However, these areas of the world are affluent and have well developed shelter programs and veterinary medical markets. In developing countries (including the majority of Island Nations), there are many roaming dogs and few resources to reduce and eliminate their suffering.

Controlling dog populations is a challenge in each area where this problem has been identified, but solutions to this challenge will probably vary considerably depending on the environment and available resources. For example, many islands rely heavily on economic trade from tourism and tourists do not enjoy witnessing large numbers of malnourished or diseased street dogs. National and regional governments on islands have to be sensitive to such negative publicity. There may be additional support from tourist boards and hotels concerned with attracting visitors from abroad. In addition, it is usually simpler to control the importation of pure and mixed bred dogs onto an island, and the possibilities of controlling stray dog populations on island nations, if resources are available and properly utilized, are hence greater than on the continents.

A key issue, therefore, is the development of appropriate strategies and tactics for dog and cat population control that might work on islands and laying out the various elements that should be considered before approaching and addressing animal welfare concerns on island nations. Such approaches need to be flexible to account for wide variations in cultural, political, and economic circumstances on different islands but, even more importantly, these options should be based on carefully analysed projects that have already been demonstrated to show promise and on appropriate data collection and analysis prior to the development of an animal welfare project on an island.

While the LES approach has been successful in the USA, there are no data that indicate exactly why it has succeeded. Thus, one cannot point to legislation, education, or sterilization as THE key element in the program. There are hints that the onset of low-cost sterilization programs may have been the most important element but not because of their direct effect on dog and cat sterilization rates. What appears to have happened as a result of the establishment of such programs is that the behavior of private veterinary practices changed in significant ways. Thus, in Los Angeles in 1971, veterinary practitioners began to sterilize dogs and cats when they were faced with a perceived threat from a new municipally-operated

spay neuter clinic. In just five years, the percentage of licensed dogs that were sterilized jumped from 10% to 50% with the vast majority (about 90%) of dogs being sterilized by private practices (Rowan and Williams, 1987). Many shelters recorded substantial drops in the number of animals handled in the 1970s. Thus, the impact of low-cost clinics was indirect and occurred by influencing the behavior of existing veterinary practices. If a community has few or no veterinary resources, this effect on the behavior of the veterinary clinics cannot occur.

More recently, the humane movement in the USA has begun to adopt a different approach to the problem of stray and feral cats. Unlike the situation with dogs where the stray/feral population is small to non-existent, there is a large and thriving population of stray and feral cats – amounting to as much as 60% of the “owned” cat population. These stray and feral animals are usually supported by what are known as “cat feeders.” Until recently, shelters dealt with stray/feral cats by trapping and euthanizing the animals. Such an approach antagonized the large number of cat feeders. In the 1990s, an approach best described as Trap, Vaccinate, Sterilize, Release and Monitor has come into vogue. Most cat feeders are much more comfortable with this approach and are prepared to co-operate with shelters in such a program. This has effectively expanded the population of “volunteers” that the shelter can call on and provides a way to begin to control populations of stray and feral cats. Anecdotal reports indicate that communities with effective programs are beginning to see a decline in shelter cat populations. In nations with few or no resources for animal control and no functioning shelters, such an approach may be modified to work for dogs. The project supported by HSI, SNIP, AARF and the Pegasus Foundation on Abaco Island in the Bahamas (see later) indicates that it has potential.

Thus, there is a need to explore approaches that might be effective in dealing with stray dog and cat populations in nations where veterinary and shelter resources are poorly developed. To address these issues, an Island Nations Conference was held on April 2, 2002 in Miami Beach, Florida, USA. In attendance were representatives from 15 or more animal-related groups on island nations throughout the world. The conference involved presentations, case studies, roundtable discussions, and a core group meeting, which provided the participants with ideas, suggestions, and options to aid them with their work on their respective islands. In addition, it offered the participants the opportunity to network, to meet informally to share information and exchange ideas.

PRESENTATIONS:

Island Nations consisted of six presentations given by experts in the field of animal control and protection as well as animal population statisticians, all of whom have experience working in island environments. Below is a summary of their presentations (a link is provided for the complete presentations).

TIPS:

Those presenters currently working on animal control programs on island nations were asked to compile a list of suggestions derived from their own experience for developing stray dog population control programs. Their Suggested Operating Needs follow each presentation.

Impact of Companion Animals on Islands Issues and Problems in their Management: DOGS

Joy Leney Regional Director for Europe and Asia
World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA)

Introduction:

World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) is an international non-government animal welfare organization with representation at the United Nations (UN) and the Council of Europe (CoE). Founded in 1981, WSPA has 428 member societies in 92 countries and a combined membership of more than 10 million people. WSPA works in co-operation with the World Health Organization (WHO) on the humane management and control of stray and unwanted animals.

In 1990 a WHO/WSPA report: 'Guidelines for Dog Population Management' was published. This was based on WHO studies on dog ecology carried out in various countries in all continents. Based on this report, the WHO Expert Committee on Rabies (1992) recommended drastic changes in the management of dog populations that, up to that point, was largely done through indiscriminate methods such as 'catch and kill,' poisoning, shooting. Although such methods are still used in some countries/islands, there is no evidence to show that these methods have any long-term effect in reducing the size of the dog population. The space vacated by the 'removed' dogs is quickly filled by increased reproduction among the remaining dogs and through migration of dogs from other areas.

In 1994, following recommendations from WHO, WSPA developed a practical dog management programme for governments/municipalities and non-government organisations (NGOs) that can be adapted to the cultural and social aspects of any country. This programme has been introduced to more than 80 countries worldwide, but its success or progress is largely dependent on 'government willingness' – NGOs rarely have sufficient resources to manage dog populations long-term, although it is usually through the efforts of the NGOs, that a structured dog control programme emerges.

Recommendations for a dog population control programme:

Ideally dog population management should begin with a survey of both owned and unowned dogs. The costs and benefits of dog management programmes cannot be established without knowing, inter alia, the size and turnover of the dog population; the degree of supervision of family and community dogs; the numbers and origins of stray/feral dogs; and public attitudes to dog populations. Such information can be obtained through questionnaires and dog population survey techniques. Too often this step is overlooked by NGOs. However, unless the scale and composition of the dog population is determined, it is not possible to allocate resources with any degree of accuracy, or lobby government departments/ municipalities with a reasoned approach.

Socioeconomic studies of the costs incurred as a result of stray and wandering dogs (e.g. London University School of Economics 1989) show that costs to governments can be drastically reduced if a pro-active programme is introduced, as opposed to a re-active panic response when complaints or problems occur. Economic arguments usually carry more weight than animal welfare issues with governments. Tourism for islands is often a vital part of the island's economy. A leading tour operator serving Mediterranean islands informed WSPA that the largest number of complaints from tourists each year relates to concerns for the health and welfare of the dogs and cats on the streets, with some tourists stating that they will never return to the island(s). Information of this nature can help to influence governments to develop pro-active management

plans, as tourist economies depend on satisfied tourists returning again and again – emotional pleas for government assistance with dog management rarely succeed long-term.

Issues for consideration regarding the management of dogs, using recommendations from WHO studies:

- National legislation to provide a framework for control of both owned and unowned dogs, also sales outlets e.g. dog breeders, puppy farms, pet shops/markets
- Specific controls of owned dogs, through registration and identification (can be introduced at national or local level and enforced through Animal Control Officers/Wardens)
- Environmental control, through appropriate garbage disposal to discourage scavenging animals
- Neutering initiatives to attack the root cause of over-population (could be subsidized through government and/or municipalities)
- Education and public awareness programmes in schools and through the media as a means of promoting owner responsibility. Public pressure for reforms to existing inhumane practices can influence decision makers
- Veterinary education specific to companion animals to include both theoretical and practical training in surgical techniques e.g. early-age neutering at 6-8 weeks of age
- Government controlled dog collection centres or NGO premises, where animals can be assessed and, if suitable for adoption, vaccinated, neutered, and then advertised to the general public. It is recommended that diseased and/or aggressive dogs, should be humanely euthanised. It is also recommended that surplus dogs, after a set period e.g. 7, 10, or 14 days, are humanely euthanised.

Problems in the Management of Dogs relevant to ‘Neuter and Release’ Programmes:

Recognizing that euthanasia is not acceptable in some countries/islands and cultures, the practice of ‘neuter, vaccinate and release’ is becoming increasingly favored, based on the theory that if the existing dog population is vaccinated and neutered, it becomes a safe, disease-free population. Over time, the stray dogs will disappear through reduced reproduction and only the owned dogs will remain on the streets. Animal protection groups mainly initiate such programmes. However, in countries where there are high stray dog/cat populations and where intensive neutering programmes have been introduced as a *sole* means of dog/cat control, problems have been encountered.

Although unable to reproduce, all other social problems associated with stray/wandering dogs still exist with a ‘neuter and release’ programme e.g. fecal pollution, noise pollution, road traffic accidents, spread of disease. In addition, ‘neuter and release’ does not promote responsible ownership, as it allows for owners and/or animal welfare groups to continuously add to the problems for society (and indeed for governments) that result from unowned street animals. From an animal welfare perspective, welfare can also be compromised, as ‘kind people’ who feed street animals are usually reluctant to take on any veterinary expenses incurred through, for example, traffic accidents or disease. In many countries a ‘law of abandonment’ prohibits ‘neuter and release.’

Too often NGOs put forward an emotional plea for governments to do *something* about the stray and unwanted dogs – to do what? Usually governments do not share our animal welfare concerns and simply

do not know what to do. NGOs must therefore be able to put forward a logical comprehensive plan and lobby/encourage/influence governments to take on the long-term responsibility for dogs and their owners. It is impractical and unreasonable to expect governments to allocate sufficient funding and resources to capture, vaccinate, neuter and release unwanted dogs on a wide scale and continue to fund their maintenance long-term – such proposals have been presented to governments by NGOs for adoption as a national policy in many countries – it is simply not realistic!

Therefore WSPA does not recommend ‘neuter and release’ as a National Policy, nor consider such a programme to be suitable as a management tool for busy cities/large towns or for areas where there are large dog populations on the streets. Possibly for some rural areas with small dog populations it may be tolerated, although the added problem of attacks/worrying of farming livestock and wildlife, needs to be considered. Also, the health and welfare of the dogs would have to be monitored and addressed when required.

In developing countries where there is little, if any, concept of owning dogs/cats as companion animals, ‘neuter and release’ may be seen as the first step towards more humane treatment of dogs/cats. Also on islands where there is a small dog population, neuter and release done in a rigorous way, with continuous after-care for the dogs, could well appear to be successful BUT long-term success depends on education of dog owners, the general public and ‘government willingness.’

Islands because of their natural boundaries have advantages over inland countries when developing a dog management programme. The steps recommended in this presentation for dog management *do work*, but the management and control of dog populations is indeed complex. It requires a comprehensive plan, involves controlling people and changing attitudes and behavior. NGOs can only do so much – government willingness and government participation are essential, whatever the size of the country or island.

Cats and Islands

Outline of a presentation by
Gary J. Patronek, V.M.D., Ph.D.
Tufts Center for Animals and Public Policy

The Central Problem

The major expressed concern about the impact of feral, stray, and pet cats on islands is their effect on local fauna, especially birds. Animal protection groups are concerned about these issues as well, but are more likely to focus on cat welfare issues in trying to address stray and feral cat populations on islands.

Historical Background and Context

Twenty percent of all birds are on islands. More than 90% of the bird species that have become extinct in historical times were island species. Islands constitute less than 7% of the earth's surface, yet 53% of endangered bird species are on islands.

There is a lot of literature in the field developed from studies of isolated islands onto which cats and other mammals were introduced deliberately or accidentally as a result of European exploration and or colonization.

For example, New Zealand is surrounded by over 700 islands, over one-third of which are larger than five hectares and almost all have introduced mammals that have harmed these ecosystems. Restoration of these ecosystems is a continuing interest but, one hundred years or more after the introduction of foreign mammals, it is arguable whether the original ecological balance could ever be reset.

Definition of an island

We must first examine what we mean by "island." An "island" may not necessarily be a piece of land surrounded by water. There are other forms of barriers that provide "seas" of varying permeability including roads, urban development, and desert. In this conference, we are concentrating on islands created by water barriers. Another issue concerns the size of the "island." Australia, England and Tahiti are all islands but this conference focuses almost entirely on relatively small islands.

The Studies

Cat populations and their effects have been studied on a large number of islands including: Abaco, Ainosshima, Ascension, Canary, Dassen, Fregate, Galapagos, Garden, Herkepore, Jarvis, Kerguelen, Little Barrier, Macquerie, Marion, Motuihe, Reunion, Socorro, and Stewart. These islands include the following climates: temperate, tropical, Mediterranean, and subarctic.

Dassen island has a very rich food supply and a Mediterranean climate. The Galapagos are equatorial and are very arid yet wild cat populations on both islands have thrived. On Marion Island, five cats were introduced in 1949 to control mice at a new meteorological station. In spite of low temperatures, ceaseless winds, vegetation that consisted primarily of tussock grass, and 300 days of rain and snow, the cat population increased at a rate of 23 % each year. In 1976, the population was estimated at 3,409 cats.

The studies have reported on feline diet, home range, social structure, impact on prey, predator-prey interactions, fecundity, and control / eradication measures.

The diet of free-roaming cats indicates that they are opportunist predators who will eat birds, lizards, small mammals and carrion (scavenge). Feline dietary habits have been determined by scat (fecal) analysis, by observation, and by the analysis of stomach contents. A cat's dietary preference is determined by a variety of factors including the nutritional value of the prey/food, its abundance, its accessibility, the ease of capture, the net energy reward of capture, and water availability. If water is scarce, as on the Galapagos, then dietary water must come from the prey. In arid conditions, cats will also select food with lower nitrogen (protein) content because the products of protein digestion require water to excrete the nitrogen wastes.

On Dassen Island, the average cat diet consisted annually of 134 rabbits, 37 jackass penguins, 25 cape cormorants, 24 mice and 31 other birds amounting to about 180 kg per cat per year. Annually, the cats actually caught and killed 105 rabbits (78%) and 13 birds (14%). The majority of the birds were scavenged. Birds formed a major portion of diet only when available in very large numbers and mammals in very small numbers. The birds that the cats killed themselves constituted only 5% of diet – the remainder were scavenged. Cats have been present on Dassen Island for 100 years.

On Macquarie Island, it was reported that 375 cats killed 57,000 rabbits, 46,000 Antarctic prions and 11,000 white headed petrels per year. This comes to 152 rabbits, 123 prions and 29 petrels each per year. On Marion Island, it was reported that 2100 cats killed 450,000 petrels per year or 213 petrels per cat per year.

Except on islands, birds usually form only a small portion of a cat's diet. Rabbits may be the preferred prey for cats and allow a higher cat density than would occur without rabbits. Rabbits may also compete directly with birds for food (seeds) or indirectly by denuding vegetation. Rabbits may allow cats to survive over winter when birds are absent, or permit cats to maintain higher densities than they otherwise could. In one study, it was concluded that the main effect of the rabbits is to allow an increase in the cat population above that which the indigenous birds might permit alone.

Predator-Prey Interactions

Terrestrial ecology is very complex. We need to look at very simple systems to even begin to understand food webs and ecological interactions. Cats may have a direct impact on bird populations, or they may affect bird populations by containing the populations of the rabbits who could change the ground vegetation, or they may limit the populations of the rats who would prey on the eggs and the chicks. It is usually far from easy to isolate the ecological impact to a single species in an ecosystem.

On Herekopare Island, New Zealand, the birds were studied in 1911. At the time, there were no native mammals. Cats were introduced in 1924. By 1940, at least 6 bird species had gone extinct and a very large population of diving petrels was thought to have been exterminated by the cats. In 1970, all the cats (numbering 33 in total) were eradicated. On Stephen's Island, the flightless Stephen's Island Wren was alleged to have been exterminated by the cat of the lighthouse operator. The island was very small but there had also been a great deal of habitat destruction and brush clearance.

Precautionary principle

This is a widely used/advocated principle in environmental science policy in which it is held that it is more important to prevent false negative than false positive results for environmental dangers. In other

words, one does not wait for convincing proof that the cats were responsible for exterminating a bird.

Since extinction is forever and the damage may be irreversible, one should err on the side of removing any potential source of population decline, including the cats.

Methods of control

A variety of control methods have been proposed and tried. These include poisoning (1080), the leg hold trap (gin trap), cage traps, hunting with or without dogs, biological control (panleukopenia), and killing the preferred prey species (e.g. rabbits).

On Macquarie Island, the culling of 20% of the cat population per year had no effect on the total population. Hunting is not effective in populations having a high density and high growth rate – it is best at low density and low growth rate.

There were 3,400 cats on Marion Island in 1977. The population had been growing at 23% per year. Panleukopenia was introduced and, by 1982, the population was down to 615, a decrease of 29% per year. Panleukopenia is excreted in feces, urine, saliva, vomit and is resistant to wide temperature fluctuations. It can be transmitted through indirect as well as direct contact. It is especially lethal to young cats.

Conclusion

Cats are able to adapt to a very wide range of terrestrial ecosystems. They have had an impact on island ecologies but it is not always possible to predict just what that impact might be or has been. There are few examples where cat extermination programs have worked and they are mostly restricted to islands with no permanent human presence. There are fewer examples of cat control programs that have worked or achieved the hoped-for results.

CASE STUDY

The Esther Honey Foundation, Inc.

Cathy Sue Anunsen, President and Founder

The Esther Honey Foundation operates an Animal Clinic on Rarotonga in the Cook Islands, South Pacific. Its mission in the Cook Islands is to improve the health conditions and quality of life for *all* companion animals (including the homeless) by offering the following programs and services:

- ◆ a veterinary clinic
- ◆ affordable veterinary care
- ◆ spay and neutering and
- ◆ a comprehensive humane education program.

The Cook Islands is a small South Pacific country consisting of 15 islands located midway between Hawaii and New Zealand. The total human population of the islands is about 18,000 approximately half of whom live on the island of Rarotonga. There has never been a census of the canine/feline populations but in 1993, EHF was advised that there were approximately 6,000 dogs and 8,000 cats on Rarotonga. EHF has spayed or neutered approximately 4,000 of that number and, based on the current available information, there are approximately 3,200 dogs on Rarotonga and a total of 4,400-5,000 canines in the Cook Islands as a whole. This estimate is based on responses to a 2000 EHF questionnaire distributed to the mayors of all the outer islands inquiring about animal population and health issues on their islands. These are the figures used most consistently by the print media to describe the number of homeless animals in the Cook Islands and the number of registered dogs on Rarotonga. There is no recent information regarding the number of cats.

The relationship between humans and the registered dogs on Rarotonga represents a mix of western-style guardianship and community ownership. Expatriates living on the islands tend to reflect western views while locals are more likely to favor a community owned approach. Motel-dogs, like the foundation's namesake for example, guard the premises and are regarded as the property of the motel owners; however, dogs are fed and watered by the motel's guests. The 750-1,200 homeless dogs behave much like the tourists. Traveling in small groups, they play on the beach, swim in the ocean, walk on the reefs and catch fish for meals. They rely on the kindness of strangers and their own resourcefulness in order to survive.

History: In 1993, while vacationing in the Cook Islands, Cathy Sue Ragan-Anunsen learned that the country had no veterinarian for its thousands of companion animals and that police, in an effort to control the dog population, routinely shot and bludgeoned to death unwanted canines.

Anunsen returned from the South Pacific to Oregon and in 1994 founded the non-profit Esther Honey Foundation, Inc. named in honor of her grandmother, Esther, and a friend from the islands, Honey, a golden Raro dog. With the help and generosity of animal advocates, veterinarians, pharmaceutical companies and Air New Zealand, the foundation established the country's only companion animal hospital in 1995, on the island of Rarotonga, the largest of the Cook Island's 15 islands. All EHF Animal Clinic staff members volunteer their expertise and time. The staff positions vary from time to time, but include a combination of the following:

- ◆ Veterinarians (EHF veterinarians average 14.5 years experience)
- ◆ Veterinary nurse and/or veterinary technician

- ◆ Senior veterinary students
- ◆ Pre-vet college interns.

Students receive academic credit and supervised hands-on surgical experience at the clinic and in the field.

The foundation is rich in human resources but has an extremely limited budget. Out of necessity, EHF has developed a unique system of networking, couriers, and volunteers to meet the foundation's ongoing supply and staffing needs. In addition to the direct benefit to the animals, EHF's continuous stream of volunteers, their families, and many friends who visit the Cook Islands during the volunteers' stay, contribute to the local economy.

Homeless animals receive the same level of veterinary care as animals with guardians.

- ◆ No animals are euthanized because of an inability of their guardian to pay for veterinary care.
- ◆ All services, up to and including complicated orthopedic surgeries, are provided at no charge for animals with guardians and those without.

EHF does not maintain an animal shelter but healthy animals sometimes reside at the clinic until they can be re-homed.

The euthanasia of healthy animals by EHF personnel is prohibited. Animals are euthanized only when veterinary care cannot alleviate the animal's pain or suffering. Our veterinarians, cognizant of EHF policy and the strength of our commitment to that policy, make the determination whether euthanasia is the compassionate choice for the animal in their care.

Programs: Over 1,000 animals are treated each year at no charge by EHF's volunteer staff. The Foundation's treatment and spay and neuter programs extend beyond the Esther Honey Foundation Animal Clinic doors to outlying villages on Rarotonga and remote outer islands where, without EHF, animals would never see a veterinarian. EHF's patients are, in accordance with EHF policy, primarily companion animals, but EHF doctors have also treated pigs, goats, chickens, horses, birds, fruit bats and one seal. Fifty EHF veterinarians (with the help of hundred's of other volunteers) have treated over 9,000 animals since we established the EHF Animal Clinic. EHF volunteers have spayed or neutered approximately 4,000 animals at no cost. EHF promotes early spay/neuter in the course of all our programs:

EHF Vet Trek Teams have traveled by air and freighter to treat over 700 animals on outer island animals. Our 2002 team recently spent a week on the outer island of Aitutaki where they, with the help of local residents, captured, treated, altered and released 104 feral cats.

EHF Education Programs: EHF uses every opportunity to share animal care and humane education in our Community Outreach Programs including the following:

- ◆ Clinic and Schools: "Honey's It's Cool to Be Kind" Campaign
- ◆ Television PSA's, Radio question and answers programs, and "VET TALK," a twice-monthly newspaper column
- ◆ Village Visits and Outer Islands Clinics: In addition to treatment, we provide education to animal guardians during our Vet Treks.
- ◆ Reading Programs: EHF donates animal theme books to a children's reading program where our volunteers offer their services as readers.

- ◆ Teaching by Example: In a country where there was no dog or cat food in the stores when we arrived and dogs were viewed as a food source, the compassion and dedication of our volunteers were reason for curiosity if not suspicion. Seven years later, our clinic staff members are respected members of the Rarotonga community. It is not uncommon for businesses to provide discounts after learning their customer is an Esther Honey volunteer. Raro markets now carry several brands of dog food, flea control and several other animal care products. Businesses contribute to our outer island trip airfare expenses and donate lumber for our kennels and other clinic projects. The media donate their services.

However, animals are still being fed fish entrails which leads to fish poisoning. Goats and pigs are still found tethered with no food or water and dogs continue to be raised for consumption. Changing people's perception of the value of animals and the importance of humane and responsible care is a slow process but we believe our presence in Rarotonga has encouraged the community to move in a more compassionate direction.

Suggested Operating Needs

On the Island Nation

1. Volunteer recruitment: A tropical site, stable government, English speaking population, and reasonably priced living expenses increase the probability of an adequate number of volunteers.
2. Island Nation liaison: Preferably a local person (or persons) with connections to the government (Immigration and Customs), village leaders, local businesses (who can donate clinic space and volunteer living accommodations, car dealers for discounts on vehicle for clinic and rentals for volunteers, pharmacy for incidental clinic and volunteer supplies, oxygen supplier, grocery stores for animal food, newspaper for publicity, community relations and education), schools for education programs, and women's organizations to increase your connection to the community and to introduce the link between animal abuse and domestic violence. Our volunteers often volunteer for community projects, such as a local women's group reading program for children. EHF donates children's books with animal themes and provides volunteers to read twice a week as a part of our community education program.
3. Equipment: One particularly needs a clinic computer, a state-of-the-art anesthesia machine and a clinic vehicle.

In the U.S.

The US team should (ideally) consist of a person to assume full-time, long-term commitment to provide a continuous supply of volunteers, pharmaceuticals, equipment and funding, an assistant, a veterinary advisor, a fundraiser, and a website developer

The network should be made up of the following:

- a. Veterinarians interested in volunteering and collecting and donating supplies
- b. College student interns
- c. Airlines, travel agents

CASE STUDY

Hawaiian Humane Society Feral Cat Program

Pamela Burns, President/CEO

In 1861 Mark Twain reported during his visit to Hawaii “I saw cats—Tom cats, Mary Ann cats, Walleyed cats, cross-eyed cats, grey cats, black cats, white cats, yellow cats, striped cats, spotted cats, tame cats, wild cats, signed cats, individual cats, groups of cats, platoons of cats, companies of cats, regiments of cats, armies of cats, multitudes of cats, millions of cats, and all of them sleek, fat, lazy and sound asleep. There are just about cats enough for three apiece all around.” (from *Poi Dogs and Popoki*) Today there are also many people of a wide range of ethnic backgrounds.

On the Island of Oahu (a 620 square mile piece of land that is the site for this case study), there are 872,478 people divided as follows:

28%	Caucasian
26%	Japanese
20%	Hawaiian & part Hawaiian
12%	Philippinos
9%	Other (e.g. Korean, Tongan, African American)
5%	Chinese

The estimated dog and cat populations are as follows:

Owned Dogs	102,500
Owned Cats	115,000
Stray Cats	Unknown (Research conducted in June 2001 asked the question, “do you feed any cats that do not belong to you?” The responses were Yes – 25%; No – 75%)

In September of 1995, the government of the Island of Oahu passed cat legislation. Its aim was to provide a way for people to “own” cats and take on the appropriate responsibilities. The legislation required owned cats to be identified in some way, mandated an appropriate holding period for cats picked up by animal control and required that cats owned for 6 months or more and allowed outside must be sterilized.

Other programs that affect stray/feral cats include Neuter Now and the Feral Cat Sterilization Program. Neuter Now was established in 1987 and provides low-cost sterilization to pet owners who, for financial reasons, would not have the surgery done. The City and County of Honolulu provide the funds, 36 of 40 veterinary clinics on Oahu agree to charge greatly reduced fees for such clients and the Hawaiian Humane Society administers the program at no cost. The care-giver purchases a certificate (\$18 for a male and \$29 for a female) and then presents it to a veterinarian who is paid a further \$50 for a female cat, or \$40 for a male cat sterilization.

The HHS Feral Cat Sterilization Program was formally instituted in 1993 to reduce the population of stray and feral cats through sterilization programs that support individual feral cat care-givers in the community. Feral cat caregivers must first register with HHS to be eligible to receive free sterilization of feral cats. Appointments are not required and the program does not include vaccinations or testing for viral diseases. The cats must be provided with an acceptable ID before they can be released back to the care-giver.

During 2002, HHS provided 2,690 free feral cat sterilizations for 572 caregivers.

Outcome: There has been a reduction in the number of incoming cats during the past nine years as seen below. We did not separate stray cats from owned cats until FY 1993, thus the nine year period.

	<u>1993</u>	<u>2002</u>	<u>Variance</u>
No. of stray cats received	14,325	13,608	- 5%
No. of owned cats received	5,704	3,726	-35%
Returned to owner rate	.9%	4%	3.1%

Research conducted in June 2001 resulted in the following reaction when asked, “Should the stray cat population be trapped/put to sleep (euthanized) or trapped/neutered/released to public areas?”

Trap and euthanize.	39%
Trap, neuter, release	51%
Don't Know.	10%

Suggested Operating Needs

Community

- Define the problem (size, location, nature)
- Decide on the program goal
- Focus on targeted areas first
- Develop a realistic budget and funding
- Make sure guidelines are clear
- The staff, feral cat community, and community at large need to know the structure and goals
- Staff needs to understand why we're doing it
- Partner with as many individuals and groups as possible, even the “fringe” need to be consistent and flexible
- Encourage community veterinarian participation and partnership – it really helps to have a respected veterinarian advocate
- Understand the motivation/issues related to cat caregivers – expect the unexpected
- Be prepared for controversy and obstinacy
- Get the word out to targeted markets (feral cat caregivers, community at large, and donors/feeders) and in different ways
- Help participants recognize that cat over-population is not any one person or group’s responsibility
- Be open to suggestions from caregivers regarding operational issues
- Get all participants to acknowledge a sense of team responsibility and give them input in all steps of the process
- Publicly recognize responsible caregivers
- Educate the community regarding the source of feral cats; prevention through sterilization; the importance of inside cats, longer life, etc.
- Consider legislation regarding cat ID, requiring that owned outdoor cats be sterilized, animal abandonment, etc.

Operating Issues

- Make sure staff knows how to safely and humanely handle feral cats (both privately and publicly)
- Staff must be able to perform high quality and efficient surgeries
- Have the necessary supplies and equipment available
- Maintain records on number sterilized, cost, mortality, etc.
- Patience, tact and compassion are needed attributes for all staff
- Microchip ID is important
- Encourage caregivers to maintain records - number of cats, sex, when the cat joined the colony, mortality, etc.
- Make it as easy as possible for people to do the right thing

CASE STUDY

Spay Neuter Incentive Program (SNIP)

Kathleen Hargreaves, President

This is the story of Project Potcake, a spay/neuter return program that effectively reduced the number of stray roaming dogs on the island of Abaco in The Bahamas. Our partners in this project were Chris and Molly Roberts, the brave hearts behind Abaco Animals Require Friends (AARF) and William Fielding, the Nassau-based statistician who performed independent surveys to gauge the effectiveness of Project Potcake. Also vitally important to Project Potcake were the scores of volunteers who got their hands, feet, and clothes dirty performing countless acts of mercy.

Because on Abaco the pool of targeted canines consists solely of indigenous dogs – which in The Bahamas are known as potcakes – we call our program Project Potcake. They are called potcakes because tradition has it that the dogs eat what's left in the bottom of a pot of the traditional peas and rice – the *pot cake* – when it's thrown out. Potcakes are mixed breeds – *mongrels* – in the strictest sense of the word.

The average potcake is a free agent. He or she does not really belong to anyone in particular but rather is part of the fabric of the community. This is a new concept to many people in the USA, but it is a standard arrangement in many developing nations. The concept is *vitally important* as far as the dog – and the community – is concerned. If you're a potcake on Abaco it most often means that no person accepts individual responsibility for you but everyone agrees you live in the neighborhood. Potcakes have distinct territories and rely on specific food sources. Calling most potcakes stray is like calling gypsies homeless.

As many as half of all potcakes die in the first few weeks of life. They starve to death at the teat, in hidden litters, their bellies full of hook and roundworms. Mothers drop their litters under houses, in the bush, or under abandoned vehicles. Many are hit by cars and trucks. Some are poisoned.

The average lifespan of a stray, roaming, or feral dog on Abaco is three to four years. Heartworm is endemic. Garbage is the dogs' main source of food. Basic veterinary attention for vaccines, parasites, bacterial and fungal infections is virtually non-existent for perhaps 90 percent of the island's dogs. Potcakes who pester pedestrians are pelted with stones and rocks. But for the most part potcakes are simply overlooked. They are victims of benign neglect.

During a two-month watch in 1999, we counted one dead potcake per day – *per day* – lying at the side of the road after having been hit by a vehicle, and as many as 50 out and about on *just one road* in the older and poorer communities – emaciated, skeletal, mangy, staggering dogs and puppies and always pregnant, lactating bitches were visible.

According to statistician William Fielding, potcake overpopulation has been a problem on Abaco *since at least 1850*. (*This is true for New Providence see Mather, Fielding & Darling, 1999*).

Abaco is known in The Bahamas as one of the “Family Islands” because it belongs to the family of Bahamian islands. It is the third most populated of these islands. The bulk of the 13,170 residents of Abaco population lives in the center of Great Abaco Island around the town of Marsh Harbour where about 6,500 people live in 2,190 households (2000 census data), the third largest population center in The Bahamas. In terms of its problems and characteristics, Abaco is not much different than many other warm weather islands in the western Atlantic. It's a quiet tourist destination for seasonal boaters and has a fairly stable pool of second-home owners and expatriates.

Just beyond the tourist district is a different Abaco. Residential communities are densely populated and consist primarily of small, often old homes. There are few fences on Abaco and still fewer gates. Abaco also has a small but growing Haitian population.

Before Project Potcake began, the various methods used to reduce the roaming potcake population – such as catch and kill poisoning, etc. had not made a noticeable difference.

Therefore, in 1999, AARF and what was soon to become SNIP put our heads together and agreed to privately fund a clinic that was 100% free to the public. Because there is a prohibition against practice by non-Bahamian veterinarians in The Bahamas, we suggested to the Bahamian veterinarians that we would be paying customers. We knew the veterinarians could not afford to do pro bono work and we knew that most animals we were targeting for spay neuter would never otherwise be seen by a veterinarian. So we also knew that our clinic would *increase* the income of participating veterinarians. We agreed that if we wanted the animals sterilized, we would go and catch them *and return them* ourselves. We decided to offer a cash incentive of \$10 for every male and \$15 for every female brought in for sterilization because we felt that some added motivation would give the project the greatest chance of success.

Our first Project Potcake clinic was a total gamble. We bought radio time, ran off flyers, posted them around the town, put an ad in the local newspaper, and then we hit the streets. We went door-to-door, block-to-block introducing ourselves and Project Potcake. We paid close attention to every question and objection that anyone offered.

In the Haitian communities we found that most people, although poorer by far than the average Bahamian, just wanted to prevent unwanted litters. They love their dogs. They just do not want more of them.

But in the Bahamian communities it was a different story. Our spay/neuter pitch met with stony silence. People could not believe that all we wanted was permission to sterilize neighborhood potcakes. Most Abaconians are polite, however, and would hear us through. The resistance took various forms. Some insisted that they “just love puppies.” Many were convinced that “fixing” a dog was a euphemism for putting it down. We had to earn trust. And we had to be honest. And, we had to understand that, in their own way, Abaconians want their potcakes.

We always saved the closer, the cash incentive, until the very end. At the point when we sensed we might be losing the deal, we would say, “Oh, and did we tell you we’ll pay you \$15 cash for every female and \$10 for every male?” By the end of that two and a half day clinic Project Potcake had spayed or neutered 186 animals; all but a half-dozen were potcakes. The total clinic cost? was \$12,000, with about 90% going to the veterinarians.

Doctors Owen Hanna and Val Grant, the Bahamian veterinarians involved in that first Project Potcake clinic, reported back to us that we had held the largest spay/neuter clinic ever to have occurred in the entire Caribbean basin.

Within less than a year of that first clinic, SNIP incorporated and obtained 501(c)(3) non-profit status in the U.S. so we could raise funds more effectively as well as act as conduit for US charitable contributions to assist AARF in Abaco. We jumped feet first into the animal welfare/grant writing/fund raising/project development fray. SNIP and AARF also started working closely with Humane Society International (HSI) and The Pegasus Foundation.

Back home in Maine, we asked a statistician to design a program that when fed estimates of the total dog population, and other pertinent information, such as mortality rate, average age at death, the sex ratio of the dogs, and the average number of pups in a litter, would tell us how often would we need to hold clinics and how many females we needed to spay each time to significantly control and reduce the roaming potcake population within 18 to 24 months. Our statistician named the database *Canine Population Reduction Program*. We followed it the program's recommendations to set minimum quota targets for every clinic. Without exception, we have either met or exceeded them.

Since that first prototype in 1999, Project Potcake has held eight spay neuter clinics and sterilized more than 1,000 animals, of which about 65 percent were females. All but approximately 200 animals were potcakes. The remainder were cats or so-called breed (pure-bred) dogs.

Our average cost per spay/neuter procedure is under \$45. Taking into consideration all clinic costs – including fees for things like venereal tumor treatments, spaying nursing females or females in heat, miscellaneous conditions such fractures and acute infections, as well as airfare – our average cost per animal is about \$90. None of us receive salaries or remunerations.

Before Project Potcake, road kills were estimated at about one per day. Roadkill frequency has now dropped to about three or four per month. Before Project Potcake, we routinely counted as many as 50 dogs on any given major street. Now we see 20 and the animals who have been sterilized look healthier, larger, and more robust. We estimate that we have reduced the number of reproductive potcakes in targeted areas by as much as 75 percent. Attrition is on-going, and numbers on the street will continue to drop as the dogs die off.

No matter how many times we do the math it still boggles the mind. We conservatively estimate having prevented approximately 20,000 births in 3 years.

Dr. Owen Hanna, the only veterinarian who has worked every clinic with us, says this about Project Potcake, “The key to Project Potcake's success is its ability to take advantage of local and international experience, resources, and expertise. Its flexibility has also been a great asset. It's one of the few programs that has been able to impact and motivate Bahamians at all levels.”

But obviously, it makes sense to have an independent assessment of the impact of Project Potcake. So Humane Society International brought in a Nassau's expert statistician, from Nassau, William Fielding who conducted before and after surveys and population assessments. Although our “take” on the island's potcake population and human survey responses is not identical to his, his data also confirm the fact that Project Potcake has had a positive impact on Abaco street dogs.

The incentive monies have also gone down. We went from a high of \$1,200 in incentive fees at that first clinic to \$40 at our last, held just 2 weeks ago. Cash incentives are not necessary anymore because the community has observed the benefits of the project. Instead, people now ask for information about worming programs and vaccines.

Today, in addition to doing annual maintenance clinics in “completed” areas and finishing up a series of clinics in others, we are developing a similar program – Project *Potcat?* – to deal with the problem of feral cats on the outer cays as well as the threat cats on the main island pose to the endangered ground nesting Abaco Parrot (*Amazona leucocephala bahamensis*). We also realize that education is more important than ever so we are working on smaller programs that target the younger generation.

We also face new problems. There is a strong interest in acquiring guarding and fighting dogs such as Pit Bulls, Akitas, Dobermans, German Shepherds, and Rotweilers. We hear there are organized dog fights, and there is definite evidence of forced breeding between female potcakes and Pit Bulls. We also continue to try and engage the Government in our work on behalf of Abaco's animals and citizens. We have made little progress to date but we intend to keep at it.

Suggested Operating Needs

- 1) Enter the project with a strong sense of total commitment to its success. Possess an unshakeable "can-do" attitude.
- 2) Maintain a clear and unwavering concept of your goal. Project Potcake's goal is the dramatic reduction of targeted canine populations without euthanasia, i.e., spay/ neuter/return.
- 3) Form an alliance with a locally established group of people or organization who share your commitment and who have demonstrated perseverance in ways large or small. Know who you're dealing with.
- 4) Allocate responsibility. Encourage people to do what they do best – community networking, finances, publicity, animal handling, etc.
- 5) "Talk up the program" to people from all different walks of life, i.e., local residents from all economic and cultural strata, radio personalities, reporters & editors, government officials, veterinarians, health clinics, tourists, second home owners, etc.
- 6) Establish contacts and maintain a contact list of people who will act as volunteers or information conduits for the program. Present the program as one that affects everyone in the community
- 7) Seek funding from as many sources as you can identify – local residents, sympathetic second homeowners, tourists, funding institutions, animal welfare organizations, philanthropies... and your own pocket.
- 8) Make sure that you are physically and financially able to conduct the program as you envision it. Don't bite off more than you can chew but also don't be afraid to take a big bite.
- 9) Establish a positive relationship with the veterinarians involved. You will build strong associations based on trust and fair play. Be upfront, appreciative, honest, as well as knowledgeable enough to be able to discuss problems and issues as they arise. You are engaged in a vital partnership. You cannot succeed without them.
- 10) Establish a written list of protocols and a fee structure before beginning the clinic. Review it regularly. Alter it when needed.
- 11) Pay bills promptly as they are incurred. Scrutinize bills before paying them.
- 12) Use volunteers to do anything and everything that doesn't require your direct attention
- 13) DO NOT use inexperienced volunteers in positions that are potentially dangerous.
- 14) DO NOT let children handle, soothe, touch, or minister to animals. REMEMBER YOUR LIABILITY!
- 15) Endorse and practice juvenile sterilization. The animals recover faster, are easier to catch, and will never reproduce.
- 16) Have adequate pre- and post-surgical containment for all animals.
- 17) No matter how cute it looks, DO NOT allow puppies to congregate or recover in common areas. Their immune systems are fragile.
- 18) Use sedatives that ensure fast recoveries. If you can use isoflourane, so much the better. Otherwise make "ketamine cocktails" a clinic requirement.
- 19) Assess animals for their ability to withstand the risks of surgery before they go under the knife. Often just a worming and a week or two of regular meals is all they need.
- 20) If the veterinarian expresses concern over an animal's inability to withstand surgery, follow his/her advice. Don't risk a life to make a quota.

- 21) *The dog is not your enemy.* Have at least two core team members who can handle and “read” animals in the field. Take the time to spend five or ten minutes calming a frightened animal; it’s well worth it. Don’t resort to catch poles or other equally strong-armed methods unless absolutely necessary. It only makes the dog more resistant, more fearful and more aggressive.
- 22) Whenever possible, have someone present who knows the animal when you take control of the dog. It calms the animal and usually facilitates your role
- 23) Use a disposable leash to secure the dog. Allow the dog to resist while you continue soothing it. If you remain calm and don’t exert undue force, it will usually calm down quickly. We routinely encounter, secure, lift, and carry dogs who have never been handled before within the space of 10 minutes. None of us has ever been seriously injured.
- 24) Learn how to use a leash as a make shift muzzle.
- 25) Watch body distance when assessing whether you will be able to “take” the dog. Chances are you will not succeed in “taking” a dog that consistently maintains the length of its body from you.
- 26) **KNOW YOUR CUSTOMER.** Do not speak down to the people you meet in the field. Do not lose your temper. Do not criticize. Know the environment well enough to be able to communicate your purpose and explain the benefits of s/n within the confines of the culture.
- 27) **DO NOT** release animals into their environment before they are fully awake and alert.
- 28) Be prepared to hold animals anywhere from overnight to a week in order to assure they are healthy enough to return home.
- 29) Explain to the responsible party that the animal has had major surgery and should be allowed to rest and recover. This is particularly important with puppies and spays.
- 30) Expect occasional emergencies. Stitches rip. Incisions bleed. Scrotal sacs swell.
- 31) Check back on as many animals as possible to assess their recovery. We try hard to return to remove spay stitches and often stop back sooner if it seems appropriate. If you find people in the field who are willing to help you locate dogs, be sure to explain that the animals should not be tied up or confined in any way that may bring them harm; don’t expect people to understand what you take for granted.
- 32) **KEEP YOUR WORD.** If you say you’re going to return a dog by day’s end and can’t, tell the people. Trust is a major ingredient of our clinics.
- 33) Expect that you will have to continue explaining the program long after it’s begun. People do not always understand that the complete results of spay/neuter/return aren’t apparent until attrition occurs.
- 34) Offer clinics that are absolutely free to clients. Remember, you are trying to effectively reduce animal population, not determine financial need.
- 35) Experience has proven that in locales such as ours – where there are community (rather than privately owned) dogs – simply offering a “no cost” clinic fails to draw clients.
- 36) It would be extremely helpful to have the active support of Government behind a project such as this. Not only would it encourage citizens to participate, it also would facilitate the acquisition of important medical supplies, currently restricted due to importation duties. We have yet to make this happen.
- 37) Project Potcake works because we go out in the field, door-to-door canvas, offer a cash incentive to encourage cooperation, catch the dogs, and then transport the animals to and from the clinic. The situation we face calls for nothing less.

Note: *Dogs on Abaco Island: A Case Study*, Humane Society International, 2001, is available upon request by contacting HSI at hsi@hsihsus.org or telephoning (1) 301/258-3010.

CASE STUDY

Yudisthira – Bali Street Dog Foundation

Putu Listriani, D.V.M., Director of Veterinary Medicine
Sherry Grant, Director of Operations

Hundreds of mangy stray, feral, and sick dogs roam the streets and beaches in third world countries and in some of the most exotic places on earth. The story is basically the same regardless of where it originates. This has been an age-old problem with which animal lovers and welfare organizations around the world have been wrestling.

Yudisthira – the Bali Street Dog Foundation - has been developing an innovative grass roots approach to deal with the community dog problem. For the past three years we have successfully adopted and adapted components modeled after different animal welfare campaigns worldwide to create the grass roots foundation we are today. Cultural, religious, government and education barriers have been penetrated in less than three years!

With help from and a few donations from some friends and clients, we started Yudisthira, Bali Street Dog Foundation in 1999 with a medicine box, an intern from Dr. Listriani's practice, and a dog catcher.

The mission statement for Yudisthira Bali Street Dog Foundation is to:

1. Improve the health of Bali's dogs.
2. Reduce the dog population.
3. Improve the level of veterinary medicine.
4. Raise the level of public and professional animal welfare consciousness.

We worked the beaches and the streets two days per week catching and treating the dogs for skin diseases, parasites, and wounds. Sometimes we would also do one or two castrations. We were treating and healing dogs, using a catch, treat and release approach, but our numbers were so small and the job so big that we were hardly making a difference. This was a big undertaking both financially and physically. Catch, treat, and release is our only option since there are no kennel or shelter facilities on Bali.

In February 2000, The World Society for the Protection of Animals (WSPA) arranged for a visit from their veterinarian, Dr. David Griffith. He taught us how to do a bitch spay using a spay hook and a 3 cm incision, something Balinese veterinarians did not learn in Veterinary School. Since then we have taught this to many veterinarians on the island. Soon the population control goal of our Mission Statement was developed. Out of our Street Program came the Field Clinic, which works in villages and provides medical treatment, spays and neuters for free. To date, we have sterilized over 2,287 dogs and this year we will treat (give any medicine, operation, or care) to more than 5,500 dogs.

We have not traded in our medicine boxes, but our program has evolved into an animal welfare project that includes:

- Street Program
- Field Program
- Fixed Clinic
- Visiting Vet Program
- University Training Programs
- Veterinary Research
- Public Education Programs

Street Program

The heart and soul of our operation has always been our street work. We target problem areas - which are everywhere - and take care of specific dogs or situations. This could be a neighbourhood, beach, tourist destination, or market.

Field Clinic

The Field Clinic is a MASH-style operation that moves around the island and cares for dogs in the villages and cities. A minimum team is two doctors, one dogcatcher, a driver/field assistant, and an intern. The team goes out four days a week.

Fixed Clinic

At our fixed clinic we do more complicated surgeries and clinic demonstrations. We use this facility for education and the training of Udayana veterinary students and new doctors. Our doors are open to all doctors on the island. We welcome them to participate in all of our surgery demonstration clinics and to use our microscope and autoclav.

Visiting Vet Program

An important part of this teaching program is our Visiting Vet Program. Under this program, visiting vets from around the world work side by side with Yudisthira vets, local vets, and students to discuss, explore, and share practical experience

Public Education Program

Another long-term project is the education of the general public about animal welfare, particularly dogs as pets. We operate two education programs: Pet Respect and Kindness Clubs. With our Pet Respect Program we overcome long-standing cultural views by focusing on how to care for a dog. This is a single presentation program for the schools and the villages and is held during a Field Clinic. It comes complete with handouts, interactive learning, a dog video, stickers, and games.

Our Kindness Club is an in-school program that was developed by Yudisthira and sponsored by WSPA. Each month for 10 months we visit 10 schools and each time explore a different animal. Currently 500 children are participating in our pilot program. Each session has a newsletter, handout, workbook, and a finger puppet of the animal being studied that month. Each session also includes a video or short field trip.

University Programs

Yudisthira works in conjunction with the Udayana University, providing training and education to their veterinary students. We also provide mentorship and internship for new doctors starting their practice. An important part of this training is that they get hands-on surgery experience -- something that they would not otherwise receive.

Two years ago, Yudisthira organized a joint DNA research project between UC Davis Veterinary School and Udayana University. A young doctor from Udayana is just completing a six-month sabbatical in California sponsored by UC Davis and is working directly on the project in their Genetics Lab.

Yudisthira – Bali Street Dog Foundation has evolved from a medicine box and treating a few poor dogs each week to a diverse foundation that treats thousands of dogs a year.

The Biggest Challenge

Sometimes the biggest challenge is sticking to our mission statement and not deviating from it. We quickly realized that we could not:

- try be everything for everybody.
- solve every complaint
- help every victimized dog

It is easy to fall into this trap

Issue: Shelter

One challenge we faced was the issue of a shelter. Many hours were spent on the phone, with emails, in meetings and other venues defending our decision not to structure an animal welfare organization that would have to sustain an animal shelter.

We crossed this bridge early in our evolution. Time and exposure to the business of Animal Shelters quickly revealed that we would NEVER have the financial resources that could sustain a shelter *AND* run the other Yudisthira programs that would do so much for a large number of dogs and give so much back to the community. It was one or the other. The choice was simple. We could not go the familiar route of the shelter. That would have to be left to somebody else.

We adopted three timeframes and developed programs for each. While we wanted to ease the immediate suffering we also realized that unless we looked long term, the situation could quickly revert to its former state. We wanted to make a lasting impact. Today we are realizing this vision in Bali.

Think Strategically

In order to achieve what we wanted we had to:

- Stay focused on the Mission Statement
- Get the best return for the investment of time, money, resources, and talent.
- Look both the short-term and the long-term
- Manage the project – this is a business
- Market the project

As the foundation grows, education programs expand, and the numbers of treatments, spays and neuters increase, the most commonly ask question by our colleagues in animal welfare and veterinary science is:

- Have any field surveys been conducted to measure the effectiveness of your work?
- Have any assessments been made on the dog population?
- How do you know you are making any impact?

Based upon what we see in the areas we have worked, it appears that we have made a significant impact. However, these assumptions have not been supported by statistical studies.

Developing a Survey/Describing the Problem

In August 2001, Humane Society International (HSI) sponsored a project with Yudisthira Bali Street Dog Foundation to evaluate the effectiveness of the Field Clinic Program. Yudisthira would conduct a survey gathering statistics on the dog and the human populations in the villages where the Field Clinics worked. We developed and implemented a survey and learned a great deal but the project is not complete as we have not yet resurveyed the villages to measure the impact of the programs. Nevertheless we have gathered some interesting statistics.

The first question is what to survey. There's a tendency to collect too much data. The best way to avoid this is to work backwards. Start with you want from the survey. The required data will flow from that. The survey form must be precise, unambiguous and clear to both the surveyor and surveyed, with no open-ended questions. Then there is all of the logistical organization such as getting and training personnel, scheduling, and transportation. We recruited university students to do our surveying.

Some things that might seem simple in a Western context are not so simple in a place like Bali. For example, in the West in order to ascertain income level, you usually just give ranges for people to respond to. But Bali, to a large extent, still remains a barter society and many people do not really know how much they make. In order to overcome this, we had to ask questions about their lifestyle and infer from that their approximate income.

Then we had a few unexpected results from our surveying. When we started, we surveyed a village about one week before we ran the Field Clinic. During the process of the survey, we informed the resident of the upcoming Field Clinic and asked if they wanted to get their dog sterilized or treated. What we found was a significant drop-off in attendance at the Field Clinic. We surmised that this was because people had longer to think about it and somehow were less favorable towards it.

A Picture of Bali

In Bali, the center of civic power is the Banjar. A Banjar is like a neighborhood center and can encompass anywhere from a dozen to a hundred families. We organized our work by Banjar. We surveyed one Banjar at a time and then followed it up with three Field Clinics. In this way we were better able to define our survey area and insure that we had covered a particular area. We tried to keep the survey as simple and clear as possible. We sought to profile both the dogs and the population so as to correlate the two. We had regular meetings with the survey team to refine our techniques.

Bali has a population of about 3 million people. Most of them are concentrated in the southern part of the island where the capital city Denpasar is located as well as the main tourist areas. Based upon the population-to-dog ratios determined from our survey, we estimate that there are about 500,000 dogs, the vast majority of them being street dogs.

The survey covered 37 villages made up of over a hundred banjars. Over 3,200 families, 13,000 people, and 2,000 dogs were included in the survey. The vast majority of the population in these 37 villages are either rice farmers or laborers. In this environment, a government worker or small merchant is considered upper class.

The only surprise relating to the age distribution in the surveyed population was the relatively high average age of 45-50 years. It should be remembered that these are rural villages where the main livelihood is rice farming. We believe the high average age is a result of the young adults moving to the city leaving the older people behind.

We were surprised by the large number of elementary and senior school level people compared to the low number of middle school level.

Education levels	Preschool	Elementary	Middle School	High School	University
1 Baru (26 villages)	209	2,745	1,007	3,193	131
2 Baru (16 villages)	72	1,692	616	1,417	226
Totals	281	4,437	1,623	4,610	357

One reason for the high elementary level is probably the fact that the old people never got beyond the elementary level and, since they represent a large portion of the population, they skew the level to the low side. We are unable to explain the high number who have completed senior school level.

Of the approximately 2,100 dogs in our profile, 85% are “street” dogs. This is because, culturally, the Balinese in general do not consider dogs as pets in the Western sense. Dogs are almost never allowed in the home and most dogs are not really owned by anyone. There are just dogs around, and people will feed them their garbage or leftover food.

Through the survey, we are attempting to show the effect of our sterilization program in the villages. It appears that prior to our treatment, 24% of the dogs were sterilized versus 51% after we ran a field clinic. However, we find it hard to believe that there was a 24% sterilization rate prior to our arrival. Most of these villages had no veterinarians, and there is a cultural bias among the Balinese not to interfere with the natural order of things. Dogs have a place in this order and to sterilize a dog can be considered as interfering with the natural order of Karma. Also, the survey data did not tie very closely with our treatment records. We suspect that the survey may have missed a large number of villagers and that the question may have been structured wrong. There is also the fact that people will often tell you what they think you want to hear. Also, some may have felt that if they said that their dogs were not sterilized, that we would forcibly take and sterilize them.

The survey has found little correlation between income and the number of dogs. To us this indicates that in the Balinese culture “ownership” of a dog is a vague concept and this vagueness crosses social economic classes. Not surprisingly, we see a stronger correlation between income and the care of the dog. In calculating the care component we looked at the type of food (scraps, garbage, etc.), number of feedings, the health of the animal, and whether or not the animal was ever seen by a vet. We also see a moderate correlation between sanitation in the home (as measured by the toilet facilities and garbage disposal) and the care of the dog. A moderate correlation also appears to exist between education and care. Not surprisingly, as income goes up, the care of the animal improves. Likewise, as sanitation improves, so does animal care. Lastly, those with more education tend to care better for their animals.

We believe we have had considerable impact on animal welfare in Bali even though the size of the problem is much larger than our resources at the moment.

Suggested Operating Needs

1. Have a mission statement and stick to it. Don't try to be all things to all animals all at once. You can't save every animal. Keep your eye on the big picture.
2. Plan on working your butt off. You will be an integral person in starting the project. You will probably be working as a volunteer (i.e. without pay) with a vision and the skills to drive the project forward. Building an on-going project takes a lot of time and some of the things in your life now will suffer as you move forward.
3. Start-up small. Keep it manageable and keep focused.
4. Work the program consistently, not just when you feel like it or off-and-on. Every day there is something to do.
5. Appoint a Board of Directors that is composed of influential locals.
6. Get proper foundation licensing:
 - a. This minimizes governmental and agency problems in the future; especially when you become recognized and start making a difference.

- b. You will be ready to do fundraising immediately.
 - c. Most charities require documentation. Don't loose out on opportunities because you don't have the proper paperwork.
7. If you come from outside the area, create a partnership with your local management. There must be an equal commitment by both parties which is built on common trust and respect.
 8. The project must be theirs not yours. Your job is to organize, fundraise, set objectives and show the organization how to keep moving forward. The less you (as a foreigner) are "out in front" the better.
 9. The (your) objective should be to build a program/foundation that can eventually run without you. That's the lasting legacy that you can leave.
 10. RESPECT the cultures and traditions of the country you are working in, even though it may not be the most desirable option to achieving an end goal. For Yudisthira the ceremonies and holidays are a scheduling challenge.
 11. Make a business plan. Find someone who can help you write one. Don't let the task of getting your thoughts and ideas organized and down on paper stop you from doing this. There are so many ways you can get a business plan produced with a little help.
 12. Open a bank account with wire-transfer service, and on-line banking, if available. Develop a relationship with your bank. It makes international fund raising easier. Get a merchant credit card account if possible.
 13. Immediately develop a check writing protocol which requires two signatures on each check.
 14. Develop a budget for every project and everything - and (really) stick to it!
 15. Start to fundraise right away. Don't wait until you have spent all of your own money before you start fund raising. Accept that fund raising is going to be one of your (the person at the helm's) main jobs. If there is no money, there is no program – that's the fact. Also, look for non-monetary donations. Be creative. Look locally and overseas.
 16. Market the organization in the community – the media, schools, local community, expatriate and nationals community, government, and international community. THINK MARKETING.
 17. Develop a website and put your name on everything.
 18. Know your customs regulations for the importation of donated goods. Don't end up spending more for custom fees then the donation is worth. Manage your non-monetary donations. People will oftentimes send you stuff you don't need.
 19. Keep records of everything! Set up your books whether you have a computer or not.
 20. Especially if you are a foreigner working in the country, make sure that your local co-partner and Board of Directors knows where the money is coming from and how it is being spent. Otherwise suspicions will undermine you. Many people will think that there is more money than there is and that you are taking it all for yourself. Remain Transparent.
 21. Pay attention to developing a core staff of young and seasoned people/professionals. Yudisthira has a fulltime Balinese staff comprised of veterinarians, dogcatchers, a driver, and an administrator. In addition, we use volunteer intern veterinary students, local veterinarians, and a few (screened) westerners.
 22. Organize the jobs. Create a team with esteem. At Yudisthira each vet or special task person is responsible for a specific part of the program: i.e. Teacher – in-school animal welfare curriculum (sponsored by WSPA Kindness Clubs); Managing Veterinarian – field clinic; clinic operations, administrator and agent for ordering and maintaining supplies; Driver – maintenance of the vehicle; Dogcatcher – pre-op, etc. You're running a business. Organize it as such.
 23. Develop an operating manual.
 24. Develop your programs with animal welfare and pet respect education in mind.
 25. Mange your volunteers – Don't be managed by them. If not used wisely, volunteers can cost more in time, money, and energy then the benefits they provide.
 26. Develop your program to target to different audiences – keep your message intact.
 27. Get to know the administrators in the government, local university, veterinary association, schools, social communities, business, hotels, and other animal welfare organizations in your country or area. This is where the strength of the partnership comes in. NETWORK.

28. Public Relations plays a major role in your business. Find someone who can manage your public consistently. The public includes, locals, volunteer vets, media, universities, kids, letters and phone calls from around the world, donors, hysterical tourists, angry business owners, government agencies, housewives, other charities, staff, board members, elementary schools, people who have witnessed a dog hit by a car. YOUR PUBLIC is everywhere! Your public comes two ways – positive and negative. Be ready! Know your mission statement and stick with your picture.
29. DO NOT build your welfare premise on founding a shelter to get started!

Core Group Discussion

A core group, comprised of the presenters and representatives from Humane Society International, Pegasus Foundation, International Fund for Animal Welfare, World Society for the Protection of Animals, Esther Honey Foundation, Bali Street Dog Foundation, and Spay Neuter Incentive Program, met on the day after the conference. This group met to discuss possible model approaches/programs to address animal overpopulation issues on island nations. It was quickly agreed that a single model system could not be applied to each island, as they all differ in culture, government policy, and program ability. Instead, the core group came up with a list of things to consider when approaching the stray dog/cat management problem.

These CONSIDERATIONS include:

1. Collect as much data and information on the issue as possible before developing a project. Include in this data, the attitudes of the relevant community towards stray animals, their perceptions on the importance of dealing with the issue, the level of pet ownership responsibility, and so on. In addition, provide information that may be of interest to the local government, such as dog bite incidents and the numbers of rabies cases. The costs for dog bites and rabies treatments are often borne by the local government and this statistical evidence can create a strong argument for the need for an animal control program. If possible, try to obtain data within the home environment to gain confirmation of what you are being told.
2. Find the hook to get people interested and involved. Many people are not concerned about animal welfare so you may need to identify economic, public safety, or additional factors affected by animal overpopulation. This is a useful approach when meeting with government officials. Animal welfare does not stand on its own as an important issue but economics almost always does. There is a need to show why it would be beneficial to the island/government – what's in it for them? If at all possible, make friends with those animal lovers who occupy positions within the Ministries of Agriculture, Environment, Public Safety, Tourism, and so on. Presenting facts and figures on rabies statistics and dog bite incidents can work as a tool to stimulate the ministries/government into action. Get media involved in any way possible to bring awareness of the issue to the public.
3. Make sure your approach is culturally sensitive and inoffensive to the local community. Address the issue from the health standpoint for people and their pets (dogs/cats, etc). If you do not consider yourself a native in the local community, then it is important that you gain a good understanding of the culture you will be working with and public attitudes towards your issue. The most successful programs would have local involvement from the beginning with a goal to leave the program in the hands of native citizens or government at the end. Involvement from the local community can help you to gain a true perception of the culture and will benefit your organization when addressing government officials or agencies. Find the time to meet with the tourist boards, hotels, and ministries to discuss with them what an appropriate approach to the problem may be. It is essential to have the genuine support and involvement of the local community.
4. Work with the local veterinary community whenever possible. Initially, vets may see your presence as a threat to their business. Make it clear that you wish to work with them and appeal to the economic aspect, showing that your sterilization program can contribute to their business. Often, foreign vet exchange programs are helpful and serve to motivate the local vet community

5. to get involved. However, it is imperative that local vets be given the opportunity to become involved and provide expertise at any point in the program. Foreign or visiting vet participation should be kept in a teaching capacity to provide advanced veterinary skills and practices and to avoid threatening the local vet community.
6. In situ teaching or training of local vets also allows the foreign vet to see what resources are available for use, as most developing countries do not have modern veterinary technology and materials.
7. An ongoing humane education component is necessary to any program to enhance the perception of the role of animals in society. Addressing the concept of “pet ownership” may help decrease the incidence of pet abandonment and directly affect the stray population numbers.
8. It is necessary to identify the additional factors that contribute to stray overpopulation problems. In many instances, the lack of garbage control is instrumental in providing a food source for thriving stray populations. This is an area in which you can involve the Ministry of Health. The World Health Organization (WHO) provides information on the role garbage management plays in controlling stray populations numbers. In addition to the WHO data, statistics demonstrating that dogs are picking up diseases from garbage and passing them on to the local community will help to win over government support for the program. The government will need to develop a garbage collection program, but individual confinement of garbage cans is equally necessary to make this program work. Simple designs such as picket fences around individual garbage containers can help to deter stray dogs.
9. On certain islands, different approaches to handling the street animal populations have been explored:
 - A. **Village Mentors** – identify a leader in the community who is interested in receiving some training or may already possess some skills in animal care. As a member of the local community, this person can provide recommendations, materials, and on occasion, minor veterinary services. This person becomes a resource for the community and is helpful in spreading awareness of animal care and kindness.
 - B. **Dog Mommas** – when a village or small society has a number of street dogs known as “community dogs,” often one or two people (mostly women) identify themselves as the caretakers of these animals and provide food/water. These people can prove beneficial to the community and stray dog population; however; they may become barriers to dealing with overpopulation of street dogs. The majority of dog mommas cannot afford veterinary care and are often against sterilization, allowing an increase in stray dog numbers. In addition, many people perceive these “mommas” as animal collectors, only feeding stray animals for personal and emotional gain.
 - C. **Cat Cafes** – in hotel areas, stray cat colonies have been controlled through this concept. Hotel personnel designate an area to feed cats at a certain time on a daily basis. The cats are trapped and sterilized as part of the program and veterinary treatment is given when needed. This program has been viewed as a success for many reasons. Tourists often enjoy viewing the cats during feeding time and find the concept agreeable. The cats are generally healthy in comparison to the strays observed on the streets. The hotel benefits by putting up a sign that states they are an animal friendly institution, which generates positive feedback from the guests. It prevents the cats from lingering at restaurant tables and keeps the rodent population numbers down. This concept is difficult to apply to dogs as they are a more people-oriented species and also more expensive to feed and care for.

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