

# Animal Sheltering

animal services / rescues / shelters



34

## At Their Service ... With a Smile

Good customer service at shelters has never been more critical. With the massive Shelter Pet Project campaign reaching out using the Internet, TV, radio, print, and outdoor advertising, the potential for increased adoptions is huge. Many people will attempt to adopt a pet for the first time, and their experiences have the potential to impact shelters for years to come.



42

## People Care Starts with You

Those at high risk of compassion fatigue are most commonly found in helping professions—doctors, nurses, police officers ... and animal shelter workers. But shelter staff experience a stressor the other groups don't have to confront: Some are asked to end the lives of the very creatures they have saved and nurtured. It's little wonder that the stress can reach a boiling point—but there are ways to cope.

**ALSO:** Chicken keeping is a hot trend these days, with urban and suburban folks discovering the joys of contented clucking coming from the backyard. But for some, the charm of this new-found hobby **wears off quickly**—keeping the birds takes money and time. And that's led to an increase of surrender inquiries at shelters around the nation, a development no one's crowing about. *Creature Feature, p. 27*



**THE HUMANE SOCIETY**  
OF THE UNITED STATES



## 5 Letterbox

### 6 Scoop

Catnip helps shelter staff provide mental and physical stimulation to cloistered kitties; an Israel-based nonprofit works to improve the status of donkeys in a region where they've long been mistreated; a retired pilot helps transport dogs from the misery of a puppy mill in Arkansas; Virginia's hound-hunting tradition creates an influx of cast-off dogs into the state's shelters; new shelter campaigns promote cats; and much more.

### 24 Coffee Break

In your space, you told us about your heroes and mentors in the animal welfare field—the people who inspired you, or showed you the ropes—and why they were so influential.

### 27 Creature Feature

Chicken keeping is on the upswing as a hobby, and for some, caring for their own little flock of clucking pets has become a passion. But for others, the charm wears off quickly, and that's caused an increase of surrender inquiries at some shelters and rescue groups.

## 49 The "101" Department

For shelter staff, keeping track of animals is a bedrock responsibility: If you mistake one animal for another, you might adopt out the wrong cat, administer an improper medication, fail to keep a dog for the required holding period, or, worst of all, euthanize the wrong animal. And yet proper identification is a task that many shelters neglect. Correctly identifying animals in a shelter requires staff to pay attention to the details—starting at the moment an animal comes through the door.

## 53 Q & A

Animal welfare issues are just one of the passions of the Indigo Girls, the Grammy-winning, politically active folk-rock duo who've been making hearts and minds sing for more than 20 years.

## 57 Shelter Medicine

In the shelter, it's hard to tell the difference between truly feral cats and those who are tame but acting frightened and reactive. The way you handle these cats can make all the difference—with time and TLC, they will show their true colors.

## 62 Behavior Department

Using a clicker to change the behavior of animals isn't new, but not everyone knows that clickers can benefit cats as well as dogs. A handful of volunteers, armed with clickers, fresh treats, and a few simple instructions, can reduce feline stress and bring shelter cats out of their shells.

## 68 Off Leash

The Sacramento SPCA recently unveiled a series of ads using iconic animal cartoon characters—or, more precisely, their absence—to show that when pets aren't around, there's a void in our lives.

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