

Off Leash

Scooby Dooby Doo, Where Are You?

He's not in the Sacramento SPCA ad campaign—and that's the point

BY JAMES HETTINGER



Snoopy's doghouse has no beagle on top. Garfield's supper dish is full, but the wisecracking cat is nowhere in sight. And without Scooby Doo to feed Scooby Snacks to, Shaggy's got a tear running down his cheek.

The Sacramento SPCA recently unveiled a series of ads using iconic animal cartoon characters—or, more precisely, their absence—to make the point that when pets aren't around, there's a void in our lives. And the best way to fill it, the ads make clear, is by adopting from a shelter or rescue group.

The ads are the brainchild of Sacramento-based advertising firm Glass McClure, which agreed to do a

pro bono campaign on the SPCA's behalf. The images began appearing in May on Sacramento-area billboards and bus station posters, as well as in *Luxlife* and *Comstock's* magazines and the *Sacramento Bee* newspaper.

"We've gotten very positive feedback locally. It brings a warm smile to people," says SPCA executive director Rick Johnson. "... It's not hard-hitting, but it does get their attention."

"Initially, we wanted to do a spay/neuter campaign, and [Glass McClure] just couldn't get too terribly excited about that," adds Sacramento SPCA spokeswoman Lesley Kirrene. But the idea of a campaign promoting adoptions fired up the agency's creativity, she says, and the

firm was able to secure the necessary licensing rights.

The campaign's message is universal, Kirrene says, and the SPCA would love to find a sponsor to take the ads nationwide.

Johnson says he's not normally a fan of using cartoon characters to convey serious messages, but he believes the ads work because they catch the eye and cut to the chase. "The message is a real quick message: Where's Snoopy?" **AS**