



A Humane Society in Michigan Gives Donors Pets for the Holidays ...

... but they're *on* the gift boxes rather than in them

WHAT'S BETTER THAN AN UNEXPECTED, UNPLANNED PUPPY FOR CHRISTMAS?

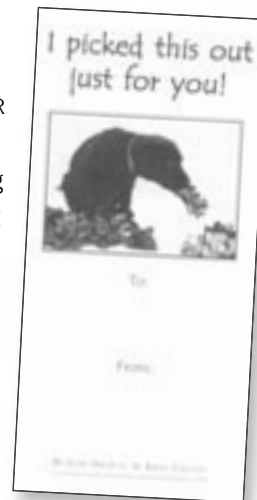
Well, a lot of things, but for those donors who felt like spreading a little puppy (and kitten) love last holiday season, the Humane Society of Kent County in Grand Rapids, Michigan, had a great option. As part of its holiday fundraising mailer, the shelter helped frantic gift-givers wrap their presents and promote shelter pets at the same time—by including gift tags bearing images of adoptable animals wearing Santa hats and playing with wide fabric ribbons.



The gift tags were enclosed in a card showing a picture of Maddie, a puppy the shelter had cared for, holding a gift bow in her mouth. Photos of other animals were inside the card, and accompanying text told recipients a little bit about each animal, informed them about upcoming holiday events at the shelter, and even managed a little bit of education when it came to the story of Cookie, one of the dogs pictured.

"Cookie, a sweet Doberman Pinscher, had been shuffled through 3 homes during his first two years before coming to the Humane Society," the card read. "While this lack of caregiver commitment would cause most dogs to have behavioral issues, Cookie maintained his affectionate and trusting disposition. Cookie was recently adopted into a new family, one that we hope he will have for life."

Showcasing Cookie, Maddie, and the other animals was made easier with the help of photographer



Jonathan Shuff, who donated his services for the project, says Tina Dee, the shelter's development and marketing director. "Since I came here, I've been trying to make sure all the graphics we use in our publications feature adoptable animals," says Dee. "They're the best images we have."

Donors think so, too. Not only was the fundraiser successful, Dee says, but many of the people who received the tags in the mail later called to see if any of the featured animals were still available for adoption. And the tags themselves were a hit with animal lovers in the community; donations rolled in accompanied by notes saying how cute they were. "The holiday greeting card/gift tag idea was so popular that we are planning on doing it again this year," says Dee. —CA



Humane Society of Kent County Annual Fund Campaign

Yes! I want to help you place pets in a home for the holidays!

I want to help provide food, shelter, and attention to the thousands of companion animals who need care in our community. I also want to help the Humane Society of Kent County continue its important programs in the areas of education, pet sterilization, pet-assisted therapy and fostering.

Please accept my gift of: \$150 \$100 \$75 \$50 \$25 Other _____

My check is enclosed Credit Card _____

Animal Sheltering
HSUS
2100 L St NW
Washington, DC 20037-1525

Phone: _____ E-Mail Address: _____

Please make any corrections above