

To: Dr. Erika Paterson
From: Connor Runnalls
Date: October 11, 2019
Subject: Report Proposal for Increasing Awareness of Small Humane Societies

Intended Audience/Reader

The intended audience of this comparative report would be the president of the Okanagan Humane society, both of which are small scale humane societies that rely solely on volunteers, fosters, and their donations. The report will be exploring ways in which awareness can be raised in order for these foundations to receive an increase in support. This increase would ideally allow for further support in the form of donations, volunteers, or fosters, and thus allow for more animals to be rescued.

Introduction

When thinking about animal welfare and prevention of cruelty, typically, the BCSPCA will be the first thought that comes to mind. The British Columbia Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is an incredible foundation (charity or organization) dedicated to rescuing and rehoming animals that are abused, neglected, and abandoned. In fact, across 36 shelters, a wildlife rehab centre and five hospitals, the BCSPCA helped 44,776 animals in 2018. In addition to aiding such a significant number of animals, the BCSPCA educates thousands of children per year on how they can help animals in their respective ways. Finally, the BCSPCA, under the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act, is the only humane society in BC who possesses the authority to carry out investigations and enforce the law with regards to cases involving cruelty to animals.

With all the BCSPCA does, they deserve a bulk of the credit for helping animals province-wide. However, they are merely a part of the solution to preventing animal cruelty. In B.C. alone, there are well over 120 humane societies dedicated to the protection of animals (including the 44 locations associated with the BC SPCA). These smaller, lesser-known societies are equally vital to the prevention of suffering of animals, particularly the strays roaming the streets.

Statement of the Problem

The problem in this matter is the lack of recognition received by smaller humane societies and the impact that could be made if with increased awareness in their role of aiding animals. The BCSPCA runs on a budget of 38 million dollars per year (all of which are through donations and grants), which go towards paying for the shelters, law enforcement, food, operations, and other expenses towards salaries and wages of persons responsible for the care of animals in the shelter. On average, from their 44 locations and 47,776 animals helped, averages out 1085 animals helped on \$860,000 (with the assumption that all is equal, which it isn't quite as simple realistically). In comparison, an organization such as the Okanagan Humane Society runs on an annual budget of \$200,000 and helped 1164 animals (and countless others through TNR programs) in 2018. Raising awareness for smaller organizations such as the Okanagan Humane Society (OHS) or Vancouver Orphaned Kitten Rescue Association (VOKRA) could lead to significant improvement in the welfare of animals.

Proposed Solution

Increasing awareness for charity foundations can be challenging, especially when limited funds are better suited for going towards helping animals as opposed to throwing events in efforts to fundraise. With that said, there are ways in which it can be affordable and realistic to raise awareness. Community events in which representatives from many different organizations come together in one location to provide information on their respective charity and how they are helping the cause would be a potential solution and overall less expensive with the combined effort. Another solution is through the improvement of marketing techniques that require little to no cost. This could be through social media, word of mouth, or other types of media reports such as the news.

Scope

To raise awareness for smaller charities, it is important to start by looking at their current methods of advertisement, contrasting with how larger humane societies advertise is a quality first step and then expanding from there. Thus, in this report, I will be researching and contrasting

- 1) Methods currently used by smaller charities
- 2) Methods used by larger charities
- 3) Analyzing where there is overlap, and where improvement can be made
- 4) How these improvements can be made with cost efficiency
- 5) How one would carry out these improvements to maximize advertisement capability

Methods

I will be obtaining my analyses through interview processes with the smaller charities such as the Okanagan Humane Society. Analyzing their methods of advertisement/awareness-raising techniques and contrasting this information with one another. In addition, I will be conducting a survey to those associated with the organization such as volunteers, donors, and general followers for preferences of advertisement/awareness-raising, as well as what they have noticed as effective methods of awareness raising. Once this data has been collected, it will be used to assess what is working, what isn't, and where improvements can be made.

Furthermore, there will be research done on literature with regards to advertising in general. This is with the intention of discovering/understanding patterns for what has traditionally worked in advertisement and how it can be modelled to enhance the animal welfare domain.

Qualifications

Animal welfare and protection is as much of a passion of mine, as it is engrained in my genetics. My mother is the current president of the Okanagan Humane Society, has many previous ties with the BCSCPA, as well as the foundation of numerous other charities. Along this path, I have observed the psychological toll running a welfare organization takes. I have taken part in observing and aiding in the running of fundraisers. I have helped take care of over ten animals, and fostered countless more.

Conclusion

The increased awareness of small scale charities can make a world of difference. The BCSPCA is fantastic at handling all of the heavy lifting for animal societies, and especially in the prevention of cruelty to animals. However, the SPCA can only do so much. That is where the smaller scale humane societies step up and make a difference in the animal world. Through programs such as fostering, Trap Neuter Release, and rescuing adoptable strays, the quantified sum of animals helped by these other small humane societies, is merely a fraction of the animals they have helped in prevention of them living a life of suffering. An increase of awareness may not be necessary, but the impact could be monumental.