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SHELTER MEDICINE TIMES

ISSUE 3 // VOLUME 5 OR 6. BUT WHO'S COUNTING?

CAPACITY FOR CARE BOOTCAMP

BY MANDY NEWKIRK

It's Magic Number week for the Bootcampers enrolled in the 2019 Fall class. With the help of UC Davis experts, shelters are crunching their data and finding the magic numbers that will expand their shelter capacity while saving both time and resources.

Next week they'll use those numbers to examine pathways and the efficiency of their current housing design. Dr. Denae Wagner, KSMP facility and housing design expert, will work with each shelter individually to make sure their housing units are being maximized while looking for easy ways to reduce the workload on kennel staff.

This is the third Bootcamp the Million Cat Challenge has hosted with the help of the extended UC Davis team, a program that has allowed nearly 30 shelters access to resources that were previously available only through private consultation. Now, by leveraging online learning platforms and video conferencing technology, shelters can learn how to identify their shelter's capacity, reduce length of stay, and elevate housing/welfare, all while networking with their peers in an intimate and protected learning enviroment.

We asked Phillip Zimmerman, graduate of Capacity for Care Bootcamp Spring 2019 to share his experience with other shelters interested in assessing their shelter's operations and learning more about Capacity for Care.

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IS YOUR "HOW" IN LINE WITH YOUR "WHY"?

SHELTER MEDICINE'S SHARED RESOURCE LIBRARY

WEBINAR WATCH

THE RESULTS ARE IN: IS RTF THE MOST EFFECTIVE CAT MANAGEMENT STRATEGY?

31 GIFTS WITH YOUR NAME ON THEM

HGTV FOR SHELTERS: 2020 HOUSING TRENDS ARE CHOICE, CHOICE AND CHOICE

AN INTERVIEW WITH THE DIRECTOR OF STOCKTON ANIMAL SERVICES, PHILLIP ZIMMERMAN

UPDATE: PHILLIP IS NOW LEADING SACRAMENTO'S FRONT STREET SHELTER. CONGRATS, PHILLIP!

HGTV HOME SHELTER

CLICK HERE FOR MORE GREAT HOUSING INFORMATION

HOTTEST DECORATING TRENDS FOR TODAY'S MODERN FELINE

Open Floor Plans

It's official: Small, Victorian-sized rooms are so last decade! Today's active cat demands larger floor plans with room to move. No surprise "As much as I can get!" was the most popular answer given by over 200 surveyed felines, but what does that boil down to when planning for more than a handful of guests? When you have the good fortune of starting from scratch, 11 sq/ft of floor space per singly housed cat is ideal for meeting basic needs (don't count shelves or raised space please). That said, most of us are working with the housing we inherited.

When designing on a dime, you can give your standard 2x2 cages a major upgrade by putting a hole in the wall. Adding a portal to an existing cage allows separation of the bathroom from the living room and adds a few extra feet to stretch and move. Not sure it matters that much? Imagine riding economy on a full flight circling the globe. Imagine that flight kept circling the globe for a week, or two, or three. You're not allowed out of your seat, even to use the restroom. On a scale from one to ten, how badly do you want the seat next to you to be free?

"If I had my doubts in the past I am convinced now that cat portals are one of the most important things we've done. While I do not have firm data at this time, I can share the experience whenever we closed portals this year we saw URI. Seeing is believing."
Tim Anderson
King County

Bold Door Dressings

Taking a page from the She Shed book, 2020 is all about daring patterns on our Hidey Holes. Cats love curtailments for the same reason we love doors: privacy! Curtailments provide the option to take a time out when needed (and who doesn't need a break every now and then?!). From the adopter's point of view, curtailments are a sign that your shelter keeps welfare front and center.

"Saving the world, one curtailment at a time!"
Dr. Jen Smallwood
Fear Free-certified DVM

Why not show off a little bit with coordinated patterns that are on trend and in season? Flex your design chops and warm up your shelter by trading out curtailments like throw pillows. Christmas and Hanukkah are right around the corner and we'd love it if you'd challenge your volunteers to decorate our Facebook page with pictures of your double-compartment housing dressed to the nines in dreidels and and elves.
Special prize package will be sent to the best-dressed shelter!

Curtailments are easy to make and cost next to nothing, but don't dismiss them as just a fun craft project. **Curtailments provide choice.** Help support appetite for those secret eaters; reduce stress and watch URI plummet. Those "cute" little curtains are a designer's secret weapon to slashing care costs.

Mindfulness in Design

According to Pinterest's trend reports, a 310% increase in the term "mindfulness" was seen in décor related searches this year. Mindful décor includes design elements that allow us to focus on our mental well-being through lifestyle practices like stretching, scratching and biscuit making. Cats waiting in a shelter don't need to be reminded to "live in the moment", they just need a little help from their host to make it possible. Remember to include plenty of enrichment opportunities to keep your feline mentally and physically healthy.

Modular Floorplans

Flex your quads! Portals can be installed to join two cages side by side, or they can join two stacked cages. The more portals, the more flexibility.

Wondering how to install portals? The popular series Rescue Rebuild made a video just for you: click here

WHAT'S THE DIFFERENCE ANYWAY?

TNR
TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN

- **Proactively trapping** cats in the community and giving them a ride to a s/n clinic
- Altering and vaccinating the cats
- Returning the cats to the environment from which they came, minus their reproductive bits
- Cats are presumably free-roaming, do not have a legal guardian and are not in the market for one.

SNR
SHELTER-NEUTER-RETURN

- Referring healthy cats that are brought to the shelter to a s/n clinic OR
- Altering and vaccinating the cats at the shelter
- **Returning** the cat to the environment from which they came, minus their reproductive bits
- Cats may be feral or friendly, but their body condition suggests they already have a life that's working for them and should be returned to it.

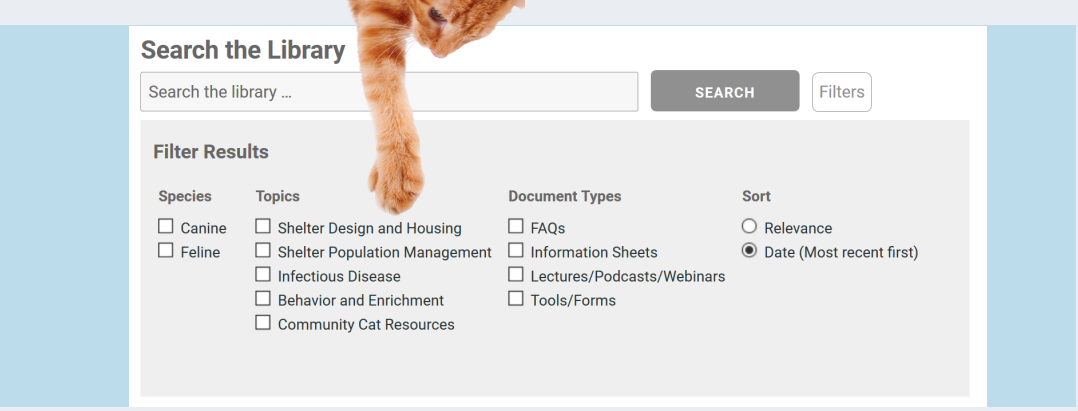
RTF
RETURN TO FIELD

- RTF and SNR are used interchangeably. Technically, SNR specifies the cat entered the shelter. and was neutered. RTF includes SNR and any other program that **restricts intake of animals not in need**.
- Both programs follow the same guiding principle: A healthy cat with good body condition already has a life that's working.
- Shelters should reserve adoption programs for cats in need of rehoming.
- We should not euthanize cats that have another option, such as being returned to where they were found.

Does TNR really work?

This University of Florida study has the answer.

CLICK HERE



A LIBRARY RESERVED FOR YOU

BY ALEISHA SWARTZ, DVM

Our website library is a treasured resource for shelter veterinarians, staff and volunteers alike. A joint venture of the UC Davis Koret and University of Wisconsin Shelter Medicine Programs,we are continually adding new content to the shared resource library (SRL) in the form of FAQs, Guidebooks, Information Sheets, and tools/sample forms. Our email inboxes are often full of great questions that would be a shame not to share, so we turn them into FAQs and post them. Recent FAQs include several questions on vaccination protocols in shelters, best practices in TNR clinics and one asking if goat milk is an adequate milk replacement for puppies and kittens.

And to better improve your searching experience, we added the ability to sort library resources by date. Just click the "Date Descending" sort dial when searching the library to find the most recent additions and stay up to date with the latest and greatest recommendations from the KSMP and UW teams.

This summer, shelters and rescues in the East Bay area of California experienced an outbreak of canine H3N2 influenza. Assistance was provided to the affected shelters and the outbreak was stopped before spreading into the community thanks to the generosity of Maddie's Fund, Pet Food Express and other organizations and individuals. Many questions about CIV were asked and answered during this time and are now published in the SRL for future reference. Things like, Should shelters be vaccinating for CIV? Will the CIV vaccine make dogs sick? And should my rescue require dogs be vaccinated for CIV before transferring from my local shelter? Do you have another question about CIV that is still unanswered? Send your questions about CIV or other topics by email to our team!

This handy resource can be valuable when in need of information to share with stakeholders in your community. One shelter director heard us speak at a conference and say that intake quarantine of healthy animals increases length of stay and contributes to crowding and increased illness. He contacted us and asked for a written resource to share with his shelter's board of directors to gain support for changing their policy. We are happy to report that the board accepted our recommendation to eliminate mandatory intake quarantine for healthy animals and they have since decreased their length of stay and increased their capacity to help more animals, all without increasing the risk of disease. Our final highlighted resource here is one of our favorite recommendations—which we recently realized did not even have a reference in the library! Check out this new information sheet to learn why Open Selection may be the easiest way to decrease length of stay in your shelters.

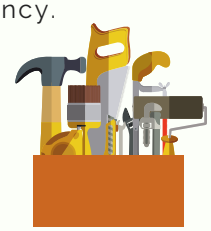
Two Truths and a Lie

1. The most effective way to manage feline URI is by reducing stress, often by providing more floor space.
2. Reducing the number of animals on the adoption floor often leads to more adoptions.
3. Most 8 week old kittens weigh 2 lbs.

Think you know? Check your answer on page 5

Add these to your toolbox!

Use these calculators to model different scenarios to help you hit your "just right" sweet spot where you have the housing you need to get every animal to the best possible outcome with the greatest possible efficiency.



- **Length of Stay Predictor**
- **Length of Stay Calculator**
- **Basic Animal Care Time Requirement Calculator**
- **Housing Number Calculator**

Q: Simon Sinek's TED Talk "How Great Leaders Inspire Action" is all about starting with your "Why". Can you guess how many views that talk has received?

Answer at the end of the article.

DO YOU KNOW YOUR WHY?

BY CINDY KARSTEN, DVM

What's an animal control service or animal control agency? It is an entity charged with responding to requests for help with animals ranging from wild animals, dangerous animals, or animals in distress. At least that's how Wikipedia defines us. Helping animals is a given. So too is helping people. But who decides what form that help will take and which programs will be top priorities given our limited resources? Whether we realize it or not, those decisions are ours to make. Animal welfare is a community service business. And like any business, it requires clarity, thoughtful planning and a firm grip on what works to ensure it succeeds — not only for its customers but also its employees. Lack of clarity can lead to unnecessary or even counterproductive effort; burnout is the inevitable result when we're always working beyond our capacity and suffering under the weight of an unrealistic load.

When we are working so hard and yet seem to be right where we always were, it's exhausting. Or maybe we do feel that things are improving but we're still wondering if it is always going to be this hard, then we must ask ourselves – Is there a better way?

So to reframe the original question: Why does our organization exist – what is our purpose?

Cont. on pg 4

HAIKU CORNER

(5) READ THE HAIKU HERE
(7) YOUR TURN! POST ON OUR FACEBOOK
(5) YOU: HAIKU HERO

We found a lost cat

That is what the people say

Lies! I was catnapped.

Post your RTF-inspired (theme changes every newsletter) Haiku on the Koret Shelter Medicine Program Facebook page (@sheltermedicine)

Weight a minute...

8 Weeks/2lbs, right?

This summer three healthy kittens that had been born at a vet clinic were surrendered to our local shelter.

All three were raised in the veterinary clinic and never went to a foster home. The kittens were dropped off at the shelter at exactly 8 weeks to the day.

Perfect little control group!

Weights in lbs
Kitten 1: 1.4
Kitten 2: 1.5
Kitten 3: 2.0

Only 1 in 3 kittens weighed 2lbs, which is what we'd expect.

The average age range for a 8 week old kitten is 1.4-2.6 lbs.

Why are so many shelters spaying/ neutering at 6 weeks, 1.5 lbs?

- **MCC Blog guest post by Dr. Chumzee Aziz**
- **Winn Feline Foundation Findings**
- **Dr. Bushby's webcast**
- **AVMA weighs in**

Once we truly understand our purpose, we can step back and look at how we do things. If our why and our how are not matching up and one is not leading to the other, then we know that we need to change. And while this change may seem impossible to make and even harder to explain to our communities, not changing is a thousand times worse. Not only ethically, but to ourselves and to the animals.

If I might offer an example of a somewhat recent paradigm shift that came from realigning our why to our how: let's talk about community, free roaming cats. Historically when someone was concerned about or annoyed by a free roaming cat, in most communities the response was to bring the cat to the shelter. This was our **how** (admit the cat to the shelter) in response to our **why** (we respond to requests for help with animals; we help animals in distress).

We did this for years without seeing any reduction in intakes or complaint calls. Our shelters grew overcrowded. Our national live release rate for cats was dismal. Reflection revealed that our why was mismatched with our how. We realized that, "we can do anything else and it will be at least equally ineffective and maybe, just maybe it will be better," for the people and the cats we served. So we looked to science and experience to find a how that fully honored our why – and henceforth the now common practice of Return to Field.

What is your shelter doing in an attempt to meet your why that is not creating the results that you want? If you take some time to reflect on this, we promise it will help you, your organization and those you serve.

A: 47.5M! Making it the third most popular Ted Talk of all time.

We heard gifts were your love language, so we're giving you a present every day this year.! **Visit** sheltermedicine.com/countdown-to-2020 for a present **every single day** of December!

Work With Us Here!

Are you interested in working for the UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program (KSMP)? We're looking to fill Veterinarian, Registered Veterinary Technician, and Animal Health Technician positions.

KSMP is a dynamic team dedicated to advancing shelter medicine as a veterinary specialty through research, specialty training and education, and performance of veterinary service in animal shelters. We are looking for energetic, self-motivated, and patient individuals to join our team at Yolo County Animal Services in Woodland, California.

The Associate Supervising Veterinarian will provide veterinary services to the shelter as well as participating in student training and clinical research to benefit shelter animals. The RVT and AHT will provide veterinary technical support and assist with the clinical training of fourth-year veterinary students during their shelter medicine and surgery rotation.

Utilize your skills to positively influence the lives of thousands of shelter animals, and help train the next generation of veterinary professionals in the vital field of shelter medicine and surgery.

Ready to join us? Please visit a link below for more details:

- Associate Supervising Veterinarian
- Shelter Medicine Lead Technician
- Small Animal Medicine and Surgery Support Technician

Or Join Our Friends in D.C.

Humane Rescue Alliance in Washington, D.C., the first unified organization in a major urban area to provide a full complement of animal welfare programs and services to the community, is looking to fill several veterinary positions, including:

- Spay/Neuter Veterinarian
- Veterinarian

SHOW TIMES

The Association of Shelter Veterinarians and The Association for Animal Welfare Advancement has launched an expansive Shelter Medicine webinar series. The collaboration is set to last through December, 2020,

Medical Aspects of Companion Animal Transport Programs
December 4, 2019

Learn about best practices in medical oversight of companion animal transport programs. This program has been approved for 1 hour of continuing education credit in jurisdictions that recognize RACE approval.

Population Medicine and Effective Animal Disaster Response & Recovery
January 22, 2020

We will address how shelters can use population medicine to ensure the welfare of animals while protecting public health during disasters. Pending RACE approval.

Reducing Infection: Updates in Feline URI Management
February 12, 2020

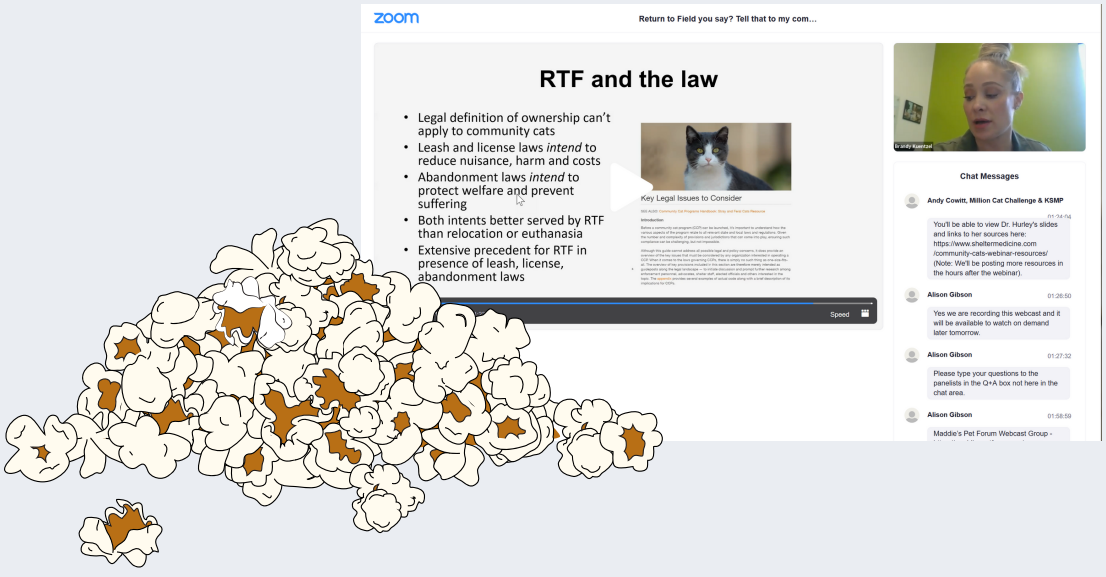
Learn about UC Davis Koret Shelter Medicine Program's recent research on environmental and population health risk factors for feline upper respiratory disease in animal shelters.

Reduce Fear, Anxiety & Stress in Shelter Animals with Fear Free
February 26, 2020

Learn how to clearly identify signs of fear, anxiety, stress and frustration in shelter animals in order to improve improve their overall welfare, mental health, and emotional well-being.

Return to Field you say? Tell that to my community/commissioners!
Watch on demand!

In this webinar hosted by Dr. Kate Hurley, we put Hurley in the hot seat and invited you to "come at her" with all your RTF questions, concerns, roadblocks and woes. How did Hurley and her panel of subject matter experts field your hardest hits? Click here to watch.



WATCH IT AGAIN

How to Turn Orphaned Kittens into Senior Cats

Survival statistics and novel treatments for orphan kitten diarrhea. The information is based on a recently published study evaluating significant associations between treatment interventions and survival of orphan shelter kittens with diarrhea.

Getting to Model Shelter: One Shelter's Journey to Completion of the ASV Guidelines

Learn how Humane Society Silicon Valley tackled over five hundred guidelines and significantly increased their life-saving capacity... and how you can, too! RACE-approved.

Foundations for Behavioral Well-Being

How to meet the five freedoms of animal welfare for all animals in your care in affordable, doable ways, such as housing, in-housing enrichment, out-of-housing time, and length of stay. RACE-approved.

The Leadership Challenge: Nobody in Vet School Told Me I Had to Lead to Succeed

Learn how to successfully lead multiple stakeholders and truly rise to the occasion to positively affect shelter leadership. Pending RACE approval.

INTERVIEW WITH A BOOTCAMPER

BY MANDY NEWKIRK

Why did you take Bootcamp?

Honestly? For several years as a new shelter manager I was constantly feeling critiqued in my position. I felt like people thought I could do more, better, faster. Either I was euthanizing too many animals or I wasn't euthanizing them fast enough. I was taking in too many animals or I wasn't taking in enough. I took Bootcamp because I honestly wasn't sure if I was doing my job well. I was immediately relieved to find out "Bootcamp" isn't nearly as militant as it sounds. In fact, the first thing I learned was how many things I was actually doing right. Which was good because I was already feeling a little defensive!

What surprised you about Bootcamp?

The lack of pressure! It wasn't at all "let's talk about what you are doing wrong" but instead it was, "Hey, let's take a look at this. Here are some suggestions we think could help. Try them out and see if they are right for your shelter and your community." There was no pressure. There was no, "You have to do this!" For example, putting kittens back in the community. In Bootcamp we discussed how we'd roll it out, but in reality we didn't even have to do that! We starting putting kittens back and our community just….got it. We had two people make a stink, We explained it to them, they understood and we moved on.

Did you find it hard to keep up with Bootcamp while still running your shelter and managing day to day operations?

No,I didn't think so. I thought it was the right amount of videos and stuff to read. Of course, I liked that you could watch it like I do my podcasts- 1.5x speed! I don't have time for "normal" speed. I also liked that everything was online and I could do it at my own pace. We had our call times as a group, but other than that you didn't have to wait for everyone else to progress.

What is one change you made that had the biggest impact?

Definitely diverting kittens back out into the community with finders or returning them to mama. I didn't run the numbers today, but last time I did we were in the 700s. That's more than 700 animals that didn't have to enter the shelter.

Did you try anything that was a no-go for your team?

It's not that it's a no-go, but we haven't been able to fully manage owner surrenders yet. We created a document and we've tried it, but we haven't been able to fully implement it. The few times we've tried it out it's been great. We've called to follow up with the person looking to surrender and they've had a change of heart or found a home in their circle. We know it works, we just need to formalize our process.

If you could choose one little "aha moment" from camp to share with the world, what would it be?

Allowing cages to be empty is okay. I've felt a lot of pressure to fill every cage, sometimes with more than one animal. I've learned part of staying within our capacity includes having cages reserved for those emergency cases when, say, we get a hoarding case or an owner is arrested or dies. There's a peace in walking through the shelter every day and seeing a few empty cages and knowing the very best we can and should do does not include busting at the seams. If something bad happens, we can manage. Mentally—and optically—it's a relief.

What's the hardest thing about making change?

It's so hard not to focus on the naysayers and the keyboard warriors. Knowing that there are organizations out there, like UC Davis, that really support the work you do….just knowing that there are people that have your back and understand that not every shelter is the same, not every community is the same. It's just huge. It's really huge, because this job is hard. And if you just focus on all of that, it'll just pull you down. It'll literally suck the life out of you.

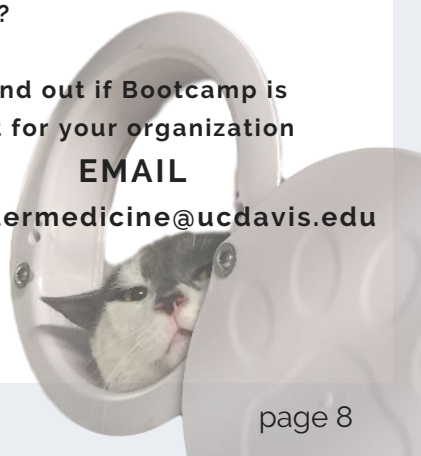
What would you say to someone thinking of taking Bootcamp?

Do it! There's always room for improvement in every organization. So many of the things discussed are easy, common sense strategies. The majority are really easy to implement. Some are harder. obviously, but there's a lot of really easy wins.

Do you think your shelter could benefit from Capacity Care Bootcamp?

Interested in joining with a partner shelter to get in step?

To find out if Bootcamp is right for your organization

EMAIL

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