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Athens Canine Rescue Public Relations Campaign Proposal

I. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Athens Canine Rescue was founded in 1990 with the goal to rescue abandoned animals from animal shelters and find them permanent homes. The organization relies on a network of foster homes, community donations and volunteers. The proposed public relations campaign has the goals of increasing awareness about the importance of spaying and neutering pets and increases the amount of outside donations received by Athens Canine Rescue. The campaign specifies objectives, strategies and tactics to support the goals of the organization based on in depth research and analysis. This plan seeks to accomplish goals through event-planning, increased attendance at events, and an increase in community donations. This proposal is implemented from January 2013 to December 2013. Its total budget is \$3,758.45.

II. SITUATION ANALYSIS

A. Organizational Factors

1. History

- a. *When Established*: Karen Covi established Athens Canine Rescue in 1990.
- b. *Why Established*: Athens Canine Rescue was established to help abandoned and stray dogs in the Athens community find a permanent home with the help of a network of foster homes.
- c. *Service/Product Provided by Organization*: Athens Canine Rescue provides the opportunity for abandoned and stray dogs to find a home. The organization relies on a network of foster homes to house the dogs until they are adopted. It holds adoption events each month and provides an Education Outreach program for the community. The Athens Canine Rescue Education Outreach program makes visits to classrooms to inform students about how to safely meet a dog, raises awareness about the overpopulation of dogs and how to help homeless dogs, visits to children's birthday parties for education, and visits to retirement homes for presentations or canine therapy. As a member of the Athens Area Rescue Foundation, Athens Canine Rescue participates in mobile spay/neuter clinics in the community and Adoptapoolza, a mega adoption day in Athens with other local rescue organizations.

2. Current Standing

- a. *Gross income*: The organization would prefer to keep this information private.
- b. *Number of employees, volunteers, members, etc.*: Athens Canine Rescue is organized under a board of directors with six members. Bly Bain is the president of the board. The board positions include a treasurer, foster coordinator, adoption coordinator, event coordinator, and a publicity and public relations coordinator. The number of foster homes varies depending on how many active fosters there are and how many dogs are in the system. The maximum number of dogs Athens Canine Rescue has decided to have in the system at one time 20 dogs. The number of volunteers varies depending on events that the organization is hosting and the event's need for volunteers. There are normally about two or three volunteers at adoption events.
- c. *Reputation in community*: Athens Canine Rescue's reputation in the community is overall positive. Some misconceptions are that all animal rescue organizations work together. Athens Canine Rescue is a separate organization. There is some tension when ACR cannot rescue a dog that is brought to the organization's attention from an outside source for any reason, such as lack of space or the dog is not as adoptable as another dog may be. Athens Canine Rescue's adoption process is also a selective process and adoption applications are first come, first served, which may deter some people.
- d. *Competitors, opponents*: Athens Canine Rescue has the same goal as some other organizations in the community. These organizations include the animal controls in Athens and surrounding counties, the Madison Oglethorpe Animal Shelter, Athens Area Humane Society and Pawtropolis Helping Paws Rescue.
- e. *Significant publics*:
 - i. *Primary/Secondary*: Primary adoption publics are adults in the Athens area. Athens Canine Rescue is not specific about demographics. The organization targets families, singles, older people and younger people of any racial or religious background. Animal lovers and people looking for a dog are a primary target audience. Specific events and fundraisers are targeted towards specific

interest groups, such as runners for a 5K race.

Secondary audiences include current dog owners and families that have previously adopted a dog from Athens Canine Rescue or other rescue organizations. The secondary publics influence primary publics to learn more about rescuing a pet from a rescue organization.

ii. *Internal/external*: The internal audience consists of the board of directors, volunteers and network of foster home families. External audiences include the Athens area, potential adoption families and donors, and current dog-owners in the community.

3. Organizational Structures

a. *Centralization*: The board of directors makes the majority of the decisions. The president of the board, Bly Crane, will make executive decisions when agreement cannot be made. The board will consult a professional if they feel it is necessary to make the right decision.

b. *Formalization*: Athens Canine Rescue has a formal structure. Each board member has a specific responsibility. The president of the board makes executive decisions and runs the organization with the help of other board members. The treasurer handles donations, taxes and accounting needs. The foster coordinator works with the foster homes to ensure the dogs are well taken care of. The adoption coordinator handles adoption applications and plans adoption events. The event coordinator is in charge of outreach and fundraising events in the community. The publicity and public relations coordinator is in charge of reaching out to the public and contacting media outlets about events.

4. PR/Communication Activities

a. *Personnel/resources*: Athens Canine Rescue has a publicity and public relations coordinator who is in charge of communication with the public and the media about the organization and events. The resources that Athens Canine Rescue uses to connect with the community are its website, social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter, a Listserv for volunteers and donors, a weekly radio spot and a monthly newsletter. When there is an event media releases are sent to local newspapers, such as the Athens Banner-Herald. Each Athens Canine Rescue dog is cross-listed on PetFinder.com. At events, such as adoptions or fundraising events, an information book on the organization and all available dogs is provided. Displays, fliers and posters are also used for promotion and advertising.

b. *Role of PR staff*: The PR coordinator is a member of the Athens Canine Rescue board and takes part in decision making. The PR coordinator makes the decisions regarding publicity and promotion of events and the organization. Public relations has a priority in the organization because it is the primary way by which people in the organization become aware of Athens Canine Rescue and events.

c. *Past, ongoing PR campaigns/activities*: In the past, Athens Canine Rescue has hosted a seasonal 10K fundraising race. In February, Athens Canine Rescue partnered with local businesses to host the Puppy Love Valentine's Day Raffle where people could enter to win a special Valentine's Day prize package for two. Adoption events are hosted each month. Athens Canine Rescue partners with other rescue organizations to host spay and neuter clinics throughout the year. Each week, Magic 102.1, an Athens radio station, features the Athens Canine Rescue Dog of the Week on air. There are also seasonal safety and pet tips posted on the website and blog.

B. Organizational Environment

1. Trend Analysis:

The current issues within Athens Canine Rescue are lack of funding and a large number of stray and abandoned dogs in the community. The recent economic downturn has had an influence in determining how much money people can donate. The overpopulation of dogs in animal shelters is a community issue that affects Athens Canine Rescue and how much they can do to help. However, pet adoption from rescue organization over private breeders has increased in recent years. Kill rates in animal shelters have also seen a decline.

C. Needs Assessment (SWOT Analysis)

1. Strengths & Opportunities:

Athens Canine Rescue is a cause that everyone can support because mostly everyone wants to help animals in need. There is a lot of community support and good core group of committed volunteers. The organization has learned limitations and knows how far to take something when an issue arises. The organization has an online store to sell promotional merchandise. It also keeps contact with past adopters. Opportunities for ACR include spay and neuter education in the community, establishing a way to receive online on the website, finding a way to separate Athens Canine Rescue from other rescue organizations in the community and promoting non-dog related events to the community at large.

2. Weaknesses, Threats & Problems:

Athens is a transient town – people move in and out of the area often, which can make it hard to keep long-term volunteers. Being an Athens Canine Rescue volunteer can be difficult and it takes a lot of training to properly take care of the dogs. It can be difficult to say “no” to a dog and to not let emotions get involved when dealing with a living thing. Athens Canine Rescue does not have a physical shelter so people cannot come visit a dog anytime they want. Most problems are specific and deal with a certain dog or internal logistics of the organization, such as government paperwork. A threat to the organization can be stereotypes that people have about certain breeds of dogs that can affect how adoptable a dog is. Breeders, pet stores and other rescue organizations in the area are competition to Athens Canine Rescue.

D. Core Problem Definition

1. Problem: The problem that Athens Canine Rescue is facing is a community issue that concerns pet overpopulation in Athens and a lack of knowledge and awareness of the benefits of spaying and neutering pets.

2. History and cause of the problem: This has been a growing problem over the years with euthanasia rates in animal shelters increasing as the population has increased, leading to an increase in animals that could not all be found homes. The cause of the problem was a lack of low-cost sterilization options, apathy towards spaying and neutering, misconceptions about spaying and neutering becoming popular, and lack of knowledge of the benefits of spaying and neutering.

3. Importance and potential impact of problem: Pet overpopulation and failing to have pets spayed and neutered can have a major impact on the community. As the stray and abandoned number of animals increases animal shelters and rescue organizations will reach max capacity and will not have the means to help every animal, leading to preventable euthanasia of many animals solely because there is no room or funding available to take care of them. The impact of

not spaying and neutering can also affect the animal. Animals that are not spayed and neuter tend to be more aggressive and have more health problem.

4. Duration: The duration of this problem is ongoing and has the potential to keep growing if pet-owners are not responsible and don't get their pets spayed and neutered. While adoption from rescue organizations is increasing and the kill rate in shelters is decreasing, these things are occurring at a slow rate and it is not likely a major long-term change will be seen in the near future.

E. Theoretical Framework

The theories that will be the basis of the campaign and used to accomplish the desired outcome are Sherif and Hovland's Social Judgment Theory and Grunig's Situational Theory of Publics.

Sherif and Hovland's Social Judgment Theory is a persuasion theory that focuses on how an individual's judgment affects internal processing with relation to a communicated message. It is an explanatory method that details when persuasive messages are most likely to succeed with the main objective being attitude change. By applying this theory Athens Canine Rescue can determine what conditions are necessary to make a person change their opinion on something. The issue that Athens Canine Rescue is seeking to change the public's opinion on is spaying and neutering. To do this they will need to determine the message receiver's level of involvement, the structure of the message stimulus, and the credibility of the source. These circumstances will help determine the conditions that Athens Canine Rescue should share their message under so that it will be most effective in changing people's attitudes.

Grunig's Situational Theory of Publics proposed that publics could be identified and classified by how aware of the problem they are and the extent to which they do something about the problem. This theory tells when communications aimed at people are most likely to be effective. It will help Athens Canine Rescue determine if the public is aware of the spay and neuter issue in the community, and which of those people are information seekers and the most likely to respond well to the campaign. By applying this theory, Athens Canine Rescue can know what groups in the community to target the most.

F. Focus Statement

Athens Canine Rescue is a network of foster homes in Athens with the goal to help stray and abandoned dogs that are trainable and adoptable find a permanent home. At any given time Athens Canine Rescue can have 20 dogs in its system and at least 20 volunteer foster homes. As a rescue organization it is facing the issue of lack of funding and overpopulation in animal control shelters. ACR cannot take in every dog in need from animal control, but strive to increase pet-owner responsibility and raise awareness about the importance of spaying and neutering pets.

III. RESEARCH

Target Audience Research:

For the campaign to be successful, target audience research must be conducted to determine their awareness and knowledge about spaying and neutering, as well as their knowledge about Athens Canine Rescue. This will be done primarily with surveys because they are a more efficient and cost-effective way to reach a large number of individuals in the Athens community. Surveys will consist of a number of questions that will ask about spay and neuter knowledge, opinions on spaying and neutering, and awareness about Athens Canine Rescue. The

survey will be given out at the Athens animal control shelter, at Athens Canine Rescue adoption events, partnering veterinarian offices and online via the Athens Canine Rescue website. The data from this survey will help Athens Canine Rescue determine what aspects of spaying and neutering they need to promote based on current target audience knowledge and allow the organization to become aware of their current presence in the community.

There will also be a volunteer and donation survey mailed to current and potential Athens Canine Rescue donors. The data from this survey will help determine what improvements Athens Canine Rescue can make to increase donations, volunteers and adoptions, as well as identify new donors and potential volunteers or foster home families.

Organizational Research:

To help properly promote Athens Canine Rescue organizational research will need to be conducted. Interviews will be conducted with two members of the ACR board and with one foster home family. The board member interviews will give insight into the history, structure, goals and needs of the organization. The interview with an ACR foster family will give insight into how the organization interacts with volunteers, how it can improve communication and volunteer experiences, and how it can gain more volunteers. Organizational research interviews will also help to determine the significance of the core problems this plan will be addressing, which are community awareness of spaying and neutering and lack of donations.

IV. TARGET AUDIENCE(S)

A. Primary Target Audiences:

The primary target audiences for spay and neuter awareness include current pet-owners in the Athens community and potential adoptive families or individuals. Current pet-owners can be families or individuals that already own a pet, with an emphasis on younger people between the ages 18-25 and the Hispanic population in Athens. These target groups lack awareness, transportation or financial means to get their pet spayed and neutered, but also have potential to have the greatest impact on the pet overpopulation problem.

B. Secondary Target Audiences:

The secondary target audiences are families that have adopted in the past from a rescue organization and already have a spayed or neutered pet, other rescue organizations and the Athens-Clarke County animal control. These groups already have knowledge of spay and neuter benefits and are likely to influence others to rescue a dog and inform friends on the benefits of why they should have their pet spayed or neutered.

V. PROGRAM OF ACTION

A. Campaign Theme, Logo

The theme of the campaign is “Paws, Spay and Neuter”. The campaign is meant to increase knowledge and awareness among the Athens pet-owner community about the benefits of spaying and neutering pets. The goal is to make people stop and think about being a responsible pet-owner for the benefit of their pet and the community as a whole and to encourage pet-owners to get their pet spayed or neutered.

The logo of the campaign will remain the same as the current Athens Canine Rescue logo. The logo is a black and white spotted dog in front of a red cross resembling the symbol of a

hospital or aid. “Athens Canine Rescue” is written in a downward-curved way at the top of the picture and “please spay and neuter” is written in an upward-curved way at the bottom of the picture in a sans-serif font.

B. Statement of Goals and Objectives

- 1. Goal 1:** To raise awareness and increase knowledge about spaying and neutering pets.
 - A. Objective 1.** To increase awareness by 25 percent about the benefits of spaying and neutering pets among the pet-owning community of Athens by December 2013.
 - B. Objective 2:** To increase spay/neuter clinics held throughout the community to six events per year (one every other month) within the next year.
- 2. Goal 2:** To attract more young people and members of the Hispanic population in Athens at spay/neuter events.
 - A. Objective 1.** To increase the attendance of young adults who are pet-owners in Athens at spay/neuter events by 20 percent by December 2013
 - B. Objective 2.** To increase the attendance of members of the Hispanic population who are pet-owners in Athens at spay/neuter events by 20 percent by December 2013.
- 3. Goal 3.** Gain additional monetary and supply donations from the public.
 - A. Objective 1:** To increase monetary donations by creating an additional way that potential donors and volunteers in Athens can give to Athens Canine Rescue by July 2013.
 - B. Objective 2:** To obtain two local business drop-off sites for potential donors and volunteers to drop-off supplies for Athens Canine Rescue by July 2013.

C. Strategies and Tactics

Strategy 1: Have an awareness day with current spay/neuter partnerships to target pet-owners in the community.

Rationale: This strategy will support the first goals and objectives by helping to increase the reach and awareness of spay/neuter events, different low-cost option, benefits of spaying and neutering and increase the demand for spay/neuter events.

Tactic 1: Decide and reserve a location for the event.

Tactic 2: Create promotional material and invitation for the event.

Tactic 3: Confirm sponsors and mobile spay/neuter clinic for the event.

Tactic 4: Organize event during National Spay and Neuter Awareness Month (February)

Strategy 2: Target young people via social media.

Rationale: This strategy supports the second goal’s objective to increase the attendance of young adults who are pet-owners in Athens at spay/neuter events by 20 percent by the end of the year. Younger people receive most of their information via the Internet and social media.

Tactic 1: Sponsor Facebook ads about spay/neuter events and Athens Canine Rescue.

Tactic 2: Start a “PawsSpayNeuter” hashtag on Twitter when events are coming up and when posting spay/neuter facts.

Strategy 3: Create a way for dogs and owners without transportation to get to spay/neuter events.

Rationale: This strategy supports the second goal’s objective to increase the attendance of members of the Hispanic population who are pet-owners in Athens at spay/neuter events by 20 percent by the end of the year. The main reason that member of the Hispanic population cannot get to events is because they live too far away and do not have a car.

Tactic: Create a transportation system that is run by volunteers and with shuttle bus donations from local churches or businesses that will pick up dogs and their owners before an event and then take them home after the event is over.

Strategy 4: Build relationships with local animal and pet-related businesses in the community.

Rational: This strategy supports the third goal’s objective to obtain two business local drop-off sites for potential donors and volunteers to drop-off supplies for Athens Canine Rescue by July 2013.

Tactic 1: Send personal letters to business owners explaining Athens Canine Rescue’s mission and asking for their support and willingness to be the location of a donation drop-off site for Athens Canine Rescue.

Tactic 2: Personally go to businesses and speak with the owner to gain their support and to determine their willingness to be the location of a donation drop-off site for Athens Canine Rescue.

Tactic 3: List drop-off site businesses on the Athens Canine Rescue website and list business as a sponsor on the website and on printed materials.

Strategy 5: Create a way to make monetary donations online.

Rationale: This strategy supports the third goal’s objective to increase monetary donations by creating an additional way that potential donors and volunteers in Athens can give to Athens Canine Rescue by April 2013.

Tactic: Create a PayPal plug-in on the website where people can log in with a PayPal account to make a monetary donation of any determined amount to Athens Canine Rescue quickly and securely.

VI. CAMPAIGN BUDGET

Tactic	In Charge	Items Required	Number of Items	Cost per Item	Total
Event Paws, Spay and Neuter Awareness Event	Athens Canine Rescue	30x30 tent	1	\$585.00	\$585.00
		Stage	1	\$32.00	\$32.00
		Inflatable dog bounce house	1	\$165.00	\$165.00
		Tables	10	\$8.00	\$80.00
		Chairs	40	\$1.75	\$70.00
	FedEx Office	Event posters (24x36)	2	\$42.49	\$84.98

		Banner	1	\$89.99	\$89.99
		Raffle tickets	300	\$0.10	\$30.00
		Registration information packets	70	\$0.20	\$14.00
	Anne Yarbrough Photography	Photographer	1	\$100.00	\$100.00
Advertising and Promotion	FedEx Office	Color posters (11x17)	100	\$2.50	\$250.00
		Brochure	300	\$1.25	\$375.00
		Postcards	500	\$0.80	\$500.80
	Athens Canine Rescue	Facebook Ads	One year	\$20 per week	\$1,040
10% Contingency					\$341.67
TOTAL					\$3,758.45

VII. CALENDAR

	Jan.	Feb.	March	April	May	June	July	Aug.	Sept.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.
Print promotional materials for event (brochures, fliers, etc.)	■											
Post fliers around Athens	■	■										
Tweet and post relevant content on social media	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Draft donation/sponsorship letter	■	■										
Mail out donation/sponsorship letter and visit businesses	■	■	■	■	■	■	■					
Obtain local business donation drop off sites	■	■	■	■	■	■	■					
Evaluation of tactics												■

VIII. EVALUATION

Goal 1

Objective 1: To increase awareness by 25 percent about the benefits of spaying and neutering pets among the pet-owning community of Athens by July 2013.

Evaluation: To determine if this objective were successful I would evaluate the ACR event attendance, number inquiries received about spaying/neutering, number of surgeries performed at local clinics, and also send out a follow-up survey about the community's spay/neuter knowledge.

Objective 2: To increase spay/neuter clinics held throughout the community to six events per year (one every other month) within the next year.

Evaluation: In one year look back and determine if six events were held over the course of the year and determine if there was a need for the spay/neuter clinics and if they were successful.

Goal 2

Objective 1: To increase the attendance of young adults who are pet-owners in Athens at spay/neuter events by 20 percent by December 2013.

Evaluation: To evaluate if this objective was successful the executive board would look at the amount of young people (ages 18-26) who attended the main spay and neuter awareness event, as well as the mobile spay/neuter clinic at other times during the campaign timeframe, compared to previous events. This would be determined by the information that attendees at each event will be asked to provide.

Objective 2: To increase the attendance of members of the Hispanic population who are pet-owners in Athens at spay/neuter events by 20 percent by December 2013.

Evaluation: To evaluate if this objective was successful the executive board members would compare the amount of people from the Hispanic population who attended the main spay and neuter awareness event, as well as the mobile spay/neuter clinic at other times during the campaign timeframe, compared to previous events. This would be also determined by the information that attendees at each event will be asked to provide.

Goal 3

Objective 1: To increase monetary donations by creating an additional way that potential donors and volunteers in Athens can give to Athens Canine Rescue by July 2013.

Evaluation: To evaluate this measure the treasurer will look at the amount of online donations made and if donations saw an increase in comparison to previous years in the time after the online donation form was made available.

Objective 2: To obtain two local business drop-off sites for potential donors and volunteers to drop-off supplies for Athens Canine Rescue by July 2013.

Evaluation: To evaluate if this measure was successful the executive board would compare the number of donations during the specific time of year to the same time of the previous year to determine if there was an increase in donations.

IX. REFERENCES

II. Situation Analysis

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III. – VIII.

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P.O. Box 7064 Athens, GA 30604

www.athenscaninerescue.com

Athens Canine Rescue Research Questionnaire

The purpose of this questionnaire is to determine the knowledge of community members about spaying/neutering pets and its importance. It is also to determine the community's knowledge about Athens Canine Rescue and services offered.

Participation in this survey is voluntary. All responses are confidential and will only be used for proper analysis by Athens Canine Rescue. Your participation as a survey respondent is greatly appreciated.

1. Are you a pet owner?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

2. What is your ethnicity?
 - a. African-American
 - b. Caucasian
 - c. Hispanic
 - d. Native American
 - e. Asian
 - f. Other: _____

3. What is your yearly household salary?
 - a. Less than \$30,000
 - b. \$31,000 - \$50,000
 - c. \$51,000 – \$80,000
 - d. \$81,000 or above

4. How many dogs and/or cats are in your household?
 - a. 0 - 1
 - b. 2 - 3
 - c. 3 - 4
 - d. 5 +

5. What is your age group?
 - a. Under 18
 - b. 18-25
 - c. 26-45
 - d. 46-60
 - e. Over 60

6. Is your pet spayed/neutered?

- a. Yes
- b. No

7. Have you ever had a spayed/neutered pet?

- a. Yes
- b. No

8. On a scale of 0 to 10, how much of a priority should it be for people to have their pets spayed and neutered?

No priority											High Priority
0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	

9. Are you aware of the multiple benefits of spaying and neutering such as reduction of cancer, less homeless pets, and less dog fighting?

- a. Yes, I was aware
- b. No, I was not aware

10. Were you aware that about 25 percent of animal control intakes are euthanized In Athens-Clarke County each year?

- a. Yes, I was aware
- b. No, I was not aware

11. Do you feel that is it too expensive to get a pet spayed or neutered?

- a. Yes, it is too expensive
- b. No, it is a reasonable price
- c. I don't know

12. If there were a low-cost or free option available to have your pet spayed or neutered, how likely is it that you would use that option?

- 1. Very likely
- 2. Somewhat likely
- 3. Neither likely or unlikely
- 4. Somewhat unlikely
- 5. Very unlikely

13. Would you support a state law that requires all animal shelters to spay/neuter an animal before it can be adopted?

- a. Yes
- b. No

14. If your pet had an unexpected litter do you have the means to take care of that litter?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
15. What do you feel is the main reason people do not spay/neuter their pets?
- a. Cost
 - b. Inconvenient/lack of transportation
 - c. Don't think it is important
 - d. Feel that their pet will become depressed or gain weight
 - e. Believe it is dangerous for their pet
 - f. Want children to witness the miracle of birth
 - g. Other. Please specify: _____
16. Have you ever heard of Athens Canine Rescue?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
17. Would you ever adopt a dog from a rescue organization?
- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Maybe
18. Were you aware that Athens Canine Rescue hosts mobile spay/neuter clinics throughout the year?
- a. Yes
 - b. No

Your feedback is important and helps us to improve our organization and the Athens-Clarke County pet community. Thank you for your participation in our survey!



P.O. Box 7064 Athens, GA 30604

www.athenscaninerescue.com

Memo

To: Leslie Trier, Event Coordinator, Athens Canine Rescue

From: Megan Deese

Date: April 8, 2013

Re: Athens Canine Rescue Awareness Event, February 2013

With the Athens Canine Rescue Paws, Spay and Neuter event rapidly approaching, I wanted to give you an update on the planning process and explain how the event will go. The purpose of this event is to raise awareness about the pet overpopulation issue facing animal shelters and to inform dog owners and the local community about the importance of spaying and neutering pets.

Anticipated Audience

The event has been promoted throughout the community and past Athens Canine Rescue adopter and volunteers had been invited to attend. Based on past event attendance, we expect to have about 50-60 people from the community, 15 volunteers and 30-40 dogs in attendance.

Setup

The setup will begin at 11 a.m. on the day of the event, two hours before the event starts. Volunteers will check to make sure the large tent, stage, food, raffle prize table and inflatables are set up and functioning properly. The Atlanta Area Humane Society and Athens Regional Spay and Neuter Center veterinarians will be responsible for setting up the mobile spay and neuter center. The order of the event is as follows:

- Registration
- Welcome
- Mobile spay and neuter clinic open
- Band will begin playing
- Food served
- Raffle prizes announced
- Closing

Food sponsors will be responsible for setting up their own booth and preparing food to be

served to guests. At registration for the event, each dog owner will be given an event with information from sponsors, an Athens Canine Rescue t-shirt and a treat bag for dogs.

Contingency plan: In the event that there is bad weather or the location is no longer available for use, the event will be moved to the gymnasium of the Milledge Avenue Baptist Church located up the street from Memorial Park. The mobile spay and neuter clinic will still be outside.

Advanced Publicity

A press release and media advisory will be sent to the Athens Banner Herald for coverage two weeks prior to the event. In addition, the Paws, Spay and Neuter event will be promoted on the homepage of the Athens Canine Rescue website and through social media websites, such as Facebook and Twitter. Promotional fliers will be posted around the community and postcard invitations were mailed out to residents.

Media Coverage

Three days before the event, a follow-up email will be sent to confirm that the invited media will be attending the event. In addition, starting at the beginning of the month Athens Canine Rescue will post Facebook with facts about spaying and neutering and that include a link to the event page on the Athens Canine Rescue website. The hashtag #PawsSpayandNeuter will be used on Twitter.

Documentation

Anne Yarborough, a local pet photographer, will be the main photographer for the event. The Athens Canine Rescue public relations coordinator will be taking pictures throughout the day and posting them to Facebook and Twitter. Bly Bain, president of Athens Canine Rescue, should be live tweeting throughout the event. The main photo opportunities to be captured include guests arriving with their dogs, the mobile spay and neuter clinic, raffle prize table, informational materials and Bly Bain giving her welcome speech. An Athens Canine Rescue volunteer will record the event with their personal video equipment and will create a video to be posted on the website after the event.

Timetable

Please review the timetable for the day of the event below.

If you have any additional question or need more information prior to the event, please feel free to contact me via phone or email.

Feb. 26, 2013

11 a.m.	Athens Canine Rescue volunteers arrive to set up for event.
11:30 a.m.	Adoption volunteers, foster families and ACR dogs arrive.
12 p.m.	Atlanta Area Humane Society arrives with mobile spay/neuter clinic. Athens Canine Rescue board greets them and helps prepare the clinic.
1 p.m.	Event begins. Guests and pets begin to arrive. Food booths are prepared to serve guests.
1:15 p.m.	Bly Bain delivers welcome speech.
1:30 p.m.	Atlanta Area Humane Society introduction and explanation of mobile spay/neuter clinic.
1:40 p.m.	Local Athens band line-up begins.
1:45 p.m.	Mobile spay/neuter clinic begins working with patients.
2 p.m.	First round of raffles prize winners are announced.
3 p.m.	Second round of raffle prize winners are announced.
4 p.m.	Event ends. Bly Bain thanks everyone for coming and directs guests to where they can get more information about Athens Canine Rescue. Foster families and dogs leave.
4 p.m. – 5 p.m.	Clean up and break down.

Post Evaluation

- *Feb. 27, 2013* — Post pictures and video footage from event on website and social media websites. Thank everyone who came to the event on social media websites.
- *Feb. 28, 2013* — Send formal thank you notes to community sponsors, participants, volunteers and those who made donations. Follow up with dog owners who participated in the mobile spay/neuter clinic.
- *Feb. 29, 2013* — Write up evaluation report and hold executive board debriefing meeting. Discuss and review the evaluation report, and make suggestions for changes to make for the next event.



P.O. Box 7064 Athens, GA 30604

www.athenscaninerescue.com

MEDIA ADVISORY

ATHENS CANINE RESCUE TO HOST SPAY AND NEUTER AWARENESS EVENT

ATHENS, Ga., Feb 10. 2013 – Athens Canine Rescue will host its first annual Paws, Spay and Neuter awareness event on Feb. 26, 2013. The event is being held on World Spay Day during National Spay/Neuter Awareness month to promote the importance of spaying and neutering pets. The event also aims to raise awareness about the pet overpopulation issue facing animal shelters. Athens Canine Rescue president Bly Bain will give a speech at the event.

WHERE: Memorial Park

93 Gran Ellen Drive

Athens, GA 30606

WHEN: Feb. 26, 2013 from 1 p.m. to 4 p.m.

PHOTO-OP: President of Athens Canine Rescue, Bly Bain, will give a speech at 1:30 p.m. and will meet with press immediately after. Press is welcome to stay until 4 p.m.

WHO: Athens Canine Rescue is hosting the event in partnership with the Atlanta Area Humane Society and Athens Regional Spay and Neuter Center for the local dog owners in the Athens community.

WHY: The event is being held in conjunction with Spay/Neuter Awareness Month and World Spay Day. The event is aimed at informing dog owners and the local community about the importance of spaying and neutering pets.

Contact: Megan Deese
770-595-3052
meg.deese@gmail.com

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Client Speech

Bly Bain, the president of Athens Canine Rescue will deliver this three-minute speech at the start of the Athens Canine Rescue Paws, Spay & Neuter awareness event to be held at Memorial Park on Feb. 26, 2013 from 1 p.m. until 4 p.m. The purpose of the speech is to inform the attendees of the importance of spaying and neutering their pets. The intended audience is the people that are in attendance at the event. Attendees will mostly be pet owners in the Athens community and Athens Canine Rescue volunteers. There will be approximately 50-70 attendees along with their pets, five veterinarians and 10 volunteers.

Bly Bain's three-minute speech to be given at the Paws, Spay and Neuter event on Feb. 26, 2013 at 1:15 p.m.

Welcome to the Athens Canine Rescue's first Paws, Spay & Neuter event!
(quick pause for response) Thank you all so much for coming out today! Athens Canine Rescue is excited to be hosting this event in conjunction with World Spay Day during Spay/Neuter Awareness Month.

For those of you who don't know who we are, Athens Canine Rescue is a nonprofit organization in the Athens area that rescues adoptable dogs and places them in a network of foster homes until they can be permanently adopted. We want to help as many dogs as possible find loving homes. Spaying and neutering is a subject matter very close to our hearts and mission as an organization.

We are facing a problem in our community concerning the animals that hold a special place in our heart. The Athens-Clarke County Animal Control shelter is at its max capacity. There are more intakes than adoptions, and many dogs are at risk of being euthanized if they are not rescued in a timely manner. Each year there are more than three million animals euthanized in shelters across the United States. In Athens-Clarke County alone about 25 percent of intakes at animal control are euthanized. Our hope is that one day this number will be zero.

Rescue organizations like Athens Canine Rescue work closely with animal shelters and concerned citizens to help reduce the number of animals euthanized, but we can only do so much and we need the help of everyone here today. The

only way to fix the problem of overcrowded animal shelters and to prevent adoptable dogs from being euthanized is to spay or neuter your pet. What many people don't know about are the many benefits there are when you spay or neuter your pet. Spaying and neutering has many health benefits for the animal and can help them live a longer and healthier life. It is highly cost effective, not only for you as a pet owner, but also for the community because animal shelters will not be overcrowded. Neutered pets are also well behaved and won't roam away from home as often. Our goal is to spread the word about these benefits and encourage pet owners in the community to be responsible and help us solve the problem of pet overpopulation. By being here today and making the responsible decision to spay or neuter your pet, you're helping us achieve this goal and I thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Thank you again for coming out and supporting Athens Canine Rescue in our goal to help rescue as many dogs as possible and reduce the number of animals that are euthanized in shelters each year. Thank you to our sponsors, the Atlanta Area Humane Society and the Athens Canine Rescue volunteers for making this event possible. We hope that today will be one of our most successful events to date! *(Wait for applause from crowd, wave and exit the stage)*

(Word Count: 491, about 3 minutes and 30 seconds)



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Biography: Bly Bain, president of Athens Canine Rescue

Bly Bain is the president of Athens Canine Rescue. She became involved with Athens Canine Rescue immediately after graduating from college in 2005. Prior to becoming the president of ACR in 2006, Mrs. Bain served as the secretary. Athens Canine Rescue is a nonprofit organization that rescues adoptable dogs and places them in a network of foster homes until they can be permanently adopted. It does not have a shelter facility and relies on volunteer and donations from the community.

As the president of ACR, Mrs. Bain has a role in every aspect of the organization. Her primary responsibilities include making sure the day-to-day functions of the organization are carried out, making sure each member of the executive board is completing their respective job, completing paperwork for the Department of Agriculture and helping in any way that she can to make sure the organization runs smoothly.

Everyone involved in Athens Canine Rescue, including the executive board, is a volunteer. Mrs. Bain's "real job", as she refers to it, is doing the purchasing for a local power plant. Working with Athens Canine Rescue is Mrs. Bain's first experience of working for a nonprofit organization. Prior to becoming involved with Athens Canine Rescue, Mrs. Bain graduated from the University of Georgia with a bachelor's degree in forestry wildlife. She originally wanted to major in zoology and attend veterinary school, but decided to pursue her love of animals in a

different way. Since becoming involved with Athens Canine Rescue she has been a foster to over 50 different dogs and gained the knowledge of several veterinary skills.

For Mrs. Bain the most rewarding aspect of being involved with Athens Canine Rescue is knowing that every dog the organization rescues had no other chance without the help of ACR. She loves knowing that she has helped to change a life and hopes to find each dog find a family that will love the dog unconditionally.

Originally from Savannah, Ga., Mrs. Bain now lives in Athens, Ga., with her husband and dog, Napoleon.



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News Release

Contact:
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Public Relations

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

TOP 5 REASONS YOU SHOULD SPAY AND NEUTER YOUR PET

ATHENS, Ga. – Athens Canine Rescue, a local nonprofit animal rescue organization, has created a list of the top five reasons pet owners should spay or neuter their pet. Athens Canine Rescue volunteers created this list in support of Spay/Neuter Awareness Month and World Spay Day taking place Feb. 26, 2013.

“Spaying and neutering is something we are very passionate about as an organization. Our goal is to save as many dogs as possible from being euthanized in animal shelters,” Bly Bain, the president of Athens Canine Rescue, said. “Having your pet spayed or neutered can help make a difference in the pet overpopulation problem we are facing not only in the Athens community, but across the United States.”

1. Spaying and neutering helps decrease the amount of stray animals in the community.

According to the ASPCA, approximately 5 million to 7 million animals enter animal shelters nationwide every year. Spaying and neutering your pet can help reduce this number by preventing more unplanned litters from being born when homes are not available for them.

2. Your pet will live a longer and healthier life. Having your male pet neutered can prevent testicular cancer and prostate disease. Spayed females have a reduced chance of having breast cancer and uterine infections.

- more -

- 3. The cost of spaying or neutering a pet is less than the cost of raising puppies or kittens for a year.** There are several affordable spay and neuter options. Veterinarians can work out payment plans to best fit your needs and many organizations in the community come together throughout the year to provide free or reduced mobile spay and neuter clinics.
- 4. Your pet can be spayed or neutered as early as two months of age.** Many pet owners believe their pet must be six months old before being spayed or neutered, but this is not the case. Many females can begin to go into heat as early as four months old. Younger dogs also recover from the surgery faster and better than older dogs do.
- 5. Your pet will be better behaved.** It is a myth that spayed and neutered pets will become depressed and lazy. They will actually be less aggressive, have a lower tendency to run away from home in search of a mate and focus more on their family.

About Athens Canine Rescue

Athens Canine Rescue is a nonprofit organization in the Athens area that rescues dogs and places them in a network of foster homes until they can be permanently adopted. Athens Canine Rescue only rescues friendly and adoptable companion dogs that have often been neglected by previous owners. The nonprofit relies completely on foster home volunteers and donations. For more information, visit athenscaninerescue.com or email rescue@athenscaninerescue.com.

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Megan Deese
Athens Canine Rescue
P.O. Box 7064
Athens, GA 30604

Feb. 1, 2013

Karah-Leigh Hancock
News Reporter/Online Producer
Athens Banner-Herald
One Press Place
Athens, GA 30601

Dear Ms. Hancock:

Athens Canine Rescue (ACR) currently facing a need for volunteers and donors to keep the organization running. In the past few years, monetary donations and volunteers have decreased due to the economic downturn and the fact that Athens is a transient town. ACR is looking to increase our network of volunteers by posting volunteer opportunities online and setting up donation drop-off sites in the community for items like dog food, blankets and toys, as well as monetary donations. The organization has a major event coming up this month in support of National Spay and Neuter Awareness month called and needs volunteers to help make it a successful community outreach event for Athens Canine Rescue.

A news article on Athens Canine Rescue and the organization's need for volunteers and donations would be relevant because a majority of readers are Athens residents that are stable in the community or young people that are interested in community service. It would also help increase awareness about ACR, which is one of the smaller animal rescue organizations in Athens that many residents do not know about. Another way to present this story would be to write a list of the top reasons why people should donate to Athens Canine Rescue or highlight a current sponsor in the community and why they are helping ACR.

If you would like more information about the organization's current needs or the "Paws, Spay and Neuter" awareness event this month please let me know so I can get you in contact with Bly Bain, the president of Athens Canine Rescue, and schedule an interview. I will call you in three business days to discuss this story with you more. Please feel free to call me in the meantime at 770-595-3052 or email me at meg.deese@gmail.com

Sincerely,

Megan Deese
Public Relations Coordinator
Athens Canine Rescue

For the Love of Dogs

One Athens Man Turned His Love of Dogs into a Way of Life

Author: Megan Deese

For some it might seem like a far-fetched to open their home and heart to more than 30 abandoned dogs, but for the past four years that become a way of life for Chris Buice.

Buice is a foster for Athens Canine Rescue, a nonprofit organization in the Athens area that rescues adoptable dogs and places them in a network of foster homes until they can be permanently adopted. In his four years of being involved in Athens Canine Rescue, Buice has fostered more than 30 dogs until another family adopted them.

He first became involved with ACR through his neighbor, Michelle Rabold, who is also the foster coordinator for the organization.

“I’ve always liked dogs and the idea of fostering definitely appealed to me,” Buice said.

As a foster, Buice is involved in every aspect of the rescue process, starting at the animal shelter. Buice typically chooses to foster dogs that have been in the animal shelter for a long time. These dogs are not likely to be adopted from the shelter because the environment they are in makes them stressed and scared. He describes his typical foster dog as “good dogs, they just need a little extra work.”

Buice is not alone when it comes to taking care of his foster dogs. Athens Canine Rescue pays for veterinarian bills and provides food and leashes. It also serves as a knowledgeable resource when he has a question about a dog’s behavior and how to handle it.

There is a lot of commitment and compassion involved in being a foster, but there also comes the time when a foster must part ways from a dog when they are adopted into a permanent

- more -

home. For many fosters, this can be a difficult time, but for Buice it is his favorite part of being an Athens Canine Rescue foster.

“When you take [the dog] to get adopted and they realize that this is the family who they’re supposed to be with and they fit in, it’s the best moment. You want to adopt every dog that comes in, but you can’t and that’s what makes it fun to keep fostering - seeing that there is a place for the dog. It’s really neat,” he said.

Buice is currently fostering Samson, a mountain cur mixed breed, with big ears and a calm, lovable personality.

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P.O. Box 7064 Athens, GA 30604

www.athenscaninerescue.com

FACT SHEET

Organization

Athens Canine Rescue

P.O. Box 7064

Athens, GA 30604

www.athenscaninerescue.com

Facebook: <http://www.facebook.com/athenscaninerescue>

Twitter: @ATHCanineRescue

Mission

The mission of Athens Canine Rescue is to save adoptable dogs that have been abandoned in animal shelters from euthanasia and find them permanent, loving homes.

Overview

- Athens Canine Rescue is a nonprofit organization in Athens, Ga. established in 1990.
- ACR rescues friendly, companion animals that have been neglected by previous owners.
- ACR does not have a shelter facility and relies on a network of foster homes to house the dogs until they are adopted into a loving, forever home.
- All dogs are brought up-to-date on shots and medications, treated with monthly flea/tick and heartworm preventatives, microchipped and spayed or neutered.
- Foster homes provide love and shelter to dogs, as well as basic training and housebreaking, if necessary.
- ACR pays for all food and medical expenses, and maintains ongoing contact and support with the foster home.

Board of Directors

- President: Bly Bain, President@AthensCanineRescue.com
- Secretary: Jesse Abbott, secretary@athenscaninerescue.com
- Foster Coordinator: Michelle Rabold, Foster@AthensCanineRescue.com
- Adoption Coordinator: Andrea Collier, Adopt@AthensCanineRescue.com
- Event Coordinator: Leslie Trier, Events@AthensCanineRescue.com
- Publicity and PR Coordinator: Leah Leggett, LHLeggett@Gmail.com

Contact

Megan Deese

Public Relations Coordinator

Athens Canine Rescue

Telephone: 770-595-3052

Email: meg.deese@gmail.com

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Contact: Megan Deese
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PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT - SHOOT SCRIPT

ATHENS CANINE RESCUE – PLEASE SPAY & NEUTER

VIDEO	AUDIO
Picture of dog in animal shelter. Camera zooming in on the picture.	Somber, slow music in the background. (Female Voice of Bly Bain, ACR President): Did you know that between five and seven million animals enter animal shelters each year?
Fade out of first picture to a black screen with the 25 percent statistic in large bold writing.	Somber, slow music continuing in the background. (Bly’s voice): In Athens-Clarke County alone twenty five percent of animal shelter intakes are euthanized.
Change to shot of Bly sitting with a happy Athens Canine Rescue dog. Fade in caption with “Bly Bain – Athens Canine Rescue President” while she is speaking.	Fade out music. (Bly’s voice): Athens Canine Rescue is working to reduce this amount, but we need your help.
Change to footage of a past low-cost mobile spay and neuter event hosted by Athens Canine Rescue and linger on an image of a happy pet owner and their dog at the event with the mobile spay and neuter unit in the background.	(Bly’s voice): Spaying and neutering your pet can help stop the issue of animal shelter overpopulation. There are also several benefits to spaying and neutering for you and your pet. Don’t let the cost hold you back.
Change back to scene of Bly with the Athens Canine Rescue dog. She is speaking directly to the audience and looking into the camera.	(Bly’s voice): Make the right decision for your pet, your family and your community and please spay or neuter your pet.
Change to Athens Canine Rescue logo and website.	(Bly’s voice): For more information on low cost spay and neuter options and upcoming Athens Canine Rescue events please visit W-W-W-dot-Athens-Canine-Rescue-dot-com.



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Contact: Megan Deese
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State Date: April 15, 2013

Stop Date: August 1, 2013

Word Count: 73

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT

ATHENS CANINE RESCUE – PLEASE SPAY & NEUTER

(Reading time: 30 seconds)

Did you know that between five and seven million animals enter animal shelters each year?

Twenty five percent of animal shelter intakes are euthanized in Athens-Clarke County. Athens Canine Rescue is working to reduce this number, but we need your help. Spaying and neutering your pet can help stop the issue of animal shelter overpopulation. For more information on low cost spay and neuter options and Athens Canine Rescue events please visit W-W-W-dot-Athens-Canine-Rescue-dot-com.

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P.O. Box 7064 Athens, GA 30604

www.athenscaninerescue.com

Memo

To: Bly Bain, President, Athens Canine Rescue

From: Megan Deese

Date: April 8, 2013

Re: Athens Canine Rescue Brochure

Athens Canine Rescue already has an effective monthly newsletter that is sent to volunteers, foster families and posted on the website. An informational brochure would be a beneficial addition to informational materials. It would help ACR by reaching a new audience in the community, promote the mission of ACR, and give basic information on the organization and services provided.

Purpose and Target Audience

The proposed brochure is intended to reach people in the Athens community who are not already involved in Athens Canine Rescue and people who are already pet owners or looking to adopt a pet. It is intended to provide information about Athens Canine Rescue, the organization's mission and services offered. Its goal is to help make people more aware of the organization and encourage them to become involved, as well as provide helpful information on how to do so. The brochure will be distributed at the local Athens Animal Shelter, veterinarian clinics, animal hospitals, local parks and pet supply stores. The brochures will be delivered to each locations and replaced as needed. Brochures will also be given out at all Athens Canine Rescue events.

Content

The cover of the brochure should be eye-catching and colorful since it is the first thing a person will see. It should include the Athens Canine Rescue logo, mission and a graphic that represents ACR. The back right panel that you see when you first open the brochure should include the one of the main goals of Athens Canine Rescue, which is the importance of spaying

and neutering. It should provide details about why it is important and give information about where people can go to find more about low-cost spay and neuter options provided by ACR. The left panel on the inside of the brochure should contain adoption information. This information should include adoption procedures, cost of adoption and when ACR adoption events are held. The middle panel should contain information about the importance of foster families and how they are an important part of ACR. Information about the role of a foster family and how to apply to become a foster should also be included. The right inside panel should include information about ACR outreach programs, like the low-cost spay and neuter clinics, educational program and Adoptapoolza. The back panel should include the logo, contact information, website and social media information.

Design and Layout

The layout is a typical tri-fold brochure on 8 ½” by 11” paper. This layout is traditional, organized and easy for people read. There are six different panels in the brochure and information can be easily distinguished on each panel by using headers. A bold sans serif typeface should be used for display type, such as headers, and a Roman font should be used for the body copy under the headers, which will consist of the information. It is also important to use a consist font and color scheme throughout the brochure. The logo and mission should be on the front panel, and contact and social media information should be on the back panel. Using subheads will help break up the information for the reader on the inside panels. Photos may be included in the brochure if they relate to Athens Canine Rescue and are relevant to information on each panel, and that are appealing to the reader. When the brochure is complete and ready for distribution it should be printed in color on glossy, durable paper.

If you have any suggestions about the brochure or specific questions regarding the design or content please feel free to contact me. I would be happy to discuss any ideas with you.

Brochure

Brochure



P.O. Box 7064 Athens, GA 30604

www.athenscaninerescue.com

Memo

To: Bly Bain, President, Athens Canine Rescue

From: Megan Deese

Date: March 25, 2013

Re: Online Communications Review

I have recently conducted a thorough review of Athens Canine Rescue's online communication tools. Overall, the organization has a strong and well-organized presence online with the website, Facebook and Twitter. The following are aspects that Athens Canine Rescue should continue to do that work well online and suggestions for where improvements can be made to help optimize online communication with target audiences.

Website:

The first impression of Athens Canine Rescue website is that it is well-organized, easy to navigate and is visually appealing to the user. The slideshow feature at the visual center of the page features good quality and relevant photos. There is good amount of content that is relevant, understandable and provides the information necessary for the user. ACR events being featured on the home page and the pictures on the adoptable dogs page is a great visual aspect and addition to the content. A possible suggestion would be to make the contact information page stand out more by possibly having its own tab in the menu at the top of the page. Since there is not a phone number provided, it might be beneficial to explain why, or provide the phone

numbers and emails of the executive board members for people to be able to contact them with specific questions or concerns.

Online Newsroom:

An online newsroom is a beneficial means of communication to have for journalists and the media. My suggestion is for Athens Canine Rescue to dedicate a space on the website for an online newsroom where event press releases, fact sheets, answers to frequently asked questions, bios and newsletters can be posted and organized so that they can be easily found. If journalists can find these documents easily, they are more likely to write about Athens Canine Rescue or an upcoming event being hosted by ACR in their publication. Adoption, volunteer and foster application can also be posted in the online newsroom, along with the contact information for the Athens Canine Rescue public relations director.

Blog:

The organization blog is a great aspect to have on the website. The blog is easy to navigate, contains posts relevant to the organization and current happenings, and headlines are easy to understand. Posts are made consistently, well written in a conversational style and stay on topic. A suggestion for the blog would be to include more multimedia features like videos and pictures throughout the posts where appropriate and also categorize the blog post according to topic. This will make it easier for users to find a specific blog post they would like to refer back to and read about the topics that interest them most.

Facebook:

The Athens Canine Rescue page is very well-done. It has relevant posts that are easy to understand, contains interesting photos and useful information, links to other websites and is updated regularly. Facebook is a good place to post information about events and the page

features events and does a great job of utilizing the events function. Athens Canine Rescue's Facebook does a great job of interacting with its target audience and should continue to update about adoptions and dogs available, post events and adoptions updates and engage with users by responding to comments, especially if they contain questions.

Twitter:

Athens Canine Rescue's Twitter account contains concise, clear and relevant tweets that relate to the organization. The Twitter account should continue to be updated daily, but should also contain tweets that are different in content from Facebook posts. A suggestion would be to retweet relevant posts from supporters or similar organizations, as well as share pictures of adoptable dogs and Athens Canine Rescue events. Using relevant and popular hashtags consistently can also help enhance the organization's Twitter presence.

Conclusion:

In conclusion, Athens Canine Rescue has a very strong online presence that is appropriate for the organization and always contains relevant and professional content. I look forward to seeing the current communication outlets grow and improve with time, as well as new aspects like an online newsroom, being added. Please let me know if you have any other questions or would like to discuss the above suggestions in more detail.



POSTION PAPER ON SPAYING AND NEUTUERING PETS

Pet overpopulation is a growing issue that receives little attention from the public. It is a topic that is not openly discussed and tends to be ignored. No one likes to see or hear about an animal that is suffering, much less talk about, but ignoring this problem will not make it go away.

Athens Canine Rescue chooses not to ignore this issue and is dedicated to raising awareness about the importance of spaying and neutering pets.

According to the National Council on Pet Population, Study and Policy the estimated number of cats and dogs entering shelters each year is 6-8 million and the estimated number of cats and dogs euthanized by shelters each year 3-4 million, which is half of the animals that enter a shelter. As these numbers continue to increase, the awareness about the issue seems to decrease. Now is the time to make people more aware about the pet overpopulation issue communities are facing and to encourage them to take action to help reduce the number of animals euthanized each year in animal shelters.

The main factor that leads to the pet overpopulation issue we are facing today is that animals are not spayed or neutered. According to the American Pet Products Association, only 10 percent of the animals received by shelters have been spayed or neutered, while 78 percent of pet dogs are spayed or neutered. These numbers help show how important spaying and neutering is and the effect it can have on the overpopulation problem in animal shelters.

There are several reasons why a pet owner might not get their pet spayed or neutered, but each reason has a more negative outcome compared if their pet was spayed or neutered. One reason cited often for why a pet owner might not get their pet spayed or neutered is that the procedure is expensive. It might be surprising to some that the cost of spaying or neutering a pet is less than the cost of raising a litter of puppies for a year. There are several low-cost spay and neuter options available to pet owners. Many veterinarians and rescue organizations host free or low-cost and convenient clinics throughout the year. Another reason is that pet owners believe their pet's behavior and personality will change, but this is a myth. A pet that has been spayed or neutered will actually have improved behavior. Neutered male dogs fight less and also don't wander away from home as often, resulting in a lower chance of them of getting lost or injured.

The surgery is not harmful to animals and the animal will not miss the ability to reproduce. There are several health benefits to spaying and neutering that many pet owners are not aware of. There is a decreased risk for uterine infections and breast cancer in females and testicular cancer in males, if done before six months of age. Overall, spayed and neutered animals live longer, happier and healthier lives.

The decision for a pet owner to get their pet spayed or neutered is important, not only for their family, but also for the animal and the community. It is crucial that people are aware of the benefits of spaying and neutering and the impact that this surgery can have over time. The organization strongly believes that disproving myths and spreading awareness about the importance and benefits of spaying and neutering can help reduce the number of animals unnecessarily euthanized in animal shelters each year.