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Mon, 2014-12-22 12:55 — Robin Olson

Nothing makes me happier than when I can help others, especially cats. During this season of giving, of cherishing your family and friends, it's the perfect time to think about giving to the cats and kittens who are still in shelters, dreaming of their forever home.

While giving during the month of December can provide a big lift to small rescues who depend on donations to make ends meet, I'd like to ask you to consider a longer-term way to help your favorite animal charity, but it won't break your bank account.

Go Beyond One Gift

Rescues and shelters always need financial support, but instead of giving one gift, **sign up to do a monthly donation.** It doesn't have to be a lot of money, even \$10 a month ends up to be a nice donation over the course of a year. This way the organization knows they can depend on funds coming in during times when donations are at a low.



©2011 Robin AF Olson. Adoption event set up takes a lot of heavy lifting and someone to set it up so it looks nice. If you have a flair for design, decor, or have six-pack abs you can help your local rescue (even if you don't have six-pack abs, that was just wishful thinking on my part).

Networking is Free

If you're like me and are cash-strapped, I bet you have a talent that a rescue would really appreciate. Do you do PR, Advertising? are you an Artist, Graphic Designer, Videographer? Are you a good Writer? Photographer? Maybe you're great at organizing files, or helping plan adoption events. Do you like to talk; meet new people? **Rescues always need someone to talk to potential adopters and do community outreach.**

My rescue, [Kitten Associates](#) ⁽¹⁾, needs someone to do something as simple as data entry. **Bottom line: the odds are very good that you can do something that a rescue needs, even bake cookies for a bake sale.**

You also probably have friends and family who love animals. **One of them might be cajoled into helping volunteer with you or perhaps provide goods or services** (maybe they have a store and they can donate items for a gift basket or they provide a service and they can give you a certificate that can be used as a raffle item or a Ebay auction item).

Become an Advocate on Social Media

If you're on Facebook and Twitter a lot, make use of those great connections you already have and corral all of them to share a post from your favorite rescue when they ask for donations. **Just doing that can substantially increase the odds of good donations coming in just when that rescue needs it most. This goes far beyond the holiday season.** Being an advocate takes dedication and compassion and **the ability to urge your friends to help without heavy-handed tactics.** Maybe you can have fun with it or even challenge your friends to match any donation you make or to see if they can get more shares of a post than you can? Perhaps the winner gets taken out for coffee by you? This shouldn't be a chore. **It's a labor of love-and when it's fun you'll be more willing to keep helping throughout the year.**

You can also join the [BlogPaws Community](#) ⁽²⁾ where like-minded pet lovers are joining together to build a group with goal of

giving back to pets.



©2013 Robin AF Olson. The Clementines were such wonderful foster kittens, but the costs for their care was no joke. With multiple bouts of illness our rescue spent thousands of dollars providing for them. Most rescues have the same challenges-how to stretch available funds to cover unpredictable health issues.

Don't Forget the Humans

The truth of it is pretty much every animal rescue organization is struggling with possibly the exception of the biggest ones. The little guys do more directly for their animals with the donations they receive simply because they have no paid staff and don't pay someone to do fundraising. Whatever you offer, know it will be appreciated and it may make a huge difference.

It's also a lot easier to see your gift in action when you have a one on one relationship with a rescue. Let them know you believe in their work. Tell the folks that volunteer that they're doing a great job. The folks who do rescue pay a very big emotional price to care for animals 365/7/24. They don't get a day off and they rarely get thanked. A simple thing like feeling appreciated is a great gift you can give a rescue, too, so don't forget to send them a card or email and let them know you love what they're doing.

Happy Holidays!

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Comments

Tue, 2014-12-23 13:32 — jmuwj (not verified)

RE: GIVING [4]

Thanking you so much for all you do for the cats and kittens we love so much, Robin, and for these thoughtful and constructive suggestions! I'm down to not being able to do much financially, but I absolutely agree that automatic monthly contributions to one (or more) shelters/rescues/sanctuaries can help a lot. Also very much appreciate your hint about online sharing (crossposting) of info and photos of cats in need of loving, forever homes and fundraisers. I'm involved in this on a daily basis, have met a lot of wonderful people who do likewise on social media, and know it can make a huge difference, because the more potential adopters see the cats and read about them, the better the cats' chances of finding the loving forever homes each and every one so richly deserves.

May your holidays be joyous and bright!

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Links

- [1] <http://kittenassociates.org/>
- [2] <http://community.blogpaws.com/>
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