



November 12, 2008

To Whom It May Concern:

Good Mews, Atlanta's first no-kill, cage-free cat shelter, is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year; and in honor of this special occasion, the theme for our annual auction, The Furr Ball, was the 1980's. While we anticipated it would be great fun to see people dressed up to the likes of Madonna and Krystle Carrington, we were worried that people would not bid as they have in the past due to the state of the economy. Charitable donations have decreased dramatically; and we feared the auction would not bring in the much needed funds to meet budget.

We had taken Rhonda's advice to play the "Heads or Tails" game last year, which was wildly successful in uniting the crowd, so we decided to introduce the "Fund a Program" concept for our HALO program. HALO's (Home At Last) mission is to find permanent, loving homes for our special needs and geriatric cats.

HALO cats are typically overlooked for adoption because of age, ongoing medical conditions or behavioral issues - the most common reasons beyond euthanasia at traditional animal shelters. Funds designated to this program help pay for the ongoing medical care of these cats while they wait for **AND** after they find their perfect home. As you can imagine, this program is costly, with over \$40,000 allocated towards the care of these cats since it's inception in 2004.

Thanks to "Fund a Program", we not only met, but *exceeded* our goal! Our former Executive Director spoke, citing some examples of cats currently enrolled in HALO, and a slideshow presentation was played immediately after featuring past and present HALO cats. After that concluded, there wasn't a dry eye in the room. Rhonda and I had discussed starting the bidding at \$250; but after reading the crowd's emotional reaction, she instead started at \$500. I couldn't believe my eyes when four people immediately held up their paddles! In a matter of minutes, close to \$7,000 was raised!

I strongly recommend that other organizations take advantage of this concept to either fund an item you need or program you want to raise funds for. We have worked with Rhonda for the past two years, and every year, we learn something new; thus improving our auction methods to generate the dollars needed to operate our shelter.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Joan Peterson". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

Joan Peterson
President



finding good homes
for good kitties

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