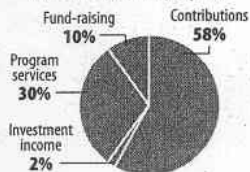


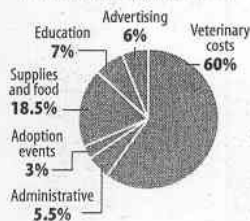
COLUMBUS DOG CONNECTION

5990 Flora Villa Drive (mailing)
Worthington 43085
Phone: 614-637-1342
Web site:
columbusdogconnection.com

FY 2001 revenue: \$58,153



FY 2001 expenses: \$64,992



Mission: To assist shelters by placing dogs who are scheduled to be euthanized. The organization promotes all rescues and shelters through its Web site and organizes collaborative adoption events. It educates the community about the overpopulation problem and promotes solutions that will end euthanasia of adoptable dogs.

Executive staff: Kellie DiFrischia and Mirna Bowman, co-directors

Paid staff: none

Volunteers annually: 40

Board: Melanie Berical, secretary; Mirna Bowman, treasurer; Kellie DiFrischia, president; Pam Herb; Karen Skilken, vice president

Quick facts:

- Columbus Dog Connection was one of the first groups in the area to practice pediatric spaying and neutering.
- Columbus Dog Connection is run entirely by volunteers and depends on donations. Its on-going needs include crates, collars, leashes, harnesses and beds as well as copying services and money for vet expenses.
- Foster homes are the backbone of the organization, providing temporary homes for animals in need. The organization is always in need of more volunteer foster homes for the dogs.

Fund-raisers: Holiday gift-wrapping at Barnes & Noble, December; A Night for the Dogs – Cocktails, Conversation and Canine Causes; biannual party: An Evening at Sunstorm

FY 2002 budget: \$75,000

FY 2000 revenue: \$83,381
FY 2000 expenses: \$53,664

CORPORATE CARING

AN EXECUTIVE GUIDE TO NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS



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Group seeks happy endings for homeless pups

BY JILL MCCULLOUGH ■ FOR BUSINESS FIRST

In February 2000, a Franklin County social worker combed Columbus trying to find a missing family. Even the family's pets had disappeared.

His journey led him to the Fairfield County Humane Society where he found the missing dogs. What he was not expecting to find was a mass of fur that he barely recognized to be a puppy – much less a purebred poodle.

That puppy, which was unrelated to the missing family, was so matted and mangy that those who took care of it couldn't determine whether it was male or female.

"It was the social worker – that good Samaritan – who brought the dog in," said Kellie DiFrischia, co-founder and co-director of Columbus Dog Connection, a nonprofit organization that rescues and finds homes for dogs. "The poor little thing was scared to death. Only after he was groomed could the vet determine his sex."

Today, DiFrischia is happy to report the puppy, which she named Frankie, is living in Gahanna with his new adopted family. Thanks to an adoption event at an area pet-supply store, the dog was placed in a permanent home less than one month after leaving the humane society.

If he hadn't have been brought to Columbus Dog Connection, chances are Frankie would have been put to sleep.

"It's wonderful to see this little guy go from being on death row to living with a family with kids and ... attending 4-H events with the teen-age daughter," DiFrischia said.

"Frankie is making leaps and bounds in his progress," she said. "Through the efforts of Columbus Dog Connection, we were able to find this dog a good home."

DiFrischia and Mirna Bowman founded Columbus Dog Connection in July 1998 as a rescue organization. As part of its mission, it assists shelters and humane societies by rescuing dogs scheduled for euthanasia.

It also coordinates a series of foster homes for dogs until permanent homes can be found, said DiFrischia, who is also a foster-home volunteer.

"Unfortunately, finding foster homes is a slow, painful process," she said. "It's painful because I give someone a dog and tell him to



JANET ADAMS ■ BUSINESS FIRST

Kellie DiFrischia with, from top, Cinders, Zach and Sporty. Cinders and Sporty are available for adoption and can be seen at the Mingle With Our Mutts event, which will be held July 21 at the Franklin County Animal Shelter, 1731 Alum Creek Drive. Zach came to DiFrischia as a foster dog but has now become her permanent pet.

socialize with, housebreak and house the dog. Then I tell him to take the dog to community adoption events and let someone come along and adopt the dog.

"It's hard on the heart to let the dog go, especially if it is an abused or neglected dog. It's also one of the most rewarding things you can do. Whenever we make a good match, it feels great. We know our services are badly needed. It hurts, though," said DiFrischia, who gave up one of her two foster dogs for adoption this spring.

To find homes for these dogs, the organization participates in such events as the Bexley Street Festival, the Pooch Parade in Worthington, the Gahanna Flea Market and Petmart's National Adoption Day event.

The organization also co-hosts an adoption event with the Franklin County Animal Shelter held from noon to 2 p.m. on the third Sunday of each month. The Mingle With Our Mutts takes place at the county shelter on Alum Creek Drive. The next event is scheduled for July 21.

Columbus Dog Connection, which is overseen by volunteer board members who double as foster owners, has placed nearly 1,000 dogs since its inception.

Adoption fees and donations support the organization as it rescues, vaccinates and spays or neuters each dog prior to adoption –

expenses that well exceed the \$125 adoption fee, DiFrischia said.

To make ends meet, the organization receives veterinary services and dog food from the Norton Road Veterinary Hospital, Shearer Pet Hospital, PetSmart and Petco. Urban Axis, Loft House Publishing, Pet Butler Dog Waste Removal Service and Animal Source also provide in-kind and financial support, she said.

DiFrischia said the greatest gift the business community can give to the organization is exposure. And the best way to accomplish that, she said, is by visiting its Web site at columbusdogconnection.com and printing out the page that lists its ready-to-adopt dogs.

The Web site, which is kept up and running compliments of Loft House Publishing, also lists other rescue organizations around Columbus, including purebred shelters. As a community service, Columbus Dog Connection lists adoptable dogs available through these shelters as well.

"We don't care where you adopt a dog from, just so long as you adopt it from a rescue or shelter," DiFrischia said. "All I ask is that employers post the dogs-available page somewhere in the lunch room or on office doors and cubicles. We need the exposure because every time one of our dogs gets placed in a home, we can get another dog off death row."