

## Chapter 6 – Promoting SOAR

### Volunteering to Promote SOAR

SOAR rescues several hundred Airedales every year. This makes it very important to always be on the lookout for new adoptive homes for our dogs. Our Web site is a great tool, but it only catches the eye of those surfing the Web. We need to tell our story in as many ways as possible so that we don't miss out on a good home.

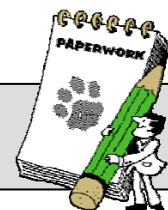
In addition to looking for new adoptive homes, SOAR is always looking for new volunteers. We are the largest Airedale rescue organization and operate in states from Colorado to Ohio and Wisconsin to Mississippi. In addition to that, we also help Airedales in Ontario, Canada. That is a lot of territory to cover! The more volunteers we have, the lighter the workload is for everyone. Finding new volunteers is just as important as finding new adoptive homes.

### What it Takes to Help Promote

All it usually takes to get started is a desire to help. Many of our volunteers keep their eyes and ears open for opportunities in their area to spread the word. SOAR also hears about opportunities and will pass on information through our coordinators, our Web site and our newsletter.

Once you identify an event and are willing to participate, SOAR will support you. You don't have to worry about publicity – we will get the word out about your event. We can supply you with some literature, newsletters, etc. depending on the nature of the event. Just let us know. We will make sure that everyone who wants to help promote rescue will have everything they need.

Before you officially represent SOAR at any event, you MUST sign a SOAR Volunteer Agreement form and mail it to the SOAR Vice President Volunteers.



### Bring Your Airedale

The purpose of most of the events is to let the public see our favorite breed and learn about what we do. Chances are yours won't be the only Airedale there. Other SOAR supporters usually stop by with their Airedales.

### Available Literature

- SOAR has an "About SOAR" newsletter that describes who we are and what we do. In addition, it has information about promoting fostering, transporting, home visits and adopting. We also have a business card template that you can use to print up some cards for yourself. You can put your name and contact information on them or include the contact information of the state coordinator for your area. Once we know you will be participating at an event, we will make sure you have a supply of literature.
- Many of our volunteers will make up a poster board of their own to display at events in their area. We encourage this and will help you with photos and ideas as it is difficult to mail a poster. Contact the president for an e-mail of a pre-designed poster photos.
- We usually have some extra back issues of newsletters that we can send to you for your event. Because we don't have large supplies of these, we ask that you hand them out to people who genuinely show an interest in SOAR. Contact our newsletter editor.
- SOAR has a great PowerPoint program set to music that you can run on a laptop at promotional events. You need to have PowerPoint installed (or at least the free PowerPoint viewer) on your laptop in order to run it. Let us know if you would like to do this and we can get you a CD. Contact the president for a copy.

## Events to Attend

There are a number of events SOAR volunteers attend on a regular basis. These are described below. However, we are always looking for new ways to promote SOAR. Keep an open mind and let us know about any ideas you may have.

- Parades are a lot of fun and usually draw out many Airedales, supporters and volunteers. There are usually opportunities before and after the parade to hand out literature and speak to the public about our work. Because of the large numbers of people that come to these events, SOAR usually gets a number of leads for new adopters and volunteers. Some of our best volunteers found us at a parade!
- Posting literature at vet offices and groomers is an easy way to help promote SOAR. All of us need to visit our veterinarian every so often. Some of us have a favorite groomer for our Airedale. Why not take some “Wanted” posters to pin up on the bulletin board while you are there. Add your phone number to the poster as a local contact.
- Photos with Santa. There are several pet supply stores that invite rescue groups to come in during the Christmas season and do “Pet Photos with Santa.” Some of these stores will supply the film and photographer – all we need to supply is the “Santa” and the manpower. The participating group usually gets a portion of the proceeds. We are sometimes able to hand out literature and perhaps sell some things to raise additional money. This is a fun way to get together with a few other Airedale friends, meet the public and promote SOAR.
- Gift wrapping is another great way. Borders Books has been great to us by allowing us to make some money for rescue wrapping gifts during the Christmas season. Our participating volunteers can hand out literature and talk to the public about Airedale rescue while providing a service for the store. This is another way to spend an afternoon with other SOAR volunteers.
- Tables at pet stores or events are a little more relaxed, yet still give volunteers the chance to tell the public about SOAR and Airedale rescue. They usually involve setting up a table, displaying posters and literature and talking with the public. Make sure to bring your Airedale and a chair.
- One of our volunteers found out that a local baseball park held a “Pet Day.” Patrons attending were allowed to bring their pets with them. To take advantage of this opportunity to promote SOAR, her Airedale came equipped with saddle bags filled with literature.
- There is no better way to attract attention than to walk your Airedale down a busy street. Airedales are so full of personality that they naturally invite people to stop and ask questions about the breed. If you know you will be taking a walk with your Airedale through town or talking a walk at a vacation spot somewhere, take some SOAR business cards with you.
- There is no limit to the things you can do to promote SOAR. We have one volunteer whose husband drives a race car with “Airedale Rescue” painted on the car. Another volunteer travels quite often in a motor home and has created a poster to put in the front window when they are parked at the campgrounds. This same volunteer had a big “Airedale Rescue” decal made up for the back window of her truck. Yet another volunteer who writes for a newspaper wrote an article about an SOAR volunteer using a private aircraft to get an Airedale to her new forever home. It made the front page!

## Insurance

Some events require a form to be filled out and submitted to our insurance company. Contact the president if you need this information.

## **Petco**

Petco offers opportunities for SOAR to set up tables and talk about rescue in their stores. SOAR has a Vendor ID# with Petco of 33-164. You should check with your individual Petco store about this number. You may have to apply for one for SOAR in your state. If you do, please send the number you have obtained to one of the SOAR officers. If you need any official SOAR forms to obtain a number, contact the SOAR treasurer.

## **Petsmart**

Petsmart also offers opportunities for SOAR to set up tables and talk about rescue in their stores. You will have to apply for one for SOAR in your state. If you do, please send the number you have obtained to one of the SOAR officers. If you need any official SOAR forms to obtain a number, contact the SOAR treasurer.

If you apply to Petsmart for your state, they may do a home visit for you or one of your fosters. There are some rules to follow once you are approved regarding adoptions that come about as of a contact in the store. One of the benefits, however, is that we can be qualified to participate in their Giving Tree program which is now equally splits any donations received during the holiday season among the qualified pet partners for that store.