



Join the Pack!



**YOUR 6-WEEK  
GUIDE TO  
SAVING LIVES**

## **HEARTLAND ANIMAL SHELTER WALK OF LOVE TOOLKIT**

Thank you for joining the Walk of Love and pledging to raise critical funds for the dogs and cats in our care!

This toolkit is designed to make your fundraising journey as easy as possible. In addition to this toolkit, you will receive our walker newsletter, *The Weekly Wag: Your Walk of Love Countdown*, with additional fundraising tips, easy-to-use templates, impact stories, and more.

Every dollar you raise goes to the medical care, food, and enrichment of the animals at Heartland Animal Shelter. You are their second chance!

For assistance setting up your personal fundraising page email [maribeth@heartlandanimalshelter.org](mailto:maribeth@heartlandanimalshelter.org).

# WALK OF LOVE COMMUNICATIONS PLAN

**Don't send the same message to everyone!**

**Tier 1 (Inner Circle):** Send a personalized text or a phone call.

**Tier 2 (Professional/Community):** Send a structured, heartfelt email.

**Tier 3 (Distant Reach):** Use our social media templates.

## **Tier 1: The Inner Circle (High Response Rate)**

These are the people who support you because they care about you personally.

- Immediate & Extended Family: Parents, siblings, cousins, and in-laws.
- Best Friends: Your "inner sanctum" who hear about your life daily.
- Significant Other's Network: Your partner's close friends or family.

## **Tier 2: Professional Network**

These contacts often appreciate a professional yet passionate appeal.

- Current Colleagues: People you work with daily (check if your company has a matching gift program!).
- Former Coworkers: People from previous jobs with whom you've stayed in touch via LinkedIn or text.
- Clients or Vendors: If appropriate for your industry, people with whom you have a strong professional rapport.
- Mentors or Former Teachers: People who have invested in your growth.

## **Tier 3: Community & Neighborhood**

These are the people you see in your "geographical" life.

- Immediate Neighbors: The people on your block or in your building.
- Local Business Owners: Your regular barista, hairstylist, or the owner of the pet shop.
- HOA or Neighborhood Groups: Members of your Nextdoor community or block club.

## **Fundraising Incentives**

- **Raise your registration fee** and receive the 2026 Walk of Love T-Shirt
- **Raise \$100** and receive 5 complimentary Walk of Love raffle entries
- **Raise \$250** and receive 10 complimentary WOL raffle entries
- **Raise \$500** and receive complimentary sponsorship of a Dog Kennel or Cat Condo for a year
- **Raise \$1000+** and receive a custom engraved dog bone or fish displayed on the shelter walls.

Notes: You must raise your fundraising minimum by 5/26/26, to guarantee you receive your t-shirt at the event. In addition to your t-shirt, you will receive the single most valuable incentive you qualify for that matches the total amount you raise by 6/13/26.

# PHASES OF PLAN

## PHASE 1 PREPARATION & KICKOFF (WEEKS 1-2)

**Goal: Set up your page and make your first "asks."**

### Week 1: The Setup

- Action: Customize your fundraising page and set a fundraising goal.
- Action: Add a photo of your animal or a current Heartland adoptable cat or dog
- Tip: [Click here](#) for our adoptable dogs and adoptable cats to grab their photo and story to share.
- Action: Make the first donation to yourself! People are more likely to give when they see progress.

### Week 2: The Personal Outreach

- Action: Call/text your inner circle and ask them to donate to your fundraising efforts
- Action: Announce that you are fundraising for Walk of Love on social media
- Tip: Check out our library of social media templates and graphics for quick posting!
- Action: Email to professional and community network
- Tip: Check our library of email templates (below) that you can copy and paste into your email!

## PHASE 2 BUILDING MOMENTUM (WEEKS 3-4)

**Goal: Share the "Why" and broaden your reach.**

### Week 3: Share the Impact

- Action: Share why you are fundraising for Walk of Love
- Tip: Check our Heartland's mission and impact social posts in our library!
- Action: Follow up with calls, text and email if you didn't get a response from last week's outreach.
- Action: Publicly thank supporters, and link your donation to the post to broaden your reach.
- Tip: When you tag someone in your post their social network will also see your fundraising link!

### Week 4: The "Pet's Perspective"

- Action: Create a social media post from your animals POV or an adoptable animal at Heartland POV
- Action: Check in on your fundraising goal! If you already exceeded your goal or are very close, consider increasing it!
- Reminder: Remember that you must raise your fundraising minimum by May 26, 2026, to guarantee you receive your t-shirt at the event.

## PHASE 3 THE FINAL PUSH (WEEKS 5-6)

**Goal: Create urgency and say thank you.**

### Week 5: One Week to Go

- Action: Create an incentive! Offer to do something funny, like dress your animal up in costume if you reach your fundraising goal.
- Action: Start posting a countdown to the walk with daily or every other day alerts

### Week 6: The Big Finish & Gratitude

- Action: Email those in your inner circle, community and professional network that haven't donated an urgent and heartfelt message as the event approaches.
- Tip: Create urgency of the impending event deadline
- Action: Start posting a countdown to the walk with daily or every other day alerts
- Action: Post a photo of yourself at the Walk of Love and thank your donors!
- Tip: Include your personal fundraising page link and let everyone know it's not too late to donate

# TEMPLATE LIBRARY

## For Adopters

**Focus:** The "Happy Ending" and paying it forward.

### Week 2: Kickoff Email (Professional/Community)

Subject: A life-changing tail (and how you can help)  
Hi [Name],

As many of you know, my life changed for the better when I adopted [Pet Name] from Heartland Animal Shelter. Watching [him/her] blossom from a nervous rescue to a beloved family member has been an incredible journey.

I'm participating in the Walk of Love to ensure other animals get the same second chance [Pet Name] did. My goal is to raise \$[Amount] for their medical care and food. Would you consider making a donation to help me reach my goal? [Link to Page]  
Best, [Your Name]

### Week 4: Social Post (Pet's POV)

Caption: "Before I found my home, the humans at Heartland took care of me. Now, I'm helping my fellow rescues find their families! Donate to my human's Walk of Love page so more pets can get their 'gotcha day!'" [Insert photo of your pet]  
[Link to Page]  
#HeartlandAnimalShelter #WalkOfLove #Adopter

## For Fosters

**Focus:** The bridge between "homeless" and "home."

### Week 2: Kickoff Email (Professional/Community)

Subject: Life from the "foster" side of things  
Hi [Name],

I've seen firsthand the love and resources Heartland Animal Shelter pours into every animal. As a foster, I've watched shy cats learn to trust and sick dogs regain their strength—all thanks to the funding provided by supporters like you.

I'm walking in the Walk of Love to raise \$[Amount] so Heartland can continue saving the most vulnerable animals. Every dollar counts. Will you join me in this mission? [Link to Page]  
Gratefully, [Your Name]

### Week 4: Social Post (Foster Pet's POV)

Caption: [Photo of your current foster] "I don't have a permanent couch yet, but I have a warm bed and a full belly thanks to Heartland! My foster parent is walking to make sure I get everything I need until my forever family finds me. Can you help?"  
[Link to Page] #FostersSaveLives #WalkOfLove

## Quick Tips for Success

- **Tag Heartland:** When posting on social media, tag Heartland Animal Shelter so they can reshare your posts!  
#heartlandanimalshelter  
#walkoflove #wol2026  
#solemates
- **Use Visuals:** Posts with photos or videos of animals perform 3x better than text-only posts.
- **Ask Three Times:** People are busy. Don't be afraid to send a friendly reminder if someone hasn't responded to your email.

## For Volunteers

**Focus: Behind-the-scenes impact.**

### **Week 2: Kickoff Email (Professional/Community)**

Subject: Why I spend my weekends at the shelter

Hi [Name],

You might see me posting a lot of photos of shelter dogs/cats—that's because I'm a volunteer at Heartland! I see the hard work that goes into every rescue, and I see the need for resources every single week.

I'm taking my commitment a step further by participating in the Walk of Love. I'm aiming to raise \$[Amount]. Your donation directly funds the medicine and enrichment that keeps our residents happy while they wait for homes. [Link to Page]

Thank you, [Your Name]

### **Week 4: Social Post (Shelter Resident POV)**

Caption: [Photo of a dog/cat you work with] "This is my favorite volunteer, [Your Name]! They give me treats and walks, and now they are walking for the Walk of Love to help me and my friends. Please donate if you can!"

[Link to Page] #VolunteerLife #WalkOfLove

## "Walking In Memory Of"

**Focus: Honoring a legacy of love.**

### **Week 2: Kickoff Email (Professional/Community)**

Subject: Walking in memory of [Pet Name]

Hi [Name],

This year's Walk of Love is very personal for me. I am walking in memory of my beloved [Pet Name], who taught me everything I know about unconditional love.

To honor [Pet Name]'s legacy, I want to help Heartland Animal Shelter save other animals in need. I've set a goal of \$[Amount]. I would be so touched if you'd consider a donation in [Pet Name]'s honor. [Link to Page]

Warmly, [Your Name]

### **Week 4: Social Post (Memorial POV)**

Caption: [Photo of your late pet] "We lost [Pet Name] on [Date], but [his/her] spirit lives on. I'm walking in the Walk of Love to turn my grief into hope for another animal. Help me reach my goal in memory of the best [dog/cat] ever."

[Link to Page] #InMemoriam #WalkOfLove

## "Walking for an Adoptable"

**Focus: Advocating for a specific adoptable pet.**

### **Week 2: Kickoff Email (Professional/Community)**

Subject: Meet [Adoptable Pet Name]—my Walk of Love inspiration

Hi [Name],

I'm participating in Heartland's Walk of Love, and this year I'm walking specifically in honor of [Pet Name], a [dog/cat] currently at the shelter who is still searching for a home.

[Pet Name] is [briefly describe personality—e.g., a senior sweetheart/high-energy puppy]. I want to raise \$[Amount] to ensure [he/she] has everything needed while waiting for a family. Will you help me support [Pet Name]? [Link to Page]

Best, [Your Name]

#### **Week 4: Social Post (Adoptable Pet's POV)**

Caption: [Photo of the adoptable pet] "Hi! I'm [Pet Name] and I'm still waiting for my new family at Heartland. [Your Name] is walking for ME! Every donation to their page helps keep me healthy and happy until I find my home."

[Link to Page] #AdoptMe #WalkOfLove

## **For General Supporters**

**Focus: Community mission and general impact.**

#### **Week 2: Kickoff Email (Professional/Community)**

Subject: Join me in being a hero for animals 🐾

Hi [Name],

I've recently joined the Walk of Love to support Heartland Animal Shelter. They are a local pillar for animal welfare, and I'm proud to help them raise the funds they need to save lives.

My goal is \$[Amount]. Even \$[Amount] makes a huge difference in the life of a shelter pet. Can I count on your support? [Link to Page]

Best, [Your Name]

#### **Week 4: Social Post (General POV)**

Caption: "I believe every animal deserves to be loved. That's why I'm raising money for the Walk of Love! We're \$[Amount] away from the goal. Who's going to help me get there today?"

[Link to Page] #WalkOfLove #HeartlandAnimalShelter

#### **Final Push Templates - Week 6**

Urgent Email Template (Inner Circle/Tier 1)

Subject: We're so close! Just 3 days left 🏃♂️🐾

Hi [Name],

The Walk of Love is this Saturday! I am only \$[Amount] away from my goal of \$[Total Goal]. Heartland relies on this event to fund their rescue work for the entire year.

If you haven't had a chance yet, could you help me close the gap with a donation today? [Link to Page]

See you at the finish line! [Your Name]

#### **Post-Walk Thank You (Social Media)**

Caption: [Photo of you at the walk] "We did it! 🎉 Huge thank you to everyone who donated. Together we raised \$[Amount] for Heartland Animal Shelter! It's not too late to push that total even higher—link in bio to donate!"

#WalkOfLove #SoleMates #HeartlandAnimalShelter