

Invests in Animals

The animals have been banking on Rhonda Sherwood for more than 15 years. That's how long the financial planner for ScotiaMcLeod has been volunteering in various capacities for the BC SPCA. Sherwood started out as a cat-care volunteer at the BC SPCA's Vancouver shelter and over the years took on roles with increasing responsibility, eventually becoming volunteer coordinator for the Vancouver shelter, chair of the society's Vancouver/Burnaby Community Council and a major fundraiser for the annual Scotiabank and BC SPCA *Paws for a Cause . . . Walk for the Animals*.

"I feel like I'm on this huge mission to educate people about what the BC SPCA does and what the animals need," says Sherwood. "*Paws for a Cause* is a great opportunity to raise public awareness and do that." ScotiaMcLeod is the investment arm of Scotiabank, the campaign's title sponsor. In addition to contributing \$25,000 to the event as the major sponsor, Scotiabank also matched the \$15,000 in donations made by employees toward *Paws for a Cause*. Last year, Scotiabank's total contribution was \$65,000.

Sherwood, who personally raised \$4,675, says it's heartening to work for an organization that shares her values, and the values of the community it serves. "It creates an inclusive workplace where employees are supported for who they are and what they believe in. As an employee, I'm going to feel more loyal to a company that supports what I believe in and values what I value." Sherwood credits Scotiabank's participation in *Paws for a Cause* with fostering a collaborative workplace where both staff and clients come together for a worthwhile objective. She said she's met wonderful employees with whom she never would have had any dealings in an organization as large and diversified as Scotiabank, if not for *Paws for a Cause*. For example, May Smith, an employee with Scotia Private Client Group, bakes and sells dog and cat cookies throughout the campaign and donates the proceeds to *Paws for a Cause*.

"There are so many people who have a real passion and who care about animals," says Sherwood, who also bonds with clients who are sympathetic to the plight of rescued animals. *Paws for a Cause* is the BC SPCA's signature campaign, raising more than \$800,000 in 2007 for urgently needed medical care, emergency rescue and sheltering for the province's most disadvantaged wild and companion animals. This year's campaign launches June 1 and culminates with the walk itself on Sunday, Sept. 14 in 37 communities across the province. All funds raised through *Paws for a Cause* stay in local communities to help animals in need.