

Cat, Dogs and Actor Star in Adoption Ads

Patriotic ad campaign calls attention to shelter pets.

By Soraya Gutierrez

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Actor, veteran stand-up comic and author Richard Belzer adds another leading role to his acting resume. He's now the "Uncle Sam" of the pet world.

In a new campaign to help shelter animals, "We Want You . . . To Adopt," Belzer assumes the compelling glare of the iconic 1916 recruitment poster. In his latest role as the star of a national shelter animal adoption public service announcement launched by North Shore Animal League America, Belzer's portrayal of the patriotic figure seeks sign-ups to take a shelter animal into their home.

The ads, featuring Belzer in Uncle Sam garb and holding a dog in a stars-and-stripes top hat, intend to capitalize on the public's attention to the media's current surge of presidential campaign news. The ad announces a "Paws-i-dential Year" for all "Republi-CANINES and Demo-CATS."

Animal League spokeswoman Devera Lynn said it's estimated that nearly 5 million pets are euthanized in the United States each year. She expressed confidence that Belzer's image on the ad will grab attention and help increase adoptions across the country.

"At the same time, we have the potential to make a significant impact on the euthanasia toll," Lynn said.

Belzer currently stars on NBC's "Law & Order: Special Victims Unit" and is a pet owner and longtime supporter of shelter adoptions. In a statement, he described the Animal League campaign as a "noble cause for which he has a strong affinity."