

# Capital Pet

newsletter  
of the

Mohawk & Hudson River  
HUMANE SOCIETY



 3 Oakland Avenue Menands, NY 12204  [www.mohawkhumane.org](http://www.mohawkhumane.org)  (518) 434-8128

## before



## ARES' STRUGGLE

To the ancient Greeks, Ares was the god of war. At the Humane Society, a little six-week-old puppy would be named Ares because he would have a difficult battle ahead of him. Ares was found alone on the street in Albany, discarded by someone who didn't care enough about the sick, helpless puppy to give him the loving care that he needed.

Ares had no hair, his skin dry, flaking, and tight over his bony body. His skin had become so tight that Ares could not stretch out fully or walk normally. Our Medical Director diagnosed Ares with Demodectic Mange. Puppies commonly have mites that cause this disease, but when their immune systems are healthy, there are often no ill effects. Ares, however, was not in normal circumstances. He was not nursing from his mother in a warm, loving environment. He had been left on the street hungry and helpless as winter began.

Ares soon went into foster care with our shift leader, Jim Bedford. Jim brought Ares into his home and slowly began the orphaned puppy's road to recovery. After only a short time, little patches of hair started to grow and Ares was able to walk normally. He soon met the resident dog at Jim's house and learned to play like a normal puppy. After a few weeks of care, Ares was ready for his new home – off the streets, healthy and with only distant memories of his difficult beginnings in life. Ares had won the battle for his life.

## after





## BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Barbara Harms, President

Richard Shelsky, Vice President

Mary Anne Kowalski, Secretary

Kathlene Thiel, Treasurer

Jeffrey Bulger, Member at Large

John Ebersole

Timothy Hart

John Kearney, DVM

John Kenney

Libby Post

Denise Ringer

Eveline Ward-Sells

Joyce Weiler

Lisa Witkowski

## MANAGEMENT

Brad Shear, Executive Director

Tina S. Murray, Director of Operations

Roger Blankfein, DVM, Medical Director

Deidre Bruce, Community Outreach Manager

Nancy Haynes, Animal Welfare Coordinator

## LOCATION

3 Oakland Avenue  
Menands, NY 12204

## HOURS

Monday-Friday 10am-6pm

Saturday 10am-5pm

Sunday 1-4pm

## WEB SITE

[www.mohawkhumane.org](http://www.mohawkhumane.org)

## TELEPHONE NUMBERS

518.434.8128

518.434.0217 (fax)

# FROM THE DIRECTOR



Executive Director  
Brad Shear and  
Bastian, his cat

My first full year as the director of the Mohawk and Hudson River Humane Society has just come to an end. As I reflect back on that year, I am amazed at how this community has come together to help animals. The list of people and groups that have reached out to help is far too long to mention here, but the accomplishments are many.

Our Humane Investigation Department has gone through one of the most impressive changes. We commissioned two investigators this year, and our department is now called upon regularly by police and district attorneys' offices throughout the region. The demand for our services seems to be ever increasing. Every week there is a new case of

animals suffering at the hands of people who could not take the time to care for animals properly or are callous enough to purposely cause animals harm. Thanks to our investigations over 200 animals were saved from abuse and suffering. People who have committed these crimes have been charged so that we can continue to stop these cruel acts. You may remember some of the more shocking cases: a man with 25 Chihuahuas living in filth in his home, a woman with over 40 cats that were all sick and in need of medical care, and the poor frightened horses who were locked in the darkness of their stalls without food, or care. All of these animals found solace and comfort with the Humane Society.

This year we started our Safe Haven program. The program is a partnership with Unity House in Troy. When a woman enters Unity House's domestic violence shelter, her pets are housed at the Humane Society. Many women face abuse from spouses and partners, but stay to protect their children and pets from abuse. Domestic violence shelters will take children, but rarely accept pets. This new partnership has allowed women to safely leave abusers with their entire family.

Hundreds of school children learned about caring for animals and the importance of animals in our lives. These children will be the future advocates for animals in our community. This program will grow over the coming years because of our partnership with Siena College's Bonner Scholar program. A Siena student has begun interning at the Society and will continue with us throughout her four years of college. Her focus will be on growing our humane education programs so that the future will be bright for orphaned animals.

Of course the Mohawk and Hudson River Humane Society is best known for finding new homes for orphaned pets. This year over 3,400 animals were adopted from the Society's Animal Care Center and our satellite adoption centers. Our adoption facilities were improved this year by installing new flooring in the dog kennel areas. In the coming months we will be replacing many of our dog kennels and creating a free roaming room for cats - all improvements that will make orphaned animals' temporary stay with us happier and healthier.

This year we are happy to announce the opening of our new adoption center in the Latham PetSmart. We are very excited about this new high traffic location that promises to find homes for more animals than ever. Our community



# RAVENA'S RESCUE

When the frightened tabby cat was first rescued by our humane investigators, she was simply cat number 23. Soon she would be named 'Ravena' after the town where she was saved by the Humane Society. What was life like for Ravena before the Humane Society arrived? What is it like to be one of over 40 cats in a house, feeling sick with no medical care, no litterbox, breathing air that is stale with the pungent scent of ammonia caused by urine? It is no life for a cat like Ravena who just wants to be loved.

When the Humane Society's Investigation Team was asked to assist the Town of Ravena with a case of cat hoarding, we had a good idea of what we should expect to see. All of our investigators had been in several similar homes where people had taken in more cats than the owners could properly care for and conditions for the cats continued to worsen over time. At this house the neighbors didn't open their windows because the odor of urine and feces was so strong.

Our response team was prepared, covered head to toe in Tyvek protective suits, wearing masks and gloves. They held cameras to document the scene, and had plenty of carriers to bring the cats back to safety. Our medical director came to assess the condition in the house and

examine each cat, prioritizing those that would need immediate care. These were all things that our team has prepared for many times in the past in similar houses.

As expected, there were far too many cats in the house, they were not properly cared for and were in need of medical attention. As expected, much of the house was coated with cat urine and feces, cats were in every spot they could find, and it would take days to rescue them all.

This case, however, would take an unusual turn. As our investigators went through the house seeking out cats to rescue, they came across a room filled with military memorabilia including rockets, hand grenades and bombs. The home was quickly evacuated and the bomb squad was called in while the police evacuated neighboring homes. Rescuing more cats would have to wait until the house was declared to be safe. Police determined that none of the munitions were active and allowed the Society's staff to continue with our cat rescue operation.

The following day, Humane Society staff went back to the house to make sure all of the cats had been found. There was so much trash and debris in the house that not only did we find more cats that were hiding the previous day, but there was

another room with unexploded ordinance. Police were called again to evacuate the area and clear the house. Once again, no dangers were found and our staff was allowed to get back to work.

Saving Ravena and over 40 other cats like her would ultimately take weeks of Humane Society and Town of Ravena staff going back to find more cats coming out of hiding each day. Our staff never questioned whether they should risk their safety going back into this house that seemed to be filled with dangers; they all knew that the cats had to get out. Finally all of the cats got the care they needed, the fresh air to breathe and for Ravena, a new, safe HOME.



The Second Annual  
***Around the World  
for Eighty Strays***

A gala to benefit the Mohawk & Hudson River Humane Society

**Friday, April 24, 2009  
7:00pm**

**Wolferts Roost  
Van Rensselaer Blvd, Albany**

Corporate sponsorships and Honorary Committee available.

Please call (518) 434-8128 ext. 206  
or email [events@mohawkhumane.org](mailto:events@mohawkhumane.org)  
for more information.

# MOHAWK & HUDSON RIVER HUMANE SOCIETY TRIBUTES

Tributes listed here were received 10/9/08 – 1/6/09. More recent tributes will appear in future editions.

## IN MEMORY OF...

### Maria Abraham

Evelyn Williams

### Vicki Adler

Mildred Wolfe

### Agatha, Kayla & Nielly

Barbara McNamee

### Kenneth Albert

Jeffrey & Diane Adams

Pam Amerman

Barbara Bradley

Christine Burke

Margaret Callahan

Hutton Dhue

Ron Kohn

Carol Kretzschmar

Jack Overton

Linda Portanova

Ann Sarsmit

Jim & Suzie Snoddy

Rae Wakelin

Bill Clarkson and the Westminster

Schools Faculty & Staff

### Steve Albigese

Laurie Albigese

### Trusty Arnold

Linda Gottstein

### Nikita Attwell

Linda Gottstein

### William Aumic

Adam Hagues

Evalyn Krone-Blaha

### Jean Balashek

Corianna Thompson

### Barney

RPI Government & Community Relations

### Jeanne Barton

Lorri McCarthy

### BB & Brandy

Barbara Pavelchak

### Bryant Beaudoin

Friends from OTDA

### Becky

Susan Holdridge

### Copper Behrens

Doris & Jim Davis

### Cindy Berkowitz

Boght Hills Elementary School Faculty  
& Staff

### Bodie

Judi Kopek

### Christopher Bojanowski

Michael Roswig

### Marilyn Bovair

Mary Ann Moroskey

### Robert Brosen

Wallace & Joan Charron

Elizabeth Modleski

### Annie Brown Fowler

Susan Swartz

### Murphy Brown

Barbara Laney

### Bubba Jim

Eveline Ward-Sells

### Benji Buckler

Valerie Lattanzi

### Caesar

Alderisio Family

### Amanda Campbell

Sandra Fratianni

Ted & Barbara Hahn

Hoosic Valley Athletic Assoc. Officers,  
Members, Parents & Players

### Amanda Campbell (cont.)

Darryl Partridge

Dana Pearce

### Ann Candib

Mary Tebbutt

### Casey

Barbara McNamee

### John Centofanti

Susan Fraley

### George Chesbro

Bethlehem Central High School Class  
of 1958

Chesbro Family Reunion

Ray & Eileen Chesbro

Debbie Hext, Carol Premo & Chris

Marshall

Dawn LeFevre

L. George Piazza

M. Poole

### Harry Chesky

Clara Abate

### Rose Cheung

Carol & Blaine Bryce

### Chrissy

Betty Ferris

### Betty Comtois

Rene Comtois

Lauri Morton-Peasley

### Marc Coreno

Angela Cerkowski

John & Nancy Uruskyj

### Carolyn Cushman

Karen Ackerman

Pam & Austin Sperbeck

### Daisy

Linda DeFelippo

### Marie Davies

Kate Cahill

### Frances Davis

Joan & Donald Ryan

### Robert DeFlumer, Jr.

Michael Ricard

### Delila

Mary VonHof-Martin & Trent Martin

### DJ

Penny Schermerhorn

### Domino

William Van Valkenburg

### Domonique

Anonymous

### Dr. Albert Ellman

Marcia Kolakoski

### Emilia

Carolyn Trombe-Hains

### Alice Flomp

Marjorie Leibowitz

### Thomas Flynn

Karen Caola

### Alice Fontaine

Mary Savage

### Kyle Genaway

Carrie Genaway

### Reno Giacomini

William & Christine Beecher

Gabor & Nancy Danchetz

Sandra Dickinson

Elizabeth DiLorenzo

Richard Jenkins

Cheri Newton

Lucy & Sol Prudente

Louis & Marge Roberge

### Gina

James & Irene Otto

### Ginger

Joan Slaver

### Bernard Goldstein

Nicholas Selby

### Steven Goldstein

Andrea Dolgas

### Lucy Gorman

Marvin Wulf

### Jeanette Green

Joan Adams

### Cali Hart

Marcia Nagengast

### Robert Harwood

NYS Office of the Medicaid Inspector  
General

### John Herrington

John & Roberta Buono

Thelma Culver

Edgar & Teri Glasheen

Jon & Connie Hall

Dorothy Halloran

Cynthia Henninger & Ernest Aurelia

Barry & Diane Isenberg

Ronald & Linda Martinelli

Jean Plume

Deanna Smith

Ursula Sturm

Thomas & Elizabeth Sweeney

### Jenny Hicks

David & Patricia Schlegel

### Richard & Suzanne Hill

Paul & Ann DeBarbieri

### Ruth Hyde

NYS Dept. of Labor Friends &  
Co-workers

### Jett & Rue

Beverley Krauss

### JR Whitey

James Sheppard

### Junior

Easton Family

### Frank Kavanagh

Michael & Dorine McManus

### James Kavanagh, Jr.

Michael & Dorine McManus

### Joseph Kinary

NYS Attorney General's Office Friends

### Jocelyn Kost

Charlie & Cheryl Barnes

Carol & Wally DiStefano

Nicole Ehrie

Mitzi & Gerry Flynn

Tess Glass

Laurie & Phil Gross

Jean & Gary Keehufus

Jay Kessler

NYS Office of Real Property Services

Sax-Greene Family

Lyn & Michael Shanley

Ellen & Bob Smyth

Joe Urschel

### Tai Krokenberger

Jean Krokenberger

### Ernest Legenbauer

Cheryl Bovair

Stacy & Hannah Galarneau

Anne Hoffman

Joseph & Lynn Kogut

Jeff & Patricia Sharpe

### Ruthe Levin

Harold Geurtze & Company, Inc.

Francis Murray

Brian & Susan Spindler

### Ruthe Levin (cont.)

Elaine & Walter Spoor

Cathy & Dick Svenson

### Lexi

Maria Lizzi

### Lil

Dale Ann Bradford

### Georgia Little

Audrey Higgins

### Mariah

Margaret Pecoroni

### Marlena

Pamela Kalinowski

### Max

Robert Miller

### Max

Gordon & Betty Fishlock

### Richard McMahon

NYS Dept. of Education - Rate Setting Unit

### George McMaster

Margot Scott

### John McNeish

Knollwood Members

### Mitsey

Katherine Kalbus

### Molly

Colleen Flynn

### Paul & Mary Monaco

Rosemarie Melius

### Philip Morgan

D. Kirk Morgan

Lawrence & Adrienne Waltz

### Hans Mosher

Shirley Mosher

### Ernest Naylor

Linda Abbott

### Donna Newman

Jeannette Hall

### Micky Newton

Judith Ferguson

### Nino

Mary Jo Cosco

### Christopher Nolin

Nancy Roberts

### Theresa Norton

Joan McKeon

### John Nowicki

Heather Nowicki

### Courtney Oliver

Nancy Mallory

### Ollie

Judy & Frank Lavardera

### Ollie

Nina Pattison

### Zoe Passaretti

Linda Passaretti

Katie Wilson

### Pity

Jerry & Elaine Pospisil

### Lorraine Power Tharp

The Hon. Rachel Kretser

### Pumpkin

Orli Loewenberg

### Bear Purcell

James & Shirley Hicks

### Eleanor Corey Qua

Donna Corey Qua Livingston

### Quincy

June Beyer

### Raj & Augie Puffin

Kilambi Janakidevi

### Rita Rawley

Virginia Crotty



# MOHAWK & HUDSON RIVER HUMANE SOCIETY TRIBUTES

Tributes listed here were received 10/9/08 – 1/6/09. More recent tributes will appear in future editions.

- Rex**  
Christine Linn
- Gary Rice**  
Charlotte Gray
- Dr. Jean Rissacher**  
Barbara Ashline  
Kathleen Ashline  
Phyllis & Leon Charash  
Richard Thomas
- Frederick "Fritz" Ristau**  
Maureen Carney-Root & Richard Root
- Mary Robitaille**  
Dianne Ammerman
- Rosie**  
Dr. Lynda Hohmann
- Sammy & Max**  
Robert Sweeney
- Sammy, Max, Alex, Cookie & Peaches**  
Lindsay Zamek
- Sampson**  
Lynn Bessette
- Anthony Mario Sano**  
Anthony Dawson  
Jennifer & Christopher Harkin  
George & Patricia Maloney, Children & Grandchildren  
Robert Santorelli  
Bev & Herb Vener
- Shadow**  
Deborah & Ronald Priest
- Steven Michael Sheehy**  
Carol & Blaine Bryce
- Sibo & Barry**  
Anita Fiedel
- Dianne Skpowski**  
Marci McKenna
- Ryan Slingerland**  
Nicholas McSpedon
- Wayne Smith**  
Judith Barnes  
Sharon Bates  
Thomas & Elizabeth Bullock  
Elizabeth Donahue Doviak  
Gaetano Gialanella  
Stephanie Lloyd  
Harold Lohner  
Patricia Loucks  
Willie Marlowe & Tom Speight  
Our Brothers' Keepers Foundation Board of Directors  
Linda Passaretti  
George & Joyce Sarachan  
Kimberly Swift  
Warren W. Fane, Inc.  
John Williams
- Socks**  
Laura O'Mara
- Sophie**  
Maureen Bracken
- R. Speanburg, Sr.**  
Bill & Mary Brizzell  
Steven Heider  
Clare Schisa
- Daisy Spier**  
Syma Lapides
- Spike**  
Dorothea Castle
- Reba Sullivan**  
Erin Sullivan
- Susie**  
Lee & Bill Morin
- Lil Tehan**  
Mary Lou Palmer
- Betty Lou Thompson**  
Lois Mitchell
- Thumper**  
Kathleen Economides
- Tikki**  
Karen Stiles
- Tiny**  
Bob, Pat, Amy & Daniel Hunziker
- Celia Tocci and her dog Nikki**  
Carol Jackson
- Wally Towle**  
Paul & Monica Shelmandine
- Trish**  
Barbara McNamee
- Kurt Trolenberg**  
Astrid Birk  
Leonard & Lynn Bossard  
Ellen Collins-Howd  
Anne & Edward Davis  
William & Linda Davis and Family  
Einbinder Family  
Jonathan Fogel  
Robert Forster  
Emilio & Jill Genzano and Family  
Sheila & David Kiehle  
Kathy Martucci  
NYS OCFS Employee Assistance Program – I. Biggi, H. Blaise-Coleman, G. Gardiner, M. Lawyer, C. Linder-Cantwell, M. Monaco, J. Morgan, J. Quinlan, B. Reagan, E. G. Robinson, B. Seckerson, M. A. Young  
NYS Office of State Comptroller Friends & Co-workers  
Grace Regutti  
Sandy Sawyer & Bill Barret  
Frances Schmitt  
Jeanneane Southern  
SUNY OAS
- Trooper**  
Anthony Spadaro
- Roberta "Chick" Vendetti**  
Vickie McLea
- Lou Wagner (and in honor of Doris Wagner)**  
Dottie & Ed Young
- Wally**  
Geraldine McDonald
- Marcia Walsh**  
Doris Poskanzer
- Richard Wm. Webb**  
Nancy Webb
- Joseph Welter**  
Barbara Baciewicz  
Marilynn Bryan  
Joan Collen  
Anna Durocher  
Friends at Monday Night Volleyball  
Charles Furman & Amy Ludik  
Clyde Furman  
William & Vicki Galcik  
Arlene Hurley  
Liselle LaFrance  
Thomas & Barbara Mabee  
Penny Newberry  
Eleanor Page  
Nicola & Angelina Parente  
Brenda Parnes  
Dorothy & John Pelersi  
Elaine & Walter Spoor
- Joseph Welter (cont.)**  
St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church  
Choir  
State Archives Records Center  
Martha Sue Steadman  
David & Karen Tarella  
Steve & Marylou Wahl  
Eileen Warzek  
William Welter
- Mary Wertman**  
David Gerson  
Matthew Gerson
- Mildred Westphal**  
Mary Davis
- Walter Wilkinson**  
NYS OMIG
- Winnie & Emmitt**  
Marguerite Bauer
- Nancy Wise**  
Albany Police Detectives  
Albany Police Officers Union  
Douglas Alderton  
Jessica Ali & Jennifer Ali  
John Ali  
Rosemarie Ali  
Laureen Brisley  
Charles Carrier  
Julie Carroll  
Eileen Clinton  
Alice Dickert  
Pam Drzewiecki  
Mark Duffy  
Jeffrey Hyde  
Debbie Keville  
Petra Larsen  
Colleen McAllister  
Frederick & Susan Prince  
Lyn Ritchie & Dave Catalano  
Rosemarie Stevens  
Janet Thiel
- Rose Zaccardo**  
Richard Zaccardo
- Zeke "22" Zlotsky**  
Shirley Bone
- Zoey**  
Melissa Rose
- ZZ**  
Michael Janairo
- IN HONOR OF...**
- Richard Ahlborn**  
Tyler Ahlborn
- Dora Alcon**  
Kristen Kiser
- Linda Alifano**  
Madeline & Arthur Alifano
- Lori Allen**  
Ronnie Green
- Peter & Tasha Ansell**  
Peter Conlin
- Caroline Barrett**  
Joan Krege
- Mrs. Harry Bridge**  
Roy Bridge
- Bonny**  
Michael & Pam Dubuc
- Mr. & Mrs. C. Brooks**  
Andrew & Joan Zlotnick
- Linda Campbell and every living creature**  
JoAnn Campbell
- Jerry Carafello**  
Anonymous
- Darren & Tami Celso**  
Marilyn Morris
- Chief & Maggie**  
Joseph Smith
- Colette & t'Fille**  
Beth Ammerman
- Peter Collins, DDS**  
Office Staff of Peter Collins, DDS
- Tina & Byron Connell**  
Susan & Alexander Filipp
- Henry Crowley**  
M. Crawley
- Carol Croak**  
Jon Leach
- Chris & Paul Danker**  
Nancy Relyea
- Ray Darling**  
Carole Darling
- Bob Dawson**  
Martin & Sarah Dunbar  
John & Vicki Heins
- Dottie Denham**  
David Orton
- Marilyn Eberle**  
Nancy Relyea
- Eileen**  
James Catlin
- Mr. & Mrs. Engler**  
Gregory Schramek
- Terry & Mike Franchini**  
Joseph Nye
- Chaz Furman**  
Jane LaCombe  
Albert & Dorothy Ludik
- Mr. & Mrs. Gentile**  
Heather Waalkes
- Denise Goodrich**  
Regina Mooney
- John Heid**  
Jannice Sherwin
- Cheryl Henley**  
William Daniels
- Aurelia Hope**  
Diane Turner
- Harriet Jaffe**  
Joan Krege
- Gordon Jevons**  
Karen & Jim George
- Dr. & Mrs. Allen Kaplan**  
Jyl & Bob Cosgrove
- Dr. David Kaplan**  
Lauren Kaplan-Rieger
- Cindy Kilgallon**  
Gary Mulligan
- Lydia Kosinski**  
Mark Yolles  
Paul Yolles
- Larry & Dee Kronau**  
Stephanie Silvernail
- Tiffanie Helena LaFleur**  
Anonymous
- Betsy Lamoureux and Students from Emma Willard School**  
Barbara Thorp
- Tom Lomma**  
Watson Family
- Kelly Long**  
Jennie Bauer
- Sarah MacDougal**  
Wanda MacDougal  
Wesley MacDougal

(continued on next page)

## MOHAWK & HUDSON RIVER HUMANE SOCIETY TRIBUTES

Tributes listed here were received 10/9/08 – 1/6/09. More recent tributes will appear in future editions.

### IN HONOR OF...(cont.)

#### Maddie & her pups

Art & Sandra Venne

#### Laudelina Martinez

Phyllis & Stephen Hillinger

#### Masha & Addison

Robert & Diane Freer

#### Matt

Gloria Ballien

#### John & Sue Matthews

JoAnne Schrader

#### Sue McDonough

Claudia Russell

#### Barb McNamee

Heather Koleszar

Steven & Susan Powers

#### Ann McPherson

Grace Raymond

#### Alanna Mensing

Colleen Pasquale

#### Monty & the Zells

Colby Roberts

#### Moyer/Jureller Family

Florence Abrams

#### Dede Nash

Richard Pfielsticker

#### Rose Nasso

Marianne Nasso

#### Edward O'Connor

C. L. King & Associates

#### Christopher & Melissa O'Hara and Family

Arline O'Hara

#### Janice Otis

Lani Beaudet

#### Gloria Ozmeck

Lonna Baker

#### Ann Pasquale

Colleen Pasquale

#### Morrie & Catherine Peters

Mary Lou Haber

#### Lindsay Piechnik

Nikki & John Piechnik

#### Tracy Pitcher

Michelle, Rebecca, Renee, Jessica & Reggie

#### Bill & Ruth Price

Christina Owens

#### Stephanie Ranze

Richard Pfielsticker

#### Nancy Relyea

June Bender

#### Sherri Riccio

Michael Mockler

#### Miriam Rider

Thomas & Barbara Rider

#### Carol Roberts

Joan Verdile

#### Steven Roberts

Gary LaValley

#### John Robinson, Jr.

Leanne Robinson

#### Maureen & Jacques Roeth

Thomas Rossman & J. Matthew Miller

#### Emily Sabatino

Connor Patrick

#### Saint Pius X Class 2-3 (Ms. Sabatino)

Sam Wagoner

#### Saint Pius X School Faculty & Staff

Carmela Pellegrino & Neil Pawlusch

#### Scruffy

Shirley McLaren

#### Brad & Lessa Shear

David & Carlynn Thompson

#### Lisa & Richard Shelsky

Dean Luongo

Kathleen Luongo

#### Dolly Lee Simmons

John Articolo

#### Gemini & Susan Smith

Barbara McNamee

#### Wayne Smith, Jr.

Charles Hite & Nancy Doran-Hite

#### Cobbey Sova

Chester & Mary Griffith

#### Paul Stockert

Richard Pfielsticker

#### Ricky Talmage

Joan Krege

#### Tanner

Bonnie Erickson

#### Linda Taylor

Bruce Raver

#### Toby

Tina Lecuyer

#### June & Gene Walters

Dottie & Ed Young

#### Janice & Stuart Weiner

Melissa Fraley

#### Roger Williams

George & Jill Nohai

#### Rainbow & Shadow Winig

Agnes Hurley

#### Renee Wolfman

William Daniels

#### Greg, Brenda, Barney & Lucy Young

Diane Brosius

#### Mr. & Mrs. Gary Zlotnick

Andrew & Joan Zlotnick

## SPECIAL THANKS

**ANIMAL HOUSE GROOMERS** for holding a holiday pet photo fundraiser

**DR. MICHAEL CASLER** for orthopedic assessment of a dog

If you would like to hold a fundraising event for the Humane Society or have a donation canister at your place of business, please contact our Development Department at 518-434-8128 x206.



## FROM THE DIRECTOR

*continued from page 2*

truly understands that adopting from the Humane Society not only brings a new lifelong family member into your home, that adoption saves a life. Our ongoing partnership with PetSmart has lead to the adoption of over 600 animals this year alone.

This year we held our most successful fundraising event in our 121 year history, the *Around the World for 80 Strays* gala at Wolferts Roost, which was just named one of the region's top events by the Business Review. Our 4th annual Art Saves Animals auction was our most successful yet, and plans are already underway to make both events better than ever.

All of the animals I mentioned and many more were rescued, rehabilitated and found new homes because of the support of our community. No government agency or national animal welfare group funds our programs; only your donations keep the Society's essential services going.

In the coming year we will face new challenges. We will look for ways to help people keep their pets in spite of the difficult economic times. We will be looking for new adoption outlets for our animals so they can get out into the community and be seen by potential adopters. We will continue the growth of our outreach and education programs. Most importantly, we will continue to fight for the protection of our best friends who have no one else to speak for them. Thank you for your support. I am looking forward to another great year helping the animals and people of the Capital Region.

*Brad Shear*



# TRAINER'S CORNER

## Does Your Dog Really Understand?

"I think I will move a distance away from that fuzzy toy," says Sally as she sets up to move through Temptation Alley.

It's graduation night. For the past month and a half, owners and their dogs have been learning basic skills to help them in everyday life. 'Temptation Alley', a game I learned at one of Pat Miller's internships, is a line of tempting items for the dogs laid out on the floor every few feet. Owners walk their dogs around the tempting items. They practice walking on a loose lead, 'leave it', sit, down, stay and having their dogs focus on them.

Sally had learned one of the basic skills we teach in class: set your dog up for success. She knew a fuzzy toy was too tempting for her dog. She moved a few feet away, so she could reward her dog for the correct behavior of staying at her side while they negotiated their way around Temptation Alley. As her dog is successful at five feet away, she will move a few inches closer each time she practices. Her dog is learning that she is reinforced for staying close to her owner as Sally rewards intermittently with tasty treats.

Did her dog know the meaning of 'let's go', 'sit', 'down', or 'leave it' the first night of class? No, but through luring and shaping the correct behaviors for the past six weeks, Sally was now able to walk her dog past a container of food, a bone, and a ball that wiggled and jiggled. Fuzzy toys were still a challenge but Sally had made great progress.

Our dogs are not born knowing how to speak our English language. It is our job to teach them what different cues mean. With positive reinforcement training we begin at the very basic level, with minimal distractions. We set our dogs up, by managing the environment, to be successful so we can reward them for the correct behavior, rather than reprimand them

for incorrect behavior.

We teach by luring or capturing the behavior, then fading the lure (empty hand, no treat in it....your hand becomes the hand signal). When the dog is anticipating the behavior, we then add the cue word. The dog associates his action with the cue word. Bit by bit he learns what different words mean. The cue word is said only once; otherwise the dog learns he does not have to respond the first time.

Imagine yourself learning a foreign language. Someone speaks a word to you, but you do not understand. Would it be easier for you to learn what 'sit' meant if:

- (1) someone took you gently by the arm and led you over to a chair?
- (2) they repeated the word over and over again? or
- (3) continued to shout the word if you did not respond the first time, and roughly pushed you into the chair?

Which method would be more enjoyable? Which would make you want to continue learning? Positive reinforcement training provides an atmosphere where our dogs want to interact with us.

Dogs are very visual. A squirrel in the yard, a ball being bounced across the street, another dog being walked - all are very enticing for our dogs. Their instinct to chase and be social kicks in. These are all distractions for our dogs. Distractions should be kept to a minimum when teaching a new skill. We first teach them to respond to certain cues in a quiet environment with minimal distractions before we begin to add distractions.

Dogs also learn in certain contexts. Once they know 'sit' in a quiet room, move to different rooms in the house to practice. You may have to go back to luring a few times, until they

By Christine Danker, CPDT

(518) 439-2992

Hemlock Hollow LLC

[www.hemlockhollowdogtraining.com](http://www.hemlockhollowdogtraining.com)

understand that 'sit' means the same in different places, with different people present, etc. Can they sit on a rug? With the TV on? With you in front of them? To the left of them, to the right of them? If visitors come to the door? We call this generalizing the behavior.

I was reminded of this recently. Our new puppy had been sitting at the door before I open it to let her in or out. But just last week she just stood there and looked at me. Ah...I had not trained her to sit on my right side, I had not generalized the sit to all contexts. I had placed some packages on the ground near the door and she was standing on my right side. We had not practiced sitting on my right side, only in front and on my left side! I didn't yell at her, I didn't repeat the word sit; I helped her out by luring her into a sit. A few more practice sessions and she is now able to sit on either side of me.

Be patient - it may take a few extra training sessions but in the long run you will have a dog that enjoys training and being with you. His understanding of cue words in a variety of places with distractions will grow, and you will be rewarded with a well-mannered family companion in different scenarios.

*Chris Danker, CPDT, has over four decades of showing and handling her own dogs as well as dogs for clients. Participating in many venues, Chris has handled dogs to multiple National and Regional Specialty wins, and over 70 titles in obedience, agility and conformation. She is active in pet therapy with her own dogs. Chris is a Canine Good Citizen (CGC) and Therapy Dog International (TDI) evaluator.*

*Chris is now teaching classes and workshops at the Humane Society. Check our website [www.mohawkhumane.org](http://www.mohawkhumane.org) for the latest dates and times.*

# YOUNG MOTHER AND BABIES RESCUED



Early on a cool November morning, one of the Humane Society's staff members noticed a large cardboard box outside of our animal care center. This is a common occurrence at the Society. People regularly leave boxes of blankets and towels to give our orphaned animals a bit of comfort. Maybe the box was a donation of nourishing food to keep orphaned animals healthy until they find new homes. But this box was different: it was moving.

The staff member gently pulled back a corner of the box to reveal a small chocolate Labrador mix looking out of the darkness with her big brown eyes. Shockingly, she was not alone. This poor abandoned dog was faithfully nursing five young puppies, only three weeks old.

Mother and pups were quickly brought inside where they were fed and warmed up. Our medical director examined them and our Humane Officer began an investigation. Luckily mother and puppies would be fine and were in one of our loving foster homes by



the end of the day, where the mother was named Maddie. Maddie could have easily escaped from the flimsy cardboard box that held her, but she refused to leave her puppies, keeping them safe and nurtured throughout the night until help arrived.

Maddie's puppies were old enough to find new homes just after the new year so they could start 2009 with loving families and distant memories of one cold night in the dark. Maddie has also found a home where she can be cared for and loved now that she has raised her babies and protected them from those who would put them out on the streets.

Thanks to all of the volunteers, supporters, and staff of the Mohawk and Hudson River Humane Society, the New Year will mean a new life for Maddie and her babies.



## Maddie's Puppies

