

# Capital Pet

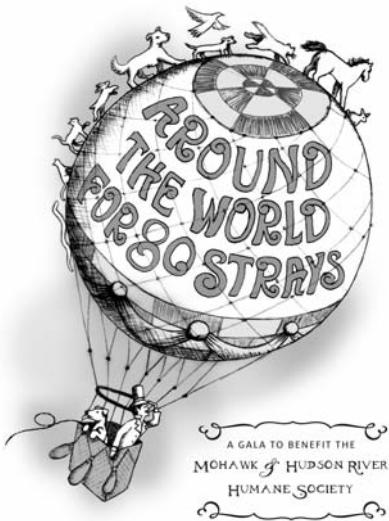
newsletter  
of the

Mohawk & Hudson River  
HUMANESOCIETY



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

## A NIGHT TO REMEMBER



On Friday, April 4th, over 270 people came together at Wolferts Roost Country Club in Albany for the Society's inaugural *Around the World for 80 Strays* Gala, raising over \$67,000! Honorary Committee Chair, Assemblyman Bob Reilly, welcomed the crowd and shared his vision for the future of the Society. Guests enjoyed culinary delights from Italy, China, Spain and France, paired with delicious wines donated by Joe Carr and desserts donated by Anthony's Dipped Fruit, while music from 24/Seven played on. The silent auction boasted a little something for everyone, and Auctioneer Ben Patten from WKLI 100.9 FM "Magic in the Morning" hosted the live auction, which featured rare finds like a custom-made suit from Christopher's, 2 bicycles from LL Bean, and a 14 karat gold triple-strand circle necklace from Phil Alexander Jewelers.

The evening could not have been so tremendously fun and successful without the dedication and hard work of the Planning Committee. Our thanks go out to: Cheryl Brenn, Tracey Collins, Joyce Klein, James Kopp, Barb McNamee, Laurie Michaels-Cerrone, Samantha Morris, Denise Ringer, Ed Sells, Dr. Richard & Lisa Shelsky and Eveline Ward-Sells.

Most of all, we would like to extend our sincere thanks to all of our Sponsors:



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Auctioneer Ben Patten gains crowd enthusiasm while Lessa Thompson models a necklace donated by Phil Alexander Jewelers as part of the Live Auction. Board Members James Kopp and Dr. Richard Shelsky look on.



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## LOCATION

3 Oakland Avenue

Menands, NY 12204

## HOURS

Monday-Friday 10am-6pm

Saturday 10am-5pm

Sunday 1-4pm

## WEB SITE

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

## TELEPHONE NUMBERS

518.434.8128

518.434.0217 (fax)

# FROM THE DIRECTOR



Executive Director  
Brad Shear and  
Bastian, his cat

In late January a sweet, slightly pudgy, black labrador retriever came into the Humane Society's animal care center. His owners brought him in because he was not getting along with the new dog in the house. So after 4 years of giving unconditional love to his family, "Buster" was surrendered to the Humane Society.

The staff and volunteers immediately noticed his two most distinguishing characteristics: his weight and his love for everyone. I first noticed Buster when he came to our dog adoption center the next day. It may seem odd, but he stood out to me *because* he didn't stand out. I almost walked right by him because he was such a dark-colored dog on a dark green dog bed. I noticed his wagging tail as I passed the kennel, but he didn't stand up to greet me. Already his eyes were drooping and he looked depressed, wondering when his family would come back for him. I knelt down to say hello to him and he came to the front of the kennel for a scratch behind the ears. I spoke to the kennel technician about making sure that he had a light-colored blanket to lie on so he would be more visible. I was sure that if someone saw this sweet dog, he would find his new home soon. I was wrong.

"Buster" did not find his new home that day or the next, or the one after that. The longer he waited for someone to share their home with him, the more depressed he became. Volunteers reported that he tried to get into every car in the parking lot as if he was just looking for that special ride home. Eventually, his emotional depression had physical consequences: Buster became ill. He was examined by our veterinarian and prescribed medication. The medication did not seem to have an effect and his condition worsened. Buster had to be moved to our intensive care kennels. He had stopped eating and was put on intravenous antibiotics with frequent visits from our veterinary and kennel staff. It seemed that Buster had lost his will to go on. He no longer wagged his tail or wanted to go for walks and he stopped trying to get in the cars to go home.

I asked our veterinarian, Dr. Blankfein, about Buster's condition and was told that he might not make it through the night. His illness had become severe and we were doing everything possible to keep poor Buster going. Dr. Blankfein was going to stay late to monitor his condition, but I volunteered to take Buster home for the night instead. I packed up Buster's antibiotics, a dog bed and special food that would hopefully encourage him to eat again.

When Buster came home, he laid in the dog bed that we had put in the living room for him and went to sleep. We tried feeding him but — he refused dog food, cat food, and his choice of human food. Buster simply would not eat, lying in his bed, his eyes sagging and his breathing labored from congestion in his lungs. He continued to stay at home with us and the cats in hopes that he would soon recover. Finally, after almost a week, he ate a small piece of cheese — I felt like Buster and I had just won at the Olympics! It was a sign that he was on the road to recovery. His small bite of food was the big news at the shelter the next day.

As Buster's recovery continued, we began to wonder. Here is the dog that everyone comes asking for: sweet, gentle, quiet and loving. Buster is housetrained, never barks and, contrary to what we thought, he loves other dogs. Most of all, he loves to have his belly rubbed. How could anyone give up on this sweet dog with nothing but love to give? After our struggle for Buster's recovery there was no way for us to bring him back to the Society. So, fortunately for us, he has become a permanent part of our family, and a constant reminder of the fantastic pets that can be found at the Humane Society.

*Brad Shear*

# TRAINER'S CORNER

By Christine Danker, CPDT

(518) 439-2992

Hemlock Hollow LLC

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

## Outdoor Activities

Spring is here!! We have daylight in the early morning hours, and well into the evening. The temperatures are rising and we feel a need to be outdoors with our dogs. Not only is the exercise good for them, it benefits us humans as well.

There are many options for outdoor activities, but before we head out there, let's consider some things we should be aware of.

1) If your dog has some extra "winter weight" after being sedentary during the cold indoor months, a visit to your vet is a good idea to get the okay to begin some hardcore outdoor activities. While talking to your vet, remember to get some flea and tick preventative and ask about the Lyme Disease vaccine.

2) If you want to begin exercising with your dog, start slowly. Just like us, dogs get out of condition and need to build up their muscles and stamina. Perhaps you were able to walk a brisk 4 miles together last fall, but after several months off, beginning at half a mile is best.

3) Be a responsible dog owner. Wherever you go, keep your dog under control at all times. Remember that not everyone loves dogs as much as we do and will not appreciate being jumped on or greeted by a strange dog. Keep him on a leash unless you are in designated off-lead areas and he is totally reliable about coming when called. Be prepared to clean up after your dog, have identification on his collar, and carry an updated rabies vaccination certificate with you, especially if going into State parks.

### DOG PARKS:

A dog park is a wonderful place for dogs to play with other dogs, burn off LOTS of energy, and experience all sizes and shapes of people, which in the long run will make your dog more at ease in other venues. Not only do the dogs get to socialize but so do their owners. If your dog has never been to a dog park or has not had much experience socializing with other dogs, have him meet one dog in a neutral area first.

Dogs who are social, friendly, and under control in areas of distraction will benefit most from the dog park experience. If your dog has any aggressive tendencies, he should NOT be at a dog park. If he is frightened by other dogs or people or is a bully, the dog park is not a good place for him to be. You want your dog's experience around other dogs to be a positive one. You do not want to frighten your dog or have your dog be the bully of the group.

Dogs have different play styles. Labs seem to be into rough body-slammings type of play or run through anything in their way to retrieve a ball. Herding dogs like to circle around dogs and people. My hounds prefer a good game of 'tag' with little body contact. If your dog is constantly moving away from other dogs, perhaps he is uncomfortable with the dogs around him. He may be more eager to join in with a different group of dogs that have similar styles of play and greeting. Learn a bit about canine body language so you

can break off any play that appears to be escalating into high arousal where tempers may flare.

Before letting your dog off-lead to run and play with other dogs in a fenced area, some basic control exercises are beneficial. If your dog is playing at the far end of the dog park and you are ready to leave, will he come when called? If a fight breaks out, can you call your dog off so he does not join in? If your dog needs a break, does he know how to 'settle' on cue? Does your dog know how to greet people without jumping up on them? Practicing these skills before you go to the dog park will make everyone's experience more enjoyable.

Small dogs at parks have other issues to contend with. A person stepping on them can easily injure them. A large dog colliding into a small dog could cause injury. A small dog can also be seen as prey by larger dogs. Unless there is a designated area separate from large dogs or a time when the park is open just for small dogs, it probably is best to leave your small dog home. It is safer to arrange to meet in a fenced yard to allow the smaller canines to play together.

### HIKING:

Hiking is my favorite outdoor activity with my hounds! The same guidelines apply. Dogs should be on-lead unless in a designated off-lead area and they should be under control at all times. Be a responsible owner by being considerate of others and cleaning up after your dog. Before letting your dog off-lead, ask yourself one question: will my dog come to me under all situations? If the answer is no, keep your dog on-lead. Using an Easy Walk harness (made by Premier) attached to a buckle or Martingale collar and a long line will allow both of you to enjoy the hike. Use a line that is made of cotton and about 1 inch in width so it cannot burn your hands should your dog decide to pull and chase a flushed rabbit or other wildlife. You will be relaxed knowing your dog cannot run off and will be able to sniff, roll and romp through fields, climb hills and perhaps go for a swim. Do not be in a rush to take your dog off-lead. My youngest dog dragged a long line for over a year before I took it off and she had a year of training to come when called in all situations. She now enjoys running off-lead with a group of about 10 dogs nearly every week.

Before heading into the wilderness, check to see if dogs are allowed and if they must be on lead. If you meet another owner and dog, give them space by stepping off the trail and allowing them to pass. The basic exercises for control will come in handy here. Having a dog that will sit quietly in the presence of another dog and person is just good manners! I prefer not to let dogs meet on lead. Tight leads tend to inhibit their normal body language toward each other. Leads can get tangled, arousal levels can escalate, and fights can break out.

*Continued on page 5...*



# MOHAWK & HUDSON RIVER HUMANE SOCIETY TRIBUTES

Tributes listed here were received 1/1/08 - 3/12/08. More recent tributes will appear in future editions.

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## MOHAWK & HUDSON RIVER HUMANE SOCIETY TRIBUTES

Tributes listed here were received 1/1/08 - 3/12/08. More recent tributes will appear in future editions.

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Larry Kavanaugh  
Mary Walczyk  
Beverly & Joe Olander

## SPECIAL THANK YOU

### THE IRISH MIST IN TROY AND THE FABULOUS FOUR

for hosting the "Best in *Drag Show*," a fun evening and great success that raised \$800.

### TRADER ED'S NAUTICAL PUB AND RESTAURANT IN TROY

for donating a portion of their St. Patrick's Day weekend sales and collecting donations for the Humane Society.

### E-LOT RECYCLING

for donating a laptop computer to our Humane Education program.

### SAND CREEK ANIMAL HOSPITAL

for providing radiographs for a dog with a painful leg.

### DOGS IN NEED EVERYWHERE (D.I.N.E.)

for donating Kongs and Easy Walk Harnesses for our dogs.

### ALBANY TATTOO and THEDOGDAYS.ORG

for donating proceeds from their "Dog Days of Winter" event, along with over 300 pounds of dog and cat food.

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 x212.

## TRAINER'S CORNER

Continued...

The places to hike are limitless here in the Northeast. A few basic manners, water for both you and your dog, tick repellent and you are set to go.

Next time, I'll discuss swimming, fetching and other outdoor activities for you and your dog to enjoy. If you see two large hounds, stop and say hi. That will be my two girls and me, we will be out there covering the trails this season.

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. Visit [www.mohawkhumanesociety.org](http://www.mohawkhumanesociety.org) for the latest dates and times.

# VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

By Deidre Bruce, Volunteer Manager

When his sales job brought him to the Capital Region from Rockland County in 1991, Brad Blauhut made himself a promise: he would go to the nearest animal shelter and adopt a dog as soon as he owned his own home.

After buying a house in 2001, Blauhut wasted no time paying a visit to Mohawk & Hudson River Humane Society. “Which dog needs a home the most?” he asked the desk attendant, telling her he wasn’t picky; he just wanted to give a good dog a good home. Blauhut described his first impression of the pit bull mix that would soon become his best friend, Doobie. “He seemed to be saying ‘pick me!’ when I saw him in his kennel. He became my sales partner from day one,” he said, and told of Doobie riding shotgun on his sales routes in the years to follow.

In 2006, as Blauhut transitioned from a career in sales to running his own home improvement business, he made himself another promise. “I decided I would do something useful with my spare time, rather than just watch TV,” Blauhut explained, noting self-employment would allow a more flexible schedule. He remembered the kennels filled with dogs at the Humane Society. Brad returned in January 2007, with Doobie riding shotgun in his van. He attended an orientation session for new volunteers.

After completing Volunteer Orientation and Introduction to Dog Care, Blauhut began helping the shelter staff with exercising and socializing the dogs awaiting adoption. It didn’t take long for him



Brad Blauhut and Doobie

to recognize other areas around the shelter where help was needed. “I met Dave (Glatz), the Facilities Manager, and offered to help with cutting the grass,” Blauhut recalled. Brad had noticed that Dave had more work than one person could possibly handle. Soon Blauhut was performing light carpentry and making repairs in the intake building. Most recently he helped construct a new office on the second floor of the shelter, and installed a utility sink in the cat adoption room.

Blauhut’s volunteer work doesn’t end with walking dogs and maintenance and construction. He also helps with special events and off-site adoptions. He and Doobie even make room in their hearts and home for shelter dogs in need of foster care.

Recently, they opened their home to Vinnie, a blind dog, and cared for him until he was adopted. Without a break they welcomed Diesel, another special needs dog recovering from eye surgery. Doobie is still sharing his bed with Diesel at night.

Brad also tries to recruit new volunteers wherever he goes. He finds that many people have the best intentions, but don’t commit because they believe they won’t have time. Blauhut tells them, “That’s what’s so great about volunteering for the Humane Society. You can help out even if you don’t have a lot of time,” he says, noting that the time requirement is minimal compared with other volunteer programs. He might even mention that it’s better than sitting around, watching TV in your spare time. We thank Brad for all he does for the Society!

## WHAT IF...?

What if something happened and you were unable to care for your pets or communicate with others?

Many of us believe that our close friends and family will know what to do. Have you ever asked them, or written “care instructions” for them? Pets often slip through the cracks. We all need a short- and long-term plan for our pets in the event we unexpectedly pass away or require hospitalization.

There are options available for animal lovers, some of which may simply need to be formalized. It will ease your mind if you have a frank discussion with your friend or relative about the care involved and costs associated with regular checkups and food for your pet. You may also want to:

1. Find two or more people who are willing to provide a temporary home for your pet. Provide them with keys to your home or an alternative means of access, feeding and care instructions, veterinarian’s phone number and address, and information about the permanent care steps you have taken.
2. Give your family and close friends the names and phone numbers of these two people. You can also carry this information in your purse or wallet for emergency personnel.

3. Emergency care contacts should be posted near the entrances to your home. List the types and number of animals in the house or apartment, and keep this information current.
4. Talk to friends, family, neighbors - anyone you trust - to see if they are able and willing to assume permanent responsibility for your pet. When possible, select someone who knows your pet and will provide a good home. Include this information with all of your financial and estate planning papers. Have a second or third person listed just in case.
5. You can work with an attorney to formalize the agreement providing for your pet’s care and guardianship. Instructions can be included for the executor for your estate regarding the care of your animals. Discuss these directions with your representative in advance to ensure that your intentions are followed.

Do your homework and make arrangements for your pet now. Review your plan, update it as needed, and most importantly, keep in touch with your chosen short- and long-term caretakers. You’ll feel better knowing that the future of your beloved companion is safe and secure.



# SUCCESS STORY



When a beautiful German Shepherd named Callie was surrendered by her owner to the Mohawk & Hudson River Humane Society last March, the staff were immediately struck by her good looks, intelligence and “eager to please” attitude. Knowing that local law enforcement agencies are often looking for German Shepherds to train as working police dogs, we started making calls to State and local agencies.

It is common for law enforcement agencies to pay thousands of dollars for specially bred dogs trained to work with police. At least one police officer now knows that paying a lot of money for a dog doesn't make her a better pet or, in this case, a better partner. Joe Terry, a K9 Officer with the Rensselaer Police Department, was the first to respond to our calls and he was eager to meet our new guest. Officer Terry met Callie and knew right away that she would make a great addition to his team.

The bond between a K9 officer and his dog is vitally important to the success of that team. The dog is truly the officer's partner and they depend on each other for success and safety. After working during the day, the two go home together and enjoy their time off as a pair. Officer Terry recently visited us with his partner to show off her new skills. They have been side by side ever since that day in March and throughout their intensive training courses. Callie is now a Certified Narcotics Detection Dog and will be certified for patrol and tracking work this summer.

Callie recently recovered 101 grams of cocaine that was hidden in a secret compartment during the search of a car. Way to go Callie! We wish this team the very best of luck for many years to come. And, we want to thank Officer Terry and Callie for reminding us that Humane Society alumni can do anything!

# SAVE THE DATE



**Please join us  
for the**

*4th Annual*

# *Art Saves Animals*

*Art Auction*

**Saturday, September 13, 2008  
Albany Center Galleries  
(Downtown Albany)**

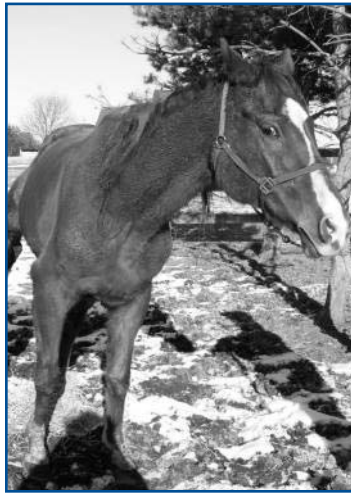
**An event for the art lover and  
the animal lover in everyone!**

# EQUINE RESCUE

On January 24th, 2008 the Society's Humane Investigators went to a property in South Bethlehem where sisters Sue and Deborah Denton housed their horses. Over time, this once rural area has become a neighborhood with suburban homes on large lots, except for the Denton sisters' property. In the middle of that piece of land is a forlorn structure built to house horses. The doors to three stalls were always closed to the fresh air and light outside.

Humane Society Investigators got a tip that there were distressed horses living in the ramshackle structure. When Investigators arrived, they were shocked by what they found: three horses living in complete darkness, apparently locked in their stalls 24 hours a day with little food or water and no time to run free in the pasture surrounding their stalls. In one stall, the only food that could be found was two animal crackers in a feed bucket. There was no hay or other nourishment that the animals so desperately needed. A horse's body condition is measured from 1 to 9 with a system called the Henneke Scale. These horses rated a 2 on that scale or 'very thin.'

In addition to their poor weight, the horses' hooves had become overgrown from lack of care. Combined with their weakness from lack of nutrition, they could barely stand up and had great difficulty walking. When the horses were brought out of their dark cells into the light of day, our Investigators immediately



saw that they were covered in mud and their own feces because of the cramped quarters they had been living in.

Neglect of horses has become a serious issue in the Capital Region and across the country. In January, the *Wall Street Journal* published an article citing the increase in the cost of hay and decrease in personal income. Baby boomers are retiring and finding that their retirement income does not cover the cost of horse care. At the Humane Society, we have been receiving calls regularly about similar situations; people who have horses and can no longer take care of them, or simply choose not to. In this case, the

Denton sisters surrendered ownership of their horses, acknowledging they could no longer care for the animals that depended upon them.

When animals are not being cared for by their owners, it is the Mohawk & Hudson River Humane Society that must take up their cause and ensure they are cared for properly. Fortunately for these horses, our Humane Investigators responded to the call and Harmony Hill Equine Rescue and Catskill Animal Sanctuary were able to house and rehabilitate these neglected animals. Our Investigators continue to work on cases of cruelty involving all animals, and do so without any government support. It is only with your continued support that our Animal Cruelty Investigation Program can continue.

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## YOUR SPARE ROOM COULD SAVE LIVES



During the summer months, the Society will receive an average of two cats every hour, every day. They will be newborns still nursing from their mothers, orphaned kittens just a few weeks of age, and adults who have lost their families feeling confused and alone. We call this time "kitten season," as scores of kittens — most too young for adoption — pour into our animal center, taxing the limits of space, resources and time. Most of these kittens just need nourishment, time and love to prepare them for adoption.

Last year, almost one third of all cats adopted from the Humane Society spent time in one of our foster homes. These foster parents are truly life savers. By opening your home and heart you are providing a loving environment for animals in search of permanent homes. Their work alleviates the strain on our adoption center by bringing animals in that have been raised in a loving environment and are ready to go to their permanent home right away.

If fostering appeals to you, we would love to hear from you! We're sure you'll find that it's a rewarding experience to open your home to a cat or kittens who need a respite from shelter life. All you need is a spare room and some extra love. Supplies can be provided and your commitment can range from a couple of weeks to a couple of months, depending on the age of the cat or kitten. Training sessions will be offered regularly. Please contact Sharon Ansell at (518) 810-2568, Nancy Haynes at (518) 434-8128 x 201, or [fosters@mohawkhumanesociety.org](mailto:fosters@mohawkhumanesociety.org).