

Capital Pet

newsletter
of the

Mohawk & Hudson River
HUMANE SOCIETY



3 Oakland Avenue Menands, NY 12204 www.mohawkhumane.org (518) 434-8128



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Art Saves Animals

The 4th Annual Art Auction to Benefit the
Mohawk & Hudson River Humane Society

The fourth annual *Art Saves Animals* auction was a huge success!

Thanks to the support of our sponsors, Honorary Committee members, artists and attendees, and the dedication of our volunteers and staff, this year was our best ever, resulting in over \$26,000 raised for the animals!



Hal Connolly

Merrill Lynch



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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.mohawkhumane.org

TELEPHONE NUMBERS

518.434.8128
518.434.0217 (fax)

FROM THE DIRECTOR



Executive Director
Brad Shear and
Bastian, his cat

Last summer, dozens of households in the City of Rensselaer fell victim to flooding. Some homeowners were able to clean up and move back in quickly, while others found themselves with months of repairs to be done, costing thousands of dollars. In the weeks following the flood we all read headlines about the lack of funding for rebuilding homes and damaged infrastructure. While we haven't recently experienced the large-scale disasters that have been caused by hurricanes on the Gulf Coast or fires in the West, this disaster was just as real for those affected. Losing your home is losing your home, no matter how big the disaster around you may be.

The floods affected one man, Joseph Ford, in a different way than many of his neighbors. Like many of his neighbors, Joe found himself unable to get back into his home because of flood damage but, unlike his neighbors, he couldn't go to a temporary shelter because they would not allow him to bring his dog and two cats with him. Joe found himself with no choice but to sleep in his car with his three pets.

In July, Governor Paterson signed a law authorizing the creation of state and County Animal Response Teams (CARTs) that will help people and pets when disaster strikes. The new law recognizes the strong connection people have with their pets and shows that our government leaders understand what many pet lovers have always known: our pets are an important part of our families and we will not leave them behind when disaster strikes.

Five years ago I was involved in the creation of similar state and local teams in Colorado and saw how planning and preparing for disasters with pets in mind could improve coordination of limited resources, improving response and ultimately keeping people and their pets out of danger. That experience has taught me that with or without a state law, we would need to meet with our county disaster planners and other people who would respond to help people and animals affected by disaster.

When the flood struck Rensselaer, we had already been involved in meetings that coordinated the Rensselaer County Animal Response Team, led by the county public health and public safety departments. The team casts a wide net to involve representatives of a variety of groups in the county who may be able to help animals when disaster strikes. In addition, we at the Society have been distributing information on how to prepare to evacuate from a disaster area with your pets.

The County Animal Response Team created a connection that allowed Joe Ford to find help when he needed it. When Joe called the City of Rensselaer to let them know that he wouldn't leave his pets behind, the response team knew they could call the Mohawk and Hudson River Humane Society for help. Joe brought his pets to the Society's animal care center in Menands, where they were housed for over two months while his home was repaired. Joe came every day to walk his dog and visit his cats, and served as a constant reminder of how important our pets are to our lives.

When the governor signed the authorization to create CARTs, no funding was provided to help these groups create plans or respond to animals in disaster. Planning for disaster, educating people about preparing for disasters with their pets in mind, and helping the human and animal victims of disasters is only possible because of the Society's supporters, who know how important it is for all of us to keep our pets with us during difficult times.

Brad Shear

BEAUTY IS ONLY SKIN DEEP



Last July, a kind-hearted woman found a surprise in her back yard. She had never seen a more pathetic looking puppy. At only five months old, this hungry, lost little orphan had already lived a lifetime of sadness. He had a horrible skin infection that caused him to lose almost all of his fur, replacing it with dry, itchy scabs. He scratched constantly but found no relief, until he arrived at the Mohawk & Hudson River Humane Society.

The Society's Medical Director, Dr. Blankfein, examined him and diagnosed a severe case of skin mites. Even with this painful condition, the puppy's sweet and

loving personality showed through. Dr. Blankfein named the puppy "Uncle Sam."

Whether it was taking him for a walk or giving him the special medicated baths and treatment that he needed, Sam just wanted the love that any young puppy desires. After a month of treatment, he started feeling better and new hair began to grow. Sam was now on the road to recovery and went to one of our wonderful foster homes to further recuperate and fill out his coat, so he could prepare for his new home.

It wasn't long before he found his soulmate in Prada, a dog who was adopted from the Society only a few of months before. The two became inseparable and they now keep the family's little girl company in her bed at night.

Thanks to the love and caring of the Society's staff, volunteers and supporters, there is now no sign of the trauma Sam experienced. His family only sees the love that had always shown through, no matter what Sam looked like on the outside.



THE STORY OF "GOOD BOY"

On June 16, Humane Society investigators were called to Karl's Motel in Latham to check on horses that appeared to be neglected. The investigators were shocked by what they found: not only were six horses living in horrible conditions without clean food or water, but also two dogs in similar conditions. When Humane Society investigators and Colonie Police returned with a search warrant, all of the horses and dogs were removed and animal cruelty charges were soon filed.

One of the dogs, Good Boy, was living in a back yard. His only shelter was a damp, dark basement littered in filth. When Good Boy arrived at the Society, he was immediately examined by our Medical Director, Dr. Roger Blankfein. Good Boy was missing most of the hair on his back from flea allergies and infection, he was riddled with intestinal parasites, and his teeth were rotten and broken, causing severe pain. Our medical staff immediately began treatment to get Good Boy on the road to health.

Soon, Good Boy's previous owner was convicted of animal cruelty and all of the animals were ready for new homes. We reached out to local veterinarians to provide intensive dental care that Good Boy needed. Fortunately, the Animal Health Center in Clifton Park came forward. Nine teeth were extracted, many requiring surgery to reveal the fractured roots. After a little time eating only soft food, Good Boy was ready to find a new home.

Thanks to the hard work of our Humane Investigators and veterinary and animal care staff, and the contribution of the Animal Health Center, Good Boy now has a better life with his new family.



MOHAWK & HUDSON RIVER HUMANE SOCIETY TRIBUTES

Tributes listed here were received 7/16/08 – 10/8/08. More recent tributes will appear in future editions.

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Jill Rifkin

Jerry Lozoff

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MOHAWK & HUDSON RIVER HUMANE SOCIETY TRIBUTES

Tributes listed here were received 7/16/08 – 10/8/08. More recent tributes will appear in future editions.

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Howard Weber

Lillian Irene Palmer

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Diane Garab

Thumper

Kathleen Economides

Tiggy & Ladybug

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Taube Rothenberg

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Brenda & George Alan Wiederkehr

Ruth Ann Abrahamson

SPECIAL THANKS

ANIMAL HEALTH CENTER for extensive dental work on a dog

BALLSTON SPA VETERINARY CLINIC for treatment and adoption of a sick cat

BLOOMINGROVE VETERINARY HOSPITAL for care, isolation and adoption of a sick cat

CANTERBURY ANIMAL HOSPITAL for multiple radiographs

VETERINARY SPECIALTY REFERRAL CENTER for assistance with a cruelty case and leg fracture repair

GUILDERLAND ANIMAL HOSPITAL for surgical consultation

BERKSHIRE BANK EMPLOYEES for their grounds beautification project

EP&M INTERNATIONAL for donating the use of a display for our calendar contest

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TRAINER'S CORNER

Reward-Based Training

By Christine Danker, CPDT

(518) 439-2992

Hemlock Hollow LLC

www.hemlockhollowdogtraining.com

Dog training has evolved considerably in the last few decades. The old-fashioned method of correction-based training has been replaced by positive training techniques. Instead of yelling “no” and intimidating our four-footed friends, newer positive methods manage and prevent undesirable behaviors and reward desirable behaviors.

We need to teach dogs to live in our world, while their instinct is telling them to do otherwise. Dogs chase, catch, chew, shred, and dig. Your dog is doing what comes naturally to her. All those behaviors are hard-wired. Just because we have brought canines into our homes does not mean they understand the rules. If we continually yell and correct them for doing what comes naturally, we are creating frustrated dogs and eroding any chance of building trusting relationships with them.

We have to teach them what is proper behavior: 1) sit nicely at the door, when they would rather be dashing through the door in anticipation of the squirrel in the yard; 2) walk nicely on the leash, instead of pulling to get to the spot where the neighbor’s cat was sitting last night; and 3) come when called, instead of staying outdoors to continue excavating the backyard. It is our job as our dogs’ guardians to teach them what acceptable behavior is, and to prevent them from practicing the unwanted behaviors until they know what is acceptable.

Positive reinforcement training is based on scientific theory of how animals learn. Simply put, all animals will continue to repeat a behavior that has been rewarded. If stealing off the kitchen table has been rewarding to your dog because she ate part of your dinner, then the behavior of jumping up on the table will be repeated. Yelling or hitting her teaches her nothing, other than to fear you as you enter the room. It may keep her from entering the kitchen when you are present but, if given the chance in your absence, she will be back up on the table looking for food.

The kinder and more humane solution would be to prevent her from jumping up on the table until she knows the rules of living in our world. Give her a filled Kong in her crate, while you eat dinner. Clear the table before she is let into the kitchen. Or if she has had some training, put her on lead and ask her to lie down on a mat while you eat dinner. Reward her for staying there by giving her a treat every so often.

I am often asked why food is used in positive reinforcement training. There are several reasons:

- Food is just one type of reward.
- All dogs need to eat to survive, so food is used most often.
- We can get many repetitions using food during the early training phase.
- It is convenient and easy to carry.

If your dog likes to chase a ball, eventually throwing the ball can be a reward, but it is not practical to start throwing a ball when your dog walks nicely at your side on a busy street. Measure out your dog’s daily ration of kibble and use it to reward desirable behaviors throughout the day. For more distracting situations, use tiny pieces of cheese, or cubed chicken. Eventually the rewards will be given randomly, which will make the desirable behaviors even stronger.

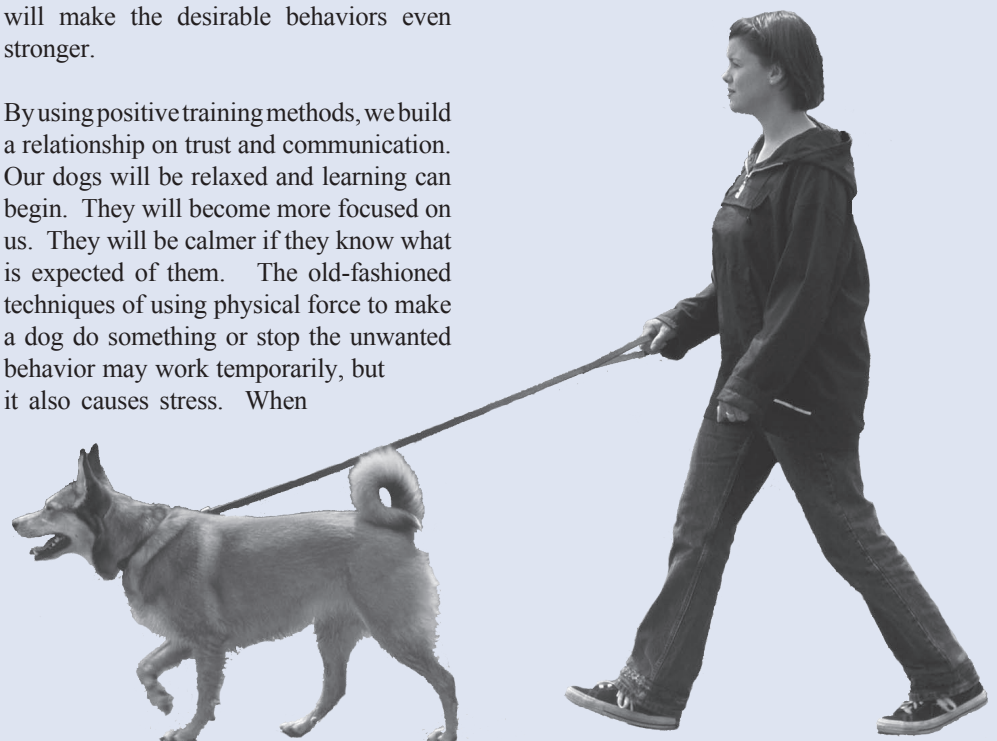
By using positive training methods, we build a relationship on trust and communication. Our dogs will be relaxed and learning can begin. They will become more focused on us. They will be calmer if they know what is expected of them. The old-fashioned techniques of using physical force to make a dog do something or stop the unwanted behavior may work temporarily, but it also causes stress. When

stressed, an animal cannot learn. Using force when an animal is stressed will increase the intensity of the unwanted behavior and can cause aggression.

Our goal as positive dog owners and trainers is to cause no pain or intentional stress to our dogs. The lines of communication between you and your dog are opened up when using positive training techniques. You are forming a trusting bond with your best friend.

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 for the latest dates and times.



SUCCESS STORY

Tasha Ansell is a 3½-year-old black Chow Chow who was adopted from the Mohawk & Hudson River Humane Society in June 2007. Since then Tasha has had a great life helping to take care of her family's miniature horses and sheep. She also makes sure that her family goes on long walks every day. After completing the Society's dog training programs, Tasha also got a new job as a therapy dog. Recently she sent us a note about the great work she's doing:

Dear Humane Society:

Since you were helpful in getting me off the streets of Troy, into a good home and trained as a therapy dog, I thought you would like to know that I have been paying regular weekly visits to the Kingsway Nursing Home in Schenectady. The residents (and the staff) there seem to like me a lot, especially all my soft fur, and I'm happy to give them a little pleasure.

I had a particularly good moment this week. One of the residents there is much younger than most of them. She has a neurological

problem that prevents her from moving. She was sitting up, but she couldn't move her head to look at me. So my handler, Peter, lifted me up. When she saw me, a big smile slowly spread across her face and stayed there for a couple of minutes. Apparently she hadn't smiled much because her parents, who were visiting at the time, were thrilled and the staff person who took us around couldn't get over it. Made my day!

Looking forward to many more visits. In September, we were trained for hospice work with the Community Hospice organization.

Thank you for helping me so I could help others.

Love,
Tasha



HAPPY TAILS

Dear Humane Society,

I would like to submit the "Happy Tail" of Deogie (now named Abe) because he is the best! Hopefully, his little story will show people that adopting older pets definitely has its benefits.



Poor Abe was so scared when I first saw him. I believe he had been with one owner all of his 12 years, then he was surrendered to the shelter. I remember how he crawled up to the kennel door on his stomach, looking up at me with sad brown eyes like he was begging me to get him away from the barking dogs and the unfamiliar smells and sounds. I knew right away he was coming home with me!

Naturally, Abe was a little confused and sad at first but, as time went on, he began coming out of himself. I live in a small apartment complex and he views all of the neighbors as his "people." When we're out on our frequent walks, he always has to stop and greet everyone.

Abe is excellent with my cats and all of the other pets in the complex. In fact, he's so good with cats that he actually helped successfully place a cat at a local adoption clinic recently. We just happened to be passing by and some people wanted to adopt a cat but didn't want to do it if the cat wasn't "dog-friendly" (they had a dog at home). Abe was the willing volunteer. The cat took to him right away and the people were so thrilled by the response that the little cat went home with them. What a community service Abe performed for a homeless pet that day!

Abe really loves the outdoors. His favorite pastimes are rolling in the grass and tearing pine cones to shreds. He will "fight to the death" to keep his pine cones...wagging his tail all the time to let you know he really doesn't mean the fierce noises coming out of him.

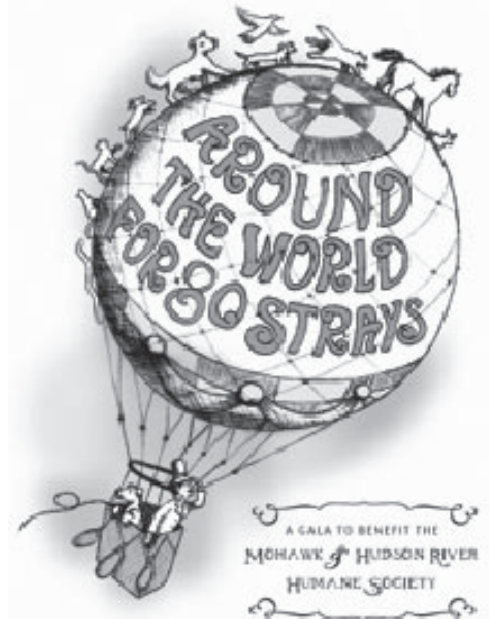
I love this little guy! He is a great companion and is fine to be left alone, as long as you leave his country music station on to keep him company. Even though Abe is an older dog, I wouldn't trade him for the world! It wasn't Abe's fault he had lived a lot of his life before he became homeless. Other than a few minor living adjustments, there were absolutely no training problems or "puppy issues" to deal with.

I am so grateful to Deidre at the shelter for calling to tell me about him, and I think Abe is grateful too!

- Abe's Mom

SAVE THE DATE!

Friday, April 24, 2009
Second Annual



at Wolferts Roost
Van Rensselaer Blvd, Albany

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For more information, please
visit our web site
www.mohawkhumane.org
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EVELYN'S STORY



Evelyn with Dr. Blankfein

In the best of circumstances, new mothers are often tired and afraid. Guided only by instinct, all of their time and energy is suddenly dedicated to raising their new babies. In the case of one small white cat, named Evelyn, this difficult time might seem impossible.

Evelyn was found with her two 3-week-old kittens under a tree just down the road from our Animal Care Center in Menands. A cat nursing two kittens is not unusual, but this cat's circumstances were especially dire. The nights were getting colder, and food and water would soon become scarce. Humane Society staff was alerted and went to retrieve her, but immediately noticed that this was not just another cat nursing kittens. She was thin from trying to feed her babies with little food, but she was also severely injured.

Life on the street had not been kind to her and her front left leg had somehow been horribly injured, but she continued to keep her babies alive and growing. Our veterinary team quickly attended to her and determined that the leg could not be saved. Our staff named her Evelyn, which means 'life', because throughout her trauma she continued to provide life for her babies.

After surgery to remove the limb, Evelyn immediately began looking for her babies. They were soon returned to her and she continued to raise them while recovering from surgery and learning to walk on three legs, which she adapted to almost immediately. Now all three cats are in loving homes, off the streets during the cold winter months and away from danger.



Evelyn with kittens

SECURE YOUR FUTURE AND THE FUTURE OF ORPHANED PETS

In these turbulent times, we are all wondering about our own futures and many of us are concerned about how homeless animals will continue to receive the vital services they need. In response to these concerns, we are especially pleased to offer you a tool which will present you with the security of a steady and unchanging income stream – guaranteed not to change no matter how long you live or any fluctuations in interest rates or stock declines.

Charitable gift annuities are a wonderful way to enhance your retirement income, and support the vital work of the Mohawk and Hudson River Humane Society.

The Society is partnering with The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region to ensure our own financial sustainability. This partnership allows MHRHS to focus on building a permanent endowment fund to provide financial stability far into the future. It is through this partnership that MHRHS is able to offer our supporters a fully-insured Charitable Gift Annuity Program.

In exchange for an irrevocable gift of cash or securities, The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region will pay you (or you and another person) fixed payments for life -- no matter what happens in our economy. Upon the death of the last income beneficiary, the remainder is placed in the Society's permanent endowment fund at the Community Foundation. The larger the gift and the older you are, the more income you will receive – and the greater the tax deduction for your gift.

Sample Calculations for a \$10,000* Charitable Gift Annuity:

Donor	Age 65	Age 75	Age 85
Value of Gift	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000
Annuity Rate**	5.7%	6.7%	8.9%
Annual Payment	\$570	\$670	\$890
Charitable Deduction	\$3,454.60	\$4,484.00	\$5,408.50

* \$10,000 is the minimum gift amount to establish a CGA, and a minimum age of 65

** Annuity interest rates are set by the American Council on Gift Annuities



While you can outlive the income from every other kind of investment, you cannot outlive the money you receive from a gift annuity – it continues no matter how long you live. What's more, your gift continues to support our mission to protect animals for generations to come.

If you would like to learn more about this income enhancing gift, please contact Brad Shear, 518-434-8128; or Mindy Derosia at The Community Foundation for the Greater Capital Region, 518-446-9638.