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# Latham Letter

VOLUME XXVII, NUMBER 4

FALL 2006

PROMOTING RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION

SINGLE ISSUE PRICE: \$5.00

## Building Community Relationships

### Selections from the University of Illinois Humane Education Seminar

*Special Issue*

Family Violence Prevention  
Law Enforcement  
Animal Welfare  
Education

Guest Editors

Amy Fisher, Ph.D. and Susan Helmink,  
Department of Animal Sciences,  
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

*Inside...*



Veterinary Outreach, Online Training for Law Enforcement,  
Effective Communication, Safe Havens, Teachable  
Moments, and Animal-Assisted Therapy

Beginning on Page Six

# Edith Latham's Mandate:

"To promote, foster, encourage and further the principles of humaneness, kindness and benevolence to all living creatures."

## Guest Editors

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**AMY FISCHER** received her Ph.D. in Animal Sciences at the University of Wisconsin in 2004. While completing her degree, she fostered kittens and volunteered over 500 hours with the Dane County Humane Society ([giveshelter.org](http://giveshelter.org)). During her postdoctoral stay at the University of Florida Department of Animal Sciences, she volunteered with Operation Catnip ([www.operationcatnip.org](http://www.operationcatnip.org)), a high-volume spay/neuter clinic for feral and stray cats, and also fostered kittens and cats with Gainesville Pet Rescue ([www.gainesvillepetrescue.org](http://www.gainesvillepetrescue.org)). She joined the Department of Animal Sciences at the University of Illinois in 2005 as an Extension Specialist and Teaching Associate in Companion Animal Biology and Humane Education. She also serves on the humane education committee of the Champaign County Humane Society ([www.cuhumane.org](http://www.cuhumane.org)). Amy lives near Homer, Illinois with her husband, Kevin, their eight fabulous cats, and the cutest beagle in the entire world.



Photo by DMS Photography

**SUSAN HELMINK** holds an MS degree in animal sciences and is a former lecturer in the University of Illinois Department of Animal Sciences' companion animal program. She developed and taught an undergraduate course entitled "Humane Education with Companion Animals" and coordinated the annual Humane Education Seminar among other duties in the department for over six years. Susan is co-founder and president of the Companion Animal Resource and Education (CARE) Center (<http://carecentercu.org>), a non-profit organization devoted to providing education and resources that foster a mutually supportive bond between companion animals and people. She is also on the board of directors of the Association of Professional Humane Educators (<http://aphe.org>). Susan lives in Philo, Illinois with her husband, Karl, and their four cats.



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Promotion of Humane Education

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# The Latham Letter

Volume XXVII, Number 4, Fall 2006

**BALANCED PERSPECTIVES ON  
HUMANE ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES**



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The Latham Foundation is a 501(c)(3) private operating foundation founded in 1918 to promote respect for all life through education. The Foundation makes grants-in-kind rather than monetary grants. Latham welcomes partnerships with other institutions and individuals who share its commitment to furthering humane education.

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## CONTENTS:

EDITORIAL: Expectations Does the daily news ever get you down? . . . . .	4
<i>By Hugh H. Tebault, III</i>	
Of Note . . . . .	5
An Introduction to this Special Issue . . . . .	6
<i>By Amy Fischer, Ph.D.</i>	
Unique Online Course Teaches Illinois Law Enforcement Professionals about Animal Abuse. . . . .	7
<i>By Patricia S. Rushing, Ph.D.</i>	
A Pet's Place Creates a Safe Haven Program for Pets of Women who are Battered . . . . .	10
<i>By Kathleen E. Quigley, Jimm M. Wojciechowski, Cheryl A. Weber, and Marcella D. Ridgway</i>	
University of Illinois Veterinary Students Reach Out to Their Community . . . . .	12
<i>By Emily Wheeler, Heather K. Tegeler, Emily Eaton, Janet Calkins, Kelli Kramer, Erin Lindblad, and B.V. Nelson</i>	
Teachable Moments and How They Open the Windows of Opportunity . . . . .	16
<i>By Jane Greco-Deming</i>	
Canine Connection's Healing Dogs Lend a Helping Paw . . . . .	18
<i>By Mary Young and Harriett Weatherford</i>	
Reaching the Hard-to-Reach Audience . . . . .	20
<i>By Ann Reisner, Ph.D.</i>	
Tools for Your Important Work. . . . .	22
Media Review . . . . .	23

## Expectations

*Does the daily news ever get you down?*

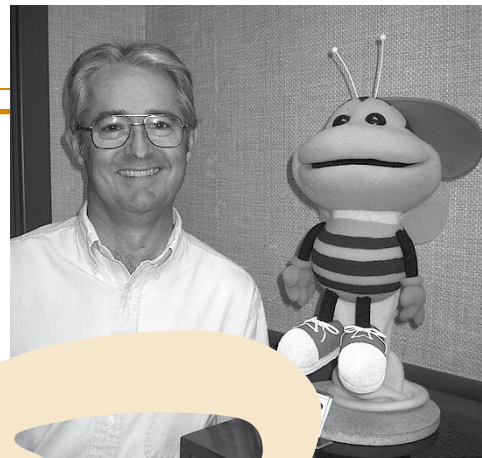
**Does it seem to be all bad news, with people constantly disagreeing about everything? Few people seem to be working together or trying to make our society better. I found an antidote for that problem: read about real life.**

I've just had the most incredible experience that has restored my faith in people – a faith somewhat tarnished by the daily newscasts. It was refreshing to read stories of many local heroes found around the nation.

I was asked to be a judge for the North American Riding for the Handicapped Association's (NARHA) annual recognition event. Each of their eleven regions submits a nomination for the Horse of the Year and the Volunteer of the Year.

The ability of the nominated horses to demonstrate compassion to their special riders is inspiring. The stories covered the gamut from the younger horses showing great promise to the older horses that have continued to improve with age. If you have never experienced horse-facilitated therapy, I urge you to take time and do so. To see an animal turn into a therapist extraordinaire is not to be missed. (You can find a NAHRA center near you on their website: [www.nahra.org](http://www.nahra.org).)

The backgrounds of these nominated horses were as varied as the types of horses themselves. There were horses that had been abused, neglected in fields for years, and just common horses – even a mule. Every one of these fine animals found a human partner who



*Hugh H. Tebault, III, President*

saw their potential, helped them along and now had the joy to see that horse blossom in active therapy work.

I hope that those of you who have any animal therapists, whether they are horses, dogs, cats or llamas, will share your passion in your community and actively seek to tell how effective these animals are helping us every day.

The backgrounds and activities performed by the Volunteers of the Year were also varied. There were retired career types helping out, and the 'I love horses and wanted to help' types. Every volunteer brought different talents with them. Some volunteers were jack-of-all-trades, while others brought singular skills like organization, encouragement, or just plain hard work and partnership when it was needed.

Reading about these volunteers selflessly giving of their time and talents to help others was just what I needed. I was getting brought down by the feed of bad news that "news" networks make their bread and butter.

The state of any organization rests with its staff – paid and volunteer alike. The state of the nation rests with its organizations, citizens and volunteers. It speaks well of the many therapy centers represented, and of our neighbors, that there are so many nominated for this honor. I applaud those nominated and recognize they represent a much larger group of dedicated people working every day to improve the world they live in.





# Of Note



## **“Conversations with Flower” Wins First Place in the Human-Companion Animal Bond Video Category**



We goofed! We inadvertently left one of our Video Award Winners out of last issue’s centerfold announcement.

Deepest apologies to Julia Grayer, who produced “Conversations with Flower,” First Place Winner in the Human-Companion Animal Bond Category of the Search For Excellence video awards.

“Conversations with Flower” is an example of the many benefits that animals play in the lives of all, filmed at an independent living facility where seniors share their life stories with a dog named Flower.

For further information, contact Julia Grayer, 141 East Oak Avenue, Moorestown, NJ 08057 or call 856-261-4732, [jbgrayer@yahoo.com](mailto:jbgrayer@yahoo.com).

## **Latham Remembers Steve Irwin 1962 - 2006**

Several years ago, when asked how he would respond to those who don’t like the way he treated animals, “Crocodile Hunter” Irwin had a ready defense.

“Here we are in the year 2003 and people are wondering whether I am bothering the chameleons or bothering a crocodile,” he told *The Times*. “Isn’t that fantastic? Ten years ago, mate, people would go, ‘That’s just a slimy, stinky reptile.’ Haven’t we changed?”



### **Latham’s New Film**

***DOG DEFENSE: Avoiding On-the-Job Dog Bites***

Order at [www.latham.org](http://www.latham.org)



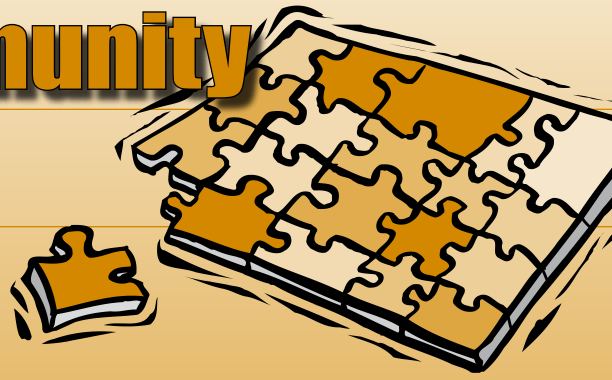
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# 8th Annual Humane Education Seminar Builds Community Relationships

By Amy Fischer, Ph.D.



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UNIVERSITY OF ILLINOIS AT URBANA-CHAMPAIGN

ASPCA®

PETSMART  
Charities



Animal Sciences Building



ACES Library



Animal Sciences Building Relief

The Department of Animal Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign was the first in the United States to establish a program in companion animal biology, out of a desire to serve those students more interested in companion animals as compared to livestock and poultry. Today, the Companion Animal Biology and Humane Education program provides training in the basic sciences of companion animals as well as the human-animal interactions that so strongly affect our lives and society.

Since 1999, the signature outreach activity of this program has been the annual Humane Education Seminar. This one-day event was developed with the support of its founding sponsor, the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). Each year the seminar attracts up to 80 educators, students, animal shelter personnel, animal control officials, and community leaders from across the nation.

In addition to presentations by an expert panel, the seminar also features a Program Showcase, which is an opportunity for coordinators of effective humane education programs to share their experiences through oral presentations and poster sessions. Speaker presentations are also made available to Internet audiences through the generosity of the PetSmart Charities Webinar program; select presentations from

previous seminars are archived and may be accessed at <http://petsmartcharities.webex.com>.

Each year, attendees share and receive ideas focused on a central theme. This special issue of *The Latham Letter* captures the powerful theme of the 2006 seminar – *Building Community Relationships*. We sincerely thank all of the authors for sharing their vision, and hope that you find their contributions enlightening and helpful as you strive to build and strengthen those essential relationships within your own community.

We look forward to developing future activities and programs with the goal of serving the humane education community. In that spirit, please feel free to share with us *your* ideas for future seminars, presentations, or workshops. Please visit <http://pets.ansci.uiuc.edu> for more information about the Companion Animal Biology and Humane Education program. You may also contact Amy Fischer at [afischer@uiuc.edu](mailto:afischer@uiuc.edu) or 217-333-6462.

## Editor's Note

Space precludes our including all of the articles and photographs that we had hoped to. Please see [http://pets.ansci.uiuc.edu/outreach/humane\\_ed.cfm](http://pets.ansci.uiuc.edu/outreach/humane_ed.cfm) for further information.

# Unique Online Course Teaches Illinois Law Enforcement Professionals about Animal Abuse

No one knows for sure how many animals are repeatedly victimized, how many are ignored, beaten, tortured, mutilated and murdered, or how many merely disappear. Many pets are the first victims of domestic violence and many studies suggest the importance of pets and their impact on domestic abuse cases. Recognizing animal abuse can help identify other victims of family violence.

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA), the Illinois Regional Institute for Community Policing (RICP), and ASK International are serving animal kind – as well as their human protectors – through a collaboration to teach law enforcement professionals about animal abuse prevention. This consortium has developed an online learning experience for the law enforcement community.

## **The Research**

Animal abuse and neglect, dog and cock fighting and interpersonal violence are destabilizing factors within all of our communities. Whether perpetrated on animals, children or adults, the cycle of violence must be broken. Research suggests that animal abusers are five times more

*By Patricia S. Rushing, Ph.D.*



likely to commit violent crimes against people, four times more likely to commit property crimes and three times more likely to have a record for drug or disorderly conduct offences (Arluke et al., 1999).

Additionally, an ever-growing body of evidence suggests the correlation between animal cruelty and the probability of committing violence against humans (Ritter 1996; Arkow 1995; Lockwood and Hodge, 1986). It is a well-known fact that a relationship exists between animal abuse, domestic violence and serial killing. Law enforcement agencies have recognized the high incidence of repeated animal abuse in many of the most violent offenders including serial killers, serial rapists and sexual homicide perpetrators (Lacroix, 1999).

Animal abuse is an indicator of other problems in violent households (Arkow, 1995) as exemplified in a study where animals were abused in 88% of the families in which the children were abused (DeViney et al., 1983). The criminal justice system must acknowledge the progressive nature of these deviant crimes to preempt the initial perpetration and continuation of crimes against animals and humans alike.

## **Program Impetus**

The goal of the program is to provide police officers with information about animal cruelty and abuse prevention. The unique online approach gives



participants accessibility to the curriculum wherever they have an Internet hookup: home, office and even in their squad cars.

The program consists of five modules and concludes with an examination to establish mastery over the content. Proficiency in the identification of animal abuse and neglect situations and the appropriate application of the law will “serve and protect” the most helpless of those within our communities. The long-term outcome will serve those who have been terrorized, abused and neglected, helping them live their lives free of fear, pain and shame.

If “The greatness of a nation and its moral progress can be judged by the way its animals are treated,” law enforcement officers have their work cut out for them!

Public safety officials investigate domestic violence, drugs and gang-related offences; however, this course offers new strategies for fighting and reducing



crime and presents a unique application of the criminal code. At the foundation of this collaborative effort is the concern for officer safety; therefore, the course provides officers with techniques to keep themselves, the public and of course, animals safe.

A web-based environment will facilitate a high transfer of new learning to the officer’s existing experiences; ease updating dynamic information such as state and federal laws; allow learner access 24-hours a day, seven days a week; and provide a high degree of flexibility over instructor-led strategies.

This program makes extensive use of case studies and problem-solving scenarios to further officer development of anti-cruelty and humane decision-making skills.

Course objectives include the demonstration of proficiency in identifying abuse and neglect situations and applying applicable laws appropriately. Ultimately, the collaborators hope to see a community culture wherein appropriate behaviors and attitudes towards animals are second nature.

## **Program Modules**

The **Welcome to Animal Abuse and Prevention** introductory module acquaints the learner with the navigational tools offered throughout the curriculum and offers a quick synopsis of the individual blocks of instruction. Tips, manuals, handbooks, web pages, and other resources assist the officers in handling animal encounters and abuse situations.

The officer proceeds through the remaining modules as though he/she was patrolling through “districts.” In each district, the learner concentrates on a different aspect of abuse prevention as well as officer and animal safety.

### **District 1: Officer Safety - Dog Bite Prevention for Law Enforcement**

In this module, the participants identify and gain the necessary skills to respond safely to hazardous situations that involve dangerous or potentially dangerous dogs.

Participants learn how to interpret an animal’s disposition to prevent them from becoming victims of dog bites, as well as to protect the animals from overzealous officers who may inaccurately read an animal’s disposition. The module heightens awareness of departmental issues such as liability as it relates to cases involving animals. It gives learners alternatives to lethal methods for handling animals and techniques for minimizing personal injury in the event of an attack.

### **District 2: Animal Abuse & Community Policing**

This module exposes the participant to the links between animal abuse and other serious crimes and identifies ways to reduce both within the community. Dog fighting affects the community as it is part of the cycle of violence and is associated with other criminal activity such as illegal weapons, gambling, narcotics, child abuse, and other forms of interpersonal violence. The quality of the relationship between criminal justice professionals and members of the community has a direct impact on the effectiveness the police and other anti-cruelty officials have on stopping the cycle of violence – a cycle that breeds contempt for other living creatures and desensitizes children and adults to violence and cruelty.

This module creates interest in the topic from the community policing perspective, making linkages between animal abuse, interpersonal violence, school shooters and serial killers. Students examine how, from a political perspective, good animal enforcement is good politics.



## District 3: Investigations & Evidence

This module provides participants with the tools needed to investigate animal abuse cases and collect evidence to support them, including report writing and courtroom testimony.

## District 4: State Laws

This final module focuses on defining the state laws pertaining to animal abuse and neglect.

As the e-Learning curriculum is rolled out nationally, each state will have its own unique laws included in this block of instruction. The participant will learn how to interpret and apply: the Humane Care for Animals Act; Forfeiture Laws; Felony Animal Abuse Offenses and other animal laws to effect a positive change in the lives of animals.

This module also emphasizes “thinking outside the box” by using obscure, tangential anti-cruelty law. For example, an officer responds to a domestic dispute but the victim decides not to press charges. The officer hears dogs barking and the victim tells the officer there are dogs in the barn. Upon examination, the officer determines the dogs are in poor condition and used as fighting dogs. Now it would be possible to arrest the perpetrator for animal abuse, neglect or dog fighting instead of the initial crime of domestic violence.

Thinking creatively will produce the most effective legal defense against those who break the animal abuse and neglect laws and may produce a “teachable moment.”

## The Partners

### American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA)

A privately-funded 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation headquartered in New York City, the ASPCA offers

programs in humane education, public awareness, government advocacy, shelter support, and animal medical services and placement throughout the United States. Their web site, [www.ASPCA.org](http://www.ASPCA.org), contains a wealth of information on making animals and communities safer.

### Regional Institute for Community Policing (RICP)

The RICP is part of a national network of 27 regional institutes across the country supported by funds from the U.S. Department of Justice, Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS). RICP provides community training and technical assistance to police agencies, community governments, community residents, social service agencies and private sector representatives throughout Illinois in order to enhance the quality of life. Visit [www.ricp.uis.edu](http://www.ricp.uis.edu) for additional information.

### ASK International

ASK International remains at the forefront of the rapidly changing Web-based training industry. Additional information about ASK International is located at [www.askintl.com](http://www.askintl.com).

*Dr. Patricia S. Rushing is the Co-Director of the Illinois Regional Institute for Community Policing, Institute of Government and Public Affairs at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. There she focuses on curriculum development, the prevention of animal abuse and neglect, human trafficking, writing and strategic planning. Prior to joining the Institute, she served as Chief of Staff at the Illinois State Police (ISP) Academy and served as a member of the Illinois State Police Strategic Management Core Group. Additionally, she facilitated leadership education for the ASPCA Poison Control Center. She lives with her husband, Randy, and her two golden retrievers, Poppy and Isabella. You can reach Dr. Rushing by telephone at 217-206-6028 or by e-mail at [prush1@uis.edu](mailto:prush1@uis.edu).*



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### (Footnotes)

- <sup>1</sup> Mahatma Ghandhi



# Online Law Enfor

# A Pet's Place Creates a Safe Haven Program for Pets of Women who are Battered



Photo by Tom Schaeffges courtesy of University of Illinois

Pet's Place volunteers Jennifer Koranda (left) and Katie Quigley (right) pose with littermates who were cared for by A Pet's Place and now are doing well with their owner at their new home in another state.

By Kathleen E. Quigley, Jill M. Wojciechowski,  
Cheryl A. Weber, and Marcella D. Ridgway  
University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine

*She's abused by her boyfriend and afraid to leave him. She's desperate, thinking about suicide. And she loves her three cats. She won't leave him if she can't take her cats with her. The domestic violence shelter doesn't allow pets. She can't find anyone to foster them. She doesn't want to give them up. What does she do?*

She entered A Woman's Place, a domestic violence shelter in Urbana, Illinois, to escape her abuser. And she got emergency shelter for her cats through A Pet's Place, a joint program between the domestic violence shelter and the University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine. She began to heal the emotional scars of intimate partner violence, then found a new place to live. There was a joyful reunion with her three cats.

The safety for this family of four was possible because of the partnership between a domestic violence shelter and a veterinary college – a partnership that helps break the cycle of violence – a partnership needed because most shelters don't accept pets and women don't want to leave their pets behind. Reports show that 18-40% of battered women seeking shelter delayed entering a shelter due to concern for the safety of their pets.

## **Mission: Public Service**

A Pet's Place is a "safe-haven" program for the companion animals of domestic violence victims. The mission of the program is to help battered women by providing confidential, safe and free shelter for their pets for up to 30 days while the

women are staying at one of two local shelters, A Woman's Place in Urbana or Beth's Place in Tuscola, Illinois.

Animals enrolled in A Pet's Place receive food and water, daily exercise and social interaction, plus a physical examination by a veterinarian and any necessary vaccinations or other routine health care. Women with pets in the program can contact A Pet's Place directly to check on the status of their pet or to arrange an appointment to visit.

The shelter contacts A Pet's Place when an animal arrives. A student volunteer is available from 7am-9pm daily for intake, which includes gathering information about the pet and any special needs it has and obtaining the woman's signature on a written agreement outlining the program policies. Women retain ownership of their pet while it is being cared for through the program.

A Pet's Place volunteers are trained in matters of confidentiality and safety and are also responsible for formally tracking the number and species of animals served.

## **Mission: Public Awareness**

A Pet's Place volunteers work to increase awareness among veterinarians, veterinary students, and the local community about the link between animal abuse and human violence.

- Veterinary students and faculty participate in the Illinois Health Cares Coalition, a statewide coalition of agencies working to improve the health care response to domestic violence.
- The College of Veterinary Medicine, the Illinois Health Cares Coalition, and the East Central Illinois Police Training Project co-sponsored the seminar "Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence: The Cruel Connection" for veterinarians, law enforcement and domestic violence service providers.
- For the past three years, veterinary students have worked with coalition partners to help design posters on animal

abuse and family violence for a public awareness campaign. The posters were used on mass transit buses, and students put them up in the College. Students delivered posters and brochures to local veterinary clinics as well.

- Students distribute materials on animal abuse and domestic violence at the College's annual Open House.
- Students organize lunch-time seminars on animal abuse and domestic violence showing how veterinarians, animal control officers, licensed humane investigators and law enforcement can work together to respond more effectively to violence.
- Students collect old cell phones and donate them to the domestic violence shelters.

## Mission: Research

A research project entitled "Healthy Pets and Strong Families: Building Stronger Families through Companion Animal, Family, and Community Connections" is in progress, funded by the University of Illinois Cross-Campus Initiative for Promoting Family Resiliency ([www.familyresiliency.uiuc.edu](http://www.familyresiliency.uiuc.edu)).

## Starting New Programs!

More "safe haven" programs for animals are needed. They can be started by animal shelters, veterinary hospitals, humane societies, SPCAs, breed rescue groups, domestic violence shelters and others. An excellent resource for those interested in starting a program is Dr. Frank Ascione's book, *Safe Havens for Pets: Guidelines for Programs Sheltering Pets for Women who are Battered*, which can be downloaded at no charge from the web site of Andrew Vachss at [www.vachss.com/guest\\_dispatches/safe\\_havens.html](http://www.vachss.com/guest_dispatches/safe_havens.html). To find a program in your area, you can check the HSUS Online Directory of Safe Havens for Animals™ Programs at [www.hsus.org](http://www.hsus.org).

The University of Illinois College of Veterinary Medicine, together with A Woman's Place and Beth's Place, have shown that by building relationships and working together, they

## Abusers don't stop with the family pet

Make the call  
that can change  
your life!

Ask about our  
Safe Haven  
For Pets  
1-217-384-4390

Illinois Health Cares



Domestic Violence Hotline  
1-800-799-7233

Sexual Assault Hotline  
1-877-236-3727

Child Abuse Hotline  
1-800-252-2873

Elder Abuse Hotline  
1-800-252-8966

Animal Abuse Reports  
(in Champaign County)  
1-217-344-7297

The Illinois Health Cares Coalition produced this poster to increase public awareness of resources to help break the cycle of violence.

can help to keep women, children and pets safe and break the cycle of violence.

## Acknowledgments

We would like to recognize the veterinarian-psychologist couple Howard Gelberg, DVM, Ph.D., Dipl. ACVP and Susan Gelberg, Ph.D., for their leadership in initiating the program, and the many University of Illinois volunteers, veterinary students, faculty and staff who have moved the

program forward since the first animal was accepted into A Pet's Place in January of 2001. Each contribution has helped break the cycle of violence.

A special thanks to Tami Tunnell and the staff at A Woman's Fund, Barb Utterback and the staff at Beth's Place, and Teresa Miles of the Illinois Health Cares Coalition for nurturing strong relationships with A Pet's Place.

And a special thanks to the women who have entrusted the care of their dogs, cats and rabbits to A Pet's Place.

## About the Authors

**Marcella Ridgway, VMD, MS, DACVIM** is an Assistant Professor in Small Animal Internal Medicine at the University of Illinois and faculty advisor for A Pet's Place.

**Kathleen Quigley and Jill Wojciechowski** are veterinary students and Co-Directors of A Pet's Place. **Cheryl Weber, MSW** is the Client Counselor Specialist at the Veterinary Teaching Hospital. She can be reached at [cweber79@uiuc.edu](mailto:cweber79@uiuc.edu).



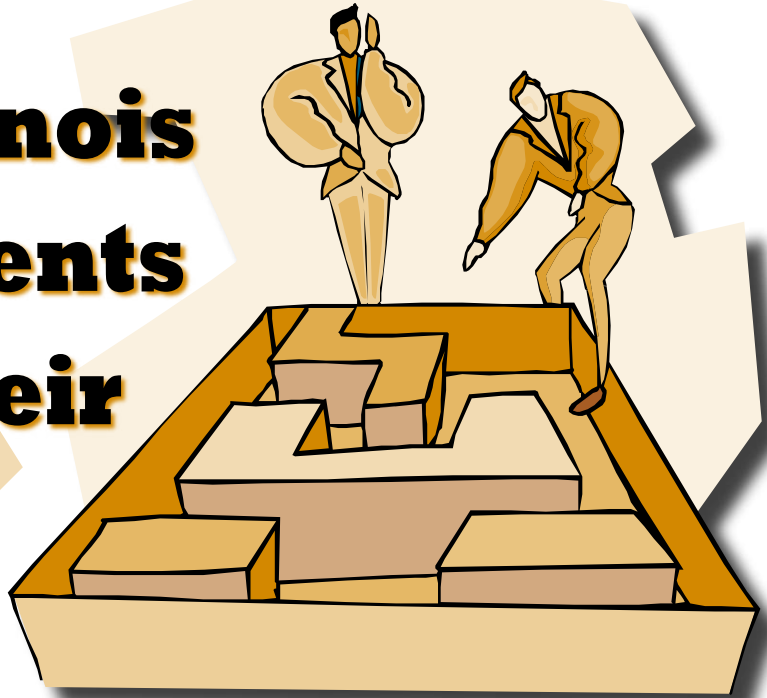
Veterinary student Katie Quigley does a physical exam under the supervision of A Pet's Place faculty advisor Dr. Marcy Ridgway.



Photo by Tom Schaeffges courtesy of University of Illinois

For a list of resources and more wonderful photos about this program, visit the UIUC Animal Sciences web site [http://pets.anci.uiuc.edu/outreach/humane\\_ed.cfm](http://pets.anci.uiuc.edu/outreach/humane_ed.cfm)

# University of Illinois Veterinary Students Reach Out to Their Community



By Emily Wheeler, Heather K. Tegeler, Emily Eaton, Janet Calkins, Kelli Kramer, Erin Lindblad, and B.V. Nelson



*Education is for improving the lives of others and for leaving your community and world better than you found it.*

— Marian Wright Edelman

## **Mission**

The Veterinary Student Outreach Program (VSOP) is a student organization that enhances the relationship between the College of Veterinary Medicine (CVM) and the community through educational programming and outreach activities.

Our outreach objectives are:

- **to spread** educated awareness of animal-related issues of concern in our society,
- **to share** our knowledge about animal health, husbandry and welfare,
- **to reveal** the exciting sciences that underlie modern veterinary medicine,
- **to emphasize** the importance of the human-animal emotional bond,
- **to encourage** people considering or pursuing careers in veterinary medicine, and

- **to enlighten** people about their role in contributing to a more humane world.

## **History**

After assisting with a junior high career day in 2003, four veterinary students got the outreach bug. “This was great!” they said. “We want to do more of this. We want to teach people about what veterinarians do!” And the seed for VSOP was planted. Since then, we have grown to more than 50 student-volunteers and a student executive board to manage the administration of our program. The first full executive board took a firm stance when drafting VSOP’s official mission statement in 2005. While veterinary medicine and animal health are our primary expertise, we uphold a broader mission. Every outreach event is an opportunity to use our skills and education to make the world kinder and more humane.

## Structure and Event Scheduling

(Figure 1)

VSOP is lead by an elected executive board of nine veterinary students with the support of a volunteer faculty advisor. Board positions are:

- **Public Liaison (2 positions):** accepts event requests and communicates with the public, connects requestor to appropriate program coordinator
- **Program Coordinator (4 positions):** organizes programs and recruits volunteers, one for each age group (pre-K-5<sup>th</sup> grade, junior high, high school and adult)
- **Secretary/Publisher (1 position):** records meeting minutes, assists with officer elections, and publishes biannual newsletter
- **Historian/Webmaster (1 position):** archives event plans and materials, sends "Thank You" card and event evaluation to requestors and maintains web site
- **Meeting Facilitator (1 position):** organizes club meetings and executive board meetings, communicates club activities to membership, and facilitates communication among membership and faculty/staff of the veterinary college

Student organizations often struggle with continuity due to the high turn-over of leadership. In order to maintain experience in our leadership during such transitions, elections for the executive board positions are staggered, with half of the positions elected in November and half in April.

When a request is submitted to the web site it goes through a series of feasibility checks.

- *Is the event request feasible for our group (i.e. location and approximate timing of event, program requested within our mission scope)?*

**Yes.** Public Liaison sends request to appropriate program coordinator.

**No.** Event is declined and referred to other possible resources for the service requested.

- *Can we achieve the requestor's educational goals and provide a fun, interactive program? Do we have a program for this purpose available or do we have sufficient time, expertise and resources to develop one?*

**Yes.** Program is pursued by the Program Coordinator for volunteer recruitment for possible dates proposed by requestor; when availability is questionable or when possible,

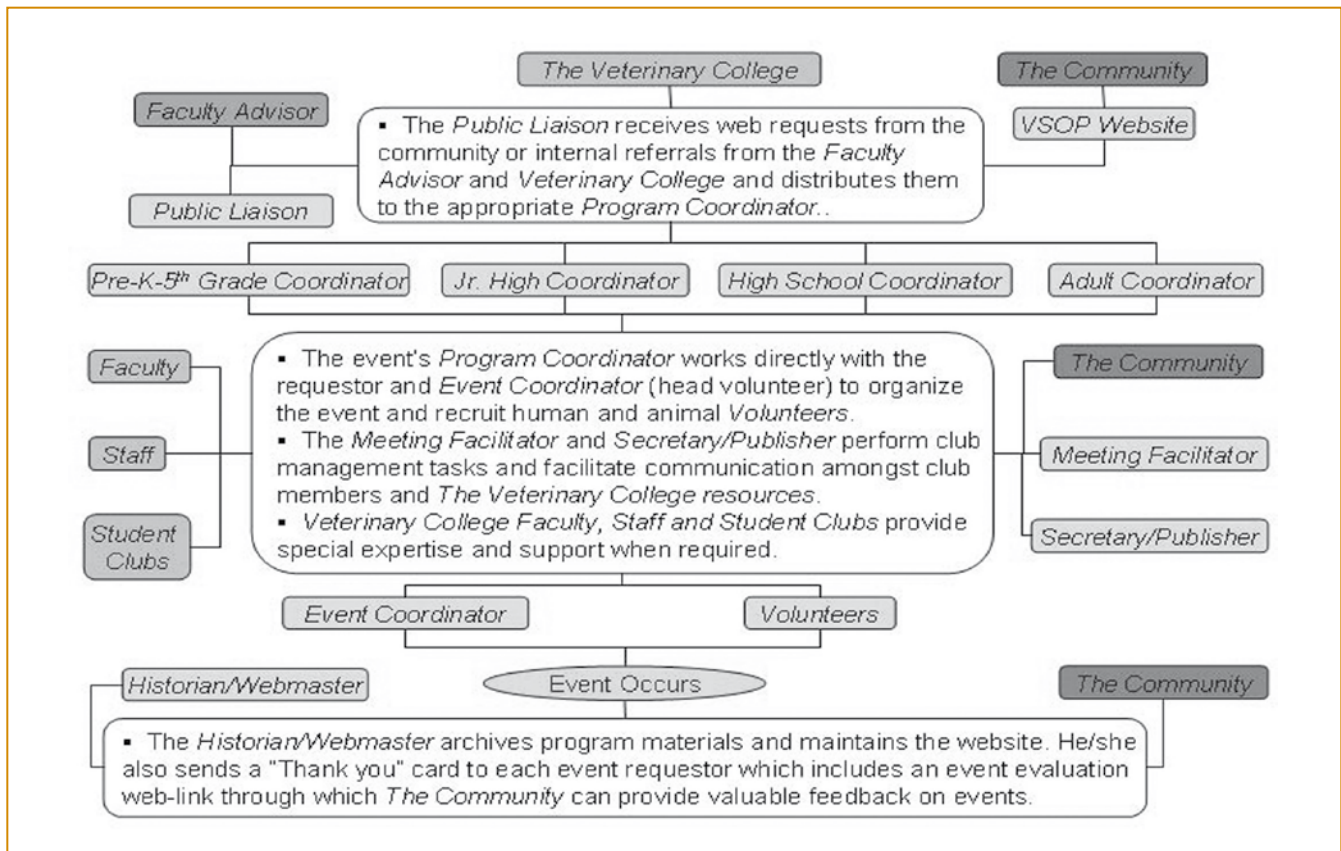


Figure 1

*“Tell me and I forget. Show me and I remember. Involve me and I understand.”*



Photo credit: Emily Wheeler

Veterinary student Emi Eaton gets participant assistance while teaching non-verbal communication to an elementary school group.

date is set immediately and volunteers are recruited for the established date.

**Maybe.** Program Coordinator works with requestor to work around obstacles preventing us from meeting their needs and sets a date/recruits volunteers if possible.

**No.** Event is declined and referred to other possible resources for service requested.

■ *What are the volunteer needs to manage the required program? Can we obtain this number of volunteers for the requested date and time?*

**Yes.** Program Coordinator confirms the event with the head volunteer (Event Coordinator), volunteers, and requestor.

**No.** Either the Program Coordinator and requestor work to find another mutually acceptable date or, if date is not flexible, the event is declined and referred to other possible resources for the service requested.

If an event request meets these criteria, the event becomes the primary responsibility of a head volunteer. The Event Coordinator is responsible for recruiting additional volunteers and for working with the event's Program Coordinator on organizing materials and volunteers for the event.

To simplify communications, the Program Coordinator retains primary communication responsibility with the requestor throughout the process and relays information to the Event Coordinator and volunteers as needed. This is primarily to prevent any confusion due to multiple persons contacting requestors for information. Records of all communications on an event-in-progress are recorded on each event's administrative web-log.

## **Programming**

We ascribe to the teaching philosophy of the Chinese proverb “Tell me and I forget. Show me and I remember. Involve me and I understand.” We have a growing list of “ready-made” programs on our web site for which we have curricula, supplies and trained volunteers (go to

[www.cvm.uiuc.edu/asa/vsop](http://www.cvm.uiuc.edu/asa/vsop) and view Table 1). Many requestors prefer to select from this list. Our most well-developed programs, such as bite-prevention sessions for elementary school children and career-day talks for junior high students, are very popular.

As we develop our outreach program, we are trying to grow in a way that meets the needs and wants of the community. Thus, we are always happy to create a program to meet a specific interest expressed by a requestor when time and available resources permit. When designing new programs, we use age-specific activities to make the programs fun and educational for all participants. Many custom-designed programs give us the start for developing new “ready-made” programs to advertise on our web site.

While we are currently developing programs on a variety of topics which we feel will make an important contribution to our outreach goals, we realize that there are many pressing topics in animal welfare, science and health that have yet to be added to our list. We would love suggestions on what you think would be important areas to focus on next. Do you have ideas? Go to our web site (listed at end) to contact us and tell us your thoughts.

## **Motivation**

Most veterinary students decide to go to veterinary school because they want to improve the lives of animals and humans. But for some of the biggest issues like improving animal welfare or preserving biodiversity, nothing permanent can ever be accomplished without increased public awareness and support. No one can change the world single-handedly, but if we could each reach just a few people, big things can happen. Every outreach event is a valuable opportunity to weave a thread of kindness into the lives of other people, promoting respectful and humane treatment of all creatures and of our planet.

We will likely save more animals' lives and enhance more human-animal relationships with outreach activities than we will ever really know. It is the difference you know you have made, even if it cannot be enumerated, that is often the most satisfying. The beauty of a sunset cannot be counted. We are glad to have this opportunity to make a difference as students while we gain the skills we need to contribute to our cause as veterinarians.

## **Future**

The number of VSOP events has skyrocketed since 2003 as we become better known in the community (Figure 2). We

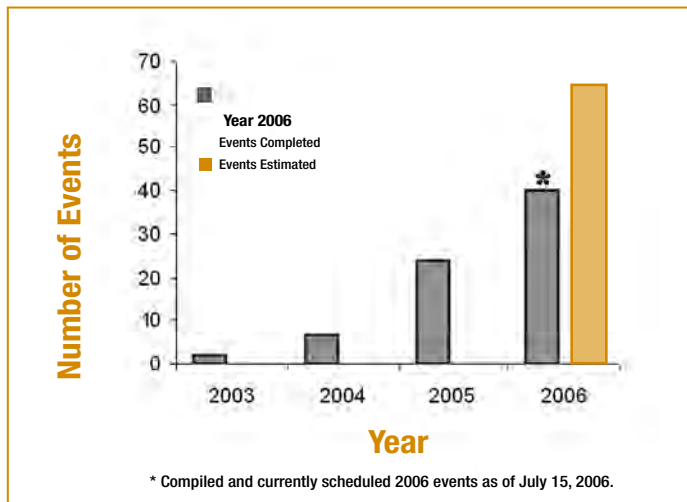


Figure 2

estimate that by the end of 2006 we will have performed approximately 60 requests in a single year! While we serve all age groups, we currently have more established programs for high school-aged students due to a co-sponsorship with our Office of Academic and Student Affairs for two high school pre-health sciences groups (Figure 3). As we develop new programs to address specific educational needs and interests for other age groups, we expect an increase in our ability to serve younger student and adult groups.

Other improvement projects for the future:

- **Fundraising** - We are a free service of the CVM, but are investigating external grant opportunities to fund program development and volunteer recruitment.
- **Collaboration** - A huge strength of our program is the resource pool of enthusiastic and animal-aware volunteers who would love to get involved. Our major weaknesses as a student-run organization, however,

*"The best way to predict the future is to invent it."*  
 – Immanuel Kant

Veterinary student Denise Cudiamat teaches how to approach a strange dog. Every outreach event is a valuable opportunity to promote respectful and humane treatment of all creatures and of our planet.



Photo credit: Emily Wheeler

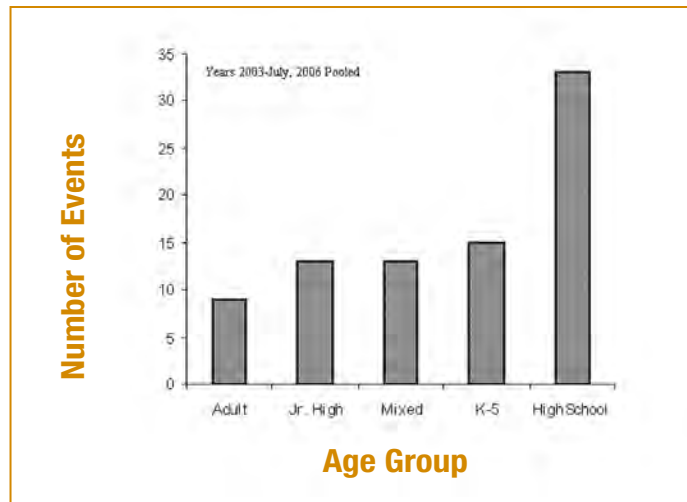


Figure 3

are finding the time and specialized expertise needed to fully develop educational programming. For this reason, we are especially interested in strengthening our relationship with veterinary and animal-related clubs and organizations that are interested in co-sponsoring events or assisting with targeted program development. Once a program is developed in collaboration, we can easily provide trained volunteers to take that program into the community to advance public education on pressing issues in animal welfare.

### Acknowledgements

We owe many thanks to the CVM faculty, staff and students for supporting our efforts and for providing such a nurturing environment for pursuing our outreach efforts. We especially appreciate the support of the Office of Academic and Student Affairs staff, Gerald Pijanowski and our faculty advisor, Mary Kelm and the brilliant vision of the VSOP founding student members Kevin Lewis, Tom Satkus, Amy Wolf and Claire Ojala. We would also like to recognize the intellectual contributions of Tamara McArdle, Joseph Cosman, Jill Horton, Kathleen Kersey, and Erin Long to the production of this manuscript and to building VSOP's structure and success during their terms on the first executive board. And a final thank you to the Urbana-Champaign community, who has embraced our desire to provide services in humane education and has provided honest and constructive feedback which is so vital for improving our burgeoning program.

**Emily Wheeler** is a DVM/Ph.D. student at the University of Illinois in Urbana-Champaign. She is the High School Program Coordinator for the Veterinary Student Outreach Program. She can be reached directly at [erwheele@uiuc.edu](mailto:erwheele@uiuc.edu) or through the VSOP web site at [www.cvm.uiuc.edu/asa/vsop](http://www.cvm.uiuc.edu/asa/vsop).





# ***Teachable Moments and How They Open the Windows of Opportunity***

*By Jane Greco-Deming*

**Opportunity** is what it's all about! Although much of humane education is prepared programs with age-appropriate topics, artifacts and animals, moreover it is seizing the opportunity to get an important point or message across to one or more listeners. Teachable moments are sometimes organized, scheduled and prepared for, but they can also be those instances where you speak with someone about a cat that needs to be spayed or a dog that spends too much time tied to a tree. Knowing how to identify those moments and what to say is extremely important to a humane educator. People often look to us for guidance about their pets or their animal-related classroom activities. As humane educators, our goal is to be sure we are informed enough to provide an answer that is appropriate and makes sense to the listener(s). We must also be humble enough to say we don't know, but we will find out and get back to our audience with the correct answer.

Who is the educator? Everyone and anyone that works in an animal-related organization can and should be an educator. Some of us have the title "Humane Educator," and we are the folks who pack up our gear each day and travel to schools and scout meetings or run summer camps and speak to seniors

at luncheons. However, along with official humane educators, the entire staff in a shelter, humane society, trainer, kennel, groomer, etc., will also receive people's questions about pets. Our answers, how they are delivered, how we react, and even our body language are vitally important to projecting a positive message.

Many changes and technologies have grown out of what was once simply standing in front of a group of kids and telling them to put ID tags on their pets and take them to the vet. We are now seeing partnerships, collaborations, interactive exhibits, on-line curricula, and so much more. That growth is fabulous and vitally important to improving people's opinions about responsibility and kindness toward animals. However, in the midst of all that growth and dynamic change, we need to keep our eyes on some basics too.

## ***Tips for "Opening the Windows of Opportunity" at Your Facility***

- Always be positive and kind. No matter how bad the situation, try not to lose your cool. People won't hear what you are saying if you are condescending or rude.
- Use open body language. If you are pointing your finger or folding your arms, you send out a negative message.
- Give people 10 points for coming to you and looking for help. Their behavior indicates that they have faith in you or your organization and feel they can resolve a problem or get a clear answer with you.
- Stay abreast of what is happening with animals, locally and nationally. Be informed and organized. If you can't remember details or answers, then you should know how to put your hands on information to answer questions.
- If in the end you don't have the answers, at least direct the person to a logical next step to help them with a solution.
- Try to turn every encounter into a positive educational experience.
- Make sure the entire staff is trained to answer questions, and knows where to go for answers when they don't know.

Remember that with a small amount of thought and a little preparation we can make every encounter with a person or group of people a "Teachable Moment."



## Tips for “Opening the Windows of Opportunity” for a Humane Educator

What was said above applies to all of us. For professional humane educators, however, there is an even greater need to know your stuff. You represent a professional organization. Your every mood, attitude and behavior will influence your credibility. Making a positive impression when you walk through the door or have your first telephone conversation with a teacher will work to your benefit in the future. Be positive!

Here are some other general tips for humane educators:

- Be organized. Make sure you keep a calendar of all of your program dates. Keep it out in the open for volunteers or co-workers so they know where you are.
- Make sure the teacher or organization representative who schedules a program receives a reservation form or confirmation letter that spells out what is expected of them and what you will provide. Have them mail/fax back a copy with a signature to be sure that they received the form and agree with the terms, and that all the information is correct. Keep the signed forms in chronological order so that they are easy for you or the staff to find. It is also helpful, to ask for directions to the location.
- Make sure you are prompt and prepared for whatever program you are bringing. Leave time for traffic and getting lost. Most schools have a rigid schedule and if you are five minutes late, it is hard to make up that time.

If you are creating a program for the first time or trying to work in some new ideas, it is important to remember that kids learn best by being part of what you do. Here are some thoughts to help you get started:

- Most states have either performance standards or curriculum guides. Using a copy of those standards to tailor your program/presentation will be a benefit, as it will help you connect with what is happening in the schools and have teachers view you as an asset that complements what they need to accomplish.
- Make sure what you are doing is age-appropriate. If you are introducing new terms, be prepared with definitions. Don't discuss issues that are beyond what kids can handle or understand. The topic of neutering is not for pre-schools!
- Be creative. Anyone can stand in front of a group and lecture for an hour. Will the kids think of it as a memorable experience? Not likely! They will remember touching artifacts, answering questions, story boards, games, and interactions.
- Stay on subject. It is very easy to be drawn off track with a topic. Use a lesson plan and stick to it. The lesson plan is a great tool for program planning and execution.
- Don't be afraid to try something new! Some of the most amazing education programs in this country came from a simple idea. Talk to staff, board members, teachers and fellow educators, and create something that works for you. Then share it with others!

## About the author

*Jane Deming has been the Director of Education at the Providence Animal Rescue League for over 12 years. Her most notable accomplishment during that time was the creation of the “Pets & People” exhibit at the Providence Children’s Museum in 1997. This first-of-its-kind in the nation interactive exhibit was designed to help children understand the importance of being responsible and kind to animals. In January of 2006, exhibit visitation reached one million people.*

*At the League Jane has created many unique programs for people of all ages. The most recent is the “Baby-Ready Pets” program. This program was designed to assist expectant parents with preparing their pets for the arrival of a new baby and it has been a smash hit with all who have participated. Along with creative partner Katenna Jones, animal behaviorist and cruelty investigator of the Rhode Island Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RISPCA), Jane will unveil that new program for national distribution at the Association of Professional Humane Educators (APHE) annual conference in Denver in February 2007.*

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Coming in the next issue:  
Jane's fundraising tips

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# Canine Connection's Healing Dogs Lend a Helping Paw

## Innovative and Interactive Animal-Assisted Therapy

By Mary Young and Harriett Weatherford

### *We do humane education, too!*

Champaign-Urbana's Canine Connection works with companion animals, specifically dogs, to promote the human-animal bond and its healing and motivational benefits in recreational and therapeutic programs. Dogs provide a unique ability to penetrate barriers that might otherwise exist to goal attainment with-in these types of programs. Humane education topics are the primary source we draw from to keep our participation relevant and engaging. Our participation is multidisciplinary and performed in diverse venues.

### **Focus on Youth Programs**

We regularly provide therapeutic recreational programs for groups and/or individuals who are residents of a local children's home and for groups at the county's youth detention center. Individuals with physical and/or emotional challenges achieve therapeutic success when teamed with certified therapy dogs and their volunteer handlers to accomplish specific and identifiable goals. During sessions with troubled youth populations, humane treatment and proper care of dogs has become a predominant component and intervention strategy.

Young children and adolescents become residents of the children's

home for many reasons, including mental illness, trauma, abuse, neglect, and developmental disabilities. Those in the county detention center are in the custody of the court system. Both populations tend to share common problems such as lack of self-esteem and inability to focus, share, or feel comfortable in a group. Relying on the power of the human-animal bond, we assist the clients to focus on the dogs while at the same time achieve their therapeutic goals.

Every session is conducted within a framework of positive reinforcement for both the human and the animal members of the team. We teach and show the participants how well the dogs respond and how quickly they learn when they are praised for offering a correct or desired behavior. We also demonstrate the benefits of addressing an incorrect behavior by redirecting the dog positively, ultimately resulting in successful performance.

### **What Happens in a Canine Connection Session?**

Canine Connection motivates individuals to achieve their therapy goals with canine assistance. Goals might be as simple as encouraging participants to join a conversation or participate in a group activity.



Bill Kreyssig with Sparky at an Adult Special Recreation Program. This moment captured is typical of the relationship that develops between program participants and the Canine Connection dogs.

Most youth programs begin with Canine Connection volunteers introducing themselves and their dogs followed by introductions from the participants. We ask the participants to tell us what animals they have had in their lives so we can relate topics back to their personal experiences. A substantial number of them come from backgrounds that include many animals, but ones that may not have been well cared for or trained. In fact, it is not uncommon for participants to be afraid of their own family pets. By working with well-trained, affectionate animals, we demonstrate how fulfilling life with a companion animal can be.

Many of the participating therapy dogs have been adopted from a humane society or rescue group. It is not lost on the children that these were once unwanted animals that now reside in loving and fun homes.

### **Therapy Activities and How They Relate to Humane Education**

Many different activities can be used to accomplish a goal, and a single



activity may simultaneously help the client work on multiple goals.

The volunteer's primary objective is to provide encouragement, training, and guidance to the participant so that he/she learns to work with the dog to complete exercises that meet therapy goals. The volunteer teaches the client the appropriate commands for his/her dog to perform the requested behavior. During the program sessions, we use simple obedience commands or a combination of any of the exercises below. These exercises improve the clients' physical and verbal skills and, more importantly, improve their self-confidence and emotional well-being as the dogs respond to their commands.

*After explaining one dog's background to a young man in detention, he said that his life was similar to the dog's... up until the point where the dog's life improved.*

### Examples of Activities

The following activities are examples used in a typical Canine Connection youth group session with the goals of enhancing each participant's:

- communication skills,
- physical skills,
- ability to focus, and
- desire to participate as part of a group.

**Dog Breed Characteristics.** Each participant is given a dog magazine (which they can keep) to read a breed-specific article. The volunteer and child discuss the article and then present the breed to the group. They tell how the breed in the article is the same or different from those dogs present. This module focuses on presentation, cognitive development, and confidence.

**Dog Jobs.** Each child is given a picture of a dog at work. The child and volunteer discuss the picture and talk about what kind of dog can do the work depicted in the photograph. This module focuses on verbal skills, cognitive development, and potential.

**Dog Greeting.** Each participant learns about body language in dogs and how dogs communicate. They are shown the proper way to approach a dog they don't know, as well as how to handle a dog that is approached by another dog team. This module focuses on awareness, communication, and confidence.

**Dog Grooming.** Hands-on experience is provided to demonstrate basic grooming (brushing, nail trimming, ear cleaning, teeth brushing) with an emphasis on observation related to health, bonding and pleasure, as well as hygiene. This module focuses on health, physical dexterity, and compassion.

**Dog Worms.** Jars of common parasites (roundworms, hookworms,) are shown and discussed – how animals and people get them, how they can be prevented. This module focuses on biology and health.

**Dog Games.** Basic commands are presented to allow the teams to negotiate agility obstacles, perform retrieve games, employ basic obedience commands like walking on a loose leash around obstacles, and play-train other dog games such as "catch bubbles" and "find it." In addition to positive training techniques, we talk about how to recognize when a pet is tired, stressed, or sick and what to

do about it. This module focuses on physical activity, awareness skills, and relationship/trust.

## Results of Canine Connection Therapy Dog Programs

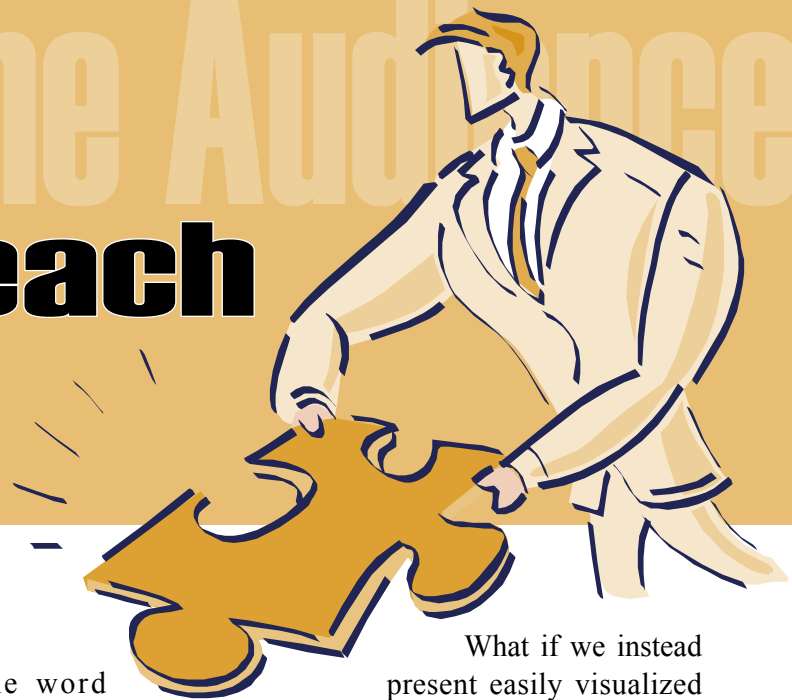
Because of the nature of our programs and the array of populations we serve, we don't use formal methods of recording benefits of Canine Connection. We are confident, however, of the long-term benefits our programs yield by observing firsthand how they have positively affected the lives of those we've worked with. Success of the Canine Connection programs is measured in the personal triumphs of its participants, as the following examples illustrate:

- An "angry" youth lacking empathy or sympathy for any person or creature now willingly shows pride in and affection for the canine he "trains" each week. Counselors report that he shows more respect, and even affection, for his teachers.
- "Logan, come," were the first words spoken by an injured teenager following months of physical therapy. This breakthrough helped the therapists design a program that enabled her to make a full recovery.

*Mary Young and Harriett Weatherford are founding members of Canine Connection. They also work with their local humane society and in their community to promote animal welfare and an appreciation for the joy of pet ownership. Canine Connection can be reached at [www.illinidogs.com/canineconnection/](http://www.illinidogs.com/canineconnection/)*



# Reaching the Hard-to-Reach Audience



By Ann Reisner, Ph.D.

Reaching the hard-to-reach audience actually differs very little from reaching any other audience. You have to design your message using words the audience members know and values they understand; reach your audience using channels that they regularly use at a time and a place when they are likely to listen to you; and make sure that you are not asking the audience to do more than they can actually do. This article addresses the first stage of the process: understanding what the audience knows and feels about a topic so that an effective message can be designed.

## **Designing your message using words the audience members know**

Let's look at a nutrition example, because there has been a tremendous amount of research in how to communicate information about food. The American Heart Association (AHA) currently states that a healthy diet includes eating no more than six ounces of lean meat, poultry or fish a day, and five to six servings of fruits and vegetables.

Has the AHA used words that the audience member knows? Well,

let's discuss the word "serving." When nutrition educators use the word "serving," the size of what constitutes a serving changes depending on the kind of food.

A serving of meat, for example, is three ounces; a serving of vegetables is between  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup and one cup; and a serving of grains is  $\frac{1}{2}$  cup of cooked rice or  $\frac{1}{4}$  cup of nugget cereal.

Do most people use the term "serving" in this way? Actually, no. According to a research study on serving sizes, a sizable chunk of people consider a serving to be what is on their plate, whether the serving is 3 ounces or 24 ounces.

Even if the audience members know that they should eat two servings of meat a day and a serving is three ounces, that doesn't mean that the audience knows what three ounces of meat looks like. Is three ounces as big as the palm of my hand? Half of the palm of my hand?

Research again shows that people don't really know, in many cases, how to judge the weight of a piece of meat by its cooked size. So here is a second audience, one who has difficulty with a *skill* – the skill of judging how many ounces a particular piece of meat is.

What if we instead present easily visualized terms? For example, one chicken breast, a cut of meat about the size of a deck of cards, or a thin cut of fish about the size of a checkbook are each about three ounces. Using these concrete and easily visualized terms, we are much more likely to say something the audience will understand.

## **Talking to the audience using values the audience members share**

The most basic idea, the absolute core concept we have, in using communication to change audience behavior is that messages have the most effect when they are targeted to publics: people with shared life experiences. A person's life experience is what helps that person develop his or her most important values and strongest emotions.

Unfortunately communicators most often distribute information that is important to the communicators. The medical field, for example, knows a tremendous amount of information about the grim implications of being overweight: heart attack, stroke, hypertension, and a myriad of other health problems.

But communicating technical information about risk says nothing about whether the person who is overweight feels at risk. And salient information will not promote change unless the person cares.

This is the most important reason why audiences are difficult to reach. In order to effectively promote change you need to know what the audience feels is important: the audience's shared life experiences.

What if we target a public that has more in common than "being overweight"?

For example, the Wellness Institute at Northwestern Memorial Hospital and Hill's Pet Nutrition partnered in a year-long study of a weight-loss program for overweight dogs and their overweight people. On average, the humans lost about five percent of their body weight (about 11 pounds) and dogs lost about 15 percent.

In this case, the public has a shared life experience and a reference group that is important to it (the dog) that strongly supports the activity. I've yet to meet a dog who doesn't like going on a walk. The public also has ties to values such as, "I need to lose weight to feel better," "I need to be a good dog owner to

my overweight dog," and multiple emotions urging exercise – feelings of self worth, love of the dog, fear of health consequences, and so on. Some of these values and emotions apply to a more general audience; some are unique to the public of overweight dog owners.

### **Reaching a specific group of people with shared life experiences**

The four general stages in reaching an audience include: identifying the problem, researching the problem and the audience, designing a message, and checking whether that message can effectively reach the audience. To illustrate the process a very hard-to-reach audience will be examined – people who do street dog fighting.

**1. Identify the problem.** The first step is to set a goal of some behavior that you want to change. In this case, convincing people who do dog fighting on the streets to stop.

**2. Research the problem and the audience.** The next stage is always gathering as much information as possible about the problem, the solution, and the audience from as many different reliable sources as one can identify. This stage involves *formative research*, which can be as simple as listening to and asking a lot of questions about why the audience would or would not do what you want them to do. Approach both people in official positions whose job is to know about the problem and people in the target audience itself.

I started with my friends' kids who would probably remember information about dog fights. I also talked to staff in the university's

companion animal program and read information gathered from libraries, the Web, and humane groups.

Armed with information from these sources, I approached the local animal control officer who confirmed three formal arrests for dog fighting on street corners in the last four years. There were about ten calls a year reporting street fights and there were probably more fights than were called in.

The offenders were lower income white males in their late twenties and early thirties who lived in high crime areas and had both a history of domestic abuse and a significant rap sheet.

Ideally I would have specifically talked to the target audience, but all of the dog fighters I could actually identify were in jail. Instead, I talked to other groups that were familiar with the target audience, such as social workers.

**3. Design a message.** Designing the message is a matter of packaging together two basic elements: information and values.

Look at what the audience needs to know, but does not, and make sure that the information is included in the message.

Be sure to use an appeal that is important to the audience. If the audience likes dogs, describe in detail how stopping the fights is good for dogs; if the audience is indifferent to dogs but feels strongly that children should be protected, show how stopping the fights creates a safer environment for children.

In this case, however, I concluded that there is absolutely no way to change this group's behavior with communications – intensive long-range therapy, maybe.

**To effectively promote change, you need to know what the audience feels is important.**

# Reaching the Audience

#### 4. Check whether the message can effectively reach the audience.

Once a message has been developed, it is important to take that message back to some people in the public you are trying to reach and check whether what you think you wrote is what your public thinks you wrote. This process is called *pretesting* and will be addressed in a future *Latham Letter* issue.

In this case I needed to select other ways to help the dogs. This involves changing either the problem or the solution. I could, for example, work to increase the number of people

arrested for dog fighting by encouraging neighbors and people who see the dog fights to report the perpetrators to authorities. However, I would need to start completely over at step one. I would need to figure out why more people aren't reporting the dog fights they see – from the point of view of the people who live in neighborhoods with people who do dog fighting. This entails 1) talking directly to the audience, 2) listening to them, and 3) reaching them where they are.

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*Environmental Communications in the Department of Human and Community Development and Affiliate in the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Her research interests include environmental communications; environmental social movements and social movement organizations; sociology of the mass media (press); and community mobilizing. She may be contacted at [reisnera@uiuc.edu](mailto:reisnera@uiuc.edu) or 217-333-4787.*



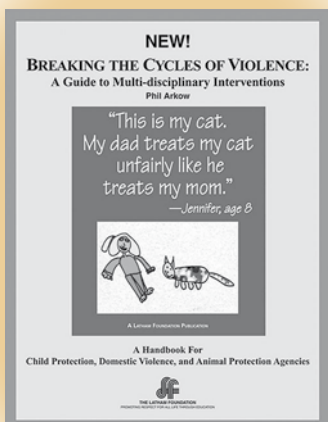
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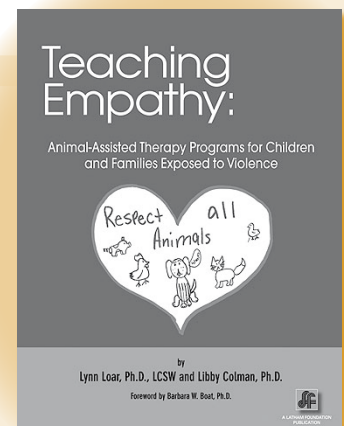
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# Media Review

## **Living with Kids and Dogs ... Without Losing Your Mind**

Reviewed by Joan Orr, Ph.D.

**Living with Kids and Dogs ... Without Losing Your Mind** by Colleen Pelar is a must-read for parents who have kids and dogs or are contemplating acquiring a dog. Colleen gives practical advice that considers the needs of kids, dogs and parents. This goes far beyond the usual “supervise and control” mantra and gives workable approaches that empower the parent to advocate for both the kids and the dog.

The book is themed around the three keys to success, which are (in order of importance): relationship, management and training. Positive reinforcement techniques are described for helping to build a strong relationship between the dog and the family using various games and training exercises. Common sense management suggestions are made to help parents think of ways to prevent problems. For example, stealing from the counter can be prevented by putting food away. Training comes more easily when there is a strong foundation of mutual respect between the dog and the kids and when a household is well managed. Colleen advocates using positive methods with kids and dogs and never resorting to punishment.

## Living with Kids and Dogs



...Without Losing Your Mind

*A Parent's Guide to Controlling the Chaos*

Colleen Pelar, CPDT

Topics covered in the book include deciding to get a dog, choosing a dog, bite prevention, spotting serious behavior issues, essential equipment, babies and toddlers, preschoolers, elementary schoolers, teenagers and saying goodbye. A unique and very useful component of this book is the “Words for the Wary” section at the end of each chapter. This recognizes that sometimes a parent is just too busy to sit down and read or re-read a whole book chapter and so the highlights are conveniently presented.

There are too many clever and original ideas in the book to list them all here, but a few examples illustrate the types of activities described. There is the “dog in the rope” game, where the kids click and treat the dog for lying calmly within a rope circle to keep him from interfering with their games – such a better way to use a

rope than to tie the dog up! Another great technique is the double leash to prevent jumping. Two leashes are attached to the dog and the parent steps on one to prevent the dog from jumping while holding the other in the regular way. This stops the dog from jumping while preventing the handler from yanking the dog back with the leash. Don't punish your dog for growling – this is surprising advice to most parents. Colleen explains this and many other dog behavior concepts that are important for parents to understand.

As a mother of teenagers and a professional dog trainer, Colleen Pelar has lived it all and she tells it like it is with humor, compassion and practicality. This book is highly recommended!

**Living with Kids and dogs ... Without Losing Your Mind: A Parent's Guide to Controlling the Chaos**

By Colleen Pelar, CPDT

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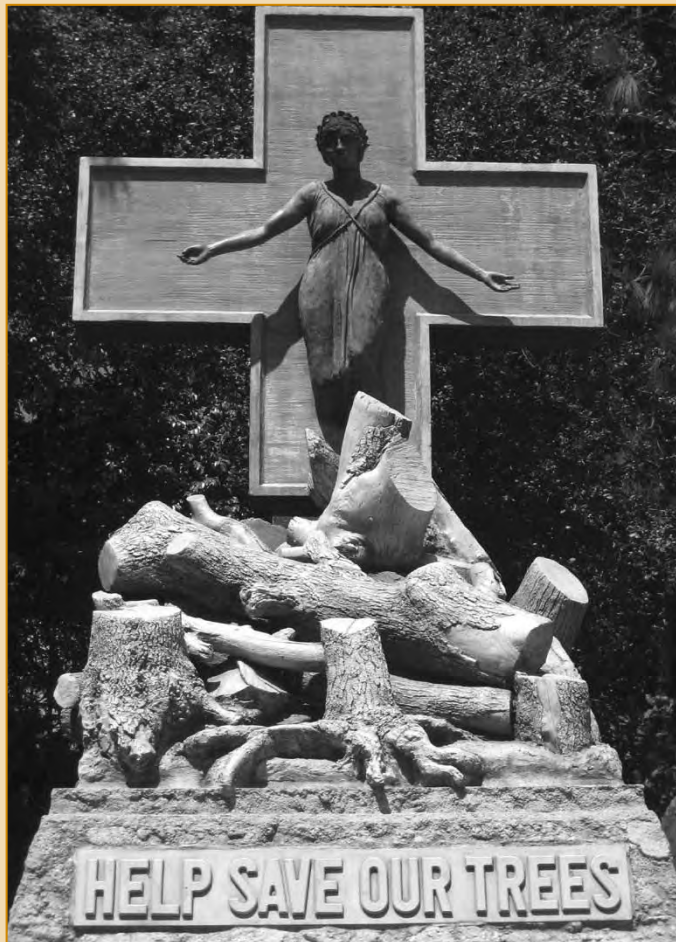


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Standing more than 25 feet tall, Miss American Green Cross is a symbol of the early conservation movement in the U.S.

She was commissioned by the founding chapter of the American Green Cross Movement, Glendale, California, in 1928. Today she guards the beginning of a nature trail in Brand Park, Glendale, CA.

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MISS AMERICAN GREEN CROSS  
Frederick Willard Potter, Sculptor



## The Latham Foundation

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