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# Latham Letter

VOLUME XXVIII, NUMBER 3

SUMMER 2007

PROMOTING RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION

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## When Heroes are the Pits

By Kristine Crawford



Cheyenne, Dakota, Tahoe and their friend Peter.

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Conference and Pets as Social Capital

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# *Edith Latham's Mandate:*

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



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Promotion of Humane Education*

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# The Latham Letter

Volume XXVIII, Number 3, Summer 2007

**BALANCED PERSPECTIVES ON  
HUMANE ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES**



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# In Loving Memory

Hugh Holbrook Tebault II

June 23, 1917 – May 10, 2007

Latham Foundation Director Emeritus



Hugh H. Tebault, II, former President of The Latham Foundation for the Promotion of Humane Education, died May 10, 2007 at the age of 89 in Alameda, California. He led the Foundation's work for more than 45 years, from 1953 to 1998, having been introduced to its work through his mother who was founder Edith Latham's friend and co-worker.

Determined to help those who could not speak for themselves, young Edith Latham and Gwyn Tebault explored many methods of reaching the largest possible number of children with their humane message.

Methods through the years included the Kind Deeds Club and the Kindness Messenger (a school newsletter), a radio program, an essay contest, and an international poster competition. The Wonderful World of Brother

Buzz television program (KPIX Channel 5, San Francisco) in the 1960s and the Withit Series in the 1970s were syndicated nationally.

Following the 1981 HCAB/Delta conference in Philadelphia and the Hawaii Symposium with People Pet Partnership,

Latham created the Delta Committee of the Latham Foundation, which developed into the Delta Society in 1982. Tebault was always proud of Latham's role as a catalyst in the development of the Delta Society and its role as a leader in the field of animal-assisted activities.

Tebault led the Foundation through the development of its quarterly magazine *The Latham Letter*, many books and films, and its website, which is now 12 years old.

Hugh Tebault II is survived by his wife of more than 59 years, four children including his eldest son, Hugh H. Tebault III, who is the current president of the Latham Foundation, and four grandchildren. A retired WWII veteran, he retired as a US Air Force Lt. Colonel after more than 34 years of service. He then went on to pursue a career in mortgage banking, serving as Vice President of the Lomas and Nettleson Company. After retiring from Lomas and Nettleson, he devoted his career full time to The Latham Foundation. In 1973 he co-founded Alameda Meals on Wheels and he continued to volunteer with them until 2006. He was also a member of the First Presbyterian Church of Alameda, a past member of the Alameda Planning Board, the Alameda Grand Jury and the Alameda County Recreation Commission.

Latham friends are encouraged to visit <http://lathamremembers.blogspot.com> and post their memories.



Hugh Tebault II with Lassie in 1974





## Inspiring reports from the H.O.R.S.E.S. for the Physically Challenged Newsletter

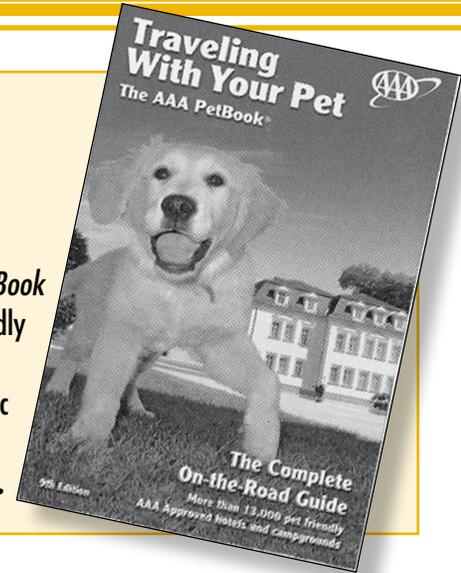
[www.open.org/horses88](http://www.open.org/horses88)

"There is nothing we like better than hearing how horses have impacted the lives of the people we serve. Here are just a few of the personal triumphs attributed to these noble beasts.

"A seven-year-old boy used verbal language for the first time in order to communicate with his horse; A young girl instructed her father to remove the training wheels from her bicycle because she no longer needed their help to balance; A young woman overcame a debilitating fear of horses in order to ride with friends and family. Many thanks to the volunteers and supporters who made these, and a hundred other miracles possible."

### Traveling with your Pet

The recently released ninth edition *Traveling with Your Pet: The AAA PetBook* contains more than 13,000 pet-friendly AAA-Approved hotels and more than 400 campgrounds that allow domestic animals. **Available at AAA Bookstores in Auto Club offices.**



### Martha Stewart Promotes Pet Adoption

Martha Stewart wrote in a recent issue of *Martha Stewart Living*, "I, and I am sure many of you, believe in the fine idea of pet adoption. This month's Pet Keeping column explores the subject of adopting greyhounds. I visited with a local greyhound-adoption group recently, and I can attest to the grace and beauty and loveliness of this breed of dog.

Every type of dog, cat, or other species requires a great deal of thought and care before you welcome one of them as your pet, to live in your home, to interact with everyone, and to become, in fact, a member of your family. There are so many reasons to consider adoption – and so many reasons to take pains to learn and study and try out before you adopt. Adopting a pet should be considered almost as seriously as adopting a child. After all, you need to ensure that the adoption and the process of integrating your pet into his new home will be a success. Over the years, I have adopted several dogs and many of my cats, and I have really had very little trouble acclimatizing the pets to my home and to the menagerie that I have created there. Adoption has proven to be a generally kind and humane act, and one that helps the animal kingdom."

#### **The Latham Letter** *Balanced perspectives on humane issues and activities*



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Photos: Judy Johns

Tahoe, Dakota, and Cheyenne

# HEROES

## When Heroes are the Pits

By Kristine Crawford

Every day thousands of dogs across the country are discarded, unwanted, and left in the streets or at the doors of a shelter. Dakota was one of those dogs. She was just another pup, among a litter of pups that was abused and going to be abandoned and/or destroyed. But I rescued the exuberant pup, and after years of training, overcoming stereotypes and some incredible obstacles, Dakota became a world famous search and rescue (SAR) dog.

Dakota is a 10-year-old American Pit Bull Terrier who has been deployed on over 200 search and rescue missions. These searches include high profile cases such as the search for Laci Peterson and the Space Shuttle Columbia disaster, where she worked tirelessly, searching for the seven astronauts that lost their lives,

to help bring closure to their families and to a grieving nation.

Dakota has made multiple finds, both the living and also the deceased. Because of Dakota's incredible accomplishments, what she has overcome, and what she stands for, she has received numerous awards, including a certificate of appreciation from the FBI. She has also been featured in books, newspapers, magazines and on cable television programs including Animal Planet and National Geographic.

Watching Dakota work is a remarkable sight, and she loves to work. Whether it's at a search or one of the many other community activities she performs, her eyes shine, her tail wags with emotion, and she is exquisitely aware of

everyone around her. More interesting than that though are the subtle things that might be overlooked, like the smile that reaches the eyes of the of the young child's face that Dakota has stopped to visit at a local hospital, or watching 200 children learn life saving skills during Dakota's Safety Around Dog demonstrations. Then seeing Dakota, sitting with perfect manners, take a moment with each child, as they pet her. Dakota's humble beginnings and her success at overcoming obstacles in her life often inspire physically and mentally challenged children, encouraging them to overcome their personal obstacles, or work past their own disabilities.

Despite her heroism, Dakota faces discrimination and hatred. This selfless, giving companion is called

names like “monster” and “baby-killer.” Why? Because Dakota is a pit bull. The enigmatic breed that, even animal experts agree, faces unwarranted prejudice.

Case in point: Last year Dakota and I, along with my other two pit bulls Cheyenne and Tahoe, moved to a home with a homeowners association. Shortly after moving in, I received an eviction notice stating I had seven days to move out. When I asked why, I was told it was because the Board of Directors were afraid my pit bulls might “attack” the neighborhood children. I pointed out that my dogs have passed every temperament test there is, passed the extensive testing to be world class search and rescue dogs, have spent countless hours working with disabled and abused children, and teach Safety Around Dogs classes to children at local schools, most of whom are the very same children that live in the association. Additionally, these were the very dogs that would be called if ever one of those children came up lost or missing! They said that they needed to ensure the safety of the neighborhood children. I asked about the three registered/convicted child molesters living in the neighborhood, the ones who

had already demonstrated they would not hesitate to hurt a child. If the goal was to ensure the safety of the children, were they being asked to leave too? No, they were not. So, after all the years of hard work my dogs had done in the community and all the lives they had saved, my dogs and I were treated WORSE than registered sex offenders, simply because of what my dogs LOOK like. As we drove away on our final day, one of the convicted child molesters waved to me as he sat on his porch, watching the children in the street.

It’s incidences like these where I turn to Dakota for strength, for this rugged looking dog has a heart as strong as her muscular body. Her head in my lap and paw set atop my knee, with soulful eyes she tells me she understands. I’ve always believed we can learn far more from our dogs than we can ever teach them. The way they love so openly and accept people without judgment. Dakota can make a disabled child forget about their disability or teach an abused child how to love, and she does all of this without ever saying a word.

America lacks heroes right now, and we all need heroes, real heroes, the kind that inspire us to not only

reach for, but to grasp onto qualities that inspire the hearts of others. I know where to look, and so do the many people whose lives Dakota has touched with her presence. We look in that soft spot in our hearts, *where heroes are “THE PITS.”*

*Kristine Crawford is the founder of For Pits’ Sake. She is also the proud owner of three pit bulls: Cheyenne, a therapy dog, Dakota, a SAR and therapy dog, and Tahoe, a SAR and therapy dog. You can find more information about them at [www.forpitsake.org](http://www.forpitsake.org).*



Tahoe

EDITOR'S  
NOTE

## The Pit Bull Paradox

Intelligence, trainability, determination, zest for life, and even their sense of humor endear American Pit Bull Terriers to their responsible owners.

Yet as Carl Friedman, director of San Francisco’s Animal Care and Control, reports, 50 to 60 percent of their hearings on vicious and dangerous animals are for pit bulls. And despite questions about skewed data, unfair media attention, and experts who disagree about whether pit bulls are inherently more dangerous or just the latest breed in vogue among irresponsible dog owners, one sad fact remains: in recent years, pit bulls – or dogs identified as pit bulls – are responsible for more fatalities than any other breed.

To promote safety and understanding, Latham is producing *The Pit Bull Paradox*, a film for pit bull owners and potential adopters. Further information will be available soon on our website ([www.Latham.org](http://www.Latham.org)) and in the *Latham Letter*.

# Green Chimneys Humane Education Conference Looks at Neuroscience, Genetics, and Culture

By Phil Arkow



Photo: Phil Arkow

Michael Kaufmann (right), farm director at Green Chimneys, escorts a group of humane educators who toured the residential treatment campus via horse-drawn wagon. The educators saw examples of Green Chimneys' animal-assisted interventions that have been used with at-risk youth for 60 years.

## ***You don't have to be a brain surgeon to teach humane education. But it helps.***

That was the theme of a historic conference on humane education held in April at New York State's renowned Green Chimneys. "Empathy, Animals & Nature: Brain, Behavior & Beyond" took a look at the emerging research on how neuroscience, as well as genetics, psychology and culture, affect the development of our empathy or violence.

Nearly 130 educators, clinicians, counselors, students and scientists from eight nations participated in what may have been the largest humane education gathering ever held. The event was hosted by the ASPCA with a generous grant from the Kenneth A. Scott Charitable Trust, a KeyBank Trust.

The nature-based therapy programs and enrichment environment of Green Chimneys was a perfect backdrop for a conference that was designed, as farm

director Michael Kaufmann said, "not to be a camp to exchange working ideas, but an inspiration that will generate wonderful new programs."

Steve Zawistowski of the ASPCA suggested that instead of researching the origins of violence, we should look at how people develop empathy. Following on the heels of the mass killing tragedies at Virginia Tech University, he noted that we shouldn't be looking into why one student went bad as much as why so many students and teachers risked their lives to save others.

The 16 world-class speakers gave the participants thorough groundings in both research and practical applications of the intersection of genetics, experience and neurobiology. But perhaps the conference was best summed up by Ann Gearhart, humane educator for the Snyder Foundation for Animals, who observed that the goal of humane education should be to "Leave No Child Unkind." 

There was something interesting for everyone.



Photo: Norma Charette

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# Pets as “Social Capital” Another Way to Look at our Furry Friends

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*In the hopes of inspiring foundations, public health authorities, urban planners, social scientists, and human services professionals to take the human-animal bond more seriously*

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By Phil Arkow

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At first glance, it would appear that bowling and cleaning your cat’s litter box have nothing in common. Actually they do, in a way that has significant implications for foundations, urban planners, social workers, public health officials, and anyone who cares not only about animals but also about the degree to which the tapestry of American society is frayed.

Robert Putnam, a professor of public policy at Harvard University, wrote a controversial book in 1996 called *Bowling Alone*. He used the term “social capital” to describe the resources that communities have when people work together for common goals. Putnam believes that America’s social capital is badly eroded and the tapestry of our society is in tatters.

The metaphor Putnam used was bowling: more people than ever are bowling these days, but bowling leagues are in serious decline. People are so busy with jobs, families and other responsibilities that we don’t make time to do things with our neighbors. We’re disconnected from our communities.

We can text-message and e-mail people all over the world, but we don’t know the neighbors across our backyard fence. We’re busy, but isolated. We’re bowling alone, Putnam wrote. Lisa Wood, Billie Giles-Corti and Max Bulsara of the School of Population Health at the University of Western Australia recently published an impressive study that, for the first time, puts companion animals into the realm of social capital. We know well the therapeutic, psychological and physiological benefits that pets can bring to individuals. This study of 339 families in Perth’s suburbs found that animals have public health benefits as well: they increase social capital.

Pets act as “lubricants” for social contact, causing people to exercise, meet their neighbors, and use parks more frequently. Pet owners are more likely than non-owners to see suburbs as friendly, they found.

Pet owners are more likely to exchange favors with neighbors. Asking your neighbor to change your cat’s litter box while you’re on vacation, or to walk your dog if you’re coming home late from work, requires trust – more trust than, say, going next door to borrow a cup of sugar. And this contributes to a greater sense of community.

Among the other findings, pet owners are 57% more likely to participate in civic activities than non-owners. Pet owners are also much more likely to volunteer (20% vs. 11.5% of non-owners), to participate in school activities (25.5% vs. 13.7%), to serve as a coach or instructor (8.5% vs. 2.9%), and to campaign for environmental or social issues (14% vs. 10.8%).

The researchers concluded, “Pet ownership should be included in the mix of factors that may facilitate social capital and sense of community.” They noted that while public health priorities include obesity, mental health, and lack of physical activity, and that pets can help people improve in these areas, there are many social determinants of health and the erosion of social capital. Here as well, they said, “Pets have the potential to make a difference.”

The study, “The Pet Connection: Pets as a Conduit for Social Capital?” was published in *Social Science & Medicine* (2005), Vol. 61, pp. 1159-1173. It is available online at <http://www.publichealth.uwa.edu.au> and searching for “social capital.”



# Murphy: A Little Bit of Magic

By Frances Hogue



Murphy when we first brought him home.



Murphy and Chris

Photos: Roger Hogue

Murphy first came to us as a hope – a hope that a small four legged creature might somehow create a little bit of magic - might somehow heal our son. Our son had undergone surgery for a brain tumor the year before and at first he seemed to recover, but then he began to slowly slip away, struggling to negotiate the daily battle with his own body. He began to leave us – seeking another world to inhabit. I could not blame him.

So, I thought, what can be done? What can be done to bring our son back to us - what can we offer that will make him want to stay? As I sat in the waiting room at the hospital, I overheard some of the other mothers talking about their children and their dogs; about the comfort, love and companionship between them. New hope was born.

That weekend we went seeking – the three of us, my son, his father and I. So eager to find this new friend. We found ourselves in the home of a woman who provided shelter for those abandoned, neglected and abused animals needing rescue, those animals

also seeking another world to inhabit. We found there a small, yellow and pink nine-week-old puppy, partly bald – the hair on his head standing up like a punk rocker. He had mange we were told, but had been treated and would recover. We were hesitant – not a sick puppy we thought, but it would not be our decision, it would be our son's – his choice.

There he lay, this sickly little creature snuggled up next to a very large yellow lab. His father we wondered? The animals had been removed from the home of an elderly couple who had grown too frail to care for them, or themselves. The house infested with fleas, the young pup had not fared well. Yet there was a spark and keen intelligence in the young pup's eyes, and I knew that our son would choose him. So with assurances that he had been treated and would recover, we took Murphy – as our son named him – home that night. The rest of the family declared him to be the ugliest little puppy they had ever seen, but we thought him beautiful.

We took him to our own vet right away. The news was not reassuring, there were concerns, he was not getting better – he was much more seriously ill than we had known. Yes, he did have mange, but not the kind that is passed from animal to animal and can be treated. No. Murphy's mange was caused by a suppressed immune system. The prognosis was not good. He was too young for conventional treatments – such treatments would kill him – without them he would likely die anyway. We were all devastated. How could this be? We could not bear this – our son surely could not. We sat crowded around our little pup, our son cradling him in his arms and wept, all of us. For love of him, for the possible loss of him, for all that our son had been through, for all that we had been through. Our hearts were breaking.

He would not die we declared – he could not! We began to investigate and research the possibilities for treatment, to understand his illness, to seek a cure. Our vet called us – he told us he knew of a possibility, an experimental treatment; there had been some success with it in trials, but it was not yet approved. There were risks, possible neurological damage, with Murphy's weakened immune system he might have kidney or other serious problems – yet it might save

him. Murphy was suffering, he was failing – he had continued to grow in the few weeks that we had him, but was very thin and had lost over 80% of his hair, the itching was driving him mad. We decided to try the treatment. This little dog could not die! He would recover. I knew it. Our son had chosen him you see.

So his treatment began – a few drops of medication several times a day. We waited and we watched. They were a matched set, our son and his dog – each with black orbs circling their eyes, their bones sticking out, all sharp angles, snuggled together in the hammock, beneath the oak tree in our back yard, marking the time together. Our son caring for Murphy and Murphy caring for our son. As the weeks passed it became clear that Murphy would be well; suddenly he was well. And so at six months of age he was given a clean bill of health: no side effects, no other illness or problems. Our ugly little puppy had transformed before our eyes into a most magnificent and beautiful beast with a chubby puppy belly, full of energy and devilment. The laughter erupted in our home and in our hearts, we were overjoyed. Our son was smiling again. There was magic after all.

Our son's journey of recovery was a long one. The time was marked

in years, not months. Yet through it all Murphy kept time with him, ever constant. Their bond goes beyond the physical and emotional, for they seem to know each other's thoughts, and to anticipate each other.

I have one last brief tale to impart before I close – an attempt to illustrate this special bond.

Our son decided after the long years of his recovery, that it was time for a short trip. He left for several weeks adventure, leaving Murphy at home with us. Murphy did not wait at the gate as was his usual practice, but seemed to understand that his friend was gone for a time. So the weeks passed until one Friday evening Murphy began to talk to me in his deep doggy voice, making grunts and growls low in his throat, trying to tell me something. He began to wait at the gate. He waited and talked all weekend. On Sunday, he talked all evening, going in and out, lying by the gate. We had no word from our son as to his return, but Murphy seemed to know something we did not. So it came then as no surprise when Monday morning I heard my son greeting his beloved friend. When I told him the story of how Murphy had begun to talk and wait for him by the gate since Friday, he turned to me and shrugged, saying, "Well you know, I sent him a message on Friday that I was coming home."



Murphy when he was very ill.

*Frances Hogue is a counsellor and Transformational Psychotherapist in training who lives in Mississauga, Ontario. She plans to pursue training in the field of facilitating healing through animal companionship.*

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# Reaching a Hard-to-Reach Audience

## Part Two: Changing Behavior

By Ann Reisner, Ph.D.

With an introduction by Susan Helmink



Educators of all types often struggle to reach their selected audiences. We may spend hours creating handouts or promotional pieces, only to wonder why the materials do not have the anticipated effect. This can be particularly frustrating if you are trying to educate an audience that is hard to reach, perhaps one that shares different life experiences or attitudes than you do.

In the Fall 2006 *Latham Letter*, Dr. Ann Reisner discussed strategies to “understand what the selected audience knows and feels about a topic so that an effective message can be designed.” Dr. Reisner stressed the importance of knowing your audience – its experiences, values, customs, etc. – in order to design an effective message.

In the article that follows here, Dr. Reisner takes us step by step through the process of designing a communications piece. You will learn factors to consider during the design phase and how to pre-test the message – before mass production and distribution—to confirm the intended reaction or outcome.

Reaching your selected audience is a lot like traveling along a spiral path that gradually draws into the center. The first stage along the spiral is learning about the issue that you want to help solve, what is causing it, what can help solve it and so on. The next length to travel is learning about the audience, what they know, what they need to know, what they care about, what they are capable of doing with what resources they can command. Once you are comfortable that you have learned enough about the issue and the audience, then you need to carefully think about what information, attitudes or skills the target audience needs to know, feel or develop and you can help the audience move from point A to point B.

### **When information is lacking:**

When your target public lacks information, your communications should make people more aware of the problem and

show them how they will benefit from solving the problem. You generally want to include information about:

- What the problem is and how best to solve it
- Costs of continuing current behavior (from the audience’s point of view)
- Benefits (what the public gains from continuing current action)
- Costs and benefits of alternative actions (again, from the audience’s point of view)

Commonly used channels/methods include fliers, books, reports, newspaper articles, magazine articles, brochures, and websites.

### **When motivation is lacking:**

Attract attention to the message and tie the problem-solution to the target public’s existing goals, needs, beliefs, and values.

Motivating factors include:

- Salience information (this could happen to me)

# Reaching the Audience

- Impact information (costs and benefits)
- Emotional links (ties to important values and emotions that the audience already has)

Commonly used channels include workshops, role-playing, dramas (including television, advertisements, movies), and support groups. Commonly used message characteristics include testimonials, anecdotes or stories, or other methods that trigger emotions.

## **When the public needs to develop skills:**

Sometimes the public's primary need is to learn how to do something. Your goal is to inform and to train.

Simple skills include recipes, how-to columns in the newspaper, and educational radio and television programs. Medium level skills include one-on-one instruction, manuals, workshops, and training sessions. High level skills include degree training, apprenticeships, and residencies.

## **When the public needs to be reminded to keep doing the action (retention):**

Once you think you have educated your target public, think again. Repetition is essential to reinforce changed behaviors. The message can be shorter and less-detailed, but still keep the issue on the minds of your target audience.

Commonly used channels include billboards, short ads, plaques, thank-you notes, donor lists published on brochures or other places, checklists that remind people what they need to do, and instruction sheets.

## **The importance of pre-testing**

Even after researching your public, you may miss something important. So pre-testing becomes the last turn along the spiral. Pre-testing, again, is just what it sounds like – taking a sample production piece to people who are members of the groups you want to reach and finding out if these members of your target audience learn what you want them to learn from the production piece that you have designed. The following describes a simple way of conducting a pretest.

## **Decide what you need to test for and remember that every production piece should have a number of elements, including:**

1. a specific goal that the piece is trying to accomplish,
2. a specific public the communication is trying to reach,
3. the basic (critical) information the public needs to know,
4. the pitch or appeal of the piece that ties the message to some goal or value the public believes is important, and
5. a way to deliver the message.

## **Decide who should do the pre-test.**

The first and most important part of selecting the person to run the pre-test is to find someone who the public members can talk to easily. Find a good listener. Generally, the best people to pre-test are trained interviewers who are also in the target public.

The pre-tester should not have any vested interest in the answers. This means that the people who constructed the message and designed the material must not do the pre-testing. People who construct messages are usually emotionally involved with the production piece and want the public to react to the message in a certain way. Interviewees can very quickly pick up on body language and will tell the person doing the pre-test what they think the interviewer wants to hear, not what they actually feel or think.

In each case, the pre-tester should try to find out as much as the respondents can tell him or her by asking additional questions. (See the pre-test section in the Summary on page 15 for examples of questions to ask.)

## **Pre-testing for attention, interest, and understanding**

Does the material grab the public's attention? If the public doesn't look at the message, the message might as well not have been written.

The initial step in getting the public's attention is delivering the message when and where the public is likely to look at it or listen to it. If the target public doesn't watch television, then don't use television to distribute messages. If the public doesn't listen to programs on dogs, slip the messages into shows the public does listen to.

Adapt the message to what people are doing when they see or listen to the message. Audio cassettes and podcasts are examples of adapting a message to a particular time and place. Most of the time, however, the public has less direct control over selecting when they will choose to listen to a message. Posters, radio announcements, talk shows, and most other production pieces simply have to win the contest between the educational message and whatever else is clamoring for their attention. So the message should be put in a place during a time when the public is most likely to be able to pay attention.

## **How to check for attention:**

Focus groups, questionnaires, and observation periods can help determine whether your communication piece will attract your public's attention. One of the best ways to check is to put a few samples of the piece where you plan to distribute it. For example, if your agency is going to place a brochure on adopting dogs in the waiting room of a clinic, put a sample

# Reaching the Audience



brochure there and see how many people pick it up and, of those people who pick it up, how many people read it during one or more observation periods. If you plan to put posters on a wall in the center of town, put the sample poster on the wall. If no one looks at the poster or the brochures, then select a different place or make a different poster.

The first part of the pre-test will only tell whether public members are attracted to a piece or not. It will not tell you why. If your group has the time to produce several versions of the production piece, such as several different sample posters, you can also check several different approaches to find out which one is most effective.

For the other categories (attention, interest, understanding), the pre-tester should ask people who are in the target public to read or listen to the production piece and then comment on what they learned and how they felt about the message.

Remember, people need to know what they should do, why they should do it, and how they can do it if they're going to change. Of these, the "why" is most commonly associated with interest.

## How to check for interest:

People are more likely to pay attention to and act on a message when it is clearly linked to a goal that they already consider important.

A message can be interesting for one of two reasons:

1. Because it or its packaging is enjoyable, in and of itself. For example, the message could be funny; the design of the production piece could be beautiful; the picture or pictures could have lovely scenery. In each of these cases, the public members could watch or listen to the message for the pleasure of the message itself.
2. Because the message is tied to something that the public finds interesting or important or because the public members feel that the subject (content matter) of the message is inherently interesting.

## How to check for understanding:

Checking for understanding is the most critical part of the message pre-test. I divide understanding into several parts, all of which can essentially be reduced to: (1) what the public should do, and (2) how they can do it.

What the public should do is the main point of any message. The pre-tester should assess whether the public understands the main points of the message. The researcher should also check for how useful the information is (i.e. information utility): Is the information complete? Is the information applicable to the target public? This can also be broken down into two categories: (1) completeness and (2) local applicability.

## Limitations of pre-testing:

Despite all of the above, remember that sometimes it makes sense to produce a message simply because it is cheap, easy, and probably will reach some people. For example, don't turn down a talk show invitation simply because there is no time to pre-test the messages. A good rule of thumb is to compare the cost of the pre-test versus the production piece. The more a production piece costs in time and money, the more effort you should put into finding out what kind of effect the production piece will have.

Normally after you have run the pre-test you will need to make some changes in the publication, occasionally you might need to throw away the original piece and try a new design. The first few times that I have discarded brochures (or lectures), I spent some fairly useless time feeling discouraged because I didn't produce the perfect communication piece my first time around. Now, I've changed a bit to being grateful that I have the extra steps to check how effective the pieces are. Over the years, I've gained vast respect for how complicated and how varied audiences actually are and how difficult it is to reach them. Again and again, research, and experience, shows that taking extra time in the beginning to understand the audience, and then later, to check the message, is the most helpful thing you can do to reach the target audience effectively.

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*Dr. Ann Reisner is Associate Professor of Agricultural and 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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*You can reach Susan Helmink c/o the Companion Animal Resource and Education Center, P.O. Box 161, Urbana, IL 61803 or [susan@carecentercu.org](mailto:susan@carecentercu.org).*



# Reaching the Audience

## Summary – Reaching Your Audience

Stages of developing a communication piece with basic questions to be answered at each stage.

**Before producing your publication think about:**

Sequence	Questions to ask
<i>Define desired change (goal)</i>	What public am I most interested in reaching? (Who will I have to change?)
<i>Identify essential information</i>	What do I think the public I am interested in changing knows now? What do I think they need to know for them to change in the desired way?
<i>Develop the message's appeal or "pitch"</i>	What goals, values, or interests are important to my target public? How can I tie the message to one of these goals or values? What will I use to attract the public in the first few seconds of looking or listening to the message?
<i>Identify a strategy to deliver the message (i.e. channel)</i>	What channel does my target public use most? What channel does my target public most trust for the kind of problem I am addressing? What can I afford?

**After producing a sample production piece, conduct a pre-test to check whether your piece will actually do what you want it to do.**

<i>Self-evaluation of production piece</i>	<p>Before doing a pre-test, evaluate your reaction to the piece by asking yourself:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Given my understanding about the target public, will they be attracted to the message?</li> <li>• Have I used a picture or graphic that will be interesting to the target public?</li> <li>• Can the target public tell – at a glance – what is important about the message (for the target public)?</li> <li>• Have I used a title or an opening idea that is tied to a goal, interest, or value that is important to the target public?</li> <li>• Have I clearly tied the message to the topic? Does the tie between what is interesting or valuable to the target public and the problem-solution I am interested in communicating work? (i.e. Is there a good fit?)</li> <li>• After they read the message, will the target public know enough about the problem to think that the problem is serious and that they could be affected by the problem?</li> <li>• If the target public learns only the information in the production piece (plus what I think they already know), will they be able to execute the desired change in behavior?</li> </ul>
<i>Conduct a pre-test</i>	<p>Check for attention, interest, and understanding.</p> <p>Attention: Observe to see if the target public attends to or picks up and reads the production piece.</p> <p>Interest: Wait until your public is finished reading or watching the message. Then ask the public members questions about the message such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What did you like about the (poster, television show, song)?</li> <li>• Was there anything you didn't like?</li> <li>• Is the goal something you want or worry about? Why? Why not?</li> </ul> <p>Understanding: Ask:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What was the main point of the message? (Anything else?)</li> <li>• Were there any parts you found confusing? What was confusing?</li> <li>• Are there any parts of the message you think your friends would find hard to understand? (What would these be?)</li> <li>• Did you learn anything useful from the message? Perhaps something that you didn't know before?</li> <li>• Was there anything that you would like to know more about?</li> <li>• Was there anything that the message was asking you to do? Would you do it? What about it would be hard to do? What would stop you from doing it? Is there anything that you would need that you don't have or can't find?</li> </ul> <p>Ending question: How can we improve the _____ (insert whatever kind of production piece that is being tested)? (Or "do you have any suggestions how we could improve the _____?")</p>

**Revise and recheck.**

# Latham Letter BACK ISSUES containing "Links" Articles

The following back issues containing articles on the connections between child and animal abuse and other forms of domestic violence are available from the Foundation for \$2.50 each, plus \$3.00 Priority Mail Postage and Handling for up to 10 issues (U.S. and Canada).

Foreign orders please add \$10.00. California residents please add 8.25% sales tax. MasterCard and VISA accepted.

___ Legislative Roundup: "Link" Measures Enacted Across the U.S.	Summer 06	___ Domestic Violence Assistance Program Protects Women, Children, and their Pets in Oregon	Summer 97
___ Cut, Curl, and Counsel	Fall 05	___ University of Penn. Veterinary Hospital Initiates Abuse Reporting Policy	Fall 97
___ Canadian Veterinarians Adopt Strategic Policy on Reporting Animal Abuse	Summer 05	___ Domestic Violence and Cruelty to Animals	Winter 96
___ "Link" Activities Come to the Windy City	Summer 05	___ Animal Cruelty IS Domestic Violence	Winter 96
___ "Link" Activities Extend to Delaware's Probation and Parole Officers	Spring 05	___ Gentleness Programs (I Like the Policeman Who Arrested that Dog)	Spring 96
___ Latham Brings "Link" Training to Brazilian Police Officers	Winter 05	___ Loudoun County, Virginia Develops Cooperative Response to Domestic Violence	Spring 96
___ Nova Scotia Conference Explores the "Link"	Summer 04	___ And Kindness for ALL (Guest Editorial)	Summer 96
___ Partnerships Formed in Colorado to Stop the Cycle of Violence	Summer 04	___ Should Veterinarians Report Suspected Animal Abuse?	Fall 96
___ Tulane University Symposium Introduces the "Link" to Lawyers	Spring 04	___ Windwalker Humane Coalition's Web of Hope Grows Stronger	Fall 96
___ Crime Prevention Funding Introduces the "Link" to Canadian Groups	Winter 04	___ Update on the Link Between Child and Animal Abuse	Fall 96
___ Gabriel's Angels Breaking the Cycle of Violence in Arizona	Summer 03	___ Report on Tacoma, Washington's Humane Coalition Against Violence	Winter 95
___ New Training Materials Help Professionals Recognize Non-Accidental Animal Injury	Spring 03	___ Animal Cruelty & the Link to Other Violent Crimes	Winter 95
___ Making a Difference for People & Animals in Hamilton, Ontario	Winter 03	___ Univ. of Southern California Conference Addresses Violence Against Children	Spring 95
___ Examining the "Link" in Wellington County, Ontario, Canada	Summer 02	___ Working to Break the Cycle of Violence	Spring 95
___ New Link Resource Book Helping Albertans	Summer 02	___ The Tangled Web: Report on La Crosse, Wisconsin's Coalition Against Violence	Spring 95
___ Making the Connection Between Animal Abuse and Neglect of Vulnerable Adults	Winter 02	___ San Diego, Calif. Child Protection Workers Required to Report Animal Abuse	Summer 95
___ Calgary Research Results: Exploring the Links Between Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence	Fall 01	___ Abuse an Animal - Go To Jail! (Animal Legal Defense Fund's Zero Tolerance for Cruelty)	Summer 95
___ Ontario SPCA's Women's Shelter Survey Shows Staggering Results	Spring 01	___ Milwaukee Humane Society's "PAL" Program: At-Risk Kids Learn Respect through Dog Obedience Training	Winter 94
___ Putting the "Link" All Together: Ontario SPCA's Violence Prevention Initiative	Spring 01	___ Latham Confronts Child and Animal Abuse	Spring 94
___ Canadian and Florida Groups Actively Working on the "Link"	Winter 01	___ A Humane Garden of Children, Plants, and Animals Grows in Sonoma County	Spring 94
___ Latham's "Link" Message Goes to South Africa	Spring 00	___ Education and Violence: Where Are We Going? A Guest Editorial	Spring 94
___ Latham Sponsors "Creating a Legacy of Hope" at British Columbia Conference	Winter 00	___ Bed-wetting, Fire Setting, and Animal Cruelty as Indicators of Violent Behavior	Spring 94
___ New England Animal Control/Humane Task Force	Spring/Summer 99	___ Animal Abuse and Domestic Violence: Intake Statistics Tell a Sad Story	Spring 94
___ Confronting Abuse (a veterinarian and a social worker confront abuse)	Summer 98	___ The Veterinarian's Role in the Prevention of Violence	Summer 94
___ The Human/Animal Abuse Connection	Spring 98	___ Results of Latham's National Survey on Child and Animal Abuse	Summer 94
___ The Relationship Between Animal Abuse and Other Forms of Family Violence	Winter 97	___ A Shared Cry: Animal and Child Abuse Connections	Fall 94

# Breaking the Chain

By Debra J. White



Winning entry: Animals are people too.  
They need everything that we need especially love.

An educational project called *Breaking the Chain*, with its message about the unhappy lives of chained dogs and how third-grade children can help end the cycle of canine misery, recently celebrated its third year in the Maricopa County (Arizona) Public schools.

Humane education benefits children by improving their outlook on society. Teaching children about kindness to animals may nurture the next generation of compassionate, thoughtful leaders. Pam Gaber, president and founder of Gabriel's Angels, a therapy dog group that focuses on abused, abandoned and at-risk children in the Phoenix area says, "Any time we teach a child humane treatment of animals we help develop gentler children. How we treat and respect animals reflects on us as a society. *Breaking the Chain* teaches children the importance of animals in our lives and how to treat them with respect."

*Breaking the Chain* is based on a simple writing and art contest in which children find creative solutions for rescuing Joey, a chained dog, with the help of the great Harriet, the neighbor's cat. The contest shows children that showing care and compassion for animals may lead to a more humane world for everyone.

Although Joey is a fictional character, children learn that chained dogs live a miserable existence, often suffering from exposure to blistering summers, frigid winters, and thunderstorms. They often lack adequate food and water. Without human companionship, dogs can become vicious. Chained dogs kill and seriously injure children every year. Sometimes misguided teenage miscreants abuse chained dogs, further exacerbating their agony.

Laura Lyman, recent winner of the Milken National Educator Award and teacher at Ishikawa Elementary School in Mesa, Arizona says, "I love this contest because it teaches kids the importance of caring for our pets. Children become more compassionate human beings when they care for someone or something. I know the children learned a lesson from it."

*Breaking the Chain* won admiration from Arizona Governor Janet Napolitano and Phoenix Mayor Phil Gordon who added their endorsements with proclamations for the contest. So did Thelda Williams, section commander of the Maricopa County Sheriff's Office.

At least seven hundred students entered poignant stories about Joey and how the great Harriet freed him

from his chains. The top story grabbed the judges because of the writer's concern for animals and her creative skills.

The artwork showed extraordinary empathy as well. The winning entry, shown above, depicts a chained dog outside in a yard. The caption reads: Animals are people too, they need everything we need, especially love.

*Breaking the Chain* is an educational project of the Phoenix Animal Care Coalition (PACC 911). PACC 911 founder and president Bari Mears says, "The contest is a start to make children develop sensitivity for animals. We are hoping to create a kinder, gentler generation." *Breaking the Chain* is also backed by the Arizona Animal Welfare League, Maricopa County Animal Care and Control, the Maricopa County Maddie's Fund Pet Care Project, and It's a Ruff Life Dog Day Care.

The Puffin Foundation, PetSmart Charities, and private sources funded the 2007 contest.

*The contest has carved a niche in the Maricopa County public school system. Not only does the contest teach empathy to animals, but some students wrote of compassion to each other. In a violent society, who can argue with that?*



# Upcoming Workshops, Conferences and Events

 E-mail your listings to [info@latham.org](mailto:info@latham.org)

## SEPTEMBER

**September 13-18** Southern Regional Spay/Neuter Leadership Conference, Memphis, TN. [www.spay-usa.org](http://www.spay-usa.org)

**September 18** International Conference on the Relationship between Animal Abuse and Human Violence, Oxford, England. For information: [director@oxfordanimaethics.com](mailto:director@oxfordanimaethics.com) or [www.oxfordanimaethics.com](http://www.oxfordanimaethics.com)

**September 27-29** American Humane Annual Conference 2007, Alexandria, VA. [www.americanhumane.org](http://www.americanhumane.org)

## OCTOBER

**October 19 - 21** Valley Cottage, NY Therapy Dog Camp. The first camp ever devoted to Animal Assisted Therapy – a weekend of workshops, presentations, training sessions, and special events for dogs and handlers on the campus of The Tolstoy Foundation. The camp is being conducted by the Hudson Valley Humane Society Visiting Pet Program. For more information visit their website at [www.HudsonValleyVisitingPets.com](http://www.HudsonValleyVisitingPets.com) or call 845-267-8795.



## Eight Rules for Survival

By Kathy Savesky

Reprinted with the kind permission of the author and *Paws to Think*, Summer 2003, The Pet Savers Foundation, [www.patsavers.org](http://www.patsavers.org)

### 1. **Always remember the Power of One.**

You influence others every day through your actions, words, etc. Don't underestimate the impact you have as an individual.

### 2. **Hold onto your capacity for empathy.**

We are generally very good at empathizing with animals, but often lose our capacity to empathize with other humans. Especially those who are least like us. Look for the connections/similarities you have with others. Try to understand their points of view. It will make you far more effective at helping them see yours.

### 3. **Find constructive ways to channel or let go of your anger.**

Too often our anger over the cruelty, neglect or apathy we experience in our work gets turned on each other. This not only diverts important energy away from what we are trying to accomplish,

but also lessens our credibility within the broader community. And carrying your anger inside often results in depression and burnout.

### 4. **Never forget what you don't know.**

Recognizing that you always have more to learn can help keep you open to new ideas and eager to find new ways to approach old problems.

### 5. **Recognize the difference between healthy skepticism and cynicism; embrace the former; run from the latter.**

A little healthy skepticism is important in forcing us to think for ourselves, evaluate carefully what others tell us, and avoid accepting "common wisdom" as fact without evidence to support it. At the same time, the kind of cynicism that develops in many advocates simply distances us from all around us, leaving us unwilling to trust anyone or anything.

### 6. **Acknowledge and cherish victories, even the little ones.**

They are the essential fertilizer for growing optimism and sustaining positive energy.

### 7. **Remember that "No" may simply mean "Not now," "Not here," or "Not in this way."**

There are always other pathways to yes. We are often known for our tenacity – like the pit bulls in many of our shelters, when we get hold of a problem we don't let go. The secret is in adding strategy to tenacity: if one approach to a problem doesn't work, don't give up, but do evaluate why, and alter your approach accordingly.

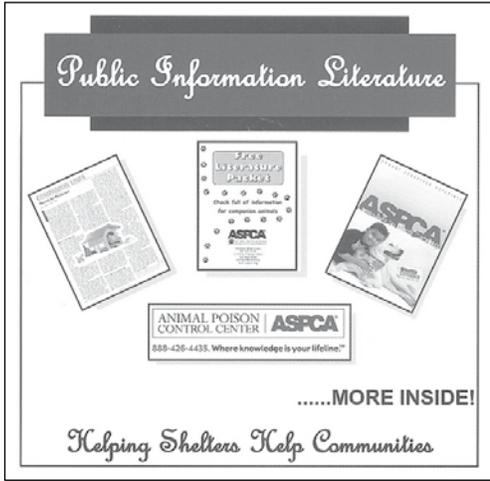
### 8. **Get a life. Keep a life.**

Too often we are so busy trying to save the world that we forget to savor it. Without the latter, the former has little meaning.





# Media Reviews and Announcements

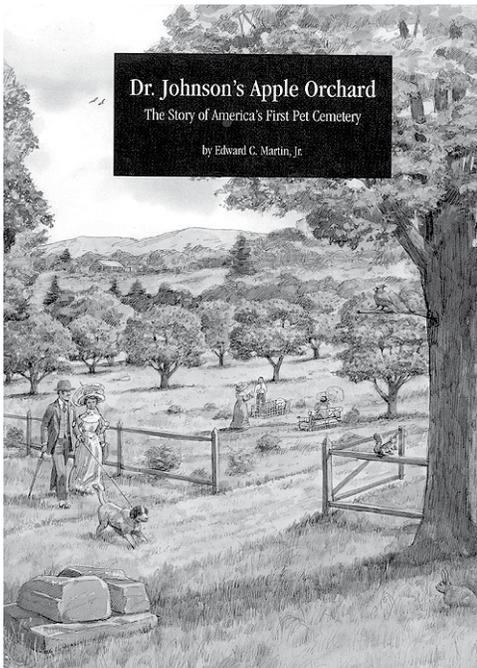


## Public Information Literature from ASPCA National Shelter Outreach

A CD loaded with beneficial information that can be printed and distributed to adopters. Topics include:

- Cat and dog care and basic training,
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## Dr. Johnson's Apple Orchard: The Story of America's First Pet Cemetery

By Edward C. Martin Jr.

*Dr. Johnson's Apple Orchard* recounts the history of the Hartsdale Pet Cemetery in Hartsdale, NY, now in its 107<sup>th</sup> year of operation.

Featuring more than 200 photographs of the old and new Hartsdale Pet Cemetery, the 120-page coffee table size book tells how a New York City veterinarian, Dr. Samuel Johnson, began it all by offering to bury a Manhattan friend's deceased pet in his suburban apple orchard back in 1896. Today there are more than 70,000 pets buried in Hartsdale and more than 500 pet cemeteries in the United States. The Hartsdale Cemetery is the resting place for pets of every description, from parakeets to a lion cub, from the loyal dog of a blind newsman to the pampered pets of famous celebrities and a former vice president of the United States. Its carefully tended trees and crystal-clear stream have made it a community treasure.

The book contains chapters contributed by Michael Lemish, an expert on military dogs; noted anthropologist Mary Elizabeth Thurston; and Malcolm Kriger,

a plot-holder and author of *The Peaceable Kingdom in Hartsdale*. There are also a number of personal reflections by some of the historic cemetery's plot-holders. Martin has captured the dignity and compassion that has marked the cemetery's fascinating history, creating a feast for the eyes as well as the heart. There are stories of simple devotion, outrageous eccentricity, and remarkable heroism, all resulting in a deeper appreciation of the intricate relationship between people and their pets.

Author Martin, who first became associated with the cemetery in 1974, is a retired former professor of accounting at Iona College in New Rochelle, NY.

ISBN 0-9659266-0-5 • \$29.95  
*Hartsdale Pet Cemetery*  
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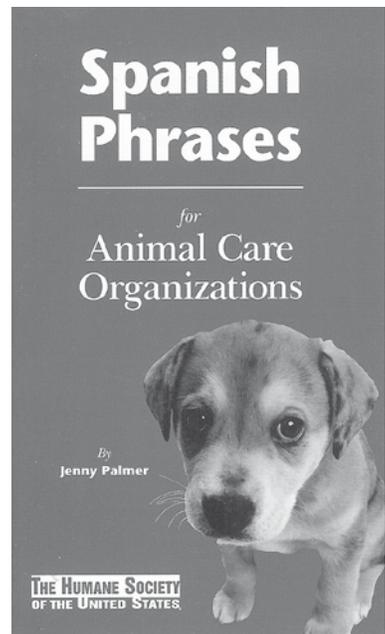
**¿Usted habla español?**

## **Spanish Phrases for Animal Care Organizations**

*By Jenny Palmer*

The HSUS developed this valuable, logically organized guide for Spanish translations of common phrases and keywords in an effort to help animal care and control professionals be more effective in their community outreach and humane education efforts. Every shelter needs one.

*The Humane Society of the United States • 202-452-1100.  
2100 L St NW • Washington, DC 20037 • [www.AnimalSheltering.org](http://www.AnimalSheltering.org)*



Turid Rugaas

## **On Talking Terms with Dogs: Calming Signals**



A **Dogwise** Training Manual

## **On Talking Terms with Dogs: Calming Signals**

*By Turid Rugaas*

*Reviewed by Norma Charette*

I am an Animal Control Officer and I'm always faced with having to deal with "problem" canines. More often than not, these dogs are running loose. What I have to capture, I have

no control over, and there are no boundaries to limit the canine's movements. These dogs snub their nose at me, or, fearing any living thing that moves, run off into the woods or another yard, or even into the street. I really need to understand their behavior if I hope to have them willingly come to me, or better yet, to allow me to approach them.

This easy-to-read book by Turid Rugaas gave some of the insight I was searching for. It points out the signals that dogs use to avoid conflict, to calm themselves and avoid stress, and to make friends with other dogs and people. I doubt anyone will become a pro overnight as Rugaas' teachings require you to take time and focus your attention, but I do have more understanding than before about what some of the animals I have caught have been telling me. Perhaps not all canines provide these signals, but for those that do it might prevent an injury. After all, our ability to practice observation is prime for "us" to avoid threats, whatever the source.

I also find other uses for calming signals within each environment I find myself in – in the schools, in any work environment, at home, and on dog walks. It is better to understand than to be annoyed.

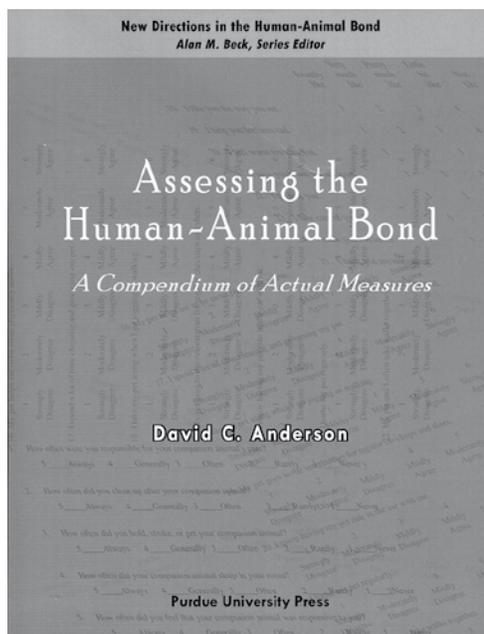
The book doesn't provide 100 percent of the answers, but it is well worth reading.

### ***On Talking Terms with Dogs: Calming Signals, 2nd Edition***

*ISBN: 1-020242-34-4 • \$12.95*

*Dogwise Publishing • Item # DTB527*

*Turid Rugaas lives in Norway and has studied canine social behavior for more than 30 years. She is also the author of My Dog Pulls. What Do I Do? and the DVD counterpart to Calming Signals, which is also available from Dogwise Publishing. \$24.95, Item # DTB788.*



## Assessing the Human-Animal Bond: A Compendium of Actual Measures (New Directions in the Human-Animal Bond)

This book gathers, in one place, those measures presently used to study the human-companion animal bond. The measures chosen for inclusion are the most heavily used by researchers, as well as measures that appear to be innovative or relate to the different aspects of the human-companion animal relationship. The measures cover the human-animal bond principally by attachment, but also by fear, abuse, or neglect.

*David C. Anderson is the author of Humans & Other Species, which was purchased by the American Veterinary Medical Association. Anderson, a retired librarian, continues to follow research in the field of human-animal studies and contributes a bibliographic column to the International Society for Anthrozoology.*

By David C. Anderson

Reviewed by Lisa Peacock

Paperback: 120 pages • Publisher: Purdue University Press (2006)  
ISBN: 1-55753-424-1 • \$39.95

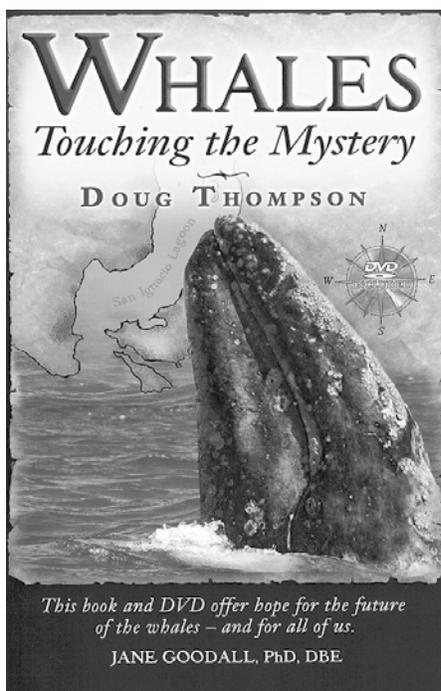
## Whales: Touching the Mystery

By Doug Thompson

Reviewed by Judy Johns

The DVD companion to *Whales: Touching the Mystery*, with its gorgeous underwater photography by the author, is almost worth the price of the book itself. And while I'm not convinced that the Gray Whales off Baja, California are offering forgiveness for the dark years of whaling through their willing encounters with humans, something amazing and unprecedented is surely going on. In the relative safety of the remote San Ignacio Lagoon, the whales and a growing number of eco-tourists gently interact, providing an extraordinary interspecies connection.

Author Doug Thompson, a marine naturalist for more than thirty years,



calls the unexplained interactions “touching the mystery” and he chronicles them with an experienced, appreciative eye. He also writes about the people of San Ignacio Lagoon – the keepers of the whales – and their successes with creating livelihoods from eco-tourism, while

still protecting the whales and their environment.

Thompson presents an overview of modern threats to whales along with a brief history of whale hunting. Importantly, he also discusses the reasons why whale hunting in today's world is no longer a viable option – from a business perspective as well as for humane reasons. He offers international examples of communities that have created healthy economies based on whale watching rather than government-subsidized whale hunting.

This book both informs and inspires. I'd love to “touch the mystery” myself.

ISBN 0-939165-55-4

160 pages, \$24.95

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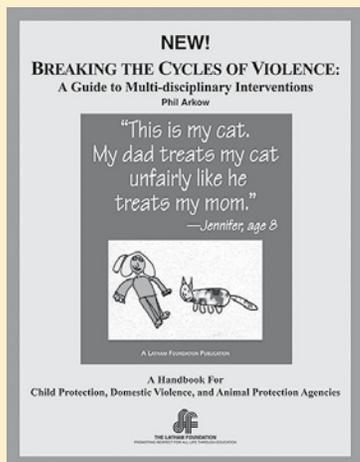
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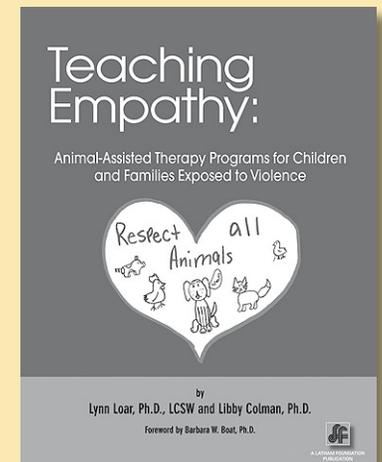


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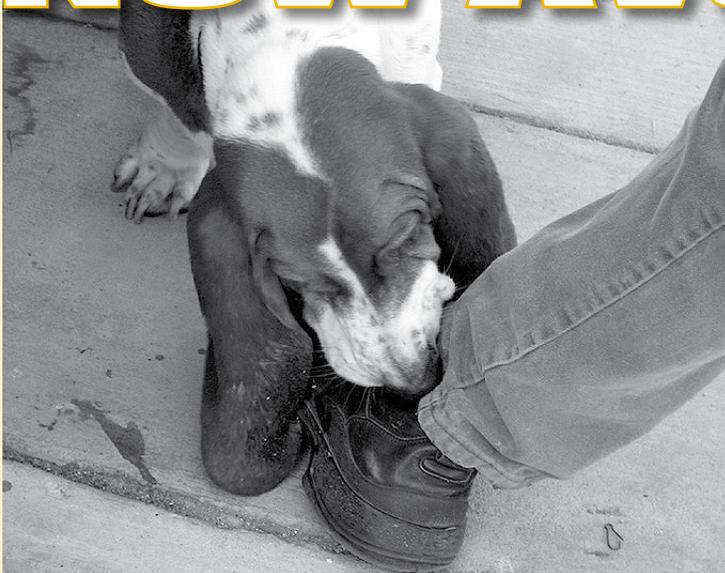


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*Dog Defense, which is based on the most current advice from dog bite prevention experts and animal behaviorists, emphasizes techniques for avoiding bites by assessing the situation and reading dog body language to avoid conflicts if possible. But it also shows how to help protect oneself if an attack is inevitable.*

*This new, 19-minute film features real-world situations and personal accounts by mail carriers and meter readers who encounter dangerous dogs in the course of their work. It is appropriate for anyone whose job includes regular or occasional home visits.*

*The Dog Defense package includes a **reproducible handout of illustrated tips** and additional dog bite prevention resources.*

**YES, I want this valuable training resource.**  
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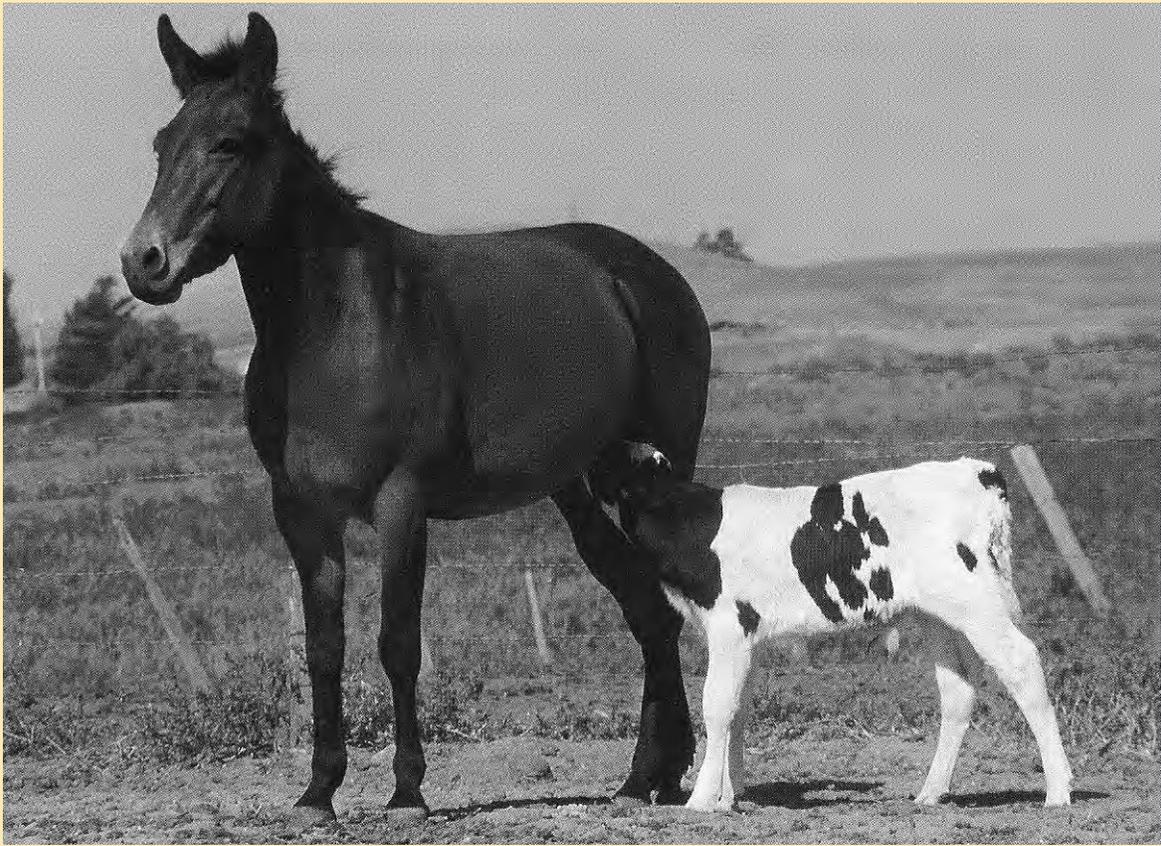
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