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Latham Letter

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FALL 2010

PROMOTING RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION

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Special Issue: Legislation and Public Policy



*Animals Helping Children Through
American Humane's Therapy Animals
Supporting Kids (TASK)[™] Program*

By Allie Phillips, J.D.

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INSIDE



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*

The Latham Letter

Balanced perspectives on humane issues and activities

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The Latham Letter

Volume XXXI, Number 4, Fall 2010

**BALANCED PERSPECTIVES ON
HUMANE ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES**



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The American Experience



*Hugh H. Tebault,
Latham Foundation's
President with
Brother Buzz*

It seems too early for this year to be over. Time for the Fall issue already. Time to enjoy the last few weeks of warm weather outside with friends. Time to plan for winter fund raisers in several non-profit community groups we participate in. The days become increasingly shorter heralding the end of daylight savings time. Saving time is an odd concept. We still have only 24 hours each day; no matter how we change, time remains constant. This is an odd aspect of government – that those who write laws believe they can command us to save time. The net effect of the law is to make millions of people take time to change their clocks twice each year.

This issue of the *Latham Letter* deals with much more practical and essential applications of law – criminal laws dealing with acts of cruelty. Every community has needs – many of which are similar from community to community and can be solved by our working together in like fashion. Lessons learned in one community can be easily shared and implemented in another. However, with the natural diversity we enjoy as a nation, variations of a program’s specifics can be important for it to succeed. That is why our nation is setup allowing individual states to make their own laws specific to their needs. The state of California may find a certain program helpful, but it may need to have several parts adapted to be effective in the state of Iowa. This sharing between our united states is what truly sets us apart from other nations. There is no one-size-fits-all solution. We tailor fit our programs to work in our own community.

Because of our historic freedoms, we have a constant stream of new Americans joining us. They bring with them their hopes and aspirations, their passions and energies, as well as infusing our cities with their talents. Each community has the challenge of helping these new Americans to understand what makes us who we are – inculcating the American values of personal responsibility, freedom and the desire to individually help our own neighbors through volunteer outreach.

However, some of our new Americans also bring with them behaviors that don’t fit in with or benefit this nation, and they need to be corrected. One example recently arose in Colorado when a “Mexican rodeo” group was found to be abusing animals during a “classic Mexican” rodeo event. The animal cruelty investigators found animals which had been severely injured, so much so that they had to be euthanized. It is to the credit of the American Humane Association, which stood firmly on its values, that this case of animal abuse was adjudicated.

This give and take as our nation grows is part of the American experience. We must always be clear on our own values. As we welcome our new citizens, part of our responsibility is to help them recognize and adopt our core American values, two of which are showing kindness to animals and showing respect to each other. Stand up for your values and work in your community to maintain them. You can make a difference.



SAVE THE DATE!



2011 APHE National Conference

***"The Best and the Brightest Under the Sun"
Basics & Beyond***

February 23-25, 2011, Fort Myers, FL
Further details as they become available at
www.aphe.org

Dear Latham,
I just came across a certificate I won in 1958 – it was in a file labelled “My First Award.” I had forgotten about the poster contest, but the wording of the certificate was so lovely and the paper on which it was printed so beautiful that I did a web search. I found out about your wonderful work, and wanted to thank you.

I am now 61, and have won many awards in life – most of them related to peacemaking and education. I won an NEH grant to go abroad and retrace the footsteps of St. Francis of Assisi, for instance.

Who would have known that when I was just 11 years old, someone there saw this potential?

Of course I wonder if my poster is in your archives. I submitted it when I was at Edgewood School in New Haven, Connecticut.

Blessings,
John Braman

Hugh Tebault replied:

John,
I am honored to hear from another Latham poster kid. Congratulations on continuing to share your passion for kindness towards animals and toward others.

We were not able to keep the posters. They often were packaged into touring boxes and sent to a series of schools around the country. Several years ago we got a phone call from a school who found one Latham poster touring box in their basement and asked if we wanted it back – Those posters are on our website as examples at <http://www.latham.org/posters1940.html>.

The Latham Foundation continues to reach out to promote humane education – teaching kindness and respect for animals, knowing it forms a foundational value supporting so many other values.

Our work these days is providing those same consistent values you illustrated in 1958. Our tools these days are in publications and video’s used by organizations around the world.

Thank you again for your ongoing work.

Hugh Tebault

BACK TO SCHOOL OR HOLIDAY GIFT IDEA

Consider supporting our work by subscribing to the **Latham Letter** or ordering a DVD for a friend or colleague.

It's a great way to promote humane education and stay informed about who's doing what where.



Thanks!

CORRECTION

We incorrectly attributed the poem, *Doga*, on page 15 of the Summer Latham Letter to Suzzy Roche rather than to its rightful author, Jude Roche. Sincere apologies for the mix-up.

American Humane's Therapy Animals Supporting Kids (TASK)[™] Program: How Animals Can Help Traumatized Children

By Allie Phillips, J.D.

Former Vice President of Human-Animal Strategic Initiatives American Humane Association and Co-Creator of the TASK^(™) Program



Like most pet owners, I have experienced how therapeutic a pet's unconditional love can be during times of stress. It has not surprised me, therefore, to see many organizations, counselors and health care professionals formally recognize how therapy animals can help people with emotional and physical injuries recover faster.

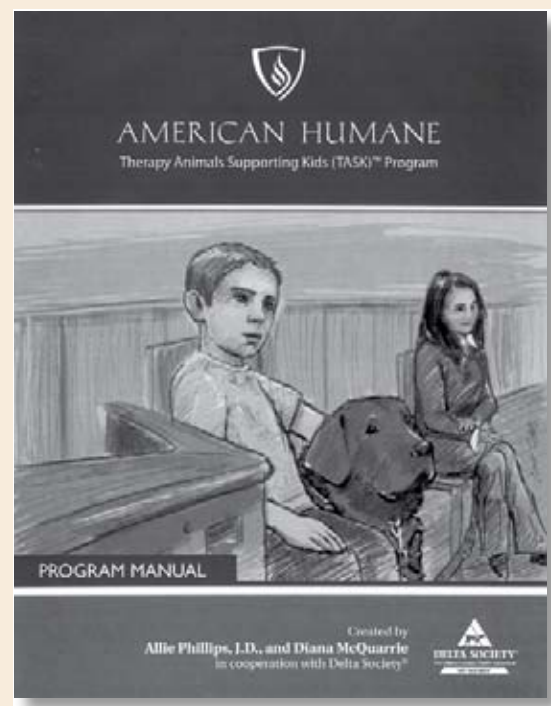
The American Humane Association has long acknowledged the power of the human-animal bond, and currently trains and provides registered therapy animals to help people in need – especially children who have been maltreated or have witnessed trauma. To further support and advance this work, American Humane launched a national initiative at the 21st Annual Crimes Against Children Conference in Dallas, Texas on August 17, 2009 called the *Therapy Animals Supporting Kids (TASK)[™] Program*.

TASK provides guidance regarding therapy animals to child welfare professionals, attorneys and prosecutors, child protection workers, social workers, police officers, and other professionals who work with maltreated children. It is widely accepted that therapy animals can benefit individuals who have suffered physical or emotional trauma. The TASK Program takes this concept one step further and encourages child protection professionals to incorporate therapy animals into sessions with children who have been abused or neglected, or have witnessed violence. When children have suffered trauma, it is often difficult for them to speak of their experiences. Incorporating a therapy animal into the process can help a child open up and promote the healing process.

The TASK Program includes a manual that merges two important areas of expertise: first, the practical issues involving establishing an animal-assisted therapy program and safely working with therapy animals; and second, the legal implications and do's and don't's of effectively incorporating therapy animals in work with children that often entails a difficult court process.

The TASK Manual identifies six situations for incorporating therapy animals into work helping traumatized children, and thoroughly details the

benefits, drawbacks, and potential legal ramifications involved with each type of situation. The six situations are: greeting children (at a children's advocacy center or other agency location), the forensic interview or evaluation, the medical examination, individual or group therapy, court preparation and courtroom testimony. The manual features children's advocacy centers and prosecutors' offices that currently incorporate therapy animals to assist children. It also contains sample forms that can be downloaded through the TASK webpage. The TASK concept can also



be expanded to other areas involving children, such as off-site visitation between children and parents and family group conferences.

The TASK Manual was peer-reviewed by nationally recognized leaders in child protection and animal-assisted therapy, as well as agencies that have effectively incorporated therapy animals to benefit child victims and witnesses. The manual has received endorsements from several child protection organizations, including the National District Attorneys Association in Alexandria, VA; National Children's Advocacy Center in Huntsville, AL; the National Child Protection Training Center in Winona, MN; the National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse in Alexandria, VA; and the State's Attorney for the 15th Judicial District in Palm Beach, FL, and several children's advocacy centers. It has also been endorsed by Delta Society.

One story featured in the manual comes from the Palm Beach County State Attorney's Office. The office has three registered therapy dogs (Jake, Chloe and Morgan) that help children through the court process. In one situation, Chloe assisted a child who was so fearful of the process she did not want to testify. Once the child realized that Chloe could accompany her, the child relaxed and was able to testify. According to Lorene Taylor, "She was able to tell the adults what happened. It was not easy. Sometimes she gripped the leash until her fingers turned blue. Sometimes she would only whisper to the dog about what she had seen. They all pretended not to watch while she cried into the fur on the dog's back. But she was able to tell what she knew."

In 2009, Nan Martin and Isabelle, a Newfoundland therapy dog, were named Volunteer of the Year for Alliance For Children (AFC) the Tarrant County Child Advocacy Center and Children's Advocacy Centers of Texas. They were chosen for this award for their outstanding work and dedication to the families served by AFC. They attend counseling groups twice a month at two locations and assist with the Kids In Court program and individual court preparation when needed.

One time Nan and Isabelle were asked to work with an 8-year-old girl before trial because she was shutting down. When Nan and Isabelle got to the courthouse the girl was very shy and reserved. Nan and Isabelle played some games with the girl to break the ice and then the attorney told the girl that Isabelle had a story about secrets and asked if she wanted to hear it. The girl nodded yes and Nan began to read the story to the girl. When the story was finished the attorney asked the girl if she wanted to share her secret with Isabelle. The girl said yes and proceeded to tell Isabelle her own story. The attorney stated that in that moment she talked more about the abuse than she had ever done before.

This is only one example, but there are many, of the ways that Nan and Isabelle are touching the lives of abused children in Tarrant County, Texas.



As a former prosecuting attorney, I know firsthand how difficult it can be for a child to climb up to the witness stand and testify about the trauma he or she experienced or saw. Animals, especially trained therapy animals, have an innate ability to comfort and calm children and help them through the court process, often resulting in less trauma and better outcomes for everyone involved. And it should be everyone's goal to safeguard the children that come into our care.

For more information about the TASK Program, please visit www.americanhumane.org/task, where you can download a complimentary copy of American Humane's TASK Program Manual. Or email the TASK Program at task@americanhumane.org.

About the Author

Allie Phillips is the former vice president of human-animal strategic initiatives for the American Humane Association. Previously she was a senior attorney with the National District Attorneys Association's National Center for Prosecution of Child Abuse and National Child Protection Training Center, and an assistant prosecuting attorney from Michigan. For further information visit www.alliephillips.com.



WAS JUSTICE SERVED?

PROSECUTION OF A FELONY ANIMAL ABUSER

By Denise Cahalan, J.D.

I found myself deeply troubled when I followed first-hand a horrific case of animal abuse that initially began in 2006 and resulted in a conviction in 2010. As an animal lover and an attorney, I was left wondering if the criminal justice system worked. Was the result fair to the injured animals? fair to the many who poured hours into the process of arrest and conviction of the defendant? fair to the defendant? Here is the story. You decide.

The Alleged Abuser

Renee “Thomas” Delgado and also known as LaPreda Thomas was bright, upbeat, and always interested in learning more about feral cats or kitten care. Thomas owned her own traps. It was easy to trust her, although it was later learned that she had been convicted of burglary and was on probation. In July 2009, she turned over a kitten to Island Cat Resources and Adoption (ICRA) located in Alameda, California after she had taken the kitten to an emergency veterinarian. The kitten was hurt and the injuries were thought to have been inflicted by Thomas because ICRA had taken other cats and kittens from her who had been similarly harmed. These injuries included claws that were cut beyond the quick on all four feet causing all toes to bleed. The additional injuries were more horrific. The veterinarian who examined the kitten, who eventually was renamed Chocolate Bunny (“Choco” for short), removed his eye, treated him for upper respiratory infection, and lice.

Unfortunately, ICRA acquired a 2nd kitten (“Oliver”) from this same woman 10 days after Choco had been surrendered. Oliver was an orange tabby, not more than six weeks of age. He was in much worse physical condition than Choco but miraculously survived in foster care despite an upper respiratory infection, broken front legs (two bones broken in both front legs), and lung damage (due to crushing or shaking). Oliver subsequently endured two emergency overnight hospital stays as well as 12 veterinary visits to have leg splints checked and changed.

The development of the case continued in July 2009. ICRA personnel met with Oakland Animal Shelter (OAS) Director, Megan Webb, and filed a formal criminal complaint for Choco’s injuries. A formal statement was given to the County D.A. of knowledge of Thomas’s activities going back to April 2006. Another individual from Fix Our Ferals (FOF), a cat rescue group serving Alameda and Contra Costa Counties, also filed a statement with the D.A. (FOF had previously taken an injured adolescent from Thomas in the fall 2006.) Furthermore, a third person from Feral Cat Foundation filed a formal complaint for Oliver’s injuries at the Oakland Police Department and provided copies of the complaint to the Oakland Animal Shelter. Local veterinarians



who examined the animals provided medical records, including x-rays. Megan Webb, Shelter Director, met with Oakland Police Department's (OPD's) Criminal Investigation Unit and the District Attorney's office.

The Raid

At the end of July, OAS and OPD entered Thomas's residence and removed three kittens and a dog. All of the kittens had leg fractures; the dog was physically ok. These kittens were then placed in the foster care program provided by ICRA.

The Arrest

On September 24, 2009, Thomas was arrested and jailed. Following the arrest, OAS entered Thomas's apartment and found yet another adult mom cat with a broken leg and her two-week-old kitten. The mom cat's nails were cut very short. Despite this abuse, the mom cat was very sweet and tame. Thomas was subsequently charged with two counts of felony animal cruelty, PC 597(a) and PC 597(b). The DA also alleged a violation of her felony probation. She was held on \$135,000 bail on the new charges and zero bail on the probation violation. Defendants on felony probation are not entitled to bail.

Court Proceedings

The legal process continued with Thomas attending a hearing during which she requested a public defender. After several extensions of time, which were granted, a plea hearing was scheduled for November 3, 2009. In the meantime, Thomas was locked up in the county jail pending trial. Besides the felony animal abuse



charges, she was in violation of the terms of her probation on a prior felony, which was a non-bailable offense.

In February 2010, Thomas pleaded guilty as charged to two counts of felony animal cruelty, Section 597(a) and 597(b) of the Penal Code. The next step was her sentencing hearing scheduled for March 30, 2010. Because of the importance of community involvement, ICRA took the lead in requesting that various individuals send a letter to the Judge if they had direct contact with the animals injured by Thomas. Letters from veterinarians who treated the animals were also requested. The sentencing DA of Alameda County DA's office suggested that letters to the Judge be submitted that were essentially "Victim Impact statements". The statements were to state what was done to the animals. It needed to be factual but descriptive and should say how many animals were hurt. How the harm done to the animals has affected the animals should be identified as well as how the community has been affected. Risks to the community from Thomas were to be noted as well. Critical at this stage of the process was that the Judge be informed of the community's view of the defendant's actions.

The Sentencing

After several delays on the date for defendant's sentencing, on June 1, 2010, more than 30 local citizens appeared at the criminal court, wearing white shirts with buttons with pictures of Oliver and Choco. Thomas appeared in prison clothing, sitting very close to the Judge, looking at the audience, many



of whom were staring at her. It was difficult to think that the young woman sitting in the courtroom, who also had a young daughter, had abused the kittens. The public defender, however, was not in attendance at the time of the sentencing. The significance of the community involvement through letters and personal attendance at the sentencing hearing was noted by the Judge who considered delaying the sentencing because the public defender was absent. He noted

that because of the strong community interest in justice he felt obliged to render his decision. In doing so, he noted that Thomas's actions were "horrific." Despite the absence of her public defender, the Judge sentenced her and then he stayed execution of the sentence for ten days. She would then go back to jail for ten more days, then in 10 days, be transported to the residential treatment program in which she was required to participate.

The Sentence

Thomas received as her sentence one year in the county jail with credit for time served, plus one year confined in a dual diagnosis (mental illness and drug abuse) residential treatment program. She was also ordered to pay fines

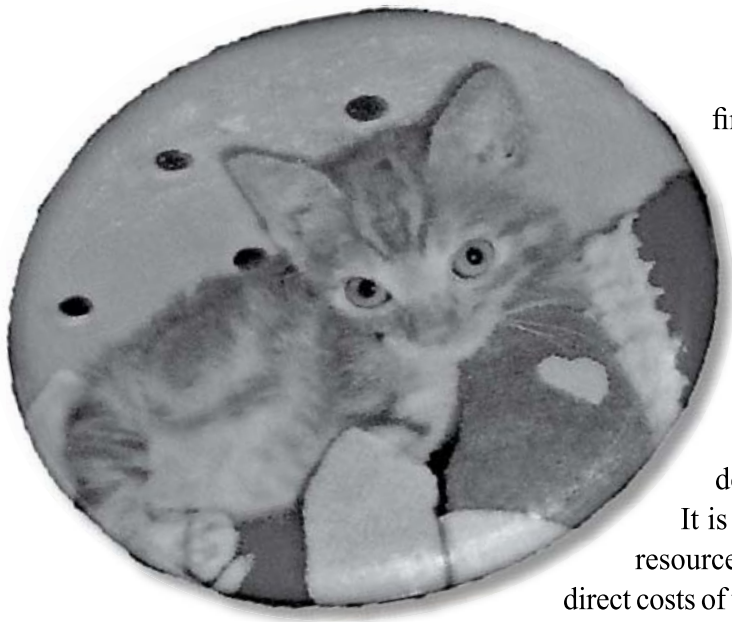
in excess of \$1,000 plus an additional amount that would go to the victim restitution fund. Upon completion of the one-year behavioral treatment program, she will be on felony probation for five years. If she violates the terms of her probation, she will be sent to state prison for three years with no credit for time served. Probation terms include waiver of her right to object to a search anytime, anywhere, and prohibition from owning, caring for, or having custody of any animal during the five-year period.

Where Are The Victims Today?

Of the five known Thomas victims ("Chocolate Bunny," "Oliver," "Emily" and her daughter, "Tory," and "Jules"), all but Jules have found forever homes. Jules, a handsome tabby, remains part of the ICRA foster program. However, Oliver, the kitten who had both legs broken, has adjusted well to his new home as have the other victims. It was difficult to anticipate how these five victims would fair given their difficult start. To the credit of the various volunteers who fostered these injured animals, they are now thriving despite the terror and pain they endured.

"Our task must be to free ourselves by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature and its beauty."

– Albert Einstein



A Good Conclusion?

My original question was whether the criminal justice system worked. Was the result fair and equitable? By whose standards? The conviction was a success when one considers the requirements for prosecuting animal abuse. The coordination required cooperation between several animal rescue groups, various law enforcement agencies, and strong community involvement. It was well executed. According to Scott Heiser, Senior Staff Attorney of Animal Legal Defense Fund's Criminal Justice Program and lead attorney in charge of providing support to local prosecutors of animal abuse, it is very difficult to prosecute these cases because of, among many factors, the difficulty of securing evidence.

The defendant is getting the help she needs in a residential treatment facility where she will be confined for a dual diagnosis program (mental illness and drug abuse). Should she fail to complete the in-house residential treatment, she will be returned to jail. Thomas is being given the chance to be rehabilitated but with the potential for punishment through additional jail time. She is also being

fined which could provide money for the victim restitution fund. She cannot own, care for, or otherwise have custody of any animal during her probationary period of five years. The local publicity generated from this conviction and sentencing makes a strong statement to others that animal abuse will not be tolerated under the law. It is costly to pursue a case, particularly for a city such as Oakland, which is plagued with budget issues. OAS is part of the OPD and thus subject to competing for funding with the police department, making devoting resources even more difficult. It is costly for animal rescue groups to spend time and financial resources supporting local law enforcement efforts. In addition, the direct costs of veterinary expenses to save the injured animals are significant. For example, ICRA has unreimbursed veterinary expenses in excess of \$4,000. After all is said and done, however, those abused victims who could not speak for themselves are now safe in the loving homes that they deserve.

I believe the system worked because the criminal justice system provided protection for the helpless animals and the defendant will be given an opportunity to be rehabilitated under strict supervision with consequences if rehabilitation fails. *What is your view?*



Photos courtesy of Heather Hanley and ICRA

There are many ways to pursue a career benefitting animals. Here are some of the resources available to help you learn more. Search online at sites such as Amazon and Dogwise and at your library for recent additions and further information.

BOOKS

- 101 Best Businesses for Pet Lovers* by Joseph Nigro and Nicholas Nigro
- Career Success with Pets* by Kim Barber
- Careers for Animal Lovers (Careers For Series)* by Louise Miller
- Careers for Animal Lovers* by Russell Shorto
- Careers with Animals* by Audrey Pavia
- Careers with Animals* by Willow Ann Sirch (The Humane Society of the United States)
- Careers with Animals: Exploring Occupations Involving Dogs, Horses, Cats, Birds, Wildlife, and Exotics* by Ellen Shenk
- Careers with Horses: The Comprehensive Guide to Finding Your Dream Job* by Vickie Hogue-Davies
- Cool Careers for Girls with Animals* by Ceel Pasternak and Linda Thornburg
- How to Run a Dog Business – Putting Your Career Where Your Heart Is* by Veronica Boutelle
- Opportunities in Animal and Pet Care Careers* by Mary Price Lee and Richard Lee
- Pet Sitting for Profit, 3rd Edition* by Patti Moran
- The Everything Guide to Working with Animals* by Michele C. Hollow and William P. Rives
- The World of Work: Choosing a Career in Animal Care* by Jane Hurwitz
- Working with Animals (My Future Career)* by Margaret McAlpine
- Working with Wildlife: A Guide to Careers in the Animal World* by Thane Maynard and Jane Goodall

WEBSITES

- www.humanesocietyuniversity.org/careers/working_from_the_heart/businesses/
- www.arkanimals.com/index_unusual_animal_careers.html

DVDs

- Caring Careers: Making a Living Making a Difference*, The Latham Foundation
- The Boarding Kennel Business*, Locklin Productions
- The Pet Sitting Business*, Locklin Productions

This information is available as a PDF that you're welcome to copy and use as a resource.
 Email info@Latham.org or call 510-521-0920.





What people are saying about

“Caring Careers”

Latham’s latest DVD



From a High School Senior

Animals are beautiful creatures that are belittled in this world. This is why I wish to work with them, in order to give them a better life.

Hi!

My name is Marisela Macias. I’m a high school senior at the East Palo Alto Academy High School and a new volunteer at the Peninsula Humane Society in San Mateo, CA. I love animals and I wish to pursue a career with animals. I am still not sure exactly what kind of job I would like, but Caring Careers came in handy in giving me some ideas.

In this film there are in site visits to places where people work with animals. There is a dog groomer, a dog walker and pet sitter, an equine massage therapist, a reptile and amphibian specialist, a horse trainer, and several technicians. You get to see what their jobs are like and learn a little bit about them. I was pleased to learn that wanting to work with animals does not necessarily mean that you have to be a veterinarian. There are many career options in the animal world. Whatever animal career suits you is the one to pursue, but you have to be eager to achieve it.

What I loved about this film was that not only do you get an inside view of different animal careers, but also how difficult those careers can be. It is not an easy job to work with animals because animals can be dangerous. You have to take your job seriously because these animals are very important, but if you love to work with them, then I assure you that you will love your job.

I really recommend this film to everybody interested in pursuing an animal career like me. This film is really informative and you will really like it.

From a Humane Educator

Caring Careers is fabulous!! Thank you! This very well done DVD is just what I needed to help me teach caring careers with animals. I so appreciate all the planning and production it took to create it.

Gratefully,
Carol Shiveley, Oregon Humane Society

From ARF

I showed this DVD to my Animal Career Campers in June and they liked it.

The horse masseuse was especially interesting to them. One boy in my class (a future herpetologist) really liked the out-take at the end of the credits. It’s only 20 minutes – perfect for camps! Great job Latham Foundation!!!

Erika Hart, People Connect Manager
Tony La Russa’s Animal Rescue Foundation
2890 Mitchell Drive, P.O. Box 30215,
Walnut Creek, CA 94598

From WSPA

(World Society for the Protection of Animals)

I received the review copy of the Caring Careers DVD that I requested at the APHE conference. Many thanks for sending this!

I have now had a chance to look over it and to have a couple of colleagues review it as well. If you are interested, I would like to highlight this resource on the database on our FCAW website.

I would definitely be interested in any other resources you might develop, so please keep me posted!

Mariah McConnaughey, Education Officer
WSPA International, London, England





Supporting The Link in New Mexico: Making Strides to Address Human and Animal Abuse

By Tammy Fiebelkorn

To those familiar with animal welfare issues, the link between human violence and animal abuse may seem obvious. But in New Mexico, where there are more than 25,000 incidents of domestic violence annually, we are still working hard to reduce family violence – and one of the tools in our arsenal is creating a mainstream understanding of The Link.

Luckily, New Mexico has a strong ally for this work in Governor Bill Richardson. In 2004, Governor Richardson acknowledged the link between animal abuse and human violence and began funding a yearly conference to teach professionals in New Mexico how to spot The Link.

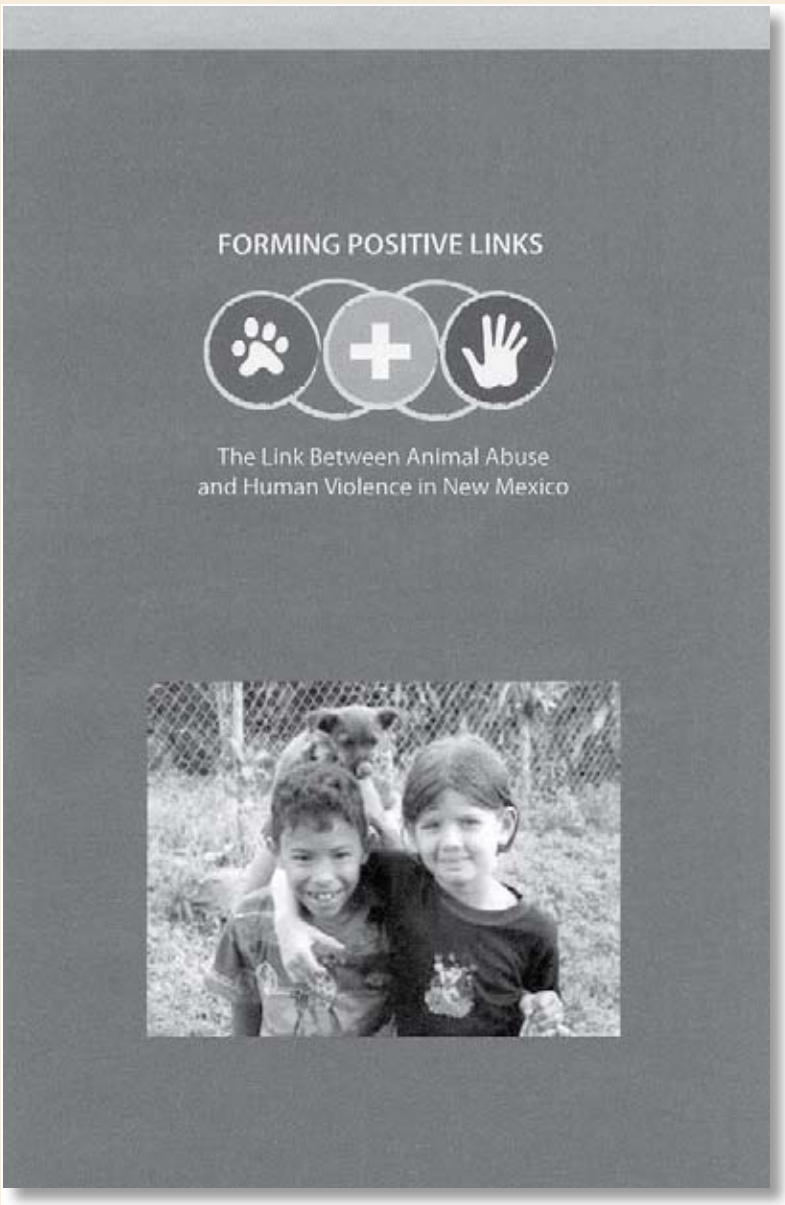
In its seventh year, The Governor's Conference on The Link Between Animal Abuse and Human Violence has grown to reach approximately 200 people annually. The Conference is a unique opportunity for experts in the fields of animal control and sheltering, social services, law enforcement, juvenile justice, and counseling to come together with teachers, lawyers, animal advocates, child advocates, and domestic violence workers to explore ways to work together to identify and stop all forms of family violence in New Mexico.

New Mexico is a poor state and the number of family violence reports each year can be staggering. It seems every week, at least, there is a news story about extreme animal cruelty, domestic violence, child abuse – or all three. But thanks to Governor Richardson's leadership, New Mexico has prioritized the need to address domestic violence and is beginning to work across disciplines and departments to address these critical community issues. To support the work, Governor Richardson allocated funds for the Conference on The Link from the Department of Public Safety (DPS) training budget; Children Youth and Family Department (CYFD) co-sponsored the Conference for the past two years.

Thanks to DPS and CYFD sponsorships, law enforcement personnel and social workers can attend the day-long event in Albuquerque and earn continuing education credits for *free*. The Conference has been lucky to attract Frank Ascione, Phil Arkow, Barbara Boat, Marie McCabe, Allie Phillips, Ken Shapiro, as well as many more nationally renowned speakers in the past several years. New Mexico is also home to many experts on The Link and related issues including Dr. Karen Schaefer, Tamara Ward and Melissa Winkle – all certified in the AniCare therapeutic model – and Dr. Patricia Feeser – our very own forensic veterinarian.

Forming Positive Links Committee

After five years of innovative engagement, Conference attendees wanted to continue their work between annual conferences so they added a new class to the conference



called *Strategy for Fighting The Link in New Mexico*. They brought in a trained facilitator to lead participants through guided discussions to prioritize needs in New Mexico and determine the appropriate and effective ways to address these needs. Overwhelmingly, conference attendees expressed the need to stay in touch with other professionals and support the Conference's goals throughout the year. So in 2009 Link Conference participants formed a statewide committee, the New Mexico Forming Positive Links Committee, to expand Link work throughout the year.

issue. Some were even worried the memorial might somehow impact cattle ranching, and the legislation was assigned to the House Agriculture and Water Committee – a sure sign that the intent was misunderstood! And so, we launched a large legislative education campaign; fact sheets were distributed to every member of the legislature and we held many one-on-one meetings to explain the issues and intent of Link Awareness Day. Our champion, Senator Eric Griego, worked long and hard to support this work, and told his story at this year's Governor's Conference on The Link. With success under our belts, we know there is still more work to do. The Forming Positive Links Committee will be lobbying for legislation in 2011 that will allow companion animals to be included in protective orders. Acknowledging the high rate of domestic violence in New Mexico, the Committee will continue working to create laws and regulations that protect domestic violence victims and support them leaving their homes safely – with their companion animals. This legislation was proposed previously, but did not pass. However, we are hopeful that by continuing our education efforts, we have gained enough legislative support to pass this bill in the 2011 session.

The Forming Positive Links Committee has showcased the power of the Link Conference by bringing diverse people together to advance policies that will safeguard communities. The Committee works to ensure that state statutes support ending all forms of family violence, to implement appropriate rules and guidelines that encourage or require cross reporting of family violence, and to educate the public about The Link. In education and policy program work, the Committee focuses on the following three areas:

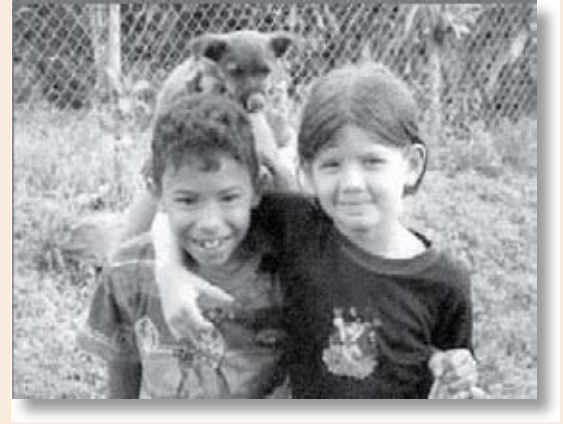
LEGISLATION

In 2010, the NM State Legislature was the first in the nation to pass a memorial acknowledging The Link. This legislation created NM Link Awareness Day on February 10th. (SJM 27: NM Link Awareness Day.) Forming Positive Links Committee members worked with Senator Eric Griego to develop this piece of legislation and pass it through the Senate and House of Representatives. This was a valuable tool for educating lawmakers and the public about The Link. Several lawmakers had never heard of The Link and were suspicious of language that recognized animal cruelty as a family



CROSS-REPORTING

Part of working to understand the Link is the ability to accurately report on concurrent issues of domestic violence, child abuse, elder abuse and animal abuse. So Link volunteers are developing a plan to maximize cross reporting of violence between the various professionals and departments around the state. While there is certainly substantive interest in creating workable systems for cross reporting, there are many administrative issues to resolve before systems can be implemented and effective. Some animal control officers in New Mexico are already cross reporting, but these efforts are voluntary and depend on the level of education on this topic the



officer has received. Some social workers understand the need to cross report, but they need new internal systems that facilitate consistent reporting of Link concerns. Various levels of understanding of The Link among law enforcement officers result in haphazard levels of cross reporting, and many professionals involved with the Committee cite concerns that their reports are not prioritized in other agencies' tracking systems and they have no ability to follow-up on cross-reported cases. The Forming Positive Links Committee is planning a statewide roundtable that will develop a more thorough understanding of the issues that effectively block cross reporting in New Mexico, and will work to find ways to facilitate better cooperation amongst agencies. The Children Youth and Families Division has expressed interest in working on this issue, and the Cabinet Secretary of the Regulation and Licensing Department (RLD) has also shown strong support for this work. With great support at the upper levels of government, we are encouraged to move forward. One clear cross-reporting area to address is the confidentiality language in state law. Currently, some mental health professionals are only allowed to report concerns of violence that are inflicted on other *humans*. If a patient threatens harm to a companion animal, reporting this threat is not allowed. We need to change this in order to protect animals, and the humans who love them as well. The Attorney General's Office completed a review of the current law, and provided a memo to the Forming Positive Links Committee outlining simple changes to the law that could facilitate cross reporting. As a first step towards changing this confidentiality law, the Forming Positive Links Committee met with officials at the RLD and obtained permission to make presentations to all relevant boards dealing with mental health professions in New Mexico. The first presentation to the Psychologist Examiners Board was overwhelmingly successful. Data on The Link was provided to members of the board in demonstrating the need for psychologists to report on all forms of family violence – including animal abuse.

Board members were unanimously supportive. The Committee will schedule meetings with other boards to gain support and work with new allies in passing legislation.

**In New Mexico
there are more
than 25,000 incidents
of domestic violence
reported
every year.**

EDUCATION & OUTREACH

Policy success would not be possible without a necessary focus on education and outreach about all forms of family violence. In a state with extreme poverty and a high rate of family violence, public education is vital. So the Committee has undertaken the following tactics to distribute information that New Mexicans need in order to report and seek help for all forms of violence – whether in their own lives or in their communities:

✓ Media Coverage

Since forming the Committee, volunteers have worked with media personnel to create several investigative pieces on statewide television news and in national and regional media that demonstrate the Link. Perhaps the most influential media piece was done by Tim Maestas, anchor for KRQE News 13 in Albuquerque. This story centered on domestic violence victims whose abusers also hurt or killed their companion animals. An interview with a woman who experienced various forms of domestic violence, including the murder of her dog, was particularly impactful and resulted in a great deal of community inquiry into Link issues.

✓ Public Presentations

Members of the Forming Positive Links Committee have developed presentations on The Link that can easily be tailored to community groups, government agencies, etc. We have given presentations at several conferences thus far, including the New Mexico Humane Conference, and also to several community groups. Committee volunteers are available to make presentations throughout the state.

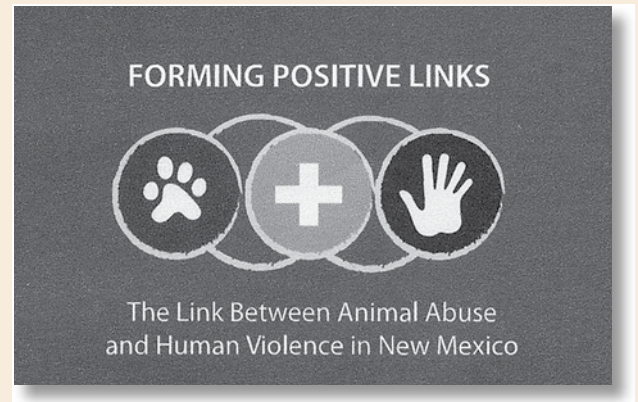
✓ NM Forming Positive Links Committee Brochures

Information on The Link in New Mexico was compiled in a brochure created by committee volunteers and more than 2,000 brochures have been distributed to domestic violence shelters, animal shelters, animal control officers and judges throughout the state and to individuals at numerous community fairs and festivals.

The Forming Positive Links Committee is also active with the National Link Coalition (NLC), a group of experts nationwide who share resources and information on this issue. New Mexico has benefitted from many NLC resources, including expertise, speakers, legislative assistance, outreach materials and perhaps most importantly – moral support. The Forming Positive Links Committee was one of only three Link programs asked to share their success stories at the June, 2010 NLC Roundtable in Denver, Colorado.

The Forming Positive Links Committee is a volunteer-based working group. We are currently exploring ways to formalize our structure and raise funds to pay for at least a part-time staff member. While we are thrilled with our

success thus far, we know we need more resources to grow our efficacy and to meet our goals of ending domestic violence and animal abuse. Until we can afford paid personnel to support volunteers, we will continue to move forward with a lot of dedication from hard working volunteers and the full support of our amazing State Government Administration. There is still much to do in continuing The Link work, but we have found that with patience, education, and community investment, we can take large strides together in working to eradicate violence – for people and animals alike.



For further information contact Tammy Fiebelkorn, Chair, Forming Positive Links Committee Organizer, New Mexico Governor's Conference on The Link, 505-410-3884, tammy@e-solved.com.

Ms. Fiebelkorn is the President of eSolved, Inc., a business and non-profit consulting firm that provides project planning and management, community outreach, marketing, economic and environmental analysis, lobbying, operations and development services. Ms. Fiebelkorn has degrees in Economics and Finance from Northeast Louisiana University as well as a Master's Degree in Environmental Economics from Colorado State University. She volunteers her time on a variety of issues to improve the lives and legal standing of animals. Ms. Fiebelkorn lives with her geriatric furry kids – Spunky (15 year old, 12-pound, mutt dog), Gertie (21 year old, 4-pound, mutt dog) and Chloe (12 year old rabbit) in Albuquerque, NM.



LONG ARMS OF THE LAW

By Barbara Saunders

When the 2nd Annual No Kill Conference convened at George Washington University Law School on July 31st-August 1, 2010, organizer Nathan Winograd had much to celebrate. Since the publication of his provocative, independent book, *Redemption*, emerged as a manifesto for shelter reform, the No Kill movement has gone mainstream. The language, even the term “No Kill”, still draws criticism from established animal welfare and animal control corners. However, reform efforts have moved beyond the original battles between activists and these agencies.

A groundswell in animal law is attracting legislators and the courts more deeply into questions of sheltering and animal keeping by the public. At this year’s conference, presenters in a sheltering track and a legal track (which offered Continuing Legal Education (CLE) credits,) covered a variety of policy and cultural issues that have taken hold in the public discourse only within the past twenty years.



Many animal activists argue that protecting the rights of animals needs no justification in terms of benefits to human beings. Speakers provided numerous examples to suggest that the distinction is a moot point: our lives have become so intertwined with the lives of our companion and community animals, dogs and cats in particular, that when bureaucratic organizations apply their standing policies towards these animals, they are increasingly coming into conflict with the rights of animal lovers, owners, and advocates.

Groundbreaking Animal Protection Law

On July 23, 2010, Delaware governor Jack Markell, signed Senate Bill 280 into law. Hailed by proponents as “groundbreaking,” SB280 is the most comprehensive law in the United States to protect animals in shelters. The new law, which is supported by a number of the state’s progressive animal welfare organizations, sets standards for veterinary care and animal husbandry in shelters.

In addition, it requires that *shelters*, municipal or private organizations that house animals in the groups’ facilities, cooperate with *rescue groups*, entities that keep animals’ in volunteers’ foster homes until they can be placed for

adoption. SB 280 also mandates that shelters give preference to animals in the state and make efforts to circulate information about animals in their custody by publicizing them on websites and in other media.

This legislation specifically about animals is just the tip of the iceberg.

Policy and Governance – Beyond “Animal Law”

Practicing attorneys and lawmakers shared information about legal issues for people that are affecting animals:

- **Disability rights** – Ever since the City of Denver passed breed-specific legislation outlawing pit bull dogs, animal advocates have argued that these ordinances don’t just harm dogs; they also hurt families forced to choose between giving up their pets or leaving their homes. Pit bull defenders find an unanticipated ally in the Department of Justice. The DOJ recently released guidelines stating that breed bans may violate the Americans with Disabilities Act when they result in preventing people from using their assistance dogs to access public services. DOJ questioned the reliability and accuracy means used to determine a dog’s breed.

- **First Amendment rights** – Attorney Sheldon Eisenberg discussed his successful application of Section 1983 of the Civil Rights Act of 1871 to protect volunteers in Los Angeles who came out as whistleblowers against government-run shelters. The plaintiff alleged that the shelter had removed her volunteer privileges

and stopped allowing her to rescue animals in retaliation for exercising her First Amendment rights.

- **Testator’s rights** – Richard Avanzino, director of Maddie’s Fund, which grants money to collaborations between public and private animal control and sheltering organizations, spoke in defense of the last wishes of Leona Helmsley. The famously misanthropic New York woman left millions of dollars to her dog, Trouble, and created a foundation worth billions with instruction that some of the money be used to help animals. The animal gifts are still in limbo. In Avanzino’s opinion, “the idea that anyone, especially a wealthy woman, who wishes her estate to benefit animals is automatically a little ‘off’ and thus, those wishes can safely be disregarded, needs to be challenged and brought to an end.” In the early eighties, Avanzino was on the other side of a challenge to a will. When a San Francisco woman willed that her dog, Sido, be put down when she died, Avanzino led a very public, winning campaign to have it overturned and spare the dog’s life.

- **Consumer rights** – A private Colorado shelter was sued under the Colorado Consumer Protection Act for deceptive fundraising practices. Among other violations, the organization was accused of misrepresenting their euthanasia numbers, thereby misleading the public into donating and surrendering animals.

- **Governance** – New York State Assembly Member Micah Kellner, known as a champion for disability

and LGBT rights, shared the story of his eye-opening, unsuccessful effort to enact Oreo’s Law, a bill similar the Delaware legislation. In his address, Mr. Kellner expressed concerns that government agencies supported by tax dollars and powerful nonprofits supported by donations hold unilateral power to withhold access to animals from smaller, less powerful groups, even while they kill the animals.

No More Business As Usual

The sheltering track was notable for the way that No Kill-oriented leaders, even those who work in municipal animal control departments, embraced attitudes and language more common to the business world than to conventional charities and government agencies.

In a lunchtime panel talk, Nevada Humane Society director, Bonney Brown, quoted business author Jim Collins in describing her philosophy about managing and retaining personnel. Mike Fry, director of Animal Ark and founder of Animal Wise Radio, an Internet radio program, supplied sample html code that can be used to standardize the way animal organizations post data on the Web. The Nevada Humane Society calls its information line a “help desk,” reflecting its adoption of a customer-centric stance cast in the mold of innovative, for-profit businesses.

The Personal is Political

While the No Kill movement – and the conference – focused on the



“No matter what the issue is: the fight for democracy as epitomized by Madison, Benjamin Franklin, and John Adams; the abolition of slavery as epitomized by William Lloyd Garrison, Harriet Tubman, Sojourner Truth, and Frederick Douglass; the struggle for women’s suffrage as epitomized by Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, and the great Alice Paul; civil rights as epitomized by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Harvey Milk; an end to child labor as epitomized by Lewis Hine; or disability rights as epitomized by Justin Whitlock Dart, Jr. and Richard Pimentel; all these movements culminated in the passing of laws.”

treatment of pet animals in shelters, the plight of animals killed for food was invoked as well. Only vegan food was served during conference breakfasts and lunches. Attendee Ellen Weinstock said, “As a vegan who has rescued dogs for about a decade, I’ve often had to work with people who have ideas I don’t agree with, like hunters, pig farmers, and omnivores who will drive 300 miles to save a dog but stop and eat part of a cow on the way home. And it felt absolutely right that the wonderful conference hosts avoided needless killing in our refreshments.”

(My breakfast partner, a long-time vegetarian living in rural Georgia, noted that veganism is yet not a feasible option in many parts of the U.S.)

The Way Forward

In the past, most of the rhetoric from the No Kill movement targeted the leadership and operational practices at shelters and the deficiencies in compassion and common sense that rescuers witness every day. Yet in an auditorium that stands only blocks from the White House and the National Mall, Winograd delivered an address that reframed the issue of shelter reform within the context of the American project.

Whether or not individual animals are ever granted rights, their status as chattel is changing. Pet Connection blogger Christie Keith reported Avanzino’s reminiscence of a remark from a judge in the Sido case. If the little dog is property, he said, she is like a Rembrandt, and should not be willfully destroyed. Avanzino’s assessment is bolder: “if you work on the premise that animals are family members, you are going to follow a certain path. They’re not human. They’re not property. We have to decide what entitlements they get. The human species will define that.”

*Barbara R. Saunders
(www.barbararuthsaunders.com)
is a freelance writer and global citizen currently living in Berkeley, CA. She promotes the welfare of animals everywhere by advocating for homeless pets and educating human beings about health, fitness, and wellness.*



R • E • S • C • U • E

*You are love
I kiss your black feet
And smell the rims of your ears
Your eyes, like oily olives
Never have I seen you smile or cry*

*You don’t have a single word
Something silent pulls me in
I’m beside your skinny bones
I believe in your wordless world*

*You are always asking at my pockets
I turn them inside out for you
You accept disappointment with a
hopeful eye*

*You want all my food
And none of your own
I think I make you mad
But what can I do
When you forgive me all the time?*

*At night we curl into our dreaming
Like two orphans remembering
The night of being left behind
I could say I rescued you
But you could say you rescued me*

*I kiss your black feet
I call you joy and sadness
What name have you given me
In the whimpering and barking
Of your great concern?*

by Suzzy Roche

Basic Dog Body Language Online Course

Reviewed by Judy Johns

Recently I had the pleasure of reviewing the Basic Dog Body Language course, one of several excellent online courses that are a joint effort between Doggone Safe and Doggone Crazy! This is an amazingly thorough and useful course, whatever your existing knowledge might be. I highly recommend it because it emphasizes both safety and empathy for dogs.

As creator Joan Orr and instructor Theresa Lewin explain, “The Basic Dog Body Language online course answers the question “do dogs have feelings?” and describes many dog body language signs that help us understand what dogs might be feeling. The course covers individual body parts as well as overall body postures. You will learn how to look for clues in each body part and to look for clues in the environment to help figure out how a dog might be feeling and why he might have those feelings. There are many photos and videos that illustrate dog body language with explanations and interpretation.

“The information presented in this course is important for two main reasons: 1) safety and 2) developing empathy for the dog. Dogs that are anxious are more likely to bite than dogs that are happy. It is important for anyone interacting with a dog to be able to look at the dog and know whether the dog is happy and will welcome the interaction or is anxious and may feel the need to defend itself by biting. We all want our dogs to have a happy life and not be anxious or unhappy. By learning to speak dog, we can more readily understand what the dog is feeling and take steps to reduce anxiety that we may be inadvertently causing for our dogs. Understanding the dog better leads to the development of empathy for the dog and this in turn leads to a better relationship and a better life for the dog. The observation skills that you will develop from taking this course will be helpful in interactions with dogs, other animals and people too!

“This course qualifies for continuing education credits from many professional dog training and veterinary technician organizations.”

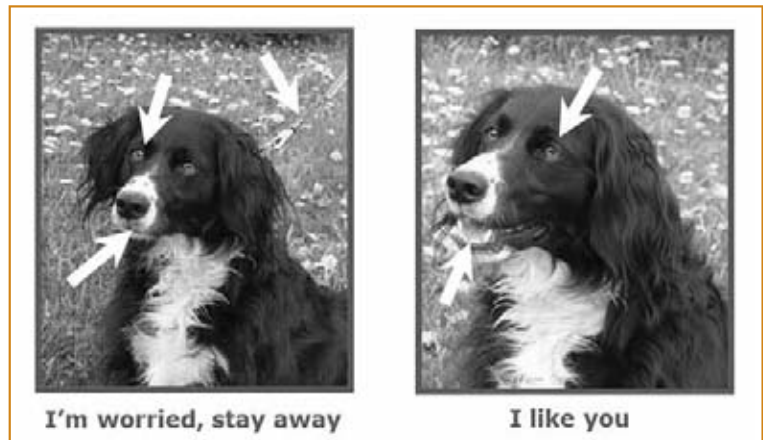
Basic Dog Body Language

Course site: <http://campus.educadium.com/DoggoneCrazy/>

Teacher: Teresa Lewin

Cost: \$30.00

For further information about the many valuable Doggone Safe resources and services, please visit www.Doggonesafe.org and consider becoming a member.



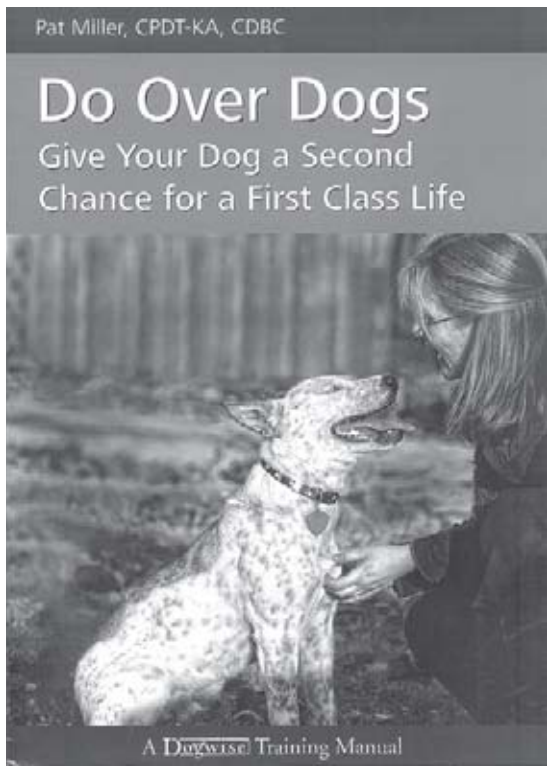
Don't Forget –

Doggone Safe Members, APHE Members, and Latham Associate Members all receive discounts on Latham DVDs and publications.

Ask yourself:

What do you get when you cross Lassie with a rose?

A collie-flower!



Many of you may already be familiar with Pat Miller’s books and magazine articles, as she has devoted much of her life to spreading the word about positive training methods for dog owners. She also works with and for animal shelters to insure that they can successfully fulfill their mission to rehabilitate and find new owners for dogs who end up in their care.

We agree with Pat’s publisher in saying that *Do Over Dogs* is one of the most comprehensive books ever written on

the subject of why dogs end up in the shelter and/or rescue world and how someone interested in adopting a do over dog can maximize their chances for a successful adoption and a happy long life together. As Pat

explains, however, this is not always an easy task. You may have to live with behaviors (as she admits she has with some of her adopted dogs and as I do) that you’d rather not have in a dog.

But how do you maximize your chances for success? Pat advises:

- **Understanding** why dogs are given up on and the most common types of behavior problems you might face,
- **Learning** how to do an assessment of a dog before you adopt it,
- **Taking advantage** of the “honeymoon period” where you have the best opportunity to teach your dog new behaviors, and of course,
- **Thoroughly reviewing** modern positive training and management techniques.

What is a “do over” dog? It’s any dog that you think needs/deserves a second chance in life. It could be a shelter dog you’re working with to make more adoptable, a dog you’ve rescued or adopted, or the dog you’ve lived with for years but still has “issues” that make him a challenge. Taking on a “do over” dog and making it work for both you and your dog truly is an accomplishment – a very rewarding one. *Do Over Dogs*, as the title suggests, will help you give your dog a second chance for a first class life.

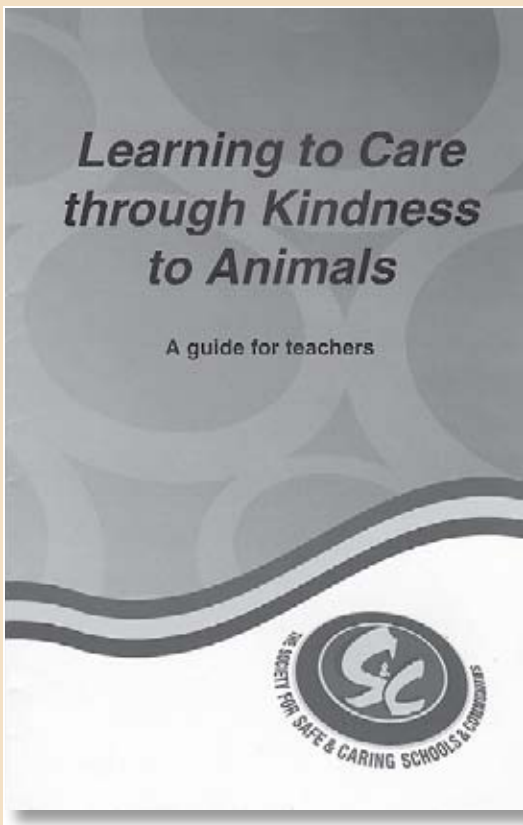
Do Over Dogs

Pat Miller, CPDT-KA, CDBC
 ISBN 978-192924269-6 • \$17.95
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 1-800-776-2665
 www.dogwise.com

2010 Revision now available

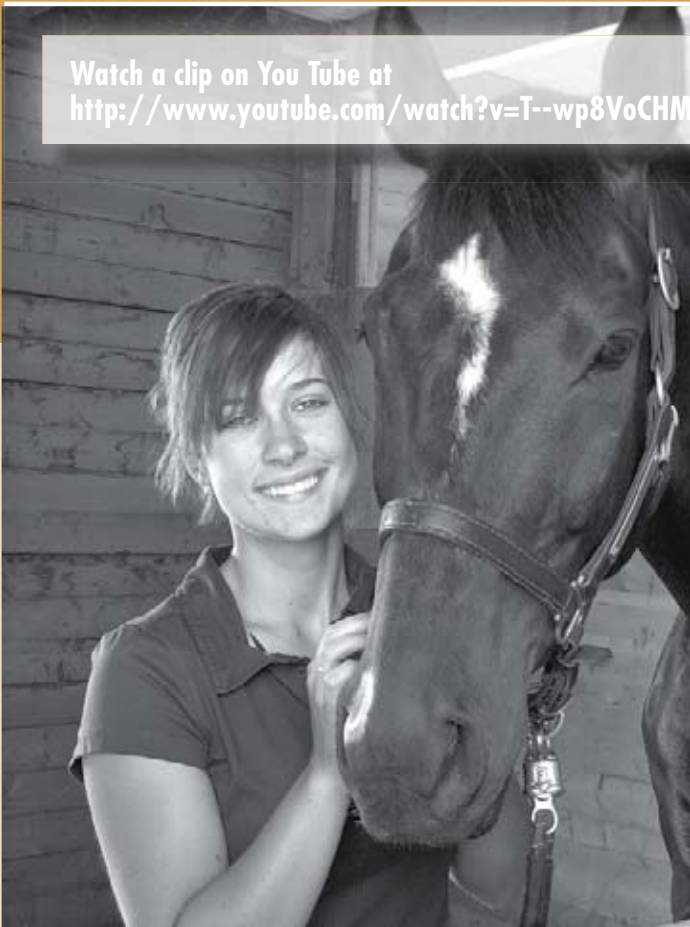
A valuable booklet summarizing the benefits of character education with animals, authored by Tim Battle, Director of Education, the Alberta Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. The booklet was made possible through a grant from Canada’s National Crime Prevention Strategy’s Community Mobility program, and produced by The Society for Safe and Caring Schools and Communities, Edmonton, Alberta T5N 2R1,

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