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Latham Letter

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WINTER 2011

PROMOTING RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION

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Out of Africa:

A Young Woman's Journey of Discovery



Author Leah Katz and baby Baboon Rhea

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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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The Latham Letter

Balanced perspectives on humane issues and activities

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The Latham Letter

Volume XXXII, Number 1, Winter 2011

**BALANCED PERSPECTIVES ON
HUMANE ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES**



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Tune out the Distractions



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

As I sit down to write this editorial, the urgent news is about a riot in London by “students” protesting school fees being raised. A battle is underway in Congress during the “lame duck” session over what could be the largest tax increase in history, and over what to do with many who have violated our immigration laws. The “Wikileaks” event has resulted in many on the internet attacking commercial banking web sites. The recent elections in the United States appeared to rebuke the politicians running Washington D.C. by taking away the overwhelming majority they had given to one party in 2008 and restore some balance of power.

These are the times we live in.

With that background – I want to point to the many good people and programs that persist today. While the stories that may lead on the mass media seem bleak, they are only a noisy, small part of our society. They do not represent us.

We are hard working, considerate and helpful in all we do. We constantly look for opportunities to help other people, and animals. We volunteer our time and talents to help others. We don't stand in a line for government handouts. We know that most answers lie within us, not in waiting for someone to tell us what to do. Our highest success is personally helping another to be independently successful.

So, how is it that the mass media presently is showing so much of the negative side of our society? I have to admit the old newspaper adage of “if it bleeds, it leads” holds true. People are attracted to blood, sad stories, and painful events – more that they are attracted to happy stories about people helping others. So the mass media, whose business is to make money, tends to focus on what sells their product, not what they believe is best or even mainstream in society.

Unfortunately these tendencies combined with the huge influx of “media” we have today become an attack on our senses. We see it in newspapers, we see it on television, on cable television, in movies made for TV, on internet news sites, in RSS feeds, in Twitter feeds, in Facebook items – many directly sent to our smart phones – so we rarely have a chance to take a breath.

We want to help others, but with so much negative news there is the tendency to throw up your hands and give up. Well, *that is not the answer.*

There is little in today's news that has not been said or done before. What is different is the speed and volume we hear about it. We need to adjust our hearing and understanding to compensate for this onslaught. To be successful you have to focus on what you want to do, how you can help, how you can work together with others in your community to improve your area of life.

Humane Education is all about helping each other. It is all about cooperation between different people with different ideas who are able to find that common area of agreement and work together to make it successful. Success is not just making someone else do it your way. It certainly is not getting a government involved to force others to do it your way as some organizations believe. It is about personal responsibility and the relationships you build. These form the basis for true success.

Stories in the *Latham Letter* focus on great people who are being successful. Listen to them. Let them inspire you. Pass the good news on and tune out the distractions.



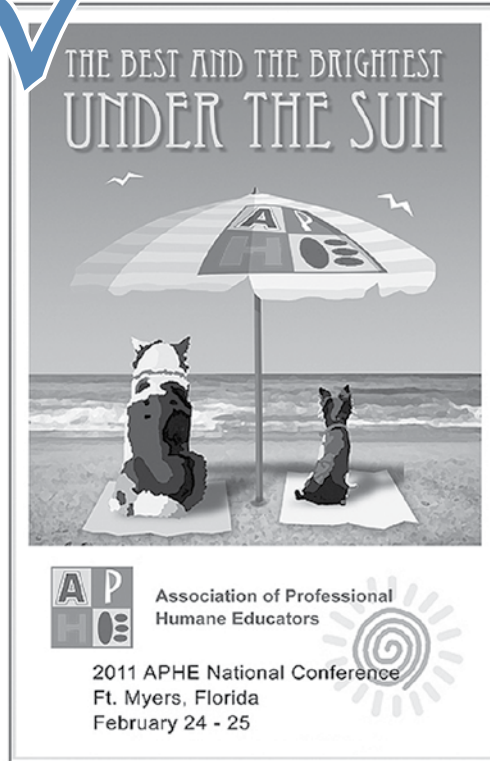
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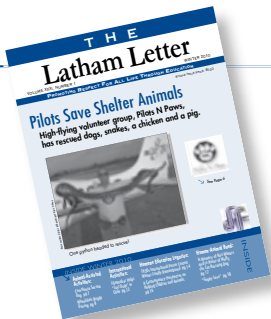
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Out to Africa:

A Young Woman's Journey of Discovery

By Leah Katz



It isn't often that procrastination leads to anything other than a very rushed assignment and a few mindless typos, but in May of 2008, one ordinary bout of procrastination led to one of the most remarkable, unlikely, and meaningful experiences of my life.

It was midnight my senior year of college and I was staring at a blank Microsoft Word document hoping that the words to my very last undergraduate essay would magically unfold themselves onto the daunting white screen in front of me. Without any luck, I assured myself that all I needed was a short break, and so the procrastinating began.

I closed my computer and began flipping through television channels when an image of a tiny monkey flashed across the screen. Having an unexplainable lifelong affinity for primates, I began watching the program that turned out to be “Growing Up Baboon” on Animal Planet. The show follows the lives of volunteers in South Africa at C.A.R.E. (Center for Animal Rehabilitation and Education) where they rehabilitate orphaned baby baboons.

As I watched this show, it was as if my heart had grown legs. It raced, nearly leaping out of my chest, as if to pull me all the way to South Africa. Within minutes my computer was open again. I frantically scoured the internet for the sanctuary web site and within an hour I had filled out an application and by the end of that week I was booked for a two month stay at C.A.R.E.

There are few moments in my life when I have truly known that I am in the right place at the right time, but as my final flight to C.A.R.E. soared over the infinite savannah of South Africa, a feeling of belonging and peace washed

over me and it increased with each baobab tree that we passed.

Sue, a rough-around-the-edges, but wonderfully passionate volunteer staff member from the Isle of Man met my plane and drove me to the sanctuary. “Don’t mind the smell. You’ll get used to it,” she assured me as she pulled into the sanctuary. “I don’t smell anything,” I replied, wondering what smell she was referring to. She looked at me a bit stunned, “You’re going to be a good one!” she laughed. Not quite sure what that meant, but accepting it as a compliment, I off-loaded my bags.

Soon they took me down to one of the enclosures, which is called a ‘hok,’ in Afrikaans. I entered “Jack and Michelle Hok,” named after two of the sixteen baby baboons inside.

My first hour was filled with shock and wonder. Up to that point, my only experience with primates had been through the distant bars at the San Francisco Zoo. To find myself

suddenly sitting in an enclosure with sixteen monkeys inspecting my ears, tugging on my sandal straps, and swinging from the long, curly locks of my previously clean hair was mind-blowing.

Perhaps the most striking observation I made during the whole hour was noticing the baboons' hands, which are exactly like ours. The experience was overwhelming, but left me wanting more ... and more I got.

The first month involved a lot of learning. I had to understand the reason for C.A.R.E. before I could truly join the cause. Baboons in South Africa are often seen as pests and the scum of the primate world. They have been known to break into homes and cars in search of food, and to aggressively intimidate tourists and even locals through aggression. With their bad reputation and many misconceptions floating around, baboons are in a dangerous position.

Many of the baby baboons that C.A.R.E. takes in are brought to the Center after their families have been shot and killed. They find these babies still clinging to their mothers' lifeless bodies, calling for her and waiting for her usual reassuring response, which

never comes. Once safe at C.A.R.E., these babies still sometimes wake up at night screaming, disoriented and afraid.

Poaching is a serious threat to baboons. Even if the poacher does not capture and kill the baboon, he will often neglect to check all of his traps, leaving the captive mother to suffer for days before either losing a limb, or dying.

Another major issue is the selling of baby baboons as pets. Without giving any thought to where the baboon came from or why it is being sold on the street, people will buy a cute baby and try to raise it as a pet. It doesn't take long for these individuals to realize that baboons are wild animals. When these "pets" are brought to C.A.R.E., they are sometimes wearing bonnets and dresses. Though this can be comical, it is not fair to the baby, who has been robbed of a natural life in the wild.

Some of the most horrific cases involve the baboons used for experiments in labs. C.A.R.E. has an entire section reserved for these baboons, who, due to extreme psychological and emotional trauma, cannot be introduced to a troop and will never be wild. The goal for these baboons is to provide them with the most comfortable sanctuary life possible.

In other cases, natural causes such as drought will keep a mother baboon from producing milk for her baby. When this occurs, the baby will eventually lose the strength to hang onto its mother's body, and let go. If the mother does not notice, the baby will be left behind. Though the babies who are rescued from these devastating circumstances are, dare I say, lucky, they often arrive at C.A.R.E. severely traumatized, mutilated, and starving.

Healthy baby baboons are called, 'pink faces,' as they have beautiful, soft, pink faces. Naturally, the face turns dark after a few months. However, if a baby undergoes a tremendous amount of stress or trauma, its face rapidly becomes black as coal. This is Wally. He was found at a garbage dump alone and calling for his mother. After being brought to the sanctuary he was paired with volunteer Rachel Gips, who became his foster mother.

A foster mother at C.A.R.E. is used to simulate the natural bond between baby and mother that is needed for normal development. As a foster mother, Rachel carried Wally in a pouch around her waist for two months. It may sound strange, but in order to simulate the relationship Wally would have had with his baboon mother, he had to spend every single moment with Rachel: eating, playing, washing and even sleeping! Though his face will never become pink again, the love and care Rachel gave Wally during those few months uncovered his sweet, gentle soul and gave him a second chance at life.

After a month of learning about these issues, figuring out the distinct features and names of each baby in the enclosures, making dozens of



formula bottles a day, chopping hundreds of sweet potatoes a week, and cleaning countless hoks, I had fallen in love with the baboons and, with the approval of my parents, I decided to extend my stay an extra month.

At the end of that first month, a staff member informed me that Rita, the creator and founder of C.A.R.E., wanted to see me in her house. Rita is a tough, witty, no-nonsense older woman who has wholeheartedly devoted her life to the survival of these baboons. I racked my brain, trying to figure out if I had done something wrong and how I would explain to Rita how sorry I was about it – whatever it was! Taking a deep breath, I entered her house and sat down on the couch, where I noticed a small cage sitting in the center of the room. Inside was a tiny, skinny baby baboon. I knelt down and greeted the baby by smacking my lips together, which is a friendly way to say ‘hello’ in baboon language. Several staff members were also seated around the room and I greeted them next with a simple, “hello,” (humans at C.A.R.E. don’t typically lip smack when greeting each other, though I can’t say it hasn’t been done!). “So?” said Rita, “What do you think?” “About what?” I asked. “About being her foster Mum!” Rita laughed, as if I should have known all along.

Every smiling eye in the room froze on me, eager to see my reaction to the offer. I didn’t know what to feel: shock, excitement, fear, joy – I was speechless! Finally, I found the words to accept and reached slowly into the cage, terrified that I would frighten the tiny baby inside. I gently wrapped my hands around her frail body, lifted her out of the cage, and pulled her close to my heart, where she has remained ever since.

I spent the next 24 hours alone with this baby to solidify our bond and earn her trust. As she slept snuggly on my

chest, curled up in a little ball just under my chin, I stroked her sweet face and noticed a faint ray of golden fur streaked along her brow. It was a ray of sunshine, and so, came the name, Rhea.

My Rhea and I shared something I cannot easily describe, but something that I have never experienced with any other person or creature in the world.

Our bond deepened and I found that we could communicate effortlessly with a simple glance. One day, I was upset about something that had happened at the Center, and, in the privacy of our room, began to cry. I have no idea whether Rhea was watching me, or if she felt my sadness, but she climbed into my lap that day, and held my face in her two tiny hands. I cannot explain how Rhea knew what to do, but it goes to show the incredible emotional intelligence of these creatures. They may not be able to speak, but they undoubtedly understand what it is to feel happiness, fear, pain and sorrow. That fact alone should be enough to deter any human being from laying a harmful finger on these sensitive souls.

Leaving C.A.R.E. and Rhea after two months of being her mom was one of the hardest things I’ve ever had to do. She had become as much a part of me as my own arms and legs. The last couple weeks before my flight home, I began weaning Rhea off of me and into a troop of other orphaned babies. This was not easy, and as my emotions rose, so did Rhea’s. She became sensitive and needy as she felt my own anxiety over my looming departure. This is when I had to

give myself a serious reality check. Without lessening the experience Rhea and I had together, I had to realize that she was not mine and I was not hers. My role as Rhea’s foster mother was just one part of her rehabilitation process. Weaning her into a troop was also my responsibility and equally as important. With a throbbing heart, I weaned Rhea into her new family, said goodbye to the tiny creature I had grown to love, and boarded a plane back to the States.

During the next several months, Rhea consumed my thoughts. I felt as if a piece of myself was missing. Without her, I felt incomplete and knew that I needed to return to



C.A.R.E. before too much time went by. My hope was that seeing how well Rhea was doing in her new troop would give me the ability to finally let go.

So, in June of 2009, six months after leaving C.A.R.E., I flew back to South Africa. I was teeming with anticipation and apprehension. *Had Rhea adjusted to life in her troop? How would she react to my return? And my worst fear, Would she react at all?*

I entered her hok as an audience of excited volunteers crowded around to watch. “Rhea!” they called, “Rhea! Look who’s here!” Rhea, being the little princess that she is, relished all the attention, dancing and twirling about the enclosure, showing off to these unexpected, but very welcome, fans.

For several minutes I sat there unrecognized and my disappointment grew. My worst fear became a reality. I tried not to let my sinking heart show and struck up a conversation with a volunteer to my left. At that moment, I watched Rhea freeze mid-twirl and whip herself around in my direction. She had heard my voice – the voice that had soothed her to sleep so many dark nights. She sprinted across the hok and leapt into my lap – wrapping her long arms and legs around my waist and holding on so tight. With immense relief that turned into the purest joy I have ever felt, I held her in my arms as the sweetest tears in the world streamed down my cheeks. I knew true happiness.



I spent just one month at C.A.R.E. that summer, but it was one of the most wonderful months of my life. The bond Rhea and I shared had not withered or wavered, and on top of that, I could clearly see that she had found confidence and happiness in her new family of other orphaned babies. The fact that they would grow together and someday be released back into the wild as a troop gave me the comfort I had been searching for all those months. This time, my goodbye to Rhea was said through tears of bittersweet joy, and true inner peace.

My experience with the baboons in South Africa has given me more than just an adventure to write about. You cannot interact with these animals and not see yourself and what you are at your core. They reflect us in every way – good and bad, and the experience is both inspiring and humbling. I have spent a total of

four months at C.A.R.E. and that time has solidified my belief in one world community, not just between people, but between animals and the earth as well. We are all on this planet together and we all have a responsibility to care for one another. As a human being, I was able to be a voice for Rhea and her suffering. In return, she taught me more about myself than I ever thought possible.

For more information about C.A.R.E., or for ways to get involved in the protection of these remarkable animals, please visit <http://www.FriendsofCARE.com/>.

Twenty-three-year-old author Leah Katz grew up in the San Francisco Bay Area and after earning a Bachelors degree in Humanities with an emphasis in Psychology at Sierra Nevada College in Lake Tahoe, Nevada, traveled for six months on a solo trip through Israel, Europe and Africa. On her return, she re-enrolled at Sierra Nevada College and began studying for a Masters degree in Education with an endorsement in Special Education.

Currently, Leah is studying and volunteering for ten months in Uganda through a Rotary Club Ambassadorial Scholarship. She reports that she has met with incredible warmth and hospitality and is thankful to have such an amazing opportunity to be part of their culture. After these ten months she plans to complete her Masters degree and fulfill her dream of becoming an elementary school teacher.

You can reach Leah at schwickledoo@gmail.com and to read about her travels during these ten months in Uganda, visit her blog and web site at <http://www.katzinuganda.tk>



Mentoring Program

Helps Teens

become **Productive** and

Compassionate *Members*

of Society



By Carol Rathmann and
Beth Karzes

History

SANTA ROSA, CALIFORNIA – Forget Me Not Farm began in 1992 as a program of the Sonoma Humane Society (SHS) providing animal-assisted and horticultural therapeutic activities to “at-risk” children. Mental health professionals, teachers, and therapists bring children to the two-acre Farm adjacent to Sonoma Humane’s state-of-the-art shelter to teach children from violent backgrounds how to value and care for living beings, develop respect for all life forms, and create a compassionate way of behaving and relating to others that is the antithesis of their traumatic experiences.

In 2006 Forget Me Not Farm (FMNF) and the Sonoma Humane education programs merged and incorporated as Forget Me Not Farm Children’s Services (FMNFCS). In the fall of 2008 they became a subordinate organization to the SHS and were granted a separate non-profit status. The rationale for this move was to position all humane education programs for expanded funding opportunities. This strategy proved successful when on September 30, 2009 FMNFCS received a \$500,000 three-year grant from the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) for our Foster Youth Development Mentoring program. FMNFCS is one of only 11 agencies that received this grant and the only one with an animal-assisted therapy component.



The need

The Foster Youth Mentoring Program helps teens aged 14-19 who are approaching adulthood acquire personal, social, and vocational skills that will enable them to become productive and compassionate members of the community. Under the guidance of a carefully-selected mentor and the cooperation of community partners, these teens who are referred to as “transitional youth” explore career opportunities, develop self-confidence



and leadership abilities, learn to resolve conflicts, form healthy relationships, and accept responsibilities in a safe and secure environment that is developmentally appropriate for each of them.

Additionally, Forget Me Not Farm Children's Services provides a supportive extended family during this critical time in the teen's life, when he or she often lacks traditional family support.

At times FMNFCS staff members are the only "family" attending graduations and other key events in the lives of participating foster youth.

When teens reach 18 they may not be eligible for further financial support and agency services but they are often drastically unprepared for entering the adult work world. An 18th birthday should be a time of joy, the highlight of every teen's life as they embark into the world to follow their dreams and goals. Unfortunately it is nothing of the sort for the 200 – 250 Sonoma County transitional age youth (14 – 19). It is the day their lives change forever – and often a day marred by more trauma. It is the day they lose the roof over their heads and the small bit of security they've come to know as "home". Sadly, it is a day that some children return to abusive homes because they have no place else to go. They are considered adults and therefore are no longer protected by the child welfare system.

Hope and opportunity through animal-assisted therapy

Pets are big business: More than 50% of people in the United States have one or more animals in their homes. Billions of dollars are spent each year on animal food, toys, veterinary care, boarding, grooming, dog parks and day care. More than ever, animals are viewed as member of the family. Once trained in animal welfare, participants in the Foster Youth Mentoring Program are prepared for local, city and state government jobs with animal shelters and other animal welfare agencies. Many entry-level positions at animal care facilities are attainable for youth who may not have strong academic or technology skills, but who have learned to be skilled, consistent and empathetic caretakers for animals.

As we establish new partnerships with local farms, occupational opportunities in the agricultural sector will

be added. What is magical about this program is that both mentor and mentee share a common interest in animals. With animals as one of the focal points, the human interaction is relaxed and the relationship has time to grow gradually around shared experiences. For some mentees the time spent with the animals brings back fond memories of a pet they may have had at home and is a reminder of a positive relationship.

How it works

The Foster Youth Mentoring Program serves 40-45 Sonoma County foster youth each year. It supports state and local academic standards and allows youth to experience firsthand the everyday demands of working in the animal welfare fields.

FMNFCS' mentoring is one-on-one and site-specific, with an emphasis on life skills, social skills and entry level job skills. Mentoring takes place daily from 3:00 pm – 6:00 pm at our Humane Education facilities; each mentor and mentee meet weekly. FMNFCS mentoring activities broaden life experiences, and give learning opportunities offered nowhere else, either by the foster care





system or through other community agencies. Mentors provide learning experiences that build the soft skills youth need as they leave foster care and prepare for adulthood. These include navigating public transportation, following instructions and being on time, arranging problems by importance, goal-setting and decision-making, and coping with failure and success.

The Foster Youth Mentoring Program curriculum is based on Sonoma Humane Society's existing successful Animal Welfare Apprenticeship Program developed for the general high school population interested in animal welfare. This curriculum is extended and individualized to meet the special needs of foster youth. It includes:

- A six-week training course that exposes mentors and mentees to local and national animal welfare and sustainable agriculture issues.
- A work rotation to sample the duties and skills necessary for employment in the ten departments of the Sonoma Humane Society, including: Veterinary Medicine, Adoptions, Kennel Technicians, Dog Training, Small Mammal Handling, Large Animal Husbandry, Retail Shop, Dog Grooming, Fundraising, Marketing and Public Relations, Non-Profit Administration and Customer Service. Rotations will also include placements in the new Production Garden. The Production Garden, which provides produce for sale to weekly subscribers, will eventually include opportunities to prepare processed foods for sale and staff a farm produce stand.
- A 10-week in-depth clinical work assignment, determined with program staff and mentor input.
- Job shadowing and mentoring with industry-trained professionals, animal shelter staff, and participation in community-supported agriculture activities.

- Presentations by the administrative staff during the six-week training provide a comprehensive overview of how the agency operates, such as administrative and managerial staff position descriptions; including the Development Director, Maintenance and Animal Care Manager, Marketing and Advertising Director, Adoption Counselor, a Staff Veterinarian, and Veterinary Technician.

Inclusion of these presentations during the initial six-week training adds a personal touch and makes the mentees and mentors feel part of the Humane Society's behind-the-scenes family while having a positive ripple effect on staff that doesn't work directly with the mentors and mentees.

The experience at Forget Me Not Farm Children's Services provides joy, fun, laughter, education, and a sense of belonging and normalcy. Youth experience the joy of small successes on each and every visit, and they find security knowing the program staff, mentors, animals, and garden will be there throughout the year.





Mentors and staff provide constant and consistent role modeling for appropriate behavior, stability, nurturing, safety and stability.

Animal-assisted benefits

The teens who participate do so

voluntarily; it is their choice and their commitment. It is not unusual for a mentee in our program to have a history of abuse and/or neglect or to have witnessed domestic or community violence. Many enter the program with low self-esteem, below grade level academic ability, emotional and behavioral issues, and a lack of social skills. Some have cognitive and physical disabilities.

The interaction between non-judgmental animals is an unspoken therapeutic experience that benefits both the mentee and the animal. The mentees often identify with the animals' temporary homelessness, need of a family, history of neglect or abuse, and feeling of abandonment. By caring for the shelter animals the mentees are educated about healthy choices, proper care, safe handling, appropriate touch, and gentle interaction. They learn how to nurture, and gain confidence by working alongside volunteer mentors and professional role models in the animal shelter and veterinary hospital. Participating in this weekly program provides stability and continuity, which are concepts rarely fostered by neglectful parents.

Mentor selection and training

All mentors complete a formal application, including three references that are fully verified by our staff. Staff check their criminal history, including fingerprinting, through the California Department of Justice and any other pertinent crime registry. In addition to the extensive interview process conducted by the Humane Educator, our Executive Director personally interviews each mentor prospect through the lens of her more than 20 years of work with at-risk youth.

Once a mentor prospect passes the recruitment interview, she or he proceeds to pre-match training. We review FMNFCS' history, mission, policies and procedures, particularly confidentiality, unacceptable behavior, and child abuse reporting. During the application, interview, reference check and training sessions, FMNFCS staff members form a good sense of each mentor – information that advises the matching process.

The primary concern is to meet the needs of the youth. Therefore we take each teen's condition and situation into consideration and match them with a mentor who has appropriate characteristics. We consider factors such as gender, racial/ethnic/cultural/language background; shared interests between the mentor and youth; complementary temperament and personality; special needs of the youth; geographic proximity; and similarity between the mentor's career and the career interest of the youth.

To further assess the compatibility of mentee/mentor matches, the mentors are mandated to attend the six-week training with the mentees. These six weeks provide an opportunity for the mentoring coordinator to see the mentor's interaction with the mentees first hand.

Measuring outcomes

To document the impact of the Foster Youth Mentoring Program, particularly for social competence, FMNFCS





now uses surveys from the After-School Initiative's Toolkit for Evaluating Positive Youth Development developed by the Colorado Trust and National Research Center, Inc. The toolkit's questions measure cultural competency, life skills, positive life choice, positive core values and sense of self. We use the Colorado Trust Toolkit question sets and tracking forms for regular self-surveys of youth outcomes.

FMNFCS has built systems for regular client self-reporting and final evaluation six months to one year after leaving the program. Self-reports are used in combination with direct observation from mentors and data collection/in-person interviews with program partners. Mentors and staff members complete written or telephone surveys, including direct observation of youth activities and behaviors, on a quarterly basis. This frequency highlights mentor satisfaction, as well as behavior changes in youth, and helps FMNFCS to make needed adjustments in mentor matching, training or support issues. Data collected is used by FMNFCS consulting psychologist to improve therapeutic learning objectives, make recommendations for program enhancement, establish realistic hypotheses for further research, and provide periodic feedback to our staff and to representatives of active partner agencies.

To manage client information and track program data, FMNFCS has developed a data collection system using a FileMaker Pro database. This system tracks data points required by our funders and provides aggregate and detail-level reporting.



Summary

The Foster Youth Mentoring Program at the Sonoma Humane Society is a uniquely successful program that illustrates how for profit business, local and federal government, and non-profit organizations can work together to provide programs to underserved populations.

In addition to the collaborating agencies, there are more than 75 active volunteers who support the minimal staff of Forget Me Not Farm Children's Services and the 1200 children served each year in its programs. This is a program that can be replicated at many animal shelters. For additional information, contact <http://forgetmenotfarm.org/index.html>.

Authors:

*Executive Director **Carol Rathmann** is the founder and has directed Forget Me Not Farm since its inception in 1992. Ms. Rathmann has more than 30 years of experience in humane education and animal welfare. She holds a Master's Degree in Psychology with studies focused on the effects of abuse, neglect and trauma on early childhood development.*

*Humane Educator **Beth Karzes** designed the Sonoma Humane Society's Animal Welfare Apprentice program, and adapted this curriculum for Forget Me Not Farm Children's Services Foster Youth Mentoring Program where she teaches career skills and animal welfare practices to foster youth. Ms. Karzes is a credentialed elementary education teacher with more than a decade of experience teaching kindergarten through high school age students.*

Dog-fighting-Free Zones for All 50 States

By Ledy VanKavage, Esq.
Best Friends Animal Society

Dog fighting is a brutal crime, illegal in all 50 states. Sometimes this horrendous animal abuse can occur in settings that are shocking.

In September of 2009 the Animal Crimes Unit of the Cook County Sheriff's Department was in for a grim surprise when they raided a dog fighting operation. In addition to hosting dog fights, the home was also a licensed day care operation. Ten children were in the house and nine dogs were rescued – all of them victims of the violence that was occurring.

The daycare operator alleged that she was not involved in the dog fighting and stated that the children were never near the dogs. Despite her protests, state officials nonetheless shut down the daycare operation. The Sheriff's Department arrested Charles Sutton, Lance Webb, and Martez Anderson for felony dog fighting. Andersen, a convicted felon, was also arrested for being in possession of an unneutered or unspayed dog – a violation of Illinois state law.

Sheriff Tom Dart was appalled. Prior to becoming Sheriff of Cook County, Dart served in the Illinois House of Representatives and was responsible for getting one of the strongest animal welfare laws in the United States passed. The Sheriff went on animal advocate Steve Dale's radio show to express his outrage and talk about preventing similar crimes involving children and victimized dogs from happening again. During the conversation Steve suggested that there should be an enhanced penalty for people who bring children to dog fights and asked the Sheriff to work with Best Friends to draft a bill.

Steve didn't realize that Illinois already had increased the penalty for bringing children under the age of 13 to a dog fight, but when he learned that it was already a law, he insisted there must be something else we could do. We started brain-storming. "What about having dog-fighting-free zones, similar to the drug-free zones around schools?" I asked. "We could increase the penalty for anyone who fought dogs near a school, daycare, or park." Steve liked the idea and asked that I contact the Sheriff. Sheriff Dart embraced the idea and assigned his chief lobbyist, Rob Moon, to work with Best Friends Animal Society's lawyers and lobbyists to draft a bill and spearhead its passage.

The Sheriff's office then secured Rep. Karen Yarborough and Sen. Kimberly Lightford to sponsor a bill that would make it a Class 3 Felony to stage a dog fight within 1,000 feet of a school, public park, playground, daycare center, or group home. Best Friends did alerts asking their members to contact their



state representative and ask them to support, this humane bill. A petition arguing for passage of the measure went up on Change.org. Because of the support, this innovative humane legislation sailed through the Illinois General Assembly and landed on Governor Pat Quinn's desk.

When Governor Pat Quinn signed HB 5790 into law, Steve Dale and representatives from Best Friends Animal Society were present. Sitting next to the Governor and smiling during the signing was Rou, a pit bull terrier who is part of the Safe Humane Chicago team helping dispel the myths that surround pit bull-type dogs. Now at Cook County Animal Control, court case dogs who were victims of cruelty are evaluated, trained, and adopted instead of summarily euthanized.

Best Friends Animal Society and of course Steve Dale hope that this humane public safety legislation aimed at protecting children and animals will eventually be enacted in all 50 states.

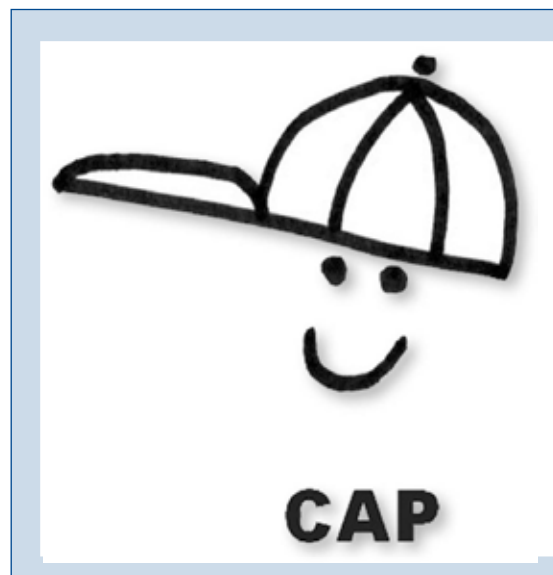


Animal Abuse

is

Everybody's Business

By Michael L. Kaibel



Part One:

KLAMATH COUNTY OREGON, home of Crater Lake National Park, is a recreational paradise with beautiful scenery, mountain meadows, and an abundance of streams and lakes. Nestled on the east side of the Cascade Mountain Range, Klamath is considered high desert and has an average of 300 days of sunshine per year. We are a family orientated rural community with traditional values.

Yet, like every community across America, there is a dark shadowy side that largely goes unspoken. Hidden within the shadows is family violence. Tease apart the fabric of family violence and you will find the tangled threads of child maltreatment, domestic violence, elder abuse, and animal abuse. Yes, animal abuse is a form of family violence. Animals are often the target of threats and acts of violence as a way to control family members and others. But the connection between animal abuse and human-on-human violence is not new. Pythagoras (570 BC – 495 BC) said, “For as long as men massacre animals, they will kill each other. Indeed, he who sows

the seed of murder and pain cannot reap joy and love.” And St. Francis of Assisi (1181-1246) declared, “If you have men who will exclude any of God’s creatures from the shelter of compassion and pity, you will have men who will deal likewise with their fellow men.”

**For as long as men massacre animals, they will kill each other.
Indeed, he who sows the seed of murder and pain
cannot reap joy and love.**

– Pythagoras (Pre-Socratic Greek Philosopher)

Today we have the benefit of decades of scientific research connecting cruelty to animals with interpersonal violence. And so it was in April of 2009 with our “Vision of a Violence-Free Klamath County” that our community group, Klamath Child Abuse Prevention (CAP), decided to include the prevention of cruelty to animals as part of our program to end child abuse and break the cycles of family violence. Since 1997, CAP child and family advocates have been dedicated to bringing light and hope to victims, survivors, and the community at large through education and awareness campaigns. Educating our citizens about the connection (The LINK®) between animal abuse and human abuse was the next logical step in our prevention program and is now a standard part of our awareness campaign: **PROMOTE KINDNESS – Prevent Cruelty to Animals.**

Known locally as an action group, CAP members were ready and willing to take our program to the streets and make a tangible difference in the lives of children and families. Our first action item was in the area of domestic violence because it severely impacts the whole family and is one of the least reported crimes. Consider these facts: Twelve independent studies have reported that between 18% and 48% of battered women delay leaving abusive situations out

of fear for the safety of their animals (Ascione, 2007); and in a Wisconsin study, 68% of battered women reported their animals had been the target of violence. Of these incidents, 87% occurred in the presence of the women to intimidate and control them, and 75% occurred in the presence of children (Quinisk, 1999).

The decision was made to meet with the director and staff at our local women's shelter for victims of domestic violence and sexual assault, Klamath Crisis Center, and introduce them to American Humane's Pets and Women's Shelters (PAWS)[®] Program. It had been a long-time wish of the shelter's director to have an on-site kennel, and with guidance from the PAWS Program, the process is underway to make her dream come true. We expect the PAWS kennel at Klamath Crisis Center (KlamathCrisisCenter.org) to be operational by Spring 2011.

Next, CAP approached our Klamath Falls Police Department about ways to inform battered victims about the availability of the on-site kennel (our police department has an excellent working relationship with the Crisis Center and an extensive knowledge of the needs of battered victims). They said that by law they were required to give victims of domestic violence a written statement of their rights. Their suggestion was to add a statement at the bottom of that form and together we came up with: **Contact Klamath Crisis Center for safety planning, including pets**. This statement will go into effect the next time they reprint the form.

Another way to assist victims and their children from further intimidation and control by batterers is to have animals included in domestic violence protective orders. Currently, 17 states have laws providing for the inclusion of animals in protective orders, unfortunately Oregon is not one of them. However, judges in Oregon can include animals in protective orders under the "other relief" clause in the Family Abuse Prevention Act. So we contacted our county court to encourage our judges to take animal abuse seriously and to see if they were comfortable with the "other relief" clause for including animals in

protective orders. Klamath County judges responded that they were okay with the "other relief" clause as long as the case merits it and it is presented as a human safety and welfare issue.

Then CAP went to the Domestic Violence Reduction Unit (DVRU) in the District Attorney's Office to share what the judges had said, so the DA's Office would know how best to petition the court for inclusion of animals in domestic violence protection orders. DVRU's Domestic Violence Investigator acknowledged their full support and noted that they were in the process of creating a new Domestic Violence Resource List. To further help get the word out and to show a coordinated approach by agencies to help victims of domestic violence, DVRU plans to use the exact same wording the police department is using (Contact Klamath Crisis Center for safety planning, including pets) and to display it in their new resource list. With the addition of local animal-care groups providing temporary foster care for pets, we felt that we had woven a comprehensive safety net to support battered victims wanting to escape their situation without fear of what the batterer would do to their beloved pets.

CAP's second action item was to turn its attention to using The LINK[®] to reduce child abuse. Research studies show that people are more willing to report the maltreatment or neglect of an animal than of a child (Loar, 1999), and that people have a lower tolerance for cruelty and damage to animals than for cruelty and damage to children (Ascione & Arkow, 1999). In another study, a survey of pet-owning families with substantiated child abuse and neglect found that animals were abused in 88% of homes where child physical abuse was present (DeViney, Dickert, & Lockwood, 1983).



Henley Middle School student Amanda Gatz, accompanied by her parents Penny and Chris, is recognized as the first "Purple Hands Pledge Ambassador" in the Nation for her outstanding achievements with the Hands Project program and her high level of character.

KEEP IN MIND

Twelve independent studies have reported that between 18% and 48% of battered women delay leaving abusive situations out of fear for the safety of their animals.

(Ascione, 2007)

People are more willing to report the maltreatment or neglect of an animal than of a child.

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(Ascione & Arkow, 1999)

“Investigation of animal abuse is often the first point of social services intervention for a family...”

– Humane Society of the United States

For many children, the pain of child maltreatment is matched only by the pain of disclosing the abuse in a courtroom, a hospital or during an investigative interview. It is critical that child protection professionals do everything possible to lessen the child’s burden. To this end, the TASK™ Program is an innovative and sound intervention that assists children both short and long term.

– Director, National Child Protection Training Center

Identifying children and families at risk has been difficult in the past because of the fears and myths that keep people from reporting child abuse and neglect. But knowing that people are more likely to report animal abuse than child abuse, we decided to use that research to our advantage. One creative solution for the early identification of children and families at risk is to transform animal lovers into child welfare defenders. CAP members felt this could be accomplished simply by inspiring and motivating the estimated 40,000 animal lovers in Klamath to report animal abuse. Key to the success of this plan is that in

our community Klamath Animal Control officers are mandatory reporters for child abuse. As such, they are cross-trained to recognize and report child abuse as well as animal abuse. As noted by the Humane Society of the United States, “Investigation of animal abuse is often the first point of social services intervention for a family...” CAP plans to use our 2nd annual “Go Orange for Animals!” event as the kickoff for our awareness campaign encouraging the reporting of animal abuse as a way to reduce child abuse. See ASPCA.org for information on their “Go Orange for Animals” program.

Further assistance to promote public awareness of The LINK® and to reduce child abuse came from our Klamath County Sheriff’s Office. CAP was invited to join their Neighborhood Watch Program for county residences where we would be allowed to add information about the “family violence system” (child abuse, domestic violence, elder abuse, and animal abuse). CAP also received a similar invitation to join the city-wide Neighborhood Watch Program sponsored by the Klamath Falls Police Department whose partners include citizens, Klamath Falls City School District, and the Klamath Falls City Council. In effect, CAP will be starting a Neighborhood Watch for Pets

component under the official Klamath Neighborhood Watch Programs. This holds great promise, as Neighborhood Watch is one of the oldest and most effective crime prevention programs in the country, thanks to citizens and law enforcement working together to make communities safer.

Another promising project in Klamath revolves around America Humane's Therapy Animals Assisting Kids (TASK™) Program. The TASK™ Program was written to encourage and guide professionals within the criminal justice and child welfare systems to incorporate therapy animals into their programs and is based on research that clearly shows animals are a positive presence for children during traumatic events. The Director of the National Child Protection Training Center stated, "For many children, the pain of child maltreatment is matched only by the pain of disclosing the abuse in a courtroom, a hospital or during an investigative interview. It is critical that child protection professionals do everything possible to lessen the child's burden. To this end, the TASK™ Program is an innovative and sound intervention that assists children both short and long term."

CAP is currently in conversation with Klamath Lake Child Abuse Response & Evaluation Services (CARES) and Angels In Whiskers (local Certified Therapy Dogs) to include therapy dogs in their assessment services with children to create a more child-friendly environment. CAP also provided our DA's Office with information on the value of having dogs in courthouse settings (see CourthouseDogs.com for further information) where the dog's calming presence creates a more positive atmosphere.

Annually, CAP requests the Klamath County Board of Commissioners and the Klamath Falls City Council to proclaim April as National Child Abuse Prevention Month in Klamath. This presented us with another opportunity to promote awareness of The LINK® to both citizens and public officials.


AMENDED OFFICIAL CHILD ABUSE PREVENTION PROCLAMATION:

"WHEREAS, animal abuse is family violence and an early warning sign of a family in trouble, all citizens are encouraged to work together in reporting animal cruelty thus ending the cycle of abuse for all..."

Because CAP was blending child abuse prevention with preventing cruelty to animals, we needed a strong yet flexible program that could bridge both components and serve as the corner-stone for all of our anti-violence programs. We were already experiencing phenomenal success in our community and schools with an award winning program called **Hands & Words Are Not For Hurting Project®** (HandsProject.org).

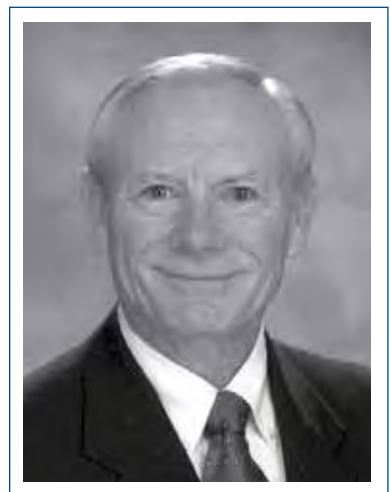
The Hands Project reduces



violence of all types and is proven to save lives. Its success is based on simplicity, repetition, and visibility. Following the wisdom that "all you need to change the world is one simple, powerful idea" makes these words the fourteen most important words you will need to remember all your life: "I Will Not Use My Hands Or My Words For Hurting Myself Or Others®." 

End of Part One

Part Two featuring the Hands Project will be continued in the Spring 2011 *Latham Letter*.



Michael L Kaibel is the Violence Prevention Coordinator for Klamath Child Abuse Prevention in Klamath County, Oregon. He is the recipient of the Klamath County Volunteer of the Year 2010 Award and the Camp Fire USA Centennial Spirit Award. Contact Michael for information on their programs to reduce all forms of family violence, including animal abuse, at michaelkaibel@centurytel.net or call 541-798-5498.

Greetings Latham,

I hope your Thanksgiving was enjoyable. One of the things I'm grateful for is the Latham Letter. In your Spring 2010 edition you featured Maine's Linkage Project and the great success they were having across their state bringing awareness about the animal cruelty/human violence connection.

The article was so inspiring that our group, Klamath Child Abuse Prevention, contacted Tonya DiMillo at the Linkage Project for information and ideas. Our conversations lead to setting up a train-the-trainer seminar with the Linkage Project. I'm happy to report that on Tuesday, 11/23/10, the Linkage Project did their first interstate training for the good citizens of Klamath Falls, Oregon. Despite a snow blizzard and hazardous road conditions we had 42 participants attend the training. It was a diverse group of community agencies that included:

- The Klamath Tribes
- Animal Control (they want to get animal abuse cases reported in the newspaper, same as drunk driver arrests) Klamath Lake Community Action Services/Sunshine Tykes Day Care
- Batterers Intervention (they are going to add animal questions to their polygraph exams)
- Department of Human Services
- Court-Appointed Special Advocates (CASA)
- Grandparents As Parents
- Child Abuse Response & Evaluation Services
- Sky Lakes Medical Center; Adult Protective Services
- Klamath Falls Police Department
- Klamath County Commission on Children & Families
- Klamath Crisis Center
- Lutheran Community Services (alcohol & drug treatment center)
- The Oregon Institute of Technology Integrated Student Health Center.

Attendee comments were: "Excellent, I learned a lot, Great, Powerful, Very moving ... and more. I can wholeheartedly recommend this training to anyone interested in learning about the violence connection between human and non-human animals."

Tonya DiMillo did an absolutely wonderful job of explaining the animal cruelty/human violence connection and answering tough questions from the audience. Also, their technical support, lead by Ben Walker, was flexible and accommodating to our unique needs.

Thanks again to the Latham Letter for being an important bridge to resources that support humane education across the nation around the globe.

Sincerely,

Michael Kaibel
Violence Prevention Coordinator
Klamath Child Abuse Prevention (CAP)
Klamath Chapter Hands & Words Are Not for Hurting Project®
KlamathCAP.com

See related article that begins on Page 16.



How Shelter Pets are Brokered for Experimentation

Understanding Pound Seizure

By Allie Phillips

“Pound seizure” refers to the practice of selling shelter pets for use in science labs.

We agree that this book is a must-read both for those who know nothing or very little about pound seizure and for those well-versed in the topic.

As Hugh Tebault, the Latham Foundation’s President explains, “*Allie Phillips details the ways that some animals have been silently diverted from pounds and sold into the murky research world. The good news is that it appears few are now being sold, but the fact that pound seizure exists at all with no visibility violates the public trust. This book is recommended for everyone working in animal welfare.*”

Back in the 1940s, the practice referred to as “pound seizure” was common in taxpayer-funded animal shelters across the country. Whether for cosmetic testing, human or animal drug testing, medical technique and tool testing, or biochemical testing, these once-family pets were subjected to experimentation that often ended in death. Today the practice is moving toward extinction thanks to local citizens and animal rescue and welfare organizations. Still, pound seizure remains a dirty little secret in American society.

This book gives readers a fuller picture of what’s happening in shelters. Most importantly, it offers alternatives and explains what they can do to stem the tide of dealers and brokers sweeping animals off to their almost-certain demise.

Author Allie Phillips is a lawyer, pet owner, shelter volunteer, and former vice president of human-animal strategic initiatives for the American Humane Association. You can read more about her current work on behalf of animals at www.alliephillips.com.

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Pit Stops

Crossing the Country with Loren the Rescue Bully

By Michelle Sathe

With a forward by Ed Fritz, Best Friends Animal Society

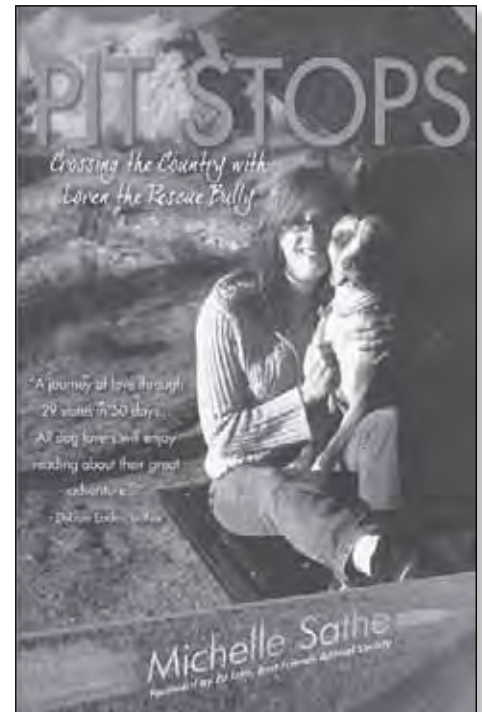
Having met author Michelle Sathe at the No More Homeless Pets conference this year, I was eager to read the cleverly-named Pit Stops. It didn’t disappoint. This witty and charming book chronicles Michelle’s cross-country adventure with Loren, a young female pit bull that she fell for while volunteering at The Brittany Foundation dog rescue in Los Angeles. Michelle pegged Loren as the perfect co-pilot for her road trip adventure and she was right.

They visited historic places such as the Grand Canyon, Niagara Falls, New Orleans, and Savannah’s scenic waterfront, sampling regional cuisine along the way. And they met many wonderful humane workers from coast to coast. Sadly, they also came face to face with the nightmare of pit bull prejudice and the reality facing “bully” breeds in America today.

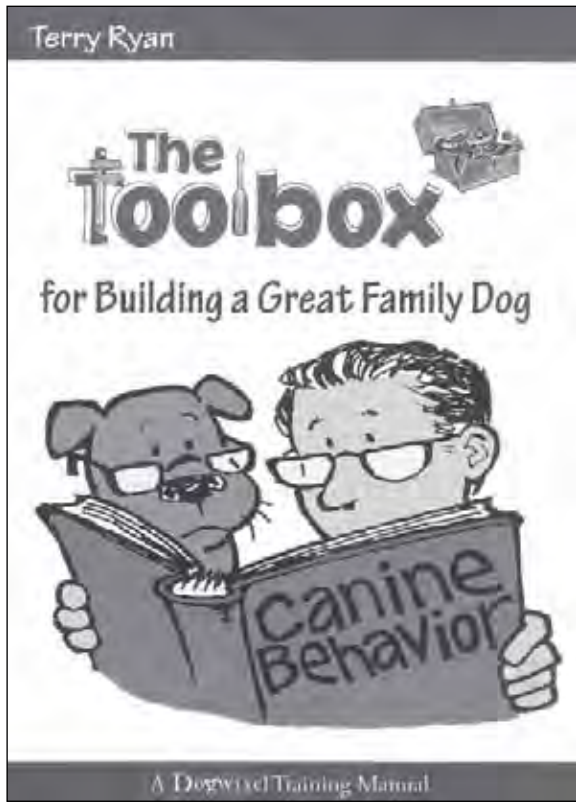
Mile by mile, whether they’re avoiding Ohio due to breed discriminatory legislation or making unlikely friends in the deep South, Michelle and Loren forge a bond that only 24/7 togetherness can create.

Michelle’s skills as a writer shine as she takes readers along on an adventure filled with laughter, sadness, and, ultimately, hope.

Along with a feel-good epilogue, Pit Stops contains a state-by-state shelter guide and a short list of pet-friendly travel resources.



Say the Words! Press • www.pitstopsbook.com
ISBN 978-0-615-38699-7 • \$15.00
\$1 of each sale benefits The Brittany Foundation



The Toolbox for Building a Great Family Dog

By Terry Ryan

Terry Ryan is one of the most well-known figures in the world of positive dog training. She has been a mentor to a generation of trainers world-wide. In *The Toolbox for Building a Great Family Dog*, she presents a complete guide to help families raise a

happy and well-mannered dog using techniques and games that are both fun and effective.

The focus of this book is the family dog and everything that phrase implies including the interactions between kids and dogs, household management strategies, common behavioral problems, and training games the whole family (including the dog) can enjoy.

Terry Ryan's 1998 book *The Toolbox for Remodeling Your Problem Dog* was one of the first books to translate the science of dog behavior and training into practical and easily understood skills for both pet owner and trainer. The focus then was on how to solve behavior problems. Now, as the author puts it, her emphasis is on circumventing problems in the first place by rewarding good behavior and teaching alternative behaviors to replace those that are less desirable.

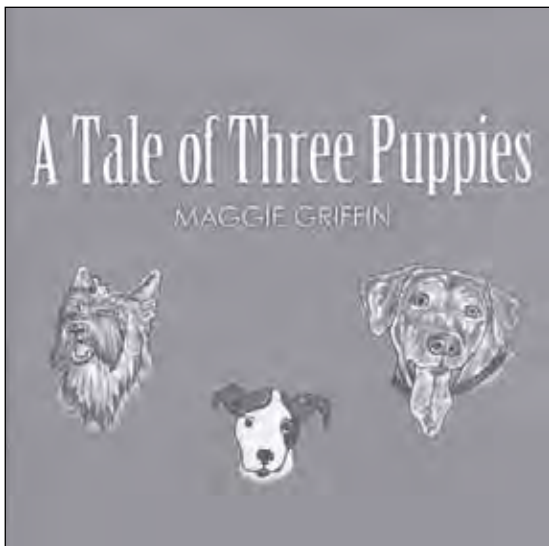
One of the first things the author reminds us is to avoid the anthropomorphism trap. As she explains, "Dogs do have a range of feelings, but they probably don't equate exactly to our own emotions. Dogs can acquire, process, and store information, but in their own way. For example, 'He loves me' is a concept that is dear to many of us. Your dog might love you and certainly you can love him back, but having the opposable thumbs to work can openers doesn't hurt either. You are even more loveable because you can turn door knobs, start the car, make toys play back, and give invitations to share great resting places with electric blankets."

Terry Ryan is a noted author, trainer, and developer of innovative training products for dogs. She has been a leading proponent of the move toward reward-based training methods and continues to teach classes and give seminars around the world. She lives in Sequim, Washington.

Author Contact: terry@legacycanine.com

ISBN: 978-1-929242-79-5 • \$16.95

www.dogwisepublishing.com



A Tale of Three Puppies

Written and Illustrated by Maggie Griffin

This is a delightful book that should find a place in any humane education program.

In it, author and illustrator Maggie Griffin has found a clever way to promote kindness, compassion, and the "golden rule." She tells the stories of three puppies. In the first, a little girl finds a stray puppy and helps it get a new home; in the second, a young boy helps a lost dog find his way back home to his family; and in the third, a family adopts a puppy from a shelter.

The author wisely includes a note to parents about safety, reminding them never to put themselves or their children in danger.

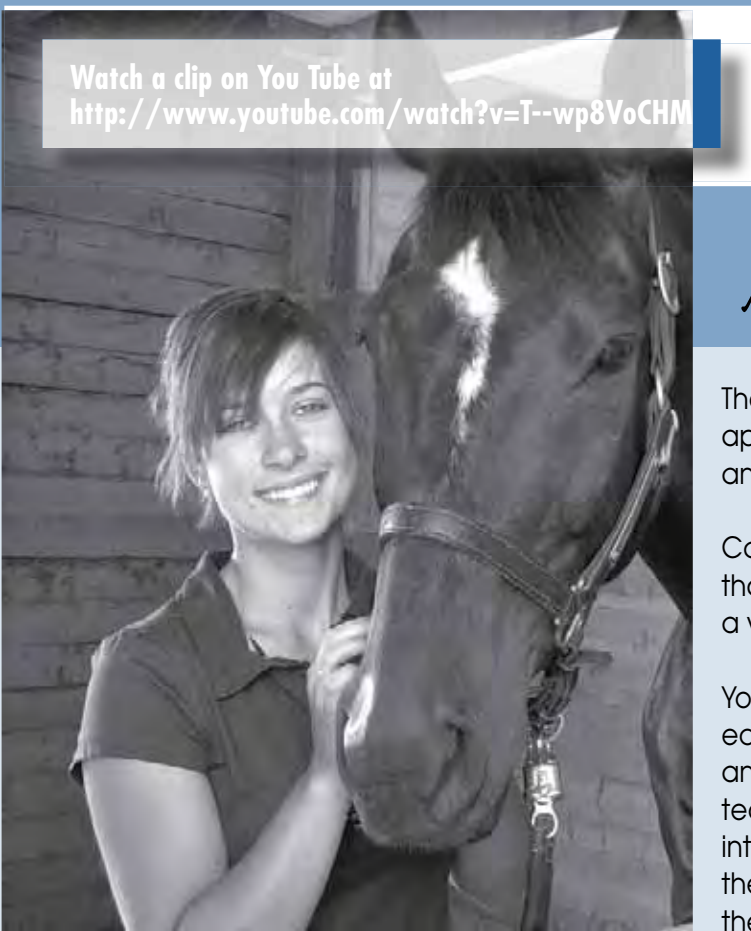
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Caring CAREERS

Making a Living, Making a Difference

The Latham Foundation is pleased to announce a new DVD appropriate for anyone considering a career working with animals.

Caring Careers focuses on several animal-oriented professions that require less formal training than that needed to become a veterinarian.

You'll meet a dog groomer, a dog walker and pet sitter, an equine massage therapist, a reptile and amphibian specialist, an up-and-coming horse trainer, and several veterinary technicians. Each gives you a behind-the-scenes glimpse into their world as they candidly discuss how they got started, the joys and challenges they encounter, and the rewards they experience in their chosen caring career.

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