

THE Latham Letter

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PROMOTING RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION

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CHANGING LIVES— Community-based animal welfare education in Melbourne, Australia

By Sally Meakin, Manager,
Education & Learning Service, Royal
Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to
Animals (Victoria), Melbourne, Australia

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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 XXXVI, Number 2, Spring 2015

**BALANCED PERSPECTIVES ON
HUMANE ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES**



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*Hugh H. Tebault III,
Latham Foundation's
President*

Food for Thought

Should an editorial give you a reason to think? I believe it should. I also believe all good articles in the Latham Letter should give you pause to consider how others are being successful in the many aspects of reaching out with humane education to improve the lives of those around them.

It has been my experience that news has gotten more and more negative and predictable as I have gotten older. Perhaps that is because I have a longer experience, or is it that the news we see has gotten controlled by an ever smaller group of like thinking people? I will note that as our children were growing up we would often hear news items together and explain to our children there is a fuller story that was not being told. In that way, we hoped they would grow up thinking more about what they heard and saw, considering more options than what may have been presented as the obvious one.

Of late the news does appear to have a singular message from some that if only the central government would take over all those little cities and state operations, we would be better off. Whether the story is about the police actions in a town or water control in a state, the message conveyed is that only centralized government control will remedy the situation. Those who have studied history of any sort should recognize this (more centralized government power) siren song and know it has always been proven untrue, but often too late to help. Hopefully the message of central planning and control in the USA will again fall flat as it should.

For a moment, let's entertain this thought and consider what central control of all programs using humane education practices for the families and animals in their area would look like. What would the new, single government program be? Who would decide

what gets taught, or how to teach? Who gets to benefit? Would it look like a California program, or a New Jersey program, or perhaps a New York City program? How much damage would that do to your current program?

Based on my experience, such a central program would be an unmitigated failure, requiring an ever larger group of people and funds to push approved program goals that were created by an unreachable and unaccountable bureaucracy. There are too many current examples of program failures like this to mention.

Contrast that with your local agencies – animal shelter, family shelter or therapy center. Each of these has a local group of highly involved staff and volunteers who are focused on those unique programs and services that your community wants. The free enterprise, distributed management system has been shown to be the best and most lasting model for mankind. These businesses succeed by creating programs when needed and being held accountable by their customers. That said, there is still an important role for government to play in establishing the basic framework that would establish rules about building safety, as well as worker or animal safety, that each of these organizations would follow.

The *Latham Letter* will continue to share highlights of these effective programs from around the world. We recognize the importance of the distributed and independent organizations and people who are all working to improve lives in their area. The unique success of the programs we share can then engage with your future planning thoughts about if and how your own community and customer base could benefit.





WE'RE MOVING!

Latham will soon be moving into a new office in Alameda, CA. Nothing is changing except the size of our footprint and we'll give you our new address soon.



In the meantime, we're having an **inventory reduction sale**. It's a great chance for you to order Latham books and DVDs at a substantial savings.

Visit www.latham.org/order-our-products/ to take advantage of discounted prices on:

Teaching Compassion (Regularly \$14.95, now \$7.50),

Great Dog Adoptions, A Guide for Shelters (Regularly \$18.50, now \$9.25),

and a 10-pack of the *Breaking the Cycles of Violence* Manual (Regularly \$85.00, now just \$19.00).

These prices are limited to inventory on hand.

From the BARC DVD:

See pages 12-13 for a heartwarming update on Oreo's new life with her adopted family.



ATTENTION APHE MEMBERS

Did you know you can purchase clothes for yourself and items for your pets with the beautiful new APHE logo?



Here's the link:

<http://www.cafepress.com/aphe>.

Need a Humane Educator? Check the Humane Education Registry!

The Humane Society of the United States (HSUS) is proud to announce the launch of the Humane Education Registry. The Registry will assist credentialed Certified Humane Education Specialists (CHES) by maintaining a centralized database of all active credential holders. It will also allow the HSUS to share approved information with those looking for local programs or humane education assistance or expertise.

[Humane Society Academy]



THE HUMANE SOCIETY
OF THE UNITED STATES

Learn more about the CHES credentialing program and find out how to be part of the Humane Education Registry, at:
<http://www.humanesociety.org/ches>.

CORRECTION

Apologies to our friend and author Phil Arkow.

In the last issue we listed his email as arkowpets@snip.com when it should have been arkowpets@snip.net.



CHANGING LIVES—

Community-based animal welfare education in Melbourne, Australia

By Sally Meakin, Manager,
Education & Learning Service, Royal
Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to
Animals (Victoria), Melbourne, Australia



Summary

As rescue organisations across the world continue to witness the tragedy of pet overpopulation and animal neglect, Animal Welfare Education seeks to inform attitudes and behaviours, so the need to rescue and provide frontline services can ultimately be reduced.

As well as contributing to positive long term welfare outcomes for animals, empathy education can also help to improve children's capacity for empathy towards other people, and to reduce the impacts of trauma.

At RSPCA Victoria, the Creating Animal Respect and Empathy (CARE) program, working with children from culturally diverse and often troubled backgrounds, is producing positive results in both respects.

The CARE Program

BACKGROUND

Victoria, the second most populous State in Australia, is rich in cultural diversity. Twenty-five per cent of Victorians were born overseas, originating from 230 different countries and speaking over 180 languages (Department of Education and Early Childhood Development 2011). Over the past decade, there has been a steady decrease in the proportion of immigrants from Europe, and a significant increase in immigration from non-European countries – in particular Sudan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Brazil (Australian Bureau of Statistics 2008).

Considering these demographics, the RSPCA has identified a need to engage with communities that are diverse in culture, religion, race and language:

Some cultures have different understandings and norms about the importance of animal welfare and acceptable treatment of animals than the standards supported

by RSPCA and required under Victoria legislation. There is opportunity for RSPCA to communicate animal welfare education messages to targeted newly immigrated communities ... (RSPCA Victoria 2010, p. 53)

The CARE program targets new arrivals in Australia with first languages other than English, and especially students from a refugee or asylum seeker background.

Many of these students have a history of trauma including witnessing violence, and experiencing periods of displacement

and homelessness, before arriving in Australia. This history can have adverse effects on the mental wellbeing and psychosocial development of these young refugee and asylum seeker students (Christie & Sidhu 2002; Mudaly, 2011).

High rates of post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) can be found amongst this cohort (Bronstein & Montgomery, 2011; Fazel, Wheeler, & Danesh, 2005), who can present with symptoms of delinquency, aggression (Hicks, Lalonde & Pepler, 1993) and reduced empathetic development (Nietlisbach Maercker, Rossler & Haker et al, 2010). Impaired empathy has been linked with anti-social behaviors, including violence towards humans and animals (Mudaly 2011, Taylor & Signal, 2004).

There is evidence to suggest that animal-assisted activity and humane education can assist in improving empathy and reducing PTSD symptoms (Kemp, Signal, Botros, Taylor & Prentice, 2013).

RSPCA education programs, subject to rigorous ethics approval, use live animals in controlled and safe interactions. These can act as an ice-breaker and also more readily promote children's trust in the adult educators in the program. A sense of safety around educators and calm, healthy animals is beneficial to children who have suffered trauma, and is important in their therapeutic outcomes and the effectiveness of their learning as many of the children lack a sense of safety in their lives (Mudaly 2011).

From a physiological perspective, health benefits of interacting with companion animals include reduction of heart rate and blood pressure. It is also postulated that as these physiological impacts involve areas of the brain where trauma

is also stored, these positive interactions with animals may also assist in trauma recovery (Friedmann & Tsai, cited in Mudaly 2011).

Animal-assisted activity, where children are given control of their interactions with the animals, also gives children opportunities to understand the effect their behavior will have on the animals. This component is also vital in empowering children who are recovering from trauma (Mudaly 2011).

Furthermore, programs which promote empathy towards animals have been proposed to assist in achieving human-directed empathy which may be important amongst children with a history of trauma who are at risk of anti-social behavior (Taylor & Signal 2005).

PROGRAM GOALS

In light of this evidence, RSPCA Victoria developed the CARE program. While its primary goal is to improve animal welfare outcomes and prevent cruelty to animals, the program also aims to improve students' wellbeing and development outcomes, using an animal-assisted activity approach.

Specific goals of the program include:

- providing the opportunity to strengthen empathy amongst the students, contributing to improved animal welfare and social capital;
- assisting with trauma recovery by providing safe interactions with calm animals;
- improving literacy in the English language amongst students by engaging them in a high impact learning environment; and
- empowering young people through education – enabling them to become active citizens in our society.



METHODOLOGY

Since 2012, the CARE program has been delivered in a small number of English language schools in Melbourne, in particular the Western English Language School (WELS). These schools provide intensive English language training for recently arrived immigrants and refugees.

The CARE program is conducted at both primary (ages 6 to 12) and secondary (ages 13 to 18) levels. Primary classes receive a total of seven contact hours over five sessions, and secondary classes receive six contact hours over five sessions.

Sessions conducted at the school cover a range of topics, in particular:

- the Five Freedoms and animal needs, focusing on dogs and cats;
- how to approach a dog safely, and 'manners' around dogs;
- how to read dog language and dog feelings – both to promote empathy and to assist in being safe around dogs;
- small animal needs (focusing on rabbits); and
- the role of the RSPCA in protecting animals.

To address these issues, a set of activities and resources have been developed, which can be delivered in an engaging and interactive way.

These include:

- A song – Five Freedoms – with a simple, memorable tune and words;
- A selection of visually interesting and tactile objects - feeding, grooming, walking, play and other items - used to prompt discussion of dog and cat needs;

- Flashcards on basic topics - 'Animal Needs'; 'Empathy Game' (animal feelings); 'Dog Manners' (how to meet a dog safely);
- 'Dog Manners' activities to practise interactions safely and build confidence;
- 'Dog Language' activities - to help students understand dogs' body language and respond appropriately;
- Animal activity work sheets, to reinforce key messages about safe and positive interactions with animals. These also support literacy development.

The final session is conducted at the RSPCA Education Centre, focussing on:

- reviewing learnings about the Five Freedoms;
- cooking dog treats;
- a barn session involving contact with more animal species (rabbits, guinea pigs, and farm animals); and
- meeting with an RSPCA Inspector to talk about animal cruelty case studies and Australian animal welfare laws.

All activities have been designed to be culturally relevant to each target group, and can be easily adapted for different age groups and audiences. Resources focus on visual engagement, and language appropriate to each group's literacy level.

The CARE program seeks to use as many strategies as possible to emphasise and strengthen the animal welfare message. One highly valued strategy is to supply students with photographs of their participation in the CARE program. Photos of all students in the primary and secondary schools are taken over the course of the





program and used in a personalized reader or photo frame. In the final session, Primary students also receive name badges with a photo of them holding an Education dog.

Photographs have a high emotional and sentimental value, particularly for refugees who may have had to leave these precious mementos behind in their home country. Through documenting the moments of contact with animals, and building these images into short story books, we are able to remind participants of: new vocabulary, animal welfare learning, and about the experience of meeting and befriending a live and interesting new creature.

These photographs provide a stimulus for memory and communication, and a trigger for fun and enjoyment. They are also a lasting memento of positive emotional and learning experiences.

EVALUATION

Since the program was first rolled out, there has been significant anecdotal evidence of its capacity to improve attitudes and behaviors towards animals, and to increase empathy.

There is also anecdotal evidence to suggest that the program benefits student wellness and their psychosocial development.

Over the course of the program, students were observed to become calmer around animals and increase in confidence when interacting with them, even if they had had previous bad experiences or were from a cultural background that does not encourage engagement with animals.

While anecdotal evidence is significant, it was clear that scientific verification of the program's positive impacts would be essential in proving the value of the program. In turn this would enable the program's sustainability and justify expanding it to other school communities. Accordingly RSPCA Education engaged two social scientists who work in collaboration on the human animal bond: Dr. Nik Taylor from Flinders University and Dr. Tania Signal from Central Queensland University.

In 2013, Dr. Taylor and Dr. Signal designed a research project in consultation with RSPCA Education and the coordinator of the WELS Wyndham campus. This involved both a questionnaire on the 'human animal bond', and a psychometric (strengths and difficulties) questionnaire to evaluate social and emotional development.

These were to be used pre and post program to evaluate firstly whether there were positive improvements in attitudes to animals, and secondly whether the program contributed to improved wellbeing of participants.

In 2013, after obtaining human ethics approval, data began to be collected from students. In 2014 data was collected from 43 secondary and 45 primary 'treatment' group students (receiving the CARE program) and 10 primary and 10 secondary 'control' group students.

The control group does not receive the program until the following term, so that an assessment can be made as to whether the changes in indicators are due to the CARE program, or whether those changes would occur anyway in the environment (for examples changes may

occur because the students are at school and integrating into Australian culture, irrespective of CARE involvement).

Some preliminary results have been received on the human- animal bond data. These show very positive changes which have been consistent across age, gender and country of origin.

The social scientists will continue to work on the other parts of the questionnaire, as well as narrative analysis of written work by the students over the past 2 years to assess the impact of the CARE program on socio-emotional learning and related skills.

The data will be used to write several scientific papers which will provide evidence of the program's value. These

will hopefully assist in finding grants that will ensure the sustainability of the program. Grants are also being sought to try to engage a research assistant to carry out more rigorous and detailed data collection on the program (using psychometric tools such as individual interviews with students).

The research is investigating the following hypotheses (Taylor and Signal):

- Students in the treatment groups will show significant improvement pre and post program in three areas of socio-emotional skills (namely relationship building, self-management and learning) while those in the matched control group show no or little improvement.
- Children in the treatment group will show significant improvement in treatment of and attitudes towards companion animals while those in the matched control group show no or little improvement.

CONCLUSION

The success of the CARE trial has ensured the program has continued and expanded to an additional school (the Collingwood English Language School in inner city Melbourne). In 2012, 60 students participated in the program; this increased to 170 in 2013, and 188 in 2014. Participating schools contributed some funding, with the outstanding costs covered by a generous scholarship from Lyne and Stephen Sedgman.

Both anecdotal and scientific evidence shows the RSPCA CARE program has created positive animal welfare outcomes by strengthening the students' empathy towards animals as well as improving their knowledge of the Five Freedoms.

The program also provided students with a calm and safe environment to assist in trauma recovery as well as an engaging means to improve literacy in English language — both factors essential to a pathway of empowerment for new arrivals to Australia.

It is anticipated the data collected by the social scientists will provide rigorous scientific evidence that the RSPCA CARE program positively changes attitudes towards animals and improves the wellbeing of participating students.

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Author Sally Meakin is the Manager of Education at the Royal Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (RSPCA Victoria) in Melbourne, Australia.

The RSPCA is a non-government, community-based charity that works to prevent cruelty to animals and actively promote their care and protection. The Education Department was established in 2002, to deliver animal welfare education in schools, through in-house sessions and outreach programs. Its goal is to develop attitudes of care, kindness, empathy and respect in children while supporting long term improvements to animal welfare.

Each year, Sally and her team of experienced teachers engage with over 11,000 learners, delivering engaging and immersive programs to children and young adults of all ages and backgrounds. Sally's particular passion is delivering outreach programs to children from migrant and refugee backgrounds. This group of learners often face difficult cultural and socio-economic barriers in relation to animal welfare issues.

In recent years Sally has led a project to extend her passion to the Pacific region, establishing an education program in Samoa in conjunction with the local Animal Protection Society (APS) and World Animal Protection (formerly WSPA). Sally recently returned to Samoa to evaluate the outcomes of the program, which showed significant improvements in childrens' attitudes to animals and animal protection.

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Oreo's new home

Some stories have very happy endings.
Here's one about the dog named Oreo who is
featured in our BARC DVD.



From this –



To this!

Lucky Oreo was chosen to participate in Project BARC and with the help of her trainer, Marvel, she became a Canine Good Citizen. Ashley and Josh adopted Oreo (now Caliope), married, and are now about to welcome their own baby into their family.

We thought you would enjoy Ashley's letter.



Oreo Oreo's New Home Oreo

Dear Tula,

Thank you dearly for sending us a copy of the BARC video. Josh and I truly enjoyed watching it and having this happy memory documented. We are glad you will be sharing it for educational purposes.

We wanted to send some updated photos of Cali – the attached are from our engagement photo shoot from 2012, only several months after adopting "Oreo." There's a "before" shot while she was still living at the Humane Society, one of her recent Halloween costume choices, and another of her most enjoyable traits – cuddling. We found her like this last Christmas after searching for her throughout the house. She was napping with my nephew.

Cali is a wonderful addition to our family and is more than excited about our next bundle of joy expected in May 2015. :)

Thank you for your efforts and those of the Latham Foundation!

Josh and Ashley Wilda



Informing Children in a **Therapeutic School** about the **End of Life** for the **Animals** in its **Animal-Assisted** **Education** and **Therapy Programs**

*How One Organization
Handles this Difficult Process*



By Miyako Kinoshita

Losing a pet or beloved animal is a very difficult experience for anyone. Often it can be traumatizing. Knodel and Beran state that (pet) loss may result in quite intense emotional and physical reactions from the pet owners: reactions that may be difficult for someone not bonded to the animals to understand. (Knodel & Beran, 1986, p. 96)

When you have over 200 children in a residential/day treatment center, which is a special education school that has a farm with 200 animals that these children take care of, the loss of one of the animals can have a great impact on the children in many different ways.

BACKGROUND

Children who live or are day students at the Green Chimneys School have various backgrounds and histories. They all have problems regulating emotions, and have been a danger to self or others in the past. They are not very good at identifying and verbalizing their feelings. They are classified as special education students who were not successful in other special education programs. Our team of professionals (which includes clinical, medical, educational, recreational, occupational, and animal professionals), works with the students to support them social-emotionally as well as academically so that they can develop coping skills and can be returned to their home school districts and homes in a relatively short amount of time.

Animals and nature play significant roles in the students' treatment, often opening the doors for children that lead to social and academic competencies. Children may learn how different animals communicate with each other using body language and vocalizations. They may learn to care for an animal and expand their knowledge and skills to satisfy its needs. In order to learn about animals, children must communicate with adults and learn from them, which promotes social interactions and appropriate behavior in a school setting. Cooperating with other children to work with animals helps them develop tolerance and appreciation of each other.

Green Chimneys encourages the children to develop healthy attachments to the animals. Clinicians, teachers, and animal professional all work together to make sure children care for animals and develop compassion toward them.

Over the years Green Chimneys has struggled with how to approach the death of its animals with the students. Today it is a team effort and often includes parents. We



discuss what to share, when to share it, and how best to support the children during the process.

WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED

This article will explore some of the on-going educational efforts and the approach that we take when an animal's death is unavoidable.

1. Don't teach children about death only when it happens. Instead, make it part of on-going education.

Many of our children and families have or will have pets at home. Teaching responsible pet ownership is a very important part of our education. We teach and model how to care for animals of all ages. We teach how to clean cages, what to feed, what exercise and enrichment animals in captivity may need, and what animals make good and appropriate pets in different types of environments. Our farm also has geriatric animals that need special care and animals that are on special diets. As exciting as it is to care for a newborn orphan lamb, the students also enjoy caring for senior sheep and tending to their diets and medical issues too. Some of the senior animal residents are nearing the end of their lives and we talk about what we need to do to ensure their quality of life. When we treat the animal or put the animal on special diet, staff may share that with students. We may discuss what a healthy animal looks like, and point out an animal that is not doing well. We may discuss extra nutrition that elderly animals may require.

These lessons in animal care are part of the lessons in Farm Science and Wildlife classes and part of the curriculum. We modify the lessons depending on the ages of the students and their ability in the classroom. High school students in the twelfth grade may already have experienced loss of a pet at home, and they generally have knowledge about euthanasia, while a first grade student may not be ready for such a discussion. The farm teacher uses his or her professional judgment to determine how much information is appropriate to share with students with guidance and leadership from the farm administration team in our ongoing staff supervision.

We feel strongly about the importance of having an understanding of life and death, and normalizing the end of life. Although losing an animal is very traumatic regardless, we feel this understanding is part of our responsibility to our farm animals and pets.

2. Planned euthanasia

There are times when we schedule euthanasia for animals that show decline or are in poor health. It is our practice that we go above and beyond what a pet owner or a farmer may do for their animals. We have a few dedicated veterinarians who will come and visit, and consult with us. As a part of children's activities, we care for sick and elderly animals as long as they can be kept comfortable. However, when our professional team feels that an animal is not responding to the treatment, and is suffering, we have to make the hard decision of how far and long we will go, and when it becomes too much for the animal.

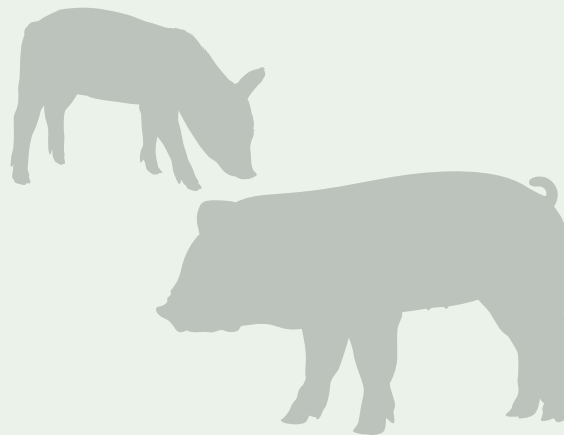
We also have to factor in the weather and natural conditions that animals are in. Animals that are not doing well may still be OK as long as the weather is nice and warm, but when it gets frigid, it is extremely difficult for them to generate heat, be mobile, and feel comfortable. Geriatric animals do not do well in winter when fresh

“ Don't teach
children about death
only when it happens.
Instead, make it
part of on-going
education. ”

grass is not available, and it is a challenge to keep them at a healthy weight. We would like to be proactive, and make sure that animals are with us while they have a quality of life, and the weather conditions have a great impact on their wellbeing.

Our animal caretakers are at the center of assessing and monitoring geriatric and/or ill animals. They approach our farm staff team when they feel that the animal's time is near. Often our vets will give us input though they do not make the decision for us. Once we decide to euthanize an animal, our team immediately coordinates services. Each team member will have a different role to play based on their primary responsibilities at Green Chimneys.

Students already are or soon become aware of our concerns we have for a given animal and they understand that we're giving the animal special care. This is a critical step to prepare the students



who are very attached to the animal. We allow the students to give extra attention to the animal, and participate in its treatment if they wish. Some of the animals get better, and children become very proud of what they did to help the animal. And some do not respond to the treatment.

As animal caretakers schedule an appointment with the vet for euthanasia, the staff who work with children closely start evaluating the following:

- Children's ability to understand responsible pet ownership
- Memories of unrelated losses that may be brought up by the loss of the animal
- How an individual processes information
- The child's involvement in the animal's care
- The child's age
- Trauma history
- Peer-to-peer interactions and how information travels within the school
- Parent's roles vs educator/care-giver's roles

Teachers in each farm area often can identify which children are attached to certain animals or have expressed concerns for them. They inform the Farm

Education Manager who is always in touch with other departments and functions as a liaison to staff who work directly with children across the agency.

We have found that many of our staff directly working with children, as well as other non-direct care workers, want to know about planned euthanasia. Many of our staff members have personal feelings and relationships with animals. It is not helpful when staff or a child talks about an animal's death and others overhear, and it becomes a rumor. We notify the clinical team and our agency administrators and supervisors first. Therapists have in-depth knowledge about their clients and can identify children who may need extra care or attention. Supervisors will share information with people who they deem as important. Various departments are informed but not necessarily every single staff member because they may have no connection or interaction with the farm and farm animals. Staff members who are particularly attached to the animal may be contacted privately.

There is no plan to inform any student about the euthanasia's exact date and time. Students know that a certain animal is not doing well, and that staff and the veterinarian are monitoring him/her very closely. We do not invite any of the students to the euthanasia itself. It also is a time for our staff to say good-bye and process the animal's passing. We feel that staff will be there in a very private euthanasia event and ensure that animals are comfortable and at peace. We do not believe that there is any merit to the animals or children in letting them participate in euthanasia.

Often staff must process their own loss of the animal as a great companion/co-teacher before they can be ready to support children. As soon as they feel OK with their own grieving, the true teamwork begins. Staff set up a memorial in the barn where the animal lived and celebrate its life.

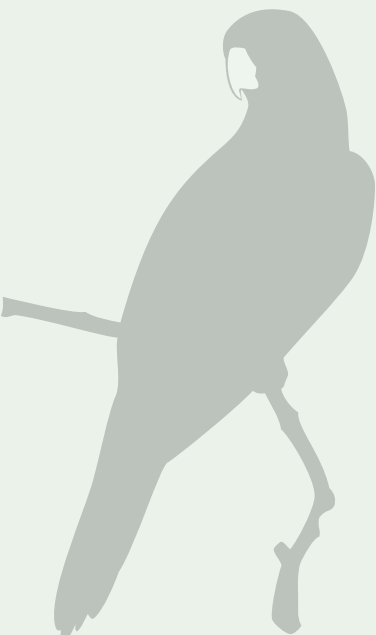
3. Why do we not tell students or not allow them to participate in actual euthanasia?

Aside from the therapeutic reasons for not allowing children to watch euthanasia, (which can be traumatic even for adults, especially with a large animal), there is another very important thing that we must consider – their family's values and their right to make their own decisions in their child's best interest. Since each family is different, we respect their right to make these decisions for their own children and their own pets. We do not believe that we should be the one to decide or let children witness the event at our therapeutic treatment setting.

4. Then the real work begins.

Once the animal passes, we create a therapeutic and supportive time and place for the children, and staff focuses on making sure children go through this process in the best way possible. If an animal was very popular among the children, they will begin noticing its absence. Staff will talk about its passing and process the information with the children. Farm staff may get together with the therapist to tell a child about the news if that is beneficial. Therapists lead the way, and farm staff support and provide information as necessary. The therapists also are on stand-by to receive a call from farm or other staff about a child reacting to the news. Families are notified as needed by the therapists, and we all work together to support the children.

In the end, grieving and sadness turns into appreciation of the animal and a celebration of its life. They fill the memorial with cards, flowers, and other mementos. Children write messages such as, "I miss you," "thank you," and "I hope you have



“ No matter how well it is handled, losing an animal

is very emotional and difficult for everyone at Green Chimneys.

We are committed to making this process as smooth,

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not only for the children but also for staff. ”

a good life in heaven.” Together staff steer the children toward being happy that the animal is in a better place and remind them that there are many other animals that want and need their help. Often the children commit to helping other animals and making sure that they are taken care of, thinking that would make their favorite animal proud in heaven.

5. Euthanasia no longer “taboo.”

In the past, Green Chimneys staff felt that euthanasia was too traumatic for children. They used phrases such as, “the animal died at the vet,” or “the animal died in its sleep.” Today euthanasia and end-of-life care is part of the children’s education and we are as truthful as possible with them. It is no longer a “taboo” subject. The team assesses and approaches individual students based on their ability and their family’s input, and are as truthful and scientific as possible.

No matter how well it is handled, losing an animal is very emotional and difficult for everyone at Green Chimneys. We are committed to making this process as smooth, educational, and supportive as possible not only for the children but also for staff. Our process changes as we come across new situations, and occasionally we make exceptions, but we find that having a general procedure about death and euthanasia and applying it consistently has many benefits.

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Author Miyako Kinoshita is a Farm Education Program Manager at Green Chimneys. She is a Certified Advanced Level Therapeutic riding instructor of NARHA, and a graduate student in Education. Miyako specializes in prevention, early detection, and intervention of emotional and behavioral crisis in AAA setting, and has done many workshops and lectures within the United States and in Japan. She was a past committee member for the Equine Facilitated Mental Health Association (EFMHA) and serves on the board of the Professional Association of Therapeutic Horsemanship International (PATH). Having lead Green Chimneys equine programs for many years, she now focuses her work on integration of the farm programs into the educational, clinical and residential programs and also supervises the international intern program.



Green Chimneys School

is recognized as a worldwide leader in animal-assisted therapy and education programs to help children with emotional, behavioral, social and learning challenges. Its Farm & Wildlife Center is home to over 300 farm animals, horses, and permanently injured or imprinted birds of prey and other wildlife. Animal rescue and rehabilitation is a primary component of Green Chimneys programming, enabling animals to thrive in the care of staff and students and playing a supporting role in educational and therapeutic programs.

Animal welfare is at the core of the Green Chimneys mission and great lengths are taken to provide each animal with the utmost nutrition, housing and veterinary care. Some animals come to Green Chimneys with a history of abuse or neglect and find sanctuary. All animals live at Green Chimneys permanently.

Staff members ensure that animals benefit as much from the interactions as the children do. Therapy animals receive rest periods, enjoy play time with other animals, and are evaluated frequently as part of stress prevention and health maintenance.

Visit...

www.greenchimneys.org
for additional information.



This tiny puppy is Snowflake, abandoned on the streets. She was brought into the RAR clinic, adopted, and has a great life now.

THE ROMANIA ANIMAL RESCUE STORY: Neuter or Spay! No More Strays!

By Nancy Janes, Founder

Many people have asked, "What is the Romania Animal Rescue (RAR) story? How did you come about?" So here goes ...

In 2001 two friends from the San Francisco Bay area and I took a hiking trip in Romania. We immediately noticed the sad state of the dogs. They were unwanted animals abandoned to life on the streets, in forests, and fields. While I was feeding some dogs in a park one day, a young woman approached me. She thought I was poisoning the dogs! She explained that authorities were killing the dogs and that she and her neighbors were hiding as many as possible, but they could not take any more, so she was looking out for the dogs that were in the park.

I told her I was an American and promised to contact the international charities that I supported about help for Romanian animals. She replied, "Everyone says they will help the

Romanian dogs. They go home, they forget. You will go home, you'll forget." I replied, "I will not forget."

When I returned to the United States, I did approach many international charities but none of them agreed to help in Romania. So in 2003 my husband and I began Romania Animal Rescue (RAR) as a registered 501 (C)(3) charity. Our mission is to "promote and establish animal welfare in the country of Romania."

We began by financing a shelter but there seemed to be an unending supply of abandoned animals. We realized that unless we capped the flow of puppies, kittens, dogs, and cats, there was little chance that we would be able to fulfill our mission.

Impoverished Romanians did not have the means to spay/neuter their animals and there were very few skilled vets, so the citizens faced a terrible choice: either kill or abandon the puppies and kittens. It was clear that our charity needed to step in and offer some effective help.

In 2004 RAR began increasing our support for spaying and neutering. We sent veterinarians from the USA to train Romanian vets on spay/neuter techniques and we tried to help the public and other charities understand the importance of spaying and neutering their pets.

Thanks to our supporters, we were beginning to provide spay/neuter services on a grander scale by 2006, but we still needed the leadership of Romanian veterinarians.

Luckily, in 2008 we met Dr. Aurelian Stefan, a young Romanian vet who had recently returned from a four-month training internship in the USA, and we began working with him and his brother, Dr. Petrisor Stefan. We are very proud that under their guidance and leadership, Romanian vets as well as vets from the EU and other countries learn highly skilled spay/neuter surgical procedures.

We held our first Spayathon in 2009 in the city of Sibiu with the charity Animal Life. In 2010 RAR held two massive Spayathons; one in Bucharest for over 700 animals with the charity GIA, and one in Tecuci for over 650 animals with Association Tomita. Our mission was taking hold!

I can proudly report that as of April 15, 2015 RAR has performed almost 35,000 spay/neuter surgeries in Romania.

Along with our spay/neuter programs, RAR began the Homeless Animals Hospital project that helps homeless animals as well as those of impoverished caregivers who cannot afford the cost of vet care. This project received the Global Giving Project of the Month Award for March 2015.

We also have an education program that has distributed 16,500 education books to schools, charities, clinics, and community events in Romania.

Our hopes for expansion include a mobile clinic and a spay/neuter and veterinary center outside of Bucharest.

*Thank you for your interest in
Romania Animal Rescue and
Animal Spay Neuter International.*

**For additional information, visit
www.romaniaanimalrescue.org**



ASNI ANIMAL
SPAY/NEUTER
INTERNATIONAL

Our sister charity,
**Animal Spay Neuter
International,**

travels the world
to help provide
spay/neuter,
veterinary care, and
veterinary training.

ASNI sends vets to
the Dominican Republic,
Suriname, Portugal,
Greece, and Bulgaria
and provides financial
assistance for vet care
in the USA, India,
and the UK.

www.animalsni.org

ASNI ANIMAL
SPAY/NEUTER
INTERNATIONAL

Liberia Animal Welfare & Conservation Society



By Morris Darbo

Liberia Animal Welfare & Conservation Society (LAWCS) Started in 2000 when concerned animal lovers at the local community level began to campaign against the lack of care for domestic animals, especially dogs and cats. They saw that the number of stray dogs in the streets had increased at an alarming rate.

LAWCS is an animal welfare organization dedicated to transforming the negative attitudes and behaviors of people toward animals through interactive humane education programs, and helping animals, especially those that are suffering.

PROGRAMS/INTERVENTIONS –

- Humane Education
- Dog Bite Prevention/ Rabies Prevention Education
- Rescuing and re-homing abused and neglected animals
- Child welfare programs
- Veterinary Services
- Vegan Outreach Program
- Wildlife Protection
- Environmental Protection

VISION –

A world where animals are treated with compassion and respect

MISSION –

To create a caring and socially responsible environment where animals are treated as sentient beings

MOTTO –

Working Together for a Better Future for Animals and Humans

Liberia suffered years of exceptionally violent and traumatic civil war. The country is just recovering amidst an almost overwhelming number of challenges including rampant abuse of animals and dysfunctional behaviors among the younger generation. Additionally, the present Ebola crisis has taken away many lives and devastated every sector of the Liberian society.

LAWCS is committed to the recovery with a clear message of non-violence, character building, ending animal suffering, and creating a just and caring and socially responsible society.

LAWCS has organized many different and exciting activities for children since its establishment. Its programs reach and inspire over 15,000 children every year.

LAWCS believes that education is key to accomplishing its goal. It is important that children enjoy the process of learning, as they will be more likely to retain information and to associate these happy feelings with the animals that share our world. LAWCS therefore uses informal and formal methods of teaching to involve the children in drama and role play, discussions and debate, video shows, humane lessons, stories, games, drawing, animal welfare clubs, free vegan food, exhibition, media talk-show – all of which encourage them to form their own positive opinions and attitudes to the animals in their lives. These activities and programs enable children to gain a richer understanding of animals in our world and a sense of how they can treat them as fellow beings, with empathy, compassion, innate love and respect.

We hope that using LAWCS' program will help children realize that animals experience life in much the same way we do. In doing so, we will be helping the children make the world we share a better and richer place for all of us.

Some of LAWCS's recent achievements:

- Conducted humane education programs in more than 50 schools with over 50,000 children
- Established Animal Kindness Club in 20 schools with 1000 members
- Trained and empowered 25 classroom teachers as humane educators in their respective schools
- Hosted four animal exhibition programs with over 2,000 audiences
- Hosted Children Compassion in Action program with over 300 children (under the guidance of the humane educators, the children help their family animals by caring for them, building safe havens for them, etc.
- Provided free veterinary care to over 500 animals – mainly dogs, cats, sheep and goats
- Rescued and re-homed 25 animals, mainly dogs and cats
- Provided 3000 people, mainly children, with plant-based diets, etc.

CONSTRAINTS

The issue of animal welfare is still a new phenomenon in Liberia. For centuries, Liberians have viewed animals as commodities, properties and sources of income. As a result, it is very difficult to change the perception and attitudes of people toward animals.

The issue of animal welfare is seen as unimportant, as a result LAWCS does not get any internal financial support to continue helping animals and people. LAWCS does not have any main source of funding. This is preventing the organization from expanding to other communities and towns to reach the larger society.

Our appeal is for animal welfare organizations and other compassionate people to come to our aid and empower us so that we can continue to make Liberia a safer environment for both humans and animals.

Morris Darbo is the Founder and Coordinator of LAWCS. We thank Phil Arkow for bringing this organization's fine work to our attention.



MEDIA REVIEWS

New from the ASPCA:

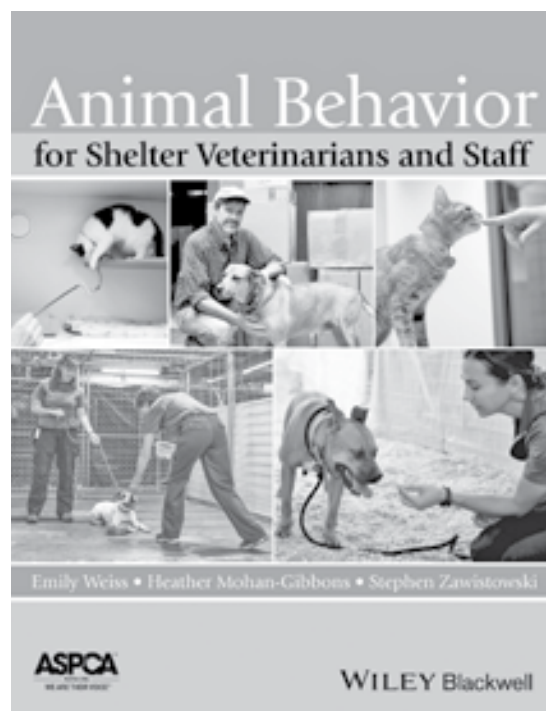
Animal Behavior for Shelter Veterinarians and Staff

a shelter behavior book for animal welfare professionals.

The book presents and evaluates the available research and programs that address both animal and human behaviors associated with the intake, management and re-homing of dog and cats. Written and edited by leading experts in shelter medicine, applied animal behavior and shelter administration, it integrates knowledge from multiple disciplines and perspectives to provide a broad based understanding of how behavior influences the welfare of dogs and cats before, during and after they enter animal shelters.

"Our objective in developing this book was to provide a deeper understanding of pets in our communities and how they end up in shelters," said Dr. Emily Weiss, vice president of research & development for the ASPCA. "We really want to help introduce shelter professionals to behavior specific to sheltered dogs and cats, while also highlighting research-supported techniques for increasing adoptions and decreasing returns."

The text also includes information on how to help families retain pets in their homes, locate and return lost pets, make pet adoption a



Animal Behavior



positive and enriching experience for all parties involved, and ensure that the placement is successful. The book takes the unique perspective to include human behavior as a significant factor in understanding and supporting the human-animal bond.

“While traditional animal behavior textbooks do not focus much on the adopters themselves, success within a shelter environment involves strong interactions with the adopting public. Our ability to understand those interactions will provide the animal welfare field with many more life-saving opportunities in the communities in which we work,” added Dr. Weiss.

Topics explored by the book include:

- *Introductions to dog and cat behavior relevant to any animal professional;*
- *Reviews of behavioral reasons for the relinquishment of dogs and cats;*
- *Descriptions of intake and assessment protocol, shelter design, training and enrichment programs that reduce stress and enhance behavioral well-being; and*
- *Concepts to improve the adoption process and support the human-animal bond post-adoption.*

The book was written by three ASPCA experts: Dr. Emily Weiss, vice president of research & development for the ASPCA; Heather Mohan-Gibbons, director of research and applied behavior for the ASPCA; and Dr. Stephen Zawistowski, ASPCA science advisor. For more information about the textbook, please visit Wiley Blackwell Publishing at the Wiley website. And for additional resources for animal welfare professionals, visit aspcapro.org/animalbehavior.



Always Blue for Chicu
Karen Dugan
The Gryphon Press
ISBN 978-0-940719-09-5

Reviewed by Judy Johns

With both text and lovely illustrations by Karen Dugan, *Always Blue for Chicu* is a heart-warming and important book with a clever device for reading aloud: “When you see a blue circle on the page, read the word ‘blue.’ *Always Blue for Chicu* deserves your attention.

Blue is at the heart of Chicu’s life, the blue of the sky and of flying free with his flock in Argentina. However, Chicu is captured by smugglers, and then taken to sea by the kindly sailor he thinks of as Big Blue. When Big Blue must go back to his ship, Chicu is passed casually from one person to another.

Neglected and suffering, Chicu finds ways to show his unhappiness until he is rescued and, after many years, reunited with his soul mate, Big Blue. As Chicu’s story makes clear, a parrot is a wild animal and a formidable “pet,” requiring significant care and attention. Parrots like Chicu can live a long life, even in captivity; depending on the circumstances, those lives can be contented or miserable.

I loved this book but at the same time, even with its happy ending, it made me sad – sad to think about the many parrots who aren’t as lucky as Chicu finally is.

Always Blue for Chicu is one of the many Gryphon Press titles, all of which are “a voice for the voiceless” and dedicated to “each person who rescues, fosters, adopts, and takes responsible care of an animal.” The Press is a unique company dedicated to publishing picture books about animals and the human-animal bond.

Please note this generous offer: Non-profits/schools/shelters/libraries can receive a 50% discount when they buy directly from Gryphon by the box. (contact: dana@thegryphonpress.com) Also, if you are interested in donating a classroom set of books to a school, visit www.thegryphonpress.com and indicate that in the contact form on their feedback page.





HELP ME HELP YOU

A series of DVDs exploring animal-assisted programs where kids and animals help each other

Each of the three inspiring films in this series describes an individual animal-assisted program and features children who have found help and hope. Every program is unique, but all are inspirational reminders of the healing power of the human-animal bond. Viewers will gain insight into starting, building, and maintaining effective programs.

Visit www.Latham.org for more information and special offers and search "Latham Foundation" on YouTube to see film clips.



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*Did somebody say
"Kitten Season?"*



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