

THE Latham Letter

VOLUME XLI, NUMBER 4

Fall 2020

PROMOTING RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION



SERVICE DOGS: A Bond and Partnership Like No Other

By Molly Neher
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Atlas co-founders Michael and Jennifer Kolar and their service dogs Turner and Theo at the top of Mount Sneffels, CO. With their dogs by their side, no mountain is too high for this father/daughter team. Photo by Jennifer Kolar.



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MANDATE

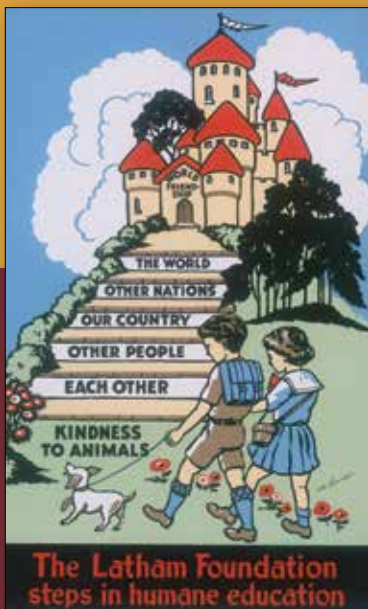
Edith Latham's **MANDATE:**

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



WELCOME BACK, BROTHER BUZZ!

Brother Buzz, star of Latham's Brother Buzz films
and our former Spokesbee,
joins us in this issue to mark the end of articles.



The Latham Letter

Balanced perspectives on humane issues and activities

Search the *Latham Letter* archives by topic and learn
more about all of our resources and grants at
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Promotion of Humane Education

The Latham Letter

Volume XLI, Number 4, Fall 2020

BALANCED PERSPECTIVES ON HUMANE ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES



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The Latham Foundation is a 501(c)(3) private operating foundation
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Latham welcomes partnerships with other institutions and
individuals who share its commitment to furthering humane
education.

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Hugh H. Tebault, President

2020

What a year!

What a year 2020 has been so far. It started off quite well, with great economic news and the best employment and lowest welfare demand ever for everyone in America. People in America were working together and making it better for all. That success was helped by the reduction of government regulations to more properly reflect the role they serve.

Then a medical emergency was declared. Now, in hindsight, there were many unnecessary actions taken in some states that have caused damage to our nation. Americans are strong and will learn from this as we move forward and rebuild again. Overcoming adversity is something Americans do.

The Latham Foundation for the Promotion of Humane Education was founded in 1918, the year of the great Flu pandemic. It is notable that nothing in our corporate records make any mention of the 1918 Flu, so while it is factual, it did not disrupt the humane education outreach or business of the nation, even though it is recorded to have been a much more-deadly event.

The work of humane education is needed in every community and serves everyone. How to deliver this truly hopeful message is unique to each community – there is no “one-size-fits-all” solution when you have a diverse population. It is important to simply focus

on the core message of humane education - showing respect to others, including animals. How we show respect varies by community. This brings me to the Latham Grants for Humane Education program.

The goal for our 2020 Grant Program was Promoting Humane Education through Animal-Assisted Activities, where both animals and people benefit. It is truly inspirational to have received almost 200 requests and to see just how diverse their program ideas are. While the majority of requests came from the US and Canada, we received proposals from a number of other nations including Bosnia & Herzegovina, China, Cambodia, Cameroon, Greece, Israel, Liberia, South Africa, Tanzania, Uganda and Zimbabwe.

It is inspiring to hear how many humane education programs are addressing the needs in so many societies. Latham has a long history of international outreach, starting with our poster contest (1925-1964). It is our hope that the grandparents or parents of today’s humane education leaders may have been encouraged by Latham programs many years ago and passed on those values.

While many proposals we received noted some disruption in their programs due to COVID closures, it was good to see that they all found ways to adapt. The spirit of working together to find solutions

Continued on next page

serves us all well as we regain our successful society, fully operating again soon. It is often up to the staff and volunteers of smaller organizations to take the lead in the restoration of success wherever they live. A free society is not managed by government – but

by the work and commitments of individuals. A government is simply employed by those free people to do limited work to make the society safer and more reliable so each person can be as successful as their own work allows. 🐾

Remember the words of our founding fathers in the Preamble to the US Constitution:

We the People of the United States, in Order to form a more perfect Union, establish Justice, insure domestic Tranquility, provide for the common defense, promote the general Welfare, and secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity, do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.



THIS JUST IN FROM STEVE DALE, CABC

www.stevedalepetworld.com

President Trump probably has no idea that his COVID-19 likely improved using the drug Remdesivir because of cats. (And I don't mean the Broadway show and certainly not the movie!)

A drug identical to Remdesivir cured cats of feline infectious peritonitis, caused by the feline corona virus, so researchers thought Remdesivir may help people too.

2020 GRANT RECIPIENTS



The 2020 Latham Grants Program focused again on Promoting Humane Education through Animal-Assisted Activities, where both animals and people benefit.

We are proud to announce the following grantees.

A Fair Shake for Youth, New York, N.Y.
AHEAD With Horses Inc., Shadow Hills, Calif.
Animal Farm Foundation Inc., Bangall, N.Y.
Berkshire Horse Works, Richmond, Mass.
Canine Therapy Corps, Inc., Chicago, Ill.
Circle Tail, Inc., Pleasant Plain, Ohio
Detroit Horse Power, Detroit, Mich.
Dr. Franklin Perkins School, Lancaster, Mass.
Forget Me Not Children's Services, Santa Rosa, Calif.
Freed Spirits Animal Rescue, Phoenix, Ariz.
Friends of Paws in Prison, San Antonio, Texas
Gabriel's Angels, Phoenix, Ariz.
Hand2Paw, Philadelphia, Pa.
Hearts and Hooves Therapy, Ramona, Calif.
Hinchinbrook Farm Society, Blockhouse, NS Canada
Hoffman Homes for Youth, Littlestown, Pa.
K9 Youth Alliance, Pasadena, Calif.
Keystone Service Systems, Harrisburg, Pa.
Langton Green Inc., Annapolis, Md.
Native Horsemanship Youth Program, Poulsbo, Wyo.

New Leash on Life USA, Penn Valley, Pa.
Newfoundland Pony Conservancy Center, Jaffrey, N.H.
Our Companions Animal Rescue, Manchester, Conn.
Paws and Think, Inc., Indianapolis, Ind.
Paws for Heroes, Houston, Texas
Project POOCH, Lake Oswego, Ore.
Prospect Riding Center, Myakka City, Fla.
RBS Therapy Dogs, Ramat Beit Shemesh, Israel
Shy Wolf Sanctuary and Education Center, Naples, Fla.
Son Care Foundation, Inc., San Luis Obispo, Calif.
Tempus Renatus School of Classical Horsemanship, Raeford, N.C.
The Little Dog Laughed Animal-Assistance, Portland Ore.
The Pig Preserve, Jamestown, Tenn.
Thoroughbred Retirement Foundation, Saratoga Springs, N.Y.
Wilderwood Equine Therapy and Rescue, Peralta, N.M.

SERVICE DOGS: A Bond and Partnership Like No Other

By Molly Neher

There is no doubt that service dogs are not just essential workers but also life savers. They can retrieve medication for someone with mobility difficulties, alert someone with low hearing to a fire alarm, and even assist and keep someone safe during a seizure. While a service dog provides important and specific tasks to support someone with a disability in their everyday life, these four-legged heroes go above and beyond just helping their person function and survive. Service dogs allow their person to live independently, be empowered, and thrive in ways they may not have thought possible before.



Living with a disability affects many aspects of one's life. People with disabilities must navigate a world that is often not welcoming or set up for them, and thus they must take many extra steps every day to adapt. Having a disability in no way makes a person weak or inferior, but it can create challenges due to the many existing barriers. People with disabilities may not always benefit from the same level of independence given to able-bodied people and may be made to feel that they are burdensome to those around them. A service dog can be essential to helping someone with a disability take charge of their own life.

Owner-Training and Empowerment

There are a variety of ways one can go about obtaining a service dog. The traditional model involves applying for a trained dog from

a foundation. This approach can have many wonderful benefits and is absolutely the right choice for some, but not for all. Many foundations have long waitlists, and there is not always a guarantee that the person will be matched with the right dog for them. Furthermore, some people who receive a service dog see regression in the dog's behavior and training over time because they do not know how to train the dog themselves. We at Atlas Assistance Dogs focus on owner-trained service dogs and work hand-in-hand with our clients to assist them with training their dog. Owner-trainers, such as our clients, train their own dog to fit the specific needs pertaining to their disability.

Beyond the support a service dog provides, the process of training the dog is empowering on its own. It is not rare for someone with a disability to feel as if they have little

control over their life or are unable to accomplish tasks. Through training their own service dog, many people with disabilities can take charge and claim ownership over their lives.

Owner-trainers have a strong commitment to the task ahead. Training a service dog from start to "finish" typically takes a minimum of two years, and refinement continues throughout the dog's lifetime. Owner-trainers must manage a dog throughout all their training stages, even during the challenging adolescent months. Owner-trainers must be motivated and goal-oriented. Training your own service dog is not always a walk in the park. It can be quite frustrating at times, but what we see time and time again among our clients, are people who are claiming power over their lives. Their dog has the potential to fundamentally change their world for the better.

Challenges in Owner Training

When we've asked clients to describe some of the challenges they faced in training their service dog, many tell a similar story, one of expectations not matching reality. Beth, who is training her dog with Atlas to help with her hearing loss, looks back on her journey: "I thought it would be easy. I didn't realize the type of relationship you had to have with your dog, and I had to change what I expected of him. Developing patience around learning and making it fun and appealing for both me and him was essential." Indeed, patience is key when training a service dog. Mastering all the skills that a service dog needs to have does not happen overnight, yet many service dog handlers feel they are failing unless they see constant and significant progress. So, learning to have patience, compassion, and forgiveness—not just with the dog—but with yourself is a crucial part of the training process.

A service dog is not right for everyone and it's not a job that is right for all dogs. We feel strongly that service dogs should not just have to tolerate their work. They have a right to be happy and confident; they have the right to a choice. Service dogs take work, planning, and support every minute they are with you. A service dog is a giant fluffy neon sign that says, "I have a disability." For some with more invisible disabilities, this can help them advocate for themselves.

For others, especially those with severe social anxiety, the unwanted attention a dog brings can be overwhelming. Katrina, having worked in the service dog industry for 15 years, and now an Atlas board member stated: "I joined Atlas because they were the first organization that I had heard acknowledge how hard it is to train your own dog to be a service dog." The challenges are often underestimated.

Alison, who trained her service dog to help mitigate her panic disorder, tells us about one of her biggest challenges: "I didn't expect the amount of time I would spend outside, around people, going into busy stores. I had to make sure my dog was comfortable in situations I wouldn't be. Dogs need all different kinds of training, in lots of different environments, with different people, and different sounds. You must be vulnerable because your dog is still in training and you have to pay attention to that as well." This points to a very real and rarely discussed difficulty when training your service dog: In order to train your dog to mitigate your disability, you have to stare your disability and all it brings with it straight in the eye.



Alison and her service dog Jack share a bond like no other. Photo by Gabe Lawler.

Building a Bond Through Owner Training

Receiving a trained dog from a foundation means that dog already comes with their own repertoire of cues and knowledge. However, through owner-based training, the handler and dog get to form their own unique language and understanding of each other. They work together as a devoted team from the start and thus learn to understand and read each other in their own unique ways. As Alison tells us "Working with another being every single day, them teaching you and you teaching them, creates this bond that is completely unexpected."

Owner-trainers tend to develop a thorough understanding of their dog's body language, needs, and learning style. When we talk to our

clients, it is clear they truly know their dog. They understand what their dog's stress signals are and how to help soothe their dog. They know how their dog interacts with other dogs and people. They know exactly which treats or toys will be the best reinforcers for learning. Similarly, the dog also learns their handler's language, behaviors, and routines. Together they grow and learn throughout the journey and develop the skills necessary to work through thick and thin. Song-Mei, another Atlas client, tells us that beyond what she taught her dog, he further "taught her patience and trust to rely on him." We see over and over how our clients and their dogs form their own language and work based on experience and instinct vs. formal cues. We see how they have the skills to adapt together as the person's or dog's needs change over time.



*Song Mei and her service dog Cody grow and learn from each other every day.
Photo by SongMei Ralph.*

Positive Methods and Strengthening the Bond

Atlas endorses only positive, force-free, and ethical training methods. By training using only non-aversive methods, dog and trainer grow even closer together. Beth, who had experienced challenges in understanding her dog and managing her expectations now tells us that this process has changed her perspective on "how she should and can relate to animals to improve their world." The use of positive training methods allows person and dog to develop a bond rooted in communication and trust for one another. Beyond treating our animals in this manner, we also ensure every person we work with is treated in a positive, ethical, and caring fashion as well. While supporting our clients through their training, our approach avoids putting them through unnecessary stress and helps them through their challenges.

Organizations who provide dogs to people with disabilities can feel a lot of pressure to turn out dogs as quickly as possible. This can lead to an "ends justify the means" approach, and a focus on efficiency at the cost of the dog or person. As psychologist Dr. Susan Friedman often states: "Effectiveness is not enough. The approach matters" (2008). While aversive training methods may produce short term results, they can cause long term harm and stress for the dog and trainer (Anderson, 2020).



*Beth is in tune with her service dog Harvey better than ever before.
Photo by Beth Mantis.*

Dogs need time to learn and become confident. People need time to really understand how to navigate their world with their dog and how to self-advocate. We care very much for the well-being of our people and our dogs and know that a good working team is a happy and confident working team. We celebrate every one of their successes and will never shame them for their setbacks. With positive reinforcement, we see their motivation grow and their confidence boosted. We strive for our clients to gain pride in their accomplishments and the accomplishments of their dog.

Service Dogs Change Lives

Clearly, service dogs have an enormous impact on someone's life. Not just in the actual lifesaving tasks they can provide, but in the way they allow people with disabilities to regain control of their

Continued next page.



Molly enjoying a full life with her partner Reid by her side. Photo credit, Gabe Lawler.

world. I myself was once spending my days in bed, waiting for the next seizure, unable to do much else... until I began training my service dog, Reid.

Reid gave me a sense of purpose and motivation. Because of him and the training we did together, I no longer spent my days in bed. Together we faced many situations I would not have faced on my own. I reclaimed my independence thanks to his alerts and help during my seizures, and I also gained hope that not all was lost, that I was capable of much more than simply pitying myself. In fact, thanks to Reid, I was able to go back and obtain my degree and pursue my passion of helping people with disabilities.

Service dogs everywhere are helping people who may have lost hope, been told they were not good enough, or felt incapable. These dogs are true heroes, and thanks to them, people with disabilities thrive every day with their dog by their side. It is critical to promote ethical treatment of service dogs

and ethical treatment of people with disabilities. We encourage people to open their minds to the capacity of service dogs to allow people to thrive and live full lives; that they can do task beyond just basic survival. Yes, a dog can retrieve your shoes, but they can also help you climb a mountain.

Watch Molly's story here:
youtube.com/watch?v=N7ZzAeIMhhA
Video credit, Zack Bivens

Atlas Assistance Dogs

Atlas fundamentally expands access to assistance dogs. We support people with disabilities to train and certify their own service dog using positive, ethical training methods. At Atlas, we believe anyone who would benefit from a qualified assistance dog should be able to have one.

For more information visit www.atlasdog.org or contact info@atlasdog.org.




Author

Molly is Atlas' Director of Operations and Programs. After developing a severe seizure disorder her Freshman year of college, she was able to obtain a dog to train as her service dog. Thanks to her dog Reid who can alert to her seizures, Molly enjoys a full independent life.

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Anderson, Eileen. "9 Effects of Punishment." *Eileenanddogs*, 26 Jan. 2020, eileenanddogs.com/blog/2014/09/19/effects-punishment/

Friedman, Susan G. What's wrong with this picture? Effectiveness is not enough, *Good Bird Magazine*, vol. 4-4, 2008, 1-5 

ARE YOU A SOCCER FAN?



MAJOR LEAGUE SOCCER HAS GONE TO THE DOGS IN PHILADELPHIA

Amy Strawbridge, Experiential Marketing Manager for Subaru, describes the creative way the company is "filling the stands" at the Philadelphia Union MLS home games for the 2020 season. Until humans can fill the seats at their Subaru Park Stadium in Chester, Penn. they are featuring life-size cut-outs of actual adoptable dogs from local animal shelters and promoting their adoption, as part of their "Subaru loves pets" mantra.



LATHAM'S GRANT IMPROVES COMMUNITY HEALTH IN WESTERN COLORADO

By Anna Stout, Executive Director

The team at Roice-Hurst Humane Society (RHHS) extends our gratitude for the Latham Foundation's generous support of our Community Health through Shelter Pets (CHTSP) Initiative. Our CHTSP Initiative aims to improve overall community health and wellness by connecting vulnerable populations to shelter pets with an empathy-based humane education curriculum as the backbone of these interactions.

Outcomes

We are pleased to report that we performed our proposed eight-week humane education curriculum with incarcerated youth at the Division of Youth Services (DYS) through the Grand Mesa Youth Services Center unit (GMYSC). A key element of this particular program is collaboration with a licensed clinical social worker or licensed therapist, as the youth work on empathy development and prosocial skills under that person's clinical supervision through our humane education curriculum. During the eight-week curriculum, participating youth at GMYSC learned about triggers, boundaries, and coping techniques of people

and animals, how to read animal body language, the importance of spay and neuter, clicker training and positive reinforcement, and skills for responsible pet ownership.

We also expanded our program to work with at-risk youth within our local school district (via afterschool programs) to provide animal-assisted activities during the course of this grant cycle. In total, we completed 52 hours of humane education with vulnerable youth, for a total of 156 youth contacts.

We also continued to partner with agencies that serve adults with developmental disabilities and provided animal-assisted activities at our facility for a total of 31 contact hours. We also started a new partnership with

four local senior care facilities, to which we took shelter kittens to interact with elderly residents. We completed 10 hours of animal-assisted activities with local seniors prior to the COVID-19 pandemic. Staff of the senior care facilities called these visits "Cuddles with Kittens" and reported it was the



Everyone wants to get in on the fun



Chile with GMYSC participant

highest attended activity within their facilities. There are several dog visiting programs for local seniors, but RHHS is the only organization that facilitates visits with felines.

Qualitative data showed that youth gained insights into the human-animal bond, animal welfare, and had a positive gravitation toward pets (especially cats). Gathering quantitative data was difficult due to anonymity concerns. However, we received positive anecdotes from the participants as quoted in the testimonials section (p 14). The GMYSC's Licensed Clinical Social Worker (LCSW) also reported that youth looked forward to this group every week, and we observed they were always respectful when interacting with the cats and RHHS staff.

***Stacy Mendell, LCSW,
reported the following
during this grant cycle:***

"The youth were selected for participation in the group based on interest, behavior goals and

ability to maintain safe behaviors. They were given the expectation to show safe behaviors for 30 consecutive days prior to the first day of group. During this time, the youth were provided with support by this writer on coping and calming skills and safe ways to express negative feelings. Though a majority of the participating youth struggled with unsafe behaviors prior to this group, all were able to meet this expectation. During the groups, the youth were engaged and open in their communication. They were able to link their safe behaviors during times of stress to their goal to build trust with the animals used in the program as well as with this writer, and Ashley DiGrado, our facilitator from Roice-Hurst Humane Society.

"Qualitative data gathered from the youth showed that they had more success on the unit and in the

ability to maintain safe behaviors. They were given the expectation to show safe behaviors for 30 consecutive days prior to the first day of group. During this time, the youth were provided with support by this writer on

school program at GMYSC during the program than they had before their participation, including: increase in positive behaviors, ability to express feelings in a safe and nonaggressive manner, and

***"We hope to
contribute to
evidence-based
research for animal-
assisted activities."***

more positive communication with staff and teachers. Two youth from the first two groups were selected to 'assist' the second set of groups due to their improvement and interest in the program.



Atlas in a clicker training session with GMYSC youth

"A key element of this program is collaboration with a licensed clinical social worker or licensed therapist, as the youth work on empathy development and prosocial skills under clinical supervision."

"The program participants noted that working with the animals made them feel calmer, happier and 'safer.' Youth reported to this writer that they were able to maintain safe and non-aggressive behaviors so they would not lose the privilege of working with the animals. While the animals appeared to be a strong motivation for positive behaviors while the groups were in progress, there was not an expectation that the youth would be able to continue this long-term and this was not monitored by staff.

"Two of the youth continued to show positive behaviors and were able to earn passes to volunteer at Roice-Hurst with this writer's supervision. One of them who has since been released, continued to volunteer after her release. All of the youth reported a stronger connection to Roice-Hurst Humane Society and an increased knowledge about how to create a more humane community."

What Worked Well

Our programming with GMYSC worked best when collaborating with the LCSW to provide a trauma-

informed space where animal-assisted activity groups could safely take place. The LCSW had rapport with the youth and selected specific youth to participate based on their behaviors and history with pets. We believe this partnership was pivotal to the success and integrity of our work at the Division of Youth Services.

Since we were not able to consistently provide six-hours of programming with GMYSC during the transition between LCSWs prior to the pandemic, we also worked in

collaboration with our local school district and after school programs. Participants were transported with their schools to the RHHS shelter and had opportunities for animal-assisted activities with shelter cats and dogs, and humane education related to animal welfare topics. This collaboration aligned nicely with the school's enrichment program offered to at-risk youth. Summarily, we found that humane education programming works best in collaboration with youth's mentors, advocates, therapists, and counselors.

Senior resident with kitten during RHHS visit



Future Improvements

After the first eight-week curriculum ended at GMYSC, DYS was in the process of hiring a new LCSW when the COVID-19 pandemic hit and all volunteer visitation was suspended, including our program. Likewise, the school district and senior care facilities also imposed visitor restrictions. Therefore, all off-site humane education activities are on hold until pandemic restrictions are modified.

One part of the program that we hope to explore at GMYSC is developing more opportunities for dogs to be included. Although they enjoyed their interactions with the kittens, some youth identified more with canines. We did include shelter puppies and a few adult dogs in the programming, but the youth consistently worked with kittens during the 8-week curriculum. In the future, RHHS will explore the opportunity to start a dog training program with GMYSC. Through working with dogs, youth could continue to improve feelings of confidence and self-esteem by mastering positive training techniques with canines.

Another part of the CHTSP Initiative programming that we hope to improve is quantitative data collection. We are working to develop a survey that can measure impact, even for one-time or limited participants. This will require collaboration with research assistants and data analysts and is something we hope to pursue in the future to contribute

to evidence-based research for animal-assisted activities.

Testimonials

From GMYSC Youth:

“I learned about the emotional connection between humans and animals and how our energy feeds off each other. It helps me be mindful of the ways I’m treating others.”

“This was such a stress reliever. I learned about how to communicate with animals by reading their body language.”


“I used to not really like cats, but now I do. I didn’t realize you could teach cats to sit.”

From Nisley Elementary School Counselor:

“The students at Nisley Elementary participated last year in a program regarding empathy with kittens. This translated into discussion as well as other social skill lessons pertaining to what empathy looks like towards self as well as others. The students learned and were able to practice empathy/compassion as well as emotional regulation while working with the kittens. The students became more cognizant of people and the world around them in how others are impacted emotionally. Thank you, we can’t wait for our next sessions to begin.”

Conclusion and Acknowledgement

The CHTSP Initiative was created with the same intention that the Latham Foundation stresses, namely “promotion of humane education.” We plan to continue to connect shelter pets to vulnerable and marginalized populations throughout Mesa County, including at-risk youth, seniors, and adults living with developmental disabilities. It is our intention to continue these animal-assisted activity groups and humane education programming after the COVID-19 pandemic subsides.

RHHS graciously thanks the Latham Foundation for its support in making these life-changing human-animal interactions possible in our community, and for helping us create a kinder, healthier place in Western Colorado. 

It's Your Time to Shine!

If you received a Latham Humane Education Grant and would like us to consider featuring your program here, please contact

JJohns@latham.org



PAWS FOR HEROES

By Jan Potts, VP Community Relationships

Paws for Heroes is very pleased to make this follow-up report concerning the grant we received from The Latham Foundation for the Promotion of Humane Education.

Project and Results

As stated in our grant application, Paws for Heroes' purpose is to alleviate emotional issues, such as PTSD, depression, isolation and anxiety, in our military veterans and to save the lives of homeless dogs. We carefully evaluate, select and professionally train homeless dogs for the purpose of providing emotional support and companionship to our veteran clients, and to give these dogs a loving home.

In our grant application, we stated that our nominal goal was to make eight matches between veterans and companion dogs during the one-year grant period. During that year, a portion of which was negatively affected by COVID-19, we made seven veteran-and-dog matches.

The grant we received from the Latham Foundation was allocated to the direct program costs of

the one of those matches, between veteran Sarah and a beautiful dog named "Frannie."

Air Force veteran Sarah served our country for five years. During her service, she was subjected to experiences that left her traumatized. She was suffering from anxiety and inability to sleep. Sarah needed a companion who would make her feel safe, as well as be her best friend. In addition, Sarah is a jogger, and wanted an energetic dog that would accompany and keep up with her on her runs.

"Frannie" is a lovely white dog of an unknown breed mix. Frannie was found living outside a gasoline station by a volunteer with Adore Houston, a dog rescue organization. Frannie had a microchip, but when Adore tried to reach the owners, it was discovered that they had moved



Veteran Sarah and her Service Dog Frannie

away, apparently abandoning Frannie in the process. Paws for Heroes saw how loving and joyful Frannie was, and adopted her for the program. After foster-homing and professional training, Frannie was ready for her new forever home. From the moment they met, Frannie was drawn to Sarah, bounding around her and wagging her tail. Frannie must have decided to convince Sarah what a good running companion she could be, because Sarah reported back to us that she had to improve her running times to keep up with Frannie! Having Frannie in her life gave Sarah the confidence to leave her hometown of Houston, to accept a good job opportunity in San Antonio. Sarah has told us multiple times that she cannot imagine her life without Frannie.

Changes, Developments and Future Plans

Paws for Heroes is constantly looking for ways to improve the service it provides. We have made improvements to our protocols as and when they are identified. During the grant period, we made a change to the service we provide to our clients after they receive their dogs, which we call “Owner Training.”

We have always provided veteran clients with the option of two follow-up training sessions and life-time access to their dog’s trainer. However, we recognized there was an opportunity to facilitate the veteran’s relationship and bonding with their new companion. This improvement consists, first, of a checklist of specific behaviors the trainers want the veteran to start practicing right away with their new companion dogs. Second, Paws for Heroes now provides and requires four scheduled pre-and-post-match sessions between the dog trainer and the client, which are used to review and discuss the behaviors the veteran is practicing with their new companion. Although this change increased our costs for each veteran-dog match, we believe the additional work helps the veteran and dog settle in well together and enhances the veteran and companion-dog relationship.

As noted in our grant application, Paws for Heroes accepts multiple speaking opportunities each year. During the past year, we were honored to be selected by AD2Houston, a philanthropic

organization of marketing and advertising professionals, for its yearly project. AD2Houston’s project consisted of helping to promote Paws for Heroes within Houston, and included a radio commercial, a billboard and a guest appearance on a local radio program. In addition, we gave presentations to diverse audiences, including ConocoPhillips, the American Association of Contractors, and the University of Houston Law School animal rights group. We are a small organization, but we take every opportunity to emphasize, not just our program, but the value a dog can bring to a human life. Our intention is to make a difference in the larger community, and to inspire the adoption of homeless dogs.

Financial Information

The grant received from The Latham Foundation was allocated to the costs of selecting, training, providing veterinary care and dog



equipment for Frannie. Sarah and Frannie were the first recipients of the new “Owner Training” protocol. Sarah benefitted greatly from the pre-match and post-match training, which helped them settle in together and bond more quickly. 🐾

BIG NEWS!

The APHE has decided to cancel its in-person February 2021 Minnesota Motivates Conference and hold a virtual conference in April 2021 instead.

Their “Renew, Restore, Reset in 2021” virtual conference will happen over two weeks on Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays April 19th - 30th!

Stay tuned for details at [APHE.org](https://www.aphe.org)



UNIQUE Service Dog Helps Save the Sea



Reprinted courtesy of the author, Mary Schwager, and the August/September issue of Dogster magazine www.dogster.com

Heather Bring applied for a service canine full of hope the dog would help change her life. “I became disabled and when that happened, it was really hard. I didn’t know where my life was going to go,” says Heather.

The Rhode Island woman battles two debilitating health problems: Ehlers-Danlos syndrome (EDS), which weakens the connective tissues in her body, and the rare Pseudotumor Cerebri, a condition that causes increased pressure on her brain, causing headaches and vision problems.

Heather needed a service dog to help her bend over and pick things up. Not being able to do that anymore was heartbreaking. Before Heather suffered health problems, one of her favorite

things to do was walk the beach and pick up plastic trash, so it didn’t harm marine mammals. When she could no longer do that, she worried animals would become entangled in garbage and suffer.

Then one day, three years after Heather applied, she finally got good news: a beautiful Golden Retriever mix named Marea was waiting to meet her. The two instantly connected. Heather knew Marea was the perfect fit. “She’s pretty incredible,” Heather says. “It’s hard to put that in words.”

But what Heather didn’t know is Marea was not only about to change her life, but she would also help save the lives of other animals, too. Once Marea got

acclimated, Heather brought her to the beach, and Marea soon learned how to help Heather resume her conservation efforts. Marea picks garbage off the shore and brings it to Heather, who bags it and carries it off the beach. “It’s awesome,” she says. “I feel like she loves it.”

Not only does this dynamic duo help keep beaches debris-free, Heather and Marea are also volunteer first responders for Mystic Aquarium’s Animal Rescue Program in Mystic, Connecticut. Marea is the first canine ever to hold the position. When the aquarium’s hotline gets a report of an animal that may need help, Heather and Marea race out to assess the situation. One of their goals is to keep people and pets away



"I open Marea's mouth and say a seal's teeth are bigger than this!"

The pair are still out on East Coast beaches helping to change the

from marine mammals on the beach. "I call it seal sitting."

Heather says, "We'll sit out with a seal on a beach and stay far enough away, so he is not bothered. People will come up to us, instead of the seal. It gives us a way to educate people to stay away from the seal. We also talk about how they can help animals by picking up trash."

world. Heather is so grateful she has the best partner she could have ever asked for. "She is an extension of myself," she says. "After everything I've had to endure, having her by my side is giving me more power and confidence to get out there and do what we need to do to help the environment and help other animals."



In the meantime, Heather monitors the seal to see if the animal is entangled in plastic or appears to need help. "Sometimes seals are just sunning themselves and not stranded," she says. Heather also teaches kids, besides being illegal, why it's crucial people don't bother seals.

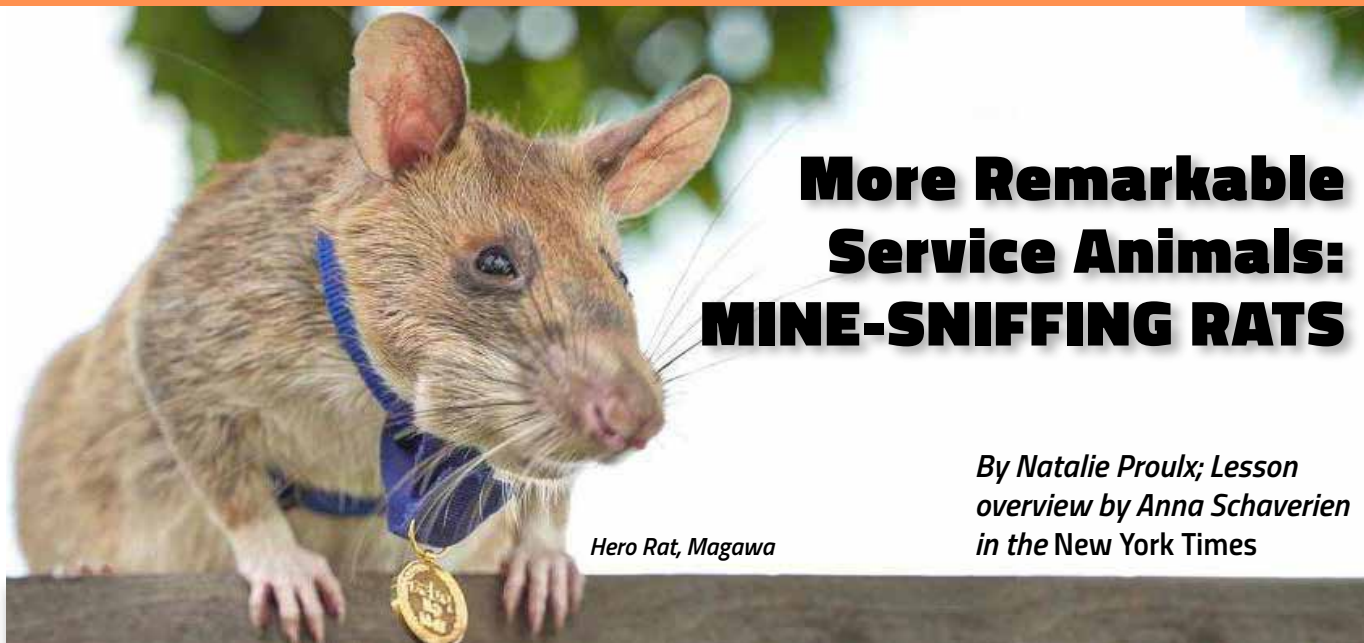
Mary Schwager, aka Watchdog Mary, is a journalist watchdogging for animals. She has won 16 Emmys, eight Edward R. Murrow, and Associated Press awards. She was nominated for two awards by the Dog Writers Association of America. Ideas welcome: watchdogmary.com. 🐕

Unusual Quarantine Companions

According to the "It wasn't all bad" column in the June 5th *The Week* magazine, a Belgian man found himself with three enormous, feathered quarantine companions after a Eurasian Eagle Owl nested outside his third-floor apartment window. Jos Baart thought he heard pigeons in his planter, but when he investigated, he found that a member of Europe's largest owl species had set up house. Soon, three gigantic, fluffy chicks hatched, and now they keep him company day and night. "It's like watching a movie 24/7," he says. Baart kneels on a pillow to talk to the birds through the window, and they watch TV over his shoulder.

The chicks will likely stay another two months before flying away. Then, says Baart, "I'll have empty nest syndrome."





More Remarkable Service Animals: MINE-SNIFFING RATS

By Natalie Proulx; Lesson overview by Anna Schaverien in the New York Times

Hero Rat, Magawa

Founded in 1917 by animal welfare pioneer, Maria Dickin CBE, © The People's Dispensary for Sick Animals (PDSA) is the UK's leading veterinary charity. Operating through a UK-wide network of 48 Pet Hospitals, PDSA provides low cost and free veterinary care to the sick and injured pets of people in need and promotes responsible pet ownership.

PDSA's Work in Cambodia

Since the 1970s, it's estimated four to six million landmines were laid in Cambodia alone with around three million of those still unfound. Sadly, these hidden mines have caused 64,000 casualties. It's here that Magawa, a giant African rat, lives and works.

Magawa has been detecting landmines for the past five years. He completely ignores any scrap metal lying around and so is much faster at finding landmines than people would be. He can search the area of a tennis court

in 30 minutes, something that would take a human with a metal detector up to four days.

When Magawa detects a landmine by the chemicals used in it, he signals to his handler. They know that where Magawa signals is the exact location because his sense of smell is so good, and so can dispose of the mine safely.

HeroRATs are the only animals who can safely detect these mines due to their light weight and keen sense of smell

On a daily basis, HeroRAT Magawa's work is life-saving and life-changing and has a direct impact on the men, women and children in the communities in which he works. For every landmine or unexploded remnant he finds, he eradicates the risk of death or serious injury in locations already suffering significant hardship.

Cambodia has the highest number of mine amputees per capita in

the world – over 40,000 people. For each landmine HeroRAT Magawa finds, he saves a life. The testimonials of those who have seen him work show the immense difference that HeroRATs make to the communities they serve.

Magawa has discovered 39 landmines and 28 items of unexploded ordnance to date, making him the charity's most successful HeroRAT and a more than worthy candidate for the PDSA Gold Medal. During his career he has helped clear over 141,000 square metres of land (the equivalent of twenty football fields), making it safe for local people.

HeroRAT Magawa will carry on making Cambodia safe until he retires to his 'home cage'. He'll then spend his time playing and relaxing! 🐹

pdsa.org.uk/what-we-do/animal-awards-programme/pdsa-gold-medal/magawa



HEALING FROM VIOLENCE THROUGH HUMANE EDUCATION

By Jeannie Russell, Service Learning Director at HEART (teachheart.org)



Note: Although this was written prior to the temporary closure of some New York City facilities due to the COVID-19 pandemic, both HEART and the Urban Resource Institute have adapted their operations to be able to safely continue serving their beneficiaries.

As of April 2020, the Caring Circles program described below is still fully intended to continue, if necessary, in a modified format.



The link between animal cruelty and abuse toward vulnerable populations such as children, elders,

and domestic partners is well-established, highlighting the critical importance of introducing humane education into the lives of all youth as a preventive measure. The principles and practices of humane education offer young people an opportunity to recognize and respect the needs of other beings in ways that speak directly to their hearts—expanding their capacity for empathy and helping to shape their development as responsible and compassionate members of society. Humane education can also play an important role in the healing process when harm from interpersonal abuse has already occurred. That insight has sparked a unique partnership in the New York City area between a leading humane education organization and a leading shelter provider for families fleeing domestic violence.

Humane Education Advocates Reaching Teachers (HEART) and Urban Resource Institute (URI) are two organizations whose missions overlap around the core principle of

centering compassionate action in all of their projects and programs. HEART is a nonprofit organization offering innovative educational resources and programs in a wide variety of both traditional and non-traditional learning settings, with the goal of fostering a generation of compassionate youth creating positive change for animals, people, and the natural world. URI is the largest provider of domestic violence shelter in the nation, with the capacity to serve nearly 1,250 adults and children each night. Additionally, URI is also the only domestic violence shelter provider in New York City to accept survivors into emergency and long-term shelter with their pets, through their innovative People and Animals Living Safely (PALS) program.

This year, HEART has partnered with URI to support youth programming at URI's PALS Place domestic violence shelter. PALS Place, and URI's six other shelter locations within the PALS program, are among only a handful of domestic

violence shelters nationwide that accept and provide appropriate space for any species of companion animal family member along with their human family in search of protection and a new beginning after experiencing the trauma of intimate abuse. The pain of abandoning a beloved companion animal has far too often been a barrier to seeking safety for women and children in abusive situations; programs like PALS recognize that our companion animals are truly family members whose loss during these already traumatic times of transition to safety can be devastating.

The youth who are in transition to permanent housing in the PALS program have experienced violence, home and school disruption, and a host of related personal challenges. These factors leave them especially vulnerable to depression, reactive

behavioral patterns, and a pervasive distrustful attitude that can have a lasting impact on their social-emotional development. HEART worked with staff at PALS Place to build upon the strong bonds that young people feel with their companion animals, and to provide these children with an opportunity to strengthen their roles as positive caregivers at a time when loss and anger can erode agency and self-esteem.

The result was the creation of a specialized Caring Circles program for the school-aged youth in shelter using the Transformative Learning Alliance's Everyday Circles Cards, which combine humane



education topics, restorative justice practices, and social-emotional learning skills in engaging and easy-to-use group activities.

Everyday Circles is itself a collaboration between HEART, the Peace Learning Center, and the Tribes Learning Community, who came together to establish the Transformative Learning Alliance in 2018. HEART provided its humane education expertise and a set of active learning resources that foster empathy, reverence, and kind actions toward all living beings. The Peace Learning Center and Tribes contributed effective, evidence-based activities that promote restorative justice responses to conflict and harmful actions, as well as proactive practices for building a culture of respect and responsible behavior.

The Caring Circles program that HEART and URI are piloting consists of weekly groups facilitated by PALS Place staff. These groups are carefully designed to illuminate and practice the multiple ways that compassionate action in our relationships with other people, with the animals in our lives, and in



our connection to the natural world makes our own daily lives safer, healthier, and happier. Structured around the visualization of a Circle of Compassion that encompasses the people, animals, and places that participants care about, the youth practice mindfulness techniques, learn about and take leadership in adding to a set of Peaceful Actions for maintaining a respectful and kind group process, and play fun group games that also nurture core social-emotional competencies and build empathy for the animals with whom they share the world, as well as respect for the living natural habitats sustaining us all.

While most of the Caring Circles games have a specific topic, they are all designed to stimulate discussion that makes connections between that topic and core areas of social-emotional development. This is exemplified in an activity focusing on empathy building for companion animals that asks the participants to listen to a brief story, “Bailey the Dog.” Bailey loves to jump on his

who is getting frustrated and angry with him. The group is then asked to share ideas for how Bailey’s guardian might train him not to jump on her lap, to think about whether punishment or humane training techniques are likely to be more effective, and to connect their brainstormed ideas for helping Bailey with how they themselves learn to act in ways that respect the needs of others.

While this activity has the clear humane goals of teaching young people good training techniques and maintaining a positive relationship with their dog, it also serves as a way of framing the importance of restorative strategies for responding to other people who might be making them angry and frustrated.

Unsurprisingly, many youth can extend tremendous patience and compassion to their animal companions, while it is much harder to stay positive with their peers. In this

behavior, it is important that youth not only learn restorative practices for managing conflict, but also

learn that there is no such thing as bad behavior, only actions that can harm or disrespect others. Just like lovable Bailey, they are always fundamentally accepted, can learn ways to manage their impulses or feelings, and can even help others do so too. Activities like this one are enhanced by weekly discussions of strategies for Peaceful Actions, mindfulness training, and a check-in go-around that gives participants a chance to bring difficulties they are facing to the group, where empathy and supportive responses are expected.

As part of the program, these Caring Circles groups are complemented by hands-on activities and projects the shelter recreation staff implement during the week between each session, intended to reinforce and extend humane education topics that the group may have introduced around animal welfare, social justice, and environmental ethics. These might include poster making or other art/craft projects; playing online games and watching videos



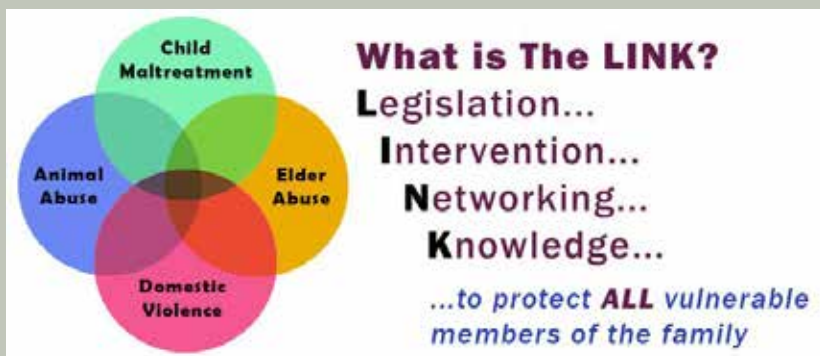
guardian’s lap, but he is growing to be very large—and this is becoming uncomfortable for his guardian,

shelter setting, where emotional and physical abuse has often been masked as “discipline” for “bad”

that highlight humane topics; and participating in service activities like helping parents with daily tasks, keeping the shelter's common areas free of trash, making bird feeders and nesting boxes, sharing tips with others on animal care, spreading kindness through "random acts" or compliments, or being a "study buddy" to someone who needs help with homework.

We're excited by the potential this partnership has to bring the core tenet of humane education—that all living beings have inherent value, and that compassionate actions on behalf of others have profound restorative effects—especially to the lives of youth who are suffering the consequences of violence and disruption. HEART and URI are staying in close contact as their staff pilot the Caring Circles program, and hope to be able to introduce the program to the other domestic violence shelters soon. From there, it can be made available as a resource to other shelters more broadly. 🐾

Jeannie Russell is the Service Learning Director of HEART (teachheart.org)



The LINK-Letter is a monthly report from the National Resource Center on the Link between animal abuse and human violence. www.NationalLinkCoalition.org

Phil Arkow, Coordinator and Editor

As we recognize Domestic Violence Awareness Month, analysis of the FBI's data system is starting to show Links between animal abuse and other crimes. The animal/human violence Link was cited in the need for a federal animal cruelty crimes division. And the need for more pet-friendly domestic violence shelters is called urgent during the COVID-19 pandemic. Also, the National Link Coalition is compiling a list of schools of social work that teach human-animal relationships, and veterinary hospital policies on reporting suspected animal abuse.

Subscribe today. *The LINK Letter* is a treasure trove of information and it's free!

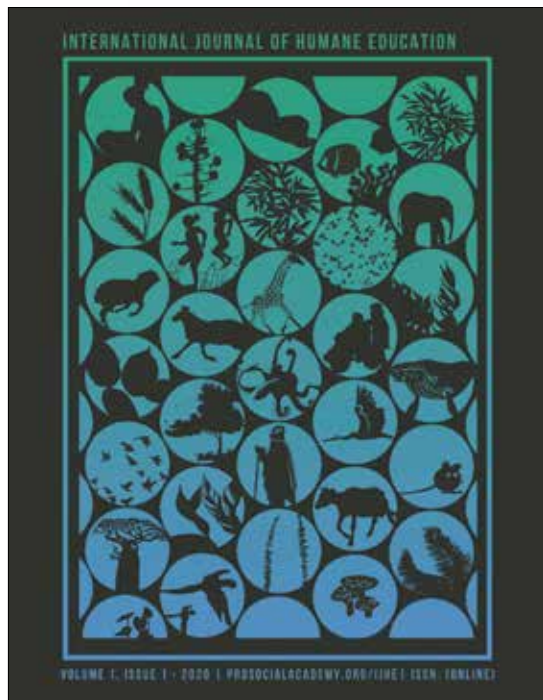
– Just send an e-mail to Coordinator Phil Arkow arkowpets@snip.net

Please tell us what organization(s) you're with and where you're located.

Phil Arkow, Coordinator
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New !

International Journal of Humane Education



The inaugural issue of the *International Journal of Humane Education* (IJHE) is now available! As the first peer-reviewed journal of its kind, IJHE strives to build a scholarly community, expand a collective knowledge base, and validate the quality of research


within all sectors of humane education. This issue of IJHE includes scholar-practitioner articles and an invitational essay on various aspects of humane education in practice and theory.

Learn more: prosocialacademy.org/ijhe.

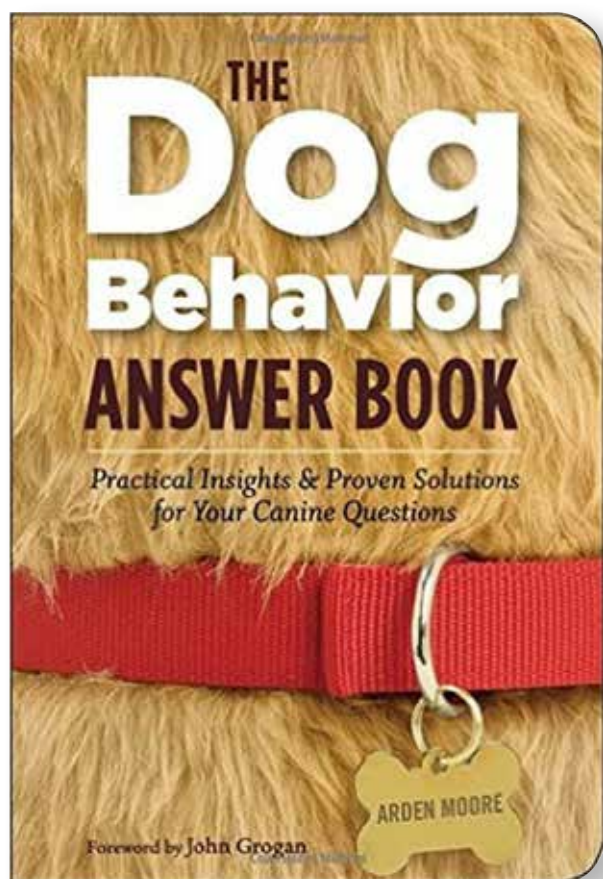
Academy of Prosocial Learning and Humane Education Coalition Joining Forces

The Academy is pleased to announce that we have entered into a definitive acquisition agreement with the Humane Education Coalition (HEC), a nonprofit global alliance for collective impact dedicated to advancing the field of humane education through collaboration, education, empowerment, and inspiration. The Academy and HEC have joined forces to provide a comprehensive platform of integrated programs and services that will better serve and strengthen the field of humane education and provide greater

stability to our existing infrastructure. This acquisition symbolizes both organizations' intention to broaden our platform in humane education and deliver more value to partners and educators worldwide.

Both organizations will work closely with partners and leadership to make this integration as smooth as possible over the next few months. Please direct questions regarding this acquisition to Stephanie Itle-Clark at sitle-clark@prosocialacademy.org. 





The Dog Behavior Answer Book - Practical Insights & Proven Solutions for Your Canine Questions

By Arden Moore

Your dog picks a fight with your dishwasher but is scared of the neighbor on his skateboard. Your dog avoids his bowl of clean water but is happy to lap up water in the dirty puddle. Your dog loves to play with other dogs but barks like crazy when a dog comes on the TV.

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Begging at the dinner table got you pleading for a solution? Try this strategy and be sure to enlist the help of your family and dinner guests.

Your dog not thinking his crate is all that great? Follow these dos and don'ts to guarantee the crate becomes his favorite spot.

- Why "sit" should be your standard command when your dog starts doing something you don't like.

- Got a dog who likes to eat grass? Learn if it's normal. And why grass makes some dogs sick.

- Does your dog like to go belly-up? You will be surprised to know that rolling on his back is not always a sign of submission. Be sure to pay attention to other parts of his body to get a true read on his feelings.

Find out why your dog behaves the way he does. There's usually a good reason and it's usually fixable. Read *The Dog Behavior Answer Book* and strengthen your relationship with your dog. You'll be happy you did.

ISBN 978-1-58017-644-6

101 Rescue Puppies

By Kathy Callahan

Over the past decade, Kathy Callahan's family has taken in more than a hundred rescue puppies.

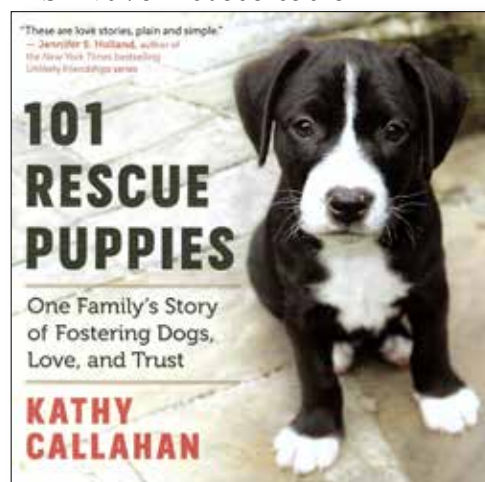
This delightful photo-filled book features the wonderful stories that emerged as these foster pups were suddenly surrounded by a nurturing family complete with patient adult dogs and curious cats.

With a gift for capturing the moment in both words and images, Callahan brings readers inside the poignant and ultimately uplifting work of fostering. This inspiring read is indeed about puppies, but it's also about family and human connection. It's about finding your own way — through that one special thing you can do to light a candle, instead of cursing the darkness.

"No other book I've read has come close to describing the joy of fostering or the reasons that foster providers keep answering the call to service."

- Nancy Kerns, editor of *Whole Dog Journal*.

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