

THE Latham Letter

VOLUME XLIV, NUMBER 3

Summer 2023

PROMOTING RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION



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MANDATE

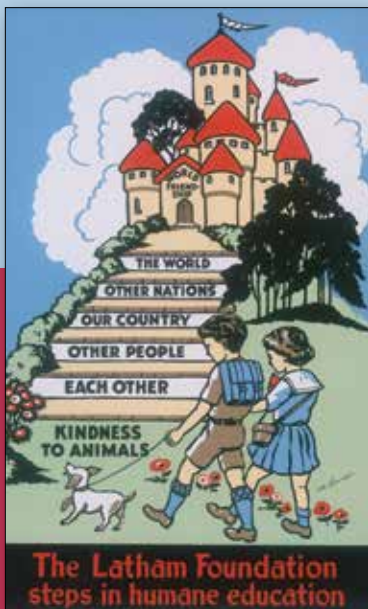
Edith Latham's **MANDATE:**

"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, marks 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
www.Latham.org or call 510-521-0920.



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Promotion of Humane Education

The Latham Letter

Volume XLIV, Number 3, Summer 2023

**BALANCED PERSPECTIVES ON
HUMANE ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES**



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ABOUT THE LATHAM FOUNDATION:

The Latham Foundation is a 501(c)(3) private operating foundation founded in 1918 to promote respect for all life through education. Latham welcomes partnerships with other institutions and individuals who share its commitment to furthering humane education.

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Hugh H. Tebault, President

KIND DEEDS ~AND~ KIND NEWS

I am always pleased to share in *The Latham Letter* the many fine examples of humane education being practiced. The diversity of how it is shared is


wide, but the fundamental message is based on the foundation that knowing how to show respect and kindness toward animals and understanding how you benefit is key to your own success.

Between 1926 and 1941, Latham published *The Kind Deeds Messenger*, a magazine for schools that highlighted respect and kindness toward animals and others. We know it was distributed widely, including being mailed to New Zealand for a time. It was during the time of our Latham poster contest (1925-1964) and annually reached thousands of people worldwide. We changed our format to radio, television and movies from the 1940s through the 1980s.

In this issue, we highlight this generation's youth publication, appropriately named *Kind News* started by HSUS and continued now by RedRover. Through her experience, Heidi shares how the impact of teaching humane education helps grow the human spirit. I am pleased that *Kind News* is available to youth today, and I wish them much success. If you can help improve the reach of *Kind News*, please do so.

All of this reminded me of a personal experience I had. As I said, the *Latham Kind Deeds Messenger* was published starting in 1926. One of the features was to have stories written by students. In part of my work to archive Latham documents, I read all the issues, including these student stories. (*Read a story from the issue shown on page 26.*)

In my neighborhood, we would have an open house in December and many neighbors would visit. During one such visit, I knew that one neighbor's family had lived in this same county since the 1920's – and I had noted a story by one young girl who had the same family name. I had made a copy of that *Kind Deeds Messenger* and asked my neighbor if this person might be related. He smiled and said, 'Yes, she is my great aunt.' I then heard of her passion and kindness for animals as he remembered them. This is just another example of the phrase, 'it's a small world.'

As I write this, Latham is just completing the annual grant program. I am always honored to receive so many fine examples of how people and animals work together in communities. I will be sending out emails to all those organizations who submitted proposals to thank them as well as to confirm those who were awarded grants. By early September, the Latham website will have the list of this year's grant awards posted. Grant awarded are listed at <https://www.latham.org/grants/deadlines-how-to-apply/> 



LATHAM 2023 GRANT AWARDS



CONGRATULATIONS! 2023 GRANT AWARDS WENT TO A DIVERSE GROUP OF WONDERFUL ORGANIZATIONS:

Animal Rescue League of New Hampshire –
Bedford, NH

Austin Dog Alliance – Cedar Park, TX

Chesapeake Therapeutic Riding, Inc. –
Abingdon, MD

Dog Tag Buddies – Billings, MT

Dreams on Horseback – Blacklick, OH

Fredericksburg SPCA – Fredericksburg, VA

Guiding Reins – Campobello, SC

Healing Hoofbeats of CT – Bethlehem, CT

Heart Strides Therapeutic Horsemanship –
Olympia, WA

HERD Foundation – Delray Beach, FL

Hero's Bridge – Warrenton, VA

Horse-powered Healing – Blythwood, SC

In Step with Horses Inc. – Chesterland, OH

Indiana Canine Assistant Network –
Zionsville, IN

Indraloka Animal Sanctuary – Dalton, PA

Jasper Ridge Farm – Woodside, CA

Joy-Ride Center, Inc. – Magnolia, TX

Miracles in Motion Therapeutic Equestrian
Center – Swisher, IA

Naperville Area Humane Society –
Naperville, IL

National Link Coalition – Etowah, NC

Paws and Think, Inc. – Indianapolis, IN

Paws for Reflection Ranch – Midlothian, TX

Pegasus Farm – Hartville, OH

Son Care Foundation – San Luis Obispo, CA

The Human-Animal Connection – Tucson, AZ

Train a Dog - Save a Warrior – San Antonio,
TX

Wild Hearts Equine Therapeutic Center –
Seneca, SC

Working Dogs For Vets – Lawrenceburg, TN

Wounded Heros Fund Bakersfield –
Bakersfield, CA

It's Your Time to Shine!

*If you did not receive a Latham Humane Education grant this time
but would like us to consider featuring your wonderful humane
program here, or you have an article you'd like to submit,
please contact: Editor@latham.org.*



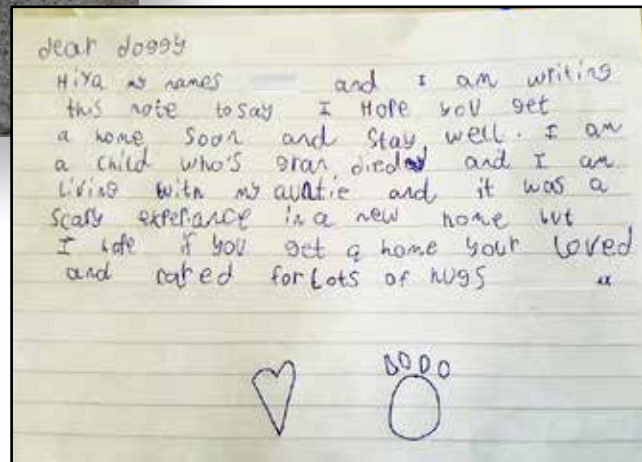
FOSTERING COMPASSION

Scottish Charity Fostering Compassion. The Charity works with vulnerable children who, due to their own difficult starts in life, may have started to show worrying behaviour towards animals. Through animal themed workshops and activities, Fostering Compassion aims to replace worrying behaviour into caring, compassionate and nurturing behaviour, therefore helping to reverse the negative cycle of abuse that so often exists where maltreatment of children or animals is present.

Written by the Founder and CEO of the Charity, Lesley Winton

With many wonderful animal welfare organisations worldwide helping animals who have been subjected to abuse and neglect, how do we go about stopping the cruelty happening in the first place? Scottish charity Fostering Compassion runs a unique and groundbreaking humane education project for children in Foster Care and Kinship Care (Looked After and Care Experienced Children) who may be showing worrying behaviour towards animals or be struggling with compassion and empathy in general.

Through our workshops and activities, we share the stories of rescued domestic and wild animals in such a way that the children draw parallels between their circumstances and those of the animals. This helps the children see animals as sentient beings who can share similar emotions to them.



Continued on next page



child abuse is also present and vice versa. Children subjected to abuse and neglect often struggle to show compassion towards animals and others and may take their frustrations out on animals as a 'pecking order' develops. If a child is displaying aggressive behaviour towards an ani-

mal they may well be mirroring caring, compassionate and nurturing behaviour and help play a part in reversing the cycle of abuse, protecting children and animals in the process.

Looked after children are the most vulnerable children in our society and they and their families are in need of the greatest support. Children who have had a traumatic start in life are often at a disadvantage when it comes to fulfilling their potential. They often feel 'different' and 'isolated.' Fostering Compassion brings together looked after children and their caregivers with other children and carers in similar circumstances in a safe environment giving them a sense of 'belonging.'

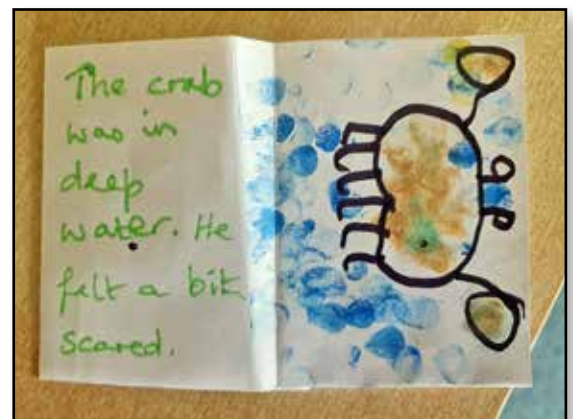
Through sharing the stories of the animals, the children gain a greater understanding of their own circumstances and this often provides a platform for the children to open up about their own abuse and neglect.

"The Fostering Compassion activities helped us discuss difficult subjects like neglect in children, through the shared stories of neglect in animals. The project has really helped us overcome some major obstacles." - *Kinship Carer*

The concept of the Link - the recognised connection between animal abuse, child maltreatment, domestic abuse and elder abuse -- and the strength of the human-animal bond strongly underpin all of our work. Often if animal abuse exists in a household the chances are

mal they may well be mirroring behaviour that has been inflicted upon them as a perpetual cycle of abuse develops. Children may mimic or learn callous and abusive behaviours toward animals from abusive adults.

We work with children who, often as a result of their own traumatic starts in life, may be exhibiting worrying or inappropriate behaviour towards animals. Through our animal themed activities, we aim to turn this behaviour into



Fostering Compassion began in 2013 with just ten children from five families in the East Lothian area of Scotland. By the end of 2022 over 1000 children had benefited from the programme with demand for our service increasing every year, especially since the pandemic.

"These are great activities. They get the children to think about feelings – when they sometimes don't realise they are doing it." - *Kinship Care Gran*

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Box of comfort

Through robust evaluation carried out by PhD Students from Edinburgh and Stirling Universities, our activities have shown that the children taking part exhibit good engagement in learning, increased feelings of self-esteem, self-worth and self confidence, a better understanding of their emotions and behaviour and improved compassion and empathy.



Each child has shown an increased sense of empowerment - understanding that their actions and attitudes can make a difference. All children show they are good learners and show improved prosocial behaviour. The children build new friendships and the caregivers find a valuable support

network. Through the medium of rescued animals including dogs, cats, horses, bears and donkeys and by sharing the animals' stories, the children gain unique insight into and understanding of their own circumstances drawing parallels with those of the animals, learning that animals can share similar emotions and fears as they do, including sadness, happiness, loneliness, abandonment, fear and contentment. This allows the children to see the animals as sentient beings with feelings just like them. This in turn helps to change worrying behaviour into caring and compassionate behaviour.

The children are encouraged to give or make gifts for the

animals to keep them well and happy through our 'Gifts of Compassion' which form part of each workshop and encourage the children to help animals in need. This includes honey for bears to help them take their medicine, apples and carrots for donkeys to keep their teeth healthy, shoeboxes of treats and toys for dogs in shelters, and Boxes of Comfort full of items for senior dogs looking for a new home.

'I often struggle to get the children to attend activities during the holidays, but when it comes to these activities, the children are running out the door! Nothing comes close to Fostering Compas-



sion and I wish there were Fostering Compassion activities every week - the children love them!'
-Foster Carer

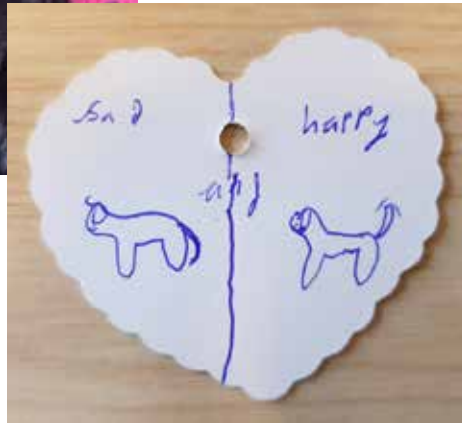


We currently have a bank of 14 workshops and our newest 'Animal Heroes' workshop, where we team up with our Scottish Fire and Rescue Service and the children learn about animals who

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needs to be resuscitated. In 2020 we set ourselves a target to raise enough money for 10 of these kits and by the end of 2020 we had raised enough for 23 kits. We have distributed these to fire stations throughout Scotland, and they have



save people and people who save animals. There is a concept known as the Macdonald Triad which lists 3 behaviours - bed wetting, animal cruelty and arson or wilful fire raising as it is known in Scotland. If all 3 or a combination of two exist, it can be indicative of potentially worrying behaviour in the future, so it was always in our plans that at some point we would team up with the Scottish Fire and Rescue Service to deliver this workshop.

already been used to save the lives of animals rescued from fires including dogs, cats, rabbits, snakes, guinea pigs and ducks!

“I loved it. I wish I could come back!” -*Child in Kinship Care*

Animal Heroes has become one of our most popular workshops, and the Gift of Compassion from this workshop is the donation of a set of three animal pet oxygen masks which are used by firefighters when they have recovered an animal from a fire that has been overcome by smoke and



As we continue to grow, this year we are celebrating our 10th anniversary. To mark this, we are holding our very first ‘Compassion Allways’ conference with an American theme! <https://www.fosteringcompassion.org/connect-with-compassion/conference2023>. Our Keynote Speaker is Mike Arms CEO of Helen Woodward Animal Center, Rancho Santa Fe, California.

Our two-day conference will focus on all things compassion related, including the importance of humane education and animal welfare, compassion towards vulnerable children, animals and older people, and additional presentations covering compassion fatigue and self compassion.

“My foster son has gone from being aggressive towards our family dog to brushing him every day and tucking him into bed at night time with a blanket.” -*Foster Mother*

Looking to the future, we would very much like to pilot some Fostering Compassion workshops in California – in particular in the Sacramento, Tahoe and Truckee areas -- and are looking for US-based charities who may like to partner with us to achieve this goal.



If you would like to discuss this further, please email lesley@fosteringcompassion.org

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FOSTERING COMPASSION CASE STUDY

CRAIG

Craig came from a home with extreme domestic violence, suffering severe neglect and emotional abuse. There had been a placental abruption during pregnancy and he was back in hospital with breathing difficulties within a month of being born, so there is a possibility that he suffered a bleed on the brain, making life even harder for this little boy. He was one of the most challenging children we've had when he attended his first workshop. Now – we all have a huge place in our hearts for him.



In the care of his loving adoptive parents his progress has been remarkable, and the compassion and insight this little boy now shows is incredible considering he suffered so much neglect and has had so many battles.

He began attending our workshops in 2018. During one of our visits to the Five Sisters Zoo for our 'Meet the Bears' workshop, Craig was particularly moved by the story of two newly rescued bears Henk and Eso, a brother and sister who were only around 4 years old when they were rescued

from a barren cage outside a restaurant in Albania, captured as part of the tourist trade. Craig learned how the bears were never fed, were given beer to subdue them, and the only water they had to drink was rainwater gathering in puddles in the cage.

Although he was six, Craig couldn't read at that point and had to have the bears' story explained to him. While looking at the 'before' and 'after' pictures of Henk and Eso he went quiet and asked if he could stay behind with the keepers and the bears. Then it came spilling out all about how the bears' story was just like his – how his first family, about whom he had never spoken to strangers before, had never fed him either and that, like the bears, he'd never had a safe place. It's even thought that Craig was over-medicated on Calpol to subdue him. Then, heartbreakingly, he asked the keepers if the bears got hit when they were naughty – clearly relating his story to that of the bears and developing a deep compassion and empathy for the animals through shared experience.



JOCK GETTING CRAIG'S BOX OF GOODIES

We have stayed in close touch with Craig and his mum and recently they came into our office Woodland Haven room for some one-to-one work. During that time, Craig made up a special goody box of treats and toys for a doggy at a shelter looking for his forever home. He took great care making up the box and then firmly announced that it had to go to a dog that 'needed' it, not just 'wanted' it – an amazing distinction between wants and needs for a little boy who had been through so much.



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He was adamant about this so we were determined to show him that adults can keep their promises and that his feelings mattered. After speaking with our colleague and the Edinburgh Dog and Cat Home and explaining the situation, they picked the perfect little doggy – Jock – to get Craig’s box. They explained that Jock definitely ‘needed’ the box as he had come to the home a few months earlier with a very large lump on his neck, most likely caused by trauma and infection. The home decided to operate on Jock to remove the lump and Craig’s box was the perfect gift to cheer Jock up as he recuperated.

When we went back to Craig and his mum to update them on his box going to a doggy that really needed it, and that Jock had recently had a lump removed from his neck, Craig’s mum in-

formed us that Craig himself was currently having investigations on a lump in his neck, most likely as a result of earlier trauma. What were the chances?!

ACTS OF KINDNESS FOR KIDS

On another occasion we spent some more time with Craig and his mum and asked him for some help with our new Animal Heroes workshop and ideas for Random Acts of Kindness – an activity we were going to include in the workshop to encourage the children to show compassion and kindness to others.

We made up a sheet with suggestions for Random Acts of Kindness and read all these ideas to Craig. He loved them all but when it came to the most important one of all – the one in the

middle that said ‘Be kind to yourself’ – a puzzled look came over his face and he said “I can’t be kind to myself because that’s selfish.” Maybe that’s something we could all learn from Craig. Many of us have forgotten how to be kind to ourselves and have some self-compassion without feeling guilty or selfish, and we should encourage that in all children. After all, how can we show kindness and compassion to others if we can’t show it to ourselves first.

It has been and continues to be a pleasure to work with Craig and play a small part in his recovery from a highly traumatic start in life.

We are learning as much from him as he is from us.

OLIVER

Oliver was one of the first children to be referred to our programme and was around 9 years old at the time, in long-term foster care with his sister.

Oliver was talking like a toddler when he was placed in foster care and had never used cutlery. He’d not had any speech therapy and didn’t have friends – only his sister could understand what he was saying. He had nightmares of people breaking in and stealing him away, and used to check that the door was locked and the chain on before bed so that the “bad people” wouldn’t get in. He wet the bed and didn’t trust anyone. His foster mum had to learn to cut his hair since he was terrified

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of hairdressers, as he thought they would cut him. Oliver had no expectation of anything good. He was always geared for disappointment. He has scars and has no memory of how he got them. His back is especially bad.

When living with their birth mum, Oliver and his sister used to be brought kittens. The mother would wait until they were attached to the animal, then give it away. This happened on a number of occasions and the children eventually stopped naming the animals and developed a worrying indifference towards them. There was a little cat living with their new foster family and it took them months to realise she was staying for good.

Oliver was very withdrawn when he first attended our activities.

HOLLY

One of our workshops is called 'Hollydays.' During this workshop the children learn the story of a rescued labrador Holly who suffered neglect and ill treatment



and lived in four or five homes before finding her forever home where she was loved and thrived. The children relate to Holly's story and part of our activities

during the workshop includes the children making up boxes of treats and toys to donate to dog shelters for animals who are still waiting for new homes.

Oliver attended our 'Hollydays' workshop and became very taken by Holly's story. He learned how Holly's favourite place was getting up on the couch to cuddle in with her owner. Holly began to struggle with arthritis as she was getting older but was still determined to get up onto her beloved favourite spot on the couch.

THE LEGO STEPS MADE FOR HOLLY

The little child became aware of Holly's plight and one weekend his foster mum noticed he was engrossed in building something with his Lego. After studiously building a little set of Lego steps, the child handed them to his Foster Mum and said 'they're for Holly – to help her up on the couch.'

Sadly Holly passed away a few years later, but Oliver was still involved in our Fostering Compassion activities. One day we were attending our 'Be a Vet for the Day' workshop and he spotted Holly's noseprints against the window that her owner hadn't had the heart to wash off yet. He gently placed his cheek up against the window and said 'I'm hugging Holly.' Also shortly after her death, a book was written and published about Holly and

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featured in the local paper. Oliver's foster mum got this paper and he spotted the article and ran up to the window and pressed the paper up against the window pane. His foster mum asked him what he was doing and Oliver proclaimed 'I'm showing the paper to Holly in Heaven.'

Oliver and his sister drew lovely pictures of Holly by a rainbow with animal angels to help her. The pictures said 'Good Luck Holly' and were full of colour, when previously the children had always drawn dark and gloomy pictures.

Note: Children benefiting from the Fostering Compassion project are all vulnerable and at risk children, models have been used for all photos on this site and all names have been changed.

AUTHOR BIO

Lesley Winton BEM has nearly 40 years' experience working in the voluntary sector in Scotland and has set up two charities for child and animal welfare. She is passionate about animal welfare and humane education and in particular the links between animal abuse, child abuse and domestic abuse. Driven by the desire to

develop a humane education project for vulnerable children, she established Fostering Compassion to help reverse the negative cycle of abuse. Lesley also has a very keen interest in raising awareness of the pain of pet bereavement and the strength of the human-animal bond.

Lesley has Diplomas in Legal Studies and Legal Accounting, a Diploma in Life Coaching, and in 2014 completed online Edinburgh University Courses on the Clinical Psychology of Children and Young People and on Animal Behaviour and Welfare. In 2020 she completed Diplomas in Native American Studies and Pet Bereavement Counselling. She is currently studying a Diploma in Positive Psychology. She is also a keen writer, publishing her first book in September 2013 highlighting the importance of the human-animal bond. Lesley won the Ceva Animal Welfare Award for Charity Professional of the Year in 2017. Fostering Compassion won the 2020 Edinburgh Prestige Award for Humane Education Project of the Year.

Lesley received the British Empire Medal awarded by Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II for Services to Animal Welfare in the 2022 New Years Honours List.



FOUR DECADES OF SPREADING KINDNESS

By Heidi Colonna



Born in a log cabin in the woods amidst the babble of a river and the parade of wild turkeys. Small but mighty, filled with endless love and a sense of wonder. Loved by children everywhere for her gentle lessons in kindness. Forty years old and as energetic as ever. It's Kind News magazine!

A MAGAZINE ABOUT KINDNESS TO ANIMALS, JUST FOR KIDS

I couldn't believe what I had stumbled on when I first held it in my hands. The warm June air made the cabin door stick at the National Association for Humane and Environmental Education (NAHEE), youth education division of The Humane Society of the United States, which sat on a crook of the Eightmile River in East Haddam, Connecticut.



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It was 1998. School had just ended, and I was invited to speak about my master's research on coyotes and children's literature with my trusty mentor, Literature professor Marion Copeland, by my side. My enthusiasm for NA-HEE's work had been radiating ever since I'd learned of it through the Tufts Center for Animals & Public Policy where I studied. Once there, the staff — all celebrities to me — were happy to tell me more and show me around. The office of the Executive Director, Bill DeRosa, was not far from the big room with a stone fireplace where I had just spoken about what books like *The Three Little Javalinas* might do for the reputation of the coyote.

I won't forget the moment when Bill opened what was then a colorful but chalky newspaper with a blocky 90s-style logo and large photos of children and dogs and cats. As he and outreach director Dorothy Weller proudly spoke about it, something came alive in me. "A magazine about kindness to animals, just for kids!" I exclaimed. They then explained the thousands of classrooms that received this cheerful little publication. Humane education was the work I dreamed of, and my dream was planted right there in a neatly folded newspaper on Bill's desk.

A NEW HOME

"This is going to be so impactful for our readers!" I hung up the phone in my home office and smiled. It was 2023 now, and every single person I've interviewed over the past seven school years exuded a love for animals and a will to make the world better for



them. Could there be a better job than to listen to them? Better than chronicling their stories? While it's work — yes, copying down every potential quote, organizing it into a story, and editing it to perfection is work — this work as *Kind News* writer and editor is a joy.

In my first job promoting *Kind News* as Communications Coordinator in 2002, I quietly wanted to write it but never ventured to dream. I had opted for an animal science degree in college and it was my time building community outreach skills at my local shelter that earned me this first position. I was content, though — the harder I worked, the more children would learn kindness and respect for animals.

I never thought I would write *Kind News*, but life had other plans. There were leadership changes and the closure of HSUS's youth education division. But the dream wasn't over. HSUS

continued to champion its flagship classroom publication until it was moved to RedRover, which decided that *Kind News* — now a glossy magazine — fit perfectly with its mission to help children understand animal behavior and become more empathetic toward animals through the RedRover Readers program. At this time, I had just begun a career as a middle school teacher and was working on a middle grade novel about the dogs of my childhood. I had some years freelancing for other animal welfare publications under my belt.

"Why don't you contact Red Rover about writing for *Kind News*?" my husband suggested one night as I got our young son into the bath. Thank goodness I acted on his nudge, and my two sons have become familiar with *Kind News* — not just with their mom as writer but through their classroom subscriptions I gifted to them and their teachers. The boys were always proud that the

Continued on next page



shared with a link or on a teacher’s smart board and with a read-aloud option. Teachers tell us how helpful it is for students struggling with reading to follow along to our voices.

THE FUTURE OF KIND NEWS

The things I most look forward to with *Kind News* are the articles to come in the months ahead based on the interviews I do. My latest was with naturalist and writer Sy Montgomery. During our interview, every phrase from her mouth was

cheering when the new “bundle of kindness” comes in the mail. I’ve seen countless anecdotes from children, teachers, and parents on what they love about the magazine. In a recent Emmanuel College research project, teachers told us in detail how *Kind News* is encouraging kind actions in their students — from “helping injured creatures like grasshoppers... before reading the article they were trying to pull the legs off of them,” to whole classes making a daily activity to bring recyclable bags out to recess in order to pick up trash, to moving a schoolyard worm so as not to get stepped on or walking a caterpillar and spider outside, to forming animal clubs — step by step from head to heart to hands.

whole class received something their mom helped create. And nothing could make me happier than a stack of thank-you cards and animal drawings from their whole class!

I’m thankful that the dream sparked at the little cabin where it was born is still alive, and I get to be part of it.

RedRover has kept familiar, long-loved articles like “Humane Hero,” a young person or celebrity making a difference for animals and “Critter Clues,” in which students must guess an animal from a list of clues about their natural history. It’s added a regular “Rescue Story,” one animal’s path from crisis to care, and DIY projects in which kids can get crafty for animals. But perhaps my favorite RedRover addition is the digital version. Now *Kind News* can be

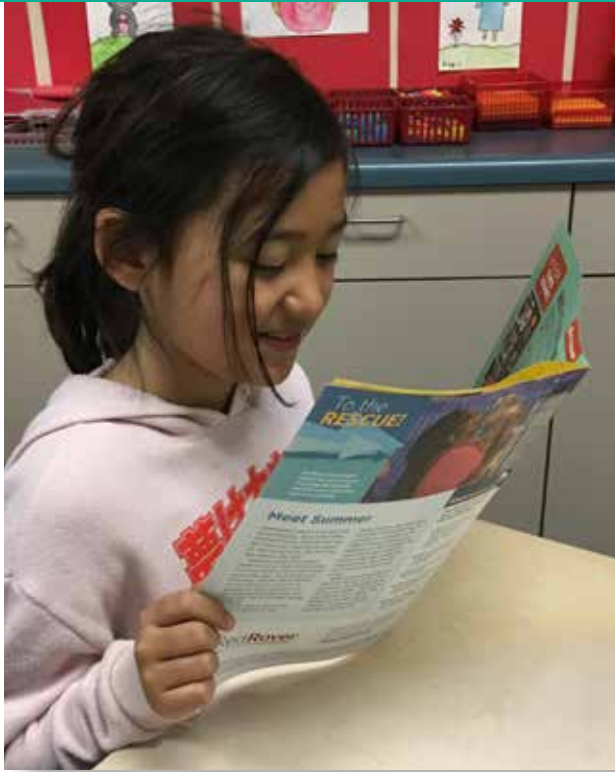
a nugget of gold for our young readers. I know that her shared experiences with wild animals around the world will change their lives. I know this because I am more confident than ever — 25 years confident — in the impact of our work.

Of all the changes *Kind News* has undergone over the years, one thing I’ve noticed is that the response from teachers has stayed the same. In our end-of-year surveys, virtually all agree that it inspires kids to be curious, helpful, and kind to the people and animals around them. They are excited to use it and tell us how excited their students are to get it, sometimes

It truly takes a village, and I invite you to open *Kind News* for yourself — especially if it’s been some time — at KindNews.org. You can share content ideas with me or contact me about bringing *Kind News* to your community at heidi@kindnews.org.



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A NEW SISTER

At home with RedRover, *Kind News* now has a sister empathy-developing program: RedRover Readers. Through RedRover Readers trainings, teachers, librarians, parents, and animal caregivers learn skills for inspiring critical thinking in children with the help of quality, humane-themed picture books.

In April and May, I helped deliver two RedRover Readers trainings in New Hampshire with former RedRover President and CEO Nicole Forsyth in partnership with Monadnock Humane Society.

Forsyth spoke of children's past experiences with animals as stories, and how those can be positive or negative and include abuse. Her advice? "Provide another narrative" using books like *Buddy Unchained*, the story of a dog who went from neglected to

pampered pet. Then, it's all about asking the right questions to draw on children's memories and allow them to think, feel, and teach one another — a simple yet game-changing strategy for educators who are used to doing the talking.

Attendees practiced their new skills by leading lessons with books of their choice to fellow attendees. One wrote, "Kids NEED this."

Everyone left with curriculum guides on a long list of humane-themed books on a range of domestic and wild animals, subscriptions to *Kind News*, and a new enthusiasm for approaching their teachings.

We have about 300,000 children receiving *Kind News* in print through classroom subscriptions or through teachers using our digital edition online. We print 5 issues a year, every other month of the school year. All our subscriptions are in the U.S. right now.

I'm excited to deliver future trainings to school districts, animal control officers, or anyone interested in using humane-themed books to develop empathy. Please visit RedRover.org/readers or contact me to bring a training to your community!

I could keep going about my vision with these programs, because that is what humane education is

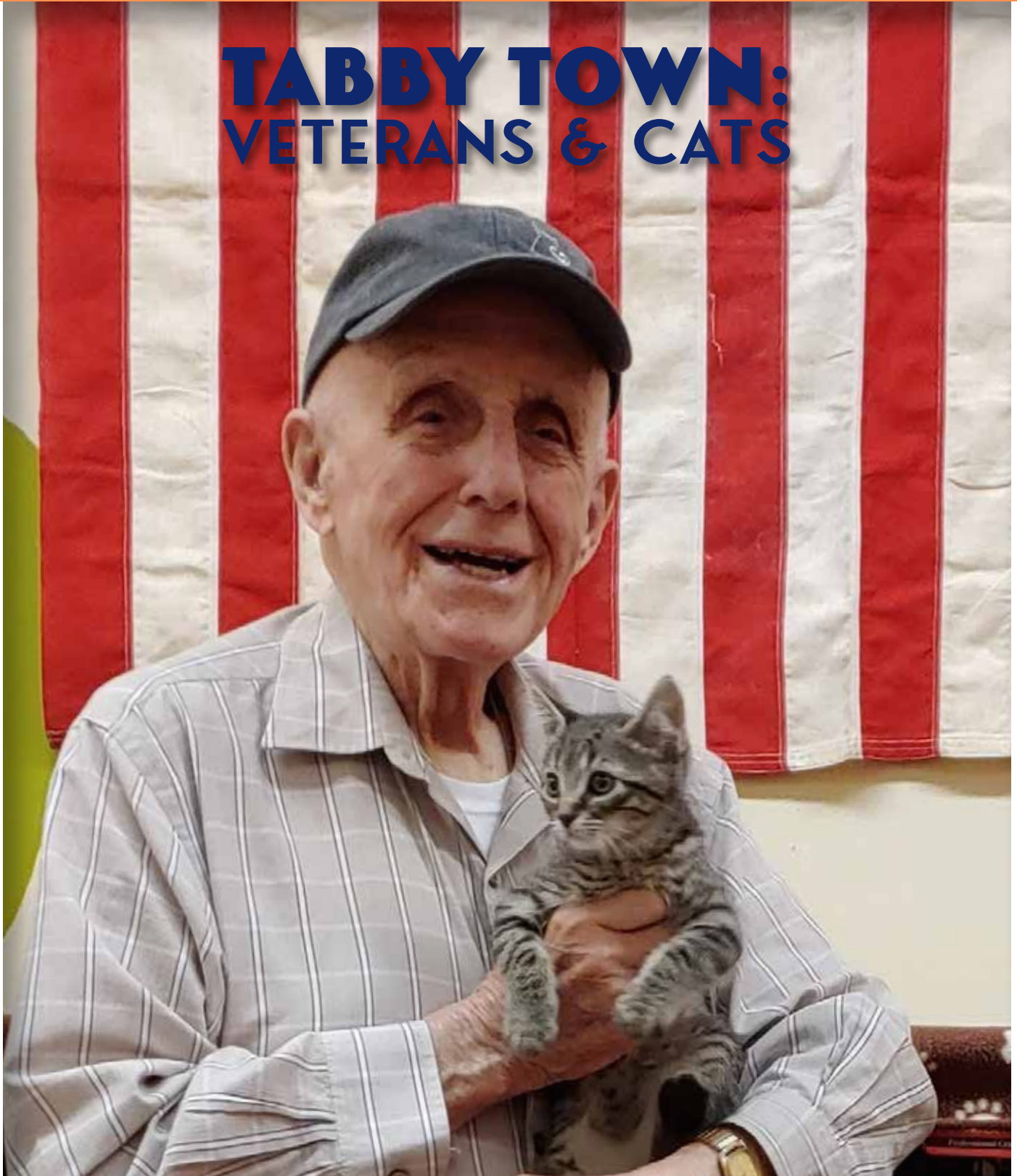
about: hope and optimism for the future. But I will stop here. I'll enjoy my long view with the knowledge that, like anyone working in humane education, everything I do will send ripples into the future.



*Heidi Colonna is a longtime animal welfare professional focusing on youth education and engagement. She is consulting writer and editor for RedRover focusing on Kind News magazine content and outreach. She's worked with children of all ages in outreach, teaching, and student mentoring positions. Heidi's past positions include student outreach director and curriculum manager for HSUS as well as board member of the Association of Professional Humane Educators. She's written hundreds of articles for publications including Animal Sheltering, All Animals, Humane Education Quarterly, NACA News, and Humane Activist. She's a member of the APHE and Society of Children's Book Writers and Illustrators, and published *Canis magicus*, a middle grade novel inspired by the dogs of her childhood and *Dear Gretchen: Letters to My Dog*, a pet loss grief memoir. She lives in western Mass with her husband, sons, and howling Husky mix.*



TABBY TOWN: VETERANS & CATS



Tabby Town is nearing its 15th anniversary. We have learned so very much over these past years, first by offering support to those in the military, veterans and their families. Then we expanded it to include first responders and now we are in the planning phase of expanding it to retired first responders or

those who live alone. Pictured above is Lt. Robert Fahey (deceased, 2021) who established a Veteran's Fund for Tabby Town and who piqued my interest in supporting those in the military and discovering organizations who support kindness to animals and to each other.

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Tabby Town is located in Blasdell, NY which is a suburb of Buffalo. Our winters are hard, especially this past winter where we suffered several major snowstorms and a catastrophic blizzard that occurred over the holiday season. Over 5' of snow accumulated, travel was impossible and due to travel bans, illegal. Forty-seven individuals lost their lives. This caused another form of isolation. Simply put, during a Buffalo winter when it's difficult to even go outside in a snowstorm to walk, it's so comforting and therapeutic to have the company of a cat.

It is the mission of Friends for Felines, Inc., 501(c)3 to increase cat adoptions in our Western New York community through an uplifting place called Tabby Town. At Tabby Town, we help fill the hearts of every rescued cat and kitten and provide them with good health, good food, and a good home.



In August 2022, Tabby Town was honored to have been awarded a grant from the Latham Foundation. The purpose of this grant was to provide a cat or kitten to those in the military, veterans, or their family.

The human – animal bond supports the health, well-being, and the dynamic relationship between humans and their companion animals. For veterans and their families, this bond is uniquely therapeutic.

Veterans may suffer from emotional and physical injuries.

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They may have a compromised life or suffer from loneliness. Some veterans have no family or a support person to rely on and the detrimental effects of this isolation is overwhelming.

For the families of veterans, who may deal with the role of being a sole caregiver and provider, raising children without their partner or having to act as both mother and father can be incredibly stressful. Most importantly, the heroics of our veterans must never become lost or forgotten. Having an animal can reestablish a feeling of being needed along with emboldening a sense of responsibility. It is a nurturing experience and the companion-

ship of an animal is a comfort and a healing source to one's soul.

This was the first time that Tabby Town participated in a grant

process in support of a specific group such as those in the military. Additionally, this program occurred during the COVID-19 pandemic which was also challenging. Tabby Town is located in the McKinley Mall in Western New York. The Mall provided limited hours of operation.

Once awarded, a press release was submitted to an array of TV and radio outlets as well as the Tabby Town website, Facebook page, Instagram and Twitter.

The allocation for this grant enabled us to complete the following:

- Medically and physically care for 10 cats by providing them with veterinary care, spay/neuters, vaccinations, combo tested (to check for FeLV and FIV).



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Town looking for a kitten and the connection between John and Pete was instant. Pete was welcomed into his new home with open arms.

A few days after the adoption took place, we contacted Pete’s owners to find out how things were going. John was elated! When we asked how his wife was handling the new family member, John handed the phone over to his wife. When asked if she was surprised, she burst into tears. They were so lonely and isolated and this little kitten brought so much joy to them.

Cecil, a 4 year old grey tabby, lost his owner around the same time his new parents lost their long time cat. When Cecil arrived at Tabby Town, he needed extensive dental and veterinary care. Funds from Latham paid for his medical expenses.

- Provide these cats with food and shelter.
- Purchase supplies for the potential adopters (litter boxes, litter, cat carrier, food.)

Pete (gray with white kitten) chose his new dad (a



a Seabee Veteran) during a time when John was caring for his wife who had cancer. It was during the COVID Pandemic and John and his wife were isolated from their family. Their long time cat fell ill and eventually crossed

the rainbow bridge. Wanting to surprise his wife with a new companion, John came to Tabby

Cecil’s new mom read Cecil’s story from a Tabby Town Facebook post and Cecil’s new dad, a Navy Veteran, brought his bride into Tabby Town to meet Cecil.



OUTCOME/ BENEFITS

A total of 10 cats/kittens were adopted to veterans and their families. All adopters were veterans residing in the Western New York community. Each participant had a unique story.

The following are actual stories from some of the adoptions:

Continued on next page



one evening to say that he had just tucked in his son and Marshal for the night. We thanked Kyle for his kind words and told him how touched we were that we were able to help his family. Kyle responded by thanking us.

The term ‘Semper Fi’ is not just a motto for the Marines - it’s a way of life. The phrase in Latin means ‘Always Faithful’ and it embodies the Marine Corps’ forever commitment to both the Marines and the United States. Marshal is the most senior rank of all branches. Other sources claim that ‘Semper Fortis,’ Latin for ‘Always Courageous,’ is the Navy’s unofficial motto.

Semper Fi and Fortis to Pete, Cecil and Marshal! You did us proud!

It just so happened that he brought her in the same day and time as the Army/Navy football game. Now, that’s love!

Their meeting Cecil was love at first sight too.

When Kyle retired from the Marines, he and his wife promised their son (who is autistic) that when they settled into their new home he could have a companion cat. This young man did not let his dad forget that promise, and they visited Tabby Town during a terrible windstorm where they

met a young orange tabby named Marshal. Kyle wanted to make sure that his son and



Marshal would bond, so we set them up in a meet and greet area where they could spend time to-

gether. It was an immediate bond and we have since learned that Marshal was even up to the challenge of being friends with Kyle’s service dog! Kyle texted us



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CONCLUSION

We did not use any specific tool to measure the effectiveness of this project. The grant award was divided into categories consisting of veterinary care, supplies for the pet owner and food. That being said, there is no tool to measure the feeling of accomplishment and pride that the Tabby Team received for the adoptions we were able to provide. The positive feedback and heartfelt thanks from



those we were able to adopt a cat speak themselves. All adopters were told that the Human Education Grant from the Latham Foundation supported their adoption in total. A sheet with a description of the Latham Foundation along with all information, medical records and history of the cat was included in their adoption packet.

We have since expanded the program to offer discounts to not only those in the military and veterans, but to first responders as well.

With escalating prices for the cost of living, food, shelter and animal care, it is increasingly rewarding to offer a modicum of support for those who work so hard in supporting us.

In summation, none of this would have been possible had it not been for the Latham Foundation. Tabby Town is grateful for their generosity. 🐱



THE MAUI FIRES

A team from San Diego Humane Society is in Maui helping Maui Humane Society rescue animals from the fire devastation. See the news clip.

<https://www.nbcsandiego.com/news/local/san-diego-humane-society-team-to-deploy-to-maui/3284193/>



Human Animal Interaction Upcoming AAI Webinars:

*Monthly facilitated peer consultation group
for anyone interested in learning more about AAI*

The HAI section has launched a new platform for new and seasoned providers of animal assisted services to be able to share techniques, ask questions, bring case scenarios, etc. These group meetings are not lecture/didactic but more ‘group dynamic’ with a facilitator (i.e., psychologist, social worker, occupational therapist, etc.) guiding the process.

Sign up: human-animal-interaction.org/blog/animal-assisted-interventions-webinars/.

September 7, 2023
Empathy and Emotion Regulation
in Animals

Presented by Jennifer Vonk

October 5, 2023
Benefits of Equine Assisted Learning
for Humans while maintaining
welfare of equines

Presented by Meg Kirby

6 INCREDIBLE STORIES OF ANIMAL HEROES

from Guideposts:

Including: Service Dog
Becomes Veteran
Amputee’s Hero

(See Lucky book review page 25)



<https://guideposts.org/positive-living/friends-and-family/pets/6-incredible-stories-of-animal-heroes/>

LUCKY: LITTLE GUY, BIG MISSION

by Eileen Doyon, Christy Gardner,
Susan Spellman (Illustrator)

FALL IN LOVE WITH LUCKY!

This amazing hardcover picture book is a true story about Lucky, a little puppy that only Christy Gardner, an Army Veteran who has two prosthetic legs, saw potential in.

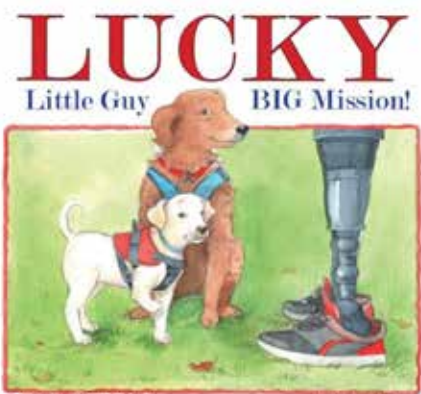
He was a little puppy born with an unusual front leg. Others saw him with a flaw, Christy saw him with lots of love to give.

She was already training puppies to become service/therapy dogs. The story of Lucky is that of a special puppy with an incredible personality and a special mission. Who knows what his fate would have been if Christy had not given him a helping hand? You see, Lucky was a puppy that no one wanted to care for. Christy immediately felt a connection with him.

Read how Christy and her service dog, Moxie, took Lucky into their home. He will warm your heart and put a smile on your face. Moxie teaches Lucky that he can do things like other puppies can, he just has to figure out his own way.

This story is about anti-bullying, and that being different is ok, and to never, never give up... happy trails!

ISBN-13: 9781950381395
Publisher: Piscataqua Press



by Eileen Doyon with
Christy Gardner

Illustrated by
Susan Spellman



CAT CARE HEROES

Written by Julie Hundman

Illustrated by Elizabeth Wright

Reviewed by our own Sue Spiersch



Cat Care Heroes is a very sweet children's story about a couple, Frank & Laurie, who care for stray cats in their neighborhood. When a stray cat would show up at their door, they would use a live catch animal trap to catch the cat and take the cat to a vet for health checkups and spay/neuter surgery. Noticing all of the cats in Frank & Laurie's yard, some neighbor children came to visit and were taught how to care for and behave around stray cats.



WRITTEN BY Julie Hundman ILLUSTRATED BY Elizabeth Wright

When the children show up with a stray from their school, Laurie & the children take the cat to the Vet where the children learn about chipping an animal and returning the animal to it's rightful owner. This is a great book for teaching children how to care for pets beyond just loving them.

Available at The

Novel Bookstore
314-738-9384 •

hello@thenovelneighbor.com

ISBN: 978-0-9970585-5-0

FROM OUR 1932 *KIND DEEDS* ISSUE TO OUR WEBSITE TODAY~EXAMPLES OF LATHAM'S FIRST STEP TO HUMANE EDUCATION:



WHAT THE KIND DEEDS CLUB HAS DONE FOR ME

By JAROLD JOSEPH, age 11 years
High Sixth, Marin School, Albany.

You do not know what the Kind Deeds Club has done for me. Before I heard of it I would hit dogs and think it very funny to see a dog running around with a tin can tied to his tail, but now I feel sorry for him and try to catch him so I can take the can off.

The woman who has helped me to know what the Kind Deeds Club is for is Mrs. Tebault with her stories and story board. I enjoy them very much.

The Kind Deeds Pledge is very helpful, too.

The Kind Deeds Club has helped me very much and I think if everyone will be kind and live up to the pledge everything in the world will be better.

BE KIND TO ANIMALS ANNIVERSARY APRIL 15-21



[Click to play](#)

If you would like to share your own anecdote, story, photo, or artwork relating to one of the Latham's steps to Humane Education, we would love to see it (and possibly publish it in *The Latham Letter*!)

Editor@latham.org

STREAMING FOR FREE: EDUCATIONAL VIDEOS FOCUSED ON EMPATHY AND KINDNESS

vimeo.com/lathamfoundation/portfolios





Interested in Writing for the Latham Letter?

The editors welcome manuscripts relevant to the Foundation's interests and mission but reserve the right to publish such manuscripts at their discretion. The Latham Foundation promotes respect for all life through education; The Latham Letter, which has been published for more than 40 years, presents balanced views on humane issues and activities throughout the world. We are particularly interested in articles that will appeal to the Letter's diverse readership. Subscribers include animal welfare and social service professionals, veterinarians, university students, and individuals interested in humane education, the human-companion animal bond, animal-assisted or animal-facilitated therapy and interventions, and the connection between animal abuse and other forms of violence.

Submissions should be between 500 to 2,000 words and e-mailed as an attached Microsoft Word document with a brief cover letter explaining your submission. The cover letter should include authors' names in publishing order and the name, address, telephone (home and work) and the e-mail addresses for the corresponding (submitting) author.

Photographs, tables, figures and other related graphics such as an organization's logo are encouraged. Photographs should be properly labeled with credit and captions and submitted either as high resolution files or as originals, which will be scanned (and returned if requested). Please include copies of all signed releases.

Tables and figures should be submitted as separate files in their original format. Please do not

integrate them into the electronic text.

Submissions should conclude with a brief biographical paragraph about the author(s) including preferred contact information.

The ultimate decision regarding the appropriateness and acceptance for publication lies with the Latham Foundation. All accepted manuscripts are subject to editing for space and to conform to the Associated Press Stylebook.

Published authors will be expected to transfer copyright to the Latham Foundation for the Promotion of Humane Education. Latham Letters appear in their entirety as .PDF files on the Foundation's website www.latham.org. Please keep original copies of the manuscript in your possession.

Send queries or manuscripts to:
Editor@latham.org

Summers End



The Latham Foundation

PROMOTING RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION

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