

THE Latham Letter

VOLUME XLV, NUMBER 4

Fall 2024

PROMOTING RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION

ON THE ROAD TO THE PARALYMPICS



A Paralympian and her Guide Dog - pp 5 - 7



PLUS FUNDRAISING ARTICLE PG 8:
EMPATHY = MONEY

HUMAN-ANIMAL INTERACTIONS pg 5

GRANT REPORTS pg 13

LETTERS & LINKS pg 17

MANDATE

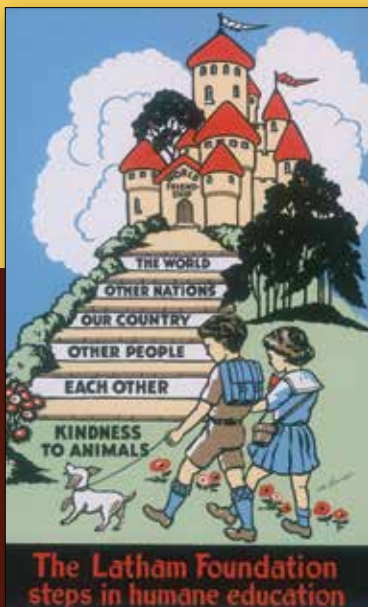
Edith Latham's **MANDATE:**

"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

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Promotion of Humane Education

The Latham Letter

Volume XLV, Number 4, Fall 2024

**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
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Hugh H. Tebault, President

VOLUNTEERS ABOUND!

It is important to share our work with others to gain volunteers, donors and friends. In this Latham Letter we share interesting work being done to encourage donors and new volunteers by bringing them together to see the work in action. The article on Jasper Ridge

Farm describes an up front and personal sharing of the work being done, demonstrating humane education better than any brochure ever could. This also helps the existing staff and volunteers develop their communication skills as they answer the questions that ultimately are asked by those seeing this work in person, maybe for the first time. We hope you will find these articles useful.

an opportunity for a wider community outreach, so they are adapting as best they can. We know they will be successful and perhaps will share some of their story with us in the future.

We were both saddened by the intensity of the hurricane season this year and impressed by the many Americans who immediately came together to help. Stories of volunteers and neighbors helping neighbors, reaching out to help the many displaced people and their animals, are heartening. One story was of hauling a supply of hay into the hurricane area to help feed those animals cut off from grazing lands by the floods.

We hope you are safe where you live, and continuing to help in your community as needs arise. 🐾

The hurricane season has impacted at least two of our previous grant award-ees. The president and family of one grant winner left one hurricane area in North Carolina to stay with family members in Florida, in the path of a second hurricane. Good news is that no damage was done, and they returned to North Carolina safely.



Another recipient was Guiding Reins in South Carolina, which did receive damage and disruption of their operations. They have found it has given them

ON THE ROAD TO THE PARALYMPICS

As a visually impaired Judo athlete, Priscilla Gagné never relied on a guide dog, though she was the proud owner of a German Shepherd Lab, Sergeant Tango. When Tango neared the end of his life in early 2023, Priscilla decided it was time to get a formally trained service dog.

“Making the jump from white cane to guide dog was a no-brainer,” Priscilla explains. Montreal’s three-year waiting list for service dogs led her to consider international options. Based in Southern California, Guide Dogs of America | Tender Loving Canines became her choice. “I knew it would take three weeks to train,” says Priscilla. “If I’m going to spend three weeks somewhere, I knew I wanted it to be California.”



The application process validated Priscilla’s decision. “Within a week or two of contacting GDA | TLC, I got confirmation I was approved and accepted. Not even a week later, I got a call telling me they had a match,” she says. “They wanted me to come just two days after a competition in Egypt. The timing was divine.”

LEARNING TO TRUST ZOPHIA

In March 2023, Priscilla flew to Los Angeles and met her match, Zophia. She had to learn how to use the harness and give commands before meeting her new companion.

“When we finally got our dogs, they wanted us to be with them and feel the harness,” recalls Priscilla. “I walk really fast and so does Zophia. They matched us so well. I had one hand on her harness and the other up in front of my body—we call it a bumper.”

“Our trainer, Sean, kept telling me to trust my dog, but even when I put my hand down, it was flexed. I was so tense.” The first hurdle was



Judo Athlete Priscilla Gagné & Guide Dog Zophia

learning to trust Zophia. Priscilla adapted quickly in Los Angeles but faced new challenges back home in Montreal.

“In Montreal, it took two weeks for both of us to be comfortable with each other,” says Priscilla. “Dogs don’t always recognize flat curbs as curbs.” The trainers’ reminder that the training would continue at home proved true. The solution? Treats!

Zophia lived up to her training, proving to be an intelligent, trainable, and affectionate companion. “Every day, she amazes me,” says Priscilla. “She never ceases to surprise me with her intellect. Before I go to bed, I give her a hug and kiss and thank her for helping me. She sleeps in my bed every night.”

Continued on next page



GDA | TLC set up Priscilla and Zophia for success, providing a foundation of trust and excellence. “The staff, the trainers, and everyone involved did an amazing job to help us feel completely welcomed and safe,” says Priscilla.

“They did a great job teaching us how to work with our dogs.” GDA | TLC also exceeded Priscilla’s expectations with their tact during training and careful follow-up post-training.

“They have so much respect,” says Priscilla. “They also do close follow-up once you go home so that they know their dog is in good hands. Their dogs have been treated well.”

A PERFECT PARTNER FOR JUDO PRACTICE

Priscilla, a former high school wrestler and goalball player on the National Team, is a skilled athlete. When she discovered Judo, she

found a grappling sport included in the Paralympics.

“When playing goalball, I missed the combativeness of wrestling. The closest thing to wrestling in the Paralympics was Judo,” ex-

plains Priscilla. “Plus, in wrestling you can’t do real submissions—chokes and arm locks—but in Judo you can. That was appealing to me.”

Priscilla joined the Canadian National Team in 2014 and competed in the 2015 Rio Paralympics. She has traveled to Turkey, Germany, Uzbekistan, Great Britain, Egypt, and more, competing in this sport requiring a unique blend of timing, strength, and deep concentration.

Competing as a Paralympic Judo athlete in Canada can be challenging. Montreal’s small, integrated training system means



Continued on next page



para-Judo athletes train with able-bodied National Team athletes. Historically, Priscilla had to leave Tango at home, which was difficult, and finding a partner was challenging.

“Initially, it was so discouraging. People don’t always want to practice with someone who is visually impaired,” explains Priscilla. “We don’t see

the fluidness of their movements, and the rules are different. We always start with a grip, we always have to have two hands on, and you can’t block a hand. In regular Judo, none of that stuff goes.”

However, going to practice with Zophia has changed everything. Navigating busy Montreal, with its heavy vehicle and foot traffic, bicycle lanes, and metro, is taxing. But walking with Zophia eases that burden and makes it more motivat-

ing to go to training. “She knows where we’re going,” says Priscilla. “I can ask her to find a door or the stairs in the metro, and she finds it. I don’t need to ask for help anymore. She breezes through obstacles.”

“It takes a lot of energy to navigate this city. Zophia makes navigation one less thing I need to think about.”

Not only does Zophia help Priscilla journey the hazard-heavy route to practice without a cane, but her presence also lightens the environment. “She hangs out in the physio room,” says Priscilla. “People come in with minor injuries or disappointments, but they immediately light up when they see Zophia.”

Zophia also serves as a great conversation starter. “People ask me how she helps me,” says Pris-

cilla. “It brings a lot of awareness, even to the younger generation.” Bringing Zophia to practice has made the whole process smoother and more enjoyable. “It’s so much easier,” says Priscilla.

Priscilla competed in Paris in the fall of 2024. She will retire from Judo as a National Team athlete. “I’ve thoroughly enjoyed this journey, and I have no regrets. Having said that, I am definitely ready for the next step in my life,” explains Priscilla.

Whatever that next step may be, Zophia will be at her side. 🐕





Meeting the animals! For free. On a Saturday! With food! Well, I'm in! Even the dress code was casual denim. I easily convinced my animal loving Great Dane Mom/friend to join me.(Full of empathy with friendly sheep shown in this photo).

After driving down a country road, we got to the parking lot where we were given a red scarf and a denim bag before we got a "hayride" to the actual farm. The event, layout, banners, and volunteers' clothes - everywhere

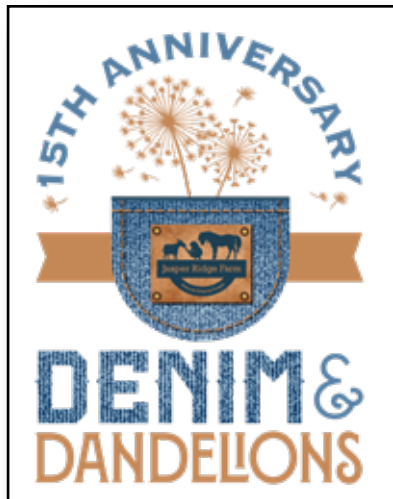
we looked - were all the same theme as the email invite, so it was crystal clear where I was, and what this was about – humane humans and animals. It was quite

EMPATHY = MONEY

By Tula Asselanis

The moment I see an animal close-up, IRL (in real life), my heart opens up - as well as my wallet. Well, at least that's the theory. Despite concerns of allergies, insurance, and/or over-handling, in-person interactions with animals not only opens up empathy to the animals, but also to an organization's mission. Showing the human-animal bond in action, even in a minor way, gets those generous, loving "aw" feelings flowing.

Scrolling through my emails here at The Latham Foundation,



I came across a warm-fuzzy feeling of a stylish/country invite titled 'Denim and dandelions.' It enticed me to read on. I didn't know much about Jasper Ridge Farm until I got to spend the day there. I did know they received a grant from

Latham for their free-to-veterans program called HorseHeroes. The invite was for an eventful day on the farm in honor of their fifteenth anniversary.



Continued on next page



I soon realized, 'Hey this is a demonstration of how animal-assisted interactions (AAI) improve human lives!'

After picking up our lunch from the free taco truck (vegan options available of course), we sat on straw bales and listened to a Bluegrass musical group and watched some visitors learning how to line dance. Others strolled over to enjoy the margarita machine. I did both!

I was able to hear a short but powerful line up of

a well attended fundraiser that had obvious major planning.

The many volunteers were easy to see in their red T-shirts and jeans, and they guided us to the various farm events. My friend and I immediately went to meet the animals before getting drinks or food. What struck me about all the volunteers was not only how helpful and pleasant to talk to they were, but also how kind they were to each other, the animals, and us. They answered all our silly questions (I'm sure over and over again all that day), and if they didn't know the answer,

they knew who to ask. Learning the proper way to pet a peacock was a new one for me. They were all fully committed to the farm, the mission and the goal of the fundraiser.

Fun kids' events were also teaching moments. Besides meeting the animals, they were shown



how to approach and interact with each different animal and personality; for example, how to kindly hold a chicken. Art tables were set up for them to draw and make their own animals. Teens learned how to carefully rope plastic bulls.

speakers who had awe-inspiring stories to tell from different animal-assisted programs at Jasper Ridge. As the day went on, the theme was even clearer to me. The different speakers brought 'empathy works' full circle for several different needs.

"Inspired by the comforting power of gentle animals and nature, Jasper Ridge Farm provides special experiences for





assists, several children's events were described, such as taking kids from a shelter on a field trip to the farm, or bringing animals to kids in hospitals and to the Ronald McDonald House, where every person needed relief from different kinds of pain. Dr. Gudiño, Deputy Clinical Director and Senior Psychologist at the Child Mind Institute, talked about how AAI helps children with different issues from anxiety to ADHD. See more on Dr. Gudiño at:

youtube.com/watch?v=LpRpen8m7o4

children and individuals in our community in need of mental health and emotional support. We strive to improve the physical, mental, emotional, and social well-being of our clients through our therapeutic animal assisted programs." Their website, mission and speakers of the day attested to this. Since it's founding by Wendy Mattes in 2009, Jasper Ridge Farm has been offering different therapeutic animal-assisted programs free of charge for their clients and community.



Dr. Omar Gudiño

Speakers highlighted each special program offered. HorseBud-dies is for special needs students in San Mateo county, which a mother of a child spoke about. (Read her speech on page 12.)

In addition, I learned about how they bring animals to visit both inmates and staff of a local prison. Besides adult mental health

Visitors at the fundraiser got to experience AAI for themselves. In addition to the joy of being around animals, they got a sense of how much effort it takes to care for them and have them available to create that magic which they offer for free here thanks to those who donate.



Continued on next page

Wrapping the event up was the epitome of giving empathy: Rachel Britten, a preeminent fundraising auctioneer with her unique witty style, “auctioned” off the joy of funding the different programs.

The funds raised will pay for the therapeutic experiences as well as vet care, food, staff compensation, and liability insurance for the farm. In previous silent auctions, people would place a bid for a donated item



EPILOGUE

I knew there must have been a lot of planning and money behind this incredible fundraiser! I got to talk to Wendy the founder about the brilliant format for this one. Wendy explained they usually have an annual “big barn bash” in May -- an evening where guests purchased tickets for a sit down dinner and auction.

Catering and renting tables and chairs were big expenses. So for their 15th anniversary, a longtime volunteer and board member, Amy Wright, suggested a different model which not only kept the costs down but also exposed

guests to the very therapy they were supporting with their donations. Although inflation has upped the farms expenses by 20%, this was their most successful fundraiser ever, with donations of over \$180,000!

Whether it’s a matter of spending a few dollars to print a flyer to encourage donations, or thousands of dollars to create an experience, the whole event was a clear celebration of the powerful human-animal bond AND it felt good to both give and receive. 🐾

such as a massage, a hotel stay or a painting. This time the focus was on the mission and the programs themselves. The highest bids were donations to a specific program, and for their money they received the joy of giving something special to others. It was an exciting way to ramp up commitments of donations with a warming enrichment to one’s soul.



JASPER RIDGE FARM CLIENT SPEAKER SEPTEMBER 7, 2024

Hi Everyone! Thank you for coming to this event. It means a lot to me to see so many people who want to support Jasper Ridge Farm.

My name is Olga and I am the mother of three boys. Alosha, the youngest, is the reason I sought out Jasper Ridge Farm about two years ago.

I will first share a little bit about Alosha and then I will talk about how the monthly visits have been a big part of his development. I will also talk about the surprising impact Jasper Ridge Farm has had on me, the parent!

Alosha is a special needs child who has difficulty speaking, low muscle tone, and a high level of anxiety around animals and strangers.

Because of the pandemic, I was looking for programs held outdoors to minimize Alosha's potential exposure to Covid. When I learned about Jasper Ridge Farm, I thought it would be the right fit for him.

From our very first Farm visit, we have felt welcomed by everyone. The staff-- Corie, Cynthia, and Margaret. The volunteers -- Patti, Kezya, and Kai. And of course, all of the lovely animals.

Initially, Alosha would not venture far from me. He only interacted with Kinsey, a small, gentle dog who loves playing fetch. Because Kinsey never tried to jump on him, his confidence around animals grew.

Today, Alosha loves to greet all the animals with a happy "Hi!" He will also eagerly take my hand and pull me towards the stalls to introduce the animals to me.

Alosha especially likes to feed parsley to the guinea pigs. He would happily spend all his time with them except that he also loves the chickens. He likes petting chickens in other peoples' laps, and occasionally, will even accept having a chicken placed in his.

Alosha has blossomed into a very confident and playful child who looks forward to the Farm visit every month.

But it is not just Alosha who has benefited from Jasper Ridge Farm. It has also had a powerful impact on me.

I always feel relaxed knowing my child will be treated compassionately by patient volunteers, and safely by gentle animals. And I get to experience the joy of connecting with animals, too! There is nothing quite like having a chicken practically melt into your lap to make you feel relaxed.

By the time the visit ends, I feel like my batteries are re-charged and I have received a warm hug from Jasper Ridge Farm. Because I have found these visits so restorative, I have introduced several other families with special needs kids to Jasper Ridge Farm.

I hope this organization continues to grow so it is able to provide more families with special needs kids the opportunity to experience similar moments of joy, relaxation, and nurture.

Thank you for being an amazing audience and supporter of this unique organization. And thank you to Jasper Ridge Farm from both Alosha and our family. I will close with his words after a recent visit, "Farm, good." Thank you.





Working with Veterans Administration staff, Jasper Ridge Farm seeks to serve Veterans, including those with PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury, and Poly Trauma injuries, through our HorseHeroes program, which offers tremendous implications for post-service well-being and functioning. By connecting Veterans

with a horse, working in a group of his or her peers, along with VA staff and Jasper Ridge Farm staff, our HorseHeroes program makes a positive difference in the Veterans' physical, emotional, and social well-being.

The generous grant from The Latham Foundation enabled us to run separate levels of our HorseHeroes program to accommodate the varying ability levels of our participating Veterans. Our program is offered free of charge to Veterans and their families, and so the tremendous support from The Latham Foundation enables us to care for our animals and continue to provide opportunities for Veterans to participate.

Feedback on our post-program surveys from Veterans include:

- "Spending time with my





wife and her therapy has been a very good experience. I see a lot of improvements in my wife's well-being."

- "This is the best anxiety/depression relief therapy!"
- "It is good to connect with horses and with other people."
- "I feel better able to step back and reflect, rather than just react."
- "Connecting with my horse has motivated me to relate with people more."
- "The trust we all forged together as a group made it easier to regulate."
- "When I feel too stressed out or overwhelmed by my day-to-day, I can visualize my horse experience, and immediately calm down and be in a place of serenity."

• "The best part was being very intune with my horse and sharing calmness as one."

• "Riding a horse gave me a sense of comfort within myself. It gave me more confidence. Being around animals releases stress and makes me happy."

• "I miss my horse when I'm not here and can't wait to see him again!"

• "Learning to take care of my horse was the most soulful experience!"

Wendy Mattes
Founder, Jasper Ridge Farm 🐾





Over a three week period, the Animal Rescue League of New Hampshire (ARLNH) hosted Camp Critter, an educational and interactive humane education summer program. We are very grateful to have received grant funding from The Latham Foundation which enabled us to offer scholarships this summer to the children of veterans, active military, and first responders.

ARLNH welcomed children aged 6-13 for half-day programming full of learning opportunities and animal interactions. The curriculum centered around “the five freedoms” of animal welfare that help animal owners provide the best care for their pets. Campers learned about different animal needs, the way dogs and cats use body language to communicate, animal care skills, and safe handling skills. We had many exciting guest speakers come to talk about their work with animals. Lots of laughs were had during animal-themed games and creativity was sparked during enrichment activities. The highlight for all was the animal interactions with shelter residents! Campers were sad to say goodbye to their new animal friends at the end of each week, but they left with a new understanding of animal needs and compassion for all.

We are so grateful to The Latham Foundation and to all

CAMP CRITTER IS COMPLETE!

AT THE ANIMAL RESCUE LEAGUE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE



the families who participated this summer. We are also excited for future programming. Next year we are looking to expand our offerings to a wider audience for Summer 2025!

After the conclusion of Camp Critter, a survey was sent to all of the participating families and our ARLNH staff members. Here are some stand-out stories from the three weeks:

One parent had two children attend different sessions, both

of whom have had challenges navigating social interactions. She was overjoyed with her children’s experience with camp and happy with their progress. Her youngest felt included in group activities and thrived in helping roles. She became emotional when hearing that her oldest offered to read to the group during storytime, something that he would not normally do, and showed his comfort level interacting in the nurturing camp environment. Quote: The first day he came home he said, “Mommy, this was such a special day.

Continued on next page



and it really helped me experience real animal care. Also, how valuable animals are to the earth.”

Campers made new friends throughout their sessions and took part in activities that centered around compassion, teamwork, and collaboration. This fostered opportunities for campers to show kindness and empathy, as well as to help one another. Campers also connected with one another about being a child of a veteran, active military, or first responder.

It was nice

I love this camp! I can’t wait for next year!” He loved every aspect of this camp from start to finish and is happily growing the lettuce and kale seeds at home for his bearded dragon!

One camper showed a great deal of growth and maturity during her session. She became very interested in learning about small animals, especially a pair of guinea pigs available for adoption. She brought what she learned about animal care needs and responsible pet ownership home to her parents and presented why she was mature enough to adopt the pair. At the end of camp, her parents

surprised her by bringing her back to adopt them. This camper was also responsible for going to the store to pick out all of the required items needed to care for them and set up their appropriate housing. She was overjoyed about her new friends! Camper Quote: “I’ve never seen a camp like this before

to see the environment that was created foster these new friendships. 🐹



WE GET LETTERS

A lovely note from Wild Hearts in South Carolina.

We are excited to hear about your program with local schools!



Hugh & everyone at The Latham Foundation - 9/1/2024
 We are eternally grateful at Wild Hearts Equine Therapy Center for your generous grant award that will help us continue to provide much needed services to our local schools and children who struggle with learning/behavioral difficulties.
 Our All-in-One Student Connections Program utilizes our rescued horses who have been rehabilitated and are trained to work with special needs people.
 Your support of this program is truly a blessing.
 Much love and gratitude - Lisa Harley

& LINKS

ASPCApro

Explore by Topic: Select... Search the site... Q

You are exploring **Tools & Tips**

• Essential Tips for Effective Fundraising

<https://www.aspcapro.org/resource/essential-tips-effective-fundraising>

Essential Tips for Effective Fundraising

As support for animal welfare continues to grow in the U.S., it's crucial for organizations to elevate their fundraising efforts to secure the resources needed for their lifesaving work. Here are some key tips from the ASPCA's Philanthropy team to help maximize your fundraising strategies.

First Name
 Last Name
 Email Address
 SUBMIT

IT'S YOUR TURN!

Have a great idea for a fundraiser? You are invited to send your comments, information wishes, or submit your own article book or media reviews, for consideration, please contact:
Editor@latham.org.



INVISIBLE DISABILITIES

by Mary Tebault

My cousin's granddaughter has a disorder called POTS, postural orthostatic tachycardia syndrome. This is an auto immune disease

which is characterized by a rapid increase in heart rate upon standing. It can cause symptoms like dizziness, lightheadedness, fainting, and palpitations.

I recently found the following YouTube video which is an excellent presentation by a young lady who has this disorder. Joined by her service dog Dallas, Bri gives a brief description of various types of service dogs as well as what she describes as 'invisible disabilities,'

mentioning that she must often advocate for herself because people cannot see her disability.

I hope this video will be as informative to our readers as it was for me.

<https://m.youtube.com/watch?v=GnAc32N06-4>

GRANT RECIPIENT

DOG TAG BUDDIES FINAL GRANT 2023 REPORT

The purpose of this grant was to help provide in-class training hours to veterans participating in our program. During in-class training, veterans are primarily focused on learning how to teach their dog the skills and behaviors they need to perform as service dogs. Training occurs in a variety of environments, including closed training environment as well as a variety of public settings. The training becomes a therapeutic treatment modality that provides the veterans a renewed sense of purpose, discourages self-isolation, and ultimately helps the veteran learn to face and manage the challenges of their disabilities with their dog by their side.

Objective effectiveness was measured by the number of training hours

recorded by training. Subjectively, our success is measured by improved lives of our veterans. By participating in our program, veterans report improved social mobility and improved mental health and wellness. More than one veteran has stated, "Dog Tag Buddies saved my life."

<https://dogtagbuddies.org/toms-story/>





The Human-Animal Connection explores the deeper possibilities of relating to animals in a way that honors their wisdom. We explore the 33 principles that allow us to enter the world of animals through love, compassion and connection.

way of the future for cat rescue. The Hermitage's motto is: Loving the Unloved and Finding Them Forever Homes Since 1965.

https://youtu.be/jwXxlZXk8_E?si=Pwp3u2ZrbFQRJ2GD

CHILDREN'S EXPERIENCES OF POSITIVE AFFECT WITH PET DOGS: A MULTI-METHOD

Kathryn Kerns, Ph.D., is a developmental psychologist whose research has focused on how children's close relationships with parents, friends, and pet dogs in middle childhood contribute to children's social and emotional development. She is currently an Emeritus Professor at Kent State University.

<https://www.human-animal-interaction.org/podcast/>





THE LATHAM STEPS

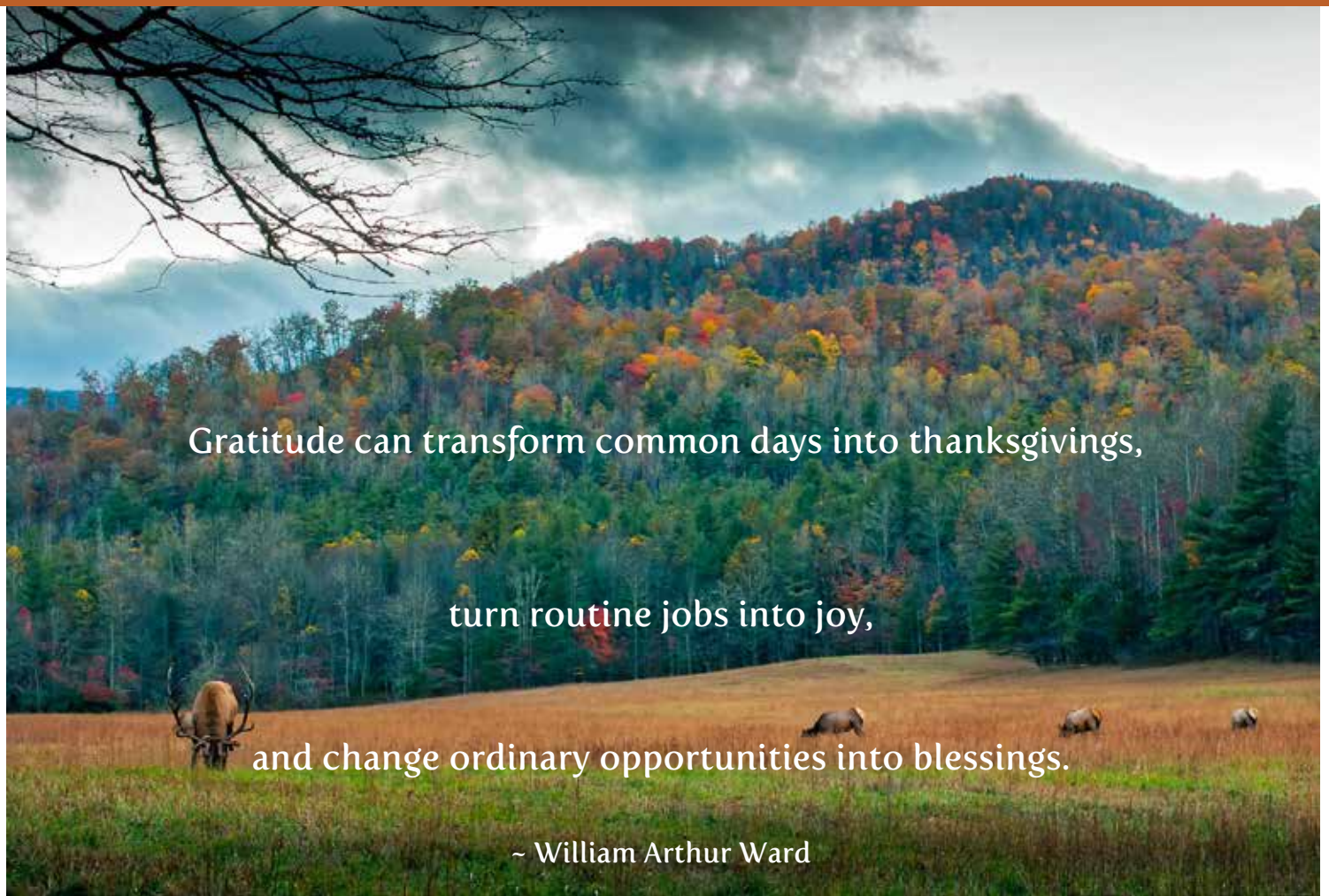
We would love to know your thoughts on this issue's articles. If you would like to share your own anecdote, story, photo, or artwork relating to one of the Latham Steps to Humane Education, we would love to see it (and possibly publish it in *The Latham Letter*!) Editor@latham.org



STREAMING FOR FREE: EDUCATIONAL VIDEOS FOCUSED ON EMPATHY AND KINDNESS

vimeo.com/lathamfoundation/portfolios





Gratitude can transform common days into thanksgivings,
turn routine jobs into joy,
and change ordinary opportunities into blessings.

~ William Arthur Ward

As we express our gratitude, we must never forget
that the highest appreciation is not to utter words,
but to live by them.

~ John Fitzgerald Kennedy

We are deeply thankful for your support
and extend to you our best wishes for
a happy and healthy Thanksgiving Day.
From all of us at The Latham Foundation



The Latham Foundation

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