



Humanely Speaking

Bangor Humane Society Newsletter

Summer 2011

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The Bangor Humane Society champions the humane treatment and adoption of companion animals, provides quality care for homeless pets, and promotes animal welfare through education and advocacy.

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How to Save a Life... By Renee Ordway

A look into the "no-kill" shelter debate

Most animal welfare advocates are familiar with the term "no kill." It's a simple two-word phrase, yet its meaning and its true applicability in the world of animal shelters is actually quite complicated.

What does no kill mean to you?

Does it refer to a shelter which performs no euthanasia?

Consider, just for a moment, the reality of that.

If in order to call itself "no kill," a shelter does not euthanize any animals, then what happens to the dangerously aggressive dog that an owner abandons at the shelter door? What happens to an old, terminally ill cat that is suffering in pain? Or the highly-contagious animal that risks the lives of many?

Is an animal truly "saved" if it is not adoptable and will live out its life in the confines of a shelter kennel?

The discussion surrounding the concept of "no kill" is a daunting, emotional and on-going conversation among animal welfare professionals everywhere.

The Bangor Humane Society adopts the philosophy of the American Society to Prevent Cruelty to Animals, which does not support euthanasia

as the predominant means of managing the pet overpopulation problem. Every effort should be made to place appropriate animals in safe, responsible homes. Euthanasia should be resorted to only when necessary to spare animals further hardship and suffering.

Realistically, what "no-kill" means to the Bangor Humane Society is saving every healthy, treatable and adoptable animal. BHS never euthanizes an adoptable pet due to time or space constraints. The philosophy at BHS is to do everything practically possible to ensure that all healthy animals will be adopted.

Animal shelters should be a temporary refuge for animals. An absolute "no kill" environment shifts away from that, and too often turns a shelter into a prison for sick and aggressive animals,



Photo courtesy of Karen Littlefield

which then places healthy adoptable pets at risk.

The goal at the Bangor Humane Society is to focus on what is known in the industry as the "live release rate" or "rehome rate."

The goal at BHS is to increase its "live release rate" to 85 percent. To do that, the number of unwanted pets needs to decrease.

That is not something BHS can do alone. BHS will lead the way, but it takes an entire community and a strong commitment to ensure the health and safety of all animals.

As part of that long-term vision, BHS opened its own in-house vet clinic in 2004 ensuring that every animal leaving the facility is spayed or neutered.

Spaying and neutering your own pets and advocating for others to do the same is the simplest and most important thing anyone can do to reduce the population of unwanted pets.

Many local veterinarians have generously offered reduced fees for BHS so that it can offer an annual low-cost spay/neuter program for low-income pet owners.

Additionally, BHS is always working on ways to economically improve the facility to better serve the animals it cares for. For example, improvements to the shelter's ventilation system can help prevent the spread of respiratory infections among cats.

Keeping the animals healthy and happy

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BHS never euthanizes an adoptable pet due to time or space constraints.

From the Director



This time of year is always busy at our shelter. But lately, pet owners are giving up their dogs and cats at an alarming rate. It's another sign of bad economic times. People typically turn in their pets because they are moving and won't have room for them or because of an unexpected litter of puppies or kittens. Now it's because they can't afford to care for their pets or they have lost their homes.

Year to date, this time last year, we took in 2079 animals and re-homed 1078. This year, we have already taken in 2100 animals and adoptions are down. Our shelter operating costs, especially vet care, continue to increase, while donations to the Humane Society slowly decline. We do what we can personally, but there are so many animals that need our help.

So, now, more than ever, we need our community's support. In order to manage the current 50 dogs and over 200 cats and kittens that find refuge in our facility or in our foster homes, we rely heavily on our dedicated staff, committed volunteers, compassionate adopters, and generous donors. We know everyone is experiencing financial stress during these economic times. But, if each person receiving this newsletter donates just \$10, we could generate over \$50,000 to go toward the care of our many shelter pets in need.

When, and only when, we all come together, can we take each and every homeless, sick, or unwanted animal and do our best to make them happy, healthy, and adoptable pets. Only when we all realize that sensitive matters of life and death are not an isolated shelter problem, but a community issue, can we significantly impact the pet overpopulation problem. Only when we all begin to make responsible choices as pet owners to spay/neuter our pets and faithfully honor our commitment to them, will we see a reduction in the animals that arrive at our door.

And, only when we stand together in times of overwhelming, and sometimes, unbearable stress, will we save the lives of the many animals that need us.

If we can do all that, then we will begin to experience one 'miracle' at a time. Like *Wiggles*, a 4 year old tiger cat who spent four months in our care without contracting illness from shelter stress. She was first nurtured in foster care as she gave birth to a litter of kittens. Then, she waited patiently, until she finally found her forever home just a week ago.

Thank you all for your continued support in our work. It is my hope this newsletter will call each of you to action to do your part, so we can do ours.

Best regards,

'No-Kill' Continued

while they are in the shelter is also crucial to increasing the "live-release rate."

With that said, we here at BHS hope to call you to action. We hope that you, too, believe in our mission because we need the support of our community.

Pet owners need to become more responsible and honor their commitment to their pets. First and foremost, they need to spay and neuter their pets. Also, they need to stop looking at the pet overpopulation problem as the sole responsibility of their local shelter. This is a community issue.

Many of us who own a pet could never imagine surrendering it for any reason. But, at BHS, many pet owners surrender to us for a multitude of reasons— allergies, moving, unrealistic expectations, lack of income, lack of time, lack of empathy. For many owner-

surrenders, they come to us first to resolve their problem, instead of as a last resort. The majority of them sign the paperwork, walk out the door, and never look back.

We also depend on individual financial support so that we can continue to provide the veterinary care to the thousands of animals who come through our facility every year.

We go to great lengths to treat the physical and emotional needs of all the animals here, and your continuing generosity is what enables us to do that.

We are a community agency. We are *your* agency and, together, we can continue to care and truly provide humane treatment to our most needy pets, who are only searching for some love, some guidance and a second chance. ■



Hours of Operation

Monday — Friday: 12:00 p.m.— 6:00 p.m.
Saturday 10:00 a.m.— 6:00 p.m.

Board of Directors

Steve Thomas, President
Emily McIntosh, Vice-President
Robert Shuman, Treasurer
Amy Faircloth, Secretary
Anne Marie Storey, Past President
David Cloutier, DVM
Louise Cross
Lani Naihe
Renee Ordway
John Kenney
Lanni Moffatt
Matt Nye
Jeff Russell

Our Staff

Executive Director
Suzan Bell

Shelter Operations Manager
Chris Young

Office Manager
Amy Gentle

Volunteer & Public Relations Manager
Stacey R. Coventry

Adoption Counselors
Sonia, Kimberly, Jeromy, Kristian, Jill,
Wendy, Lisa, Carol

Animal Technicians
Sadie, Charmaine, Ryan, Kristy, Jaime,
Tasha, Katie, Alayne, Anika, Josie

Veterinary Technician
Lauren Landry

Canine Head-Start
Dawn Weber



Your Donor Dollars Matter...

A 'Miracle' Story

By Stacey R. Coventry

Not every animal that comes to the shelter can be saved, which is an emotionally difficult reality that the staff and volunteers have to face daily, when they work so hard to rehabilitate and re-home as many as they can. But every once in a while, everything seems to align just so and the extraordinary happens. It cannot be predicted or explained, only reflected upon with joy and gratitude that our work truly does make a difference. And every now and then we are fortunate enough to experience firsthand a miracle.

On March 20th, Lauren, a BHS adoption counselor, received what she thought to be a typical after-hours call from the Bangor Police Department about a stray puppy that needed to be brought to BHS. Hours later she learned that the circumstances of this puppy were certainly nothing typical.

When Lauren arrived after-hours at BHS to take in the stray shepherd-mix puppy, she knew immediately something was wrong. The puppy couldn't hold his head up and was extremely lethargic. The police officer told Lauren that the woman who contacted the police about the stray puppy disclosed he was having diarrhea. Aware of a recent parvo outbreak in the local area and noticing the seriousness of the puppy's physical symptoms, she quickly called another staff person in for backup. As she waited for extra staff support to arrive, she ran the eight minute parvo test on the puppy to confirm her suspicion. Meanwhile, she got the puppy situated in an isolated kennel in quarantine to protect the shelter from potential contamination of the disease. The test result came back positive. Knowing that this puppy had a 50/50 chance of survival if the virus was caught within the 48-hour period, Lauren rushed the puppy to the Emergency Vet, where he was put on an IV drip and tamsin treatment. The E-vet kept staff informed of the puppy's progress, which seemed dim more often than not.



Miracle after testing negative for parvo and placed for adoption.

After a week of being at the E-vet, the puppy returned to isolation at BHS, weak and with little hope of surviving. Staff frequently tested the puppy to see if the virus was still present, and time after time the test yielded a positive result. After weeks of remaining in isolation without social interaction in order to prevent spread of the disease, it seemed only a matter of time before the puppy would succumb to the virus.

But, suddenly, he began to bounce back and finally a parvo test came back negative. Staff ran a multitude of tests to reveal any complications or side effects that the virus could have caused. A slight heart murmur was discovered, but other than that he was healthy. He had survived! It was a miracle, and so he was rightly named.

Then the search for the right adoptive family began. A family who understood the work and commitment it would take to continue his medical care, training, and socialization that were necessary to ensure a healthy



Miracle, now Remi, 5 months old, happy and healthy!

The Facts About Parvo

From the American Veterinary Medical Association

What is canine parvovirus?

Canine parvovirus type 2 (CPV-2) or parvo is a highly contagious and serious disease caused by a virus that attacks the gastrointestinal tract of puppies and dogs. It also can damage the heart muscle in very young and unborn puppies.

How is parvovirus spread?

The virus is highly contagious and is spread by direct dog-to-dog contact and contact with contaminated feces (stool), environments or people. The virus can also contaminate kennel surfaces, food and water bowls, collars and leashes, and the hands and clothing of people who handle infected dogs.

What dogs are at risk?

All dogs are at risk, but puppies less than 4 months old and dogs that have not been vaccinated against canine parvovirus are at increased risk.

What are some signs of parvovirus infection?

Dogs infected experience lethargy; loss of appetite; fever; vomiting; and severe, often bloody, diarrhea. Vomiting and diarrhea can cause rapid dehydration, and most deaths from parvovirus occur within 48 to 72 hours following the onset of clinical signs.

How is canine parvovirus diagnosed and treated?

CPV-2 infection is often suspected based on the dog's history, physical examination, and laboratory tests. If you suspect your dog may have parvo, see your veterinarian immediately.

No specific drug is available that will kill the virus. Treatment is intended to support the dog's body systems until the dog's immune system can fight off the viral infection, consisting primarily of efforts to combat dehydration by replacing electrolyte and fluid losses, controlling vomiting and diarrhea, and preventing secondary infections. Early recognition and aggressive treatment are very important in order to achieve successful outcomes.

How is parvovirus prevented?

Vaccination and good hygiene are critical components of canine parvovirus prevention.

Since CPV-2 is highly contagious, isolation of infected dogs is necessary to minimize spread of infection. Proper cleaning and disinfection of contaminated kennels and other areas where infected dogs are (or have been) housed is essential to control the spread of parvovirus.

Ask the Vet

Q: What advice do you have on how to keep my pet healthy this summer?

A: The best way to keep your pet healthy during the summer is through preventative care. Heartworm and Lyme Disease are on the rise. We recommend using a reputable flea/tick preventative, like Frontline, to protect your dog and cat from flea or tick bites through fall, until several good frosts settle in.

If you live in or frequent areas with lots of woods or deer, talk with your vet about vaccinating your dog against lyme disease. Preventing lyme is a two dose initial vaccine, given 2-3 weeks apart. The vaccine is then given once annually to provide yearly protection to your pet against the disease.

Signs of lyme disease are sudden pain and inability for your dog to get up and move with ease. Fever, lethargy, and joint pain are all lyme disease indicators. If you observe these symptoms, see your the vet immediately.

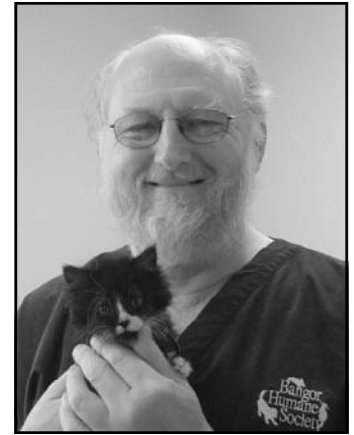
Heartworm is another extremely preventable disease. Heartworm is contracted through mosquito bites. Once the dog is 6 months old, it needs to be tested to be sure he/she doesn't already have heartworm. Upon a negative test result, the dog can be given a chewable tablet monthly to help prevent the disease. Heartguard or Inceptor are recommended brands.

Signs of heartworm are sudden lethargy and a frequent and persistent soft, moist cough.

Q: What are some ways I can help keep my dog cool this summer?

A: The best way to keep your dog cool during hot weather is to provide it with plenty of shade and water. But, here are some additional tips for the next few months.

1. On hot days, do not take your dog with you if you plan to leave him/her in the car. Not only is it illegal to leave your car in a hot vehicle, but it can be fatal to your pet. Even with windows down partially, heatstroke, brain damage, and fatality can all occur in minutes.
2. If you ever think your dog is suffering from heat stroke (uncontrollable panting and respiratory distress) use cool water (never ice cold) to help him cool down and then take him to the vet immediately.
3. On days when air quality is poor, leave your dog home. Do not take him on long, strenuous jogs, walks, or other forms of exercise to prevent respiratory distress.
4. Shave your dog's coat to help keep him cool. It is a myth that their coats insulate them against the heat. It's the same idea as people wearing a winter coat during the summer to combat heat– it just doesn't make sense. If you shave your dog, be careful of exposing him to direct sunlight to prevent sunburn. ■



Dr. Benson, Broadway Vet

Paws for Thought

Every day 70,000 puppies and kittens are born in the U.S., while only 10,000 people are born.

It's simple math - there just aren't enough homes for all of these animals.

Please spay and neuter your pets!

Shelter Highlights

- 🌿 We are proud to announce that we are a 2011 *Bangor Savings Bank Community Matters More* winner! Thank you to our community who voted for us and to Bangor Savings for this opportunity!



- 🌿 Thank you Qualey Granite & Quartz for becoming our first \$5,000 Platinum Level Corporate Kennel Sponsor!



- 🌿 Thank you Mackenzie Pearl and friends who became our youngest kennel sponsor after collecting donations for BHS in lieu of gifts for her 9th Birthday!
- 🌿 Thank you Don Hanson who just stepped down from our Board of Directors after 16 years of service!

Calendar & Events

July/August



Studio 36 Pet Portrait Contest: Proceeds to benefit BHS. Vote for your favorite pet portrait July 25th– August 12th online at www.studio36bangor.com or in person at the Bangor Art Walk on August 12th.

October

October 1st : Paws on Parade on the Bangor Waterfront from 9 am to 1 pm. Celebrate pets and raise money to help homeless pets in your community. Learn more about the event or register today at www.pawsonparade.kintera.org. Register by September 1st to earn a free event T-shirt!



Fostering Our Animals Home

By Amy Faircloth

The Bangor Humane Society does a pretty wonderful job at many things. The adoption counselors are top notch people who sincerely want to make the best matches possible between families and pets. The technicians and kennel personnel are hard working folks who strive to make and keep every animal safe, healthy and comfortable. The administrators are smart people who know how to balance the needs of the organization, its employees, the public and the animals. The volunteers are kind and passionate. There is a specific group of volunteers whose contributions may go unnoticed. These are the foster parents.

It happened to me by accident at first. I swore it would just be one time, but then I got addicted. Once I was done with one, I wanted more. My stepping stones to the slippery slope of fostering were three sibling underage pit bull puppies - the pibbles. They needed a mama. They needed to be socialized. They needed a dog role model. I didn't know if it would work in my household. I have an old grumpy standard poodle and a wild young terrier. I have a full time job. I have 17 and 19 -year- old sons. My plate is full. But I volunteered to take them home - just for the weekend. I set up a play pen in my living room and we all watched the three pibbles. "We" were my dogs, my sons, and several assorted visiting teenagers. Come Monday morning I could not return them. I was hooked.

The Humane Society provided me with everything the pibbles needed. I bought them stuff they didn't need but which they loved. I watched my terrier teach them to play tug. I watched my standard poodle teach them to respect their elders. I brought them outside for their first time. I dressed them in little sweaters. I put their first collars on them. I watched them discover and chase leaves. I introduced them to beds and

sofas, and the sounds of the vacuum cleaner and the shower. My terrier introduced them to the joy of a dirty dishwasher. I watched my teenage sons and their friends gently play with the pibbles who were using the boys as teething posts and wrestling mats. The boys named them and all claimed a favorite. I cleaned up a lot.

It is like raising children. You love them, and you teach them, you nurture them, and you give them the tools for the next stage of their life. I miss them but know that through the work of the Bangor Humane Society they are in homes where they are loved and safe. I have fostered many other dogs since then, and we have pretty much wanted to keep all of them. If I had kept the pibbles though, I never would have met the others, like Jade, the skinny white poodle, or Cadet, the elderly black poodle who needed a bath and a haircut, or Ace, the pug who needed nurturing to heal his broken leg, or Polly Pocket, a lab-mix puppy half the size of her siblings who needed a home to avoid their picking on her.

If you have the desire to foster pets, call the Bangor Humane Society. They will work with you and your household to find the perfect match. You will never regret fostering a pet from the Humane Society. I never have and I know there will never be a shortage of my drug of choice. ■



Austin's Corner



In case you haven't been in to meet me yet, let me introduce myself. My name is Austin and I'm the kingpin around the Bangor Humane Society. When I was dropped off, the staff here found me so irresistible that they decided to keep me around as the official BHS house cat.

I like to lie around on the counter and greet people who come to visit. I like to sprawl across the conference table when

our board of directors meet so that I get the inside scoop on any new plans for the shelter, plus I get a lot of attention.

I also love to roam around and check out all the pets that we are caring for while they wait to find *their* forever homes.

I especially love to prance through the dog kennels. Sometimes I stick my nose in the air and pretend I don't even notice them, but that's just for show. I'm actually paying close attention so that I can let you all know what our furry friends could use and enjoy, if you would be so kind as to drop off a donation someday.

Right now for example our dogs could sure use some toys. I'm very happy to just lay around most of the day, but dogs

want to play. Our staff and volunteers do a great job but they always could use some good toys such as Kongs (with some spray cheese or peanut butter to put inside of course) Nyla bones and squeaky or rope toys.

It's always nice to get canned dog and cat food as well. Sometimes its a special treat for us, but its also necessary for health purposes for some of our dogs and cats.

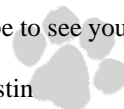
Of course dog and cat treats would never be turned away. Our staff just loves having treats on hand to reward us when we are extra good at minding our manners.

And, while the dogs are drooling over their toys, us cats? Well most of all we like to have fresh, clean litter boxes so we could always use a supply of scoopable kitty litter and extra litter boxes. We go through a lot of the stuff during kitten season.

Most of all the pets here want and need a safe and loving forever home. You can see them by going to our website at bangorhumane.org, or better yet, stop by. Chances are I'll be in the lobby waiting to greet you!

Hope to see you soon,

Austin



'Miracle' Continued

and strong future for the young pup. The search resulted in yet another miracle– the Hutchinson Family from Dover Foxcroft.

The Hutchinsons had recently lost their 17-year-old dog and were looking for another companion to add to their growing family. They found themselves at BHS and instantly connected with Miracle. They had the required time, knowledge, compassion, and listened openly to staff as they expressed Miracle's needs. It was the perfect match.

"It all came together so beautifully," says Lisa Hutchinson. "Almost like God had a hand in it all." Miracle, renamed Remi (short for Remedy– as he helped heal a grieving family just as he was healed) is now 5 months old and is as happy and strong as ever. He has easily bonded with all members of the Hutchinson's family– Lisa, her husband, her children, grandchildren, and the family cat, Hunter. He has forged a special friendship with the Hutchinson's three-year-old black lab, Sadie, who has helped Miracle, aka Remi, develop positive social skills and manners. He loves to swim, splash around in the kiddie pool, play tug of war and can sit, shake paw, and roll over.

"We are so proud of him," says Lisa. "He has just blossomed. He is active, happy, and such a joy. We just adore him."

The story of this 'miracle' puppy is not only one of survival and resilience but proof that when the skills of a talented and knowledgeable staff align with community compassion and financial support, miracles really can happen. ■



Miracle (aka Remi) playing with his new pal, Sadie.

Our Guiding Principles

- Treat all animals and people with respect, dignity, and integrity.
- Work diligently to end companion animal overpopulation by increasing awareness of spay and neuter programs.
- Promote adoption of physically and mentally healthy companion animals.
- Educate and train caretakers to develop fulfilling and lifelong relationships with their companion animals.
- Serve as responsible stewards of our resources.
- Hold ourselves to the highest standards of safety, care, and cleanliness.
- Raise public awareness with regard to the humane treatment of animals.
- Use euthanasia only as a last humane option in the best interest of the animal.



Sadie thanks you for your support!