

Celebrating 20 years of great work

In a world that reverberates with “me, me, me,” Chris Young is an exception. This year he celebrates twenty years at the Bangor Humane Society, where he works as animal care and operations manager. A member of the shelter’s leadership team, he oversees the care of all the animals and the building itself. He’s seen a lot since September of 1989, and he credits the people he’s worked with over the years for changes that have made BHS an inviting sanctuary for animals.

Though Chris had virtually no experience with animals when he first started with BHS, he was young and full of energy. “For me,” said Chris, “working at BHS was all about making a difference, about creating a better place for animals and staff.”

And that’s just what he did. When Chris came to the humane society in 1989, he saw three improvements he wanted to make right away: methods for cleaning, guidelines for food donations, and protocols for euthanasia.

It didn’t take long for Chris to recognize that the cleaning products used to keep the place spotless needed to contain disinfectants to keep the animals healthy – an easy fix that he implemented right away.

Then he saw that the generous food donations included dozens of brand names and types. So the animals could adjust to regular

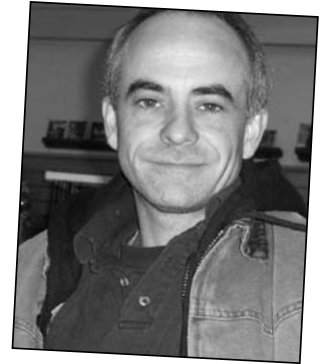
diets – and avoid upset stomachs and diarrhea – Chris made sure donors knew which brands of dog and cat food the shelter used – and why it mattered. It made for much happier animals – and more comfortable tummies.

Next Chris tackled euthanasia. Concerned that only the youngest and prettiest animals were put up for adoption, he focused his greatest efforts into developing new protocols for humane euthanasia. He knew he couldn’t work at BHS unless progress was made, and he asked himself, “If I walk away, will anything ever change?”

Working at BHS is all about making a difference, about creating a better place for animals and staff.

Twenty years and more than 100,000 animals later, Chris is proud of how BHS treats animals. Today, no animal is ever given a time limit for adoption and put to sleep when time runs out. “That’s never the case,” said Chris. “We put a whole lot of effort into getting our animals healthy, making them happy, and finding each and every one a forever home.”

Coworker Rochelle Black agrees. “I have worked with Chris since April



of 2000, and he has been the greatest mentor I have ever had. Chris has taught me volumes about selflessness and doing the right thing, regardless of personal cost. Though not one for the limelight, he is, in my opinion, the backbone of what the Bangor Humane Society is today.”

A self-proclaimed cat person (who recently added a nine-week-old beagle to the family), Chris enjoys playing fetch with his Siamese cat Butters, while his other two cats, Loka and Jasmine, watch with interest. Perhaps that’s why he’s working so hard on his current project. Chris, along with Executive Director Suzan Bell, wants to revamp the cat cages. “Cats are vertical creatures,” said Chris. “We’d like to replace the small stainless steel cages they stay in now with tall living quarters constructed of cutting edge, synthetic materials, complete with high perches.” Chris believes that beautiful new digs will improve the cats’ well-being, helping to keep them stress free and less susceptible to disease.

Paws update

Downtown Bangor watched with glee as the sixteenth annual Bangor Humane Society Paws on Parade – featuring 275 participants – padded their way down Main Street on October 3. All decked out in costumes (or at least in their favorite collars and bandanas) the dogs pranced proudly as they raised \$30,000 for the animals at BHS. Among them was BHS Executive Director Suzan Bell, who was stunned by the sheer mass of “lucky humans who get to share their lives with these amazing dogs.”

Following the parade, the crowd enjoyed demonstrations by Eastern Maine Agility Club, Flyball, and Rally Obedience. In the pet trick competition,

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And much as he doesn't like all the fuss and attention, Chris is happy to take the occasion of his twentieth anniversary to remind the public to spay and neuter their pets – and to ID them. “It's simple and inexpensive to put a tag on a pet, and, for those who have the means, microchips are even better. It's great when we're able – just by checking identification – to reunite pets who have wandered away and ended up at BHS with their owners.”

In twenty years – with the help of caring, devoted employees like Chris Young – Bangor Humane Society has made great progress. And Chris is sure that everyone (both staff and volunteers) will continue to give their all to help the animals.

“Chris has given his heart to improving the lives of the pets at BHS,” said Bell. “During his 20 years, many, many people have learned a great deal from him... including me.”



a pickpocket pooch Manny took first prize (and a wallet or two), and Pokey, a chihuahua dressed as a Green Bay Packer cheesehead, won best dressed honors.

Human winners also enjoyed a bit of fame. Team Kindred (headed by Dr. Mark Hanks of Kindred Spirits) raised more than \$5,000 for the event, and among the individual fundraisers, Jim Young brought in more than \$1,000. Corporate sponsors collectively raised \$15,000 – and the public did the rest.

“The day was a huge success,” said Danielle Coutu, BHS volunteer and events coordinator. “I am so appreciative and in awe of the spirit of people coming together to celebrate the animals.” Quite a number of businesses helped to make the day special...

- Ten vendors, Barkwheats, Uncommon Hound, Earthstone



Designs, and other home-based businesses, sold their wares.

- Area businesses like Best Buy and EPI's provided water stations along the parade route.
- Sponsors included Eastern Maine Emergency Veterinary Clinic; Green Acres Kennel Shop; Key Bank; Berry, Dunn, McNeil and Parker; Cross Insurance; Merrill Bank; Sam's Club; Camden National; Bangor Hydro; Katahdin Trust Company; Leighton and Longtin; Rudman and Winchell; Bangor Federal Credit Union; Bangor Savings; Machias Savings; Vafiades, Brontas and Komisky; and Barkwheats.

And, perhaps, the best news of all... every dog that was featured for adoption during Paws on Parade has gone home with a happy family.

Join our 2010 foster care team

“It's hard to choose just one word to describe our foster care providers... they're awesome, they're real troopers,” said Rochelle Black, adoption and foster care services manager at Bangor Humane Society. “They put their hearts and souls into giving of themselves to make life better for small, pregnant, sick, and injured animals.”

The summer of 2009 was especially busy for volunteer families working

with felines. As soon as a foster family returned a mother and her kittens to BHS for adoption – kittens they bottle fed, gave medications, played with, taught manners, and loved for as long as eight weeks – they were asked to take another litter home and start all over again. And they said yes.

“We simply can't thank them enough” said Rochelle.

If you're interested in joining our 2010 foster care team, you should know that...

- » BHS staff provides all the supplies you'll need – from food and litter to bowls and toys – along with expert advice, emotional support, and emergency contact numbers.

- » All you need is a bit of space – a bathroom, a laundry, an extra bedroom – a little time, and a lot of love.

We really need you! If you can help, contact Rochelle at 942-8902 x103 or rochelle@bangorhumane.org.

We are so grateful for your generous gifts!

What does it mean to give? Well, that's not an easy question to answer. What it means and how it feels are different for every person. In fact, just a few stories about Bangor Humane Society's generous donors illustrate the varied nature of giving.

Go Italian

No, it's not the oregano... not the garlic... not the basil. It's the caring that Jeff and Kara O'Sullivan lovingly add when they plan and host a fundraising Italian night every fall. "We adopted Jack, Fagan, and Brady – our Irish cats – from the humane society," said Kara. "And since we hope others will open their homes to deserving pets too, we do what we can to support the animals and BHS."

Now in their second year, the O'Sullivans greeted 80 invited guests – their friends – at the Seadog

on November 16 for a penne feast complete with appetizers, salad, and garlic bread. "The dinner was a complete success," said Kara. Everyone ate lots, had fun, and donated to the Bangor Humane Society. Then the O'Sullivans matched the gifts and delivered \$6700 to BHS.

Read All about It

On a fairly regular basis, BHS receives a check from Suzanne Sirois, who works at Orvieto Market and Deli in Millinocket. An avid reader, she used to take books to the thrift store when she finished reading them. Then she had a brainstorm and asked the owners at Orvieto's if she could sell used books there and split the proceeds between the market and the Bangor Humane Society. At first she was surprised when Orvieto's said, "No." But then they added, "Go ahead and sell the

books, but donate all the money to BHS."

So whenever she can, Suzanne happily sends along checks ranging from \$25 to \$75. "I've always believed in caring for animals and would be proud to work at a place like Bangor Humane Society. I adopted my cat there, and I like what they do and how they do it."

Make Your Mark

Like clockwork, James and Claire Stellato of Hermon Tattoo send \$50 a month to help the animals at BHS. As they put it in a card sent to Suzan Bell, BHS executive director, "Our faithful little loving creatures comfort and soothe us with hugs and kisses. Companions to the end, they depend on us so much. If each of us gave a mere 25¢ a day, just think of all the good we could do for God's creatures."

Believing in Lily

The Bells (dad Stacey, mom Kim, and daughters Kristyn and Kaleigh) had only lived with Lily, a golden retriever mix, for about a month when they began to understand why two families had returned the pup to the Bangor Humane Society. When she decided to act up, she could really make life difficult for the whole family!

But the Bells believed in Lily and saw beyond her unruly behavior – and they were determined not to be the third family to give up on her. Instead, they showered the dog with love, gave her lots of attention, and even got extra help from a dog trainer. What a difference it all made! Now more than half a year later, Lily is a huge part of the Bell family.

Though she'd sometimes acted aggressively toward men, she now greets all visitors to the house – male and female, old and young – with a wagging tail. "A watchdog she is not," said Kim. And, despite what they'd been told, housetraining went along just fine.



Lily loves other dogs and thrives on the attention she gets at Kristyn and Kaleigh's softball and field hockey games. At home, she cracks everyone up when she plays tug of war with her own foot or when she rolls on her back and growls like a bear.

In fact, she came so far that Kristyn and Kaleigh entered her in Old Town's Riverfest Fun Dog Show in September. In three days, they taught her to jump

through a hula hoop; and not only did Lily take home a number of ribbons, but she even captured best in show.

"She's not perfect, and we still need to work with her," said Kim, "but Lily is so funny and has so much personality that we can't imagine our family without her in it."

Donor Lists

Many of our readers give generously with donations in memory or in honor of special people and pets. Once featured in our newsletter, we're now posting their names at our website – bangorhumane.org – and using the money we save on printing costs to help more animals. We know – at least we hope – you understand.

If you'd like to help us save even more by receiving our newsletters via email, please send your email address to sbell@bangorhumane.org.

A generous grant, hardworking volunteers, and happy dogs!

The good news: The Lyman Pope Foundation generously awarded BHS a grant to purchase much-needed crushed stone for our dog agility pen.

The not-so-good news: On Nov 30th, Hughes Brothers dumped a pile – 50 yards to be exact – of stone at the end of our parking lot.

The great news: On Saturday, Dec 2, about 15 volunteers answered our call for help and came out to move the stone into the agility pen and onto the dog walk trails. They even brought their own shovels and wheelbarrows – one family actually showed up with a tractor!

The best news: The agility pen is once again a safe, level play area for BHS dogs. The stones provide good drainage, and they're small enough to be gentle on romping dogs' paw pads.

We also have safer walking trails since the low areas and exposed ledge are now filled in and covered over with the new stone. Plus, stone doesn't turn into mud when it rains and snows – a reality that makes our clean up crew very happy...the dogs that love to play in the mud, not so much.

Thanks Lyman Pope Foundation and our wonderful BHS volunteers!

A lucky dog! Scooby arrived at BHS when his owner – struggling in today's tough economy – couldn't afford to keep him anymore. He found a great new home – but remembered to write his BHS family!



Dear friends at BHS,

Sorry it took me so long to write, but I've been very busy! I LOVE, LOVE, LOVE my new home. Every morning I take a run through the woods with Mom. I've been so good at staying right with her that I don't even need a leash anymore. Yep, Mom and Dad think I'm really smart. I already know how to sit and shake paws. And they give me treats!

Our bedtime routine is a blast! First, I crawl onto 9-year-old Nick's bed and read with him. Next, I go into 12-year-old Molly's room and jump on her bed to kiss her goodnight. Then I snuggle with Mom & Dad on their bed and watch TV. And when I just can't keep my eyes open any longer, I go to sleep on my own comfy bed right next to theirs.

I also have two fluffy cat toys that I like to chase around the house. Sometimes they hiss at me, but I think they kind of like having me around.

Well, gotta go for a ride. I just wanted to thank you for taking such good care of me and for finding me a family that loves me.

Love, *Scooby*

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