

T H E Latham Letter

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SPRING 2012

PROMOTING RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION

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The

SHERIFF'S KINDNESS CLUB

An Innovative Program in Palm Beach, Florida

By Barbara Masi

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Palm Beach
County Sheriff
Ric Bradshaw with
Ambassa-a-Dogs
Sonic & Missile



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Edith Latham's Mandate:

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



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Promotion of Humane Education*

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The Latham Letter

Balanced perspectives on humane issues and activities

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The Latham Letter

Volume XXXIII, Number 2, Spring 2012

**BALANCED PERSPECTIVES ON
HUMANE ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES**



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

TO CONTACT LATHAM:

Voice: 510-521-0920
Fax: 510-521-9861
E-mail: info@Latham.org
Web: www.Latham.org

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Early Humane Education



Hugh H. Tebault,
Latham Foundation's President
with Brother Buzz

Teaching humane education requires that we create messages appropriate for the listener, and messages that convey the true values of classic humane education. Latham's new DVD, "Best Dog Ever," is our latest product to convey classic humane education by having a positive relationship with your pets and being a true owner/guardian for your pet.

Latham has created many humane education products over almost 95 years. The back cover of this *Latham Letter* has an excerpt from the January 1931 issue of our *Kind Deeds Messenger* magazine, which was published for public school children from 1926 and 1947 – 158 issues in all. It represents one of our early milestones – the first use of a character who spoke for the animals in terms that children could understand – Brother Buzz. In the finest narrative tradition, Brother Buzz did not simply show up, but he had a back story. Brother Buzz was actually a spy named Amigo magically transformed by the King into a bee so he could investigate the animal and human world and then report back.

In each of the stories, Brother Buzz met and talked with various animals and learned more and more about how they contributed to our world. In the *Messenger* mentioned above, we find out many things about the earthworm – lessons that the class teacher would then use for discussion, often having the students write their own observations about the animals in the world around them. After reading this Brother Buzz issue, the teacher would give the students factual data about the animals and teach them more about how each contributed to our environment. Humor and imagination were often key elements that allowed Brother Buzz to speak, reach out, and teach on behalf of Latham.

Working as we did in partnership with the public schools, our stories allowed the teachers to easily integrate the

"Humane education teaches a child to be kind and thoughtful for the welfare not only of animals, but of his playmates, parents and adult friends," said Mr. Givens.
(school district superintendent)

"It helps to mold his whole viewpoint on life."

– *Kind Deeds Messenger* January 1931

lessons into the elementary school lesson plans. Reading, writing, social studies, and the arts were all enhanced by the *Kind Deeds Messenger* stories.

Over the years, the Latham Poster contest, essay contest, bird house contest, and Kind Deeds Clubs were all programs used to encourage student and teacher participation to improve humane education. The real winners of the contests, as we know, were each and every one of the students, teachers, and parents who worked successfully together making the classic humane education values part of their personal values.

To read the full *Kind Deeds Messenger* from January 1931, you may visit our website. You will find this issue on our NEWS page.



Polly Want a Home?

I enjoyed Jane Deming's article in the last issue (Winter 2012) and was pleased to see her remind readers that parrots can live 50-75 years in captivity, often outliving their owners.

This is a reminder for pet owners of how important it is to have a plan in place in case pet owners can no longer care for their companion animals – whatever the species, whatever the reason.

Thousands of pets end up without a home when their human dies or becomes too ill to care for them. Having a person committed to taking over the care of pets should that ever become necessary can solve this issue.

Our all-volunteer nonprofit advocacy group has free information and resources available at www.2ndchance4pets.org to help pet owners ensure lifetime care for pets.

Amy Shever, Founder
2nd Chance 4 Pets
info@2ndchance4pets.org



MORE ABOUT POLLY WANT A HOME

Author Jane Deming would like to thank Marc Johnson of Foster Parrots, Ltd. in Hope Valley, RI for the photographs on pages 7-8. http://web.mac.com/fosterparrots/FOSTER_PARROTS/HOME.html

Also, we apologize for referring to Southwick Zoo as being in Rhode Island. It is in Mendon, Massachusetts.

Latham Visitors

Latham was honored to host some of the members of the Association of Professional Humane Educators' (APHE) Board of Directors prior to their National Conference February 29th.



FROM LEFT TO RIGHT:
Susan Helmink, Care Center, Urbana, IL; Karley Gould, Red Rover, Sacramento, CA; Mary Tebault & Judy Johns, Latham Foundation; Beth Karzes, Sonoma Humane Society, Santa Rosa, CA; Stephanie Itle Clark, Humane Society University, Washington, DC; Hugh Tebault, Latham Foundation.

Conference News

Visit the Latham Booth #541 at the HSUS Expo, May 21-24 in Las Vegas. Information: www.animalsheltering.com
We'll also be in Las Vegas for the **No More Homeless Pets Conference, Oct 25-28.**

<http://events.bestfriends.org/Upcoming/nmhp>

Palm Beach County (Florida) Sheriff's Office's

Animal Kindness Unit – a unique approach

By Barbara Masi

BACKGROUND

I had always wished every day was “take your dog to work day,” and a few years ago I’d finally reached the enviable position of having my own marketing consulting firm and working from home alongside the pets I so love. I thought my situation was ideal and had no idea that it could possibly get better.



Then I trained my retired racing greyhounds as therapy dogs and began visiting nursing homes, hospitals, schools, and library reading programs with them. I found that, for me, working with children and the dogs was most rewarding and so decided to pursue ways to increase those activities.

During this time I met then Deputy Sheriff Carol Verdigi of the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office (PBSO) and I included her in my visits whenever she was available. She brought her yellow lab, Finnagan – the PBSO mascot. In turn, Carol invited my dogs Bullet, Jet, Comet, and me to the “Harmony in the Streets” summer camps that the PBSO sponsored.

As I went from location to location, I found that Deputy Verdigi's presence made a big impression on the children. She brought the Sheriff's point of view to the program that promoted general animal kindness. This spurred a thought – why not propose that the entire program be part of the PBSO's community outreach? Having us represent the Sheriff would make more of an impact on the children, and the program could be expanded to mention the approximately 50 dogs that are part of the Sheriff's programs, as well as to encourage kindness to all animals and safety around dogs.

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Verdigi's presence

made a big impression

on the children.

Deputy Verdigi mentioned the program to Sheriff Ric Bradshaw late in 2006 and discovered he was interested. In February of 2007 I submitted a written proposal. It took patience and Deputy Verdigi's assistance, but in February of 2008 the Sheriff's Animal Kindness Unit became a reality.

TODAY

Deputy Verdigi is now a Section Manager of the Special Events Unit at PBSO, and for the past four years I have been working with her to encourage animal kindness among the students in Palm Beach County. There has been such overwhelming response from teachers and camp counselors that I sometimes schedule two presentations a day. Unfortunately, Jet passed away in August of 2006, and Comet and Bullet both died in 2011. Now I use two female greyhounds, Sonic and Missile, in the program along with Dillon (my Irish Wolfhound) for the visits in the high schools.

Each presentation is geared toward the childrens' ages. However, I do cover the three most common questions from the students in each of the programs: 1) What kind of dogs are they (including why are they so skinny?), 2) How fast do they run? and 3) Do your dogs bite? We discuss

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A big thanks to Leslie Millar and the students at Wynnebrook Elementary School for all these wonderful photos.

Our appreciation also goes to Jane Pennington of the Palm Beach County Sheriff's Office, Printing and Graphics Unit.

the fact that these are good dogs but that they do have teeth – and that even good dogs will bite when fearful, sick, or mistreated.

Our concentration with the younger students is on responsible pet ownership – care of the dog or cat (or other animal) you have taken into your home, what you need to have available for the pet, and the laws pertaining to tethering, leaving animals in a car, and leash laws. I show them my plastic poop bag holder hanging on my belt and explain that real Deputies get a taser, handcuffs, and a gun when they join the PBSO; but, as a civilian employee and dog handler, I was issued plastic bags and hand wipes – definitely “tools” unique to working with dogs.



Some of the topics we cover with all students are what to do if you are approached by a strange (and possibly menacing) dog; don't put your face in a strange dog's face and ask, "May I please pet your dog?" when approaching someone with a dog. We also cover "let sleeping dogs lie": don't bother a dog that's sleeping or eating, and what precautions to take when approaching a dog that has its favorite toy. We talk about not staring at a dog and not teasing the dog.

When working with the older elementary and middle school students, we discuss the importance of spaying or neutering their dog or cat and having proper ID for them such as microchipping and tags. We encourage annual vet visits and we also mention proper brushing, bathing, tooth care, and nail clipping. We encourage the students to consider adopting a shelter dog or cat, finding a bird through a bird sanctuary, and looking for a dog from a breed rescue group.

With the older middle school and high school students, we touch upon the bullying issue. This is important because

Our challenge was to catch the children early and reach them with the contents of this program.



"Dress" uniforms

many times bullying starts with pets at home. Since children know the pet can't speak for itself, they may find it easy to take out their own negative feelings on it. Then they move on to tease the students who are most vulnerable at school.

We also cover Sheriff Ric Bradshaw's campaign against dog fighting. This is important especially in South Florida where there are still people who consider dog fighting a "sport." I have visited places where the older youths are standing outside and they ask me if my dogs are fighting dogs

(just because they are big). They ask my friend if her little Yorkie is a bait dog. Sheriff Bradshaw is attempting to eliminate dog fighting here with his program that includes a brochure about dog fighting being a felony. He lets potential fighters know that they will be prosecuted for animal cruelty.

RESULTS

Section Manager Verdigi reports that “The Palm Beach County Sheriffs Office is pleased with our Animal Kindness Program. We started the program as a result of seeing children who have no respect or compassion for their animal companions – often because they see this kind of behavior at home or from their peers. The children then think it is acceptable, so our challenge was to catch them early and reach them with the contents of this program.

“By starting them at a young age,” she continues, “and bringing in our greyhounds so they get to touch and feel our animals, we let them know that they are touching caring creatures and that they need to be treated as such. This hands-on experience and the talk from Ms. Masi is so powerful that the children have a new attitude about how to treat animals. We have realized that there is a correlation between those who are incarcerated and the way they treated animals when younger ... so our program is two-fold in nature – change attitudes and teach respect on several levels.”

At the end of the program the children are encouraged to pet (and sometimes feed) the dogs. Most enjoy the close-up interaction with the dogs, but some



**There are still people in South Florida
who consider dog fighting a “sport.”**



Ambassa-a-Dogs Sonic and Missile

who are a little afraid wait until the others have allowed the greyhounds to take the kibble from their hands. Then we approach the petting slowly with these reticent children, providing they can overcome their fear. Also, the greyhounds' lack of dander makes them a good choice for the program because fewer children are left out due to allergies.

We describe some of the other dogs used for specific duties at the PBSO – the German Shepherds and Belgian Malinois for catching the “bad guys” and the gentle Bloodhounds for tracking and finding people who are lost, especially children and senior citizens. We briefly touch upon the bomb and drug-sniffing dogs who are also working for PBSO. We also discuss dogs that have other very important jobs in the community – the service dogs – and the contributions these animals make to society.

THE FUTURE

We are currently working on a program for the corrections department where the juveniles (ages 13-17) are incarcerated. This program will emphasize the parallels between them and the shelter animals, pointing out that they are not necessarily “bad” animals or children – but that they often need more training or direction for their energy in order to perform properly in society. We hope to teach empathy to those who may not have had an emphasis on that emotion or were not allowed to show it. Encouraging room for compassion towards an



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animal may eventually lead to more compassion for people. The goal of the visits is to teach the children to treat all animals with respect.

What could be better in life than working with dogs and children?

Author and program founder Barbara Masi has graciously offered to give readers interested in exploring a similar program the benefit of her experience. You can contact her at barbaramasi@comcast.net.



Thank you to all our readers for your continued interest in humane issues and activities.

It is because of people like you that the Foundation is able to continue to promote the importance of animal welfare, education, and the beneficial connections between humans and animals.

A Tragic Example of Agencies Not Communicating with Each Other



Editor's note: Latham was among the first organizations to encourage cooperation and cross-reporting among child welfare, animal welfare, and domestic violence prevention organizations.

This is a tragic example of what can occur when that doesn't happen.

A common premise in The Link is that concerned neighbors are more likely to report animal welfare issues to animal services agencies than they are to report suspected child abuse situations to social services. An example of this was recently reported in South Bend, IN, where several neighbors contacted animal control regarding a heavy stench reeking of dog excrement coming from the backyard of a home on West Washington Street. A gaunt pit bull was seen lying on the grass, tied to a short chain, barely able to stand up. Trash littered the lawn, but no water bowl was in sight. The dog's nearby cage was filled with his feces and soaked with urine. Unbeknownst to the neighbors, the brick home beyond the neglected dog held its own terrors: young children were allegedly being

tortured by their father, Terry Sturgis. Five months later, 10-year-old Tramelle Sturgis would be found dead inside. One neighbor said that if he had known there were children in the house, he would have called the Department of Child Services. "Because if they're keeping a dog like that, I can't imagine what life was like for the kids there." Records show that Animal Control received several calls, sent multiple letters to the family, and threatened penalty fees for failure to license the dog, but it is not clear whether the agency ever removed any animals. Officers reportedly visited the home and threatened Sturgis with a citation. Meanwhile, both South Bend police and DCS had visited the home after receiving complaints. There is no record that Animal Control notified DCS or police about the dog issues, and there is no requirement that it do so. But because animal abuse and neglect are frequently the earliest warning signs of a family in trouble, the National Link Coalition believes that human services and social services agencies should integrate their work with animal services. Research consistently shows that animal abuse is linked to child abuse and intimate partner violence and is often the "tip of the iceberg." Procedures should be established so animal control officers can call Child Protective Services to report findings, and vice versa, and then let the other agency take it from there.

Reprinted courtesy of *The LINK-Letter* Vol. 5, No. 4 April 2012
 A monthly report of news about the connections between animal abuse
 and other forms of violence
www.nationallinkcoalition.org • Phil Arkow, Editor

The National Link Coalition's LINK-Letter keeps you up-to-date on public policy, programs, and research at the intersections of animal abuse, child maltreatment, domestic violence and elder abuse.

*To subscribe, contact: Phil Arkow, Coordinator, National Link Coalition
 37 Hillside Road • Stratford, NJ 08084 • 856-627-5118
arkowpets@snip.net • www.nationallinkcoalition.org*



Fiona and Me a True Story



By Paul Bartlett

“ I believe that

Fi is truly one of
God's most precious

little creatures;
and that providence

waited patiently

to join our

life paths. ”

I would like to share a personal story of requited affection, the kinship between a sixty- one-year-old man and a black-haired beauty with gorgeous brown eyes. The object of my affection goes by the name “Fiona.” She comes from fine Midwestern stock and carries a prestigious pedigree.

Fiona and I are soul mates. While she is many years my junior, we both carry life's baggage. I suffer from depression and obsessive compulsive disorder, and not too long ago completed a four-week inpatient stint at Hazelden's Center City campus plus six weeks of outpatient care (substance abuse treatment) for alcoholism.

Fiona's early life was replete with her own train wrecks. During her formative years, she was banished to live in a barn. She never received the love and affection that all of God's creatures deserve. She was never socialized by those entrusted with her care; in fact, as a youngster, her custodians did not see fit to name her. She was never afforded the simple pleasures of romping and playing. In fact, she received no training in everyday social graces, like proper hygiene and common etiquette.

We each had our own crosses to bear and bonded on the most fundamental level. Before Fiona entered my life, she was plagued with a myriad of medical problems: multiple tumors, fortunately benign; infections that stole her ability to bear further offspring and nutritional deficiencies that paled her color and made her appear old and disheveled.

*Fi had been rescued from
an Indiana puppy mill,
where she was part of the
breeding stock.*

Her mental health was even worse. This poor girl was frightened, afraid of all men, including me; she trusted no-one. Fiona had no self confidence and avoided doing anything that would draw attention to herself. She just wanted to be alone, seeking sanctuary in any isolated corner.

Experienced with lugging my own life's baggage, I could see a proverbial "diamond in the rough" when I gazed into those beautiful but sad eyes. And when she gazed back, it was magic; I felt her love. We connected.

Most of what I know about Fiona's early life comes from the angels of mercy who rescued her along with fourteen other distressed little souls. As I understand their common history, they were all assigned a life of toil and squalor, all deprived of simple kindness and love. They were valued only for their ability to produce income for their caretakers.

Fi had been rescued from an Indiana puppy mill, where she was part of the breeding stock. Her productive days – and thus her value to her owners – were over. A spent canine – she was slated for destruction. This sort of use 'em up and throw 'em away mentality toward other life has no place in a civilized society. Any human being not capable of feeling empathy toward other living things should not "own" – should not be allowed to "own" – other life. Period.

Only through the intervention of her "Higher Power" (an Alcoholics Anonymous term), did Fi avoid her appointment with the executioner; she received a new lease on life. Given the plethora of her physical maladies, she was the last Scottie placed with an adoptive family – us. My wife and I are blessed humans; we were given the privilege of bringing that special little girl into our lives.

During her first veterinarian visit as a full member of our family, the vet reviewed her medical history and examined her. He told us that having had so many litters of puppies, her reproductive organs had been heavily taxed and that she would likely not live a long life. We expected such a prognosis. Fi's longevity was never an issue with us, and whether she lived another year or ten years, we just wanted her to feel safe, secure and loved. Each day with her has been a gift.

I'm not going to lie and say that her socialization was fast or easy. It wasn't. For days, she would not approach us. She would not respond when called. She would sit with us, but only if we picked her up. Fiona did not play; she didn't run the classic canine "figure eight." She did not bark. She simply did not do anything that would bring attention to herself. When she moved, Fi looked like a four legged "slinkie," keeping her belly close to the ground.

It's been a long process, but today, this sweet dog bears little resemblance to the frightened little gal who first entered our lives. Now, Fiona is calm and confident. Her ears and tail stand erect. She loves to "herd" her humans when we go outside. She loves us and life. She's happy! Fi has become a permanent fixture on my lap. And she has evolved from a frightened little girl into a true Scottie, with all of the "I am the center of the universe" attitude that this proud breed exhibits.

I believe that Fi is truly one of God's most precious little creatures; and that providence waited patiently to join our life paths.

This story would not be complete or fully honest if I ignored the elephant in the room: a terrible accident that nearly claimed Fiona's life, an accident I blame myself for, an accident I replay over and over in my mind, an accident that will haunt me forever.

I live in St. Paul and have the luxury of taking my dog to work with me.

About two weeks after Fiona entered my life, I attached her leash to her collar, as I had done many times before, to take her to Mears Park to socialize with

*Whether she lived another year or ten years, we just
wanted her to feel safe, secure and loved.*

other “Lowertown” canines, and attend to her doggie business. We took the elevator to the first floor – Fiona was no longer spooked by the elevator – and exited our building onto the Wacouta Street sidewalk. Then it happened.

Dogs shake – shake a lot. Anyone who has bathed a dog knows exactly what I mean. As we walked south along Wacouta Street, Fiona shook so violently that her leash detached from her collar. She was loose.

Fiona was literally raised in a barn on an Indiana farm. She was terrified of urban sounds and traffic, particularly the heavy trucks and buses that constantly sped past our building. We were not aware of this fear when we adopted her. It wouldn’t have mattered; I would surely have convinced myself that she would quickly become accustomed to the traffic, and after all, she’d be safe on a leash.

When Fiona realized she was free, she bolted into one of St. Paul’s busiest intersections in noon time traffic. I stood frozen in horror. Helpless. I saw that innocent little dog run under the right front tire of a passing sedan. I became uncontrollably hysterical.

It seems that her “Higher Power” had been watching from afar. I don’t know how, but Fiona rose, and ran west and then north. She was quickly out of my line of vision. I tried to catch up to her, but it was hopeless. Fiona was running north, directly toward Interstate Highway 94.

A Mears Park friend joined me in the chase. As we raced north, a kind lady driving a mini-van stopped and asked if we were in pursuit of a small Scottie. We affirmed, hopped in her van, and searched. No luck.

I asked her to take me to the nearby police precinct. There, I called my wife, explained this unfolding tragedy, and asked the desk officer to please radio nearby police vehicles – please, look for my Fiona. This proved as futile as my efforts.

I walked home, sobbing, sure I had lost my dear, sweet Fiona. My wife met me in front of our building. We drove the streets of downtown St. Paul. Nothing.

Hoping against all hope, I listened to our voice mail. The entire afternoon had passed, and maybe, just maybe, someone had found Fiona. After all, our phone number and address were engraved on her tag; the same information

She has evolved from a frightened little girl into a true Scottie, with all of the “I am the center of the universe” attitude that this proud breed exhibits.

Fiona shook so violently that her leash detached from her collar. She was loose.

was digitally stored on her embedded microchip.

There was a message. It was from a man in Minneapolis, about twenty miles west. He had Fiona. I do not want to discuss the details of that conversation, but for a specified amount of cash, we could claim her. But act quickly, she’s in bad shape.

We hopped in my wife’s car and headed west on Interstate 94. We located the house where she was being held for “ransom.” An obscene amount of cash was exchanged. I held her badly injured little body in my arms as we rushed back to St. Paul.

Her little belly was badly bruised and bloody; Fi was covered with thistles and road-burn. She winced in pain. I had witnessed her brush with death, an image now stored in my OCD (obsessive-compulsive disorder) memory vault.

We had only one mission: to find an open vet’s office. We raced to an animal emergency-care center near our home, violating just about every Minnesota traffic law. They were closed.

We sped to our vet’s office. Fi’s “Higher Power” was waiting. I ran in, cradling my little sweetie, and pleaded



for immediate veterinarian care. Here, I found more angels of mercy.

Fi was rushed to an examining room. The vet checked her torso and joints, looking for contusions and signs of injury. She was examined by X-ray and ultrasound. The conclusion: no broken bones and no apparent internal injuries. But, her internal organs were not in their correct anatomical positions, and all of her major joints were dislocated.

The vet's opinion: if she survived the next seventy-two hours, she would likely live. We were sent home with pain and anti-inflammatory medications. Only light, easily digested food was permitted. Fi only wanted small sips of water. My precious little buddy crawled under our buffet. I was an emotional wreck. Fiona slept and I got drunk.

After a couple of days, she crawled out from under the buffet, and limped over to me. I had prepared a meal of white rice and fried ground steak for her. For the next week, I hand-fed Fiona and carried her out to do her doggie business. She slowly recovered, finding the resolve to live. For me, recovery from this near tragedy has been difficult. Because I was responsible for her well-being, I can not shake this feeling of intense guilt. Until recently, I drank excessively.

In computer programming jargon, there is a term for a programming error that repetitiously bounces a statement back and forth between two command lines. It's called an "infinite loop." There is no escape once the loop is entered. Only restarting the machine or turning it off can end the sequence. Because of my OCD, I often experience traumatic life-events as infinite loops. In this case, that snippet of mental film, Fiona being struck by the sedan, played over and over in my mind, day after day. It was (is) my infinite loop. I am fortunate to have an empathetic family doctor who diagnosed my condition as analogous to post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD), and prescribed meds accordingly. I'm better today.

Fiona recovered from her injuries. I entered the Hazelden substance abuse recovery program and am now sober.

I am truly a blessed man. Throughout my married life, I have been surrounded by a pantheon of kind, loving females. I have known my wife since junior high school. Back in my boozing days, she never gave up on me, despite my reckless, shameful behavior. Our marriage produced one child, a remarkable girl who is a compassionate, supportive daughter, and a wonderful mother to our three precocious grandchildren. These two ladies loved me when I did not even like myself.

During the course of our marriage, four-legged companions have always been treasured members of our family. I try not to use the word "pet." I hate that word. I hate its implication: human superiority over our dearest and most loyal friends. Our canines depend on us, as we depend on them. And make no mistake, in this man's mind, we're all God's creatures, entitled to the same respect and dignity.

In the end, this is a story of second chances: of Fiona's rescue and rehabilitation, of my recovery and redemption. It is a story of our love and healing. I doubt that either of us could have succeeded without the other.

Today, I am comfortable in my own skin. I find that I enjoy my own company, albeit more when Fi is with me. Meds and counseling have helped me deal with my own demons; abstinence has lead me to a richer life. But all of the meds and recovery counseling pale to the peaceful quietude gifted to me by Fiona's loving presence. She is my rising star.

*In the end, this is a story of second chances:
of Fiona's rescue and rehabilitation, of my
recovery and redemption. It is a story of our
love and healing. I doubt that either of us could
have succeeded without the other.*



Do you remember Brother Buzz?

If so, we'd love to hear from you.

Contact us at info@latham.org and put "Brother Buzz" in the subject line.

Thanks!



Recent Facebook Postings

I just found you through a google search. I was awarded the merit which was given to the International Poster Contest work by Latham in 1950. I hope your good work for animals continues.

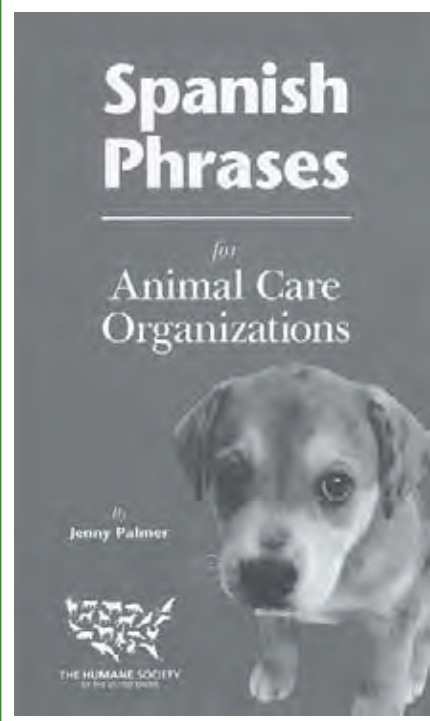
– Masako Ueda posted on Brother Buzz's Wall

"The Latham Foundation is the model by which so many of us have identified our passion for humane education."

– Chick Barnes

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Contact us if you would like sample issues for a library, colleague, or friend and help spread the word about issues and activities in humane education.

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The Kindness of Strangers

By Debra J. White

A plastic bag staggered around a vacant lot in a scrubby Phoenix neighborhood. A curious passerby pulled over to investigate. Inside he found a small brown dog with its eyes gouged out. The skinny dog was full of BBs, obviously target practice for local punks. Horrified, the stranger drove the dog to the county shelter where she underwent life-saving surgery. A local rescue group took over her care.

Since 1989, I've been an animal shelter volunteer in several different states. I've witnessed the absolute best in people, swelling my heart with endless joy. Incidents of animal cruelty and neglect sickened me to the core. The emotional agony of watching lovely household pets turned in for trivial reasons saddened me. But the kindness of strangers uplifted me enough so I never quit.

An unexpected pedestrian car accident in 1994 left me with disabling

brain and spinal injuries. I lost my social work career. Animal rescue became instrumental in my own long-term recovery. I cannot imagine my life without it.

Let's start with the unknown seamstress with a fondness for felines, who sews cat sized bedding and donates them to the Phoenix shelter where I currently volunteer. Every few months it seems a new supply arrives. Some are made of fluffy material, others of cotton with padded insides. Our resident cats, some of whom led hardscrabble lives on the streets, enjoy the soft touches. Colored material brightens the cattery.

A new adoption center recently opened at our shelter, thanks to a donor who presented it as a gift to celebrate his wife's 60th birthday. More lives will be saved because of the kindness of a stranger. Donors like this make a difference all around

the world, not just in Phoenix. I am in awe of their generosity, spirit and willingness to chip in.

A young man in Colorado touched me years ago with his kindness. I met him dropping off dented cans and ripped bags of pet food at the shelter where I volunteered.

"Please hurry and take this from me," he said as sweat poured down his neck.

"Why?" I asked.

"If my boss catches me, I'll get fired."

"They're dented cans and ripped bags. He can't sell them."

"He throws them out. He scolded me for suggesting we donate them."

The young man, who didn't own a pet, had a heart. As a private shelter, we survived on donations, both cash and in-kind. Dented cans and ripped bags stretched our budget. That he risked his job to help homeless animals said much about the kindness of this stranger.

People, including children, imperiled their own lives to save stray dogs or cats hit by cars. At the county shelter where I once volunteered, a woman showed up holding a mortally wounded cat in a towel. The Good Samaritan saw the old cat stagger to the road's edge after a car struck her. The driver sped away; the stranger stopped. That day, animal control trucks unloaded the day's worth of stray dogs so the entry door was locked for safety reasons. I took the barely breathing cat and thanked the woman for her kindness. Blinking back tears, I carried the bloodied cat back to receiving where a worker would end her suffering. I told the cat I was sorry her life had twisted into such a tragic ending. Within minutes, the cat's pain ended. Images of the cat's bony body lingered with me for hours. Before I left, I rubbed her tummy and told her she was special, even if she was nobody's cat.

Sometimes people intervened in other ways. A social worker monitored a mentally ill client living in his own apartment to ensure compliance with his medication. The patient also owned a black lab mix named Baby. When off his medication regimen, the patient lost self-control and abused Baby. Feeling sorry for the battered dog, the social worker pressed him to relinquish Baby to our shelter but he refused. Somehow, the social worker coaxed Baby away from the mentally disturbed owner and brought him to our shelter. The dog cowered in his cage, fearful of everyone. I brought Baby a cozy blanket and snacks but that barely assuaged his fears. I wondered how many times his owner had whacked him around.

“ **Animal rescue
became instrumental
in my own long-term
recovery. I cannot
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without it.** ”

Baby slowly warmed up to the staff. I took him out for walks and showered him with affection to bolster his chances for adoption. Weeks passed and no one wanted Baby. I feared that he'd end up with the dreaded yellow X mark on his cage, a sign he was slated for euthanasia.

To move him into a wonderful home, the shelter named him pet of the week in the local newspaper. A loving family showed up and gave Baby the great home he deserved. Shelter staff, including me, cried when Baby left.

“ **That dog owed
his life to the
kindness of a
stranger and to the
brave social worker
who saw he was
in trouble.** ”

That dog owed his life to the kindness of a stranger and to the brave social worker who saw he was in trouble.

I volunteer at community adoptions in Phoenix. At a two day event several years ago, a big brown older dog named Lady waited for someone to adopt her. No one did. Fifteen minutes before the event ended on Sunday afternoon, a woman adopted Lady. Volunteers at the information booth, including me, held each other and cried with joy. If Lady hadn't been adopted, her days were numbered. As part of the county shelter system, she had no guarantee for placement.

A volunteer with a Phoenix rescue group has a soft spot for old, decrepit dogs and cats that end up in area shelters. She once took home Louie, a 15-year-old dog. The next day he died. Recently she took in a 19-year-old dog someone turned in because she was too old.

If January 6, 1994 was just like every other day, my life would be dull and boring. A pedestrian car accident changed everything. Brain injuries shook up my mental capacities. My body didn't work the same way it used to. Not everyone accepted my disability, but among rescued animals. I was top dog, the high priestess of cats. I couldn't have pulled through recovery from a devastating car accident without my own two adopted dogs as well as animal rescue. I'm still married to the movement and I guess I always will be. The kindness of strangers never lets me down. I hope it never does.



The American Humane Association and Pfizer Animal Health Partner to Study the Benefits of Animal-Assisted Therapy

The American Humane Association and Pfizer Animal Health announced the completion of the first round of an innovative research study on the benefits of animal-assisted therapy (AAT) on pediatric cancer patients and their families.

For years, doctors, veterinarians and other caregivers have shared experiences about the healing power that AAT offers children with cancer. However, little hard evidence exists as to whether these claims can be substantiated, under what conditions AAT is most effective, and how, if proven useful, it may best be incorporated into treatment.

The research study, “Canines and Childhood Cancer: Examining the Effects of Therapy Dogs with Childhood Cancer Patients and their Families,” is a multi-year effort taking place in hospital settings across the U.S. that will examine the specific medical, behavioral, and mental health benefits AAT may have for children with cancer and their families. A comprehensive literature review has been completed as a first step, and may be downloaded at: www.CaninesAndChildhoodCancer.org.

In addition to the literature review, focus groups and interviews were conducted with hospital staff, family caregivers and AAT handlers, to glean vital information regarding childhood cancer epidemiology and treatment, the well-being of patients and families who are affected by childhood cancer, the applications of AAT for various populations in need, the state of AAT effectiveness research, and the considerations that need to be made when incorporating therapy animals into clinical settings.

Findings from the literature review, focus groups and interviews will help guide the design of the overall study. Preliminary findings showed that no standard protocol for an AAT session (i.e., length, number and type of participants in each session, session activities, or talking points) seemed to exist at any of the research hospital sites; each animal-handler team went about their work somewhat differently. This finding underlines the need for this study to develop consistent AAT treatment fidelity across sites in order to conduct the type of rigorous research needed in the human-animal interaction field.

The information gathered during this initial phase will serve to inform a scientific study design in order to conduct a pilot trial with three to five pediatric oncology sites across the country. Upon the conclusion of the pilot trial, researchers anticipate the launch of a full clinical trial across multiple sites for 12-18 months. During this time, certified therapy dogs and their handlers will conduct regular AAT sessions with pediatric oncology patients and their families, which will be evaluated by a range of biological, psychological and social measures.

“Now we begin the important work of validating and quantifying something that we have observed and felt for years through our own experiences – that interaction with animals can provide beneficial effects for people in need of comfort, encouragement and healing,” said Robin R. Ganzert, Ph.D., President and Chief Executive Officer of American Humane Association.

Results from the study will be widely disseminated through professional conferences and peer-reviewed journals in a diverse range of disciplines, including veterinary medicine, pediatric oncology, social work, and AAT.

To learn more visit
www.PfizerAnimalHealth.com
and
www.americanhumane.org.





Today, thankfully, dog training that focuses on rewarding dogs for the things they do right (in your opinion) rather than punishing them for the things they do wrong is becoming the norm. Still, finding the trainer who is best for your lifestyle and the behaviors your dog needs to learn can be quite an undertaking.

Fetching the Perfect Dog Trainer: Getting the Best for You and Your Dog will help you sort through the multitude of dog training books, television shows, methods, and techniques that are out there. You'll find the answers you're looking for whether you're preparing to interview a prospective trainer, trying to make sense of the common certification acronyms, or looking for a list of "red flags."

Author Katenna Jones combines her extensive professional training in animal behavior, years of experience, and an unflinching belief in the importance of building trust through positive training in this beautifully-illustrated and very practical book. *Fetching the Perfect Dog Trainer* is a gold mine.

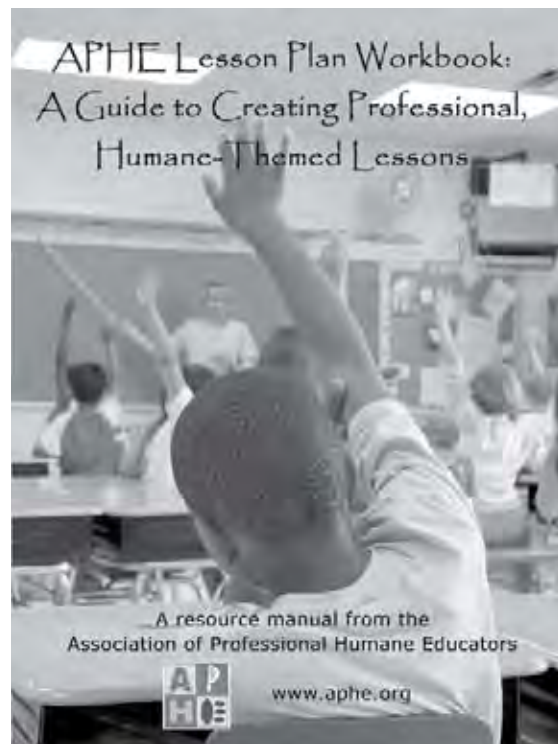
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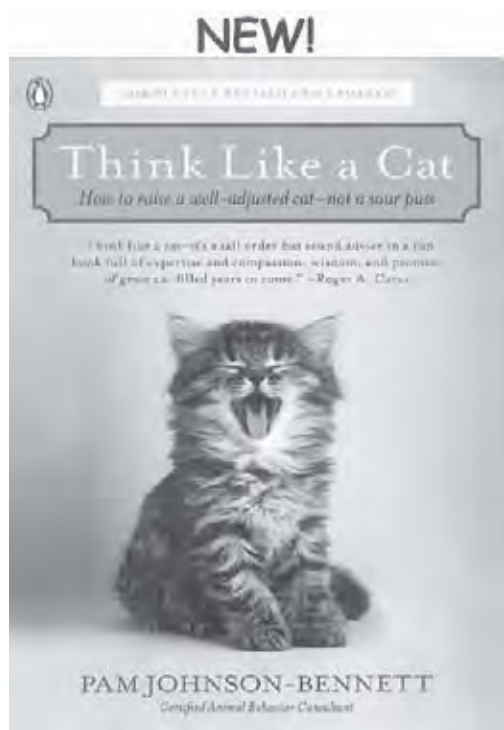
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New Resource Now Available!

APHE Lesson Plan Workbook: A Guide to Creating Professional, Humane-Themed Lessons is now available for sale through the APHE website. The 58-page PDF with accompanying PowerPoint walks you through all the key elements of lesson planning and includes six standard-based lesson plans with lessons for students ranging from pre-school through high school.

You can find the Guide in the Shop APHE section of the APHE website (aphe.org). If you are an APHE member, log in and go to the Ezone first and the Guide will only cost you \$19. Non-members can also purchase it through the APHE home page under SHOP APHE, where the price for non-members is \$28.



This updated and expanded edition from Pam Johnson-Bennett, contains the latest information on cat behavior, health, nutrition, and training. It provides valuable information on how to raise a happy, healthy cat and ways to improve your cat's life whether you're a first-time owner or have shared your life with a feline for many years.

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To order:

catbehaviorassociates.com

Love Has No Age Limit

Welcoming an Adopted Dog into Your Home

A new dog has just joined your family, a dog whose life history you know little or nothing about. Now what? How do you incorporate this new individual into your home? This book is designed to help you ease the transition from "new dog" to "family member" by guiding you through the first steps of this new relationship.

Love Has No Age Limit includes information on what to do as you enter the house, how to handle the first few days, what to do and what not to do as you get to know each other. It has tips on everything from the car ride home to the first vet visit. You'll find good advice on training and a section on solving common behavioral problems to help prevent the most frequent dilemmas that people encounter when adopting a new dog.

Authors Patricia B. McConnell, Ph.D. and Karen B. London, Ph.D. are Certified Applied Animal Behaviorists and professional dog trainers who specialize in evaluating and treating serious behavioral problems in domestic dogs. They combine the best of science with practical experience to improve the lives of their favorite species, people and dogs. As behaviorists and dog lovers, they have extensive experience bringing adolescent and older dogs into new homes, including their own.



Love Has No Age Limit – Welcoming an Adopted Dog into Your Home

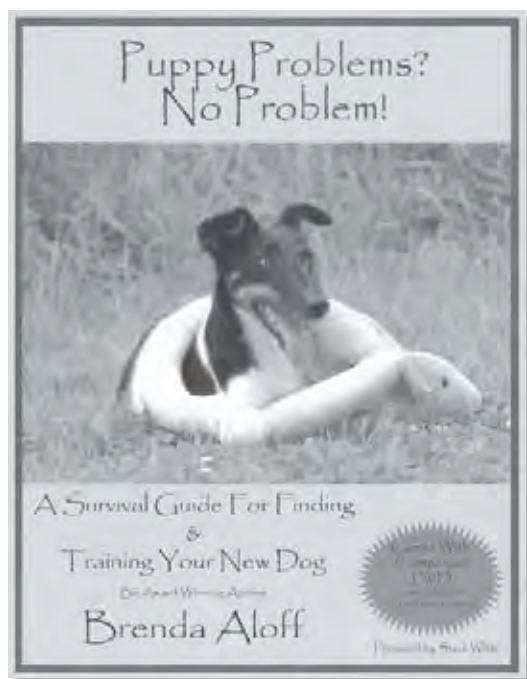
By Patricia B. McConnell & Karen B. London

\$9.95 • 96 pages

ISBN: 978189176142

Dogwise Publishing

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Puppy Problems? No Problem *A Survival Guide for Finding and Training Your New Dog with DVD*

By Brenda Aloff

Many people don't realize how much time and trouble a puppy can be. If you walk into dog ownership with realistic expectations, your frustration level will be much lower. This book gives you the tools and understanding to cope with various stages of puppy development. It is based on the author's 20 years of experience working with problem dogs as a professional pet behavior consultant. This experience has given her a unique view of what owners could have done to prevent problems from occurring in the first place. She says, "Many of the sad situations that occur do not have to be. Education on the person's part combined with humane and effective techniques can make dog ownership the joy you imagined it would be!"

The book comes with a DVD that shows readers exactly how to carry out the protocols in this book.

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Dog InSight

By Pamela Reid, Ph.D., CAAB

This book contains more than forty essays on a wide range of topics including learning theory, training techniques, and behavior problems. Readers will learn:

- *Why early enrichment and socialization are crucial when raising a puppy*
- *Why you should take puppy "temperament tests" with a grain of salt*
- *Why dogs are incredibly adept at reading body language and solving certain kinds of complex problems but "spectacularly dense" when facing other tasks*
- *Why misunderstanding dominance theory often leads to failure when people try to change problem behavior in dogs*
- *How pharmacologic treatments can enhance behavior modification plans for fearful, anxious, and aggressive dogs.*

Pam's insights are both educational and thought-provoking. Not only does she deliver scientifically sound information, she also challenges the reader to re-examine several widely held –

but not necessarily accurate – beliefs about dogs. One of the things I most appreciated is that at the end of several chapters she updated the facts with the latest (2011) information.

Dog InSight is a well-presented wealth of knowledge for anyone interested in canine behavior.



\$12.95 • 224 pages • ISBN: 978-1-61781-054-1
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How to have a happy

life with your dog

A new video that uses charm & humor to encourage responsible pet ownership. A useful bilingual resource to help reduce returns and relinquishments.

Marisela, a delightful high-school senior, is thrilled to have her first dog but she knows "love is not enough," so she asks the behaviorist at her local humane society for advice.

They discuss & show the importance of:

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- Exercise and shelter
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In other words, everything necessary to be a responsible pet owner and fully enjoy a new member of the family.

The DVD contains both English (823 mins.) & Spanish (1037 mins.) versions. To order online: www.Latham.org

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The Kind Deeds Messenger



The Latham Foundation Story Service for the Public Schools

No. 40

If we include animals in the law of duty and compassion, as we are commended to, we work at the same time for the uplifting of our fellowmen.—*Lamartine.*

AMONG THE EARTH WORMS

BY DOLORES WILKES KEST

(Amiga, the little Elf, has become a magic Bumblebee, who is to live a year and a day studying the lives of insects, birds and animals, so that he may find out why human beings understand these nature creatures so poorly.)



"One thing puzzles me. I see that Mr. Earthworm is moving, but how does he do it," said Brother Buzz.

A page from
Latham's
history book
in 1931



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