

VOICE FOR ANIMALS



Voice for Animals (VFA) is grass roots, non-profit and no kill organization established in 1987 and originally headquartered in York, Maine.

The Voice 2023

President's Message

As you will see from the personal note below Voice for Animals is continuing to provide Kind News to classrooms in both Maine and New Hampshire. We are now providing it to 42 classrooms in Maine and 44 in New Hampshire. One Portsmouth elementary school teacher got all of her colleagues in that school signed up to receive the magazine. The Mindel Family Foundation made a donation of \$10,000 to us in the early weeks of 2023. Although I cannot prove it, they are located in California as is Kind News's publisher Red Rover. I have always felt it was because of the large number of issues we are providing to area classrooms that we received this donation.

Voice for Animals always promotes helping animals in need. This time our focus is on older shelter animals. The piece included here shows how wonderful they can be.

Another major issue that Voice for Animals is involved in is that of whether or not towns agree to deal with cats and whether they will be open and honest about their choices. As you will see from the Letter to the Editor below, we are presently focusing on Kittery, Eliot, and York with plans to move to other towns once the issue is solved there. I, sadly, do not now live there, as I took a teaching job out of the area. We are going to need people who live there who will network with each other and attend select-board meetings in the towns demanding a permanent change. I will be an email or a ZOOM meeting away from providing suggestions and perhaps further help. To work on this issue to its conclusion and provide Kind News to more classrooms we are going to need more actively working VFA members. Everyone is busy, I understand, but the rewards from becoming involved in these issues will be great. Voice for Animals will not go on forever advocating for animals if we do not add new active members to the organization. Read the pieces here and see what you might be prepared to join and help us with. You can contact us at voiceforanimals.1987@gmail.com.

PS If you know your address is going to change, please let us know so we can change it in our records and you will continue to receive this newsletter.

*For All the Animals,
Caryl McIntire Edwards
President/Founder*

The Wise and The Wonderful-Senior Pets

What is stopping you from adopting one of these special animals?

Often the longest residing shelter animals, the older animals watch from their kennels as potential adopters stream by, day after day, week after week. It is a common theme in shelters far and wide, one that shelter workers know all too well. Some of these gentle souls will spend months and even years at a shelter, living their final chapter in lonely resignation. Understanding that they have not been chosen, they watch other pets leave in excitement with their new families.

The caring staff does everything in its' power to shower them with special privileges. An extra walk on a beautiful day or a ride in the car for the elderly dog. A chance to nap in the sun on the reception desk or curl up in the soft donated bed for the senior cat. Sometimes for the longest or oldest residents, a chance to spend the weekend with a foster family. All special but not the same as being noticed and chosen and brought lovingly into a family.

The years have brought a myriad of experiences that have become their life story, one that their memories are made of. Memories of their families, now gone but still in their hearts. Often sadness is a prevailing sentiment seen in their eyes. Others, less trusting, shy away from the hand of a stranger. We suspect that their memories are darker and it will take a special person to love them and help them heal. A symbiosis that often will heal both in the process.

Time and again we see the beauty and magic that senior animals bring into our lives, like older dogs Joe, Sheldon and Comet. Here is a glimpse into their lives after their adoptions.

Joe



We were a two cat family with no intentions of getting a dog...Until we met Joe.

We saw those silly, happy ears and knew it was time for all of us to go home.

Our one concern was the cats, but they knew as quickly as we that Joe was a kind creature.

His friendship was instant.

His loyalty had no exception.

A colorful personality that would make you be still with contentment or burst out with laughter.

He loved to go on long walks, play with his fuzzy ball or spend a quiet afternoon on the living room rug, so long as we were by his side.

In the winter he would roll on his back in the snow, in the grass on a warm spring day. Roll, Roll, Roll, oblivious to everything. Suddenly he would stop. But only long enough to be sure we were watching.

He would constantly give and willingly accept attention...anytime.

When we would be getting ready to leave, he would anxiously watch for a sign that he was to come- then there was no stopping his excitement. If it were a day that he had to stay then his happy face would greet us upon our return.

We spent a lifetime with Joe in the 8 short months he was with us.

Because of him we experienced activities, people and emotions we otherwise, would have missed.

Everyone who met Joe instantly loved him. He was a kind and sensitive animal.

Once he was with us it seemed as though everyone who met him "would have" adopted him.

He spent three weeks at Cocheco Valley Humane Society while people admired him then moved on to other kennels to look for a dog to adopt.

Why?? Because Joe was eleven years old...too old to adopt. So people thought.

Everyone loved Joe...but we were lucky, we experienced his love.

Sheldon



Sheldon was adopted when his mom went to the shelter to adopt a senior dog and asked which dog needed a family the most.

The staff knew exactly who to choose as this special boy had been patiently waiting for a very long time. He was 8 years old and lost his home when first his mom went into nursing care.

When he first arrived with his new family, Sheldon was not used to cats so he shied away from them. Watching from a distance, then finally starting to play along. Before long he became their protector, for after all they are his kitties now!

Sheldon regularly gets to go visit his other mom in the nursing home. Sheldon will sing along with the nursing home residents when his new mom plays the piano in the community room.

He loves these visits and It's a treat they both look forward to. He often brings her a new picture of himself for her bureau.

Comet



Comet was placed in foster care after coming into the shelter as a stray at age 9. He was not able to adjust to shelter life and needed an in-home setting to start his healing process. His fear of abandonment and confinement was crippling for this beautiful boy. He needed a routine that he could rely upon and learn to trust.

Lucky for Comet his foster home adopted him.

Comet loves to play ball. More than anything. He jumps so high to catch it and zoomies take on new meaning when Comet shows how he does them. When parked next to another car at a stop light, Comet will show them his ball, or if a visitor comes to the house he runs to his toy box and grabs his favorite orange ball to hopefully get them to play.

His sweet nature and kind heart was evident when he alerted his mom that a sparrow was trapped in the barn. He also watches quietly if wildlife comes into his yard, whether it's squirrels collecting chestnuts or a doe with her fawn walking through.

Noticing how intelligent and focused Comet was, how he seemed to hear every sound and anticipate every outcome, his mom wrote a tribute to him on his adoption day.

I COULD HAVE BEEN A HERO

I could have been a hero in another place and time. I dream of saving children, helping others, every night.

I swim the darkest channels to find a way to help, I fear no evil in my path to reach the depths of hell.

I see what others don't see and plan my every move, I hear the sounds that lead me where others dare not go.

I have a mission, wear a vest and search to find the mines, before they harm the others, yes in another place and time.

I see a tiny gosling trapped in a dark crevice, as my heart pounds loudly I leap to its defense.

I'm honored with bright medals for my courage and my stealth, and wear them proudly 'round my neck, I'm always there to help.

I dream of all my rescues from my cage down at the farm, I spend my days alone there fearing coming harm. The pain of lonely hours that don't ever seem to end, yes, the bright and hopeful pup is now almost ten.

I have so much to offer, so much love to give, but never got the chance to show what I could have been.

I dream of being fearless, but when awake I'm filled with fear, barking at the strangers who happen to appear, and thoughts of being left alone are more than I can bear.

When I was fully broken and they couldn't deal with me, they took me to a place where they thought no one would be. But an angel had another plan so close to Christmas Eve, when the sky delivered ice so thick, we almost couldn't see.

I was cold and hungry in the woods so dense and dark, alone again, afraid to even bark. As my light was dimming, I was ready to give up, you see I am an old dog now, not an eager pup.

I heard the sound of voices and my weakened heart when still. Were they coming back for me to return me to the mill? But it was my angel, by way of two kind men, and soon I was warm and fed and given a soft bed.

I have a brand new family now, and friends who help me shine, they marvel at my cleverness, how I catch the ball each time.

They can't believe how high I jump, my energy abounds. They love my sweet and tender heart and adore my friendly smile.

They love me when I'm happy and more so when I'm scared, they promise me new freedoms, and to always be right there.

I perform my new job proudly, as protector of my pack, and my new mom tells me every day that she'll never bring me back.

But what makes me the happiest, is when my mom will say that I will be her hero for forever and a day.

In closing, we would like to share that both Sheldon and Comet were adopted from Responsible Pet Care of Oxford Hills in South Paris Maine. To show our appreciation and gratitude for all they do we encourage you to make a donation to them to honor or memorialize one of your own pets.

All donations will be used to promote senior adoptions.

RESPONSIBLE PET CARE OF OXFORD HILLS

9 Lower Swallow Road

South Paris, ME 04281

Candace Burrell
Voice for Animals, Volunteer

Tributes



Queakers was always a shy cat but she loved me. She was trapped in my backyard shortly after we moved to where we live now. Another cat, ultimately named Bobby, showed up hungry and I began feeding him, then she appeared and began to take some of his food away. When it became cold, I canvassed the neighborhood trying to find out where they belonged. No one ever claimed them and since I felt they could no longer stay outside; I trapped them and brought them in where it was warm.

She was a very shy cat and liked to stay in the bathtub. When I would move the hamper, she would always jump on for her "ridie ride." Until we meet again, Queakers.



Caryl McIntire Edwards

Jojo, a five-month-old kitten who was stuck and killed by a vehicle in front of her home. The driver did not stop. It should not have happened and certainly the driver should have cared enough to stop. Jojo's life mattered.

Submitted Anonymously



KIND NEWS

Kind News wrote the letter below to us. VFA is providing Kind News to schools in Maine and New Hampshire. In Maine we provide it to York schools, Kittery schools, RSU 35 (Eliot and South Berwick) schools and MSAD 60 (North Berwick, Lebanon, and Berwick) schools. In New Hampshire we provide it to SAU 50 (Newcastle) schools, SAU 52 (Portsmouth) schools, Dover Schools, SAU 54 (Rochester) schools, and SAU 104 (Somersworth/Rollinsford).

Teachers speak highly of this magazine. One teacher got every other teacher in her elementary school to join her in receiving it. It is a wonderful way to teach elementary and middle school children ways to be kind to animals. It has been received so well we hope to expand the number of schools receiving it annually.

August 16, 2023

Caryl McIntire Edwards
Voice For Animals
PO Box 34
Harrison, ME 04040

Account number 1100022440

Dear Caryl,

Thanks to the generous purchase of \$2,136.00 by your organization, Voice For Animals, 89 subscriptions of *Kind News*™ magazine will be delivered to even more students and help spread kindness toward animals and people.

RedRover is a national animal welfare organization that has been bringing animals from crisis to care for over 30 years. We shelter and care for animals in crisis through our RedRover Responders program, provide financial assistance to help animals in life-threatening situations through our RedRover Relief program, and foster empathy and compassion toward animals in school children through our RedRover Readers program.

Kind News magazine is an eight-page publication that helps children understand and respect animals and consider why treating animals and people with kindness matters. The magazine encourages both empathy and critical thinking in children by asking important questions, celebrating the human-animal bond and helping to motivate children to take action to improve the lives of animals. *Kind News* magazine uses engaging articles and short features to emphasize issues affecting animals, how to understand animal behavior and how to care for pets. Its appealing design and engaging content help to not only enhance children's enjoyment of reading, but spark critical thinking and thoughtful discussion as well.



Kind News magazine is aligned with national teaching standards and can be easily integrated into school curriculum. The magazine is available in two versions: *Kind News, Jr.*™ (grades K-2) and *Kind News* (grades 3-6). *Kind News* magazine can be ordered for an individual child (individual home subscription) or for a classroom.

We are so grateful to be partnering with you to create a kinder future for animals by fostering empathy and compassion in children this school year. Thank you again for your purchase of *Kind News* magazine – your support is sincerely appreciated!

Warmly,

Karly Noel
Interim President

RedRover is a tax-exempt organization as described in Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; EIN #68-0124097. Contributions are tax-deductible to the extent permitted by law. Please consult your tax advisor for more information.

kindnews

Caryl - Thank you so much! We appreciate Voice For Animals so very much!

♡ Kind News team

Voice for Animals of Maine and NH Against Puppy Mills

Protesting continues. NHARL has taken over protesting in Manchester since those people live in New Hampshire. Kurt Ehrenberg, Director of NH HSUS, said they are submitting another bill 2024 for the banning of retail sales of dogs, cats and rabbits in pet shops.

Kathryn Davis Varnry

Disaster Response for Animals

York County Animal Response Team Update

The York County Animal Response Team is currently in transition. We have taken the past several months to realign our goals and restructure our team so that we are better postured to meet the needs of pets and community before, during, and after emergencies that impact animals. Our team took a bit of a hit as we transitioned from Covid-19 response back to “post Covid” operations. We will be implementing a new structure and recruitment plan to meet our previous membership numbers and will be developing our training and outreach strategy. Our team hosted two training sessions on emergency animal sheltering fundamentals for emergency managers and first responders in York County. Our goal is to have more leaders at the local level familiar with animal sheltering procedures and best practices, so they are ready to respond to sheltering needs not only for humans but for pets, as well. York County Animal Response Team is always ready to assist communities to set up pet shelters during emergencies, but it is our vision that communities will be empowered to lead this effort and we can further expand our efforts. This fall we plan to host an emergency animal sheltering exercise and continue our recruitment and team development efforts. If you are interested in learning more about pet preparedness or joining York County Animal Response Team, please contact Megan Arsenault at mearsenault@yorkcountymaine.gov

Megan Arsenault
Deputy Director

New Hampshire DART

I contacted many organizations throughout New Hampshire and could not find any active DART at the present time. Last year their message to VFA was that they were reorganizing and now there seems to be nothing at all. VFA’s advice to you is to plan ahead, so if there is a disaster near you, you know where you could go. Find out about motels out of your area who take pets and check with family members who do not live near you to see if you and your animals could stay with them until it is safe to return home. If you have farm animals contact the NHSPCA. They have farm animals and would be able to give you advice about dealing with yours during a disaster.

If you are concerned that nothing is happening in the state at this time, contact the New Hampshire Department of Agriculture, and see what needs to be done to get everything started again.

FARM SANCTUARIES

Maine Maine Farm Animals and DELAS

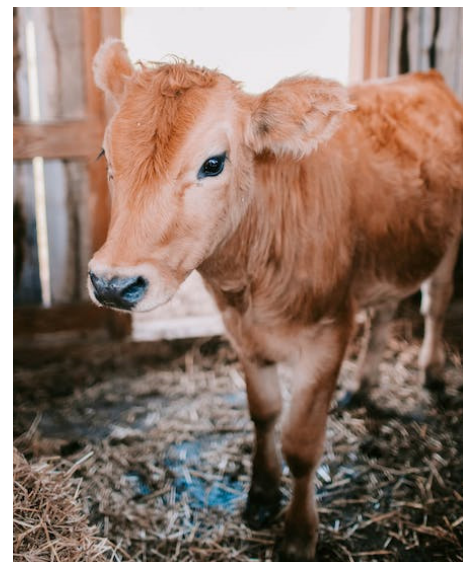
Maine Farm Animals and its partner, DELAS, have had a busy year again with many farm animals in need. DELAS continues to serve as a licensed shelter for the Animal Welfare Program (with minimal funding from the State) and also takes in private surrenders when appropriate and space allows. Recently advocates were able to save three very young calves from their awful fate as veal calves. DELAS agreed to provide all three with a safe lifelong home. DELAS, unlike Maine Farm Animals Advocates, is not a vegan sanctuary; however, all animals there are protected for life. Mighty, Moe, and Jack made the long drive north and arrived safely. They have settled in nicely and will soon be able to join the main herd of other species. The three are very lucky and will get to live out their lives enjoying freedom, friendships, and excellent care at the sanctuary. We are excited to see them grow up and develop into big personalities.

Maine Farm Animal Advocates suffered a terrible loss when Christopher, our steer, passed away from cancer just before his 18th birthday in 2022. Soon thereafter, we became aware of two 12-year-old dairy cows, Reah and Yasmin, who needed a safe home. They were too old to be productive but the staff at the farm did not want to send these two to slaughter. This was a very rare occurrence in the ugly reality of farming. We agreed to take them and they joined us in August 2022. They have settled in very well and have been fully integrated into the rest of the equine family. Yazmin is more reserved and loves to give bovine kisses but she likes to challenge fences, which makes life dangerous, of course. Reah appears more outgoing and certainly makes her wishes heard; however, she is more suspicious of humans but warms up eventually. Cows and other farm animals are sentient beings with their own desires, wishes, and personalities when allowed to develop those but they still have very little protection under the law. They continue to be exploited and are often mistreated in mass confinement with a certain fate of slaughter always looming. Maine Farm Animals continues its mission to advocate for a plant-based vision for the world to protect the animals, the humans and the planet. Please join us!

Christina Perkins



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New Hampshire Live and Let Live Farm Sanctuary

The Holiday Season is upon us, and we all need good socialization, happiness and cheer, as it seems finally, the ripple effects of the pandemic are starting to lift from our lives.

I strongly feel the ripple effects of the pandemic have been much more painful mentally and physically for humans and animals than the covid disease itself, people are finally coming out of their shells and homes to enjoy some time with others, with or without their masks.

United Way Day of Caring at Live and Let Live Farm has always been huge at LLLF until the Pandemic, then it was canceled for a few years due to Covid. Last year they tried hard to get it going, but few people attended. We are so happy to say and share, LLLF put in for 60 volunteers from United Way Day of Caring, and we ended up with 127 volunteers joining our 10 seasoned volunteers that were already here at LLLF rescue to volunteer and give of themselves on that day of caring.

A fun, eventful and fulfilling day of getting many chores completed with Mother Nature giving us a beautiful and sunny day to enjoy, working together in making a difference.

Love through the years, Facebook memories: I was just sent a Facebook memory of the Littleton Rescue we did on November 21, 2012, the largest, local rescue of horses in our history. Monday, November 19, 2012 we had a clinic going here at the rescue and at about noon time, the State Dept of Agriculture called me and said we have an urgent situation going on in Littleton NH. They said there were 23 horses and some were stallions. Thank goodness some were also mini horses. They had no proper shelter, were in knee deep mud, pretty much no water and food along with a very poorly structured fence where they were getting out loose and running along some main roads. We were informed they had to be picked up by Thanksgiving Eve. I said, "Let me see what we can do." We had a few dozen volunteers come together with a caravan of trucks and trailers to help. Some volunteers were staying behind to prepare for the return with the many horses we knew nothing about and some that were stallions. The rescue already had 66 horses on site, and when we came back with the precious cargo of the day, there were now 84 horses at Live and Let Live Farm Rescue. Five of the horses remained at a local Littleton farm.

Our largest rescue was the Great Premarin (PMU) rescue we did out of Manitoba Canada. In 4 months LLLF brought in 4 tractor trailers of horses, 104 horses and 40 were pregnant draft X mares. WMUR and Concord Monitor had been our largest helpers in finding adopters/homes for these precious animals who would have gone to slaughter. YES, 3-month-old babies and pregnant mares were going to slaughter.

LLLF rescue has been very busy in this challenging rescue world, most recently helping the town of Northwood with a hoarding situation in which we brought back to the rescue in protective custody, 16 animals from poultry to donkeys, cow and even a boa snake. Other humane societies have also participated in this Northwood PC, rescue situation.

LLLF has been very busy rescuing goats, minis, cats, bunnies and many other animals in situations of humans being treated for such diseases as cancer, with some sadly losing the battle of this horrid disease, as well as loss of homes, jobs etc. LLLF has adoption events on Sundays 2-4 pm for the companion animals whom you will often see photos of posted, if you follow our Live and Let Live Farm Rescue Facebook page.

Before ending our LLLF updates, there is another situation I would like to make animal rescues aware of: There is a scammer using the internet during this precious time of giving, with so many rescues in need, to steal/scam, focusing on animal rescues. Thankfully, I felt something was not right in the situation and dug deeper. In our case the woman called herself Jill Leila and emailed LLLF saying we were a great organization and she and her husband, Mike, chose our organization to give to this year. Jill said there was a donation check coming in the mail and to please let her know when it comes and then make a copy of the deposit when putting it in the bank. (No one has ever asked for that before) The check came for \$4,986., and had the business name of Macy's on it, which seemed strange. I searched our database and did not find her there as being a donor or adopter. Her name was not in our records so I google searched, deeply and found someone had posted how they were ripped off by her (using different companies' checks at that time).

Two things are going on here; first they get you to deposit the check and then tell you it was the wrong amount sent by their secretary, and to send them back part of it immediately so their account is not short. Also, the donation check will eventually bounce, but because it is of a real company with a real bank routing number, it will take a while to do so. I went to our bank with this check, they contacted the bank the check is written on and they are contacting the company. (We do not know if they stole checks or had some made up.) Now, you send them your bank information, when depositing the check, and they can now make checks for your accounts by either the check sent to them or using the deposit copy they requested you to send to them. The moral of this is if it seems too GOOD TO BE TRUE, it probably is...

To learn more about Live and Let Live Farm Rescue & Sanctuary, please visit our website at www.liveandletlivefarm.org We are thankful for Voice for Animals and their request for LLLF to share information. for their great newsletter. We all can make a difference for animals: together we are strong.

Wishing you all a Great and Blessed Holiday season with your precious families, friends and loved ones, fur babies and humans.

Teresa Paradis
President, Live and Let Live Farm Sanctuary

ANIMAL LEGISLATION

Maine

In the 131st Legislature we passed LD 679 “An Act Regarding Animals Abandoned by Tenants”. This bill requires a tenant to designate an authorized person to retrieve an animal in the event of the tenant’s death, incapacitation, or abandonment. The bill also explains when a landlord should subsequently release the animal to an animal shelter, an animal control officer, or police officer. This is second-in-the-nation legislation.

Our other bill was LD 1068 “An Act to Ban the Killing of Animals in Enclosed Areas”. The bill did not pass, but MFOA is considering other actions to ban these operations. Canned Hunting ranches provide non-native animals such as elk, red deer, fallow deer, bison, and wild boar too often inexperienced hunters who are guaranteed a kill within fenced in acreage. The majority of hunters consider these operations unethical, void of fair chase, and threaten to the image of hunting in Maine. And an unnecessarily inhumane practice by ‘trophy hunters’ and a blood sport that has no place a Maine. It is a dying industry that never caught on in New England.

Robert Fiske
President/Founder Maine Friends of Animals

New Hampshire

From coyotes to kangaroos, New Hampshire has a number of bills coming up this legislative session that could impact the lives of animals. (Bill numbers are still in the process of being assigned.)

Starting with wildlife, there are two bills that would provide some relief to coyotes, the most persecuted animal in the Granite State. The first, from Representative Ellen Read, would close the coyote hunting season for four months. Currently, coyotes can be hunted year-round in New Hampshire, including at night. This bill calls for a reprieve during the months when coyotes are raising their young, as is afforded all other hunted species. The second bill, a Senate bill, would prohibit the use of dogs to hunt coyotes, effectively ending the practice known as “coyote hounding,” in which packs of radio-collared dogs chase a coyote to exhaustion, even tearing the coyote apart in some cases. Last January in New Hampshire, hunting dogs chased a coyote onto unstable ice, and the coyote fell through and drowned.

The fate of wildlife is largely in the hands of the New Hampshire Fish and Game Commission, and over the years there have been repeated attempts to change the requirements for appointment to allow representation from the non-hunting community. This will be tried again in 2024. While bill text is not yet available, both Representative Cathryn Harvey and Senator David Watters have drafted legislation that could impact the makeup of the NHFG Commission.

Representative Gerri Cannon, who last session attempted to ban the sale and use of the second-generation anticoagulant rodenticides (SGARs) that are killing owls, eagles, and other wildlife, is now sponsoring a bill to ban the sale and use of rodent glue traps in New Hampshire.

Turning to domestic animals, there are two bills on the table to ban the sale of dogs in stores — a Senate bill and a House bill. The bills are essentially the same, and having two improves the chances that this legislation will pass. Finally, New Hampshire must contend with two regressive bills that would harm wild animals. The first is a bill sponsored by Representative Tom Mannion to allow private ownership of small-tailed monkeys, raccoons, foxes, skunks, otters, and kangaroos. Keeping a kangaroo as a pet is already allowed in thirteen other states, including Maine. Meanwhile, another lawmaker, Representative Michael Granger, has something even worse in mind for kangaroos. He is sponsoring a bill that would allow Granite Staters to farm kangaroos for food.

New Hampshire animal advocates are optimistic that the bills helpful to animals will pass, and the harmful ones will fail, but we will monitor these bills closely every step of the way.

Joan O’Brien
NH HSUS and NHARL (New Hampshire Animal Rights League)

Animal Shelters Voice for Animals Connects With



River Valley Animal Advocates

PO Box 628
Canton, ME 04221



Hi to our friends from the Voice for Animals,

November 2023

Congratulations on another year for the Voice for Animals group! Another year of helping animals and their people. Animal rescue has really come a long way over the years. I remember when the Voice group was one of the few rescue groups. Inland Maine has always kind of lagged behind the coastal area but now seems to be catching up at least a little bit with more groups even in Northern Maine. Voice for Animals has definitely been an inspiration for other rescue groups and I am so glad to be celebrating another year with you.

My name is Becky McDonald and I am the President of the RVAA. We are currently in our 14th year as a non-profit 501(c)(3) animal rescue group, with our major focus being the spay/neuter/ shots/medical needs of cats in our area. The RVAA would never have been formed without the support of the Voice for Animals group in 2009. Voice for Animals helped us to dream of our own rescue group. We were also introduced to Don McLean, DVM (thanks to VFA) who has been a life saver to our group from the very beginning! I would like to say thank you to the Voice for Animals group and to let you all know how the ripple effect of your support has helped us to help the animals locally.

We so much appreciate being included in your annual newsletter. I always enjoy telling you about the RVAA activities and how we have helped in our area. We mostly work in Oxford County, Maine but in the last year have had people call us from the Lewiston area and beyond. The largest town we work in is Rumford and the poverty levels in these area towns is very high. Unfortunately, the Fix-Me vouchers have been few and far between this year. 90% of the people that call me looking for spay/neuter of their cats would qualify for vouchers if we had them to give. We have been trying to do the spay/neuter for whatever the owners can pay but as we are a small group finances are always tight. We have never had to say no to any cat in need so far. We are an all-volunteer group so almost all of our funds go directly to veterinary fees. Thanks to Dr. McLean that goes a long way! We haven't been able to do quite as many cats this year as the last 2 years when we had vouchers but we were able to help over 200 cats this year. We pick up cats in the morning in the Rumford/Mexico area and bring them home at night as many of the people we help have no transportation. Another member of our RVAA board, Jolene Adley and her son Josh have stepped up to help with transporting the cats at night. As we are getting more cats coming to Canton from other areas, I have to be here to send them home at night. So, Jolene and Josh take all the cats to the Rumford area at night, many times going to people's homes to return cats. It is a tremendous help. We will have done over 200 cats this year and will have done more than 2,500 cats in our 14 years by year's end. Over 1,000 of them were females that could have produced over 15,000 kittens per year. We have also been able to help a number of dogs at our clinics. We don't do sterilization of dogs here but Dr. McLean does see dogs with medical problems or to get their shots. We try to be an all-around clinic for all the local people as they have so much need. Since the pandemic it seems that the veterinary hospitals are so busy that people are having a hard time getting appointments and care.

Thank you again for your interest in our group and all your help to get us started. Hope you have a wonderful new year and thank you so much for all the Voice for Animals has done and continues to do to help the animals.

Becky McDonald
President River Valley Animal Advocates

Russell County Phoenix Alabama Shelter

This is a small rural shelter which has no vet and no volunteers are allowed to walk dogs there. We do, however, have an amazing group of volunteers who, with the help of the staff, have managed to make things run more smoothly. Through a program that Annette Waldron runs called Operation Dog Tag which brings fosters and rescues together more than 800 dogs have left the shelter since mid-November, 2022. More than 600 left through rescue. Russell County Phoenix Shelter, 1706 4th Street, South, Phoenix City, Alabama; tel. (334) 291-4847; email rcocasa@phoenixcityal.us; <http://operationdogtag.org>

cara kopec, Volunteer

Voice for Animals knew Cara when she lived in South Berwick. We reconnected with her when she moved to Alabama. Voice for Animals contacted In Defense of Animals, which has a shelter in Mississippi, to see if they would consider taking this one in Alabama under its wing. Conversations between the Russell County Shelter and In Defense of Animals are on-going.

Caryl McIntire Edwards

Good Eats



Vegetable Chowder

3 cups corn kernels	2 Tbsp. natural peanut (<i>almond or cashew</i>) butter with no added oil or sugar
4 cups vegetable broth or water	
2 cups soy milk	1/2 lb. sliced, fresh mushrooms
1 large potato, diced	1/2 tsp. dry dill weed
1 large onion, chopped	2 tsp. dried parsley
1 medium green pepper, diced	tamari, garlic powder, salt to taste

Put all ingredients into large soup pot. Simmer 30 minutes and serve.

New England Brown Bread

1/2 cup toasted wheat germ	1 cup raisins
1/3 cup maple syrup	2 cups soy milk
1 tsp. baking powder	1/2 cup molasses
3 cups whole wheat pastry flour	1/2 cup apple juice concentrate
1/2 cup corn meal	1 tsp. egg replacer

Mix all ingredients together. Batter should hold together but not be too dry. If too dry, add water, if too moist, add more flour. Pour into large oiled loaf pan and bake at 350 degrees for 50-60 minutes until knife inserted into center comes out clean.

Recipes contributed by Barbara Bonsignore from her prize-winning cookbook. She was also the founder and administrator of New Hampshire Spay/Alter.

Animal Communication

Niko Therapies-Michele Lowry

Revealing 'The Secret' helps to Unveil and Heal – How Shelter Animals are Teaching us to have Open Communication with them.

We all have our secrets; some we hold on tightly and others we may share in the right situation and at the right time. When we realize it's time to release the burden, it's because we feel safe in our environment and the people who surround us. Shelter and Rescue animals often carry their own secrets. These emotionally destructive experiences have recreated their personalities, yet they often remain loyal to previous owners (hence 'The Secret,') and it prevents them from being ready to find their new home. Their fears, lack of confidence, need to protect themselves; all inhibit any hope of finding their forever home. And yet when the environment is supportive and loving, when they are given the opportunity and feel safe enough to share, the vast, life changing transformation, healing and shift in personality becomes completely awe inspiring where words are not enough to express the 'what just happened' moment.

These incredibly brave and courageous animals are willing, most of the time, to reset from the damage created by a human, in order to trust another human with their heart! I often wonder what reflection for humanity is being shown to us by these animals in such an unconditionally loving way. There is always a lesson for us when around these incredible creatures.

'The Secret' is revealed during communication and energy work sessions either at the shelter, or in someone's home, if they are an adoptee. As the conversation is opened up, the intention is to invite the animal to share. The words begin to become the story that is expressed telepathically visually (like a movie) of a time when there was no hope and this was the way life was going to be... and yet the animal endured and survived. I often have felt they sensed there was a small chance of being found, recovered, helped and given the opportunity for a new life. And truth be told, occasionally the animal is so deeply wounded emotionally and physically, their request is to transition. They will share that they don't trust themselves 'out there', and they would rather be released from their body so they can begin again...

I have experienced 'The Secret' as a concern for those animals left behind in a hoarding situation, back yard breeder, or varying levels of abuse. The animals all remain connected, whether abused, neglected or witnessing it and are therefore concerned about the animals who remain there. Animals have shared street addresses with me, and pushed hard for someone to explore what may still be happening...

These animals are incredibly wise and capable of sharing, if we are willing to take the time to listen and ask questions of them, we can guide and support any stories they wish to share. What I have witnessed over the years of shelter time is that when they begin to unfold the story, it is possible to literally witness them change in front of your eyes, their relief is very apparent now that they do not have to carry 'The Secret' any longer. They will always validate the conversation by either choosing to sit with me, yawning, stretching or suddenly having the desire to play!

It has been one of the most heartwarming experiences and learning to have open conversations with these amazing creatures has been the catalyst for releasing 'The Secret'.

A dear friend recently contacted me and was eager to share a story of validation as she felt that it was important for me to hear how the releasing of 'The Secret' can have such a profound effect on these animal's lives. We'd had a conversation with her recent adopted 9-year-old dog, Lily, who was a senior and had found her way to my friend's home to live out her years. Part of the conversation that Lily had revealed was that she had been shot with a Beebe gun (this unfortunately is not uncommon and hard to detect without X-rays!). She shared visions of her abusive, and uncaring experiences. This enlightened my friend to have a better understanding of who Lily was now and how to best support and love her. This conversation with Lily was a couple of years ago. More recently, Lily had been experiencing some mobility issues, following X-Rays to get a better diagnosis, it was found that Lily did in fact have Beebe gunshot lodged in her body. It was not the causing factor of her mobility issues, but simply validation that 'The Secret' she had shared was real.

Most of the time, when sharing an animal's history, the only way to tell if it is resonating and true is the animal's emotional response to the conversation being shared. So validations like Lily's do not happen often and my friend wanted to help me to trust in my visions/readings to ALWAYS share what I am receiving.

Shelter animals will also "veil" themselves so they are not seen by potential adopters. This was one of the first aspects of self-preservation I experienced in the shelters. The "veil" was to protect themselves when they were not ready, still had their Secret, or didn't want to be out there. This ability to be invisible works amazingly well. An open conversation to explore from their perspective, why they are veiling, helps to reveal 'The Secret.' This ultimately leads to an unveiling and their new family can find them now that their energy field has shifted and their frequency then matches their perfect family. My first experience of this was many years ago volunteering at a local shelter:

Doja had been at the shelter for many months, with no interest from the public to adopt her. When I was introduced to her she was in an outdoor run, situated out of sight from passing potential interest. Doja and I spent some time together and I offered her a Reiki session. It was very apparent that she had a “veil” around her. She had shrouded herself because she had lost her self-confidence and didn’t feel worthy of a new home. We worked together to clear the veil and increase her confidence and self-esteem. It was a heartfelt experience as she opened up her emotions again. When I returned to the shelter the following week, I was told she had been adopted the day after her session!

These animals are also helping their shelter care takers to see life through their eyes, which is often a different viewpoint. Shelters are very stressful environments for the humans who work/volunteer and the animals whose lives have been turned upside down, landing in a strange environment. Emotions are as variable as a rollercoaster ride, and sometimes the animals are misunderstood, or they simply need their story heard for more accurate choices to be made on their behalf.

Caesar was a 9-year-old mixed breed who had been at the shelter for a while. I was asked by one of the volunteers to have a ‘chat’ with him to see why he hadn’t been adopted. It was so interesting to find out that he thought the shelter WAS his new home – I petted him and smiled, I explained that this was a place to keep him safe until he found his forever home. I learned the following week that he had been adopted within a couple of days.

I invite you to take a moment and imagine life through the eyes of your foster, shelter or adopted animal. What do you sense from them beneath the surface? Perhaps they are confused as to what just happened in their life, or they are grieving the person who died and need to be acknowledged. Their trust left along with their abuser, or their animal family remains in danger. When you open up conversation and talk to them, just like you would talk to a friend, ask questions, and watch, sense and witness how they respond to your enquiry...you will be offering them one of the best gifts you can, to release ‘The Secret’, un-veil and reopen their world to a better place. Their history can define their future, and yet ‘The Secret’ revealed gives them the opportunity to release the burden, heal their past before they step foot in their new home to seek a loving, kind experience where they can redefine their purpose in life.

With honor always – Soul to Soul, Heart to Heart



Enlightened Horizons-Sara Moore

Some people think what I do must be extremely hard and that I have some special skills to be able to communicate with both living and deceased people and pets, but for me, it’s my normal! I have figured out how to use my senses to receive information/answers and over the past seventeen years I have become quite good at asking the pet the right questions.

Twice this week someone has told me about a woman who has a five year wait list for her animal communicating services and she charges close to \$600 per reading. Yikes! Let me give you some ways to tap into your pet for free! Before tapping into any energy, you need to call in your protectors. My mantra is, “I only allow those of God’s love and light into my space and into my life.” If I am working at an event, I then ask knights to stand in the corners of my space to protect my energy and deal with anything negative that may try showing up. Now close your eyes and think of one of your favorite animals. Be aware of any sensations you get in your physical body. Do your hips hurt? Knees? Shoulders, back, arm, paws? If they are still living and you do feel something, ask them what would make it feel better. Be open to whatever you get here! You may see taffy being stretched and kneaded, or want to spackle, sand and rinse a ball joint. Picture that happening as you sit with their energy, then ask them if there is anything they would like as a special treat. Feel your mouth and be open to the first thought that floats through your mind. When I first started on this wild journey taste was my primary sense being used to chat, so it would feel like I bit into frozen strawberries, if that was their favorite food. Some dogs love cantaloupe and watermelon, but the day a dog was asking for a gross tasting treat that was rolled in a crunchy coating, I was totally confused. The owner suddenly gasped and said that the dog loved raiding the kitty litter and THAT was what I was sensing! Gross! That was the day I learned to use other senses more.

You can ask them yes/no questions but you have to find a way to “hear” the answers. I have a built in “yes/no” meter, as I like to call it. My right eye and side of my body is yes/female/mother/grandmother, etc. My left side is no/male/father/grandfather, etc. When I teach workshops, I help you to find your own and, with practice, it is super easy. You can also get great produce at a grocery store. Is this a good ear of corn? Yes/no. When my son was little, he asked if he could be the one to pick the corn for dinner and he asked me how to do it. I said, “Just pick up an ear and feel in your body if it’s a good one.” He nailed it, even though I know how nuts this sounds. You can also use muscle testing or a pendulum and a simple on-line search will give you plenty of information to dig through. If you would like to use an animal communicator, feel free to ask them some questions before diving in with a full reading. People use me for all kinds of insight, from medical mysteries to why is my dog suddenly terrified of a specific room? I’m not an animal behaviorist and honestly, I thought I would just be doing Reiki on pets but they decided to start chatting in my head and I rolled with it.

FMI for my information on what I do or to book a reading or a webinar go to www.enlightenedhorizons.com and follow me at Sara Moore Enlightened Horizons on Facebook.

Sara Moore



Pets for Plovers

Maine Audubon’s Coastal Birds Project has been monitoring the Piping Plover population since 1981. Population numbers reached their lowest in 1983, at only six nesting pairs throughout the state. In 2023, a record high number of 157 nesting pairs were documented. The countless hours spent by all stakeholders working together to strategize feasible ways for these birds and humans to share the beach is immeasurable. It takes hard work from state and federal biologists, volunteers, beach front landowners, town employees, town, state, and federal law enforcement, state park employees, lifeguards, and more! Pet owners can contribute to Piping Plover conservation efforts as well by signing the pledge and joining the Pets for Plovers team!

This spring, we re-launched Maine Audubon’s Pets for Plovers program. The intent of the project is to encourage people to leash dogs on beaches where dogs are allowed and provide an indoor-only lifestyle for cats. The endangered Piping Plover, along with other coastal birds, relies on Maine beaches to nest, feed, and recharge for migration. Human disturbance, roaming dogs, and outdoor cats are among the top threats to the survival of plover chicks and also adult birds.

Even a friendly dog is still viewed as a predator and can harm plovers. Not only are dogs able to predate both adults and eggs, but the mere act of disturbing a nest causes the adults to expend precious energy to defend their eggs or flee. Keeping dogs leashed and cats indoors isn’t just good for the birds. Cats can be exposed to a number of threats when left to roam outside; these dangers may include predators, harsh weather, and disease.

In revamping this program, a pledge was introduced to encourage accountability among beachgoers. People who demonstrated respect for plovers on the beach, kept animals safely at home or leashed pets were encouraged to sign the pledge and were rewarded with Pets for Plovers gear including bandanas, stickers, and leashes. Pet owners are integral to our conservation efforts.

Thank you to the countless people that are doing the right thing.

To sign the pledge visit: petsforplovers.org

To learn more about Piping Plovers and the Coastal Birds Project:

maineaudubon.org/projects/plovers-terns/

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A Letter Written to the Editor of Seacoastonline by Voice for a Voice for Animals member

As yet, there has been no action on this letter in each of the three towns involved. VFA will continue sharing this letter and working with people until this issue is resolved. If you are interested in getting involved in your town please contact us at voiceforanimals.1987@gmail.com.

To the Editor:

The Animal Welfare Society in Kennebunk is the closest shelter to York, Kittery, and Eliot so it may come as a surprise to some that strays from those three towns are brought to the Kittery Animal Hospital which has had a contractual agreement with them that has been in place for many years. Last fall the KAH contacted me saying they had seen no cats from any of the three towns show up there in months and asking if I could find out what was (or wasn't) happening.

Before I go further with this, I want to give you a little history of towns and their responsibility to cats. While towns must deal with all stray dogs, they do not legally have to have such a commitment to cats: they are only obligated to pick up sick and injured ones. I have been told by some people in animal rescue that this is true across the county and that ferrets have more rights than cats do.

The decision about whether to deal with cats or not is always made by the Chief of Police in each town and if the town has no police department it will be made by the Town Manager. The interesting and decidedly sad part of this is that for whatever reason towns are not obligated to tell you about their decision. That is why I asked Nicole Doyle, the humane agent (a step up from the ACO) for Cumberland and York counties, what she could find out. The answer unsurprisingly was NOTHING. Interestingly, even if all the townspeople want the town to deal with cats it still does not have to and it still doesn't have to tell anyone about its decision.

I did eventually learn, quite by chance, that two towns would be working together going forward, dealing only with dogs, leaving cats to be dealt with by rescues in the area. I have not gotten definitive word from the third town but no stray cats are being brought in to KAH by them either. With this knowledge in mind, I researched the three-town area to see what rescues were working there and, not surprisingly, I found there were NONE. So that means that no rescues are available to take care of the cats and injured and sick ones are not being brought to KAH either. This leads to painful deaths for innocent cats and the creation of more feral colonies.

These state-sanctioned decisions regarding cats are outmoded, undemocratic, and certainly inhumane. If you are concerned about this, for starters there are petition at Kittery Animal Hospital, Ann-imals, and Safe Haven to be signed by concerned citizens.



*LuckEdwards-rescued, inside cat
"Kitten on the Keys."*

If you have further questions regarding this or you want more information you may contact me at cme4animals@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Caryl McIntire Edwards, President/Founder Voice for Animals
York is my hometown and Voice for Animals was founded because of my dealing with cats there.
Ultimately, the town took over the job and promised to continue doing it going forward.
Obviously that promise has not been kept.

**Until they speak to everyone as clearly as we hear them through our hearts,
there is a great and urgent need for you to join with us in becoming a Voice for Animals**

VOICE FOR ANIMALS

Voice for Animals

P.O. Box 34

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