

Heart of the **MISSION**



**CARING FOR ANIMALS AND
THE PEOPLE WHO LOVE THEM**

Your support helped us be there for
Paddington and his family.

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New Hampshire Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

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The New Hampshire SPCA is a four-star (the highest possible rating) animal welfare charity in the state of New Hampshire.

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MATCHING GIFT OPPORTUNITY

HELP **2X** AS MANY HOMELESS ANIMALS!



Have your gift matched now!

Learn about your impact on Pages 10-11



Dear Friends and Supporters,

At the heart of our mission is a simple but powerful goal: to further the human-animal bond. Every day, we see the deep connection between people and their pets, and we know that families come in many forms...including those with four paws, wagging tails, and gentle purrs. Our work is dedicated to strengthening these family units by reuniting lost animals with their loved ones, helping families welcome new companions, and supporting households in keeping their beloved animals at home.

Through the expansion of our programming, we are taking important steps to make this vision a reality. Our low-cost spay/neuter clinics help prevent unwanted litters while ensuring pets receive essential care. Our C.A.R.E.S Clinic brings veterinary services directly into the community, providing families with access to the medical care their animals need. And this past summer, we proudly launched our new **Community Wellness Program**—an exciting step forward in reaching those who may not otherwise be able to access or afford veterinary care. By offering vaccinations and fundamental health services, this program ensures that pets stay healthy, and families stay together.

We know that a person's financial situation does not measure the depth of their love for their animal. What it does show is the need for support, compassion, and a commitment from organizations like ours to bridge those gaps. By recognizing this truth and acting on it, we can preserve the bonds that mean so much.

Because of community support, we are able to assist animals in need not only locally and regionally, but also in other parts of the country where they may be at even greater risk. Some of these animals linger in shel-

ters not only because of overpopulation, but because they face more complex medical needs. While these cases can be more challenging, they are also the most rewarding. With veterinary care and support, we can provide relief, turn hopeless situations into hopeful ones, and give these animals a second chance at the loving forever home they deserve.



As a community, your support makes all of this possible. The contributions, grants, and donations, regardless of size, are instrumental in furthering this work. Your generosity enables us to go out into the community and provide vital services for those in need. It gives us the opportunity to educate young people about animal welfare, teaching them how to be responsible pet owners and advocates for animals. It allows us to rescue animals in harm's way, rehabilitate them, and find them safe and loving forever homes.

The support of our community is woven into every step of our work. We could not do it without you, and we are deeply humbled and grateful for your commitment to helping us keep families whole.

On behalf of the animals,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Lisa S. Dennison".

Lisa S. Dennison, M.S.
President & CEO



Yahtzee's journey home.

After 80 days in limbo, this 11-month-old hound who stole the hearts of our community finally found his perfect match.

His story would not have been possible without friends like you.

Click [here](#) to hear from his wonderful new family!



Caring for animals and the people who love them

By Savannah Alcerro

VP of Animal & Veterinary Services

Sometimes, our work goes far beyond animal care, it becomes deeply human.

Paddington, a dog originally adopted from the New Hampshire SPCA, was recently transferred back to us from another New Hampshire shelter in June 2025. He had come in as a stray via animal control and, after a seven-day hold with no reclaim, the other facility moved forward with the abandonment processes before transferring him back to us.

When our team heard the name Paddington, it was instant recognition. He had been in and out of our care multiple times over the years. We knew his story. His owners, a couple struggling with housing instability and complex medical needs, had always done their best to reclaim him. But this time was different. We learned that one of Paddington's owners had passed away, and the other, Ken, had suffered a serious accident, leaving him hospitalized with serious mobility concerns.

Despite his circumstances, Ken was determined to get Paddington back. He told us plainly Paddington was all he had left. Paddington was in good health, up-to-date on vaccines, and clearly well cared for when he arrived to us. We saw the bond between them not only in Ken's

words but in the condition and demeanor of Paddington.

While Ken remained in the hospital, day after day he tried to make arrangements for Paddington calling on everyone and anyone he knew to see if anyone could provide a safe haven to Paddington until he was released. One of Ken's providers even reached out to us, saying Ken spoke constantly about his dog, worrying over his safety and well-being, even above his own. With no friends or family to help, Ken relied solely on the NHSPCA to keep Paddington safe until they could be together again. Paddington remained in our care for over a month, until Ken was finally discharged.

On July 11, we had the privilege of reuniting them. It was an emotional moment. I honestly don't know who was more overjoyed, Ken or Paddington. Though Ken's living situation was precarious, temporarily housed at a motel, we made sure he knew we

were still here for him. I asked him to stay in touch, and he promised he would.

Three days later, on July 14, Ken called again. He had missed several medical treatments, was being evicted from his motel, and through tears and exhaustion, said he couldn't do it anymore. He asked to surrender Paddington.

While our Adoption and Veterinary teams could not spare anyone on a moment's notice, staff member Ben Driscoll immediately volunteered to help. He personally went to retrieve Paddington and bring him back into our care.

This wasn't the outcome we had hoped for. I take comfort in knowing Ken made the decision for Paddington himself. We honored his autonomy and his bond with his dog, provided the resources we could and kept the line of communication open. We gave him the dignity of choice, in a life where so much has been taken from him.

This story is a powerful reminder that our work is not only about saving animals, but also about supporting people, too. We don't just serve homeless pets, we serve the people who love them, no matter their circumstances.

Home at last!

After 64 days in limbo, Paddington is finally safe, loved and home:

"I think Paddington spent so long at your shelter because he was waiting for me to find him. I believe with all my heart he was supposed to be part of our family."



Compassionate care for community animals

Emergency surgery saves local family's dog

By **Dr. Carly LaGrandeur, DVM**
Medical Director

When a two-year-old pit bull mix arrived at our clinic, it was immediately clear he was in trouble. He was lethargic, very thin, and severely dehydrated. His abdomen was firm and distended, and his eyes told us he was not feeling well. Our team quickly got to work to figure out what was going on.

We discovered that he had swallowed a corn cob, which had become lodged in his small intestine and caused a complete obstruction. Bloodwork showed signs of serious dehydration and inflammation, and imaging confirmed that the blockage had been there long enough to do real damage. His prognosis was guarded, and his family had a tough decision to make. He was fighting infection, pain, and exhaustion. The situation was urgent and grim. His owners were given a difficult choice: proceed with high-risk, emergency surgery, or say goodbye.

His caregivers chose to give him a chance to fight. There's nothing grounded in science about it—but pitties have a will to live like nothing I have seen before, and this pup was no different.

During the surgery, it was immediately clear that there was a large section of intestine that had become necrotic due to prolonged pressure and compromised blood flow. For him to have a chance at survival, we had to remove about 10 centimeters of damaged bowel, including the corn cob, and reconnect the healthy ends.

The surgery went smoothly, but his recovery wasn't entirely without complication. He experienced some regurgitation,



We are grateful to now be able to offer low-cost services to members of our community who need it—helping to keep pets with the people who love them.

which raised concerns about potential aspiration and secondary pneumonia. Fortunately, things never progressed beyond mild concern.

We knew that the highest risk period for the intestinal site to fail typically falls between three to five days post-op, making the recovery period just as critical as the surgery itself. It's always a tense period, especially in a case where there's been significant tissue compromise and inflammation. In a full-service veterinary hospital, a patient like this would typically remain hospitalized overnight or even for up to several days on IV fluids and medications under close monitoring. Since we don't have those capabilities on-site, much of that responsibility shifted to the incredibly dedicated owners, who stepped up in every way and provided the round-the-clock care he needed at home. He required several medications including antibiotics, pain control, and a carefully managed diet of small, frequent

meals to protect the healing site. Their commitment made all the difference.

Cases like his are tough—not just medically, but emotionally. Emergency surgery is never an easy decision, and we know it's not always possible. I'm proud of the work our team did and grateful he had owners in his corner willing to give him a chance.

Over the next several days, he steadily improved. His energy returned, his appetite came back, and he started acting like himself again. His owners finally had the sweet, energetic dog back that they used to know.

This story is a powerful reminder that while gold-standard care is ideal, it's not always necessary to achieve a meaningful outcome. With thoughtful decision-making, teamwork, and a commitment to doing the best we can with the resources available, we can still offer animals a real chance at recovery—and sometimes, even incredible results.

Affordable care for community members in need

We are pleased to now offer low-cost Community Wellness Clinics to support pet owners facing financial hardship. Services include wellness exams, vaccines, bloodwork, select surgeries and more.

Our goal? To keep pets healthy and with the families who love them.

For more information or to book an appointment online, please click [here](#).



MAKE YOUR GIFT GO FURTHER



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Explore tax-smart giving through your stocks, IRA, or DAFs to help give animals the second chance they deserve. To learn more, please contact **Sheila Ryan at 603-773-5706 or sryan@nhspca.org.**

Tax smart ways to make the greatest impact

By Sheila E. Ryan
Senior VP of Philanthropy

Choosing to support the animals at the New Hampshire SPCA is a wonderful act of caring and kindness! After all, you're not just making a gift, you're helping to save lives, bring comfort to animals in need, and create a more compassionate community.

But, did you know you can make the same or greater impact by using tax smart methods of giving?

Here are three powerful options:

Gifts of Appreciated Stock

Donating stock that has increased in value may be one of the most tax-efficient ways to give. By transferring appreciated securities directly to the NHSPCA, you can avoid paying capital gains tax while also receiving a charitable deduction for the full market value of the stock. This method is a win-win for you and the animals!

Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs) from IRAs

For those age 70½ or older, your gift can come as a direct transfer from your IRA to the NHSPCA. Known as a Qualified Charitable Distribution, this type of gift can count toward your required minimum distribution (RMD) but will not be included in your taxable income.

Donor Advised Funds (DAFs)

A Donor Advised Fund allows you to simplify your giving while making a lasting impact. If you already have a DAF, you can recommend a grant directly to the NHSPCA. This is an easy, flexible way to support the animals.

Every gift, regardless of size or method, helps us provide vet care, food, rehabilitation and a chance at a loving home for thousands of animals each year. If you'd like more information on how to make a tax smart gift please click [here](#). Together, we can create a brighter future for animals in need.



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Lessons from a 63-cat rescue

By Kayla Williams

Lead Animal Care Technician

In early May, we received a desperate call from a pet owner whose home had become overwhelmed. What started with just a few unsterilized cats quickly spiraled out of control. None of the cats had been spayed or neutered; breeding became rampant. The population exploded, and the owner could no longer keep up with the care they needed.

When our staff arrived, we expected to take in 20-30 cats, but the reality was far more extensive. After rounding up all the adult cats and litters of kittens, there turned out to be 63 cats in this single household. Having so many animals in close quarters with no medical oversight meant disease had been spreading rapidly. Many of the cats arrived with eye issues, likely caused by untreated infections.

Three of them were suffering more

than most. Their eyes were painfully enlarged and cloudy. Our veterinary team made the difficult decision to perform double enucleation surgery—removing both eyes—to relieve their pain and give them a fresh start. Though they were understandably scared at first, all three of these cats adapted remarkably well to life without sight while in the shelter.

Today, they're all safe and loved in their new homes.

This situation is a powerful example of what can happen when pets aren't spayed or neutered. Left unchecked, even a small number of animals can produce dozens of offspring. In cats especially, the population can explode before anyone realizes what's happening.


Altering animals doesn't just prevent unwanted litters—it can reduce the risk of disease, lower aggressive behaviors, and help animals live longer, healthier lives. It also protects

already-overburdened shelters and rescue groups from being pushed past capacity.

While it's natural to want to help homeless animals, it's essential to make sure you can meet their basic needs. Caring for pets is a long-term commitment, not just emotionally but financially as well.

When pet owners find themselves in an overwhelming situation, we are here to help. Whether it's due to a financial crisis, a job loss, or realizing that too many animals has become unmanageable, we want to help prevent people and their animals from suffering. Fortunately, with the support of our community, we were able to step in before things got more out of hand.

All 63 cats are now safe, and most are already in loving homes. They are all reminders of just how resilient animals can be, and how much of a difference we can make when we act with compassion and responsibility.



One of the 63 felines removed from a home when their owner became overwhelmed. We were so glad they called us for help.

Paul's life-saving journey to NH

Dog pulled from Louisiana euthanasia list adopted in two hours at the NHSPCA

By **Amanda Wellman**
Transport Coordinator

Every life that we save has meaning, and every animal that we save has a story. Some of the stories stand out in my mind because they moved me or made me feel like a superhero, and such was the case with Paul.

I first “met” Paul while searching a list of hundreds of dogs in Louisiana whose agencies were looking for transfer. I am the Transport Coordinator, and it is part of my job to select the dogs and cats that we transfer in from overcrowded shelters in other states.

Sadly, Paul stood out on the list for one reason—he had a red bar across the top of his photo declaring that he would be euthanized due to lack of shelter space on an upcoming date.

One of the goals of our Transfer Program is to reduce and eventually end the euthanasia of behaviorally sound animals in American animal shelters.

I couldn't stop thinking about Paul, so I asked the folks at his Louisiana shelter what he was like in personality and behavior. His friends in Louisiana couldn't say enough good things about Paul—he sounded like a solid, all-around-good-boy of a dog who was resilient to change, excellent with people of all ages, friendly with other dogs, and well-behaved for veterinary care.

We can't resist a dog with that behavior profile—there are so many awesome adopters around here who all are looking for a dog like that! So, we arranged for Paul to be transferred to the NHSPCA on the next flight with the Bissell Pet Foundation.

Paul arrived and we immediately realized that he was even better than described, which made him practically perfect in every way.

No one could believe that such a great dog was at risk in Louisiana, but animal shelters all over the country are extremely crowded and with more animals coming in every day, many of them are in crisis mode. Dogs like Paul are at risk 24-7, which is a problem that we're working to solve.

If you know our community of supporters, it will not surprise you to learn that Paul was adopted within two hours of being moved into our Adoption Pavilion!

His family had been looking for the perfect dog for the last six weeks; in fact, the dad visited the Adoption Center almost every day while on his lunch break, hoping for the right dog to be there waiting. The family all came in together and were stopped in their tracks when they saw Paul—he seemed perfect. They took him out to play in our play yard with their two children, and he was perfect! They took him for a walk, and he was perfect. They brought their senior female dog to meet him, and guess what? Paul was perfect.

I tear up every time I think of his scheduled euthanasia.

Paul's family recently updated us, and big surprise, Paul is still perfect, and he is everything they were looking for in a dog and more. His mama says that his name is Tucker now, and he is the cuddliest dude. Tucker's favorite spot on the couch is right next to anyone who wants to dish out endless scratches. Tucker is known to his family and multitude of friends as **the best boy**, and he is clearly right where he belongs.

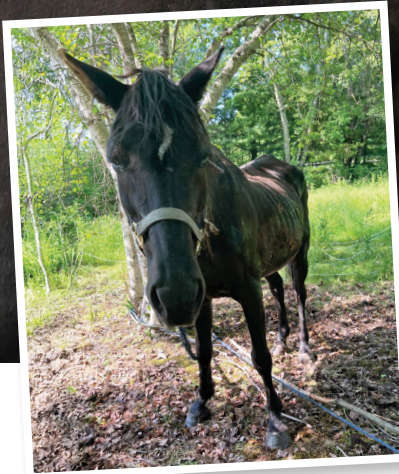
Every animal we save has a story. Thank you so much for being part of our team, and helping us bring Happily-Ever-After to animals like Tucker, the dog previously known as Paul.



We're grateful to be able to help animals like Paul, who are highly adoptable but have found themselves in an overwhelmed shelter.

Thankfully, he's now safe, loved and home (above).





Sydney (left) has come so far since being found tied to a tree without water or food (inset). A healthy, consistent diet has helped her gain more than 150 pounds. She has loved every single moment spent with her pasture mate, Wendy (right).

Hope begins with you: Be the voice for the voiceless

By Michelle Murch

Equine & Farm Program Manager

One of the most heartbreaking calls we have received came recently from a concerned neighbor who reported a horse in need of rescue. She had seen a bay mare tied out to a tree with no access to water, standing in the scorching sun and later in the drenching rain, her ropes twisted into knots until she could barely move. We responded quickly and when our team arrived, we found her exactly as described, tangled, and thin to the point of emaciation, a water tub within sight, but out of reach. Within minutes of our arrival, she became so ensnared in the rope that she fell to the ground, unable to free herself. We rushed over and worked quickly to untangle her.

Despite her ordeal, this mare welcomed help from a complete stranger. Once untangled, she drank from the water brought to her, it was clear she hadn't had enough to drink for some time. Her back was covered with scabs and sores of rain rot, and her legs were

Help victims of cruelty and neglect

Our **SOS Fund** specifically helps ease the tremendous burden of expenses associated with cruelty cases. Your gift will help pay for medicine and supplies, veterinary care, etc.

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rubbed raw with rope burns around her fetlocks. Her body condition, assessed by a veterinarian, was a 1.5, an evident indicator of severe malnourishment.

Her only "crime" was being inconvenient to her owners. The simple solution of an adequate fence, which could have provided her safety, and access to grazing and water, had been overlooked because everyone was "too busy." The result was an animal left to suffer needlessly in silence.

Once she was surrendered to our care, she walked quietly onto our trailer,

immediately she began to munch on the hay we had waiting for her as though she knew relief had finally arrived. In the weeks since her rescue, this mare has transformed. She has gained at least 150 pounds, her coat shines, and her eyes are bright and she has hope. Soon, she will be ready to meet the family who will give her the safe, loving home she has always deserved.

Unfortunately, she is not alone. In the weeks following her rescue, we took in more horses living under similar conditions, shockingly also tied to trees, malnourished, and neglected. These cases are preventable. Adequate fencing, access to water, shelter, and regular care are the legal and moral responsibilities of every horse owner.

We urge our community to speak up. If you see an animal suffering, tied, tangled, or without basic care, please don't assume someone else will act. Call Report. Help us save lives.

For that one mare who we call Sydney, and the others who followed, one call made the difference between silent suffering and a second chance.

MATCHING GIFT OPPORTUNITY

HELP **2X** AS MANY
HOMELESS ANIMALS!



Be a lifeline for animals like Cher

By Rich Hegarty
Annual Fund Manager

Cher is special. We knew it from the moment she arrived at the New Hampshire SPCA. While we get to meet many awesome dogs, Cher really stood out. She was an accomplished cuddler, always eager for belly rubs and affection. Wriggling on her back, she would reach out with her paws and intentionally draw you in! She was a laid-back, lovable pup who wanted all the snuggles she could get... and we happily obliged.

But behind those sweet, soulful eyes was a painful reality: Cher was suffering. Poor

“Behind those sweet, soulful eyes was a painful reality: Cher was suffering. Poor Cher had torn the CCLs in both of her hind legs.”

Cher had torn the CCLs in both of her hind legs. The CCL in dogs is similar to the ACL in people, and most of us know someone who has gone through that! Cher’s every step caused severe pain. To avoid putting weight on her painful knees, Cher would choose to sprawl out on the floor or on her favorite blanket. While this would soothe her a bit, it was not a cure. She couldn’t continue this way and Cher needed what only surgery would provide...relief. Despite constant discomfort, Cher remained cheerful, playful, and affectionate, a true testament to her resilient spirit.

Thanks to modern veterinary medicine and our amazing community, Cher received corrective surgery on both of her knees with six weeks of recovery time in between. Her amazing foster

Mom was patient and unimaginably kind as she cared for Cher and helped her to overcome each challenge in the process. Both surgeries are now complete, and Cher is well on her road to being an active and healthy best friend! We are so grateful that we have the capacity to provide healing for those that need it, and second chances for every animal that comes through our door.

Cher’s story beautifully highlights the complications that some animals endure. Providing this kind of extensive care requires resources, as does the daily care that every animal needs... food, medical treatment, a snuggly bed, a second chance. The resources to do this and all our work come from people just like you. Kind, animal-loving people who want to make a difference for animals that need them.

Cher recovers after the first of her two CCL surgeries—which were only possible because of the support of our incredibly generous community.

Now, your gift can be matched to help twice as many animals like Cher!



Cher will be adopted by her foster family once she is medically cleared, and good thing... because she has made herself right at home over the past five months!



Your gift can be matched now!

We have some incredible news to share—and it’s an opportunity like never before!

Thanks to the extraordinary generosity of two devoted animal lovers, we’re thrilled to announce our largest-ever matching gift opportunity for an annual fundraiser: \$50,000!

Longtime NHSPCA friend Helen Brosseau and a dedicated anonymous volunteer have each pledged \$25,000

to help animals in need.

That means every dollar you give will be matched—dollar for dollar—up to \$50,000!

[This is your chance to help twice as many animals](#)—twice as many lives saved, twice as many second chances. From urgent medical care to shelter, food, and love, your gift will go twice as far.

Here’s the catch: we can only unlock

the full \$50,000 if supporters like you step up today.

Make your gift now by scanning the QR code or clicking [here](#). When you do, you’ll be helping animals like Cher—and there are many of them—receive the love and care they deserve.

Every animal deserves a chance to heal, to be loved, and to find a forever home.

Let’s make it happen—*together*.

NHSPCA's C.A.R.E.S. Clinic...

Making veterinary care accessible for all

By **Lindsey Franck**

Community Outreach & Program Coordinator

The NHSPCA's C.A.R.E.S. stands for Community Animal Resource and Education Services, the newest addition to our Community Wellness Programs. This mobile clinic was launched in partnership with local veterinarian Dr. Lisa Boyer and the New Hampshire SPCA to support pet owners in Rockingham and Strafford Counties who face financial and transportation barriers to veterinary care.

At each clinic, a team of volunteer veterinarians and technicians provides wellness exams, core vaccinations, and advice on common health issues. While we don't replace a family veterinarian, we help bridge the gap—connecting families to affordable clinics and financial resources that support long-term pet care.

"Twenty-five of our 45 residents have cars, and most people benefit from living right downtown because they can walk to get necessities or hop on the bus," explained the Residential Coordinator at a recent C.A.R.E.S. clinic.

That day's clinic was hosted by a subsidized housing community focused on serving veterans. It was the seventh C.A.R.E.S. Clinic we've held this year since receiving funding at our Auction for the Animals and late November 2024, and launching this February.

Our final two appointments of the day were neighbors and close friends. One was a single woman; the other, a single mother. Two women planned to visit the



We are thrilled to bring care to those facing financial and transportation barriers.

clinic together after running errands, since the single Mom didn't have her own car.

During the Mom's pet's exam, the veterinarian learned that she didn't have the \$20 clinic fee and borrowed the money from her friend, planning to repay her once her monthly income came in the next day. Her budget was very limited, and she had to be careful with every expense.

Recognizing the budget constraints, we knew it would be best to waive the clinic fee and encouraged her to use the money for groceries, back-to-school supplies, or whatever her family needed. Due to financial hardship, her cat hadn't seen a vet or received vaccines in several years. The C.A.R.E.S. clinic that day made it possible for her kitty to be up to date on veterinary care, while allowing this caring

pet owner to care for her family too.

Moments like these remind us why this work matters.

The C.A.R.E.S. Clinic exists to ensure that no one must choose between putting food on the table and getting their beloved pet the care they need. By removing barriers like cost and transportation, we help keep pets healthy and with the families who love them.

Each clinic is not only about vaccines or wellness exams—it's about dignity, support, and community. We are proud to serve our neighbors, ensuring that compassion and care reach everyone, regardless of circumstance.

We are grateful to our donors, partners and volunteers who make this program possible. With your help, we look forward to continuing this work, one neighborhood, one pet, and one story at a time.



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CHARITABLE TRUST

Junior's journey

By Riann Hadley
Interim Clinic Manager

Under the blistering sun, a small dust-covered orange tabby limped through a hot Texas town. His front paw curled under at an unnatural angle, forcing him to hobble awkwardly. Yet despite the clear deformity, he moved with a kind of quiet determination.

Soon after, he landed at a Texas rescue with the incoming reason identified as “unwanted.” It didn't take long for them to assess the full extent of his condition. The paw was severely twisted, likely a congenital deformity or from an old injury. He had been through a lot already despite his young age, but his eyes sparkled with life. They named him Junior—a small name for a cat with a big spirit.

The rescue team poured their hearts into giving Junior a better chance. For months, he received gentle physical therapy and regular checkups. The staff at the rescue worked tirelessly to improve his mobility and strength, hoping he could one day use the limb properly. Junior never complained. He purred through the exercises and leaned into every touch with gratitude. But despite all their efforts, it became clear: the leg was holding him back more than it was helping him.

The Texas rescue reached out to us, where they knew additional care and more adoption opportunities awaited. Junior made the long trip north, inside a transport van with nine other cats, surrounded by well wishes from the caring rescue.

Once at the NHSPCA, veterinarians assessed him and made a difficult but compassionate decision. To give Junior a pain-free life with full mobility, the deformed leg would need to be amputated.

Even though the surgery was a success, Junior still faced some mobility challenges with his other front leg. Unfortunately, Junior also had a hyperextension of his wrist on the remaining front leg as well. This combined with adjusting to walking on three legs, had led to some challenges getting around. It was going to take time for him to learn to maneuver on three legs.

Not long after the amputation, Junior was cleared for adoption. It only took three days for him to get chosen by an adopter. They didn't see a cat with restrictions—they saw a survivor with the sweetest soul.

Junior now spends his days lounging in sunbeams, watching birds from the window, and snuggling with his human every night.

He may have lost a leg, but he gained something far greater: a life full of love, comfort, and belonging.





Helping undersocialized dogs find confidence and connection

By Kelly Marinell

Director of Animal Programs

In June, the New Hampshire SPCA partnered with a rescue organization in Texas facing a heartbreaking reality: too many dogs, not enough adopters, and dwindling resources. They reached out for urgent help placing young, friendly dogs. After confirming all necessary medical and transport requirements, four lucky pups were cleared to travel to New Hampshire for a fresh start.

Three of these dogs—Draco, Hazel, and Raven—were just seven months old and had spent nearly their entire lives in a shelter environment. While they were physically healthy, we knew transitioning into a busy shelter like ours could be overwhelming, especially for dogs who had little one-on-one human interaction.

When they arrived, it was immediately clear just how under socialized they were. All three were too frightened to walk on leash, so I carried each one into their new kennels, where we gave them soft bedding, food, toys, and—most importantly—time to decompress.

Once outside and given the opportunity to be dogs, their personalities began to shine. We saw playful behaviors—zoomies, play bows, toy tossing—that showed us there was joy beneath their fear. Hazel was the most outgoing, quick to seek attention and play with my own dog, Bob, as well as others in our care. Raven was more elusive but eager to bond. After a week of gentle, consistent time together, she began to seek out affection, leaning in for pets and even placing her paw on my leg when I stopped.

Draco, the only boy of the trio, was the most shut down. While we could carry him in and out of his kennel, we knew this wasn't the right path to helping him gain confidence. Our goal is always to create a sense of safety and allow dogs to make their own choices. For dogs like Draco, that means setting up an environment that minimizes pressure and encourages independence.

We moved each dog into our holding room, where their kennels open directly into fenced outdoor pens. This setup allows us to open their kennel doors and let them choose when to step outside, creating a low-pressure, empowering

experience. Once outside, we attach a leash and let it drag, gradually working toward light leash handling using treats and lots of encouragement.

Hazel and Raven progressed quickly. With a calm, social dog as a walking buddy, they began to walk on leash with confidence. Draco moved at a slower pace. When he felt pressure on the leash, he panicked—rolling, pulling back, and trying to escape. To avoid causing trauma, we took it slowly, simply picking up and dropping the leash without tension until he grew more comfortable.

While our team and volunteers dedicate time and compassion to every dog, nothing replaces the stability of a home. We ensure adopters are set up for success with personalized support packets and full transparency about each dog's background and progress.

Every dog is an individual, and working with under socialized animals requires patience, flexibility, and heart.

These pups, who have all since been adopted, remind us that while progress can look different for each dog, with the right support and environment, many can begin to blossom in their own time.

A new look but the same mission

By **Melissa Mower**
Communications Manager

If you've been receiving our newsletter for a while now, you've likely picked up on the fact that things are looking a little different these days. We are so excited to have finally made the leap from our traditional newsprint format to this magazine-style newsletter—and we want to take a moment to tell you why.

First, we want to acknowledge that every donated dollar is a true gift of faith. We take great pride in being thoughtful and efficient stewards of the resources you entrust to us. That's why, when the rising cost of producing our newsletter became impossible to overlook, we knew we had to make a change.

At one time, the previous format was the most cost efficient available, but Newsprint isn't as common as it once was, and there are very few vendors who still work with it. Without competition, there's little incentive for vendors



The evolution of our agency newsletter!

to keep prices low. These price hikes were happening very, very quickly while at the same time the process was taking much longer. By the time the newsletters were landing in homes, we were already working on the next one. We met with our mail house representative to work on cost savings and then, following months of brainstorming with no leads on a solution, the mailing house unexpectedly went out of business.

This sudden change gave us an opportunity—and a much-needed nudge—to reimagine how we share with you the stories that matter most. We had been considering this change for over a year, and the time had finally come to make the leap to something better.

We couldn't be more excited to reveal this new format. We're grateful for the opportunity to finally share high-resolution photos (in color!) that truly capture the heart, hope and joy of the animals you have helped save... and while we are planning to cut back to three issues per year instead of four, we promise to pour just as much energy into each one.

We hope this new look helps you feel more connected to each of the animals within these pages. Each has a story to tell, and while our team does our best to share them, sometimes a picture really is worth a thousand words.

We'd love your feedback on our new look. Please feel free to email us at news@nhspca.org with your thoughts!

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Planned Gifts Received

The New Hampshire SPCA greatly appreciates the concern shown by donors who give of their financial resources to assist the Society with its mission.

Through their planned gifts, the following individuals made generous contributions toward the ongoing programs and services of the NHSPCA.

April 1, 2025 – August 31, 2025

From the Estates of:

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If you'd like information about leaving a gift in your estate plans, please visit nhspca.planmylegacy.org, or contact Lisa Dennison at ldennison@nhspca.org.

Training that changed two lives

By Ashley Conte, AAS, CPDT-KA
Adoption Counselor/Dog Trainer

Have you ever thought to yourself, "I wish I knew how to better help and understand my dog?" If so, you are not alone. This is what Kate wished to get out of training when she came to me. Kate is a longtime volunteer and had adopted one of the German Shepherds from the large-scale rescue case a few years ago. Her name is Saoirse. She had previously lived with another dog in the home, but unfortunately her four-legged companion passed away.

Seeing there was now room to help another, Kate wanted to start fostering or taking dogs overnight. The only tough part was how Saoirse would take to a new dog coming around. Most people think that because a dog has a good relationship with one dog in the home, they will automatically feel comfortable about other dogs outside the family.

This is not always the case.

For Saoirse, it was a case of under socialization. She was not used to interacting with dogs outside her group, so she would show this with big feelings such as loud vocalizations, pulling to get to the other dog, lack of focus, etc. It can appear the dog is being aggressive, but they are just fearful or frustrated and do not know how to cope.

As part of our training, we focused on ways to help Saoirse change her feelings toward other dogs. We did this through positive reinforcement, taking it in stages, and listening to Saoirse's comfort level before moving to the next steps.

Just like in all training, it was going to take some work, but Kate was fully committed.

"The biggest challenge was getting the training done in a way that worked for Saoirse," said Kate. "Because of her megaesophagus, she doesn't tolerate extreme heat. We had a lot of hot, humid days in July where we couldn't take the kind of long walks where she'd get exposure to other dogs. Instead, we went to our veterinarian's office and hung in the parking lot with the air conditioner on. She was able to get a lot of practice with the Engage/Disengage drill."

Throughout the weeks, it was a beautiful thing to see progress happening.



Saoirse (right) and her mom put in a lot of work to be able to foster Stuart!

It was clear Saoirse was coming around and getting more comfortable each session. So comfortable in fact, that when our Adoption Center called Kate about fostering a dog, she thought it might be a good time to try.

Stuart, like Saoirse, has megaesophagus, so we knew she was the best person for the job.

There was no guaranteed timeline, or if it would even work out, but everyone was willing to try. Through the tools learned in classes and the hard work and dedication, it only took one meet and greet for Saoirse to feel at ease with Stuart.

"We were stunned!" said Kate. "We had planned a very long, gradual introduction, but Saoirse was fascinated with him from the start. I couldn't even get her to go for a walk with me that first day. She just looked at me as if to say, 'No, thanks. I'd rather look at the puppy.'"

Since then, Stuart and Saoirse have become good buddies living together for the last several weeks. Every dog is different and that means training, needs, and progress will also look different for each one. Meeting your dog where they are and asking for help to understand them is one of the best things all of us can do.

It might even land them a friend.

Rats steal hearts during Camp!

By Tracy Ritzo

Manager of Humane Education

Ask a camper what's the best thing about the New Hampshire SPCA's Summer Camp, and the most common answer you'll get is... Rats!

#1 most requested animal to play with: **Rats!** The animal campers want to adopt the most: **Rats!** The animal parents are most hesitant about—you guessed it: **Rats!** They're so cute, fun to pet, fascinating to watch, ticklish on your neck: **Rats!**

Aster and Zinnia are: **Rats!**

Aster and Zinnia are the prettiest flowers in the Humane Education classroom. These popular sisters are eight months old and (according to many summer campers) the "GREATEST" animals in the shelter!

As humane educators, we love introducing campers to our ambassador rats. Once they meet Aster and Zinnia, any stigma they may have about rats is completely *ir-RAT-icated!*

Aster and Zinnia are domestic rats.

They're clean, intelligent, and truly awesome pets! Rats are highly social animals who enjoy companionship from humans and other rats. Campers were fascinated by the intricate social interactions between Aster and Zinnia—campers watched while they groomed each other, wrestled together, and explored the variety of ever-changing enrichments in their enclosure.

Aster and Zinnia are so smart, they learned to use the litterboxes in their cage within just a few weeks, they know the routine in the Humane Education classroom and absolutely love interacting with the campers. Aster and Zinnia know their names and respond when they're called. They recognize and are especially affectionate to the familiar people in their lives.

Our goal during the nine weeks of NHSPCA summer camp is to inspire campers to treat all animals and humans with kindness. This summer, Aster and Zinnia did their part to help inspire campers to love and respect one of the most misunderstood animals: **Rats!**



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Volunteers improve the journey for every animal!

By **Tiffany Ryder**
Volunteer Coordinator

Last October, I adopted a cat named Josie who was part of a transport from Oklahoma. Josie had an upper respiratory infection and needed months of veterinary care. She is now healthy, happy and has gained nine pounds since she was adopted! Josie has bonded with my senior cat Louis; and the two have become inseparable. I know for a fact that she wouldn't be alive and thriving today had it not been for the assistance of many caring volunteers and staff members.

My experience with Josie made me realize the true impact volunteers have on animals and humans alike. I can't imagine not having Josie as part of my family, and I know she has also enriched Louis' life.

Josie's path very well could have ended in that overcrowded shelter in Oklahoma, but instead, she's a beloved member of a family.

Josie is just one of the 1,261 animals



Josie (left) and her best friend, Louis, are very grateful for our volunteers!

who were transported to the NHSPCA last year. When Josie arrived at Manchester Airport, she was greeted on the tarmac by volunteers. They loaded the cats into the Sprinter van and drove them to Stratham where more volunteers unloaded the animals and placed them in warm, comfortable kennels. After being unloaded, Josie underwent a quarantine exam and it was discovered that she had a URI. Josie was moved into quarantine, and both the van and the crate she had

arrived in were deep cleaned by volunteers.

While Josie was in quarantine, volunteers refreshed her litter, cleaned her enclosure, and gave her food and water. Staff administered her medication, and she was cared for by veterinary staff and volunteers. Other volunteers processed her transport paperwork and medical records and created her adoption folder. Once Josie was healthy enough, she was moved from Quarantine to Holding, and then finally to the Cat Pavilion. While Josie waited for a home, volunteers kept her enclosure clean and fed her twice a day. Volunteers played with Josie and gave her enrichment so she was stimulated and content. The volunteers who interacted with Josie taught her that humans can be trusted and that it is possible to be loved.

When I adopted Josie, volunteers prepared her carrier and packed up a few supplies and toys. It was volunteers who cleaned her vacated enclosure and prepared it for the next furry occupant.



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"Trust our family with your family!" 



In August, an incredible volunteer group from Camp Allen kindly spent part of their day cleaning our Adoption and Learning Centers and sorting supplies! Volunteers of all abilities lend their time and hearts at the New Hampshire SPCA, where compassion knows no limits. Our organization proudly welcomes individuals from all walks of life, creating an inclusive environment where everyone belongs and can make a difference—for the animals and each other.

Many hands and hearts made it possible for Josie to make the journey from a sick and un-homed cat in Oklahoma to a healthy and loved family cat in New Hampshire. Each animal I see when I walk through the Adoption Center is

there because of the combined effort of many volunteers who help support the staff. Every volunteer has a long-lasting impact on the lives of animals and the people that love them.

I am a firm believer that we each must

do our part to have a positive and lasting impact on the world. No gift of time is too small, and every act done in service is important.

Together, we can do great things. Thank you, volunteers!

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