

Heart of the **MISSION**



**ONE PHONE CALL THAT
MADE ALL THE DIFFERENCE**

Neighborhood bands together to rescue
a stray mama cat and her five kittens.

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New Hampshire Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

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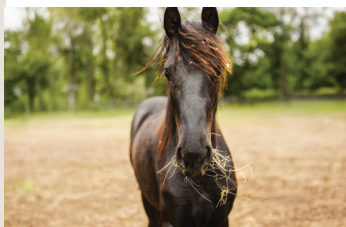
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The New Hampshire SPCA is a four-star (the highest possible rating) animal welfare charity in the state of New Hampshire.

► WHAT'S INSIDE



A year of healing

Rescued, restored, and renewed... the journey from hardship to hope for four Friesian horses. **Page 6**



Protecting animals and strengthening communities

From rescue to education, we're creating a safer, more humane world, one case at a time. **Page 9**



Community Wellness Clinics serve those in need

Making care accessible to help keep pets healthy and families together. **Page 12**



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Dear Friends and Supporters,

As we reflect on the summer season, I'm filled with gratitude for the energy and joy brought by our fabulous summer campers. Their enthusiasm and love for animals were inspiring to witness. These young individuals embraced the responsibility of animal care with open hearts, learning and growing while having fun. It was a true pleasure to see their compassion in action.

This summer also marked an expansion of our Adoption Center hours, with Thursday evenings open until 7:00 p.m. The response from the community has been overwhelmingly positive, and we're so thankful for your engagement. We have gone back to our winter hours as of the end of October and look forward to spring when longer days will return, bringing back our extended hours. We remain committed to making our services accessible and welcoming, always.

Our Community Wellness Program continues to grow in demand, responding not only to scheduled appointments but also to emergent situations. We're proud to support other veterinary practices when they reach out for assistance on behalf of their clients, and we remain dedicated to providing compassionate care for animals in need. This program is a vital part of our mission to serve both animals and the people who love them by keeping beloved pets and owners together whenever possible.

While the legislative season was quieter over the summer, important work continued. House Bill 616 will return in the upcoming session as Senate Bill 302. We remain actively engaged in advocating for animal welfare. We encourage our legislators to recognize the essential role of our humane officers—professionals who are regularly called upon by law enforcement and

animal control officers for their expertise in animal cruelty laws and welfare. Our Animal Protection Division and our investigators are deeply committed to protecting animals, whether from inadvertent neglect or intentional harm.

Looking ahead, we will host a legislative reception this winter, inviting senators, representatives, and our governor to learn more about the work we do every day. It's an opportunity to share the impact of our mission and the dedication of our team. We look forward to engaging with our lawmakers for the betterment of animal welfare.

As the year draws to a close, we enter a busy season filled with classes, community outreach, and signature events like the *Auction for the Animals*. We are deeply grateful for your support—every day, in every way. Your generosity helps care for those surrendered, abandoned, protected and those families who need our support services. You allow us to continue strengthening the bond between people and their animals, and we are incredibly grateful.

On behalf of the animals,

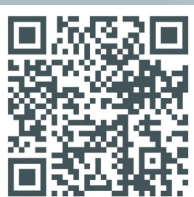


Lisa S. Dennison, M.S.
President & CEO



HELP **2X** AS MANY ANIMALS!

Learn about the incredible impact
your support makes on pages 10-11





► FROM THE COVER

One phone call that made all the difference

By Amanda Wellman
Transport Coordinator

We get a wide variety of phone calls here at the New Hampshire SPCA, ranging from folks who want to make donations, or who are wondering what our adoption process is like, or who don't know what to do with the stray rooster that has wandered into their shop parking lot. Our volunteer telephone receptionists deserve accolades for handling every call with kindness, empathy, and as much helpful information as they can provide.

Two months ago, receptionist Shelley took a call that she'll never forget: "Help, I found four newborn baby kittens on my property and the mama is nowhere

to be seen! What can I do?"

Shelley leapt into action, alerting our team of the situation and assuring the finder that we'd help her save these babies. We advised the finder to keep a close eye on the kittens for a little while to see if the mama cat would return. Mama was likely out looking for food and would be back to nurse her babies shortly. But as the minutes turned into hours, everyone involved became concerned that mama might not be coming back, and we decided the best course of action was to bring the newborns to the New Hampshire SPCA so they could be bottle fed while we continued looking out for mama.

The finder rushed the babies to our agency, where two volunteers offered to take them home overnight for bottle

feeding. Bottle feeding newborn kittens is an exhausting process that involves nursing the babies every few hours, just like feeding a newborn human child. Luckily we happened to have two dedicated, experienced individuals ready to help, so each took two kittens home to expedite the process—unlike a mama cat, a single human can't bottle feed multiple babies at once, so temporarily splitting up the litter made it possible for all kittens to be fed and cared for in a timely manner.

Meanwhile, the finder was keeping a close eye out for mama cat, because while bottle feeding is a good stop-gap measure for motherless kittens, it is best for kittens developmentally to be fed by their mothers. There was much rejoicing the next morning when mama cat appeared,



Healing Knoxx's heart—together

By Melissa Mower
Communications Manager

When 11-year-old Knoxx found himself homeless in late September, there was great comfort taken in the fact that he wasn't alone.

Knoxx and his beloved tiny sidekick, Sawyer, came to us having known a lifetime of love. They had spent their entire 11 years together and their family was devastated to have to surrender them. Our hearts broke for their family—and of course for Knoxx and Sawyer—but we were so incredibly grateful to be trusted with the care of such a special duo.

Weeks passed with little adoption interest. We suspect this was the case because it can be a challenge to find a family willing and able to take on the medical needs of one senior dog, let alone two. However, Knoxx and Sawyer waited patiently, side by side, eager for their day to come.

Around the five-week mark, little Sawyer's health started to decline. She had come to us with a known heart murmur and experienced an episode that was consistent with congestive heart failure.

We kept a very close eye on her. Knoxx did, too.

On a brisk late-October morning, our team was preparing for a busy day of adoptions. Kennels were being cleaned, dogs were being walked and smalls were being fed, when all of a sudden, everything came to a halt. Sawyer and Knoxx were being rushed to the Veterinary Center and

goodbyes were soon to be in order. It wasn't a difficult decision, but it *was* an incredibly sad one.

This little dog, who had collected many fans amongst our staff and volunteers, was at the center of our collective heartbreak that day.

However, no one was more heartbroken than her beloved Knoxx.

Now alone for the first time in his life, we knew it was critical to get Knoxx home. We shared his story on Facebook and hoped our community would show up for him.

And boy, did they show up.

Knoxx went from being an overlooked senior dog to somewhat of a celebrity—literally overnight. Our inbox and phones were buzzing with families inquiring about him... tennis balls were being donated specifically for him... and then, Knoxx's new family walked through our doors.

This incredible couple had traveled down from the White Mountains, ready to enjoy the weekend they had planned—complete with a trip to the beach and a hotel reservation. They saw Knoxx's post and decided to stop in to see if he was still waiting.

The connection was immediate, so they quickly canceled their hotel reservation and decided to take Knoxx to the beach before starting the long journey home.

Best weekend ever.

Thank you to our incredible community to showing up, time and time again... but especially for this senior dog who really needed a reminder that love does not end—it simply finds new ways to begin.



A dedicated volunteer taking care of the tiny kittens!

carrying a fifth kitten in her mouth! And the rejoicing continued when the finder was able to capture both mama and baby and triumphantly bring them both to the NHSPCA. There were many happy tears as we reunited mama—now named Goldie—with her babies.

Goldie turned out to be a darling, social, and friendly tortoiseshell, and she passed her sweetness along to her kittens. Cannoli, Chunk, Figaro, Meatball, and Tortellini are cuddly, outgoing, and charming babies who were all adopted immediately upon being made available for adoption. Not to be outdone by her children, Goldie was also adopted immediately! This happily ever-after story was brought to you by the community members, volunteers, and staff at the NHSPCA. We prove every day that when we all work together, we can make amazing things happen!



Sawyer (left) and Knoxx.



A year of healing

By Michelle Murch

Equine & Farm Program Manager

Over a year ago, four tattered Friesian horses came to us in protective custody. We assisted Dorset Equine and offered to hold and rehab four neglected mares from an extremely challenging equine welfare case. They arrived as two mares and their foals, two mothers doing everything they could to keep their babies alive despite desperate conditions.

Remi, one of the mares, was severely emaciated, her body depleted from nursing her foal Caru, without proper care and nutrition. While Caru was bright and alert, she was not strong enough to be weaned, leaving both mother and baby in a fragile struggle to survive. The second mare was Angelina, a relatively healthy mare, with her filly Charlotte, who was critically ill. Charlotte was suffering from chronic diarrhea and persistent fevers, a combination that can be deadly for young foals in a matter of hours.

Those first few days, weeks and months, were an uphill battle. There were daily veterinary visits, hospital stays, and many anxious nights glued to our stall cameras. Our local veterinarians provided lifesaving care, while the NHSPCA team worked tirelessly to support their recovery. Horses in protective custody face additional challenges, as all medical and management decisions must go through legal channels, but every effort was made to ensure these horses had the best possible chance at a new beginning.

Four protective custody horses require a lot of time, space and funding. These mares were ill, and they needed to remain separated from the rest of the herd and from each other so there wasn't cross contamination. PPE was needed each time you enter the stall, special manure forks and wheelbarrows for each and not to be used by others

Caru and Charlotte were foals when they arrived in 2024. They blossomed while in our care and are now safe, cherished and home.



Remi, one of the mares who came to us severely emaciated, is now healthy and home thanks to your support!

in the barn. Temperatures were taken numerous times a day and lots of medications were administered. They also had to learn about the farrier and hoof trims. Through it all the mares were amazing patients, seeming grateful for the care.

Once healthy the transformation was nothing short of extraordinary. The fillies grew strong and spirited, splashing in their water tubs, racing around their paddocks, and charming everyone who met them. Their mothers also began to shine, finally confident that their needs for food, water, and safety would always be met. Visitors often remarked that they were the most breathtaking horses they had ever seen, free at last from overcrowded, uncertain lives.

In September 2025, the Friesians were released for adoption by the court. Three were adopted by loving families and the remaining mare was transferred to another trusted nonprofit partner to continue her healing journey.

Their story is a powerful reminder of resilience, hope and what you make possible.

All the animals that turn to us are so lucky to know the love of our wonderful volunteers.



Celebrating the incredible generosity of our volunteers!

By Jill Sloan

Volunteer Coordinator

I am new to the Volunteer Coordinator position at the NHSPCA. I came into the position thinking how nice it is that volunteers help out at the NHSPCA. What I came to quickly realize is that volunteers run this place.

As of the end of September 2025, 609 volunteers donated their time to the NHSPCA collectively volunteering nearly 21,000 hours of their precious time. Using the current national value of a volunteer hour (\$34.79), our volunteers have given the NHSPCA approximately \$718,000 in service this year alone!

That's not just generous—that's *extraordinary*.

Volunteers work in so many areas from cleaning kennels and stalls to laundry, dog walking, events, fostering and so much more.

And here's something many peo-

Join our team!

Please [click here](#) to learn how to join this amazing community!

ple may not realize: our volunteers show up every single day of the year, despite heat, extreme cold and even on holidays like Thanksgiving and Christmas. Our animals need love and care every day, and our volunteers are there to give it. They miss time with their families so that the animals get what they need and even allow a few more staff members to spend time with their loved ones. So, as you're sharing holiday time with your animals and people, join us in giving thanks to our amazing and dedicated volunteers.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you. Thank you for showing up. Thank you for making a difference. Thank you for choosing to be part of this community.



Transforming outdoor cat lives

By Sheila E. Ryan
Senior VP of Philanthropy

In New Hampshire, unowned cats living in community colonies face numerous risks, including exposure to harsh weather, infectious diseases, and conflicts with wildlife. The New Hampshire SPCA's Trap-Neuter-Vaccinate-Return (TNVR) program, launched earlier this year, has become a pivotal solution to these challenges.

By humanely trapping, neutering, vaccinating, and returning cats to their original territories, the TNVR program not only improves the cats' health and safety but is also expected to help stabilize their populations over time. This approach will yield promising outcomes, including fewer homeless cats entering shelters, healthier colonies, and reduced community concerns.

Cats in these colonies still face challenges such as disease, predators, and harsh environmental conditions. The TNVR program addresses these issues by controlling population growth and improving overall health.

If you encounter a cat colony that seems to be growing out of control, please reach out to local animal welfare groups. In the Seacoast area, contact the New Hampshire SPCA—we can guide you through humane trapping and provide resources for maintaining a stable population. Another way to help is by offering food, water, and shelter in ways that support their well-being.

We are immensely grateful to the Pattony Foundation for their initial investment, which has been instrumental in launching and expanding this program. Their support has allowed us to reach more communities and provide the necessary resources to make a lasting difference.

TNVR benefits entire communities through fewer nuisance behaviors, reduced strain on local shelters, and a more balanced ecosystem.

These efforts contribute to a more compassionate and sustainable approach to managing outdoor cat communities. Our deepest thanks to our community for helping to create a more compassionate New Hampshire.



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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.

January 1, 2025 – October 1, 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.

Protecting animals and strengthening communities

By Sheila E. Ryan

Senior VP of Philanthropy

At the heart of our mission is the belief that every animal deserves safety, respect, and compassion. This commitment comes to life each day through the dedicated work of our Animal Protection Division, a specialized team that investigates cases of animal cruelty, neglect, and abuse throughout our region.

In recent years, the demand for our Animal Protection services has grown significantly. Calls from concerned citizens, local law enforcement, and social service agencies have increased as awareness of animal welfare issues has deepened. Thanks to generous community support and funding contributed through our Auction Special Fund in 2024, we've been able to expand our front line staff, ensuring that more animals—and the people who care about them—can receive the help they need, when they need it most.

What makes the NHSPCA's Animal Protection Division so effective is the extraordinary expertise and professionalism of its staff. Every Humane Agent on the Animal Protection team is a retired police officer, bringing decades of experience in law enforcement, investigation, and crisis response. This unique background allows our team to handle sensitive and complex animal cruelty cases with both authority and empathy. They are not only seasoned investigators, but they are also passionate advocates for animals, blending their professional training with a deep commitment to animal welfare and community service.

All of our Humane Agents are NACA (National Animal Care & Control Association) certified, a national standard that ensures the highest level of professional competence in animal protection and control work. This certification means that our team is trained in best practices for investigating neglect and cruelty, handling animals safely and humanely, and supporting legal proceedings when charges are warranted.

Because of this expertise, police departments across New Hampshire regularly turn to the NHSPCA's Animal Protection Division for guidance and support in an-



Our Humane Agents are both seasoned investigators *and* passionate advocates for the animals within our community.

imal-related investigations. Our Humane Agents are recognized as the authority in cases of suspected cruelty or neglect, working closely with local law enforcement to ensure that animals are removed from dangerous situations, evidence is properly collected, and justice is pursued on behalf of those who cannot speak for themselves.

Beyond field investigations, the NHSPCA is proud to play a role in training and education for others who serve on the front lines of public safety. The agency has networked with sheriff's departments across the state sharing how we can help their departments, and plans are coming together to help to train officers to recognize signs of animal neglect and understand the legal responsibilities involved. Our farm team hosted Equine Rescue Training, preparing first responders to safely and effectively assist large animals in distress whether during emergencies, natural disasters, or cases of neglect, and just this month we are hosting the Equine Cruelty Investigator Certification training open to Law Enforcement, ACOs, prosecutors and humane agents.

This progress is made possible by the support of our community. Your generosity empowers our Humane Agents to continue their critical work defending the voiceless, educating others, and ensuring that no act of cruelty goes unanswered.

Together, we're building a safer, kinder New Hampshire for all beings.

Animals like Mason need people like you.



Mason was skin and bones when he arrived at the NHSPCA. Your compassion is what allowed us to provide the treatment, love, and nourishment he needed to get back on his feet and in a loving home.

HAVE YOUR GIFT
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HELP **2X** AS MANY HOMELESS ANIMALS!

We are humbled and overjoyed to share an extraordinary \$50,000 matching gift opportunity from our dear friend **Dr. Peter Gray, in loving memory of his wife Ellen Gray, an animal lover and long-time friend of the New Hampshire SPCA.**

This remarkable tribute to Ellen's compassion for animals will help bring

hope, healing, and love to the homeless animals of the New Hampshire SPCA

Here's how it works: every dollar you donate will be matched—dollar for dollar—up to \$50,000! That means your gift will have twice the impact—twice the food, twice the medical care, twice the love—for animals who are waiting for their second chance.

This opportunity won't last forever! To unlock the full potential of Dr. Gray's incredible gift, we need your help now.

Please make your gift today by scanning the QR code or visiting nhspca.org.

Together, we can honor Ellen's legacy of love and ensure that even more animals find the safety, healing, and homes they deserve. Thank you so much!

Mason's journey of resilience, hope and healing

By Kelly Marinel

Director of Animal Programs

When Mason came into our care in May of this year, he was one of the most heart-breaking cases I've seen in my 15 years with the NHSPCA. Severely emaciated, he wore a harness that once fit but now hung loosely on his fragile, bony frame. He could have easily slipped out of it—but he was too weak to try.

From the moment he arrived, I braced myself for the worst. I gently warned my colleagues, "This looks really bad. Prepare yourselves." In recent years, we've faced similar cases where, despite our best efforts, the outcome was devastating. I feared Mason would be another loss.

A soul that shined through the suffering

Despite his obvious suffering, Mason's spirit never dimmed. He was clearly an older dog, but his eyes told a story of strength and resilience. His body was weak—his condition was extremely poor. One of his toenails had grown so long it curled into his paw pad, likely causing excruciating pain. He was severely dehydrated, had hair loss, and scabs covered much of his skin.

And yet—through it all—his tail

wagged. He leaned in for affection, soaking up every ounce of love we could give.

Fighting for Mason

We were all rooting for him. Staff, volunteers—we were attached from day one. I questioned if we could emotionally handle another heartbreak, but I knew this: Mason needed us. He needed comfort, care, and a chance. And we were determined to give it to him.

And oh, what a personality he had! Mason loved being around people. He even joined a few of our staff meetings, his tail thumping happily as he made his rounds to greet everyone. One day, I sat on the floor with him, hoping he might settle. When he curled up in my lap, content and snuggled, I'm pretty sure my heart exploded.

Slow, steady progress

Given his condition, we initially suspected an underlying medical issue. A serious, life-threatening diagnosis would have been heartbreaking but not surprising. However, as we watched each round of tests come back clear, it was confirmed that this dog was not sick... he had simply been neglected.

As our team took a collective deep breath and shifted our priority to helping him gain some much-needed

weight, Mason rallied.

Our veterinary team designed a careful re-feeding plan—critical, as a malnourished body can't safely handle normal amounts of food at first. He was also treated for his infected paw and received ongoing medical monitoring.

A foster home full of love

Mason was lucky to have an incredibly devoted foster family who adored and spoiled him just as he deserved. They supported him through every step of recovery, bringing him in for follow-up exams. And with each visit, we saw progress: more energy, brighter eyes, a healthier body, and that ever-thumping tail.

A forever home—and forever a place in our hearts

Eventually, Mason was cleared for adoption. But by then, it was clear—he was already home. His foster family, who had nursed him back to health with love and patience, officially adopted him.

Mason's journey reminds us why we do what we do. Not every case ends this way, but this story—his story—gives us hope. He is the epitome of resilience, and a powerful reminder that with compassion, care, and love, healing is possible.



Mason is living his best life now and it wouldn't have been possible without you!



Community Wellness Clinics serve those in need

By Sheila E. Ryan

Senior VP of Philanthropy

Exciting news is spreading through the Seacoast: the New Hampshire SPCA's Community Wellness Clinics have returned! This long-awaited revival marks a powerful step forward in our mission to ensure that every pet, regardless of their owner's financial circumstances, has access to the care they need to live a healthy, happy life.

At their heart, these clinics are about keeping families together. We understand that for so many, pets are not "just animals," they are confidants, best friends, and beloved family members. Yet, the rising cost of veterinary care has placed an enormous burden on families already struggling to make ends meet. That's why the NHSPCA is stepping up to bridge the gap between compassion and affordability.

The Community Wellness Clinics provide low-cost, high-quality veterinary care



Dr. Kristi examines 2-year-old Mabel during a Community Wellness Clinic appointment.

for pets whose owners are facing financial hardship. Services include wellness exams, core vaccinations, bloodwork, spay/neuter, other select surgeries, and more. With exam fees starting at just \$35 and

vaccines ranging between \$20 and \$30, these clinics make it possible for families to keep their pets healthy without facing heartbreaking financial choices.

"We never want anyone to have to

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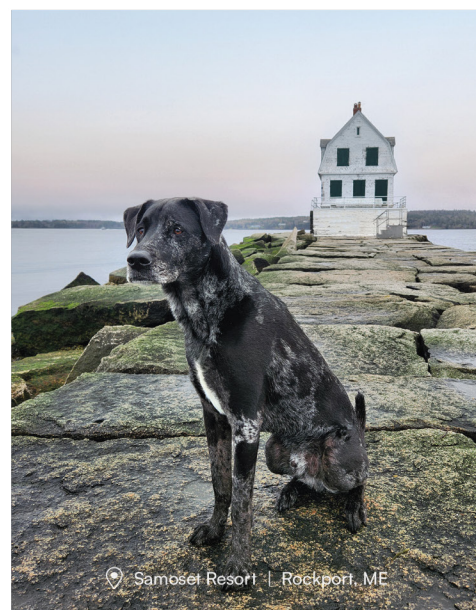


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“It is very fulfilling to help people and their pets. For me, the Community Wellness Clinic feels different than prior practice experiences. Maybe because it is not for profit, but clients are very grateful, kind and have a variety of reasons why they come to the Wellness Clinic. The common denominator is that they have some type of financial hardship and want to take care of their pets. We have already helped some clients care for their pets instead of surrendering them and that is the ultimate goal.”

— Dr. Kristi Zimmerman-Lundt, DVM, Community Wellness Veterinarian

choose between feeding their family and caring for their pet,” said Lisa Dennison, President and CEO of the NHSPCA. “These clinics are here to lift that burden and remind our community that help is here when they need it most.”

What makes these clinics truly special is the combination of expert veterinary care and deep compassion that underpins every appointment. The dedicated staff and volunteers at the NHSPCA understand the challenges that many pet owners face. Each visit is approached with respect, empathy, and a shared goal—to help every animal live their best life.

The return of the Community Wellness Clinics also represents a broader vision for community impact. By making preventive care more accessible, the

NHSPCA hopes to reduce the number of animals surrendered to shelters for treatable or preventable health issues. When pets are healthy, they stay where they belong...at home, surrounded by love.

Appointments for the clinics can be easily scheduled online at nhspca.org/community-wellness. If you don't see a service listed, the NHSPCA encourages you to reach out at (603) 772-2921 ext. 114 or email clinic@nhspca.org to see if your pet's needs can be accommodated. While these clinics aren't designed for emergency or extensive medical care, they are a lifeline for families seeking essential, affordable veterinary services.

The return of the Community Wellness Clinics is more than just a renewed program...it's a reaffirmation of the

NHSPCA's long-standing commitment to kindness, community, and the human-animal bond. It's a reminder that when we come together with empathy and purpose, we can create a world where no pet is left behind simply because care was out of reach.

So spread the word, share the news, and help us celebrate this wonderful milestone. The NHSPCA's Community Wellness Clinics are back and they're here to make a lasting difference, one pet and one family at a time.

If you are facing financial hardship, please [click here](#) to learn more and book your appointment.

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Yahtzee finds his wingman—and his family

By Lisa Cordner

Volunteer and Foster Parent

I was told that “some dogs do not do well in a kennel environment,” and in Yahtzee’s case, that was a major understatement.

I am an avid dog lover from Newmarket and started volunteering with the NHSPCA last winter as a dog enrichment and walking volunteer. After watching so many Instagram videos of adorable dogs in need, I thought, why not get off my butt and go help some real dogs in need just down the street from me?

I first met Yahtzee at a “speed dating” adoption event, where I was his handler. My job was to introduce him to “suitors” and answer questions about him. “I’m your wingman, Yahtzee!” I told him jokingly. He showed off his “paw” trick with pride to everyone but as the event wound down, I realized he was not going to find his forever home that day. He looked me right in the eyes suddenly and held my gaze, and I found myself earnestly whispering a promise into his floppy ear. “If not today, then not to worry, my friend. Some other day. I will always be your wingman.”

Over the weeks ahead, we watched as Yahtzee grew into an extremely handsome adolescent. No longer a puppy, he had become bigger and stronger and... increasingly neurotic. It became harder to walk him, as he pulled and ziplined on the leash. He was marked as “staff only hook up” because leashing him was like trying to put a bow tie on a tornado. He scanned constantly with wild eyes, panted vigorously, and burned through calories much too quickly. He clawed at the glass in his kennel, barking maniacally. I watched as potential adopters walked by him and said, “Oh heck no! That dog’s crazy!”

Weeks passed. We had several special marketing campaigns to promote him, but as soon as people came in and saw his kennel behaviors, they couldn’t imagine taking that tornado home with them.

I could feel his anxiety and was watching my friend deteriorate. The staff were concerned and prescribed

calming meds. On my walks with Yahtzee, I would spend an hour running him off leash in the pen, and then an hour calming his mind in a quiet spot. He would fall into a more relaxed lope, snuggle, and sniff the ground contentedly. But as soon as the kennel came into sight, his anxiety skyrocketed again.

The thought of him nagged at me. So, I decided I would offer to foster him. I was scared. What if I do something wrong and make Yahtzee look bad? What if he hounds my elderly dog? What if he trashes my house? But then I thought, what better way to use my house than to help my friend? And I made a promise. I’m his wingman. The staff agreed to it wholeheartedly, and then we all prepared for the tornado to touch down.

I brought him home and braced for impact. Shockingly... he slept. For hours and hours... snoozing like an old man in his favorite recliner.

Over the days, he showed me that he was potty trained and could sleep through the night without breaks. He was gentle on leash.

He loved car



rides and waited patiently while I ran errands. He didn’t counter surf. He never barked. He was gentle with my elderly dog. He snuggled with blankets in the evenings. He napped when left home alone. And he settled down into a daily home routine.

I sent reports to the foster team and we were all in awe. *This is Yahtzee?* You took the right dog home with you, right?

Yahtzee was not only adoptable but a delightful home companion.

We promoted Yahtzee’s foster experience heavily before an adoption event and waited with high hopes. A family approached. The father was a calm, quiet-spoken man and Yahtzee gazed up at him like he was a movie star. “We have two hounds already and ten acres to run in,” he said. I told them about Yahtzee’s behaviors in and out of the kennel, and the father simply said, “That doesn’t scare us. We’ve already trained two other hounds, and Yahtzee’s just like them,” as his wife and teenage son nodded and smiled in agreement.

There they were. I could feel it. The staff could feel it. Yahtzee’s family had arrived, and he was finally going home. I could not have been happier for my friend.

And now, they send me updates and tell me about all his fun adventures, and I can even visit.

Some dogs do not do well in a kennel environment. But don’t judge too quickly. You might be looking at a truly great dog... who just needs a wingman.





Dr. Carly LaGrandeur, DVM,
performs surgery on a dog.

Strengthening our ability to provide exceptional care

By Dr. Carly LaGrandeur, DVM
Medical Director

This summer, I had the incredible opportunity to travel to Miami-Dade Animal Services, one of the largest municipal shelters in the country. I've worked in animal sheltering for many years, but I had never experienced a facility operating on that scale. The New Hampshire SPCA sent me there to gain perspective, learn new techniques, and bring back skills that could help us continue to grow and improve our programs here in the Northeast.

Walking into Miami-Dade was eye-opening. The sheer number of animals was overwhelming—hundreds upon hundreds of dogs and cats needing care, attention, and homes. It was a powerful reminder of the immense challenges faced by shelters in areas struggling with pet overpopulation. The staff there work tirelessly under incredible pressure, and I came away with a deep admiration for the dedication and compassion it takes to do that work every day.

The experience also made me so grateful for what we're able to provide at the New Hampshire SPCA. Because we operate on a smaller scale, we can offer

more individualized care and advanced medical treatment to each animal who comes through our doors. Our patients receive diagnostics, dental care, and ongoing management for chronic conditions like diabetes or hyperthyroidism—things that large, overburdened shelters often simply don't have the capacity to do.

While in Miami, I had the chance to participate in their high-volume spay/neuter program, which was both fun and inspiring. Working alongside such an efficient and skilled team gave me invaluable insight into how to streamline our own procedures while maintaining a high standard of care. I picked up several new techniques and efficiency tips that we've already implemented here at the NHSPCA—like improved patient positioning during surgery, creative ways to secure anesthesia masks, and a sticker system to track which animals need which services. These small changes have already improved our workflow and communication.

This kind of hands-on learning and experience is incredibly valuable to our team. Investing in professional development and training opportunities like this ensures that our staff continues to grow in skill, confidence, and efficiency.

The more knowledgeable and prepared our team becomes, the more lives we can positively impact.

Perhaps the most meaningful part of my visit was getting to select a few dogs and cats to come to New Hampshire through our transport program. Knowing that those animals would soon find loving homes here reaffirmed the importance of the work we do. Transport programs like ours truly make a difference—helping to relieve overcrowded shelters in other parts of the country while giving deserving pets a second chance.

In the end, this experience was more than just a learning opportunity—it was a reminder of the larger network of shelters and rescues all working toward the same goal. I returned home with new skills, renewed motivation, and a deep appreciation for both the challenges and the compassion that define animal sheltering everywhere.

We're so grateful to Miami-Dade Animal Services for welcoming us and sharing their expertise. The lessons learned there will continue to strengthen our ability to provide exceptional care—and to help even more animals and people in our community every day.

Balancing local and national animal welfare

By Savannah Alcerro, MPA
VP of Animal & Veterinary Services

One question we often hear, with strong passion and occasional tension, is should animal shelters focus only on animals in their immediate area, rather than accepting animals from farther away?

It's a valid question, and one the New Hampshire SPCA staff have asked ourselves.

Our donors and supporters have entrusted us with serving animals and many of these individuals live in our community and thus have a vested interest in the local population. We believe in honoring our commitment and mission to as many animals as possible, never turning a blind eye to local animals. We believe that with compassion and strategy, we may offer help on a local to national level.

The NHSPCA exists to serve animals and the people who care for them. We are a constant, reliable landing spot for



animals with nowhere else to go, whether those animals originate as strays, owner surrenders, victims of neglect or cruelty, we welcome them in. Our local intake usually includes animals who might be considered more difficult to place such as senior pets with medical needs or dogs or cats with behavioral challenges (see the next page for a list of local dogs surrendered during a recent week).

Each animal, cat or dog, received the care they needed, whether that was vaccines, preventatives, exams, blood-work, dental care, behavior evaluations, spay/neuter, enrichment, and/or a match making plan as they neared time for adoption. We also met each person connected to these animals with compassion, respect, and resources.

With our local population maintained, we look outward, understanding that animal welfare extends beyond our own backyard. There are overcrowded and under-resourced shelters around the country, that despite their best efforts, struggle with capacity challenges and to provide a quality of life that we hope for animals. This leaves those organizations with difficult decisions, decisions that those of us in NH are typically not burdened by. This leaves us with a type of moral obligations that since we have the capability, we have the responsibility to help animals in need.

Nationally, shelters are seeing a decline in adoptions and an increase in length

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A recent week of local intake:

- An elderly chihuahua whose owners, also elderly, could no longer care for her
- A 4-month-old husky puppy brought in underweight and neglected
- A small mixed-breed dog who bites when restrained
- A stray pit bull with no background information
- Two under-socialized mixed-breed dogs whose owner was being evicted
- A 3-year-old mixed breed dog surrendered for destructive behavior in the home
- A husky with documented human aggression
- Several stray dogs reclaimed by their owners

NOTE: This list only documents canines, but cats typically make up an even greater proportion of our local intake.



of stay for dogs, a trend the NHSPCA works proactively to combat against and has thankfully not recently experienced, allowing us to absorb animals from elsewhere responsibly. Thus far in 2025, our average length of stay for adult dogs is less than thirteen days, allowing us the opportunity to use the space we have to help other animals, both near and far.

In the same week mentioned earlier, we also took in ten dogs from South

Carolina, six adult dogs and four puppies, who will be a wonderful addition to local families searching for an adoptable dog. With adoption happening here in New Hampshire we are not only providing positive outcomes for those ten dogs we are also decreasing the burden on municipal shelters, allowing them the bandwidth to provide more individualized care for the animals still there.

Going forward, we hope to continue

to be a resource to local, regional, and national animal welfare organizations, either as a transfer partner or to collaborate through knowledge sharing. With the help of our stakeholders, we will continue to share stories and data for our community to understand how our mission has no boundaries and how we work tirelessly to create and implement innovative ways to positively impact animals who need us.

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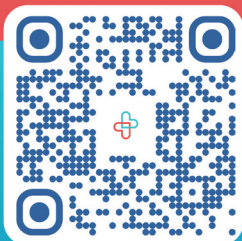
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We're here to help

In mid-October, a man called our farm team and requested help. Many years of acquiring animals (although he did so with the best intentions) had quickly piled up and he was feeling overwhelmed.

Our team was grateful he called and happy to help. They went out to his property to round up the goats, donkeys, pigs, horses, and even a turkey and his best friend, a goose!

We promised the man that we'd find the best homes possible for his animals.

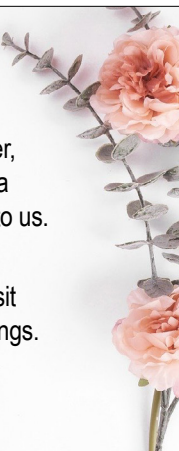
If you ever find yourself in need of help, we hope to be your first call. We're here and will always be a resource for you and the animals you love.



Commemorative Gifts

Gifts to remember or honor a beloved family member, friend or pet or in celebration of a special life event, a birthday, wedding or promotion, are all very special to us.

All Commemorative Gifts are posted on our website and are honored there for a year or more. Please visit nhspca.org/commemorative-gifts/ to view the listings.



Caring has always been at the heart of everything we do. By building and nurturing relationships, we can cultivate a community where we all thrive.





Our animals are quite fond of Wednesday evenings when the normal bustle of the Adoption Center quiets and readers come in for some quality time. Meeko the cat, pictured here, is just one of the many animals who have benefited from this program over the years.

Tales for tails: When kids read, animals listen

By Tracy Ritzo

Manager of Humane Education

Dogs love a good action adventure. Cats are into melodrama. Guinea pigs prefer serious non-fiction. Rabbits can't resist a juicy romance. And rats? Well, they delight in a dark mystery.

Welcome to **Reading with the Animals**, held every Wednesday evening from 4:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m.

**Come read to
our animals!**

Please **[click here](#)**
to register to read to
the animals!

Readers five years of age through adult are invited to come and entice our furry and feathered friends with a good story. Some animals are lulled to sleep, while others cuddle close to hear tales of daring dogs or curious cats.

They shift to the front of their cabins, listening intently to stories about dogs and cats with soft couches, warm fires, and loving humans of their own to snuggle with.

Reading with the Animals gives children a chance to practice reading at their own pace—turning their

own pages at their own speed, learning new words, and pronouncing tricky sounds. Parents often share how surprised they are that their child won't read at home but has no problem reading to the animals. "My daughter never reads on her own at home, but once she's got a dog beside her, she reads like crazy!"

Adults enjoy the experience just as much, finding cozy spots to sit and share their latest library finds to the rabbits or the guinea pigs or perhaps the mice. As one reader commented, "I'm amazed at how the animals settle down and seem like they're really listening to the story."

Each week brings a different mix of animals—dogs, puppies, cats, kittens, rabbits, guinea pigs, rats, mice, birds, and more! There's always a new reading companion waiting just for you.

Research shows that reading to animals' benefits both the readers and the animals. It helps children build confidence and fluency in reading, while also socializing with the animals and increasing their chances of adoption.

So, this Wednesday, bring a book, find a furry friend, and let the stories begin!