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For
Animals**

Compassion in Action

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Enclosed are my membership dues of \$15**

My check, payable to Voice for Animals, is enclosed My gift will be matched by my employer

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I Raise My Voice For Animals!*

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Phone: _____ Email: _____

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I want to offer my services to Voice for Animals

My Skills include: _____ Grant Writing _____ Fundraising/Special events
_____ Other writing skills _____ Computer skills _____ Other

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Thank You

Voice for Animals PO Box 522, York, ME 03909

www.voiceforanimals.net

Voice For Animals



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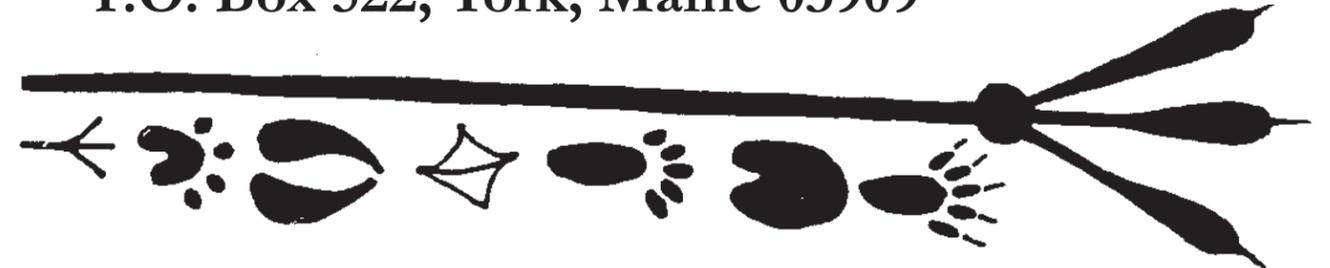
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Fall/Winter 2005

Voice For Animals

P.O. Box 522, York, Maine 03909



President's Message: Voice for Animals Plans for the Future

By Candy Burrell
President, Board of Directors

As the national news is full of heartfelt animal-related stories, Voice for Animals (VFA) has regrouped and come together as an organization to address many of the same issues being faced in Maine and New Hampshire. VFA has joined the Maine and NH Humane Federation Organizations to stay abreast of animal legislation and become a presence at the state level as a voice for the animals.

With the world watching, we learned during Hurricane Katrina that we should NOT leave our pets behind. They are not equipped to survive any better than we are. VFA plans to provide guidance and assistance for disaster planning designed for the animals.

We are against hunting and trapping, we fight against companion animal overpopulation on a daily basis, we promote Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) for feral cats, and we believe that feral cats have a right to their lives in their habitats.

We hope to someday in the near future join together with other humane agencies and share the dream of becoming a NO-Kill state(s). VFA believes that feral cats do not belong in shelters, and efforts to find other humane solutions should be foremost in our minds. We want to move away from the "trap and kill" mentality.

We support 'true euthanasia' defined as "the act of practice of ending the life of an individual suffering from a terminal illness or an incurable condition." We do not support the killing of healthy animals for convenience. Instead, we promote increasing foster home networks, implementing high-volume low-cost spay and neuter programs and most importantly giving consideration to *every* animal who comes into our care as a unique and individual being who has the right to live.

In closing, I ask you to not pass by the next stray that you see for s/he needs your help.



Donate to Katrina Relief
Contact www.hsus.org
www.unitedanimalnations.org/ears

National News/Legislation

Bill/Issue	Bill #	Purpose
<i>Cruelty Issues</i> Animal Fighting	HR 817 S382	To authorize felony-level jail time for federal animal fighting violations and band the interstate And foreign transport of cockfighting weapons.
Horse Slaughter	HR 503 S 576	To bar the transport, possession, purchase, or Sale of horses to be slaughtered for human consumption
<i>Companion Animals</i> Antifreeze Safety	HR 2567 S 1110	To require inclusion of a bittering agent in Sweet-tasting antifreeze and engine coolant toPoisoning of animals and children
PAWS (Pet Animal Welfare Statute)	HR 2669 S 1139	To extend animal welfare protections to puppies and kittens bred by large commercial operations (i.e. "puppy mills" And sold over the Internet or newspaper ads. And Make other strengthening changes in the AWA)
PETS Act HR 3858	HR 3858	The Pets Evacuation & Transportation Standards Act would require state and local agencies to include pets in their disaster plans.
<i>Farm Animals</i> Downed Animals	HR 3931 S1779	To require the humane euthanasia of livestock too sick or injured to walk and prohibit USDA certification of meat from such animals for human consumption. This law should be amended to assure that poultry are rendered insensible to pain prior to being killed.
Wildlife Canadian Seals	S Res 33	To urge Canada to end its commercial hunt.
Canned Hunts	HR 1688 S 304	To ban the interstate and foreign commerce of captive exotic mammals to be shot for Entertainment trophies
Internet Hunting	HR 1558	To prohibit computer-assisted remote hunting
Primate Pets	HR 1329 S1509	To prohibit interstate and foreign commerce in nonhuman primates for the pet trade
Wild Horses & Burros	HR 297 S 576	To restore the prohibition on the commercial sale and slaughter of wild horses and burros that was undercut by a rider to the FY '05 Omnibus spending bill

Address senators' letters to *The Honorable* _____
U.S. Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Address representatives' letters to *The Honorable* _____
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Call the congressional switchboard a 202-224-3121 to reach your legislators. To find out who your legislators are go to www.senate.gov and www.house.gov or call 202-955-3668. When communicating with your legislators, give the bill number (if available) and the name of the bill or issue. Be polite, brief, and to the point.

New Board for VFA

Voice for Animals has elected its new board members for 2005-2006. They are listed below.

President Candy Burrell
Vice President Kim Goodall
Secretary Joyce Gracie
Treasurer Betsy Shivers
Legal Adviser Paula DeSaulnier
Member at large Dot Bickford
Executive Director Caryl McIntire Edwards

Web Master Seth Mercier
Newsletter Editor Caryl McIntire Edwards
Accountant Tom Grant

How to Report Cruelty and Abuse

In Maine contact the Animal Welfare Program 207-287-3846 or toll free 877-269-9200. The humane agent in your area will investigate the abuse. You may check, as well, with your animal control officer but remember that there is no uniform job description for these people: some are very knowledgeable and care a lot, others are not and do not. It is also very important that you follow up to insure that all necessary actions were taken on behalf of the animal. In New Hampshire call your local police department to report animal abuse.

Chapter News

Voice for Animals Milton chapter continues making a difference in the lives of feral and abandoned cats. This year, several litters of kittens have been rescued, rehabilitated and adopted into good homes. In addition, many abandoned adult cats have been taken in and placed in foster homes while awaiting adoption. The Milton Chapter focuses most of its rescue work on providing Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) services and supporting feral cats in their natural environment. They would like to urge the public to spay and neuter their cats as this would make the greatest difference in reducing the numbers of homeless cats

Voice for Animals Oxford Hills chapter has been helping Dr. Monique Kramer of Fryeburg Veterinary Hospital. Dr. Kramer has made several trips to New Orleans to help the animals affected by Hurricane Katrina. As of October 30 there were still many, many dogs, cats, birds, and farm animals stranded and in need of assistance or at make-shift triage centers. Dr. Kramer personally rescued nineteen dogs and several cats who traveled with her back to Maine. Many of these dogs tested positive for heartworm (95%). Thanks to a grant, VFA has been able to pay to get these dogs treated.

This chapter was able to provide a van filled with twelve dog crates on two occasions to rescue animals in New Orleans. To date we have brought up at least twenty six dogs.

Voice for Animals' Richmond chapter Things are relatively quiet in this area since a certain bad pet owner neighbor has moved away. VFA made sure he found homes for any animals he did not take with him (a VFA home being one).

VFA is working with an acquaintance to help an elderly lady get some cats spayed/neutered and helping her with food for some ferals she is feeding. And VFA is getting all its outdoor stations ready for any stray/feral cats in the neighborhood.

Voice for Animals Waterville-Winslow chapter has been busy counseling many callers about getting their animals fixed. They were successful in helping 3 lost cats find the safety of their indoor homes again. They have taken in 18 cats, eleven of which were lucky enough to be adopted out to wonderful homes. They have also been instrumental in assisting a home down size from 12 cats to 5 and worked to get them all spayed and neutered.

Voice for Animals' York chapter has spay/neutered and provided food and heated water bowls to populations of ferals in Kittery Point, York Beach, a mobile home park in Kittery, and will be working with a population of cats (some now feral) left behind by numerous vacationers at a well-known summer resort elsewhere in Maine.

Tributes

In memory of Jimmy- Jimmy arrived sporting a red scarf looking like Snoopy and in less than twenty four hours had introduced himself to the neighborhood, even stopping in at one home. He was a challenge to the veterinary practice but was an angel at home. Bewildered and confused in his first days there, he was so typical of animals who are discarded by their family like yesterday's trash.

Jimmy loved to sit outside and always laid right on the edge of the lawn and neighbors who loved him would always stop to say, "Hello" and give him a friendly pat. He loved his walks and had a great zeal for life.

He may have been difficult at first but he became his mom's loving, devoted "best boy," and she loved him dearly. She had a difficult time letting him go but he led the way and let her know when the time was right. Here's to Jimmy, a dog who could have so easily hated, but learned to love instead... *Joan Walsh*

Remembering Doris, my tiny, white poodle who was distinctive by her sweetness and her little tongue that always hung out to one side. She touched my heart in a way that I cannot understand or explain. She was truly my joy. *Joyce Gracie*

Maine

Bear Hunting
IF&W Advisory Council

LD 628
LD1310

An act to amend the bear hunting laws specifically using dogs
To include in the council others with different backgrounds and concerns

Traps
Animal Welfare Laws

LD1460
LD1473

To ban hunting with traps except to assure public safety
Would allow for the strengthening of existing animal welfare laws which would include the ability to summons an owner for failure to obtain a rabies inoculation for an animal, raises the status of abandoning an animal to cruelty, and changes the definition of breeding kennel.

Animal Welfare Fund

LD 178

An act to support Animal Welfare that the legislature distribute fees collected from commercial feed be deposited entirely in the Animal Welfare Fund- presently only one half of the fees are deposited there

Dogs Chained for Life

LD 204

Bill amends type of shelter that must be available to dogs to protect them from inclement weather. It needs to be amended to include original intention of requiring chained dogs to be off their tethers for at least on hour a day.

Dog Breeds

LD 543

An act to prohibit an insurer from canceling An insurer's policy due to ownership of certain breeds of dogs.

Antifreeze
(Source: Maine Friends of Animals www.mfoa.org)

LD 599

See National Bill regarding antifreeze

New Hampshire

Help for Companion Animals S. B. 179

This bill requires hunters to render aid to domestic animals injured by their activities. It also requires them to report any deaths or injuries to local police

L.S. R. 2012
L.S.R. 2014
L.S. R. 2015

Relative to boarding kennels

Relative to investigations of cruelty to horses

Relative to delinquency proceedings for Juveniles committing felony cruelty to animals.

L.S.R. 2016
L.S.R. 2017
L.S.R. 2328
L.S. R. 2329

Relative to transporting dogs in open vehicles.

Clarifying drowning an animal as cruelty to animals.

Relative to homeowners insurance and certain animals.

Prohibiting dogs from being left alone in cars during during certain months.

L.S.R. 2890

Relative to the emergency plan for Service dogs and other animals.

L.S.R. 2944

Relative to the liability of pet shops for the sale of sick animals.

(Source: New Hampshire Federation of Humane Organizations)

If you do not know who your senators and representatives are your town office can help you. Remember polite calls will go much farther in achieving your goals.

Humane Legislation Scorecard

Maine
Senate Issues
Collins(R) 100 %
Snowe (R) 100 %
House Issues
Allen (D- 1st) 80 %
Michaud (D-2nd) 70 %

New Hampshire
Senate Issues
Gregg (R) 0%
Sununu (R) 0%
House Issues
Bass (R 2nd) 80%
Bradley (R 1st) 50 %

(Source: Humane Society of the United States-www.hsus.org)

Dewey Update

The second person, Shannon Walters, 35, pleaded guilty to conspiracy and cruelty to animals for her role in the slaying of Dewey, the miniature dachshound. He was drowned in May 2004 because Erin Wylie the then girlfriend of his person, Pat Collins, was jealous of the attentions paid to the dog.

Both have now been sentenced to one year in prison in New Hampshire and six months in Maine. Sentences to be served concurrently.

The sentence was hardly enough but at least the heinous crime did not go unpunished.

(source: The Portsmouth Herald www.seacoastonline.com)



Man Who Shot His Dog Sentenced

The Kennebec Journal reported in March that a Farmington man had allegedly shot his own dog who is now called Max and still recovering from his serious injuries in a good home.

The dog was acquired through ‘Uncle Henry’s’ and the man’s girlfriend had pressed him to do something about the animal because he had bitten a child and another dog.

According to the newspaper the man had NEVER used a gun and, instead of killing Max, he critically wounded him and left him for dead.

The defense lawyer tried to point out the man’s desperation which led him to do this. However, the prosecution rightly pointed out, while it IS legal to kill your own animal in some circumstances, it must be done in a manner that leads to instant death. The prosecution lawyer also rightfully pointed out he had other options, among them, surrendering the dog at a shelter or returning him to his previous owner.

The man received a 60 day sentence for misdemeanor animal cruelty which was to be served concurrently with a partly served felony burglary and theft sentence.

(Source: Maine Animal Coalition)



Cold Weather Tips

- 1.) Keep cats indoors. Outside, cats freeze and can become lost, stolen, or injured.
 - 2.) Never let your dog run around off his leash on snow or ice, especially during a snowstorm. Dogs may lose their scent and become lost.
 - 3.) Wipe off your dog’s paws, legs, and stomach when s/he comes in from the snow or ice. Salt or other chemicals could make your dog sick if swallowed from licking his body.
 - 4.) If your dog has very short hair, warm him/her up with a dog coat or sweater. Make sure he is protected on top and on his belly.
 - 5.) Some dogs may be sensitive to the cold because they are sick, old, or simply because of their breed. Do not keep them outside too long.
 - 6.) Make sure they have a warm place to sleep.
 - 7.) Keep them away from antifreeze spills.
- 5.) If you are caring for feral cats be sure they have a large amount of hay for warmth, extra food, and heated water bowls. (Also, “Snuggle Safe” heated discs may be obtained from PetQuarters and simliar stores. They require microwaving every twelve hours.)

(This information was provided, in part, from the Maine Animal Coalition web site www.mac.org)

Basic Information about TNR

What is TNR?

TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN (TNR) is a management plan in which stray and feral cats already living outdoors in cities, towns, and rural areas are humanely trapped, then evaluated, vaccinated, and sterilized by veterinarians. Kittens and tame cats are adopted into good homes. Healthy adult cats too wild to be adopted are returned to their familiar habitat under the lifelong care of volunteers.

What makes a cat feral?

A CAT BECOMES FERAL (wild) if s/he has little or no human contact during the first few weeks of life or is a lost or abandoned domestic cat (stray) who over time reverts to a wild state.



Never Turn Your Back on an Animal in Need

Paddy

Paddy was always running the roads! People on Route 117 in South Paris, Maine knew him very well because morning and night he was always there-and he was SO friendly!

His home had always been in this town and he loved his family but they no longer had time for him. In fact, they made it very clear that they did not want him. He no longer fit into their life style. They had called the SPCA in Auburn once and had been told the shelter would take him but since he was ten, they could not guarantee he would be adopted and he would likely be put down. Well, the family did not exactly want that-but they certainly did not want him either.

Many times he was picked up by Caryl and Perry Edwards and returned to his home on a side street off 117. Finally, Edwards called his people and asked if she could adopt him. They were more than happy to turn him over to someone they had never even met and knew nothing about.

The arrangement was that she would pick him up on a given morning after he had been fasted and take him immediately to a local vet for neutering. The scene before he left was a tragically sad one: Paddy, sensing that he would be leaving his family forever sat down in front of each of them and put his paw against their faces. Sadly, these people were completely unmoved by his final act of understanding and love.

But good times were coming! Paddy was picked up by Betsy Shivers, from the Oxford Chapter of VFA, and transported to her home in Fryeburg where he was to be fostered until a loving home could be found. Finding another home, however, was not necessary because the Shivers family fell in love him...

Betsy Shivers reports that he loves to be with people. That was all he really wanted anyway. It took him ten years and many trips down Route 117 until he finally found a family who would welcome him home and give him all the love he needed

Jasmine

Betsy Shivers found her wandering down a side street in Norway, Maine; hungry and frightened. Using some good detective work she found the dog’s home. Because the people seemed to really care about this animal VFA provided food for him and began to gain her person’s trust. Ultimately, we were able to get her spayed. Because her person now knows she can turn to us for help we believe that if any future problems arise her first phone call will be to us. While Jasmine’s home is not perfect she lives with people who love her and care about her well being.

An Old Tired Sweet Beagle

Caryl Edwards received a phone call at 1 AM on a morning early in July. A young girl named Nicky, who had known Edwards because she had attended the school in which Edwards taught, had found an elderly beagle wandering about in the back woods of West Paris, Maine. She had picked the dog up, hoping to keep him overnight and take him to a shelter in the morning but her mother had refused to allow the animal into their home. “Can’t you just take him back where he was and let him go?” her mother asked callously. But Nicky cared more about the welfare of the beagle than her mother did and she could not do that, so she called Edwards and asked if Edwards could please take him for the night. “You are my last and only hope,” she begged.

“Well, how can I do that?” Caryl thought. “I have a foster dog, who is a handful, here already and I am being asked to add another dog to the mix in the middle of the night.” But the alternative was not acceptable so she told Nicky to bring the dog over devising a plan as she went along: The back porch was clean and empty, the little guy could spend the night there and not come in contact with the other foster dog, thus avoiding any potential conflicts.

When he arrived the beagle did not know what to do first: eat until his sides bulged or just fall asleep. He tried to eat but quickly sleep over took him as he curled up on a bed Edwards had made out of soft quilts.

The next day (after Paddy was picked up to be neutered-everything always comes at once) Edwards took him to the no-kill shelter in West Paris-the town in which he had been found. He remained there a week and Edwards called daily. Then the good news came: a frantic, older couple had finally tracked him down to the “Moose Pond Shelter!” It is reported that tears of joy spilled when this family saw their friend and Sweetie Pie, as we discovered he was called, could not contain himself either. (Edwards wishes she had been a fly on the wall so that she could have observed this joyful reunion.)

It was a difficult night trying to find a spot for a needy animal when the house was already full but because Edwards did find room, and Sweetie Pie was eventually able to return to his family.



Recent *SMART* Meeting

On October 18 The State of Maine Animal Response Team (SMART) hosted a day long program for all those people in the state who had expressed an interest in animal evacuation. Below are listed some of the out-comes from the program. Here is how you can get involved in your county:

A. Planning and organizational activities include:

- Writing a county animal disaster plan
- Organizing volunteers
- Identifying resources (some important resources include generators, cages, fair grounds and other emergency animal shelter space)
- Identifying vulnerabilities
- Identifying farms/facilities at risk
- Building public awareness
- Educating animal owners to have an emergency plan
- Identifying funding options (e.g. CERT program, incorporation as non-profit, animal owners pay for disaster service)

C. Recommended training (*priority training):

- *Basic CERT
 - 21-hour course through county EMA, basic Incident Command System (ICS), first aid, rescue, hazmat; intro to Emergency Management and ICS could be done online
- *Basic understanding of Emergency Management and Emergency Operations Center
- Training re on-scene accountability
- Awareness of resource management
- Awareness of software
- Awareness of exotic animal location, needs
- Awareness of database for animals
- Policies (e.g. re rescue, identifying animals, location/relocation)
- Animal handling
- First aid for pets, CPR for animals
- How to use equipment
- SMART orientation

II Role of SMART in supporting CARTs:

- Provide training to support that provided by County Emergency Management offices and MEMA
- Publicize county training opportunities that are open to other counties
- Draft a Maine State Animal Disaster Plan
- Develop and publicize funding sources
- Develop expertise as resource for training
- Be available for questions and guidance
- Educate politicians, the public and police/fire/EMS about what we're doing and why
- Educate animal owners about the need to plan, and businesses on the need for continuity of operations plan
- Post periodic status reports from CARTs on SMART website
- Make resources available
 - E.g. County Animal Disaster Plan and Pet friendly animal sheltering plan from York County Animal CERT
- Be prepared to assist with donations management during emergency
- Make available Animal Owner Preparedness brochures to CARTs
- Survey emergency animal shelter space in state

III Role of County Emergency Management in supporting CARTs:

- Make available CERT training to animal response teams.
- Include CARTs in disaster training and animal disaster response
- Include CARTs in exercises. Start small, e.g. have victims refuse to evacuate because of pets
- Support CARTs' use by first responders during non-emergency animal rescues
- Provide information about county resources to CARTs
- Accept Animal Disaster Plan that is appropriate to county



Horse Slaughter in Maine???

They come and go at the home of this dealer who lives on the boarder of Maine and New Hampshire and if he cannot place them or break them they will be placed on the "kill truck." Many of them do not make it to slaughter. They are trampled to death by the other horses in an overcrowded truck or they die of dehydration and starvation. No animal deserves this! Tell your representative to support HR 503!



Animal Hoarding in 2005

According to a report by the Hoarding of Animals Research Consortium (HARC) "animal hoarding is poorly understood phenomenon the public health implications fo which are not well documented."

Hoarding is believed to occur in every community and knows no social or economic boundaries. "Although typically identified among unemployed and socially isolated individuals, anecdotal reports indicate that animal hoarding also has been discovered among physicians, veterinarians, bankers, nurses, teachers, and college professors. ... Despite its seriousness, almost no empirical research exists on this problem." It is presumed to be a serious health problem, as well.

Listed below are some of the characteristics found to be true of animal hoarders (once called "collectors.")

- . Three-quarters of the 54 hoarders in the study were female.
- . Nearly half of all hoarders were 60 years or older; 37% between 40 and 59 years of age.
- . Almost three-quarters of the hoarders were single, divorced, or widowed; just over half lived alone.
- . Employment information was not always given, but available data revealed many hoarders were retired, unemployed, or receiving disability payments.
- . Cats were involved in 65% of cases, dogs in 60%, farm animals in 11%, and birds in 11%. An average of 39 animals were involved in each case, but four cases involved more that 100 animals.
- . In 80% of the cases, some animals were found dead or in severe condition.
- . The reasons hoarders offered for their behavior included a lover of animals; a view of animals as surrogate children; feelings that no one else would care for the animals; and a fear that the animals would be euthanized if taken to a shelter.
- . In 38 of the 49 cases where residences were inspected, the premises were described as heavily cluttered and unsanitary.
- . Responses indicate that cases were often protracted and difficult to resolve; even after removal of animals, resumption of hoarding was common.
- . Outside government agencies were involved or consulted in 36 of the 54 cases (67%), but respondents expressed frustration at the inability or unwillingness of mental health, social service, and public health agencies to participate.
- . Often if the hoarders are indigent the state will determine them to be insane and the animals will be taken away; if they are wealthy they may be considered "eccentric" and their animals will be allowed to stay. (Or they may have connections with public officials.)

In places where it occurs there appear to be compelling evidence of self-neglect by the hoarder, and when dependent family members were present, neglect of them, as well. "...this rose to the level of abuse and sometimes persisted, despite awareness [that] staff at public agencies had concerns about their situation." "Animal hoarding is not yet listed as indicative of any specific psychological disorder and is not recognized as a clinical entity" it appears to be an aspect of obsessive compulsive disorder (OCD).

"It seems logical that recognition of the potential for animal hoarding to act as a sentinel for hoarders and dependent household members at risk could facilitate identification of other unmet human health and medical needs. Increased collaboration among animal control and protection groups, veterinarians, and social service agencies to identify hoarding situations could provide opportunities for earlier intervention and forestall more serious outcomes for the hoarder, household members, and communities.

(sources: National Association of Social Workers, HSUS-Animal sheltering Magazine 3/22/04)



The Animal Tragedy of Katrina

As a result of Hurricane Katrina and the lack of a plan for the care of pets in an emergency thousands of pets lost their lives in the aftermath. In one particularly terrible situation, Sergeant Mike Minton of St. Bernards's Parish, LA ordered dogs to be shot (he is facing disciplinary charges).

We all should have a plan to care for our pets in case of an unexpected emergency...

Emergency Preparedness for Animals in New Hampshire and Maine

In the wake of the recent disaster in the Gulf States I have begun to wonder how many people know what kind (s) of evacuation plan we have in Maine and New Hampshire, particularly relating to animals.

Maine's animal evacuation plan is closely tied to EMA (The Emergency Management Agency). Some counties are already setting up CARTs (County Animal Response Teams) others have not but they surely will in the future. CARTs are connected to the State of Maine Animal Response Team (SMART) which among other things seeks to educate and help people in the safe evacuation of their animals (both companion and farm).

The New Hampshire emergency plan is tied to the Department of Agriculture and is not directly connected with the New Hampshire Emergency Management Agency but it would be hoped that in times of disaster the two agencies plan to work in sync.

I have heard people say that we do not have disasters in this part of the country so it is not necessary to be concerned about preparedness. But that is not true because we have floods, blizzards, certainly ice storms, and sometime hurricanes. While both states are working to have a comprehensive plan for animals sometimes these things break down. The bottom line is that we must all have our own evacuation plans which include our animals. If you do not have a plan, there may be no plan. If families who have no plans are evacuated they will be separated from their animals. The Red Cross **will not take them**. Even when pets were declared family members in Louisiana the Red Cross did not change its policies about excluding them from its shelters.

Here are some tips for creating an evacuation plan for companion animals:

The bottom line is that we owe it to our pets to see that they are evacuated, as well. If families wait until the last minute to find shelter for their pets (in the midst of a disaster) they may find none.

To be proactive the following tips are listed:

1.) Have a place of destination already planned:

.Contact hotels and motels outside your immediate area and ask if "no pet" policies would be waved in times of emergency.

.Ask friends and/or relatives outside your area if they would be willing to help, remembering that your animals will likely feel more secure if they are kept together.

.Keep a list of boarding facilities and their 24 hour phone numbers.

.Animal shelters should be your last resort because they may be overwhelmed already.

2.) Put together all the items that your companion animals will need.

.Assemble a portable "Pet Disaster Kit" which contains medications, medical records, and a first aid kit.

.Keep leashes, harnesses, and carriers in one spot where they can be easily picked up. Your animals must be secured in this fashion to ensure that they cannot escape.

.Also have current photos of each animal, in case they should get lost.

.Have a supply of food, potable water, cat litter/pan, and a can opener

. Information on feeding schedules, medical conditions, behavior problems, and name of veterinarian in case you ultimately have to board them or have them fostered.

. Pet beds and toys which are easily transportable and smell like home

3.) Know what to do as a disaster approaches. Often warnings are listed hours and even days in advance.

.Call ahead to confirm emergency shelter arrangements.

.Be sure that medical supplies are ready.

.Bring all pets into the house so you do not have to search for them if you have to leave in a hurry.

.Make sure all companion animals are wearing collars to which identification (including your name and address of your temporary shelter or that of a friend who is outside the disaster area) has been securely attached.

.You may not be home when an evacuation order comes. Find out if a trusted neighbor would be willing to take your pets and meet you at a prearranged location. This person should feel comfortable with them, know where the animals are likely to be, and where the disaster kit is kept. They also will need a key to your home. If you use a pet sitting service they may be of help but this arrangement should be made well in advance.

.Remember your animals act differently when they are under stress so make sure they are secure at all times (i.e. on leashes or in carriers). Don't leave them unattended even for one second.

4.) Transporting other types of companion animals

.Birds should be transported in a secure cage or carrier. In cold weather wrap a blanket over the carrier for warmth. In warm weather carry a plant mister to mist feathers periodically. Do not put water into the cage while transporting but do provide a few slices of fresh fruits or vegetables which are high in water content. Have a photo and ID attached to a leg band. If the cage does not have a perch, line with paper towels and change them frequently. **Do not, under any circumstance let them out of the cage!**

.Reptiles should be transported in pillowcases but must be transferred to more secure housing when they have reached the shelter site. At this time a bowl of water large enough for soaking, as well as a heating pad should be placed in the cage. During transportation follow the same directions as for birds (i.e. slices of fruit with high water content, etc.)

.Hamsters, Gerbils and other small animals should be transported in secure carriers. Bedding materials, food bowls, and water bottles should be carried separately.

.If the companion animals are horses, llamas, etc. arrangements should be made ahead of time with local associations or with associations who will undertake the transportation of farm animals, as they will provide the most appropriate, thorough and secure care for them.

For further information go to your state EMA website (or, in the case of New Hampshire, the Department of Agriculture web site), The Humane Society of the United States www.hsus.org, The American Veterinary Medical Association www.avma.org. If you want to work on disaster planning for animals contact SMART at www.MaineSMART.org, 207-286-7610, or your county emergency management office (the number can be found in your phone book).

The bottom line is that no matter what some outside organization may label our animals, they are, after all, members of our immediate family and we owe it to these wonderful creatures who ask so little and give so much to have a plan for their survival and wellbeing in place so that we can enjoy their presence within our family circle for many years to come. (This was originally written as a letter to the editor by Executive Director Caryl McIntire Edwards and appeared in a number of newspapers in both NH & ME.)



Connections

In the past year VFA has become a member of both the Maine Federation of Humane Societies and the New Hampshire Federation of Humane Organizations. Additionally, it has joined the education committee of the State of Maine Animal Response Team (SMART).[See related article on emergency preparedness.] The Executive Director attends each of these meetings as the Voice for Animals representative.

***For delicious animal friendly recipes checkout
www.maineanimalcoalition.org and click on "virtual vegetarian."***