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PROMOTING RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION



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Justice for the Vick-tims: Pit bulls in America

By Ledy VanKavage, Esq.



See Page Six

INSIDE

Perspective on Pets in the Classroom	10
Just in Time for Spring – Plant a Memory Garden to Honor a Beloved Pet	12
New Developments in Animal-Assisted Interventions	14
“Breaking the Chain” Contest Winners	17
Coming in June – National Town Meeting to Strategize National and Local Link Efforts	19
NOW AVAILABLE! <i>The Pit Bull Paradox</i> Latham’s new DVD	23



Edith Latham's Mandate:

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



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The Latham Letter

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BALANCED PERSPECTIVES ON
HUMANE ISSUES AND ACTIVITIES



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CONTENTS:

Editorial: Where we get our facts really matters	4
Hugh H. Tebault, III	
Of Note	5
Justice for the Vick-tims: Pit Bulls in America	6
Ledy VanKavage, Esq.	
Pets in the Classroom.	10
Jane Greco Deming	
Memory Blooms	12
Patricia Rushing	
Practitioners, Researchers, and Educators in Flanders, Belgium, Cooperate to Establish New Developments in Animal-Assisted Interventions (AAIs)	14
Lieve Meers, Marijke Thierens, William Ellery Samuels and Frank Olof Ödberg	
'Breaking the Chain' Contest Winners	18
Debra White	
National Town Meeting and Summit to Strategize National, Local Link Efforts	19
Phil Arkow	
Media Reviews and Announcements	20
Tools for your important work	22
LATHAM'S NEW DVD: <i>Pit Bull Paradox</i>	23

The Latham Letter

Balanced perspectives on humane issues and activities

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Where we get our facts really matters

Hugh H. Tebault, III, President



There is an ongoing current social phenomenon with a corresponding world-wide industry that lives and thrives off social fears. The green revolution movers and shakers have become the expert snake oil salesman of our generation.

If I were to honestly evaluate most of the readers of *The Latham Letter*, I believe I would find that 98.7% of you are very concerned about your environment. Of those concerned individuals, about 15% are actively working in their community at special recycling and educational programs to promote environmental issues and telling others how they have to act, working to change laws and impose stricter regulations. If I were to identify one reason they are doing this, it would be they feel it is too important not to act; the planet has to be saved.

Having read quite a bit over the past 50 plus years, I have noticed one reoccurring theme in society that always must be viewed with suspicion – the requirement for urgency to an end where little or no discussion is allowed. This is sometimes stated as “the ends justify the means,” but mostly it is a sign that a small group is seeking to control another.

Critical thinking skills used to be taught in school. I don't know if such teaching is still in vogue, with so much political correctness these days. Each one of us needs to be educated and able to look at a set of information, determine if it is factual, and most importantly know if the facts lead to the conclusion being presented. If I use the nightly newscasters as a gauge, few facts are ever given, but many invalid conclusions are offered in 30 second sound bites. No time is spent discussing the unintended consequences of the solutions proposed. For instance, the CFL light bulbs now mandated do not last as long as stated and have so much mercury in

them that breaking one CFL in a home could require a hazardous material cleanup. The benefit was to save us some electricity, but at what real cost.

Thankfully, the field of Humane Education relies on accepted facts, and goes about its mission by improving relationships between animal and child, child and adult, adult and society. Our success is not by forcing change, but rather by helping people seek the kindness and respect that comes from within. The success is in the diversity of people, each armed with foundational principles of humane education and developing their own solutions in family, community, business and their own surroundings.

Humane Education does not teach “green technologies,” or “carbon dioxide credits,” or “environmental diversity.” Humane Education equips each of us with the best possible basis to work together toward improving everything we do. It may well equip some to develop better solutions for energy, but it does not limit what type of energy to be used.

Latham continues today to highlight the importance of teaching kindness and respect for animals as a key to society's success. How each nation develops is up to the citizens of that nation. We hope they recognize the importance of humane education in their daily lives. If we can simply teach everyone to show kindness to animals, those same people will find success in their work with other people, and then contribute to a stronger and more successful society. It is not up to some world-wide government agency to tell you how to behave to save the planet. It is up to each of us to be responsible, using our gifts of time, talent and resources to better our lives and the lives of those around us.



Back by Popular Demand

Working with Families in Shelters, a Practical Guide for Counselors and Child Care Staff
by Lynn Loar and John H. Weakland (1994) is now an electronic file available on Latham's website.

<http://www.latham.org/local/WorkingWithFamiliesInShelters.pdf>

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**Many people have asked us
about the beautiful image
that we're using to symbolize
Latham's 90th Anniversary.**

The antique portrait of the boy and his poodle is courtesy of anthropologist Mary Thurston, author of *The Lost History of the Canine Race – Our 15,000-Year Love Affair with Dogs*. Mary is also an accomplished pet photographer. Through Animal Image, she specializes in action and close-up portraiture, in natural, stress-free locations of your choice.

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Justice for the Vick-tims: Pit bulls in America

By Ledy VanKavage, Esq.

On Feb. 29, 2008, one of the American pit-bull terriers seized in the Michael Vick dog fighting case – the dogs described by some humane groups as the most violent dogs in America – appeared on “The Rachel Ray Show.” There was little Johnny Justice, a small white-and-black pit with a wriggly butt, sitting on the couch, eating treats and smooching with the host. Ray’s voice choked and tears welled in her eyes as she described what these dogs had gone through and the discrimination that pit bulls across our nation face.

Rachel Ray has good cause to be distraught at the current plight of the American pit bull terrier.

It isn’t just the Michael Vicks of the world that haven’t been kind to these victims. Pit bulls, through no fault of their own, seem to have been left out of our circle of compassion. They have been described by some in the humane movement as “kennel trash,” “land sharks,” or even “born killers.” Laws outlawing them are termed “breed-specific,” not “breed-discriminatory.”

Words do matter. In an 1870 court case, lawyer George Graham Vest delivered an eloquent eulogy about a dog, Old Drum, who had been shot. Here are some excerpts from his closing argument: “A man’s dog stands by him in prosperity and in poverty, in health and in sickness. He will sleep on the cold ground, where the wintry winds blow and the snow drives fiercely, if only he may be near his master’s side. He will kiss the hand that has no food to offer, he will lick the wounds and sores that encounter the roughness of the world. He guards the sleep of his pauper master as if he were a prince. When all other friends desert, he remains. When riches take wings and reputation falls to pieces, he is as constant in his love as the sun in its journey through the heavens.

“If fortune drives the master forth an outcast in the world, friendless and homeless, the faithful dog asks no higher privilege than that of accompanying him to guard against danger, to fight against his enemies. When the last scene of all comes, and death takes the master in its embrace and his body is laid away in the cold ground, no matter if all other friends pursue their way, there by his graveside will the noble dog be found, his head between his paws, his eyes sad but open in alert watchfulness, faithful and true even to death.”

The speech applies to all dogs, regardless of breeds. And, yes, it even applies to the American pit-bull terrier.

Tragically for many dogs and their owners, however, canine profiling is on the rise. Friendly pets are being ripped from the homes of their guardians for



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no reason other than unfounded fears about their alleged heritage.

Mark Twain aptly said, "What gets us into trouble is not what we don't know, it's what we know for sure that just ain't so." If you read the paper lately, every dog that bit must be a "pit." This media bias has resulted in dogs being confiscated and killed in some towns simply because of their appearance. How can this happen in America? Is the terminology employed by animal advocates exacerbating the problem? Are the practices employed by shelter workers fueling the latest media witch hunt?

First, what exactly is a "pit bull"? There is no such breed. There are American pit-bull terriers, Staffordshire bull terriers, American Staffordshire terriers, bull terriers, bulldogs, Boston terriers, French bulldogs, bullmastiffs, boxers, and American bulldogs. Nowadays anyone who sees a short-haired stocky dog thinks it is a "pit bull."

Some city councils have passed laws banning any mixed-breed dog that merely resembles an American pit-bull terrier. Are police officers or animal-control workers truly qualified to determine the heritage of a mixed-breed dog? Do they employ DNA testing before seizing and euthanizing someone's pet?

In the legal system, proof matters as much as words. DNA blood testing is now available to help determine a dog's lineage. In Kansas City, Kansas, for example, a man won his eight-month legal battle with the city to keep his dog, Niko, after DNA testing proved Niko wasn't a "pit bull." The dog was housed at animal control for the entire eight months, at a great cost to the taxpayers. Niko is now back home after the ordeal.

Some animal shelters add to the discrimination by refusing to adopt out a dog based on its alleged breed. Is it ethical for humane shelters to euthanize dogs based on purported breed and not temperament? Some shelters say they are euthanizing pit bulls to "protect" them, but what would the dog want – the possibility of a loving home or death? The refusal to adopt out certain canines may even contribute to the cachet of the breed, helping drive demand and making the dogs more popular.

Other shelters claim they do not adopt out certain breeds to "protect" the public. Let's look at the facts:

According to Janis Bradley, author of *Dogs Bite, but Balloons and Slippers Are More Dangerous*, more people are killed by lightning each year than by dogs.



The dog population has blossomed to more than 73.9 million in the United States, but despite this increase, usually between 12 and 33 people die each year from dogs. Why the hysteria over dog attacks when swimming pools and SUVs are much more dangerous? The answer: deep-seated fear. Canines are predators, and humans respond to dog bites on a very primal level. In *The Pit Bull Placebo*, Karen Delise, of the National Canine Research Council, examined media bias in dog-bite reporting. She surveyed news stories regarding dog attacks that occurred on a random week in August 2007.

On Aug. 18, a Labrador mix attacked a 70-year-old man, sending him to the hospital in critical condition. Police officers arrived at the scene, and the dog was shot after charging the officers. This incident was reported in only one local paper.

On Aug. 19, a 16-month-old child received fatal head and neck injuries after being attacked by a mixed-breed dog. This fatal attack was reported twice in the local papers.

On Aug. 20, a 6-year-old boy was hospitalized after having his ear torn off and receiving severe bites to the head by a medium-sized mixed-breed dog. This attack was reported once in the local paper.

On Aug. 21, a 59-year-old woman was attacked while trying to break up a dog fight in her home. Two pit bulls had entered the home through her dog door and had started a fight with her neighbor's Jack Russell terrier, which had also entered through the dog door. Her dog was not harmed. She was hospitalized with severe injuries. This attack was reported in more than 230 articles in national and international newspapers and on CNN, MSNBC, and Fox news.

The incident involving a woman being injured trying to break up a dog fight involving pit bulls garnered national attention. By stark contrast, the fatal attack on a baby by a mixed-breed dog received only minimal local coverage.

According to Delise, there is no documented case of a single neutered, companion pit bull causing a human fatality. But that fact is rarely reported.

Given such media bias, perhaps it isn't a surprise that animal shelters and animal-control workers inadvertently contribute to the hysteria. When gregarious Johnny Justice and the other American pit-bull terriers in the Vick case were seized, some humane groups called for them to be killed without the individual dogs even being evaluated. The court finally allowed the ASPCA to lead a team of behaviorists to evaluate the victims, with special master/guardian Rebecca Huss also participating in the examination of the dogs. Eventually, only one dog out of 49 had to be euthanized because of temperament. The other ex-fighters were dispersed to rescue groups and sanctuaries throughout the United States, where they are now thriving. You can watch their sojourn on www.badrap.org or www.bestfriends.org.

If breed isn't relevant, what factors are actually involved in dog attacks? According to the National Canine Research Council, the fatal dog attacks that occurred in the United States in 2006 had these commonalities:

- 97% of the owners did not neuter or spay their dogs.
- 78% of the owners did not

maintain their dogs as pets but instead used them as guard, breeding, or fighting dogs.

- 84% of the attacks involved reckless owners whose dogs were abused or neglected; were interacting with unsupervised children; or were not humanely controlled or contained (i.e., they were either chained or allowed to roam).

Instead of breed discrimination, communities should focus on these factors to prevent dog bites: restricting tethering, prohibiting guard dogs, and enforcing animal-cruelty laws.

Regrettably, breed-discriminatory legislation continues to be passed, creating far more problems than it solves. Such laws sever the human-animal bond and undermine the faith people have in their animal control officers. Most Americans view their pets as members of the family.

The anguish experienced by thousands of responsible guardians who have had their pets seized and killed simply because of their breed was movingly expressed in an e-mail posted by a Florissant, Missouri, resident on the Web in 2006:

"My name is Andrea Miller, and I own an 8-year-old, black-and-white, male but fixed pit bull named Ali. I just found out today, by a visit from the health department, that pit bulls were outlawed in my city as of this past December '05. The city apparently gave owners 2 months to get their previously owned pit bulls approved; however, I was not aware of the outlawing, and it is too late.

"I don't want to give my dog away, but I've contacted city hall, and they are



not willing to give any waivers regarding the situation; they will be back in 7 days to take him away. I've had Ali since the day he was born; the runt of a litter of 10, he had to be bottle fed, and I became attached. He's been my best friend all his life, my only friend at times. I had a baby 8 months ago, and we did all the training and adjusting to the new situation. He took to it well, and we decided it would work. We didn't consider giving Ali up, then this happened.

"He is such a great dog, a huge baby who loves scratches and any attention. I call him 'my little butt shaker.' After all he's done, I just can't bear to give up without a fight and let them put him to sleep. He is literally my child, and I am just devastated by this. I would prefer to call in, but every time I try to talk about it, I get choked up and start crying.

"I was hoping you could offer me some direction and/or hope. If it was possible, I'd even move to a pit-bull-friendly city. Unfortunately, it is out of my reach. I'd be willing to drive any distance to save him and give him the comfort of a loving home that he deserves or at least a chance at one. No one at city hall or

Fear vs. Fact

the health department seems to care how heart-wrenching this is, and I just can't understand how they can be so coldhearted. I apologize to take your time, but I don't know what to do. I'm just trying to do everything I can. I greatly appreciate your time either way.

"Ali does enjoy playing with other dogs. I frequently take him to my grandmother's to play with her two dogs. He has been through socialization classes and frequents pet stores with us. He gets along with cats, too; one of our cats, KiKi, he is particularly fond of. They take turns cleaning each other. I'm afraid she will be devastated by this once she realizes he is no longer around. I just can't believe this is happening."

"I've wondered sometimes what life would be like when Ali passed on of old age, but I always assumed I didn't need to worry about that for many years. I never would have imagined something like this could be possible. He's been the one reliable, stable friend for so long, I don't know how I will manage without him. But I can guarantee it will be easier if I know he is alive, happy, and cared for. I've lived in and supported this city almost my whole life, but I can't help but feel betrayed and very bitter."

This is America. Responsible guardians should have the right to share their lives with whatever breed of dog they choose. Reckless owners should be prohibited from having dogs.

Pit bulls are just dogs. And all dogs are individuals.

Helen Keller, owner of a "pit bull," stated it best: "Friendship is seen through the heart not the eyes." It is time for us to speak up and defend our best friends, no matter what their breed – they desperately need our help.



Ledy VanKavage, Esq. is Sr. Director of Legislation & Legal Training, ASPCA. She is also Vice Chair, Animal Law Committee, American Bar Association. She has been interviewed on the subject of dangerous dogs by the New York Times, MSNBC, NPR's Justice Talking, the Chicago Tribune, and the St. Louis Post Dispatch.

Ledy is from the heartland; she currently resides in Collinsville, Illinois with her husband Cliff who is the Executive Director of Cinema St. Louis. Ledy and her husband have adopted three brindle pit bulls, Clarence Darrow, Che, and Bella and also oversee a feral cat colony in the neighborhood.

You can contact her at PO Box 313, Maryville, IL 62062, 618-345-8086, FAX 618-345-6542, ledyv@aspca.org



Animal Farm Foundation (www.animalfarmfoundation.org) **has a wonderful handout, Fear vs. Fact, which outlines some of the prevalent myths that still permeate our culture regarding pit bulls:**

FEAR: Pit bulls have "locking jaws."

FACT: "We found that the American pit-bull terriers did not have any unique mechanism that would allow these dogs to lock their jaws. There were no mechanical or morphological differences." Source: Dr. I. Lehr Brisbin, University of Georgia

FEAR: Pit bulls have massive biting power measuring thousands of pounds of pressure per square inch.

FACT: On average, dogs bite with 320 pounds of pressure per square inch. The bite pressure of a German shepherd, an American pit-bull terrier and a Rottweiler were tested. The American pit-bull terrier had the least bite pressure of the three dogs tested. Dr. Brady Barr, National Geographic

FEAR: Although there are some pit bulls with good temperaments, they are the exception, not the rule.

FACT: The American Temperament Test shows that pit bulls consistently score above average for all breeds tested, year in and year out.

Source: American Temperament Test Society

PETS

in the classroom

By Jane Greco Deming

There is no doubt in my mind that pets and even animals in general are helpful tools for almost any lesson plan in the classroom. From Pre-school to college, there is much to be learned from the animals around us. The question is, "Do live animals belong in every classroom as tools for education?"

A friend of mine who teaches second grade uses animals and their habitats for her entire school year curricula. She infuses animal information into every possible lesson plan for her students. They are spelling, reading, solving math problems, studying history and doing art projects based on a different habitat and its inhabitants, each quarter. She teaches at a private school so she has the latitude to change up the required standards. The children do a remarkable job and learn so much more than their ABCs. In fact they are well versed in topics such as endangered species and habitat destruction. Additionally, she is providing quality character lessons regarding the animals and their environments. There are no live animals in the classroom, but it is alive with creatures of all kinds.

On the other hand, I once knew a teacher who had a menagerie of creatures in her class. They were her own personal pets and she provided them with more than adequate housing

and care; in fact she was devoted to them. She taught fifth grade and the entire collection was part of her curriculum. Her students knew about animal classification

and adaptations like it was second nature to them and were totally engaged in the weekly lesson plans. There were projects hanging on the walls about biomes and interdependency, world geography, and habitat restoration projects. The students were growing tropical plants and learning about agriculture and economics. Many of her students commented that she was their best teacher ever.

After 30 years in classrooms and working with children to teach kindness and responsibility, I guess you could say I have seen it all. The above examples are the memorable and wonderful testaments to quality teachers doing an outstanding job. By the same token, I have seen rabbits languishing on the floor of a first grade class with little feet running around them and the animals crunched into cage corners trying to find safety. I have witnessed a Bearded dragon in a tiny tank with inadequate heat and light, being ignored for weeks because the students were on

to something else. I often felt frustrated when my suggestions to make changes for the good of the animals were ignored. In some cases, kids were bringing animals home on weekends as part of a reward system, often without proper care instructions. That was very worrisome to me.

The problem is not, should or should there not be animals in the classroom, but what is best for the animals? I must admit, for the most part, I think that the average teacher has so much on their plates that having a pet in the room is just one more responsibility piled on top of No Child Left Behind, mandated curriculum and prepping for all of the testing that is now required. Many local school departments now forbid resident pets because of health and safety concerns. Also, so many more children have allergies that a pet in the room is simply out of the question, unless it is a fish or a frog that can live safely within the confines of an aquarium.

Dr. John Pitts said it best in his



Animals in the Classroom Teacher's Manual. "Animals in a classroom must first and foremost be cared for in the best possible conditions. They must also serve a real purpose in terms of being a tool for teaching lessons related to the animal, its country of origin, its habits, behaviors and reproduction." He truly pioneered appropriate preparation and care for classroom pets in the 1990s and spread the word about that responsibility through national teacher workshops. He was employed by the Pet Care Trust at the time and was a friend to all of the humane educators around the country who were frustrated about teachers that were too cavalier about pets in the classroom and all of the animals we witnessed in substandard situations.

At the same time it would be wrong to paint this issue with a single brush stroke and say all classrooms should have or no classroom should have a resident pet. Rather, like any controversial issue, we must weigh out the pros and cons of pets in the classroom and always opt for what is best for the animals. Below are listed some considerations that might help humane educators and teachers to make the best decision for their particular set of circumstances.

The Pros

- Animals often are a great medium for teaching character such as, responsibility, kindness, and compassion.
- Animals often serve to calm a group and get them focused on a subject.
- Animals can launch a lesson plan on numerous subjects.
- Animals have no prejudice, so for children with different cultural backgrounds, they can help to open lines of communication.
- Positive interactions with animals

help children to build on respect and empathy.

- Children with behavior problems or those easily distracted tend to be more attentive when animals are present.

The Cons

- Who will care for the animals on the weekends and school vacations?
- What if the school loses power during a storm and the animals aren't kept at appropriate temperatures?
- Are the animals at risk due to stress or over handling?
- Will the animal enjoy the company of a classroom full of children?
- Will the animal serve a real purpose in terms of curriculum benefits?
- Is there a quiet place in the classroom where the animal will feel safe during noisy or overly active times?
- Will there be one person who is responsible for the oversight of the animals' care and well being?

Of course we must remember that wildlife should not be in the classroom, nor should classrooms be home to exotic pets. Reptiles pose a risk of salmonella, and for many nervous animals a classroom is just not the best place to live. Dogs and cats have no place in a classroom as a permanent pet or mascot and for birds there is always the danger of drafts and escape. Perhaps the best pet in my experience is the guinea pig. These highly social animals, when properly cared for, can be hearty and wonderful teaching tools and mascots.

A great role in all of this is of course the humane educator. I always suggest to teachers that the best of both

worlds is to invite pets as guest through programs that highlight their value and needs. Service dogs and therapy dogs make terrific guests and their altruistic contributions to the community provide vital messages. Small animals that represent the outside world such as pet birds, small mammals, and reptiles, can be very helpful to a humane educator when teaching a group about such things as pet care and animal habits.

Humane Educators can also be a resource to teachers considering a classroom pet by providing a balanced view of responsibility and relevance. Often decisions about pets are made with more heart than intellect. Then the pet becomes a statistic when the teacher realizes the depth of the responsibility and the pressures on an animal relegated to a classroom. Teachers must consider caring for the animals during weekends and school vacations.

Pets are incredible purveyors of a multitude of lessons for children. On the other hand they are sentient beings with needs and feelings that must be put first in terms of what is right for all.

When it comes to classroom pets, putting the animal's needs first, weighing the value of the lesson and building curricula around the pet so the animal has relevance are what must be considered. Balancing the ability to provide the very best in terms of housing, husbandry, and time must be paramount in the decision. In the end; the only real thing that is important is doing what is best for each individual creature. The most valuable lesson children learn is from what they see us do.



Jane Deming is Director of Humane Education, American Humane Association. You can reach her at janed@americanhumane.org.



By Patricia Rushing

Memory Blooms

No one understands! Your beloved pet has died and your feelings are hard to explain. The one thing you know for sure is that your love for your pet lives on. How can you turn your sadness into beauty? Plant a garden. Not just any garden, but a memory garden where the plants and colors reflect the special personality traits of your best friend! Here are some simple, fun steps to follow.

You Will Need:

- *Crayons or colored pencils*
- *Several sheets of drawing paper*
- *Perhaps some adult help*

Instructions

1. Describe your pet! Was she loyal, playful or smart? Was he adventurous and enjoyed a walk around the block or a ride in the car? Was she a shy homebody who enjoyed playing with you in the yard? Did you know each personality characteristic has a plant, or even several, associated with that behavior? Using Checklist One on the next page, check the behaviors that remind you of your pet.
2. Did you know that certain colors signify certain meanings? Using Checklist Two, check the words that continue to remind you of your pet. This will add beautiful color, and significance, to your garden.
3. What kind of space do you have? Where will you place your garden? Do you have a backyard with sunlight? Do you have a balcony that provides shade in the afternoon? How about climate? Does it snow? Is it always hot? Always cold? Will you place the garden in the backyard, front yard or flowerpots on the windowsill

in your bedroom? Think about your garden's placement and grab your crayons and paper.

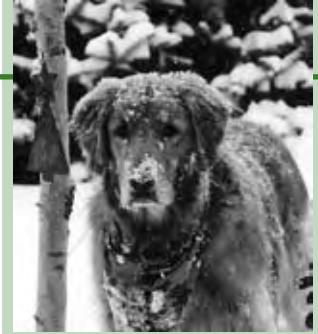
4. It is time to plan! Look at the marks on your checklists. You don't need to know exactly what a plant looks like. Rely on your colors and draw a picture of your garden. Keep in mind the garden location and space.
5. Take your list and your colored plan to your local garden center. Garden centers typically carry only plants that grow well in your area. Ask them for assistance. They are always willing to assist a blooming gardener. Remember, plants grow – so there is no need to purchase anything too large.
6. During the planting, continue to think about your pet. Don't be afraid to talk about him or her while you are creating your garden. After all, it is the reason you are creating your masterpiece. There are potting instructions with each plant you purchase that indicate how big to make the hole and how deeply to place the plant.
7. Just as you cared for your pet, the garden now needs care. Based on the types of plants and garden created, just water and watch it grow. Tend to it with love and remember the meaning of each plant. This will allow you to keep the memory of your pet alive. Enjoy the colors, the fragrance and the textures.
8. Just for fun, consider keeping a journal containing your pet's name and picture, stories, the personality of the pet, your lists and why each plant and color was selected. Take pictures of the garden throughout the years as it grows and place them in the journal. You might even take a before and after picture. The journal will be fun to look at as the years go by.

Planning and planting a memory garden is fun. It allows you to express your feelings and gives you a chance to show your continuing love for your pet. There are many more plants and their meanings from which to choose. A list of books and Internet references has been included. Happy Planting!



Dr. Rushing lives in Springfield, Illinois and shares her life with her husband Randy and two golden retrievers, Poppy and Isabella. She is the Director of the Regional Institute for Community Policing at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Rushing holds a Bachelor of Science in Music Therapy, a Master of Arts in curriculum and evaluation and psychology, and a Doctorate of Curriculum and Instruction.

"Floriography" is the art of assigning meaning to flowers.
 This became popular during the Victorian Era by Queen Victoria of England, 1837-1901, as a means of communicating a message without words.



Use this Checklist to Describe Your Pet

Affectionate	_____	clematis, morning glory, periwinkle, honeysuckle
Beautiful	_____	calla lily, tulip, clematis, gladiolus, hibiscus, jasmine, lily, rose
Charming	_____	gardenia, orchid, zinnia
Cheerful	_____	coreopsis, crocus, jonquil, buttercup
Comfort, Patience	_____	chamomile
Defender	_____	iris
Devoted	_____	Peruvian heliotrope, hosta
Dignified	_____	dahlia, elm, magnolia, palm
Energetic	_____	red salvia
Faithful	_____	hearts' ease, heliotrope, maple, violet, wild pansy, violet
Fastidious	_____	purple lilac
Friendly	_____	acacia, blue periwinkle, forget me not, jasmine, ivy
Fun loving, Playful	_____	hyacinth
Gentle	_____	magnolia, wisteria
Good Natured	_____	mullein, forsythia
Happy Love	_____	bridal rose
Intelligent	_____	Venice sumac, walnut
Jealous	_____	French marigold
Joyful, Delight	_____	caladium
Loyal	_____	violet, bamboo
Patient	_____	ox eye
Protective	_____	eucalyptus
Silly	_____	ockscomb
Shy, Bashfulness	_____	peony
Sweet	_____	honeysuckle, white lily
Sporty, Game loving	_____	foxtail grass

Colors and their Meanings

Red	_____	love, courage
White	_____	purity
Blue	_____	loyalty, affection, patience
Green	_____	generosity, understanding, compassion
Purple	_____	kindness, self-sacrifice, spirituality
Yellow	_____	intellect, humor



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Practitioners, Researchers, and Educators in Flanders, Belgium, Cooperate to Establish New Developments in Animal-Assisted Interventions (AAIs)

By Lieve Meers^{1,2}, Marijke Thierens²,
William Ellery Samuels³, Frank Olof Ödberg¹



In 2004, researchers specializing in research on animal behavior and animal welfare issues at the Laboratory of Ethology at Ghent University, Belgium, became interested in the topic of animal-assisted interventions (AAIs).

Focusing on the animals' roles, positions, and welfare during AAIs, these researchers have conducted several studies in conjunction with colleagues from several countries that addressed different concepts of AAIs programs.

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Practitioners and researchers cooperate to achieve a mutual framework and language for AAIs

Among the first findings of these studies was that AAIs are not one, united discipline as they have often been construed to be, but rather are a heterogeneous collection of disciplines that share certain common characteristics. All of these different disciplines contribute in their own way to the field and help it to grow and to develop.

However, they are borne from different theoretical frameworks, definitions, clinical techniques, assessment methods, etc.; these differences can hamper the ability of practitioners to understand each other, each others' programs, and to exchange information. These differences are not unique to the practical field; they can impede researchers as well. Investigations into one type of AAI may be difficult to generalize to other types. Cross-semimation is further hindered because study parameters and descriptions of the AAI programs assessed – such as the species of animals involved and the techniques used during the AAI sessions – are too infrequently articulated in scientific articles.

To help address this issue, researchers based in the Laboratory of Ethology at Ghent University began developing a unifying theoretical framework for the field of AAI in 2004 that proffers a common terminology that the various types of AAIs could use to communicate and even conceive of their efforts (Samuels et al., 2006; Meers et al., 2007).

Assessing former service dogs during their job as residential dogs

A prime example of the need for such an over-arching framework is exemplified in a study we conducted on the employment of dogs in assisted living facilities in Belgium. These dogs were trained to become service dogs, however at some point (usually late) during their long training, they were deemed to be no longer suited for working with people with challenges. Typically, this decision was made because of medical conditions or personality traits that emerged after the dogs started the training that predisposed them against becoming a service animal.

These animals were introduced into animal-assisted activities (AAAs) as

either residential or visiting dogs in assisted care facilities for the elderly. The typical function of the dogs was to provide companionship and stimulation for the residents. There were no structured activities featuring the dogs at these facilities.

The study consisted of conducting semi-structured interviews with those employees who either worked directly with the dogs or interacted often with them. We also spoke with several of the residents and residents' families about the dogs, the AAAs, and the residents' general experiences at the assisted living facility. The theoretical framework that had been developed guided the tack of the conversations. It also provided a set of terms and concepts that helped standardize the conversations and improve conversations between the practitioners and the researchers.



Cooperation with Hachiko

A main partner in this study was Hachiko (<http://www.hachiko.org>), a Flemish organization specializing in the training of wheelchair and seizure response dogs. They are one of the first organizations in Flanders to employ former service dogs in assisted living programs. In the past five years, Hachiko has trained ten such dogs that are all working in different elderly homes and residential settings throughout Flanders.

Findings of the study

Several interesting insights came out of this study. First, it was quickly apparent that there were many requests by welfare workers and therapists for these former service dogs; as the practitioners learned about these dogs, they were keen to employ them in their own programs. There appeared to be two principal reasons for their requests. First, many organizations like to offer their residents the benefit of an animal's presence as these programs gain favorable attention from the general public. Second, the caretakers and therapists stated that they lacked information to prepare their own AAI animals, which is of course a necessary thing to do in order to be able to start an AAI program. They felt that having been trained as service dogs was much more than sufficient for their employment in their own programs.

The second primary finding of this study was that these service dogs were seen to be very reliable. The practitioners felt this was largely

due to the dogs' strong training. Many practitioners also saw this as a guarantee to prevent bite accidents during the job.

Third, although all of these dogs were highly trained, they were in fact seldom involved in therapeutic sessions or played a part in organized goal-directed activities. In spite of the fact that these dogs knew many commands, their skills were seldom used

during their jobs as residential dogs. It should be noted, however, that several practitioners indicated that if they had better access to specialized information about AAIs they would be interested in involving the dogs in more challenging tasks, such as goal-directed activities. Moreover, all of the respondents were convinced that more could come out of their AAA projects if they only knew how to accomplish this.

Fourth, in all facilities we found that the main reason given to adopt a given dog was whether or not that dog could establish a feeling of "being at home" with the residents.

Fifth, the extent of the evaluations of the effectiveness of the AAAs was simply occasional talks between practitioners and care workers about their impressions of how things were going in the programs. The evidence that was discussed was often only anecdotal. For example, one practitioner said that the dogs seemed more tired at the end of the day and at the end of the week. Of course, this suggests that the condition of the dogs should be monitored more closely, as an intervention between human and animal can only be beneficial for the resident if it is also good for the animal involved.

Among the benefits of the residential dogs observed in this way by the practitioners about changes in the residents were (1) higher general activity levels, (2) more motivation to get out of bed and engage in communal activities, and (3) more social interactions between the residents themselves and between the residents and employees, as the residents often liked to talk about their own animals that they had in the past.

In the palliative facility, the dogs were reported to help the families of the residents deal with the death of their beloved. Anecdotal reports suggest that the dogs often chose to be near the resident during his/her last hours, as if they knew something was happening with the dying resident. Practitioners also indicated that the dogs appeared to help the residents to accept death, or at least to be more relaxed – and even proactive – as death approached.



In the palliative facility, the dogs were reported to help the families of the residents deal with the death of their beloved.

For example, a resident whose last wish was to feel the grass once more under his feet couldn't make it to the grass alone, but could with the extra courage the dog gave him. The dying resident said that the dog's presence gave him strength and power to make his last wish come true.

Overall then, we found these results encouraging, but eye-opening. There was undoubtedly a strong interest in the assisted living facilities for AAA – and even AAI – programs. Practitioners felt the programs helped their residents and the programs enjoyed a general positive regard from all who knew about them. However, the dogs had not been trained to engage in these particular programs and the practitioners admitted they did not know how to best use the dogs' skills. In addition, although the dogs were uniformly treated with care, the practitioners did not know how the programs affected the dogs. In a sense, the practitioners were benevolently uninformed about the dogs' welfare and needs. The practitioners misunderstood the use and limits of the dogs' training as well. The practitioners were keenly interested in the dogs' welfare, however, and often lamented that they had no help from the animal welfare community in this respect. Indeed, we strongly agree that the field of AAI could benefit from the input of animal handlers – who are capable of selecting and preparing animals before AAI programs – and of humane educators – who can help guide and monitor the programs.

Cooperation between practitioners, researchers and educators

Impelled by this need to improve communication and work more closely together, researchers, practitioners, and educators gathered into a committee to develop a post-graduate educational program in Belgium to train animal handlers for AAI programs. In September, 2007, the first group of students started at the University College Ghent (<http://biot.hogent.be/studeren/opleidingen/postgraduaattrainingenbegeleidingvandierenindehulpverlening.cfm>) for a new, two-year, postgraduate AAI program. The program consists of nine modules dealing with topics such as theoretical and applied ethology, training, animal selection techniques, AAI methods, and practical skills. In the future, we expect to involve the course's students in an even wider range of AAI programs and to help practitioners modify their programs so that they may be conducted in more diverse, challenging, and interesting places that are still safe for the animals involved. Assessment of these new programs will be conducted in the following years and we are sure that much more interesting developments will start from these studies.

Contact

If you would like more information about these studies please contact one of the following people.

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Breaking the Chain Contest Winners

By Debra White

Breaking the Chain, or why chaining dogs is inhumane, is the theme of an annual art and storytelling contest that I began in 2005.

Why? Besides the cruelty involved in chaining dogs outside 24 hours a day, seven days a week, dogs without human companionship can become vicious. According to Dogs Deserve Better, a national advocacy group, around 20 children are killed each year by chained dogs. The chain can often become embedded in the dog's neck causing pain and infection. Chained dogs suffer from exposure to weather extremes. Stuck on chains, dogs have no way of protecting themselves from predators that inhabit certain parts of the country.

To enter, I asked children to read a short story that I wrote and then either write or draw their own conclusion. The story involved a feisty feline named Harriet who moved next door to a chained dog.

Here are excerpts from this year's winning entries in the childrens' own words.

First Place:

"One flaming hot summer morning, with the sun beating down on Joey's face, a little disappointed cat slipped out of the basement and stepped on to the rocks where Joey was lying in his wood home just under the roof. The yard where Joey was had never been taken care of so when Harriet was dropping her feet across the ground, slipped and fell on a great big thorn. Even when she was hurt she couldn't let Joey down just because she hurt her paw. When she reached him he only had enough breath to say "thanks." Just as Harriet laid down beside Joey Harriet heard a small voice calling from the basement. "Harriet, Harriet," it said. She quickly stood from the ground and ran from sight, as Joey's heart fell from his stomach into his weak feet. When Harriet returned to her owner she made all kinds of funny movements and sounds. Her mom thought she was having a seizure. She knew she

couldn't help him now. As Joey tried to stand he couldn't so he stopped trying. He plopped down on his belly and crumpled himself up in the corner and fell asleep on the cold wood floor. He turned over and felt a stick thorn into his body. As winter came snow refilled his water bowl. He lifted his head just in time to see the rats gather by his water bowl and drink all that was left. His head dropped to the floor once again. One day was finally his last. As the sun set and the moon rose, he fell asleep. The next morning he did not wake. He died with the chain still attached to his neck. Harriet always regretted leaving him that day. Even now she could feel his pain and suffer. We shall always remember Joey now and forever.

Second Place:

EXCERPT:

"Look under the bike over there said Joey then got the axe. Are you sure about using an axe? Joey felt

super happy Harriet helped him. Then Harriet told his owner than if they could keep the dog Harriet and Joey became best friends..Harriet told her owners all the horrible stuff they did to him like never give him food and tie him up with chains and never play with him. So the nice Candice (Harriet's owner) called the police and the mean owners went to court and jail."

Third Place:

EXCERPT:

"Harriet went to go inside her house waited for her owner ... Harriet said meow. Her owner went to the gate and saw that the dog was thirsty. So she got a bowl of water for the poor dog. Then she saw the chain so she went back to the house. She got a hammer ... and unchained the dog. Then the dog was very happy and they became friends."



National Town Meeting and Summit To Strategize National, Local Link Efforts

By Phil Arkow



STRATEGIZING THE LINK *National Town Meeting*

In the past 20 years, many coalitions have been formed, many educational materials have been published, many conferences have been held, and many laws have been passed addressing the links between animal abuse and other forms of family violence. How well are we succeeding? What have we learned? More importantly, what best practices can be replicated? How can we sustain and grow this work?

These are just a few of the issues that will be addressed at “Strategizing the Link”, a historic National Town Meeting on June 8-9, to be followed on June 10 with a national invitational summit, in scenic Portland, ME.

In New England’s time-honored tradition of community empowerment, the National Town Meeting will give participants opportunities to share their successes and challenges with national leaders. This input will help prioritize national, state, and local research, legislative and programmatic initiatives in an attempt to advance public policy and sustain coalitions.

The meetings will bring together the growing cadre of community coalitions and national organizations working in Link activities to set a national agenda, to identify the field’s needs, to find ways to strengthen and sustain these coalitions, and to develop collaborative models that will enable organizations to work together strategically.

By creating a network of local groups and national organizations, we hope to strategize national priorities and federal and state legislative initiatives, to build capacity and develop sustainability, and to foster an atmosphere of collaboration that addresses family violence prevention more effectively.

Speakers and facilitators will include Latham’s Phil Arkow, American Humane’s Allie Phillips, the ASPCA’s Dr. Randall Lockwood and Dr. Lila Miller, Dr. Frank R. Ascione of Utah State University, Dr. Ken Shapiro of the Animals & Society Institute, the MSPCA’s Dr. Gary Patronek, Dr. Barbara Boat of the University of Cincinnati, and NACA’s Mark Kumpf.

Dozens of national leaders in child protection, domestic violence, veterinary medicine, and the legal profession have been invited to participate.

The events are co-sponsored by American Humane, the Kenneth A. Scott Charitable Trust and Maine’s Linkage Project. The Latham Foundation is also providing support.

People who are working in, or trying to establish, Link research, programs, and coalitions are urged to attend this unique opportunity to share knowledge and provide input to a national think-tank. To register for the National Town Meeting, which will be held on Maine’s scenic seacoast in June, visit www.americanhumane.org or www.LinkageProject.org or call (207) 622-5330.





Media Reviews and Announcements

Hanni and Beth: Safe and Sound

By Beth Finke

Reviewed by Susan Helmink

Three cheers for *Hanni and Beth: Safe & Sound!* This delightful children's book (for ages 4-10) is both a joy to read and a fantastic teaching tool. Readers join Seeing Eye dog, Hanni, in her daily life with Beth Finke, the book's author. Through Beth's daily activities, we learn the many ways that Hanni keeps Beth safe and the importance of each in the other's life.

Children will enjoy learning about Hanni's important job, and this knowledge will help children understand why it is important not to distract or disturb working dogs. The illustrations bring each scene to life with accurate depictions of Beth and Hanni working together.

There are other important lessons children can take from 'Safe & Sound'. One is the importance of teamwork and being reliable for the sake of others. Beth depends on Hanni to keep her safe and Hanni depends on Beth for direction and care. Together they exemplify a loving and mutually beneficial relationship.

'Safe & Sound' also illustrates that a disability does not have to keep one from doing the things he/she loves. Readers learn that Beth works, travels, and enjoys many of the same activities that sighted people enjoy such as baking and going to baseball games.



Hanni and Beth: Safe & Sound
by Beth Finke with illustrations
by Anthony Alex LeTourneau
(ISBN 978-0-9792918-1-4)

2007 Winner!

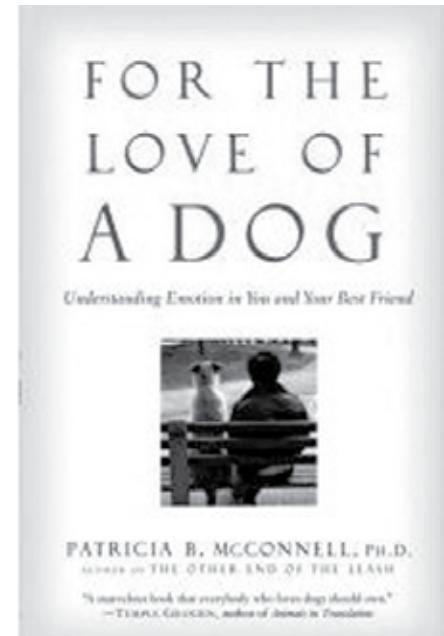
ASPCA Henry Bergh
Children's Book
Award Non-Fiction
Companion Animals
Category

Beth's realistic depiction exemplifies Hanni's strengths without presenting her as an infallible superhero. After the main story, several pages give an inside look into Hanni's journey from puppyhood to Seeing Eye dog and Beth's journey adapting to blindness.

When Hanni and Beth were first training together, Hanni became distracted and Beth hit her head on a tree limb. This example reinforces to children that mistakes happen but we can learn from them and go on to great things.

What may appear to be a heartwarming story about a Seeing Eye dog on the surface offers so much more. 'Safe & Sound' is a wonderful book for children on many levels.

Safe & Sound is available in Braille from Seedlings Braille Books for Children which receives a portion of the proceeds from the printed book's sales courtesy of Blue Marlin Publications.



For the Love of a Dog

by Patricia McConnell PhD

Reviewed by Joan Orr M.Sc.

For the Love of a Dog by Patricia McConnell is a beautifully written blend of science and anecdote, certain

to please anyone who loves dogs, wonders about dogs, studies dogs or works with dogs. This should be required reading for all dog owners and trainers. Dr. McConnell opens up her own soul with hilarious, heart wrenching and always fascinating stories about her own dogs and dogs she has known through her behaviour consulting practice. The book is rife with scientific references and footnotes, but these are presented in such a way as to be accessible to the average reader and give a sense of authority to support the author's quest for the truth about the nature of canine emotions.

The book takes us through the range of canine emotions from fear to anger to happiness to love. It explains the role of neurotransmitters, hormones, neurophysiology and the latest neuroscience research into emotion in both dogs and humans.

The descriptions of dog body language and the photos are just excellent and give information that is essential for all dog owners and particularly parents. For example, under a photo of a dog showing what Doggone Safe refers to as a "half moon" eye, the caption reads: "In a perfect illustration of 'whale eye,' this dog has turned his nose away from the visitor, but he can't take his eyes off her. The combination of the rounded eye, 'whale eye,' and a closed mouth is like a blinking neon sign that says, 'Don't pet me!'"

For the Love of a Dog explores the complex relationship between us and our dogs, shedding light on how dogs think and feel and why they behave as they do. Dr. McConnell draws a clear line between conjecture about the emotions of dogs and conclusions based on the weight of scientific evidence. She encourages us to understand that "they are dogs, and that they don't come speaking English" and that "[w]e have to find a balance here, one that acknowl-

edges that dogs are different from us and at the same time celebrate what we share with them". "What we share, without question, is a rich emotional life. Emotions like fear and happiness and love simmer within us, sometimes bubbling to the surface, always linking us together. The glass of our shared experience may be half empty, but that means that it's half full. How lucky we are that it's a big glass, and that, most of the time, the liquid within it is sweet and good."

This book reads like a novel, not a text book or a user's guide, and I was sorry when it ended. So get this book and the Kleenex and curl up with your best friend for a very enjoyable,

emotional, satisfying and educational read.

Reviewer Joan Orr is the producer of the award-winning Clicker Puppy DVD, co-creator of the award-winning Doggone Crazy! board game (www.doggonecrazy.ca), co-author of the book Getting Started, Clicking with Your Rabbit (www.clickerbunny.com) a member of the Karen Pryor Clickertraining Clicker Expo faculty and a member of the Advisory Board to the Karen Pryor Academy for Dog Training and Behavior. She is also the co-founder of TAGteach International, a company dedicated to the application of marker-based positive reinforcement teaching with humans.



Afternoons with Puppy is a heart-warming account of dynamic relationships and outcomes involving a therapist, his therapy animals, and patients over the course of almost twenty years. It is a narrative of Dr. Fine's experiences and the growing respect for the power of animals' effect on his patients and himself.

All of the inspirational stories in this book are about recovery and healing, which is a common theme in human existence. Dr. Fine reminds us

that healing is rarely, if ever, accomplished in isolation.

Actress/author Betty White describes *Afternoons with Puppy* as "A lovely read and another example of the many roles dogs take on in life."

Dean Koontz, *New York Times* best selling author, says, "Dr. Fine uses the human-animal bond to bring the patient into the fullness of a purpose-filled life."

Author Aubrey H. Fine is a licensed psychologist and professor at California State Polytechnic University. He is an internationally renowned expert on Animal Assisted Therapy (AAT) and the editor of the classic book on the subject, *The Handbook on Animal Assisted Therapy*.

Cynthia J. Eisen teaches literature at Nazareth College in Rochester, New York. As a parent of a child with learning disabilities, she brings a first-hand knowledge of the benefits of animal-assisted therapy.

ISBN 978-1-55753-4705, \$24.95
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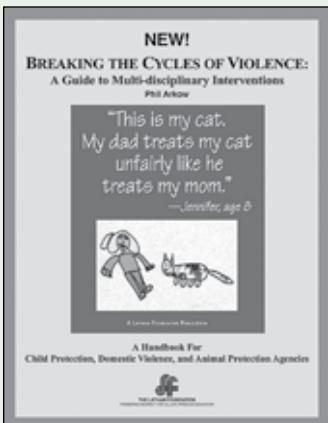
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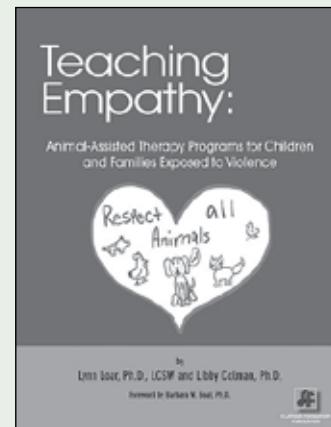
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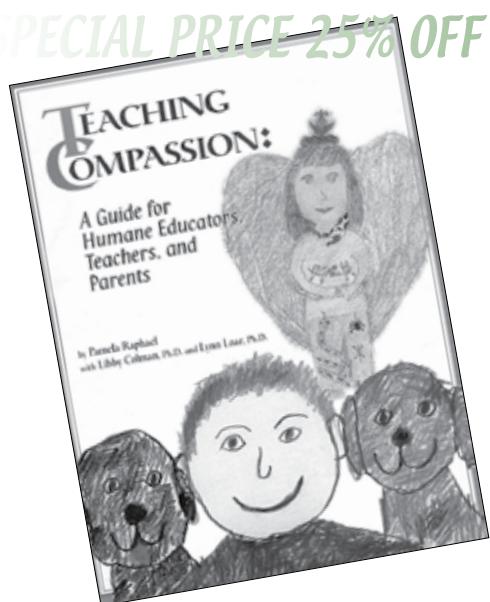
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The meanings of animals in the hearts of children as revealed through artwork and poetry.

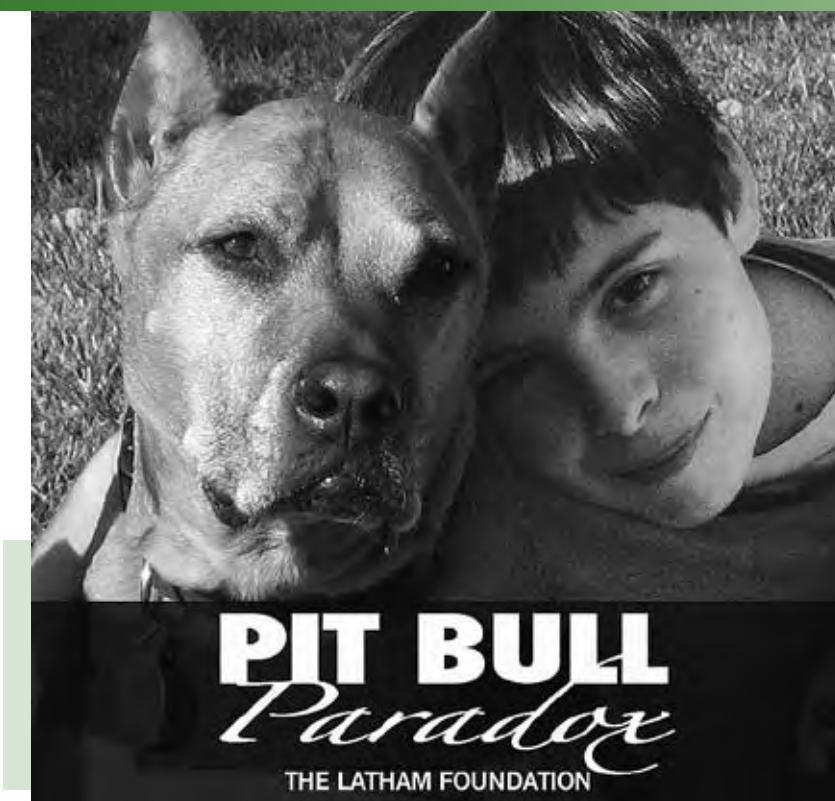
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A new DVD for potential Pit Bull adopters, new owners, shelters and rescue groups

Produced by the Latham Foundation for the Promotion of Humane Education

Written and Directed by Tula Asselanis

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"Mindfulness and heart! I've been waiting for a video like this ... it will be a great tool to help educate potential adopters."

Elana Rose Blum, Pasadena Humane Society and SPCA

It's a tragic sign of our times that in some communities shelters euthanize all Pit Bulls and in others many who would make wonderful additions to a home and family wait in vain for adoption.

Pit Bull Paradox puts the breed in historical and contemporary perspective and shows Pit Bulls in a variety of scenarios. It also examines some of the complications that people who choose to share their lives with a Pit Bull may encounter such as fear, prejudice, misunderstanding, and regulations affecting housing, insurance, and licensing.

The *Pit Bull Paradox* offers sound advice from breed experts for successful, rewarding adoptions. It emphasizes the need to consider one's lifestyle and personality, and the dog's need for daily, hard exercise, and thoughtful, consistent training and management.

True, Pit Bulls are not for everyone. Yet as Katie Dinneen of the Peninsula Humane Society reminds us in the film, "There are far more Pit Bulls living happily in people's homes as average companion animals than most people ever suspect."

Latham applauds this fact and honors the many people and organizations who work to help Pit Bulls – and *all* dogs – find loving homes. Hopefully, *Pit Bull Paradox* will contribute to this effort.

The DVD package includes a list of additional resources that purchasers can copy and distribute.

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To purchase, email orders@Latham.org or visit www.Latham.org.

Running time 29 minutes plus a separate, 14-minute "short"

"Pit Bulls are just dogs. Four legs, two eyes, one heart. Aggressiveness toward humans, severe shyness, and fearfulness are not characteristic of Pit Bulls and are undesirable in any dog."

Animal Farm Foundation

The *Pit Bull Paradox* is consistent with the Latham Foundation's mission to promote the benefits of the human-companion animal bond, encourage responsible ownership, and promote respect for all life through education.

The Latham Foundation for the Promotion of Humane Education • www.Latham.org
1826 Clement Avenue Alameda, CA 94501 • Phone 510-521-0920 • Fax 510-521-9861

Happy Spring!

*Plant a
Memory Garden.
See pages 12-13*



Dr. Patricia S. Rushing



The Latham Foundation

PROMOTING RESPECT FOR ALL LIFE THROUGH EDUCATION

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