



# Humanely Speaking

Bangor Humane Society Newsletter

## Summer 2015

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Too Much of a Cute Thing

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### Our Mission

The Bangor Humane Society champions the humane treatment and adoption of companion animals, provides quality care for homeless pets, and promotes animal welfare through education and advocacy.

Bangor Humane Society  
693 Mt. Hope Ave.  
Bangor, ME 04401  
207.942.8902  
[www.bangorhumane.org](http://www.bangorhumane.org)

 Visit us on Facebook!  
[www.facebook.com/BangorHumane](http://www.facebook.com/BangorHumane)



BHS is proud to feed our pets Hill's Science Diet food!



## Too Much of a Cute Thing

*Coping with Kitten Season in a Shelter*

By: Stacey R. Coventry



When spring arrives and people start talking about “kitten season,” for many it conjures images of adorable, fluffy kittens romping around in the sunshine.

But, for animal shelters and rescue groups across the nation, it means that an estimated 20 million new felines will be born during the spring and summer months, overwhelming shelter resources throughout the season.

Kitten Season is the time of year when kitten births proliferate as a result of unaltered cats, often producing hundreds of unwanted litters that end up in local shelters starting in early spring, peaking mid-summer, and ending in late fall.

### Kitten Season Facts

Female kittens can become pregnant as

young as five months old and can go into heat every two to three weeks.

Unaltered cats are driven by their hormones to reproduce. Even indoor cats, if unaltered, may sneak outside in search of a mate. Mating, even once, can start a domino effect resulting in dozens, even hundreds or thousands, of unwanted felines. These litters end up abandoned outdoors in people’s backyards or on the side of city streets, typically ending up in a nearby animal shelter.

### The Truth about Kitten Care

While healthy, adoptable kittens are easy to place, caring for sick, neonate babies (2–3 weeks old) is a challenge for shelter staff also trying to care for dozens of other adult animals at the same time.

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## From the Director



The arrival of another kitten season is a good opportunity for us to take pause and emphasize the importance of spay/neuter initiatives both in our own communities and statewide.

While we work hard year round to promote and raise awareness about our spay/neuter programs and are committed to spaying/neutering every adoptable pet, the arrival of hundreds of kittens each summer reminds us that we can never become too relaxed or passive in regards to our spay/neuter approach. We must continue to move forward with our proactive strategy to prevent unwanted births in order to continue saving lives.

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We are proud that the Bangor Humane Society has become a leader in our community. Our spay/neuter fund to help low income individuals is consistent, sustainable and effective. Last year, we distributed over 900 vouchers across 200 communities. Our annual intake of animals has decreased significantly over the last several years—from nearly 5,000 homeless animals annually to just over 3,000. We attribute this reduction to both our diligent spay/neuter efforts and our creative, robust adoption programs.

Recently, statewide spay/neuter programs have been threatened by our current state government, in which the proposed budget eliminated the pet food surcharge. This surcharge provides significant funding (\$100,000 annually) to the Help Fix ME program – a spay/neuter program, primarily for cats, that makes it possible for low-income families to receive these essential services for their pets. In 2014 alone, that program fixed nearly 3,000 cats with the pet food surcharge funding paying for about half of those surgeries. Had those 1,500 cats not been fixed, the State would have seen an increase of 18,000 more homeless cats in just one year.


The pet overpopulation problem is nowhere near resolved. Maine has made great strides in addressing the problem of pet over-population and has become a leader in the nation. Doing away with the pet food surcharge would be a huge step backwards.

Also, the surcharge elimination would intensify the financial burden on local municipalities, as shelters would be forced to increase their contract fees to towns because of increased shelter intake, which overwhelms shelter resources.

We must continue to be vigilant, both now and in the years to come, to urge our legislators to keep this critical legislation intact and maintain state funding to statewide spay/neuter efforts. We must never take these programs for granted.

While continuing these efforts helps reduce our overall shelter intake of unwanted litters, we still have thousands of lives that need us every year. We are seeing an increase in our shelter residents that have a variety of unique medical or behavioral needs, requiring more shelter resources. We are committed to helping each shelter guest get the second chance they deserve. We continue to expand our network of resources, create new adoption programs for special residents (i.e. Barn Buddies and Feline Leukemia cats), and partner with shelters across and out of state to help more homeless animals find new homes. But, it takes a village. We need *you*.

Whether helping with local spay/neuter efforts or making a donation to help us further our mission, your support makes a difference!

Thank you,  




## Hours of Operation

Monday — Friday: 12:00 p.m.– 6:00 p.m.  
 Saturday 10:00 a.m.– 6:00 p.m.

## Board of Directors

Emily McIntosh, President  
 Amy Faircloth, Vice-President  
 Buddy Angst, Treasurer  
 Lani Naihe, Secretary  
 David Cloutier, DVM  
 Shirar Patterson  
 Bob Williams  
 Renee Ordway  
 John Kenney  
 Matt Nye  
 Jeff Russell  
 Laurie Qualey

## Our Staff

*Executive Director*  
 Suzan Bell

*Shelter Operations Manager*  
 Chris Young

*Director of Development & Public Relations*  
 Stacey R. Coventry

*Office Manager & Bookkeeper*  
 Deborah Hawkins

*Adoption Counselors*  
 Kristin, Sarah, Alicia, Katelyn, Bethany,  
 Keren, Krysta, Biz, Abby

*Animal Technicians*  
 Mariah, Brittney, Cody, Sam, Nikki,  
 D'Anna, Nicole,

*Veterinary Technician*  
 Allen Batchelder, LVT

*Foster Care Coordinators*  
 Mariah Cassidy and Brittney Littlefield

*Volunteer Coordinator*  
 Brittney Littlefield

# Kids Give Back!

By: Stacey R. Coventry

**D**uring the 2014 holiday season, board member and BHS volunteer, Laurie Qualey launched her first Kids Give Back Event. The program is an initiative she developed for school-aged children in order to expose youth to the idea of giving back and to let them experience what goes on at an animal shelter.



*A young participant wears a pair of whiskers to help inspire his Kids Give Back project!*

Qualey created the program as a form of public outreach and education for promoting the Bangor Humane Society as an organization that plays a larger role in the community than simply caring for homeless animals.

To date, she has successfully hosted three Saturday Kids Give Back Events at BHS. The youth workshop is two-hours long with space availability for about a dozen kids.

The program is free, but participants are asked to bring something to donate from the shelter's wish list. During the workshop, the children each choose a cat or dog that is

available for adoption to sponsor by creating signs that are attached to the kennels. Additionally, the children see how BHS operates, learn the reasons why an animal may end up at the shelter, and discover how people can make difference by adopting or becoming a shelter volunteer.

The program also engages the kids by having them make enrichment activities for the shelter animals ranging from frozen dog treats to cat toys.



*Laurie Qualey pictured with the February Kids Give Back! Participants.*

“Most of the animals the kids have made signs for have been adopted and all the adopters have requested to take the special handmade poster home with them,” said Qualey.

Collecting items for the shelter and creating things for the shelter pets serves a large purpose as well, according to Qualey.

“It promotes empathy, creates a sense of civic responsibility and community, gives children a creative outlet to cooperate and work together to create their kennel signs and enrichment activities, and empowers them to know they can do something good and feel good about doing it,” says Qualey.

So far the program has enrolled over 32 children and has a goal to host an event every other month during the fall to spring season.

“We appreciate the initiative that Laurie has taken to create an outreach program that not only helps engage our youngest supporters and their families in animal sheltering, but also helps foster a philanthropic mindset,” says Suzan Bell, Executive Director.

*Continued on page 8*



*Local youth create special kennel signs during a recent Kids Give Back event!*

**To support Kids Give Back! with a donation, the program currently needs:**

- **Dog and Cat magazines/calendars**
- **Art supplies: stickers, googly eyes, markers, construction paper, and anything to decorate with and help make the projects more creative**
- **Recycle old craft supplies or donate new**



## Ask the Vet

**Q:** *Are flea/tick preventatives effective and necessary for the health of my pet?*

**A:** Flea and tick prevention is very important for our feline and canine companions. It is much easier to prevent a flea infestation from occurring than to get rid of one. Even animals that spend most of their time indoors can be affected by fleas, so it is important to consider it for all your pets.

Tick prevention is also crucial because they can cause a serious health threat to both humans and our pets. There are both topical (liquids and collars) and oral tick preventatives to talk to your veterinarian about. It is also recommended to test dogs yearly for heartworm disease and tick borne diseases.

It is becoming more common each year to have dogs that are exposed to Lyme Disease, but very few dogs that are exposed to Lyme ever develop clinical signs.

Signs to watch for that might indicate your dog is sick with Lyme Disease are: lethargy, fever, loss of appetite and extremely painful joints. The treatment for Lyme Disease includes antibiotics and pain medication. Dogs usually start feeling better in a few days after treatment begins.

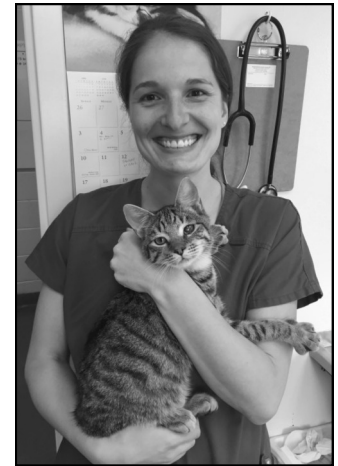
**Q:** *How can I keep my pet happy, safe and healthy this summer season?*

**A:** Summertime is so much fun because we can be outdoors and active with our four-legged family members, but it is important to watch for signs of overheating or heat-stroke. It is important to avoid any forced exercise on very hot days. Since dogs love doing fun things with their favorite humans they might not stop even though they aren't feeling well.

Watch for signs of reluctance to continue exercising, excessive panting, disorientation, vomiting and diarrhea. Summertime heat can be especially dangerous for obese animals and breeds of dogs and cats with shorter faces. You can use cool (not cold) water, to help your pet cool down. But it is important to seek help from your veterinarian as soon as you can.

Watch out for hot pavement and asphalt as well and try to walk your pet in the grass if possible. Be sure to always have fresh water and shade available for dogs and cats in the summer heat.

And, most importantly, remember not to leave your pet in the car when it is hot and sunny outside!



**Dr. Laura Tardiff, DVM**  
Veazie Veterinary Clinic

## Paws for Thought

The inside temperature of a car can reach over 100 degrees in less than an hour on a 70 degree day, posing dangerous, even fatal, health risks to your pet.

## Shelter Highlights & Upcoming Events



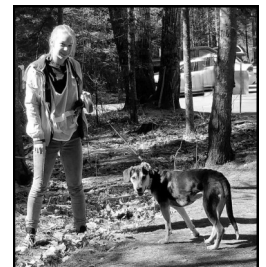
On March 24<sup>th</sup>, the Masonic Charitable Foundation presented BHS with a \$2,000 Community Grant Award! Thank you to everyone who voted!



During the week of April 13<sup>th</sup>, we celebrated our amazing volunteers during Volunteer Appreciation Week. Thank you to all our volunteers who work so hard everyday to help our staff and animals!!



In March, Matthew Gross was invited to the Maine State House to accept an award for his charitable commitment to BHS. And, in April he appeared on the Nite Show with Danny Cashman to promote his "Ride for the Wet Nose." Way to go Matt!



Thank you to Epic Sports who hosted a 5K "Rabbit Run" at Bangor City Forest on May 2<sup>nd</sup>, raising \$1,200 for our shelter pets!



In April, BHS staff had the opportunity to travel to NH to attend the 2015 New England Federation of Humane Societies conference.

**Bangor Savings Bank**

BHS is the recipient of a \$1,000 grant award from Bangor Savings as a 2015 Community Matters More write-in. Thank you to everyone who voted!

### SAVE THE DATES!

\*Check our website and Facebook for details on all events\*

- Blackstream Custom Cycles and 4Points BBQ & Blues House Charity Motorcycle Ride: **July 18<sup>th</sup>**
- Ride for the Wet Nose: **TBD– End of August**
- Electronics End E-Waste Fundraiser: **August 29<sup>th</sup>**
- **Paws on Parade: October 3<sup>rd</sup>**

**Paws on Parade**

Your Donor Dollars Matter...

## Fostered Back to Life

By: Stacey R. Coventry

On March 16<sup>th</sup>, a local animal control officer brought a beautiful nine-month-old female tri-tiger to the Bangor Humane Society after finding her in a snowbank. Staff named her Sonya Blade.

She was severely dehydrated and emaciated, but otherwise seemed relatively healthy. Staff immediately started her on IV fluids and created a special feeding plan to help her gain weight. Her prognosis was positive.

But, within her first 48 hours at BHS, her health began to deteriorate quickly and her vitals crashed. Staff were not sure what was causing the sudden and drastic change in her condition, but they didn't hesitate. They rushed her immediately to one of our local veterinarian partners who began running a variety of tests on her.

Blood tests and radiographs showed that she suffered from a condition called pyometra, an infection of her uterus.

The veterinarians performed an emergency spay and kept a close eye on her recovery for the next several days. Once the veterinarians determined she was no longer in critical condition, they allowed her to return to the care of BHS staff, who then placed her in foster care.

Sonya Blade remained in foster care for several weeks as she was nurtured back to health. She made a full recovery from her emergency surgery, gained a healthy weight,

and no longer suffered from dehydration.

She was officially placed for adoption at the end of April. The beautiful, affectionate and social feline was adopted within 24 hours.

After spending a month in the care of both a veterinary clinic and BHS foster home, Sonya Blade finally received the second chance she deserved. She is now happily settling into her new home! ■



*Sonya Blade happy, healthy and ready for adoption!*

### From Purrs to Tail Wags

Spring and summer time at BHS means one thing— we are expecting!! Hundreds of homeless kittens that is! In order to take care of all these new arrivals, we deplete our resources quickly. We are in constant need of donations in order to assist our staff and foster families as they care for these furry residents. You can help us by making a donation from our **Kitten Wish List**:

- \* Canned kitten food— any brand or flavor
- \* Canned cat food-pate style



- \* KMR (kitten milk replacement)
- \* Kitten nursing bottles
- \* Bedding for cat kennels-fleece/flannel preferred
- \* Machine washable cat beds
- \* Cat toys of all kinds
- \* Shoeboxes and similar sized cat hideaways
- \* John's Baby Shampoo— Classic formula
- \* Unscented/hypoallergenic baby wipes
- \* Hill's Science Diet Kitten Healthy Development dry food
- \* Scoopable cat litter for foster care

*All Wish List items can be found at Petsmart, Petco, Tractor Supply, Walmart, Target and online at Amazon.com*

Although our largest need this time of year is for our kitten population, we always have an ongoing need for blankets, towels and sheets for dog kennels, soft dog treats, washable dog beds, dog toys (rope, rubber, hard chews and stuffies), canned pumpkin, and Alpo wet dog food.

We thank you in advance for supporting our mission with your generous donation!

Continued from page 1

These vulnerable animals, often orphaned, sick and too young to be placed in a home, overwhelm shelter resources exhausting space, time, and supplies.

Neonate kittens need to be bottle fed every couple hours and observed regularly as their health can deteriorate rapidly. Shelter stress only compounds the challenges associated with caring for this vulnerable population.

Typically, BHS staff look for foster homes to place the influx of neonate babies, pregnant or nursing moms, or underage and orphaned babies to nurture them until they are older and healthy enough to be placed for adoption. Fostering helps kittens become socialized, reduces illness and the spread of disease to healthy cats in the shelter, provides mother cats with a stress-free environment to give birth and care for their babies, and is better for the overall health and well-being of the animals.

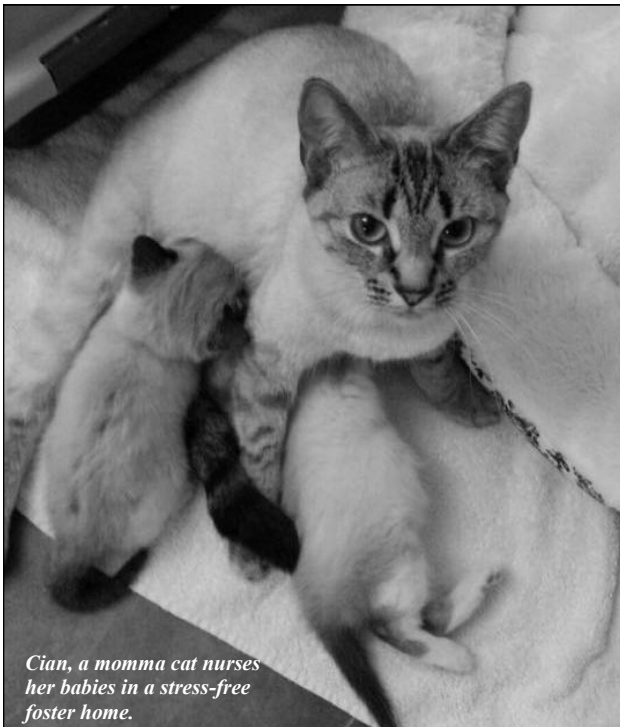


*Photo courtesy of Karen Littlefield*

## How You Can Help

1. **Spay and neuter!** Annually, BHS takes in nearly 1,000 kittens during kitten season and, on average, places nearly 300 underage babies in the agency foster program. The number one thing you can do to help reduce the burden of pet overpopulation on shelters is to spay/neuter your own pets.

Since female cats can become pregnant as young as five months of age, it is important to get them spayed as early as possible. If you have trouble affording the surgery, there are a variety of programs that can help, including: Help Fix ME, the Community Spay/Neuter Program, and the BHS low-income voucher program. Visit our website for more information on these programs and to see if you qualify for one of them.



*Cian, a momma cat nurses her babies in a stress-free foster home.*

2. **Help your local shelter.** Donate supplies (see our website or our Wish List on page 5 for specific items), money, or your time, especially during kitten season. Contact us to learn the many different ways you can help us save more lives!
3. **Care for homeless cats in your area.** If you find a litter of kittens, keep an eye on them for 24 hours before taking them into your home or bringing them to your local shelter. Their best chance for survival is staying with their mother and receiving her milk. Moms often leave their young ones alone during the day to hunt and look for food, but usually return. If you don't know what to do call your local Animal Control officer.

If you have a litter of kittens that you cannot keep, if possible, keep them with their mother and provide them with food and shelter until they are 6-8 weeks old, before bringing them to a shelter.

4. **Become a foster parent.** If you think you have the time and space in your home to provide a mother cat and her babies with the TLC they need to thrive, then contact BHS to learn more





*Harper, a sweet German Shepherd, helps her human, Kara, foster BHS kittens who need extra TLC before adoption. Harper's favorite part of her fostering job is snuggling orphaned kittens.*

about becoming a BHS foster parent. We provide all foster parents with training, supplies, veterinary care and support to succeed in your fostering role. Anyone can become a foster parent...check out our Facebook page to learn more about our special four-legged foster parent, Harper, a German Shepherd who loves caring for orphaned kittens.

5. **Host an adoption event.** If you are affiliated with a local business or organization that you think would be a great host for an offsite adoption event, contact us to learn how you can become a Cats on Tour partner.
6. **Adopt a Cat.** If you are looking to add a new pet to your home or have the time, resources and space to add another furry addition to your family, adopt a

shelter pet. Visit our website to view our list of pets looking for a new home. All of our pets are vaccinated, spayed/neutered, and behavior evaluated. Adopting a shelter pet not only gives a wonderful homeless pet a second chance, but helps us save more lives and reduces the pet overpopulation problem.

7. **Become an adoption ambassador.** If you aren't able to adopt, donate or become a foster parent, consider hosting a donation drive at your school, office, or in your neighborhood to collect shelter supplies. And, don't forget to encourage your friends, family members, and co-workers to adopt a homeless pet! ■



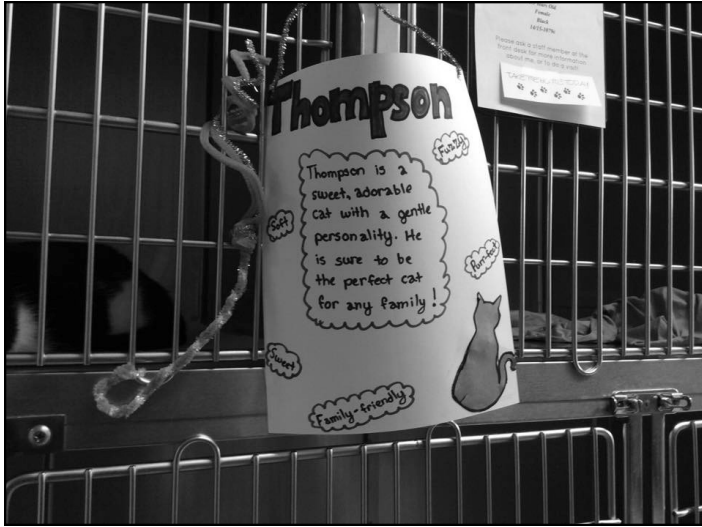
*Underage neonate kittens receive lots of TLC in a BHS foster home!*

Continued from "Kids Give Back!" on page 3

The program has been well received by the local community, as every event has been filled to capacity. And all the children and families have shared wonderful feedback about the program.

"My favorite activity was making posters for the animals because I knew that it would help them," noted one youth participant.

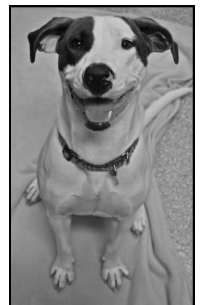
For more information on the Kids Gives Back program and details about the next event, call us at 942-8902. ■



One of the kennel signs created by a Kids Give Back participant to help BHS resident, Thompson, find a new family.

## Our Guiding Principles

- **Treat** all animals and people with respect, dignity and integrity.
- **Work** diligently to end companion animal overpopulation by increasing awareness of spay and neuter programs.
- **Promote adoption** of physically and mentally healthy companion animals.
- **Educate and train caretakers** to develop fulfilling and lifelong relationships with their companion animals.
- **Serve as responsible stewards** of our resources.
- **Hold ourselves to the highest standards** of safety, care and cleanliness.
- **Raise public awareness** with regard to the humane treatment of all animals.
- **Use euthanasia** only as a last humane option when in the best interest of an animal.



Emma thanks you for your support!