

THE HUMANITARIAN

SASKATCHEWAN SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS

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MEMBERSHIP MATTERS

The Saskatchewan SPCA would like to thank our members. To those that have chosen to support the Society by becoming a member, we extend our heartfelt gratitude to you. Without your continued support, the Saskatchewan SPCA would not be able to carry out the important work we do.

If you are interested in becoming a member of the Saskatchewan SPCA, visit our website at www.sspsca.ca to learn more about the categories and options available.

As a member, you will receive *The Humanitarian* newsletter, you can make your voice heard as an eligible voter at the Saskatchewan SPCA annual general meeting, and have the chance to serve as a member of the board of directors. And best of all, you get the satisfaction of being part of a larger community working to improve the lives of animals and humans alike. Become a member today.



BOARD OF DIRECTORS UPDATE

At the Saskatchewan SPCA Annual General Meeting on September 23, the Society said farewell to retiring board member Calvin Nickel. Calvin's contributions at board meetings will be missed, but we look forward to seeing him remain involved with the Society in different ways.

New additions to the board include Dr. Anne Allen and Chris Brueckner. The board also welcomes the return of Dr. Sandra Neumann, Margaret Northcote, Carol Thomson, Ken Krause, and Jack MacKay.

Our thanks to new and returning board members for their unwavering support.



INTEGRATING THERAPY DOGS INTO SASKATCHEWAN'S COORDINATED TRAUMA RESPONSE: ESSENTIAL ACTIONS

Colleen Anne Dell, PhD, Crystal Petryk, MSW, Darlene Chalmers, PhD, Leanne Sillers, BSW

The following was presented at the 2018 Saskatchewan SPCA Caring for Those Who Care conference

Therapy dogs are gaining attention as their roles expand in our communities, from visiting in personal care homes to working with mental health therapists in counselling sessions. This should not be surprising, given that the research literature shows the human animal bond can enhance the quality of human health. The dogs are taking pleasure from it too.

Therapy dogs were part of the response to the fatal Humboldt Broncos bus crash in Saskatchewan in early 2018. Alongside their handlers, therapy dogs visited the Royal University Hospital (RUH) Emergency Department, Intensive Care Unit and Neurological Rehabilitation, the Humboldt schools, and the Humboldt community memorial, among other sites.

Humboldt Broncos president at the time, Kevin Garinger, and other community leaders publically shared how love and support were needed during the tragic and challenging time. The offering of love, comfort and support are common features of therapy dog programs across the country.

The St. John Ambulance (StJA) and Saskatchewan Health Authority (Saskatoon) Mental Health and Addiction Services (MHAS) therapy dog programs assisted with responding to the crisis. The family dogs involved in these programs are evaluated for a caring disposition and basic obedience skills. Reflections about the therapy dogs' role was gathered from the handlers and administrators at the RUH who were a part of the response. They shared what worked well, what could be improved, and recommended six essential actions to effectively integrate therapy dogs into Saskatchewan's coordinated trauma response. They are:

1. Recognize what a therapy dog can offer

A therapy dog's instinctive role in response to a tragic event is to 'just be in the moment' with individuals. A RUH administrator shared "You could feel when the dogs were around, the energy was just different, calmer". The therapy dogs offered a tranquil presence, physical affection, and a

welcome distraction. For example, staff and students informally approached and easily engaged with a therapy dog at the schools in the days immediately following the crash. This provided the groundwork for the MHAS handlers and their colleagues to offer formal therapeutic interventions at a later time.

2. Identify the appropriate time to introduce a therapy dog

The RUH determined that a suitable time for the therapy dogs to visit was 24 hours after the intake of patients. The immediate focus of the StJA dog and handler team was to visit RUH staff and family and friends of the patients. One administrator shared that the therapy dogs are a recognized safe outlet and bring normalcy when individuals interact with them and reflect on their pets at home. As time passed, the dogs were introduced to the patients. The therapy dogs were silent and comforting supports that gave some individuals a reason to smile. Throughout, the dogs accommodated special visiting requests by family and staff.

3. Involve handlers with a human service background

The StJA handlers brought a range of human service backgrounds, which enabled them to draw on their existing skillsets while at the same time operating within the boundaries of their volunteer role. For example, when children candidly shared at the community memorial about feeling sad or were concerned for their families, the StJA handlers empathically listened but did not provide therapeutic counsel. The MHAS handlers had the opposite challenge at the school; they concentrated on visiting with the therapy dog to develop therapeutic rapport with the youth until it was appropriate and timely to begin to offer clinical supports.

4. Ensure the welfare of the therapy dog

The experience level and personality of the therapy dog will dictate the situations in which the dog can work. A solid bond between the handler and therapy dog is essential; handlers should be knowledgeable about dog behaviour. It is important that any requests for therapy dogs outline what is expected of them (e.g., size of the visiting space, total time required), and for the handler to determine if their dog can work in

this environment. The therapy dogs and handlers visiting the RUH were already regular volunteers at the hospital. The handlers shared how they still took it slow at the start of the visits, gauging their dog's comfort. The dogs are performing caring labour, and need to be both suited for the job and supported in it. Further training for handlers in dog psychology would be beneficial.

5. Safeguard the wellbeing of the handler

The need for critical incident stress debriefing (e.g., Critical Incident Stress Management) for personnel was recognized throughout the service delivery continuum that responded to the family, friends, and larger community of Humboldt. Both StJA and MHAS handlers were offered this opportunity. For the volunteer StJA therapy dog handlers, additional training such as communication skills in crisis situations may be a consideration. This training may also be a worthwhile refresher for the MHAS handlers.

6. Include therapy dogs in Saskatchewan's Coordinated Trauma Response protocol

Therapy dog organizations should be an established component of the formal protocol and fanout process of Saskatchewan's Coordinated Trauma Response team. This will help to ensure the implementation of a timely and helpful response that is safe for all involved (including the therapy dogs). The United States has national standards for Animal Assisted Crisis Response work, with specialized handler and dog training (e.g., simulated crisis exposure). There are no standards and limited advanced training in Canada. Given the rarity of large-scale crisis situations in Saskatchewan, working with the existing therapy dog resources, while recognizing their limitations, and drawing on lessons learned from our recent collective experience is an informed way forward to establish a formal protocol.

The StJA, MHAS and other therapy dog teams in our province (e.g., Leanne Sillers and Jack with Therapy Dogs International), are a resource. As shared at the recent Saskatchewan SPCA conference, implementing the essential actions suggested here, among others, will help ensure that this valuable and safe support can be offered in crisis situations and that the two and four-legged caregivers are cared for.



COLD WEATHER CARE FOR DOGS & CATS



The Basics

FOOD: If your pets spend a significant amount of time outside in cold weather, they will need additional calories to maintain their body temperature. You may need to increase their food intake by 20 to 30%.

WATER: Ice and snow are NOT adequate sources of water. Ensure your pet has access to fresh water by refilling frozen water bowls as needed, or by supplying water in a heated water bowl.

SHELTER: The *Animal Protection Act* requires that animals be provided with adequate shelter. Cats as well as young, old, and infirm pets should be housed indoors. Outdoor dogs require access to shelter, which for most is at least an insulated doghouse; however, the needs of each individual dog can vary.

Winter Hazards

ANTIFREEZE: Ethylene glycol is toxic to cats and dogs. Less than a teaspoon of antifreeze can be fatal to a cat. Exposure to antifreeze is a medical emergency requiring immediate medical treatment. The initial signs of antifreeze poisoning include the following: a drunken appearance, nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, a rapid heart rate, seizures, convulsions, depression, weakness, fainting, and/or coma.

DE-ICING PRODUCTS: Some de-icers are toxic to pets and can be ingested when your pets lick their paws. Additionally, rock salt and other de-icing products can be irritating to your pet's paws. Be sure to wipe your pet's paws after a walk to remove these potentially toxic agents.

FROSTBITE: Frostbite is the result of freezing of the skin. When your pet gets cold, blood flow to the extremities is reduced. The ears, tail, and feet are at the greatest risk of becoming frostbitten. Symptoms of frostbite may take several days to appear. Contact your veterinarian if you notice any of the following symptoms: pale gray or blue-ish discoloration of the skin, areas of blackened or dead skin, pain when you touch the affected area, and/or coldness or brittleness of the area when touched.

HYPOTHERMIA: Hypothermia occurs when your pet's body temperature falls below normal; it can be mild, moderate, or severe. Symptoms include shivering, depression, lethargy, weakness, low heart rate, difficulty breathing, and/or coma. Your veterinarian will treat hypothermia by applying warming blankets and possibly warm intravenous fluids, depending on the severity of the hypothermia.

PREPARE NOW FOR YOUR PET'S FUTURE AFTER YOUR DEATH

*By Shannon Burberry, Funeral Home Manager,
Forest Lawn Funeral Home & Cemetery*

We've all heard the phrase a "Man's Best Friend" at some point in our lives – and many of us may have witnessed the bond between pets and their owners through personal experiences or Hollywood films like *Marley & Me*. But can the loss of an animal companion really have a devastating impact on its owner? The short answer is yes. Pets play a significant role in the lives of their owners and most are treated as extended family members. These furry friends provide comfort, affection, fun and companionship during happy and difficult times of their family's lives. As most pet owners share an intense love for their pets, it's important that they're considered in one's end-of-life planning. After all, just as the loss of a pet is devastating for the owner, the death of an owner can also have a traumatic impact on their beloved companion.

They Have Feelings Too

While humans can express their emotions verbally, pets show their feelings through their actions. Many of the families I've worked with have shared stories about the toll the loss of a loved one has had on pets, such as a loss of appetite, lethargy and even whimpering.

Just as saying "goodbye" to a loved one can be cathartic and offer closure to a human, it can have the same effect on animals.

By pre-planning, you can work with your funeral director to include pets in your celebration of life so that they too can have the opportunity to say "goodbye" in their own special way.

They Help Us Grieve

I have witnessed the positive effect therapy pets have had on grieving people. Their playful and compassionate energy has helped to uplift and comfort mourning family members.

Whether you've lost someone or are providing support to a loved one going through a loss, consider the use of a therapy dog to help them work through their emotions and provide comfort.

Why we need to include our pets in end-of-life planning

When discussing end-of-life plans with loved ones, think about those who cannot verbally communicate their wishes with you, such as pets.

Not only is it important to consider how to incorporate a pet into your own celebration of life, you'll also need to plan for where they will be homed if you pass before them.

I recommend having an open and honest conversation with family members and friends about your wishes for your pets. This goes beyond finding someone who can physically care for them; you'll need someone who is up to the task of helping them adjust to new surroundings.

Like humans, all pets grieve differently. Some take more time to overcome the new reality of their life, while others try to return to daily activities shortly. Include them in your end-of-life plans to ensure that both you and they have the smoothest possible transition.

Article originally published on www.arbormemorial.ca.

2019 STRYKER CALENDARS

Start 2019 off right with one of your very own Stryker K-9 calendars. Two calendars are available featuring police dogs from the Saskatoon Police Service and the Regina Police Service.

Each calendar is \$10 and proceeds support the Saskatchewan SPCA's Stryker K-9 Care Fund for retired police dogs.

Find the Saskatoon calendars at:

- Saskatoon Police Service Headquarters
- Saskatchewan SPCA
- Early's Farm & Garden Centre
- Arlington Animal Hospital

Find the Regina calendars at:

- Regina Police Service Headquarters
- Cowtown in Regina, Moose Jaw, and Swift Current
- Airport Animal Hospital
- Veterinary Mobility Clinic
- Pawsitively Purfect

For more information on the Stryker K-9 Care Fund, visit spsca.ca.



MUDDIED BUDDIES AT THE FIRST-ANNUAL EVENT



*2nd Annual Muddy Buddy
Family Fun Obstacle Run
Saturday, August 24, 2019
Blackstrap Provincial Park*

On August 25th, animal lovers and mud enthusiasts gathered at Blackstrap Provincial Park for the inaugural Muddy Buddy Family Fun Obstacle Run. Over 150 participants traversed the obstacle-lined trail in support of the Saskatchewan SPCA.

A heart-felt thank you goes out to our major sponsors: Erical Cleaning Services, Carnivora, Cervus Equipment, Cedar Cove Resort, Tito's Handmade Vodka, Kickstand Customs, Kenro Dog Training, and The Wireless Age.

A big shout-out goes to the participants, volunteers, and staff who made helped make the Muddy Buddy a success!

You're invited to join us on August 24th, 2019 for the 2nd annual Muddy Buddy Family Fun Obstacle Run. There will be more obstacles, more mud, and more fun! Stay tuned for registration details in the coming weeks.





CARING FOR THOSE WHO CARE

The 2018 Saskatchewan SPCA Conference

In September, the Saskatchewan SPCA welcomed delegates to our 14th annual educational conference. The event, held in Saskatoon, attracted more than 60 delegates from across Saskatchewan as well as Ontario and Alberta.

Keynote speakers Dr. Colleen Dell and Crystal Petryk discussed the role of therapy dogs during a trauma event. As Dell and Petryk explained, therapy dogs can offer humans a unique form of support in times of tragedy. Their presentation reflected on the integration of therapy dogs in the Humboldt Broncos tragedy.

In keeping with the theme of the conference – *Caring for Those Who Care* – a number of sessions focused on strategies to support the emotional needs of individuals working in stressful occupations.

Other conference speakers explored a variety of topics relating to the human-animal bond. The conference closed with a discussion on opportunities for the human services and the animal welfare sectors to work together more effectively to meet the needs of both animals and people in crisis.

Thanks to our sponsors for their support:



Special supporter Ernest Olfert



RECENT UPDATES TO ANIMAL CRUELTY LEGISLATION POSITIVE STEP

The updated *Animal Protection Act (APA)* and *Regulations* came into effect on September 17, 2018. The APA is provincial legislation that helps protect animals from abuse and distress.

Notable improvements to the Act and Regulations include:

- More clarity about what constitutes an acceptable level of animal care
- Updates to the list of codes and guidelines for the care of livestock and companion animals
- Animal Protection Orders can be issued, outlining specific actions owners must take to improve the care of their animals
- The definition of an "abandoned animal" has been expanded
- Animal Protection Officers (APOs) are able to inspect a broader range of animal care facilities
- Increased fines for individuals convicted of repeat animal cruelty offenses

As well, veterinarians are now required by law to report situations of suspected animal cruelty.

Frances Wach, Executive Director of the Saskatchewan SPCA, is pleased with the intent of these legislative updates. However, she notes the increased workload for APOs.

"In order for animal protection legislation to be truly effective, all APOs must be provided with the resources they need to do their job properly, including consistent, ongoing training," concludes Wach.

To see the full Act and Regulations, visit <http://sspca.ca/report-abuse/animal-protection-act/>

According to Section 4(1) and (2) of the Act, it is illegal to cause an animal to be in distress, or permit the animal to be or to continue to be in distress. However, these sections do not apply if "the distress results from an activity carried on in accordance with the regulations or in accordance with reasonable and generally accepted practices of animal care, management, husbandry, hunting, fishing, trapping, pest control or slaughter."

According to *The Animal Protection Act* (2018) an animal is in distress if it is:

- (a) Deprived of:
 - i. Food or water sufficient to maintain the animal in a state of good health;
 - ii. Care of shelter; or
 - iii. Veterinary care or medical attention;
- (b) In need of reasonable protection from injurious heat or cold;
- (c) Wounded, ill, in pain, suffering, abused or neglected;
- (d) Kept in conditions that:
 - i. Are unsanitary;
 - ii. Will significantly impair the animal's health or well-being over time;
 - iii. Cause the animal extreme anxiety or suffering; or
 - iv. Contravene the prescribed standards, codes of practice or guidelines; or
- (e) Abandoned by its owner or by a person responsible for the animal in a manner that causes, or is likely to cause, distress resulting from any or all of the factors listed in this section.

TO REPORT SUSPECTED ANIMAL CRUELTY OR ABUSE:

Dogs & cats:

In Saskatoon: Saskatoon SPCA: 306.374.7387
In Regina: Regina Humane Society: 306.543.6363
In Prince Albert: Prince Albert SPCA: 306.763.6110

Dogs & cats in all other locations:

Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan: 1.844.382.0002

Livestock:

Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan: 1.844.382.0002



See the list
of winners at
lottery.sspca.ca