



NHES *Journal*

Whenever we, as a society, allow an animal to die from starvation or abuse, or whenever a euthanizing agent enters the bloodstream of a healthy animal, we wound humanity. —Anna C. Briggs, Founder



NHES: Standards of Humane Care for Animals



by Jim Taylor
*Chief Operating Officer
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Jim Taylor

Quite a few years ago, a gentleman (whose name evades my memory at the moment) wrote an essay that some people referred to as a blistering condemnation of our Nation's animal control facilities, animal shelters, and no-kill animal adoption centers/animal sanctuaries. At NHES, however, we did not view this essay as a criticism, but rather as a pragmatic assessment of the animal control and animal welfare sheltering community. It was essentially challenging all animal shelters, both public and private, with the goal of creating unified standards of care for animals and to implement these unified standards at every animal shelter in the country.

In a perfect world, such unified standards for animals could be achieved. However, as we know, ours is not a perfect world, and public and private animal shelters do not share unified comprehensive standards of humane care for animals throughout the country. The essay did,

however, prod us to examine our own Standards of Humane Care for Animals, and I think it is only appropriate that we share with you—our supporters—an overview of NHES's Standards of Humane Care.

An Overview of NHES's Standards of Humane Care for Animals

1. All animals will receive the following normative veterinary medical care prior to adoption:
 - Spay/Neuter, including early-age spay/neuter
 - Dental Cleanings
 - Rabies Vaccinations
 - DHLPP Vaccinations for dogs
 - FVRCP Vaccinations for cats
 - FeLV Vaccination for cats
 - Bordetella Vaccination for dogs
 - Lyme, Erlichia, and Heartworm Testing and Treatment for dogs
 - Feline Leukemia and Feline AIDS Testing for cats
 - Fecal Checks
 - Deworming (two treatments)
 - Referrals to Specialist as required

2. All animals will be micro-chipped as a means of permanent identification.



3. To minimize stress and disease, all animals will have access to well-ventilated, heated indoor areas and large fenced-in exercise yards and/or enclosed porches to allow them the benefit of fresh air and sunshine.
4. All animals will be monitored for overall well-being and immediately referred to the veterinarian if illness, distress, or physical discomfort is perceived to exist.
5. All animals will have interactions with humans on a daily basis.
6. All animals will receive fresh water and a well-balanced diet each day.
7. All animals will be properly bathed and groomed, including the trimming of nails and cleansing of ears. (Dogs/puppies will be bathed and groomed at least once a month. All domestic cats/kittens will receive a thorough grooming on a quarterly basis.)
8. Extremely frightened dogs and cats will receive additional attention on a daily basis to help bring about increased socialization with humans.
9. Throughout the course of a given day, animal care attendants will attempt to slowly socialize feral cats/kittens by talking to them throughout the workday and making intermittent attempts to pet them.
10. Each dog will receive basic obedience instruction and, if not adopted, reinforcement of obedience instruction as needed.
11. At no time will an NHES animal care facility exceed its Humane Holding Capacity. The Humane Holding Capacity, however, is ultimately determined by NHES's ability to care for the animals in accordance with its defined Standards of Humane Care. If, for example, an NHES animal care facility does not have adequate funding to provide for its maximum Humane Holding Capacity, then its animal population must be reduced—through adoption services—to a population where the Humane Standards of Care can be met by existing funding/staffing levels. This means that on occasion there may well be vacant kennels or cattery spaces because we are ethically bound to not take in more animals than we can care for in accordance with our defined Standards of Humane Care.

At NHES, we believe the day will come when a unified humane standard of care for animals will be enacted and practiced in every public and private animal care facility throughout the country. We also believe that the final evolution of this standard setting process will include standards very much like the ones noted above, and founded on a guiding principle—an immovable foundation—that will eradicate the killing of animals as a means of population control.

NHES Alliance Partners

The Board of Directors of NHES has voted to continue its Alliance Partnership and funding of (1) Operation Catnip, (2) Potomac Highlands Animal Rescue (PHAR), and (3) Fern Wildlife Refuge (FWR) during Calendar Year 2007.

Following, in their own words, Dr. Julie Levy, president of Operation Catnip, and Linda Scott, president of PHAR, describe how NHES alliance funding has helped their individual organizations and the animals that they serve. And Gretl Learned of FWR offers recommendations for helping wildlife in the spring. (Please see Gretl's article under "NEWS from the Education Department.")

1. Operation Catnip has a Record Breaking Year in 2006

by Julie Levy, DVM, PhD, DACVIM
President, Operation Catnip

The year of 2006 ended on a positive note for feral cats in Alachua County. Volunteers at the free monthly clinics provided veterinary care to 2,165 cats, the 16 private veterinary clinics participating in the Outreach program jointly sterilized 576 cats, students at the University of Florida Shelter Medicine Program spayed and neutered 224 cats, and an additional 760 cats participating in the Maddie's Outdoor Cat Program were sterilized. All together, a total of 3,725 stray and



Dr. Julie Levy & Friends



Operation Catnip Spay/Neuter Surgeons

feral cats were spayed, neutered, vaccinated, and treated for parasites in 2006, a 37% increase over 2005. The National Humane Education Society (NHES) played a leading role in making this accomplishment possible.

Alliance Funding from NHES in 2006 allowed us to assign a full-time volunteer coordinator to the clinics. John Friary set about developing a formal orientation program to teach new volunteers about the mission of Operation Catnip to control the feral cat population while allowing the cats to live out their lives in harmony with their community. He developed the new Volunteer Guidebook and Policy Manual, which is given to all volunteers so they can understand the vital role they play in the success of the program and can be trained to perform their tasks expertly. The manual has become “the Bible” of feral cat sterilization clinic procedures and is a national resource. It has been used to establish similar feral cat sterilization programs at other veterinary schools, including North Carolina State University, Auburn University, and University of Tennessee. One of John’s first projects in 2007 will be to develop an electronic edition of the manual, which will allow other groups to adapt it for use in their own programs.

Funding from NHES also made it possible for more veterinary students to join the volunteer corps of Operation Catnip. As budding surgeons and anesthesiologists, they have a lot of talent to share with the program and their participation is one reason why we were able to help a record number of cats in 2006.

We hope to recruit even more veterinary students in 2007. Perhaps more importantly, this partnership also gives future veterinarians a first-hand look at the cat overpopulation problem and teaches them what a critical role they can play in solving it. I am very proud

that many veterans of the Operation Catnip program have graduated veterinary school and taken positions in shelter or spay/neuter clinics. Their early experiences helped them develop empathy for homeless and abused animals and a resolve to make the world a better place for them. In this way, Operation Catnip’s local program has a national impact on the future of animal welfare. (To learn more about Operation Catnip, please visit them on the web at www.operationcatnip.org.)

2. PHAR Continues its Grassroots Accomplishments

by Linda Scott
President, PHAR

The volunteers of Potomac Highlands Animal Rescue (PHAR) want to thank The National Humane Education Society (NHES) and its supporters for your generous financial support over the past 10 months.

Since partnering with NHES in February of 2006, PHAR has rescued 873 animals, assisted in the spaying or neutering of over 75 dogs and cats, referred over 50 people to Spay Today, vaccinated over 250 community pets, and fielded over 100 calls about animal abuse or neglect. Specifically because of NHES’s alliance funding we have been able to provide emergency care and treatment for animals that otherwise may have been euthanized due to financial constraints.



Linda Scott and rescued friend, Ellie

While PHAR by no means condones the chaining of dogs, we have worked to improve the living conditions of every animal that we have come in contact with by assuring adequate shelter, safe collars, food and/or medical care. This year we have helped countless chain dogs. We have also educated public officials on humane issues and worked with them on animal neglect/abuse cases as requested.

This year PHAR volunteers have donated thousands of hours and opened their homes to hundreds of animals. We have traveled over 41,342 miles and spent and paid



for countless hours on the phone and computer.

While our volunteers are not short on passion, enthusiasm or perseverance, we greatly appreciate the financial, moral and programmatic support of

organizations like NHES and its supporters. In short, our successes would have been far less without your help. We know that the Alliance Partnership that we have formed with NHES has been of great benefit to the animals in the Potomac Highlands.

NEWS from the Education Department



by Cheryl Spencer Scher
Director of Humane Education
National Humane Education Society

James P. & Anna C. Briggs Humane Action Award Honorees—2006

The NHES *James P. & Anna C. Briggs Humane Action Award* is presented annually to select individuals and grass-roots animal welfare organizations that have made a significant contribution to the creation of a more humane world for animals in their community through their individual efforts that earnestly demonstrate NHES's mission of "fostering a sentiment of kindness to animals..." In 2006, the two honorees were:

1. **Dr. Brian Gentile—A Lifesaving Volunteer**

Lieutenant Colonel Brian Gentile, DVM, is the longest tenured volunteer at The Briggs Animal Adoption Center (BAAC), having begun his volunteer service in August 2001. Since that time, he has regularly arrived at the BAAC once a week and sometimes twice a week to work collaboratively with the BAAC's part-time staff veterinarian to provide veterinary services for hundreds of animals that have found their way to the BAAC's doorstep. In addition, during those times when the BAAC's part-time staff veterinarian has been ill, or when the staff veterinarian position has been vacant, Dr. Gentile has readily increased his volunteer hours to ensure that appropriate medical care was provided for the BAAC's animals.

Before being relocated to West Virginia, Dr. Gentile served as the chief veterinarian at Fort Richardson, Alaska, where he was responsible for the veterinary support of all Defense installations in Southern Alaska. At Fort Richardson, Dr. Gentile also operated an adoption program for stray animals that had a 90-percent adoption rate for 2 consecutive years, and the number of animals treated at the veterinary facility increased by 25

percent. In addition, Dr. Gentile served as the Logistics Coordinator for the Innovative Readiness Training field exercise called, "Operation Arctic Care (OAC)."

OAC required that Dr. Gentile and others spend time in Alaska's "bush" working among native Alaskans as part of public health service and training exercises, vaccinating 1,500 sled dogs in 23 remote villages and setting up dog bite prevention programs for village children.

Although we could certainly share a great deal with you about Lieutenant Colonel Brian Gentile, his accomplishments and distinguished awards, it is Brian Gentile, DVM—the very kind volunteer whom we are pleased to recognize with the *James P. & Anna C. Briggs Humane Action Award* for his volunteer service and compassionate treatment of the frightened and sick animals that have found their way to the BAAC. With Dr. Gentile's soft spoken manner and calm demeanor, hundreds of animals have begun their individual journey of healing—journeys that have ended with permanent loving homes.

2. **Potomac Highlands Animal Rescue—Making a Difference through Grassroots Volunteerism**

Potomac Highlands Animal Rescue is one of NHES's Alliance Partners, and I ask that you please read more about them under the "NHES Alliance Partners"



Anna C. Briggs presenting award to Dr. Gentile

