

2011-
2012

Annual General Report

paws
for
hope
ANIMAL FOUNDATION

Paws for Hope Animal Foundation
pawsforhope.org
2011-2012

Message from the President

What an amazing first year! It is incredibly humbling to be involved with such an amazing organization, doing incredible work to help animals and their guardians. We have established three very exciting programs and have gained such incredible support from so many communities across BC. We launched our very successful Roxy's Fund, where we help supply homeless, street involved and low income pet guardians with their pet's basic needs, such as food and bedding. Our Pets Are Not Products campaign strives to ban the sale of puppies, kittens, and bunnies in pet stores across BC, thus eliminating the suffering of countless animals in mass breeding mills. Our most recent program, the Guardian Angel Program, which assists volunteer-run rescue organizations with veterinary care funding, is up and running.



Board Members (right to left) Shawn Llewellyn, Desiree McLean, and Lisa Henderson with Merlin.

Paws for Hope Animal Foundation, and the amazing group of people who come together to make all the programs and events happen are so incredibly inspiring and have passion and vision. The determination and dedication of this working Board of Directors, and our tireless Executive Director, will continue to move Paws for Hope forward in advancing animal welfare, and we strive to achieve this goal through education and awareness, community programming and support, and rescue and rehabilitation. I look forward to the coming year as we will begin to work towards enhancing our programs and having an even bigger impact on animals and their guardians.

Lisa Henderson

President, *Paws for Hope Animal Foundation*

Message from the Executive Director

It has been such an exciting first year for us at Paws for Hope. None of our accomplishments would have been possible if it were not for the support of our donors, our volunteers, the animal loving community and the trust of animal welfare and rescue groups to allow us to begin this very important work.

The inspiration to start Paws for Hope came from a late night email. The email was forwarded from a local rescue group who was in urgent need of foster homes for five dogs who had to be pulled from a local shelter in less than 48 hours or they would be killed. I was so struck by the urgency and wondered how such a thing happens in a province like ours. After months of consultations and research into the state of animal welfare in British Columbia, it became very apparent that we were in crisis and significant and sustainable changes needed to be made.

Despite the amazing work that is being done in our province to protect animals, the system is broken.



There are no criteria required for groups to be involved in animal welfare and rescue and there is no accountability or funding support for these groups. This has created a very chaotic and fractious environment that is not conducive to any significant and sustainable changes. Our hope is that we can begin to build the foundation of a cohesive, accountable and responsible provincial animal welfare system through our programs and partnerships across the province.

We far exceeded our goals for our first year, and we look ahead with excitement and optimism that real change is going to happen in the foreseeable future.

Kathy Powelson

Executive Director, *Paws for Hope Animal Foundation*



Annual Report

June 2011 – March 2012

Roxy's Fund

Roxy's Fund was inspired by the 2011 theft of an 11-year old dog named Roxy from Downtown Dogs, where she accompanied her guardian daily. Thanks to the huge outpouring of support from the community and the high-visibility and awareness of the case, Roxy's "captor" was eventually pressured by family and friends into contacting Roxy's guardian and returning her to her home four days after she went missing.

It was during the days of searching that Christine's friend, Lori Mason, was struck by the number of homeless people who had pets. Lori, owner of Obediently Yours K9 Training, felt compelled to do something to help support these guardians in providing items that would help keep their pets comfortable, particularly during the winter months. Lori reached out to her network and soon the donations started to come in and Roxy's Fund was created.



Roxy's Fund officially launched in November 2011 at the Vancouver Homeless Connect. Soon after, we partnered with Directions Youth Services, Watari, and Raincity Housing in Vancouver to support homeless, street involved, and low income pet guardians. Thanks to the overwhelming support for this program, by March 2012 we were able to expand our services to New Westminister, in partnership with LookOut Shelter. Every six to eight weeks, donations of food, jackets, bedding, leashes and collars, toys, and kitty litter are dropped off at our partner organizations to help the most vulnerable care for and keep their pets. This service is critical as it recognizes the significant emotional support these companion animals provide to many individuals who are in so many ways isolated from supportive relationships.
(continued next page)

In addition to the generous donations we receive from individuals, we have received tremendous support from organizations around the Lower Mainland. Bosley's Pet Store on W6th Ave in Vancouver has partnered with us, allowing us to use the store as a central drop off location, in addition to donating their damaged and recently expired pet food. Black Bear Wine & Brew in Maple Ridge and Dog Utopia in Surrey have also generously provided space to act as drop off locations for donations.



Canada Pooch has also been a generous corporate sponsor, providing a variety of dog jackets to help keep the canine companions dry during our typical wet Vancouver fall and winters.

We are so pleased with the outpouring of support we have received for this program and our hope is to enhance Roxy's Fund in order to provide regular health clinics that can provide regular checkups, vaccines, flea and worm treatments, and spay and neuter surgeries.

Pets Are Not Products

There has been a growing movement over the past few years to create awareness about and ban the sale of animals in pet stores. This effort has two main goals – (1) to shut down puppy and kitten breeding mills by reducing demand and (2) decrease the number of animals abandoned or surrendered due to impulse purchases.

The first goal stems from the fact that the majority of animals sold in pet stores are acquired from either large scale puppy and kitten breeding mills or smaller back yard operations. Animal mills are notorious for their substandard and inhumane living conditions and health care. Mills are commercial breeding facilities that operate with an emphasis on profit instead of animal welfare. The majority of animals living in mills have significant infections, conditions such as epilepsy and hip dysplasia, show complications due to malnutrition, or demonstrate behavioural problems. *(continued next page)*



The majority of puppies in Canadian pet stores come from the United States, many of which are brokered through the Hunte Corporation, a Missouri-based puppy mill. It is estimated that up to 60 percent of the puppy mills in the US are based in Missouri, due to the state's loose regulations. Previous efforts to pass stricter legislation in the state continue to be met with tremendous resistance. Regardless of these efforts, it is unclear how legislation that regulates breeding facilities in the United States would impact business at the Hunte Corporation given they do not actually "breed" dogs, but rather "broker" puppies from puppy mills to pet stores. What is known is that despite numerous complaints filed with the USDA and failed USDA inspections, it is still "business as usual" at the Hunte Corporation.

In addition to puppy mills, animals in pet stores also come from backyard breeding operations that demonstrate similar deplorable conditions.

Unlike responsible breeders, both puppy mills and backyard breeders do not ensure:

- Comprehensive health checks of both parents are completed to reduce the chance of genetic diseases being passed on to offspring
- Quality maternal care so the mother has a healthy and stress-free pregnancy
- Early socialization in a family home
- Screening of the potential adopter
- Spay/neuter or contracts to ensure the puppies will be bred in a responsible manner that creates good example of the breed
- Commitment to take the dog back if the new home is not caring for the dog properly, or can't keep the dog.

As responsible breeders would never allow animals to be sold over the counter without these checks, pet stores turn to animal mills and backyard breeders.

The second goal of this movement is to prevent the consequences of impulse purchase from pet stores. As previously mentioned, pet stores are not equipped to match animals with a "forever home" as they do not properly screen applicants, inform them about animal temperament and history, or offer follow-up and support. This type of system does not encourage thoughtful purchase and can often lead ill-prepared owners to later abandon or surrender their unwanted pets.



Similarly, new guardians often only find out about health and/or behaviour problems after making their purchases. Unlike responsible breeders, a pet store won't take an animal back if the family can't care for it, meaning these animals are left to overcrowded shelter and rescue organizations. These animals can be considered "lucky" as they may have a chance to find another home. Others are dumped in garbage bins, left tied to a tree, a truck or simply just left in a desolate area. Shelters across the province will testify that one of the consequences of impulse purchases of the cute puppy and kitten in the store window is the overpopulation of homeless animals filling their facilities. This can cause a drain on our tax system in addition to the increased likelihood that these animals will be killed. The number of purebred dogs in shelters range between 25 – 50 percent across BC. Rescue agencies are stretched beyond their means and hundreds of thousands of animals are killed each year because there are not enough resources to care for them.

In response to these issues, a large movement in the U.S. has emerged, protesting the mass production of puppies and stores that sells puppies, including *Best Friends Animal Society's* national "Puppies Aren't Products" campaign. These campaigns have worked to educate the public, encourage adoption instead of buying pets, and advocate for better laws to shut down puppy mills.

Recently, in the northern and interior regions of British Columbia, Canada, attention has been brought to local puppy mills leading the government to introduce stricter breeding regulations. While this is a positive step forward in reducing the number of animals sold on-line and in newspapers, it is unlikely that such changes will significantly impact the sale of animals in pet stores.

Regulations may help improve the welfare of dogs; however the only way to eliminate puppy mills is to stop the demand. As long as people are willing and able to purchase puppies at stores, companies will supply them. Richmond became the first city in Canada to pass a bylaw (No. 8663) that bans the sale of puppies in pet stores. Since the Richmond ban, the City of Toronto has banned the sale of all animals in pet stores, Mississauga has banned the sale of cats and dogs, and Calgary has announced it will address the issue in the fall 2012.



Paws for Hope has partnered with other animal welfare and rescue organizations in BC to create the “Pets Are Not Products” campaign. These organizations include BC Chihuahua Rescue, HugABull Advocacy and Rescue Society, Petnerships, Semiamhoo Animal League Inc, Vancouver Orphan Kitten Rescue Association, and Small Animal Rescue Society.

This coalition is working to create awareness of the inhumanity of the pet trade and to work with local and provincial governments to ban the retail sale of cats, dogs, and rabbits. This July, the Executive Director of Paws for Hope, Kathy Powelson, is going to present to municipal city councils across the lower mainland to encourage their cities to ban the sale of cats, dogs, and rabbits in pet stores.

Our goal for 2013 is to reach out to other municipalities across the province and to enhance our education campaign

Guardian Angel Fund

The goal of the Guardian Angel Fund is to provide emergency funding to support animals in need and volunteer run rescue organization that meet our Responsible Rescue Criteria.

This program is still in its infancy stage and our goal is to raise funds to sustain the program in 2012/2013.



Financials

Detailed financial information available upon request.

Vancouver Pet Expo

Over 500 people came by our booth to sign a petition to ban the retail sale of puppies, kittens and bunnies.

The Expo also gave us a chance to meet the community and to connect with our animal welfare and rescue colleagues!



Picture your Pets with Santa

Santa came by Bosley's Pet Foods on W 6th Ave in Vancouver to pose for photos.

Proceeds went to HugABull Advocacy & Rescue Society.



Donation drive & Food packing

A wonderful group of volunteers met at Downtown Dogs to drop off donations of food and supplies for Roxy's Fund and to help pack food into transportable packages.

In total, volunteers donated and packed over 400lbs of dog food and 200lbs of cats food, in addition to bringing leashes, collars, bedding, blankets and toys.



Under One Umbrella's Homeless Connect

Hundreds of people came by to receive food for their furry family members.

Thanks to Cheryl and Jessica, from Vanity Furr Grooming a few lucky dogs got their nails trimmed and a good brushing.

