

New Lobby

completion of lobby renovation reflects care and hope

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Cats!

help us reduce overcrowding at the ARL through adoption

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fall 2008
volume 21

the inside scoop

published by the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland

Stray Dogs of India



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the inside scoop

the inside scoop is published by the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland. We are a private, non-profit organization dedicated to the care of homeless and unwanted animals in the Greater Portland area.

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open Monday and Friday 11a - 6p

Tuesday through Thursday 11a - 5p

Saturday 10a - 4p

a message from andrew

by Andrew Ferreira, Executive Director

As I begin to write this letter all I think is what an amazing first year my association with the Animal Refuge League has been. We are beginning a new era with our official name change that now includes "of Greater Portland." This change speaks to our desire and very real service to Cumberland County as well as parts of York County.

We have recently made major modifications to our lobby and greatly improved the enrichment areas around the shelter as evidence to our commitment to excellence in the welfare and improvement in the quality of life for the animals that come under our care.

While people surrender their pets for a variety of reasons, it seems a few more now are saying they can't afford their animals or that they are moving to places where pets aren't allowed. Everybody seems affected by the economy right now.

Although our numbers are growing, we must not lose sight of what makes us effective and unique. **We hold the physical and emotional care of each individual animal at the ARL to be paramount.** We are first and foremost a Refuge – a place of shelter, protection, and safety. Then, in just as large a measure, we are agents to place companion animals into the embrace of new loving homes. These are powerful and vital missions in our society.

I am enormously grateful to the dedicated staff, volunteers, members, and supporters for making it all possible. What a joyous and rewarding journey it continues to be.

Thank you!

Andrew

furry friends pet pantry

The Animal Refuge League opened in 1911 and was funded by former Maine Governor Percival Baxter, who believed that "humanity had an obligation to creatures of the animal kingdom".

Our mission is to provide temporary care and shelter for stray, abandoned and relinquished animals, and to place as many as possible into responsible and caring homes.

Combining our mission with the words of Governor Baxter, the Animal Refuge League is taking our mission to the next logical step. In partnership with Camp Bow Wow®, we wish to help families in need during these challenging economic times.

We will be dispensing donated pet food items for families in need, in order to help pets stay in their homes. If you need assistance, or if you are able to donate to help others, please visit the Furry Friends Food Pantry at one of the locations to the right.

Monday
1pm-3pm
Camp Bow Wow
49 Blueberry Rd
Portland

Wednesday
1pm-3pm
Animal Refuge League
449 Stroudwater
Westbrook

you think it rained a lot this summer? it rained cats and dogs at the arl!

All summer long, we had a lot of stormy weather and in case you hadn't noticed, it rained cats and dogs - at the shelter that is. Much of this summer we ran over capacity. Surrenders were up while adoptions were down. We think this was due, at least in part, to the economy. People are really having a tough time right now.

There are some very sad stories out there; some animals were abandoned in their own home, while others had been with their family for 12 years or longer, but the family could no longer afford to care for them. That left us with over 200 cats in shelter and 140 in foster care. To encourage adoptions we waived fees and reduced others throughout the remainder of the summer and into the early fall.

In late July, we announced fee waived adoptions for cats age 1 year and older. The shelter appeared on several news broadcasts to appeal to the public to welcome these wonderful animals into their homes. It worked! In a period of eleven days we adopted out 200 cats and dogs into their forever homes.

We are very grateful to all who adopt from our shelter and we are particularly appreciative to those who adopted over the last few weeks.

For those that could not adopt but came to help with food, bedding, monetary donations, and their time - we thank you. It has been inspiring to see such an outpouring from the community.

As wonderful as these banner adoption days have been, animals continue to come into the shelter daily. The continued support of our friends makes it possible to carry on our mission.

adoption fees

Cats age **1-9** are \$25;
senior and special needs cats (which may just be a special type of dry food) are **free to a good home**.

For dogs **1-8** years old, the fee for adoption is \$100.

For dogs **over 9** years of age, the adoption fee is \$25.

photos from the latest arlcp event



The Animal Refuge League of Portland held a welcome reception in the home of Brian & Ingrid Poulin on Thursday, June 26, 2008.

Around fifty donors, Board Members, and other friends welcomed Toni McLellan, Director of Operations and Andrew Ferreira, Executive Director as the new management team of the shelter. Toni began her position in May 2008 and Andrew joined the ARL in August 2007.

During the evening, Andrew spoke to crowd about his first year at the shelter as well as laying the foundation for some plans in the future.



Stray Dogs of India



Photographer Michelle Lohutko of Portland Maine embarked on a five week journey through Calcutta and many of its surrounding villages of West Bengal, India. During this journey, she captured black & white images documenting the brutal life of street dogs trying to survive next to humans. Her goal was to capture the sweet nature of these dogs in spite of their low ranking in the Indian society.

There are millions of stray dogs in India, most of which reside in the already over crowded cities. According to CDC 75% of all rabies related human deaths per year occurs in India, of which 99% is caused by dog bites. In Calcutta, over 12 people die every month from rabies. Furthermore, 30,000 new cases of rabies related deaths are reported every year in India and many others go unreported, making this a humanitarian issue as well as an animal rights issue.

continued next page



DRIVING MISS DAISY

Miss Daisy is a sweet and loving 13-year old cat that wants to hang out with you and enjoy a cozy place to sleep. Miss Daisy loves people and enjoyed life as a well-loved neighborhood cat. Then something changed in her neighborhood. Children began shooting cats with BB guns. She is very affectionate but has been a little sensitive since being hurt. She has decided to remember her many wonderful experiences with people rather than the bad ones. If you can drive Miss Daisy home, please pay this beautiful girl a visit at the shelter.

There is no adoption fee for Miss Daisy.

photos by Michelle Lohutko



Animal control and health must be a high priority to minimize the spread of various diseases. Until recently, there were no regulations in India, in part due to lack of education, funding and proper animal welfare laws. Animal welfare is not merely an issue of emotion rather a critical need in Indian society. Lack of kindness and public awareness has led to increasing crimes against animals.

Michelle's work is intended to raise awareness about the stray dog population in India and to raise funds for supporting the benevolent work of ASHARI, the only organization in Calcutta that spays, neuters, vaccinates and shelters stray dogs.

Michelle will donate 100% of the sales from photos sold at the Animal Refuge League; 50% will go to ASHARI, while the other 50% will benefit the ARL's spay/neuter fund.

Be sure to stop by to see Michelle's photos and future artists' work!

THE REFUGE



COCKTAIL PARTY & SILENT AUCTION
A NEW EVENT FROM THE ANIMAL REFUGE LEAGUE

APRIL 1, 2009



Proposed plate design pictured. Final design may differ slightly.

let's make it happen!

The ARL has teamed up with Planet Dog and an alliance of adoption proponents in Maine to sponsor the *adopt* specialty license plate initiative.

With 2,000 \$25 purchases before September 1, we can make this a reality. Visit www.arlgp.org for details.

introducing toni mcLellan

Meet Toni McLellan, the ARL's Director of Operations since May 2008. If I had to choose just two adjectives to describe Toni, they would be "compassionate" and (very) "competent." Toni brings long experience and a passion for animal welfare to her job. She has the friendly, candid demeanor of a Midwesterner. "Most of my career has been about wildlife, but I have volunteered in the animal welfare field for many years."

She worked for the U.S. Forest Service for 13 years as a wildlife biologist, covering 20 states. Toni, a native of Racine, Wisconsin, has also worked as a research scientist at UNH, and lives in Rochester, New Hampshire. Her husband is a native New Englander and also a forester. At present they have two female cats, Lucinda and Yoda, but Toni plans to adopt at least two special needs cats from the ARL.



Yoda was rescued in Louisiana after Hurricane Katrina (where Toni was volunteering), and her story is a poignant one. The tiny kitten was found valiantly swimming, though her littermates and mother had drowned. She was very sick and had to be treated for multiple illnesses and problems. Yoda is a very lucky cat.

Toni talks with intensity about animals with special medical needs, and older ones who are harder to find homes for. She mentioned the new special needs page on the ARL website. "I have a special place in my heart for older animals." Toni started an animal hospice program in one of her volunteer jobs before the ARL, and she is also the Regional Team Leader for the Disaster Animal Response Team (DART) in New Hampshire. Even on her vacations, Toni will often visit animal shelters and facilities. "My husband and I took a cross-country driving trip and were able to visit Best Friends Animal Sanctuary in Utah, a very impressive place."

She has high praise for the ARL staff. "I am so impressed with their level of dedication, creativity, and resourcefulness." Toni is proud of the incredibly high adoption rate the ARL has – 92% of surrendered animals are placed. (In the animal shelter world, an 80% placement rate is considered excellent.) And the ARL staff does exemplary work with an outdated and too-small facility. Toni says, "I look forward to the day when the ARL can build a new, modern facility so that we can do our jobs and control disease even better than we do now." She is enthusiastic about the new "dog manners" classes being offered at the ARL, Canine Manners and Puppy Kindergarten.

Toni talked about the renovations being done to the lobby and multi-cat rooms at the ARL. In this difficult economy, many more cats are being surrendered because owners have to move and can't take a cat, or afford to support it. The ARL has struggled this year with record numbers of cats and kittens needing adoption. Toni mentions Miss Daisy, a lovely black and white cat who has been an ARL resident for more than a year, and would very much like to find a forever home. She makes a special point to give Miss Daisy some affection every day.

paws in the park

A dog walk to benefit the
Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland



Fun for the whole family
Entertainment • Games • Food

Sunday, September 14, 2008
Deering Oaks Park, Portland

Registration begins at 10 a.m.

Download pledge sheets and learn more at www.arlgp.org
or call 207.854.9771



Animal Refuge League
OF GREATER PORTLAND

Can't make it to the event but still want to help? Pledge your support at www.arlgp.org/support

lobby renovations complete!

When entering the main building of the Animal Refuge League of Greater Portland, visitors will get a much more enjoyable experience than they're used to receiving in the past. Our new lobby is a warm, bright, and welcome space.

"We wanted to create an entrance that would make people feel as comfortable as possible while acting as a central hub for the shelter," Andrew Ferreira, Executive Director said. "When people come in, we want them to know that this is a place where animals are loved."

To make this possible, the shelter eliminated the rigid feel of the former lobby and opted for a more open and welcoming environment. The redesigned lobby features a separate entrance and reception desk for animal surrenders. This was added to address the need for privacy in what often are very difficult decisions.



"Our main objective was to create a space that downplays the fact that you're in an animal shelter but rather a place of second chances and hope. I think we've successfully managed to do that," said Toni McLellan, Director of Operations.



"We chose to use brighter colors and light colored wood in a more open concept to provide a professional but cheerful feel," Ferreira said. The main reception desk as well as new the gift shop is situated in the new lobby to provide an easier flow of visitor traffic in and out of the shelter. In addition, a large window gives visitors an excellent view of the redesigned cat multi-area. We have created a cozy living room like surroundings in the multi-room so that potential adopters can interact with these cats in a home-like atmosphere. Please see our wishlist below for items we can use for the multi-room.

The renovated lobby also features original artwork and photographs that capture joys as well as the heartaches of animal welfare.

fluffy to the rescue!



Owning a cat may cut your risk of heart attack death, researchers at the University of Minnesota's Zeenat Qureshi Stroke Research Center have found. During a ten-year study, subjects with cats were 40 percent less likely to die from heart attack than their catless counterparts. Feline companionship may actually help combat heart-harming stress and anxiety; a comparable effect has already been shown in studies of dog owners.

source AARP

multi-room wish list

small lounge chairs
ottomans
kitty jungle gyms
climbing furniture
climbing posts
small tables
kitty condos

if you have any of the items above you would like to donate, please bring them in!

support the life-saving programs of the Animal Refuge League

Help us give animals a second chance at finding their way home. Your generous pledge helps us provide care for dogs, cats and small animals in need. **Pledge at www.arlgp.org/support by clicking here** - it's fast and easy. From everyone at the Animal Refuge League, we thank you for your support.

