



# HUMANE SOCIETY OF SCHUYLER COUNTY NEWSLETTER

October 2002

## Protect Your Pet From Winter's Woes

Winter in Schuyler County can be wet and cold. Help your pets remain happy and healthy during the colder months by following these simple guidelines provided by the Humane Society of The United States.

Don't leave dogs outdoors when the temperature drops. Most dogs, and all cats, are safer indoors, except when taken out for exercise. Short-coated dogs may feel more comfortable wearing a sweater during walks.

No matter what the temperature, wind-chill can threaten a pet's life. If your dog is an outdoor dog, provide him protection with a dry, draft-free doghouse, large enough to allow the dog to sit and lie down comfortably, but small enough to hold in his/her body heat. The floor should be raised a few inches off the ground and covered with cedar shavings or straw. The house should be turned to face away from the wind, and the doorway should be covered with waterproof burlap or heavy plastic.

Pets who spend a lot of time outdoors need more food in the winter because keeping warm depletes energy. Check your pet's water dish often to make certain the water is fresh and unfrozen. Use plastic food and water bowls rather than metal; when the temperature is low, your pet's tongue can stick and freeze to metal. Warm engines in parked cars attract cats and small wildlife who may crawl up under the hood. Bang on your car's hood to scare them away.

The salt and other chemicals used to melt snow and ice can irritate the pads of your pet's feet. Wipe the feet with a damp towel before your pet licks them.

Antifreeze is a *deadly* poison, but it has a sweet taste that may attract animals and children. Wipe up all spills and store antifreeze out of reach. Better yet, use antifreeze-coolant made with propylene glycol; if swallowed in small amounts, it will not hurt pets or wildlife.

## Kit Cat Connection Debuts at Lakes End Pet Shop

As most of our members know, the Humane Society of Schuyler County does not own or operate a shelter. We work to increase adoptions of dogs from the County Dog shelter by producing the weekly color dog poster and by featuring shelter dogs on Petfinder.com. If you have looked at the poster and web site lately, you will see some adoptable feline beauties also. The County dog shelter does not provide any outlet to adopt homeless cats, and without a shelter of our own, we also have had no opportunity to help them——until now.

Thanks to Lakes End Pet Shop on Franklin Street in Watkins Glen, we can finally showcase a few of these homeless cats. If you are considering adopting a cat companion, please stop by Lakes End and meet some of the cats and kittens on display there.

Potential owners fill out an adoption agreement and pay an adoption fee of \$35.00. Your new kitten or cat will receive basic vaccinations, and we will provide spay/neuter assistance. Since the program started on August 3rd, we have managed to find homes for 20 cats. We will soon be expanding our efforts at the store by featuring a photo album and bulletin board of other adoptable cats in local foster homes. We also hope to post lost and found pictures and notices to help reunite pets and their owners.

This is a very small start to help a few of the many homeless cats in our county, but we want to see this program expand. If you need help finding a home for a cat, feel free to post a picture at the store, but please be considerate of the wonderful people at Lakes End and do not show up with a basket full of kittens. Any inquiries need to be directed to the Humane Society phone 546-7710. This is a brand new program, so we could become overwhelmed quickly with cats needing homes. If you can take care of them, please continue to do so. We can offer spay/neuter assistance to help. If you absolutely can't take care of them, give us a call, but understand that we don't have a shelter and can only do so much to help. The best way to control the number of unwanted litters in Schuyler County is to take responsibility for having your pet spayed or neutered. Call 546-7710 and leave a name and address to receive an application for spay/neuter certificates redeemable at local vets.

### **Would you like to adopt a pet but are afraid of commitment? Consider being a foster mom and dad.**

We are in need of foster parents that would be willing to keep kittens and cats and help socialize them for adoption. If you can help, please call the Humane Society message phone at 5467710 and leave your name, phone number and that you are interested in fostering.





## Peter

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Often when people hear of an assistance dog, their thoughts go automatically to the seeing eye dog, picturing faithful Labradors or German Shepherds guiding their owners through the streets.

Assistance dogs come in many forms. There are dogs that assist wheelchair bound owners with such tasks as turning on lights, opening the refrigerator, picking up items the owner drops, emptying the dryer, and even as in the case of one Papillon – making the beds.

A new type of assistance dog that we are finding more frequently is a hearing assistance dog. Peter, a Schipperke is one such dog. I am severely hearing impaired, and even with the help of state of the art hearing aids, often cannot pick up the sounds of a ringing phone, a knock at the door, the smoke alarm and more. I had become intrigued with what I read about hearing dogs, so I purchased a book on them called, “Lend Me an Ear” by Martha Hoffman.

She describes the type of dog one looks for in a hearing dog. Most frequently they, like the papillon who makes beds, are dogs found in the pound. They tend to often be the small breeds of dogs – the ones you may ignore because they are yappy, and bouncing off the wall. When the groups who train them for hearing disabled come across this type of dog, they know that the first requisites are in place — a dog who reacts to his surroundings and is vocal in letting you know it! There are a series of tests you perform on the prospective companion to see if they are right for the job. Though I breed and train dogs and had a large selection to choose from – none of my own dogs passed the tests. I then began to contemplate smaller breeds and narrowed it down to several of my favorites.

At a dog show in Syracuse, word had gotten around what I was looking for, and a Schipperke breeder had a dog which had been on the show circuit, but as he grew he developed a slight problem with his teeth which would prevent him from continuing. He showed all of the signs I was looking for...if there was the slightest sound in the house, such as snow falling off the roof, Peter would sound off, and go check it out. My husband and I took a trip to her kennel and tested Peter and found him perfect for the job. His breeder, Shirley Smith, gave him to me, happy to have him perform such a useful service.

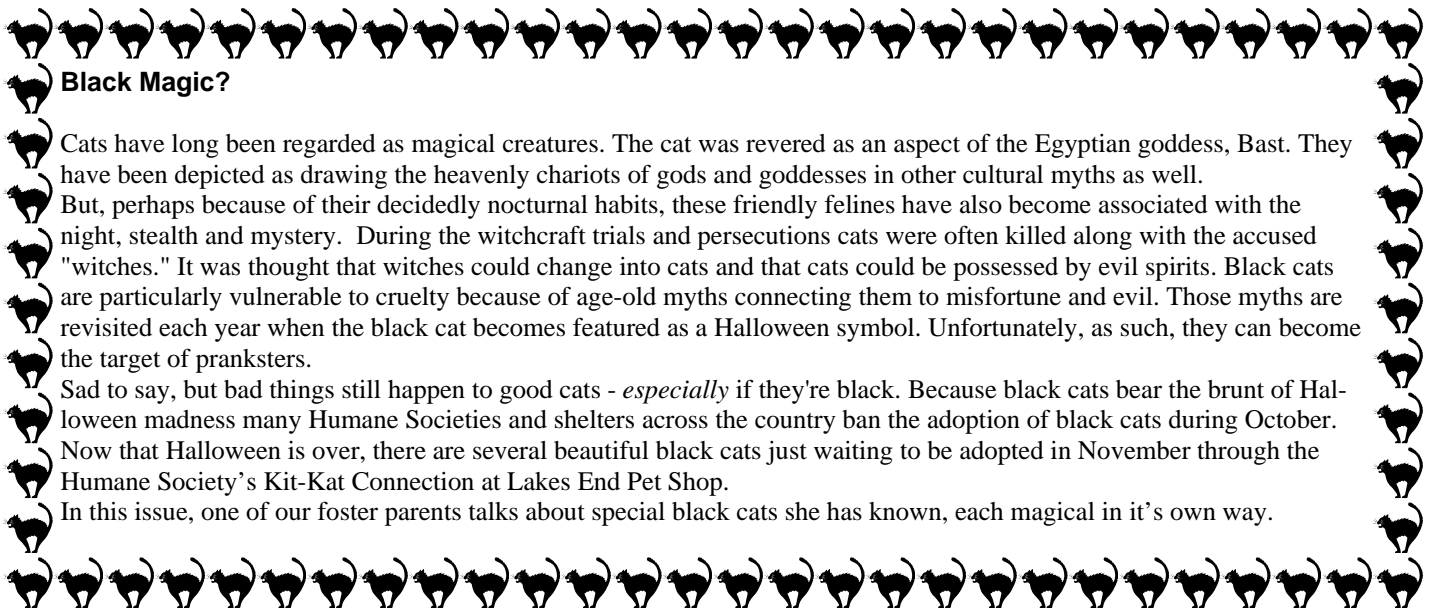
Following the techniques I found in the book, I soon was able to redirect his behavior to that which I needed. I also worked with him on lead, took him to classes to get his CGC (Canine Good Citizen) degree, and socialized him by taking him everywhere with me. All assistance dogs are legally entitled to the same rights and privileges as a Seeing Eye dog. Peter can go into a store, hospital or church with me. He can fly on a plane. We carry a legal card listing all of his rights and who to call to clarify them when you run across someone who doesn't believe you! Peter also wears a bright orange jacket in public when he is working, which declares him a Hearing Dog, and he also is licensed by the state as an Assistance Dog. I don't take him in public with me as much as I am entitled to, as usually I travel with my husband, family member or a friend, who can alert me to things. However, it is amusing when he is in public, wearing his jacket and people stop and ask me how he talks to me and how does he tell me what people are saying to me. I explain that obviously he can't talk or

translate to me, but he lets me know by barking or pawing me, about other things such as people or cars coming up behind me, people calling my name, dangerous situations I am oblivious to, and more. At home he is invaluable to me in letting me know when people have arrived at my business or home, when the phone is ringing, or something is amiss such as a puppy in the wastebasket. Sometimes it gets tiring responding to all of his alerts, but that is part of the training...he must receive a reward (praise in his case) and you must check things out so that he knows he is needed. When my husband is at home, Peter's workday is through and he knows it. He then becomes a typical family pet – and sometimes an overly mouthy one. He then is reprimanded using a sonic trainer which emits a sound only dogs can hear and works to quiet him down.

As time goes on, I'm sure many more uses for assistance dogs will be discovered. As more organizations are formed to train these dogs, hopefully more dogs in the pounds will find productive, happy lives.

### **What to do if your pet gets lost?**

- Call all shelters in a 50 mile radius and file a missing pet report. Check the shelters often.
- Gather friends and search the neighborhood.
- Post fliers with your pets photo and description, and your phone number. Offer a reward. Put ads in local papers and check the “found section”
- Check close to home first. A pet may return to familiar environments such as a local park.
- Set up a temporary outside pet station with food and familiar items for your pet.



## Black Magic?

Cats have long been regarded as magical creatures. The cat was revered as an aspect of the Egyptian goddess, Bast. They have been depicted as drawing the heavenly chariots of gods and goddesses in other cultural myths as well.

But, perhaps because of their decidedly nocturnal habits, these friendly felines have also become associated with the night, stealth and mystery. During the witchcraft trials and persecutions cats were often killed along with the accused "witches." It was thought that witches could change into cats and that cats could be possessed by evil spirits. Black cats are particularly vulnerable to cruelty because of age-old myths connecting them to misfortune and evil. Those myths are revisited each year when the black cat becomes featured as a Halloween symbol. Unfortunately, as such, they can become the target of pranksters.

Sad to say, but bad things still happen to good cats - *especially* if they're black. Because black cats bear the brunt of Halloween madness many Humane Societies and shelters across the country ban the adoption of black cats during October.

Now that Halloween is over, there are several beautiful black cats just waiting to be adopted in November through the Humane Society's Kit-Kat Connection at Lakes End Pet Shop.

In this issue, one of our foster parents talks about special black cats she has known, each magical in it's own way.

## Special black Cats I have known

Twinkie, also known as Tinkerbell, was the first kitten I rescued. She was a really laid back black kitten that lived at a home where I cleaned. The kids would carry her around and she would just lay in their arms. It finally became very apparent that her laid back manner was due to the fact that she was quite sick. It was several weeks before I could persuade the family to let me adopt her and take her to a vet. By that time, she was so sick, that the vet couldn't guarantee that she would survive, but we started her on medication. Many trips to the vet (car sick every time), and careful monitoring soon resulted in an incredible transformation. Laid back Twinkie quickly became a bounding around Twinkletoes. Although I lost her to old age several years ago, she always stayed that sweet kitten and will always have a special place in our hearts.

Ms. Beasley was only about six weeks old when rescued four years ago. She fell into a

bucket of oil at a friend's farm. When found, she had managed to crawl out of the bucket, leaving a trail of oil behind. We managed to wipe most of it off, but we knew we had to get the oil off of her or she would die. Ms. Beasley came home with me and went right into the tub. Three changes of water and plenty of hand cleaner later, she was as clean as I could get her. She did get sick from her oil swim, but recovered nicely and has become a welcome member of our family. Her favorite place to sleep is on top of the water heater with her head on the pipes. It looks pretty uncomfortable to me, but she seems ok with it. We've told her that since she is already black, she has to avoid all future oil baths.

Sissy and her siblings were born wild in an old equipment barn. Once I discovered them, it took lots of patience and perseverance to get close to them. I started taking them food every night, hiding while they ate. Finally they would eat with me watching and

eventually would let me get closer and closer until I could catch them. Sissy is still with me and is the old lady of the house. She likes to talk to me, and normally would come out only for me, but since I have become involved in fostering, she comes out to visit us all.

Boomerang, Dan, Sweetie and Precious were all rescued at 2-3 weeks of age. They were starving, and because they were so young, they had to be fed with eye droppers and baby bottles. They also needed special care because they all had upper respiratory infections. Boomerang was quick to catch onto the bottle, and would immediately come looking for dinner anytime anyone entered the room. He was always the first to be fed, but when we put him down to feed another, he was always coming back, trying to take the bottle back from his brother and sisters—which is why we named him Boomerang. Sweetie is just that—a real sweetheart. She loves to sit in our laps, put her

paws up on our shoulders and purr up a storm. Her nickname is Drooler. When she is really happy and purring away, she drools. Because of her poor start in life, Sweetie does have chronic eye problems and needs a little special attention. Dan loves individual attention, so instead of sharing our laps with other cats, he will instead come in and take a shower with us. If the door is closed on him when we shower, he will insist on rubbing on our wet legs and climbing into our laps afterward. Precious was the runt, and we were sure that she would stay that way, but she caught up with her siblings. This year she was just as big as the other three and every bit as special. **Boomerang, Dan and Precious are currently looking for new homes, as they are not as happy sharing their home with the newest rescues. They would prefer a house with only two or three cats. If interested in adopting, please call 546-7710.**

## Postal Service unveils Neuter/Spay stamps

### Spay/Neuter Clinic Totals

The Humane Society of Schuyler County is proud of the fact that a grant for the purchase of surgery instruments in 2000 has since grown into a three county effort. With the continued help of local and Cornell Veterinarians and technicians, along with Humane Society volunteers from Tompkins, Cortland and Schuyler—we will have spayed or neutered approximately 1000 feral/barn cats and cats of low income families in the year 2002.

### One cat just leads to another.....

### Ernest Hemingway

[www.Petfinder.com](http://www.Petfinder.com), the website where our shelter dogs and Kit Cat Connection cats are listed, began only a little over 6 years ago. They started with only 13 shelters and 200 animals, and have since grown to listing over 4000 shelters and 90,000 animals in the US and Canada.

Kirby and Samantha, an adorable puppy and kitten, grace a pair of new stamps issued by the US Postal Service that promote Spay/neuter awareness.

Both have been lucky enough to have been adopted, but millions of animals each year are not so lucky and end up in shelters to be eventually euthanized.

The new stamps were issued

On September 20th of this year and should be available for sale for a full year. Please show your support by purchasing them from your local post office. They are also available for purchase through 1-800-STAMP-24 and through [www.ups.com/shop](http://www.ups.com/shop).

An even better way to show your support is to get your pets spayed and neutered. There

are not enough available homes for all the unwanted litters born each year to unaltered animals. The Humane Society of Schuyler County can assist with certificates toward your vet bill. Most vets in the area do honor these certificates. Please call the Humane Society number at 546-7710 and request an application. We will help as long as our funds permit.

## Why spay or neuter your pets

The biggest reason of all is the millions of animals euthanized in shelters each year. Shelters can't take care of them all. Only spaying and neutering will end the overpopulation problem.

Your pet's personality will probably be the better for it. Not being distracted by the instinctual need to find a mate may help your pet be calmer and stop roaming. Less roaming and fighting will also mean less risk of injury and infection, thus eliminating expensive vet bills. Neutering can eliminate the objectionable urine odor in male cats, decrease roaming, fighting and territorial marking. Health benefits also include decreased incidence of mammary cancer, and decreased likelihood of prostate problems or testicular cancer in male dogs.

Letting your cat or dog have a litter, even if you are committed to finding them good homes, still contributes to the problem. Can you really be sure that the new owners will not let their animals have unwanted litters? Please spay and neuter your pet.

## Spring Rummage Sale to Benefit the Humane Society Building Fund

Snow fall usually brings to mind the Month of November, but we were treated to a special snow fall for the Humane Society Rummage sale held on May 18th of this year.

In spite of horrible weather and cold temperatures, shoppers turned out to make this the biggest fund raiser we have ever held, raising over \$1400. Proceeds went to our Building Fund.

We want to thank our newest

board member, Georgie Taylor, and her crew of hard working volunteers for collecting merchandise, pricing, cooking and organizing this event.

Special thanks to Kim and Jim Kurtz of Kurtz Enterprises for letting us set up near their store and keeping us unthawed by running their warehouse heater in our tent for the entire day.

We hope to make this an annual Spring event, so keep us in mind when you are cleaning out those closets, and donate non-clothes items to the Humane society. We will post details later as to collection sites

Additional thanks to Stillman's Greenhouse, Carol Bower Catering, Carls Rent-All and Chris Betts Pet Grooming for helping make it a success. Our local merchants are wonderful.





# Assistance animals come in all shapes and sizes

Dogs are always in the spotlight as working companions for people with disabilities, but the article on Peter made me start looking at some of the other types of healing relationships we have with animals.

Most organizations that I found do train dogs because they make loyal, intelligent, loving companions. Some organizations specifically target shelter animals to train as disabled companions. A few organizations train capuchin monkeys to help quadriplegics lead a more independent life. They can perform simple everyday tasks such as getting something to eat or drink, turning on lights, assisting with CDs and video tapes, picking up items etc. They can't take the place of a permanent caretaker or family member, but are an extra hand for the small things, and can be affectionate loving companions for those long days of immobility. A surprise to me was that apparently for accidents resulting in a person becoming a quadriplegic, the median age is 26, a time when most of us have not been living a life independent from family for long, to suddenly be back to being dependant again.

I found another organization that trains miniature horses as guide animals for the Blind. Horses can be calm, focused and safe companions that will be alert to changes and unsafe conditions. Guide horses are long lived, can be housebroken, and may be the preferred choice for someone who was comfortable with horses prior to being blind, or who has allergies to dogs.

My web surfing next took me to animals as therapy, I found inspiring stories of blind and wheelchair bound people that still rode their horses, and whose relationship was such that their horses were able to teach them independence again.

I found a therapeutic riding center called the Carousel and another called Circle of Hope that daily witnesses small miracles when emotionally and physically scarred children that are closed off to everything else, will bond to their horse.

Dolphin therapy, although not studied formally, makes claims of successes in behavior modification breakthroughs with disabled children or with children with autism or other neurological disorders. Swimming with the dolphins helps them relax and open up to

more conventional therapies.

Others make training the animals the therapy, as in prison inmates training guide dogs, or community service opportunities for troubled teens.

More and more, animals are being welcomed into nursing homes and hospitals as company for the residents, and for the calming effects they have.

There are yet other organizations that help by taking care of the companion animals of terminally ill patients. Their focus is to do the litter scooping, dog walking, feeding, vet visits, boarding during a hospital stay, and all the other things that might ordinarily mean that a seriously ill person would have to lose the companionship of a dear animal friend during a dark time in their life.

If you ever doubt the therapeutic qualities of animals, just think about how relaxing and calming it can be to sit petting and talking to your animal companion. Unlike some of your human friends, they can be trusted to keep confidences and listen. Treat them with care and respect in return and they will reward you with love—and what better therapy.

Not all animals are suited for therapy work, but if you feel you and your pet are up to the challenge, Cornell Companions is a therapy animal assistance program run by the Cornell Veterinary College. If a pet has the right temperament for therapy visits, animals and owners go through a training program, and volunteer time at local hospitals, nursing homes and children's centers.

Kindness is the language that the deaf can hear and the blind can see.  
Mark Twain

**Memorial donations have been made to the Humane Society of Schuyler County in memory of the following individuals and animals**

Mary Jane Claire (member)	Theresa Ford	Edythe Roberts (member)
Bertha Russell		Audrey Long (member)
Preeti Bagchi		Celia Raupp

Keuka, pet companion of David Goldman and Laurie Henley

**Our yearly membership renewal will begin in December for the year 2003-2004. We appreciate your continued membership support. Renew early and save us an additional mailing in December, or pass this along to a friend that you think might be interested in supporting the Humane Society. We can't do it without your membership dollars and volunteer support.**

Yes! I want to join the Schuyler County Humane Society to help improve the welfare of animals in Schuyler County.

Yes! I want to renew my membership for 2003-2004.(I've checked the membership level below)

\$20 Single (\$5 for each additional Family Member)    \$50 Friend    \$100 Sponsor

Additional donation to support:    Building fund    Spay/Neuter Fund

Feed and care for animals    Where needed most    Kit Cat Connection

I am willing to volunteer time. Please call me to find out how I can help.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail address \_\_\_\_\_

**All donations are tax deductible**

Please make the check payable to Humane Society of Schuyler County and mail to: Humane Society of Schuyler County, PO Box 427, Montour Falls, NY 14865-0427

## **Presidential Pets**

Like any other household, the presidential pets are family members; but unlike most households, these pets are often in the news, and as well known as their owners. George W. Bush has a Springer spaniel named Spot, a Scottish Terrier named Barney and a cat named India. The Bushes' orange cat Ernie (named after Ernest Hemingway) is currently living with a family friend, having been judged as being a little too wild for life in the White House. Ofelia, his favorite longhorn, stays at the ranch. At the time when the Bush daughters were repeatedly in the spotlight, reporters noted that he mentioned Spot and Barney a lot, but never his daughters. Also like any household, our pets are often a lot less trouble than our children.

The Clinton household held Buddy the Labrador and Socks the Cat. Socks had quite a following of her own. Volunteers from the United States Soldiers and Airmen's home in Washington DC handled answering mail for Socks—an average of 1500 letters a month. Whenever a Socks news story would surface, her letters would sometimes swell to 2000 a week.

George Bush had a Springer spaniel named Millie and one of her sons named Ranger. Who could forget Millie as the only dog to write a book, Millie's Book, dedicating it to her mom, Barbara Bush.

Jimmy Carter, Gerald Ford and Ronald Reagan also all had dogs——Grits, Liberty, Lucky and Rex.

President Nixon's dog Checkers, a spaniel, figured prominently in his 1952 speech.

Franklin Roosevelt had his Scottish terrier, Fala who went just about everywhere with him. He once had a destroyer turn around when he discovered that his Fala had been left behind, costing taxpayers of the time \$15000.

Lyndon Johnson once received his share of condemnation for a picture of his holding one of his dogs up by the ears. He and his family had three dogs, Her, Luci and Yuki. Yuki was found abandoned in a Texas gas station and was adopted by his daughter Lucy. President Johnson and Yuki apparently used to like to sing together to visiting dignitaries.

President Theodore Roosevelt's bull terrier Pete, on the other hand, is best known for biting a hole out of the French ambassador's pants during a White House Reception.

Some of our past presidents have had an assortment of pets. John Quincy Adams had an alligator, while his wife had a fondness for silk worms. Martin Van Buren had two tiger cubs while he was in office. Thomas Jefferson took a mockingbird to Washington with him, and was also given two bear cubs by Louis and Clark. Grover Cleveland also had mockingbirds. William Taft had Pauline Wayne the cow. Several had goats——Abraham Lincoln, William Harrison, and Benjamin Harrison. Lincoln had several animals, including a dog that was stabbed by a drunk in the street a year after President Lincoln had been assassinated. Calvin Coolidge had a wallaby, a pygmy hippo, lion cubs and a bear. Andrew Jackson preferred mice.

**I'm thinking we might have had a more interesting political history if we had elected their pets instead!!!**

# Yearly Calendar of Events and How You Can Help

## Free spay/neuter clinics for feral cat populations and low income residents (2-3 Sundays during the year as funding permits)

- Donate old towels and bedding
- Donate food to help feed volunteers (25 to 30 vets, techs and Humane Society volunteers each clinic)
- Loan crates and carriers, folding tables, fans, heaters, ,microwaves (for food and for heating up warmers for the animals)
- Help make confirmation calls and do mailings of maps to Cornell and instructions to clients prior to clinic.
- Help with paperwork during check-in and check-out
- Monitor animals during their recovery, keeping them warm and changing bedding.
- Help with setup Saturday night or cleanup Sunday night.

## Golf Tournament (Usually a Saturday in August or September)

- Play!!! A \$50.00 fee will get you 18 holes of golf, great food and wine and prizes from local merchants.
- A meal is part of the fun. Dessert donations are always appreciated.
- Help visit local merchants to collect gift certificates and other donations for prizes.

## Rabies Clinic (10-2 on a Sunday in September or October)

- Loan tables and help set up
- Fill out rabies certificates
- Donate fall decorations
- Distribute posters
- Feed volunteers

**3rd Annual Humane Society Golf Tournament**

## Spring Rummage Sale

- Collect non clothing items for sale
- Help with pricing and set up
- Feed our volunteers (We seem to eat a lot)
- Loan tables
- Donate storage space or storage rental space throughout the year



## Other Ways to help

- Help man a booth at Village Christmas in Watkins Glen
- Be a foster parent for the Kit Cat Connection
- Help with membership and newsletter mailings
- Contribute articles for a newsletter
- Write thank you notes
- Walk dogs at the shelter on Saturdays 10-12, possibly more often, if coordinated with other dog walkers. (All dog walkers must file a waiver with the sheriff department)
- Work on an education committee
- Help with mobile dog and cat adoptions

Special thanks to John Yeager and Ginny Heath for making the tournament such a success. They raised over a \$1000 for our building fund. We would also like to thank all the local merchants who donated prizes

**If you are interested in helping with any of these events, or have fund raising ideas of your own, please call 387-6589 or 387-4276. We can do so much more with a larger volunteer force.**



Humane Society of Schuyler County  
PO Box 427  
Montour Falls, NY 14865-0427

Phone: 607-546-7710  
Fax: 607-387-7148

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**PLEASE BECOME  
A MEMBER OR  
VOLUNTEER**

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## **National pet related statistics**

- 63% of pet guardians tell their animal companions “I love you” at least once a day
- 59% celebrate their pets’ birthdays
- 78% talk to their pets in a voice different from their regular one
- 83% refer to themselves as their pets “Mom” or “Dad”
- 52% believes their pet listens to them better than their spouses, significant others, etc.
- 90% would not consider dating someone who disliked their pet(s)
- 36% have named someone as the future guardian of their pet(s)
- 46% have sent a greeting card from the dog or cat
- 52% are better at remembering the names of the neighbor’s pet(s), than that of the actual neighbor

Source: 2001 Pet owner survey, American Animal Hospital Association

“I like Pigs. Dogs look up to us. Cats look down on us. Pigs treat us like equals”  
Sir Winston Churchill