



**Please meet a very special volunteer!**

**Perry McGee**

travels internationally teaching her training methods and Perry manages the direct mail portion of the business from the farm in Tyrone. There, he also manages the llama sanctuary he established in 1998.

Fast forward to the early '90s when Perry first became involved in the Humane Society. You might have seen him - chauffeuring the motley crew of County Shelter dogs to and from their extended visits to Cornell for spay or neuter operations. This program both significantly increased adoptions and dramatically reduced the rate of euthanasia at the County Shelter. Due in large part to Perry's efforts, this was one of the most successful partnerships between the Humane Society and the County.

Today, Perry continues to play a key role in what he believes to be one of the most important initiatives of the Humane Society - the spay and neuter programs. Twice a month you'll find him carrying in medical supplies and lunch, cajoling a 150 pound Rottweiler out of his crate, assisting the veterinarian in exams or wearing a surgical mask in the operating room for a full day of surgery. With no formal medical training Perry has assumed primary responsibility as "operating room assistant", readying animals for surgery and serving as the liaison to the recovery room. Even during what may appear to others as a crisis, Perry remains calm. In fact, we've nicknamed him the "cat whisperer" as he can coax the most feral feline to the surgery table. Quiet and unassuming, Perry is a lynch pin to the successful operation of the Society's spay/neuter program.

He is clearly committed to the missions of Shelter Outreach Services and the Humane Society - that of ending overpopulation of unwanted dogs and cats. Perry is a true advocate of the initiatives to spay, neuter, house and feed the county's feral cat population. He often has a shelter dog or two in foster care and hopes that in the near future we will once again have the wherewithal to have a formal foster cat program or, better yet, a shelter of our own. In addition to the success of the Humane Society's spay/neuter programs, Perry finds great reward in finding the right home for those who have none. He can't imagine that someone who loves animals could find greater satisfaction than he has found in volunteering. We hope you will too.

THANK YOU , PERRY FOR ALL YOU DO!



Perry McGee assists in Operating Room

Seven dogs, nine cats, an alpaca, two sheep, two emus, one goffin cockatoo, one blue and gold macaw, a fostered pot bellied pig named Duncan and assorted shelter dogs! Phew! Is it Noah and the ark? No, it's Perry McGee at home with his own version of the ark.

This issue of The Volunteer Spotlight features Perry, a man who clearly loves animals - of all shapes and sizes. Read on to see how Perry's ark came about, what motivates him and how he believes the Humane Society can best contribute to the community.

Let's roll back the calendar to 1983. Newly retired from the Army, Perry McGee and his wife Marty find a beautiful piece of property in Schuyler County to call home and begin a breeding program for llamas, just at the beginning of the llamas popularity in the US. Not only did Perry and Marty breed and raise llamas but Marty, a fiber artist, spun and wove the wool into gorgeous custom sweaters and other wool items.

When the llama market leveled off in the late '80s Marty developed a particular method of training llamas and alpacas. The two soon developed a line of equipment and materials to support Marty's teaching. Today, while Perry and Marty are no longer husband and wife, they remain great business partners. Marty

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## Investigating Animal Cruelty Workshop held at Montour Fire Academy

On Saturday, October 16, 2004, the New York State Humane Association and the Schuyler County Sheriff's Department co-sponsored a workshop on Investigating Animal Cruelty.

The first speaker, Harry Hovel, spoke in detail about the connection between cruelty to animals and human violence. The statistical data shows that children who abuse animals are very likely to be violent as adults. Nearly all of the children who are animal abusers have either been abused themselves, have witnessed abuse, been bullied repeatedly at school, or were bullies themselves as children. Mr. Hovel pointed out that children abuse animals as a reaction to violence in their environment. They are not born abusers. There are three specific behaviors that psychologists have connected to children who are reacting to violence in their lives. Very often the children start out by wetting their beds (there are, of course, other reasons for kids to wet their beds). They will then move on to setting fires – at about seven years of age or younger. They then will begin abusing animals between seven and ten years of age. Mr. Hovel said that it is of the utmost importance for all of us to watch for these behaviors and to address them promptly and appropriately. We should never ignore animal abuse by children with the attitude of “oh boys will be boys”.

Some of the statistics Mr. Hovel listed are as follows:

- Every year, 4000 kids under 18 commit murder and 5000 commit suicide. Virtually all of these kids had been abused themselves and also abused animals.
- Kids are ten times more likely to abuse animals if they witness abuse.
- “School shooters” – 80% of them are bullies and 50% of them are animal abusers.
- An estimated 1.4 million kids in the U.S. are in gangs – many gang initiations involve animal abuse.
- In a study of 57 families where child abuse was known to be happening – 88% of them also abused their pets.

In studies on violent criminals:

- 46% of sexual homicide perpetrators abused animals
- 48% of convicted rapists abused animals
- 88% of child abusers also abused animals
- 70-80% of spouse abuse situations included animal cruelty

- 30% of child molesters abused animals
- 60% of aggravated assaulters abused animals
- 100% of serial killers abused animals
- Many elder abuse situations also involve animal abuse

Mr. Hovel also pointed out that the U.S. spends between 400-450 billion dollars each year investigating, prosecuting, and housing violent criminals, but we spend very little on prevention. He urgently encouraged us all to focus on helping children and their families who are violent and abuse animals. We will save human lives if we seriously address animal abuse. One of the Humane Society of Schuyler County's main goals is to implement an educational program in our schools that will teach children to respect, care for and protect all forms of life.

The other speakers at the workshop, Susan McDonough, NYS Police Investigator (retired), and Holly Cheever, DVM, spoke about how Humane Societies, veterinarians, law enforcement officials, and citizens have to work together in investigating animal cruelty cases. The first step for all of us – especially law enforcement officials - is to know what the laws are regarding animal care, neglect and cruelty. In New York State, animal cruelty laws are governed by the New York State Agriculture and Markets Department; Article 26 of the New York State Anti-cruelty Laws defines and dictates the details of animal cruelty laws. There are specific laws that state that all animals must have appropriate food, water, shelter, appropriate vet care, must be vaccinated appropriately, cannot be abused physically, and cannot be used as fighting animals. In the past 10 years there has been a huge increase in dog fighting, cock fighting, and unbelievably, horse fighting.

It is the responsibility of law enforcement officials to act on all reported cases of potential animal abuse or neglect. If you report what appears to be neglect or abuse, it will truly help the animal if you note the details of the situation: the date, time, the weather, the details about the type of shelter the animal has, if the animal has access to food and water, and of course the condition and behavior of the animal. If you witness abuse first hand, note the details of what the person is doing and call the police. You should not trespass or try to intervene and put yourself in danger. If it is an ongoing situation, keeping a log book of what is happening and asking

neighbors to also note their observations will help law enforcement officials in successfully prosecuting the case and rescuing the animal. Law enforcement officials should seek out the help of veterinarians to document the condition of abused animals. They should also get humane societies involved so that any animals that are seized can be properly cared for and placed in new homes.

In Schuyler County, we see a lot of dogs chained to trees or doghouses. Often times the doghouses do not meet the standards for appropriate shelter that are stated in Section 353-b of Article 26 and the dogs suffer from exposure (not to mention horrible anxiety and loneliness). The other obvious abuse in our county is the abandonment of cats, which is considered animal cruelty. We currently have a huge problem of homeless and feral cats. This is the result of people not spaying and neutering their cats whose offspring are abandoned near farms, in the woods, or left to roam our villages. These poor cats are usually not vaccinated – even against rabies which is truly a public health hazard – nor are they fed properly – so they over-hunt our native birds and land animals.

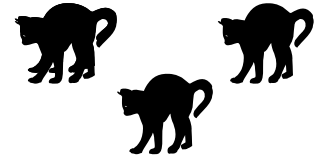
All of the speakers agreed that animal abuse is a horrible, huge problem in our society and that ignoring it leads to violence against humans. We should hold law enforcement officials accountable by following up when we report animal abuse cases to be sure they have acted appropriately. We should petition our judges and district attorneys to take animal abuse seriously by forcing convicted animal abusers, children and adult, to seek counseling, serve jail time (to hopefully rehabilitate them) and pay penalties. We should lobby our elected officials at the local, state, and federal levels to strengthen laws against animal abuse and to fund educational programs, rehab programs for animal abusers, and animal protection societies. We should all learn to care for animals and educate our children to do so also. We can make a difference by working together.

### **NYS Ag and Markets Law requires appropriate shelter for dogs**

Any dog left outside must have ready access to some form of shelter that will offer protection from inclement weather that could adversely affect the health of the dog, including, but not limited to ice, sleet, snow, rain, wind or extreme heat and cold. Appropriate shelter means a waterproof, adequately insulated shelter large enough so that the dog can turn around and lay down comfortably. Owners not in compliance can be fined.

## **National Feral Cat Day Celebrated with Shelter Building Party**

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Volunteers from Schuyler and Tompkins County braved the chill and occasional rain shower, in order to learn how to build cat shelters from Susan Greene, the queen of the Fast Food Ferals. Susan has a very small Wildlife Management company that has been rescuing feral cats in Tompkins County for a number of years, spaying and neutering them, often finding them homes, but more importantly, working to help people learn how to manage a feral cat colony. Many of the day's volunteers were



**Tompkins County  
Volunteers build cat  
shelters. Schuyler  
volunteers were there,  
but managed to dodge  
the camera.**

**Shelter boxes are 4  
foot long by 16 inches,  
built from 1 sheet of  
plywood and 1x3's**



just homeowners wanting to do the 'right thing' in their neighborhoods. Concerned about the number of feral cats in their area, they took ownership and began working through the colony. Once a feral cat colony gets used to a consistent source of food, it's possible to start trapping to spay and neuter, and then release them back to the colony. A healthy spayed and neutered colony will not fight as much among themselves and will also do a better job protecting their territory. **Removing cats from an area is not an effective control method, as new cats will just move in. A healthy stable, neutered population will do a better job of keeping new cats out.**

Susan's Fast Food Feral project has placed shelters and feeding stations along the Elmira Road strip in Ithaca behind some of our favorite fast food haunts. It used to be a common sight for cats to be raiding dumpsters, scrounging for food, and always increasing in numbers. With strong support from local merchants, Susan is now well on the way to turning the Fast Food Ferals into a healthy, stable population, trapping, spaying and neutering to stop uncontrolled population growth.



# Help Save our Swamp Cats

## (A Kit Cat Connection Program)

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We have our own version of the Elmira Road Fast Food Ferals here in Schuyler County. The ‘Swamp Cats’ are something of a local legend, as they make their way along Rte 14 between Montour Falls and Watkins Glen. With the support of businesses along the strip, the Humane Society is making them their first project in an effort to start a trap/neuter/release program for Schuyler County. We will provide shelters and food as we also start catching and neutering these feral cats, to hopefully get this population under control.

We have had successes working with some of the area farms that have large stray and feral populations, in large part due to drop-offs. With help from these committed homeowners, we have been able to concentrate on a particular farm, until most of the colony members have been spayed and neutered. SOS (Shelter Outreach Services) offers low income spay and neuter services to those people who qualify. They will spay and neuter feral cats, and this offers an opportunity for those farmers and homeowners with large stray or feral cat populations that might not otherwise be able to afford it. Area Veterinarians also spay feral animals, but please check with them first.

The Swamp Cats have no owner, but we are lucky in that local merchants are committed to helping get this population under control. This will be a slow process because we are limited in funds and volunteers, but if this program gains momentum, we can move out into other areas as they are identified. If we can make this project work, it will be a big win for both the Swamp cats and residents of Schuyler County.

**Please fund a ‘Fix for a Feral’.**  
**Look for donation jars in local businesses.**  
**Donations can be mailed to: Humane Society of Schuyler County,**  
**PO Box 427, Montour Falls NY 14865.**

### Website Update

Please visit our new website at  
[www.geocities.com/Humanesocietyschuylercounty](http://www.geocities.com/Humanesocietyschuylercounty)

We will let you know about upcoming events, news of our existing programs, and best of all, we showcase some of the adoptable animals needing homes.

Need help with Spay/Neuter assistance????  
Find information and an application for spay/neuter certificates that can be used at your local vet. Or Call 546-7710, leave your name and address, and an application will be sent to you.

Pass our website along to a friend, so that they can learn a little more about us. You’ll find our membership application and a list of ways to volunteer.

Visit [www.cafespress.com/HSSCNY](http://www.cafespress.com/HSSCNY), where we are selling a selection of our paw print men’s and women’s logo tees, doggie tees, cups, caps, totes and aprons to raise money for our programs.

### Ways to help Kit Cat Connection:

- Donate funds to ‘fix a feral’
- Donate food
- Help build or paint cat shelters
- Donate building materials—plywood, 1x3’s, insulated foam board, straw, inexpensive hinges and handles.
- Volunteer to help in the Swamp Cat project
- Donate new or used Live traps to transport ferals to the spay/neuter clinic
- Donate carriers

**Spay/Neuter Certificate Applications—call 546-7710 and leave a name and address.**

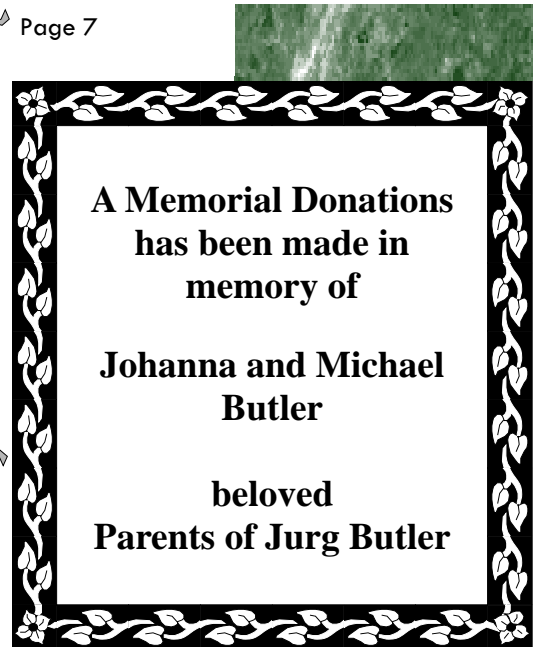
**Shelter Outreach Services low-income clinic, call 596-3639**

## A Special Thank You!!

The Humane Society of Schuyler County would like to send a big thank you to Deb Moglia of the Grist Mill Cafe. Deb donates her wonderful homemade dog bones to her patrons - who in turn donate to the HSSC collection jar. The donations collected at the Grist Mill are used to spay and neuter critters in our county. We really appreciate Deb's contributions and her caring spirit. She is a big animal lover and one of the best chefs around.

Thanks Deb!!!

A thank you donation has also been made in the name of Connie Fern Miller, to thank her for a special kindness.



## Holiday Safety for your Pet

While we all know to keep things like medications and common household chemicals locked away from Children and pets, some relatively common food items can also be hazardous to your pet companions. The holidays are times when we normally over-indulge. We might also be tempted to feed our pets some of our bounty. The following is a list, supplied by the ASPCA, of common foods that can be potentially dangerous to your animal companions:

- Alcoholic beverages should never be given to your pet. Ingesting enough can lead to Alcohol poisoning.
- Yeast dough can expand and present risk to your pet's intestinal system, such as an intestinal rupture. Enough ingested can actually ferment, also leading to alcohol poisoning. Watch for vomiting, diarrhea and drooling.
- Avocados are particularly hazardous to birds, rabbits and mice, but can also be dangerous to other pets. Ingestion usually leads to cardiovascular problems, can cause fluid accumulation around the heart and severe respiratory distress.
- Chocolate (all forms) and Coffee (all forms) can cause similar effects. Look out for vomiting and diarrhea. In addition, your pet may experience hyperactivity, increased heart rate, seizures, tremors and possibly even death, depending on the amount ingested.
- Macadamia nuts have negative reactions in dogs. Enough ingested can cause weakness in the hind legs and gastrointestinal irritation. They can also affect the central nervous system, and can cause depression and muscle tremors.
- Apple seeds and those from other stone fruits contain cyanogenic glycosides. Depending on the dose, you will see gastrointestinal effects, in addition to weakness in coordination and difficulty breathing. In extreme cases, animals can go into shock or coma and can even result in death.
- Onions, onion powder and garlic are all Alliums and can cause gastrointestinal effects and trouble breathing. These substances can also cause significant damage to a pet's red blood cells. Cats are particularly sensitive.
- Raisins and grape ingestion can harm an animals kidneys.
- Non stick cooking sprays, depending on the formulation, contain hydrocarbons which are volatile substances that can cause respiratory tract problems, particularly in birds.

Be prepared for a poisoning emergency by keeping contact numbers for your veterinarian ready and available for use. The ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center is also an information source. A \$50.00 consultation fee may apply (888-426-4435). Be prepared with your name, address, phone number and as much information as possible about your animal, symptoms your animal is experiencing, and what type of poison you suspect was ingested.



**HUMANE SOCIETY OF  
SCHUYLER COUNTY**

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

Phone: 607-546-7710

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**WE'RE ON  
THE WEB!**

[www.geocities.com/  
humanesocietyschuylercounty.](http://www.geocities.com/humanesocietyschuylercounty)  
Or visit  
[www.cafespress.com/HSSCNY](http://www.cafespress.com/HSSCNY)



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**Renew Early for 2005 or pass this along to a friend!**  
**Our volunteers are a small dedicated group, but could do so much  
more with your help! Please Volunteer!!! Become a Member!!!**

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 2005. (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    Racehorse Retirement Program

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