



Arnie Bagchi
The Man Behind the Camera



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Ever wonder who's responsible for all those pug shots (oops, we mean mug shots) for The Schuyler County Dog Poster? It's Arnie Bagchi. Like the postman...rain, snow, sleet or shine... for the past 5 years on Saturday mornings Arnie has been at the Shelter cajoling Schuyler County's homeliest hounds into putting their best faces forward for the camera.

Not only does he manage to make this crew of motley mutts look good in pictures, Arnie also gives each one a name and an identity to call his or her own...something many of them haven't had for quite some time, if ever! Now, ready to be introduced to the public, Arnie creates the well-known dog poster. Since Arnie began providing Schuyler shelter dogs national coverage about a year ago through posting their pictures to the Petfinder web site (www.petfinder.com), the adoption rate has increased dramatically. When asked what keeps him motivated, Saturday after Saturday, week after week, Arnie replies, "That's easy. Anything I can do to help these dogs to find, permanent, loving homes is motivation enough for me".

We're fortunate that the Farm Sanctuary brought Arnie and his wife Mary Lou to Watkins Glen 10 years ago. Their deep appreciation of the natural beauty of the area and the satisfaction they both find in their work will keep them here forever, says Arnie. Having graduated from the University of Buffalo with a Masters Degree in Social Work, Arnie works as a Supervising Social Worker at the Schuyler County Mental Health Clinic when he's not volunteering for the Humane Society. Ironically, Arnie is allergic to cats and dogs, so he and Mary Lou

share their house with a cockatiel named Sebastian and the inhabitants of a 55 gallon fresh water fish tank.

Arnie has been actively involved with the Humane Society since 1997 and held the office of Secretary for three years. He clearly believes that our most critical initiative is spay/neuter education. Arnie speaks highly of the organization saying that "We do exceptionally well, given what we have (or don't have) to work with. The Humane Society has traditionally been small, but thinks big. There has always been a core of volunteers with boundless energy and commitment."

What advice would Arnie have for someone considering volunteering? "Pick one thing, no matter how small, and stick with it."

Arnie certainly follows his own advice! Through Arnie's efforts over the last five years, hundreds of dogs have been adopted. Arnie's actions truly embody his commitment to the Humane Society. Thank you, Arnie!

VISIT ANIMALS AVAILABLE FOR ADOPTION AT
www.scas.petfinder.org

Call 535-8222 and ask for Bill Everetts.

Dogss are located at the Schuyler County Animal Shelter, which is located on Van Zandt Hollow Road just off of County Line Road.

The shelter is open for walking on Saturdays 10:00-12:00



Humane Society Marks Spay Day USA with 1000 Spay/Neuters

The Doris Day Animal Foundation has designated the last Tuesday in February as Spay Day USA. Spay Day USA is intended to increase public awareness of pet overpopulation and to promote spaying and neutering as an effective and humane means of addressing this issue. Since 1995 the participants in this nationwide event have accomplished over one million spay or neuter operations.

In Schuyler County, The Humane Society marks this event, having accomplished our 1000th spay or neuter surgery since July 2003 and the beginning of the partnership between the Society and Shelter Outreach Services (SOS). Shelter Outreach Services, under the direction of Dr. Leslie Appel, is a not-for-profit 501c (3) corporation established to provide spay or neuter services in conjunction with local animal welfare organizations. The partnership provides spay/neuter services for the companion pets of income eligible area residents, shelter animals and stray and feral populations. Schuyler County Humane Society volunteers provide the scheduling, administrative, and other support on surgery days. Dr. Frank Fielder, of Fingerlakes Animal Hospital, makes his facility available for the clinics.

“These results are impressive”, says Georgie Taylor, President. In February, we passed the 1000 mark, with 1002 animals—— 93 female dogs, 133 male dogs, 390 female cats and 386 male cats having been altered.

These numbers become even more meaningful when one considers that an un-spayed female dog, her mate and their offspring, if none are neutered or spayed would produce 67,000 dogs over 6 years. An un-spayed female cat, her mate and all of their offspring would produce 66,088 over the same time period.”

“This success would not be possible without the commitment of the staff of Shelter Outreach Services, Humane Society volunteers, Dr. Fielder and the residents of Schuyler County who have shown tremendous support for the program”, says Taylor.

Many people who would have otherwise found it difficult to spay and neuter their pets have taken advantage of the program. In celebration of our 1000th surgery, we drew names for a “free spay or neuter”. In a recent note, one recipient writes. “Thank you all so much for taking such good care of all of my cats. Thank you also for making it affordable for me to help contribute to reducing the problem of over population of kitties. And, thank you for our free spay. 1000 cats and dogs - WOW! Good job!” This client, like so many others, worked very hard last spring and summer to catch, spay and neuter all the cats and kittens brought to her farm. Unfortunately, much to her surprise a pregnant female showed up last fall and soon there were nine more. So, one by one, this concerned resident has been getting the kittens vaccinated, spayed or neutered and ready for adoption. Good for her!

Humane Organizations——A long History

There are many Humane Organizations in our country and internationally. They vary in focus and method of operation, but whether it be abused child, animal or spouse, all ultimately want to protect their charges.

America’s first Humane Society was the ASPCA (The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals). It was founded in 1866 by Henry Bergh, a philanthropist and diplomat to Russia, where he first started working to address man’s inhumanity to animals. He also spent time meeting with the president of England’s Royal Society for the prevention of Cruelty to Animals, founded in 1840.

He came back to America with stories, impressions, and a passion to help animals. Bergh and some of New York’s wealthiest, most elite citizens, signed a charter to make it their mission to begin addressing the every day cruelty shown to working horses, farm animals, stray dogs and cats in the city. The society persuaded the New York Legislature to pass the country’s first effective anti-cruelty law.

In 1874, as a private citizen, Bergh used his experience and connections to successfully remove a child, Mary Ellen Wilson from an abusive home. Mary Ellen’s plight resulted in the founding of the New York Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Children. In 1877, the New York SPCC and several societies for the prevention of cruelty to animals joined together to form the American Humane Association. Although better known for animal welfare, it is still an organization devoted to both Child and Animal welfare issues and is a resource for information about the link between animal cruelty, child abuse and domestic violence.

Mary Ellen Wilson's Story

Mary Ellen Wilson was born in 1864 to Francis and Thomas Wilson. Thomas soon died, and his widow was forced to board Mary Ellen while she went out and worked. Francis's economic situation became worse and worse so that eventually she could no longer support her daughter. Mary Ellen was turned over to the city Department of Charities. The department placed her illegally in a home with Mary and Thomas McCormack, who claimed to be Mary Ellen's biological father. Thomas McCormack also soon died. Mary remarried a Francis Connelly and they moved into another area of the city. Mary Connelly badly mistreated Mary Ellen. The neighbors were aware of Mary Ellen's plight. When the Connelly family moved again, one concerned neighbor asked a Methodist Mission worker, Etta Angell Wheeler, whether she would keep an eye on the child. Etta visited the tenements regularly in her work. One tenant was a chronically ill homebound woman named Mary Smitt who was also concerned because of the cries she heard from the Connelly apartment. On the pretext of seeking help for Mary Smitt, Etta Wheeler introduced herself to Mary Connelly and saw firsthand how badly treated Mary Ellen was.

New York did have a law at the time that would permit the state to remove a child from the home, but they were reluctant to do so in the case of Mary Ellen. Etta Wheeler located neighbors that were willing to testify that the child was being abused and went to Henry Bergh, then President of the ASPCA for his help and expertise. Henry Bergh sent a NYSPCA investigator to the Connelly home, posing as a census taker, to gain access to the home and verify that the allegations were true. He used the resulting trial, newspaper contacts and his own experience in the animal cruelty movement to

publicize Mary Ellen's plight. When Mary Ellen was taken to court, accounts described her appalling condition—ragged clothes, bruises all over her body, and a gash over her left eye and on her cheek where Mary Connelly had struck her with a pair of scissors. Mary Connelly was found guilty of felonious assault and sentenced to a year of hard labor in a penitentiary. Mary Ellen was taken into the Court's protection.

Etta Wheeler, the mission worker, continued to take a part in Mary Ellen's life. Mary Ellen eventually married, had children and lived to be 92. While she rarely spoke about her early life to her family, she agreed to attend the American Humane Association's National conference in 1913, where Etta Wheeler told her story.

Mary Ellen's testimony from court accounts described the above injury, along with an idea of what her life was like....."I never dared to speak to anybody, because if I did I would get whipped.....I do not know for what I was whipped.....mamma never said anything to me when she whipped me. I do not want to go back to live with mamma, because she beats me so."

Information about Mary Ellen comes from the ASPCA and the American Humane Association

Animal Abuse and Family Violence

A strong link is recognized between abuse of animals, child abuse and domestic violence. A 1983 study showed that animals were abused in 88% of the homes where substantiated child abuse occurred. A study of women seeking protection at a safe house showed that 71% of those having pets indicated that their partner had threatened, hurt or killed their companion animals, often as a way to control or threaten the family members. A 1995 study noted that 32% of the pet-owning victims of

domestic violence reported that one or more of their children had killed a pet. Some victims refuse to leave an abusive situation because of fear for their pet. The presence of animal abuse in homes with elderly residents may often be an indicator that the elders might also be suffering from abuse.

What's New with Us!!!

The Humane Society regularly meets on the **second Thursday of each month at the Watkins Glen Library Conference Room—starting at 7:00 PM.** We are changing our meeting format by inviting guest speakers to talk of things that might be of interest to our members. We hope to keep business short and sweet and let our guests shine.

January's meeting invited **Marcia Kasprzyk, (Deputy Director), and Jennifer Mehta, (Public Health Nurse) from the Schuyler County Health Department.** We talked about how the Humane Society and County Health Department can work more closely in a common goal of keeping Schuyler County animals healthy and rabies vaccinated. The Humane Society plans to provide volunteer staff at many, if not all of this year's County rabies clinics.

February's cold snowy meeting invited **John and Sue Gregiore of Kestrel Haven, a private bird and wildlife sanctuary in Burdett New York.** Kestrel Haven is devoted to being a year round banding station and has banded over 60,000 birds, 129 different species. Their presentation was about raptors—hawks, owls, eagles, with detailed information about the bird slides shown and about their presence in Schuyler County. They promise to come back and talk about Songbirds and other birds in our area. **Watch for notices of future speakers.**

Please take care of Nature's Spring Babies



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Our Summer Newsletter featured an article about Shelly Schlueter, an experienced Wildlife Rehabilitator in Schuyler County. Shelly is licensed by the New York State and US Fish and Wildlife Service as a Rehabilitator and operates a non profit wildlife rehabilitation facility called Wildkind Care. In an average season, she handles between 200 and 300 injured or orphaned animals—her goal being to provide care so that they might eventually be released back into the wild.

State law actually mandates that only licensed rehabilitators can raise or treat injured animals. Shelly can be contacted through Wildkind Care at 535-6089. The state Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) also maintains a list of licensed wildlife rehabilitators that can be contacted.

Shelly provided us a wealth of information for last years article, but since our newsletter didn't come out until late in the season, we are giving you more detailed information again in time for Spring.

Spring Wildlife Basic Do's and Don'ts

- Good weather brings us outside to work in our yards, doing things like lawn mowing, tree and shrub trimming, brush clearing, cutting hay, pesticide applications, chimney cleaning etc. ———all activities that might disturb a nesting area. Be aware of that when going about home and yard activities to minimize nest disturbance.
- If a nest is disturbed, keep dogs, cats, children and any further disturbances away from the area.
- Shelly cautions against ever touching baby raccoons, skunks or bats due to the possibility of rabies. Call the DEC immediately for the number of a certified Rabies Vector Species Rehabilitator. Keep people and other animals away at all times.
- Remember to always wash your hands after contact with any wildlife. Use gloves or a towel if available when handling.

Animal by Animal Instructions

Rabbits

- If a nest of baby cottontails is disturbed by a lawnmower, dog, cat, etc., first check to see if the animals have been injured. If the babies have been injured, contact a wildlife rehabilitator or Cornell Wildlife Clinic. Otherwise, it is best to let the mother come back to take care of the babies.
- If the babies are uninjured, repair the nest as closely as possible and then give the mother a chance to return. Keep pets, children and other disturbances away. Don't be alarmed if the mother doesn't return immediately. Rabbits usually only nurse their young after dusk. Shelly suggests putting a few pieces of string across the entrance. If in the morning, the string is disturbed but the nest is still intact, the mother has probably been back to nurse her young.

Squirrels

- If an uninjured baby squirrel is found at the base of a tree, give the mother a short time to respond to the babies distress calls. If you stay away, the mother will usually come down and take the baby back to the nest. If she fails to come, do not attempt to feed the baby any milk or other liquid. They can easily aspirate. Call a Wildlife rehabilitator.

Opossums

- If you see a dead opossum in the road and can safely approach, check the animals abdominal pouch to see if it contains any young. Look and listen for babies that might have crawled off of the side of the road. Baby Opossums make a little sneezing sound. Place the opossums into a box with plenty of air holes (using a towel to pick them up) and call Wildkind Care immediately.

Memorial Donations have been made in made in memory of the following people and pets

Leda Bardeen

Regina Klein

Moseley Benedict

Canine friend, Tybee Island Light

Spring Babies cont:

Turtles

- Turtles crossing the road are another animal that you may encounter. If you can safely help it across the road, please do so. Carry it well off the road and **be sure to carry it in the direction in which it was heading.** Do not try and relocate it to a better pond or place. They know where they are going and where their home territory is. Your attempt to take the turtle to a “better” place will increase it’s chance of getting injured or killed as it turns around in a second attempt to go home.

Fawns

- Fawns often wander into people’s yards. The doe usually comes looking for them in a matter of hours. Try to keep people and animals away from the area to allow this to happen. You should only attempt to help if the fawn has been crying for hours or if it appears to be injured. Call a wildlife rehabilitator for help. Do not attempt to feed it cow’s milk or other formula as this can sicken the baby.

Baby Birds

- Healthy, feathered baby birds that are able to hop around should be left alone. At this stage of development, it is normal for them to be out of the nest. The parents will continue to take care of them on the ground until the baby’s flight feathers finish growing. The key is to keep cats, dogs and children away.

- Healthy un-feathered birds should be returned to the nest. The nest is usually located directly above where the baby was found. If the nest cannot be found, is out of reach, or if the baby is injured, please call a licensed rehabilitator for help.

Waterbirds, Ducks, Gulls, Herons, Geese.....

- If an injured or orphaned water bird is found, **do not** put it in a box with a wet towel or water to try and make it feel at home. These birds can easily chill if sick, injured or orphaned and become hypothermic. They should be kept warm and quiet at all kinds. Call a Wildlife rehabilitator for help. When approaching this kind of bird, remember to use care and protect yourself. They can bite and hurt you.

Raptors

- Injured hawks and owls should also be handled very carefully as they can cause much damage with both talon and beak. Call Wildkind or another Wildlife rehabilitator for instructions.

Any frightened wild animal, can injure you or themselves if not handled properly. If in doubt, please call Wildkind Care or another wildlife rehabilitator for help or instructions.

Wildkind Care is run entirely with donations:
Wildkind Care
3674 Cronk Rd.
Montour Falls NY 14865
Shelly can be reached at 535-6089.

Love Thy Neigh-Purr???

The headline said 'Love thy Neigh-Purr', topping an article emailed from a member, that talked about a special animal friendship.

Annie and Tigger live in Victoria Australia, with their owner Jack Bellman. Jack describes Tigger as a nasty old Cat that will bite and hiss and scratch, but just melts around Annie. Tigger is three and Annie is two and they have formed a real bond. Tigger likes to sit on the fence railing and visit with Annie, and even sleeps in Annie's feed bin.



Two days later, a friend emails another article about a Tsunami animal happy ending involving another special animal friendship. At this point I figure this is an omen, so this article is born.

Special Animal Buddies

Owen and Mzee

A baby hippopotamus, swept away from its mother during the Tsunami, has found a new home. Wildlife Rangers found Owen, a one year old, 300 pound hippo near the Sabaki River in Kenya. He had been separated from the rest of the herd, was badly dehydrated and in need of care. Owen was taken to the Haller Animal



Facility of Mombasa, where he was released into the same enclosure as a giant male Aldabran Tortoise named Mzee (Old Man in Swahili). Owen went right to the tortoise, attracted by his color, which is similar to that of grownup hippos. Mzee wasn't thrilled with the attention at first, hissing at the newcomer, but after a few days they become inseparable—spending their time swimming, eating and sleeping together. If anyone approaches the tortoise too closely, Owen gets aggressive, just as he would if he were protecting his biological mother.

Baby Hippos generally stay with their mother for four years. If orphaned Owen had just been returned to a herd, his chances would have been very slim. An older more dominant male would most likely have killed him. Zoo officials are very hopeful for his long term survival since he now has Mzee to watch over him.

If you have access to a computer, email or the internet, you are usually inundated with cute animal pictures from well meaning friends throughout the day. It's hard to escape, and part of you wonders whether they are real or just computer magic. These two internet stories made me start thinking of animal buddy stories closer to home.

Friar Tuck and Molly

My own home has an ornery billy goat named Friar Tuck that think he's a mule. Prior to Molly, Mary and Maude (our mini mules) coming to live with us, Tucker was like any normal billy. His favorite sport being jumping the fence with Maid Marion and kids in tow, daily finding something new to taste and eat down to the ground in my flowerbeds.

Once Molly mule joined the pack, Tucker preferred to spend all his time with the mules, ignoring his family (Much to his family's delight, I'm sure—He really is ornery). Tucker sleeps in the mule stall, hangs out with them in the barnyard, allows Molly to groom him and also eats with them. He has his own feed bowl, but he and Molly will often just take turns sharing mouthfuls out of her feed bin. I've heard that it is fairly common for a goat to be placed with a horse for company and their calming effect. In Tucker's case, I think his personality is just much more suited to Mule than goat.

Daisy and Teak

Sheep farmers will sometimes run a donkey with their herds to act as protector and/or alarm notification system. Daisy, a donkey adopted by one of our members, had just such a job. She was taken to her new home, having flunked sheep protector because of a distressing tendency to pick them up by a hunk of wool and—not too gently—move them out of her way.



Since her sheep services were no longer needed, she moved to her new ‘sheepless’ home, where she quickly became best buddies with her horse pal Teak. Daisy and Teak both have spacious stalls, but prefer to stay together in Daisy’s. Daisy doesn’t ever like to see Teak very far out of her sight, and gets very upset whenever Mama takes him riding beyond her view.

Boots and Tobey

Bootsie cat and Tobey, the Mockingbird, were also housemates. Although I wouldn’t call them best of pals, Boots tolerated what most self respecting cats would not have stood for from a bird. But then again, Boots was always a pretty mellow fellow—easy going and good with kittens, cats and dogs alike. Even when he was old and frail, when kitten rubbing up against him could easily knock him over, he didn’t generally complain. He just picked himself up and waited for the next kitten mush.



Thunder and Skinny Rumblebump

Growing up, my cousin had a pair of Blue Tick Coon hounds named Thunder and Lightening. They were young, rambunctious and not particularly well behaved. Thunder was guilty of killing some young Bantam hens, and while he never hurt the cats, he would chase them and we always worried a little. One young black kitten, Skinny Rumblebump, was having nothing of it. She thought Thunder’s velvety soft coon hound ears looked like great playthings, so she early on started sauntering up and taking a swat or two at them. I think it caught Thunder off guard enough to where he tolerated it and it soon became a normal game. They developed a pretty special friendship, with Thunder spending more time with the kitten than with his litter mate. We didn’t realize how close they were until my Uncle found Skinny Rumblebump one day on the edge of our field, having been apparently killed by a Coyote. Thunder took one look and streaked off into the distance, howling all the way. Before my Uncle had a chance to

get a shovel to bury Skinny, Thunder had turned around, streaked back, grabbed Skinny and buried her himself. The night of her death, with the coyotes howling particularly heavy, he forced his way through the French doors into our living room and spent the night on the couch. Needless to say, he always spent his nights inside after that. It’s tough to lose friends!

Holley and Cody

Holley is a Kit Cat Connection foster kitty from two years ago—adopted by a coworker’s daughter and given to her for Christmas. Holley immediately became very close friends with the family’s Golden Retriever, Cody. Holley would be everywhere that Cody went—inseparable. Holley would sit between Cody’s front legs when Cody was begging for treats, waiting for her treat in turn. When Cody would stretch out on her back on the living room floor and wiggle back and forth with her feet in the air, Holley would be right beside her doing the same thing. Holley would always lay ‘next to’ or ‘on’ Cody whenever she lay down for a nap. This last picture was such a nap, just weeks before 8 year old Cody died of a brain tumor.



Holley seems to be truly lost without Cody, going to their old hangouts and just seems to wonder??—but not to worry. While she misses Cody, her owners say she is certainly not shy about demanding attention to make up for the loss of Cody’s company.

And last of all, there is that other animal relationship—the one they have with us ‘two-legged’ types. With all the interesting companionship choices they can have, aren’t we lucky that they sometimes choose us.



**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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WEB!**

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Or visit
www.cafespress.com/HSSCNY



If you haven't yet renewed for 2005, we would appreciate your support. If you have already renewed, pass this along to a friend. 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