Humane Society Helps South Carolina Flood Evacuee Dogs

When The Humane Society of the United States dispatched a request for help with caring for shelter pets displaced by flooding in South Carolina, the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society immediately stepped up. Staff from our shelter drove overnight to Annapolis, Maryland to meet the group halfway and transported 12 dogs back to Menands on Saturday, October 17.

The dogs were evacuated from the St. Frances Animal Center in Georgetown, South Carolina, when heavy rain caused flash flooding along the Carolina coast in early October. A mix of breeds and ages, the dogs had been at the Georgetown shelter – some for months – waiting for adoption.

Brian Shapiro, New York State Director for The HSUS said, “The recent flooding caused damage to multiple shelters throughout South Carolina. The Humane Society of the United States assessed the needs of these shelters and provided water, supplies and other services while these communities recover from Hurricane Joaquin. We are grateful for the quick response by the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society to care for and adopt out these shelter dogs.”

Once the dogs arrived in our shelter in Menands, they were evaluated by our veterinary staff for both physical and behavioral issues. Most were transferred to the PetSmart Charities® Everyday Adoption Center where they were adopted within the week, thanks, in part, to the attention by local media.

To offset costs for the care of these 12 dogs, our friends at the New York State Correctional Officers & Police Benevolent Association, Inc. (NYSCOPBA) donated $2,000 to the Humane Society. Because of organizations like NYSCOPBA and our many generous supporters like you, we are able to help our fellow shelters in need and work together to find loving homes for animals from all parts of the country.
According to best estimates from some national organizations, less than 30% of stray dogs coming into animal shelters are returned to their owners each year. Yes, that means that, in most communities around the country, 70% of lost dogs will never find their way back to their original families. Those shelters will have to put tremendous resources into then finding all those dogs a new home. The outlook for cats is much worse, with less than 5% ever finding their way back home. It could be said that some of the cats coming into shelters were not owned in the traditional sense and may have been living in a neighborhood being cared for by many different people, but it is hard for us to know which cats those are. At the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society we reunite about 35% of dogs with their original families, but still less than 5% of cats.

We all know the traditional methods of finding your lost dog or cat and keeping them from getting lost. First, very simply, every pet should wear a collar and tag all of the time, no matter what. I know we hear about some cats who get their collars off, but recent research in Ohio found that over 70% of cats who had collars put on still had those collars a month later. So most cats can wear them and keep them on. If they don’t, your chances of getting your cat back are slim.

By state law, all dogs must be licensed with your city or town and wear the license tag at all times. This isn’t some big government program. The same researcher at the University of Ohio found that, of all forms of identification, the dog license was the most likely to ensure dogs found their way home. Why is a dog license better than a tag? Your town sends you a renewal every year to update your contact information; regular ID tags don’t tell you to change your phone number.

In more recent years, microchips have started gaining popularity because they are permanent and are a good way to confirm ownership of an animal. I recommend everyone microchip their pets, because the chips can’t just come off and can be implanted at your veterinarian or here at the Society. Chips do have their weaknesses. In order to scan a chip, your animal has to be in the possession of someone with a microchip scanner (usually a veterinarian, shelter or animal control officer). A neighbor down the street won’t know your animal has a chip.

A few years ago at the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society we created an online lost and found system where we post all of the animals we have found and allow members of the public to post animals they have lost or found. We have had some great success with people making matches this way.

As you’ll see in this issue, we are continuing to dedicate ourselves to finding the owners of lost pets with a new relationship with Finding Rover. The Finding Rover app stores a photo of your dog and uses facial recognition software to match your dog’s photo with dogs we have at the Society and other dogs that have been found by community members. It’s easy to use, easy to take photos of your dog or a dog you have found, and we look forward to getting more animals back home to their original families. The technology does not work well for cats yet, but there is work being done to add cats to the app. Mohawk Hudson Humane Society is the first shelter in New York State to begin using the Finding Rover, and it is our hope that shelters throughout the state will sign up so animals will find their way home.

At the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society we are always looking for new ways to improve the lives of animals and their families. I hope you will continue to support our efforts to make the lives of animals a little better every day.
Our 11th annual Art Saves Animals event on October 15 at the Arts Center in Troy was a great success! This year’s event supports the Safe Haven Program, which allows victims of domestic violence to house their animals at the Humane Society at no cost while they re-establish themselves. Dave Warren, Service Director of Domestic Violence Services at Unity House, one of our partners in the Safe Haven Program, spoke to event guests on the importance of the program and the sad realities of the link between domestic violence and animal abuse.

We entertained about 160 guests, auctioned more than 100 pieces of art and netted almost $30,000 for this very important program.

Thank you to our sponsors, donating artists and guests for helping to create a fun and worthwhile evening. We are also very grateful to our volunteers who lent a hand to make the evening run smoothly: Sara Ayers, Heidi Bernhardt, Yolanda Bostic Williams, Geneva Cushman, Oliver Elison Timm, Bonnie Engelman, Cara Kennedy, Diane Knight, Gail Landrigan, Dee Levy, Brian Marsh, George Moore, Deb Moyer, Elena Oliver, Julia Popova, Michele Vics, Dawn Vitti and Tina Vogel.

MHHS staff member, Natalie Capozzelli, stands next to her original painting titled “Charlotte.” The acrylic on canvas painting, in honor of a MHHS pit bull alumna who lost her leg, was one of the most popular items at the Art Saves Animals auction.
Planned Giving

The Dr. William O. Stillman Society honors individuals who have made charitable gifts, via their estate plans, to the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society. Donors who have made financial or other estate gifts of any size through wills, trusts or other planned gift vehicles are recognized for their dedication to the Humane Society's mission. This giving society is named in honor of William O. Stillman, M.D., president of the Mohawk and Hudson River Humane Society from 1892 to 1921. In addition to his local impact, Mr. Stillman was instrumental in the establishment of the American Humane Association, as well as the New York State Anti-Cruelty Society.

Many of our loyal supporters have found making a gift through their estate plans is a mutually beneficial way to ensure the future of our work. If you have any questions or need additional information regarding Estate Planning, please contact Michael Buckley at (518) 434-8128, ext. 221.

If you have included the Society in your estate plan, we are grateful for such generosity. We would like to thank you appropriately for your commitment by making you a charter member of the William Stillman Society. Please contact Michael Buckley for more information.

We will also be hosting our inaugural recognition event for members of the Stillman Society on January 21st to thank our donors. Please watch your mail for a special invitation to members of this society.

Finding Rover

For almost our entire 128-year history the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society has taken in stray dogs and looked for better ways to reunite them with their owners. In those early days there were good old dog tags, soon followed by dog licenses. Putting up posters to find our lost pets is a tried and true tool for getting the word out that our pets are lost, and pet owners have been using essentially those same 19th-century methods for most of our existence. In 2012 we created an online lost and found system on our website where we post all of our found pets and created a system for people to post their lost pets or pets they have found. That was a good small step into the 21st century, but now we have taken a giant leap for all canines.

We are excited to announce our brand new partnership and integration with Finding Rover, and we are thrilled to be the first shelter in New York State to offer this service to our community. Finding Rover is a FREE, social media-based app that uses facial recognition to reunite lost dogs with their families and enables people to see found dogs that are in our care. Additionally, people looking to adopt can view our dogs that are available for adoption.

Now, all dogs entering Mohawk Hudson Humane Society will be registered on Finding Rover. When a dog is registered on Finding Rover, he or she is protected with revolutionary facial recognition technology. This 98% accurate, photo-matching technology is free and available for anyone to use on a smartphone or computer. Every dog that leaves the Humane Society, through a reunion with their original family or an adoption, can remain protected on Finding Rover when the pet-parent completes registration with an email. If that dog ever gets lost, his or her record will already be in the system, and identifying that pet will be a snap. Remember, there is no fee for this service.

We strongly encourage all dog owners to register their dogs on the FindingRover.com website or download the iPhone or Android app. Registration is easy and free — simply upload a photo of your dog and include your zip code. The app also offers a social function, uniting dog owners based on common interests and providing a forum for users to read up on the latest dog news, share content and interact. Currently the technology is only available for dogs, but Finding Rover is working on a feline version of the system.

We also hope that our fellow shelters throughout New York and the northeast will partner with Finding Rover so that the reach continues to grow and those who experience the devastating event of losing a cherished pet can be reunited quickly and easily.
Elizabeth Hage Joins MHHS

We welcome Elizabeth “Beth” Hage as our new Marketing & Communication Manager. Beth will be responsible for public relations, advertising, social media and overall communications strategy and will manage the Society’s special events.

Prior to joining MHHS, Beth worked with the Seton Health and Northeast Health Foundations (St. Peter’s Health Partners) on the Transforming Health Care in Troy capital campaign for Samaritan and St. Mary’s Hospitals, managing campaign communications, stewardship and groundbreaking events, and volunteer and leadership committees. She also has nearly 15 years’ experience at public relations firms in Atlanta, New York and Albany, most recently at Sawchuk Brown Associates.

Beth lives in Poestenkill with her husband, Erik, their five children, two dogs and a cat.

Forty Cats Rescued from Westerlo Home

On Monday, October 26, the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society assisted the Albany County Sheriff’s Office in rescuing and removing more than 50 cats from a home in Westerlo. The cats were neglected and living in deplorable conditions; the owner of the home had resorted to sleeping in her car most nights due to the overwhelming number of cats and trash in the house.

The Society quickly stepped into action to assess the health and behavior of the cats. All of the cats rescued were in need of veterinary care and many required medical treatment. After two weeks, 11 of the cats were healthy enough to be adopted and were transferred to the PetSmart Charities™ Everyday Adoption Center at the PetSmart® store in Latham Farms just in time for National Adoption Weekend November 13-15. Several cats are still at the Humane Society and will become available for adoption over the next several weeks as they become healthy enough to be released from the Society’s veterinary care.

Celebrating 1,000th Adoption at Everyday Adoption Center

Mohawk Hudson Humane Society and PetSmart Charities® celebrated an important milestone in the Capital Region on October 24th. Thanks to a partnership between the two organizations, 1,000 homeless pets have found loving homes.

In September of 2014 the two teamed up, with support from PetSmart®, to open a pet adoption center inside the PetSmart store at 609 Troy Schenectady Road in Latham, NY. The expansion of adoption space to the 2,000 square feet in the PetSmart store has been a real game-changer for the Humane Society. Our ability to quickly place pets in need has increased exponentially as loyal PetSmart adopters jump at the chance to add a furry family member.

Stella, an American Bulldog mix formerly known as Katherine, was the lucky dog to be the 1000th pet adopted at PetSmart Charities Everyday Adoption Center. Stella was one of the 12 dogs brought to the Mohawk Hudson Humane Society from the St. Frances Animal Center in Georgetown, South Carolina, when they were evacuated due to flash flooding along the Carolina coast in early October. Stella had been at the SC shelter since May of this year. Kiera Conde and her daughter, Madisyn, came to the PetSmart to look for a friend for their dog, Grover, who was adopted from MHHS last October. Grover and Stella met on Friday afternoon and they hit it off, so the Conde family came and picked her up on Saturday.
Tributes listed here were processed 8/16/15 – 11/15/15.

PLEASE NOTE
Due to space constraints, only tribute gifts of $25 or higher are listed in our print newsletters. Tributes of all amounts are listed on our website, www.mohawkhumane.org.
Thank you to everyone who participated in the annual MHHS Cutest Pets Photo Calendar Contest. Want to see who won? Get your copy of the calendar at our animal care facility in Menands, or order online at mohawkhumane.org or by mail below.

Order Form
2016 Cutest Pets Calendar

(Prices include shipping)

$13 for 1 / $24 for 2 / $35 for 3 / $46 for 4

Quantity Discounts:
$52 for 5 / $92 for 10

Quantity _______

Name ____________________________________________

Address __________________________________________

City ___________________________________________

St/Zip __________________________________________

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