



# Humane Society of Westchester

AT NEW ROCHELLE

*from our home to yours*

Fall 2019

## SPECIAL EDITION: EXPANSION PROJECT BEFORE AND AFTER

### LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT

*John Feldtmose*

You have the power to save a life—or many lives! This summer, the Humane Society of Westchester announced our \$4 million capital campaign to renovate and expand our shelter, creating a more comfortable and modern facility for the thousands of dogs, cats, and other animals who stay with us on their journeys to finding forever homes.

To give you a sense of how the campaign will increase adoptions, improve and expand our humane education program, provide better facilities for dog training, and create a friendlier and more welcoming environment for all, we asked the Board of Directors, staff, and volunteers working with our animals, "How will the improvements allow you, personally, to provide better care for the animals and people served by the Humane Society of Westchester?"

Their responses, which follow, illuminate the *real effect* your campaign gift has on the animals we serve. As you read on, I encourage you to ask yourself:

*Do I see myself as part of this effort? What speaks to me most? How many animals' lives can I save?*

To date, we have raised \$3 million of the \$4 million we need to begin construction. Would you consider a gift of significance, or a "stretch gift," to help us close the gap?



**Before**



**After**

## **Mission Statement**

The Humane Society of Westchester is a non-profit 501 (c) (3) organization dedicated to promoting the human/animal bond through the compassionate care and treatment of animals throughout the communities we serve in Westchester County and beyond. To that end, our goal is to create a living environment that is not just a shelter, but a transitional home for stray, lost, abandoned, injured, and abused animals, until they can ultimately be placed in loving permanent homes.

Through promotion of successful pet adoption, animal population control, and public education of animal welfare issues, we advance our belief that pet ownership is a lifetime commitment.

### **Services**

Adoptions  
Animal Rescue  
Lost and Found  
Animal Welfare Education  
Spay/Neuter Certificates  
Dog Training  
Pet Therapy

### **Board of Directors**

Judith Elkin  
John Feldtmose  
Dianne Heim  
Carol Marinaccio  
Shawn Smith  
Lee Anne Velej  
Diane Wade

**Humane Society of Westchester  
70 Portman Road**

**New Rochelle, NY 10801**

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**FAX (914) 632-0445**

**[humanesocietyofwestchester.org](http://humanesocietyofwestchester.org)**

**E-mail: [petadopt@verizon.net](mailto:petadopt@verizon.net)**

**Look for us on Facebook**

## **Ways to Help**

In addition to contributing to our Capital Campaign you can help by:

Volunteering Your Time  
Contributing Using Our Wish List  
Donating From Amazon  
Sponsoring An Animal  
Fostering Animals

## **FROM OUR SHELTER MANAGER**

*Dana Rocca*



Our planned expansion is about improving the lives of the animals while they are with us, but also about improving the experiences of the people who come to the shelter. People come to the shelter for a variety of reasons — all related in one way or another to animals. Sometimes they come to adopt, sometimes to donate and sometimes to volunteer. We provide humane education talks to educate children on what the shelter does for the community. We also have people come to us seeking help with their pet, a found pet or an injured pet.

When designing the expansion, we took all these important needs into consideration. The expansion will create a spacious bright lobby that will be focused on the adopter, with additional get acquainted rooms to introduce families to dogs and cats. Currently we have only two rooms, often with several families waiting to use the rooms. Also, in the planned expansion there is a small animal room dedicated to guinea pigs, hamsters, rabbits and birds which will provide a less stressful environment for these pets. Currently our small animals are often stacked on our benches and counters in our small lobby.

This next improvement is dear to my heart. Currently in our cramped lobby, we very often have a happy family coming to adopt, alongside a family in tears surrendering a beloved pet. With the new expansion people bringing in an injured animal will be directed to a separate area where the animal can get immediate care. People finding a lost pet will have a separate area which will be less stressful for the often-frightened pet. Families needing to surrender a pet can be consulted in private.

We do need your help making this possible. Your gift will give animals, of all sizes, the chance at a better life.

## **Upcoming Events**

**Sunday, Oct. 20th - Free Rabies Vaccination/Low Cost Microchipping Clinic - (11:30am - 3:30pm)**

**Saturday, Nov. 2nd - Howliday Shopping - (11:00am - 3:00pm)**

**Sunday, Nov. 3rd - Holiday Pet Portraits - Day One (10:00am - 2:00pm)**

**Sunday, - Nov. 10th - Holiday Pet Portraits - Day two (10:00 - 2:00pm)**

All events will take place at the shelter, 70 Portman Road in New Rochelle.

For more details about the events call (914) 632-2925 or email [events@humanesocietyofwestchester.org](mailto:events@humanesocietyofwestchester.org)



## New Cat Rooms

*After the renovation the shelter will have a glass room built right into the new lobby where adoptable cats roam freely and can meet their potential forever families. **Shawn Smith** is a member of the Board of Directors who speaks on why additional space is so important for our cats:*

The more cats in a communal cat room, the better. In an open cat room, cats can run, jump, climb, stretch, or sit high on a perch and observe their world. They can mingle with other cats or get some private time in a cozy hiding space. A big, communal room gets the most visits from potential adopters and volunteers, so the cats there get the enrichment that comes from frequent petting and play time, and they get used to being around a variety of people. The more people a cat is comfortable interacting with, the better the opportunity for a quicker adoption.

Right now, we have only one big communal room and one very small one. Besides not being able to accommodate every cat that should be in an open room environment, the current space does not give us the flexibility to address other issues that can arise. For example, there can be personality conflicts - two cats in a communal room may be good with other cats in general, but not like each other. Now when that happens, one of them is moved from the room to a cage because we have no other options. Having more space will enable us to place each of our cats in the type of living environment that best meets their individual needs.

“Get-Acquainted Rooms” are private areas, removed from the distractions of other areas of the shelter. There, adopters get one-on-one time with the animals they are interested in meeting, so they can pick the right pet for their family and lifestyle. Currently, there is only one Get-Acquainted Room for cat adoptions. On busy days, there is often a lengthy wait for the room to become available. Our expanded shelter will have three Get-Acquainted Rooms, which will allow more people to meet more animals, and spend more time with them.



## Trap/Neuter/Return

*The Trap, Neuter, Return program (TNR) has an important impact on the local feral cat population by preventing unwanted litters of kittens, and by rabies vaccinating feral/community cats, allowing them to have a more healthy life. The TNR program is sustained only by individual donors like you. Since **Carol Marinaccio**, a board member, began her TNR work six years ago, she has noticed a significant reduction in kittens being born in the towns where TNR is most prevalent. In her reflection, she recounts her TNR work and explains how the campaign will improve care for community cats before and after surgery:*



TNR is one of the most important things we can do in animal population control. The Humane Society of Westchester gets calls to help Trap, Neuter, and Return feral cats throughout Westchester and receives no public funding for this program. We pay for 100% of the spay/neuter surgery and the rabies vaccine, at an average cost of \$60 per cat. We are the only shelter or rescue in low-

er Westchester County that covers the whole cost, and we perform 500-600 TNR surgeries each year.

A kitten can get pregnant at four months old and can have two to four litters per year, depending on the weather. The cycle just doesn't stop. If feral kittens arrive at the shelter by the age of 10 weeks, they can usually be socialized and adopted to a family. We adopt out hundreds of these kittens each year as well as some friendly, non-feral adult cats found living in feral colonies.



The capital campaign will allow for an expanded medical facility where feral cats will have their own preparation and recovery room. Currently, they are squeezed in the surgical suite, with overflow crowding the floor and hallways. This is particularly stressful for feral cats who are not used to being around people. The new TNR Room is a quiet space for the cats to recover from surgery.

TNR has been proven to be the most efficient and humane way to stabilize a feral cat colony. We are fiercely dedicated to continuing this critical mission. We cannot do it without you.

## Humane Education

*Humane Education, and the ability of the shelter to provide this to children, has many important benefits said **Dianne Heim**, a board member, who gives these classes.*

First, and perhaps most important, is to encourage empathy towards other living beings, in our case, companion animals. Teaching the importance of understanding the needs and feelings of these animals will, hopefully, make the children aware of the needs and feeling of others, including people.

Humane Education helps dispel the myths about certain breeds of dogs (“don’t profile kinds of dogs nor kinds of people”), teaches children how to treat pets and may motivate adoptions of animals from shelters rather than pet stores that sell “puppy mill” dogs.

Currently we have only one room to accommodate the numerous scouts, school groups, animal welfare clubs and school service groups who want to attend our educational talks. They cannot come during the week-end since that one room is used for many different purposes, including training classes for dogs, orientations for



family, junior and adult volunteers and meetings between potential adopters and dogs. This means the children can come only after school on weekdays, usually between 3:30 and 3:45 and leave at 5:15.

During this time they learn about the shelter, what we do, how we do it and why we do it, get a hands-on visit with a dog or puppies and visit the dog kennel area and cat rooms. Some of these children go on to become volunteers or adopters. There is no fee for this visit but most groups bring donations from our suggested “Wish List,” toys they made themselves or money they collected by fundraising.

The proposed expansion will provide us with additional rooms which can be used for these classes. It will mean the rooms will be free for that purpose, so we do not need to worry that they will not be available for the children. We could accommodate more children by having two classes going on at the same time, extend the length of the visit if they come on Saturday or Sunday, and perhaps use the room for fund-raising purposes such as birthday parties and summer camp programs.



## Medical Facility

***Dr. Jen Panella**, our in-house veterinarian, had this to say about the shelter’s need for an expanded medical facility:*

The expansion of the Humane Society will help us serve the animals better by giving us more room to work, better segregation of surgical populations, and the possibility of having in-house radiology.

As it stands, the medical area has a lot packed into a small space. The area easily gets crowded, since it is also an area to house animals, hold surgical candidates, store medications used to treat sick animals and serve as a surgical prep area.

Having more space dedicated to surgery will greatly improve workflow allowing for more animals to be treated. Now on a busy day we can do up to 20 surgeries

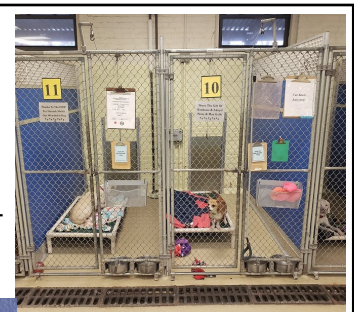
As stated above the medical area presently has multiple functions. With the expansion there will be an area dedicated to Trap/Neuter/Return cats, a separate room for adopted animals to await and recover from surgery, and a space for medical manager, Amy, to work. There will also be an area constructed to house a radiology unit. With the eventual addition of radiology, there will be much more we can do in house to diagnose and treat our animals. It will allow for quicker diagnosis of various things such as pneumothorax (leaking lungs) or broken bones.

All of these changes will benefit the animals we serve, by increasing our efficiency, and enhance diagnostic capabilities.



## Dog Kennels

Dog kennels are noisy, which can be very stressful for many animals. Our planned renovation will address this problem. The kennel doors will be mainly glass, and the kennels will



be separated into three separate rooms to reduce sound echo. Also new ceiling tiles will help muffle the sound.

The dogs will have a beautiful new home



## Groundbreaking Ceremony

On Thursday, June 27<sup>th</sup>, the Humane Society had its ceremonial groundbreaking for our Capital Campaign. The event was very well attended by staff, volunteers, adopters, donors and public officials.

We were pleased to welcome local dignitaries including (from left to right in the picture below) New Rochelle City Manager Chuck Strome, New York State Assemblyman Steve Otis, New Rochelle Mayor Noam Bramson, New Rochelle City Councilman Barry Fertel, Humane Society President John Feldtmose, New York State Assemblywoman Amy Paulin, New York State Senator Shelley Mayer and Harrison Mayor Ron Belmont. Also attending, too late to be in the picture, was Westchester County Executive George Latimer.

Several of the guests spoke including Noam Bramson and Amy Paulin each of whom were honored to hold one of the shelter's puppies and seemed to really enjoy doing so, as you can see from the photos below.



The actual construction groundbreaking will be in the next two to three months. We are hoping you will use the enclosed envelope to help our new shelter become a reality very soon.



## Training Rooms

***Modern kennels** will reduce noise in our shelter, and a dedicated training room will allow our trainer to have bigger classes with more room to run. Our professional trainer, **Ferdie Yau**, has over 25 years of experience working with wild and domestic animals. He uses positive reinforcement and relationship-based training to treat behavioral issues to bring out the best in our dogs so they can be placed in forever homes. As Ferdie explains below, your gifts toward modernized kennels and a new training room will make a major difference for our animals:*

What really stresses dogs out is noise. When dogs get stressed they start barking, and that gets all of the other dogs stressed. Studies show that dogs with noise phobias experience noise the same way they experience pain. The additional space and modern kennels will cut down on the noise dramatically.

Let me tell you about Hoss, a dog that has severe noise phobia. Hoss is a seven-year-old Treeing Walker Coonhound from down South and was chained outside. He was friendly to people, but whenever you took him out of his kennel, he would stop and shut down. A dog doing nothing is a sign of depression.

At first, I hung out quietly with him. Once he felt safe and more engaged, I started playing this game with him where I wrapped him up in the blanket and hugged him, covered his face, and he had to shake it off. I felt him start to move into my space and bond with me. I saw his personality start to come out.

After Hoss's rehabilitation, he was adopted by a dream adopter. Hoss is a wonderful success story of an older dog who was trained to shake off his noise sensitivity and severe anxiety issues.

A **dedicated training room** would mean we wouldn't need to put gates around electronic equipment to keep the dogs safe; with better flooring the dogs won't slide and slam into walls while they're running; we would have more storage space for putting treats and toys away; we could have bigger classes; plus, there would be more room for our volunteers to work with the animals.

The renovation will cut down on the noise so we can better serve animals like Hoss, and allow us to train and socialize more animals for successful adoptions.



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## ANIMALS SEEKING FOSTER HOMES

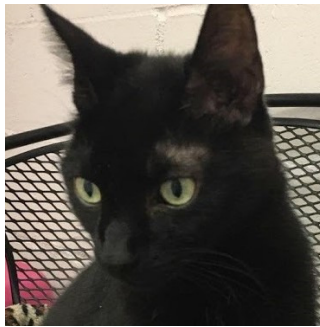
**SCOTTY**



**SASSY & SUKI**



**PURRY MASON**



**MIRIAN**



**Scotty** is a happy, friendly fellow who finds the shelter so stressful. What he needs is a good doggie friend to pal around with for a while. Scotty could use a vacation from shelter life. Your summer vacation may be over, but his has yet to begin!

**Sassy and Suki** are 8 year old sisters who are super sweet and super affectionate. They take care of each other, from ear cleaning to back scratching. Sassy is newly diagnosed with Cushing's disease, which is easily treated with medication. But while we get her treatment underway, she and her sister would love a foster home in which to spend some time. These girls will make you laugh and keep you smiling all day long!

**Purry Mason** is a chatty, energetic, 12 year old diabetic. She is as easy as they come and wants nothing more than a soft lap and some good scratches. She needs 2 insulin shots a day, which takes about 3 seconds to do. She'll show you the ropes - it's easy!

**Mirian** is a 10 year old sweet and lovely companion. She loves to lounge and will keep your seat warm when you're at work or out and about. She'd love to hear the details of your day and will always tell you how special you are. Mirian is a true friend.