



Humane Society of Westchester

AT NEW ROCHELLE
from our home to yours

Letter from Dana Rocco, Shelter Manager

*To our Board of Directors,
staff members, volunteers,
and loyal financial supporters
of the Humane Society of
Westchester:*

After 20 years as shelter manager, I will be retiring in spring, 2022.

It has been such a privilege and a pleasure working for this Humane Society, and so deeply satisfying seeing so many wonderful animals placed in so many wonderful homes.

As I prepare to retire, I am flooded with memories of various animals—dogs, cats, rabbits, and more—that we have been able to help.

There were the two adorable baby goats, rescued from a backyard in New Rochelle and brought first to the shelter, and then to a permanent placement. I transported them, during rush hour traffic, in the back of my car, and can only imagine what the people in surrounding cars were thinking: “is that a goat? A GOAT?!” The goats lived a great long life in their new home.

There was the 35-pound tortoise, brought in by a New Rochelle police officer at around 8 p.m. one night. The officer had “Sheldon” in the back of his patrol car, and kindly offered to carry him inside. We set up Sheldon in a dog kennel and were surprised and delighted by how gentle he was. Sheldon was eventually reunited with his very relieved owner and his “wife,” Shelly, another tortoise.

There was Walter the pig, found living at a frat house on North Avenue in New Rochelle. We took him in, kept him with staff behind the front desk, and taught him to sit and to spin in a circle. Walter now lives in New Hampshire with another pig.

Then, shortly after Walter, came another pig named Wilbur. When Wilbur arrived, he was only 10lbs. Green Chimneys accepted Wilbur into their farm, and he is now a favorite of both staff and volunteers. Wilbur now weighs over 400lbs.





During these years, I have adopted some of my own dogs from the shelter and have also fostered multiple newborn kittens that needed to be bottle fed around the clock. I got to witness them growing up and getting adopted by wonderful families.

One of my more stressful memories: a Rottweiler who escaped from his home in New Rochelle on a bone-chilling, 10-degree winter evening. The Rottweiler just would not come to me, and it took 30 minutes—and all my dog-behavior skills—to get him into our nice, warm van.

As I prepare to retire, I am filled with gratitude to all those who have helped us in our mission, and I will take this opportunity to thank just few.

The photographers who donated their time to photograph our calendars, holiday portraits and dog-wash portraits—and who came to photograph our various pets available for adoption. I cannot thank them enough for their generosity.

The staff whom I have been so lucky to work with. They work SO incredibly hard, day in and day out, often not even stopping for lunch.

Our remarkable, hands-on Board of Directors, who are also volunteers and who work so hard for our shelter animals. I love each one of them. Really LOVE them!



Most of all I am grateful to, and will miss terribly, our volunteers—who put in countless hours to help our animals, in ways both visible and invisible.

When I interviewed Tiffany back in 2004, I will never forget her words, “I WILL DO ANYTHING!” And she did. And she still DOES. Thank you, Tiffany, for fulfilling your promise—you will be a great shelter manager! Knowing that the shelter will be in such competent hands helps to mitigate the sadness I feel as I leave this wonderful organization!

When I retire, I will be moving to upstate New York, to be near my daughter, her amazing husband and my twin grandchildren, Keely and Easton. Fingers crossed my newest grandbaby, Lyric, who lives in Connecticut, will visit often to hang out with her upstate NY cousins!

Mission Statement

Founded in 1911 as the New Rochelle Humane Society, the renamed Humane Society of Westchester is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. Our goal is to always offer a living environment that is not just a shelter, but a transitional home for stray, lost, abandoned, injured and abused animals until they can be placed in loving permanent homes. We also dedicate our efforts to animal population control and public education of animal welfare issues.

Board of Directors

Judith Elkin
John Feldtmose
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Diane Wade
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Services

Adoptions
Animal Rescue
Lost and Found
Humane Education Programs
Foster Care

Management Changes

For 20 years now Dana Rocco has served as our Shelter Manager. And now the shelter will move forward with, to quote Dana, “an incredible team with great passion for the animals and the success of the shelter.” The Humane Society of Westchester announces its new leadership team effective January 1, 2022, chosen to take our beloved shelter into its bright future.



Lee Anne Veley has been named to be the Humane Society’s first Executive Director. Lee Anne has been working at the shelter for four years as the Manager of Finance and Administration and has served actively on the Board of Directors since 2007. Lee Anne retired from IBM after 31 years of service and made a smooth transition to working at the shelter when we began our capital building project. Lee Anne has played a major role in fund raising for this campaign as well as in project managing the entire construction which started right before the beginning of the pandemic! Lee Anne’s dedication to the Shelter, her love of animals, her business expertise, as well as her leadership capabilities will help us continue to do more and better things for the animals in the communities we serve and beyond.



Tiffany Rivera has been promoted to Shelter Manager of the Humane Society of Westchester after serving as Assistant Manager since 2014. Tiffany began working at the shelter in 2004 while she was finishing her college degree in criminal justice. She has brokered thousands of pet adoptions into loving homes and has been a recognized leader at the shelter in so many ways over the years. Her warmth and friendliness are much appreciated by adopters, staff and volunteers alike.



Sara Etkin has been promoted to Assistant Manager after working at the shelter since 2016. Before that, Sara was an active volunteer along with her family. Sara serves the animals and the community as an adoption counselor and by running an extensive volunteer foster network for the Humane Society. Sara is a recognized thought leader at the shelter, driving us to continually improve.



Carol Marinaccio has joined the shelter staff in the newly created position of Manager, Finance and Development after actively serving on the Board of Directors since 2011. Carol recently retired from the medical industry after 30 years of service. Carol has been active in the Shelter's Trap Neuter Return Program (Feral Cats) and has taken the lead in many fundraising and social media efforts. Carol's deep commitment to the shelter is a huge asset for us, as well as her depth of business knowledge.

Join us in congratulating Lee Anne, Tiffany, Sara and Carol in their new positions, and wish them great success in their new responsibilities.

Board Tribute to Dana

Managing an animal shelter is a big job, and it's not for the faint of heart. Weighty decisions must be made daily that involve the health and well-being of the animals entrusted to the shelter's care, and the safety of the general public when animals are adopted. Creating a safe, comfortable, nurturing environment for the animals, placing them in homes that will be the right match for them, and for the people who choose them, takes tremendous dedication, experience and wisdom. Pulling together a staff that shares this dedication and creating an environment that attracts the right staff members are all part of the job.

Several of us on the Board have known Dana from when she first took over the Shelter Manager job 20 years ago. And right from the start it was obvious that this was not just a job to her, it was a life calling. Dana's love of animals and her deep commitment to creating a special environment that is not just a shelter but a transitional home, has always been evident. She has constantly implemented new procedures to help make the animals more adoptable and to make the environment more comfortable and homelike. Over the past 20 years the welfare of animals has been on her mind 24/7, spending her off hours often watching webinars about, and participating in dog behavior and agility training.

A life-long learner—Dana has put what she learns into practice at the Humane Society, teaching staff and volunteers how to work with the animals. Implementing dog walking procedures that insured the safety of staff, volunteers and animals alike, and that also ensured that all our animals got plenty of TLC each day.

Her commitment to matching the right animal with the right household has helped build our reputation as a great place to come to find the animal of your dreams. And a place where an adopter could always count on someone (often Dana) to answer questions and be there for them, even after taking an animal home.

Dana's desire to help as many animals as she can has led to the saving of thousands of animals in the communities we serve and beyond. She has helped in the growth of our feral cat spay/neuter/release program, as well as the support of educational programs for the community. Her excellent public relations skills have put a great face on our organization for two decades. Finally, her team building capabilities have helped develop a staff that will carry on her vision.

Many of us have been on the Board of Directors of The Humane Society of Westchester for several years. We have watched the animal shelter that we all love so much grow better and stronger throughout those years, and Dana has been an essential ingredient in that change and growth. We will all miss her both personally and professionally.



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Look for us on Facebook!

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ANIMALS UP FOR ADOPTION

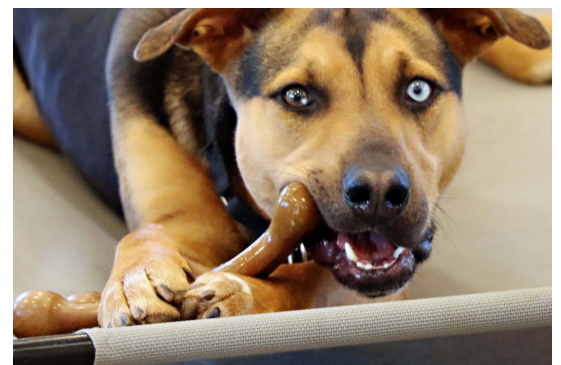
Jiggly Puff



Bubba



Harley



Patrick



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of Westchester**

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from our home to yours