



Pet Life

Newsletter of the Connecticut Humane Society

Summer 2017



Executive Director's Desk . **2**

Gentle Giant Starts a New Chapter . **3**

Senior Pups Become Family in Double Adoption . **3**

Rex: the Perfectly Imperfect Kitten . **4**

Baxter | Photo by Jack Schmidt

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NEW WORK FOLLOWS SPAY/NEUTER SUCCESS

By Gordon Willard, Executive Director



TODAY'S THEME is "give them a hand." That's exactly what the Connecticut Humane Society has done for pets for 136 years. But over those years, the answers to "what do we need to do right now" and "what should we plan for the future" have changed. CHS adapted to the animal issues of the time as well as looked forward.

The founding of CHS responded to the exploitation and abuse of humans and animals. Through direct intervention and advocacy, CHS' goal was to provide

immediate relief to suffering, and to change attitudes so abuse would not continue. CHS engaged in a social experiment that would ultimately lead to social change.

Through the decades, CHS moved from advocacy to providing sanctuary, finding homes for as many animals as could be placed. Yet the number of homeless animals outpaced the number of households willing to adopt. That is why and when spay/neuter awareness ramped up. Spay/neuter was the only way to prevent unwanted litters and the loss of thousands of animals, but how long would it take to reap results?

Spay/neuter had to be performed in massive numbers and for decades to be successful, and animal owners would have to accept that responsibility. It would require a change in people's behavior and perspective, and it would take decades of leadership before it worked. During the decades of this social experiment, CHS continued to react by operating places of sanctuary that provided temporary housing to homeless animals.

Over time with a more humane consciousness fostered by CHS and animal welfare advocates, there was a dramatic and lifesaving paradigm shift. Spay/neuter had reduced the oversupply of young, healthy animals that were more readily adopted, but at the peril of the sick, injured and old animals.

But no longer. As you will read in the articles to follow, there has been another CHS adaptation to the animal issues of the day. Those sick, injured and older animals that once had been left behind are being given health again. And they are finding love with new families. The shift in "what do we need to do right now" has moved to making animals whole again, physically and emotionally. The "what should we plan for the future" question also has a new answer: to give a hand to even more animals, including those outside of our three Pet Wellness and Adoption Centers so they can stay in their homes, rather than coming to CHS or being abandoned on the streets.

SAVE THE DATE: September 16, 2017



DIAMONDS *in the* RUFF

Puppies, delicious food, music, amazing auction prizes, a patio for gazing up at the stars. Now that's the way to spend a beautiful fall evening! And when it all helps save the lives of pets in need? Even better!

All that and more is in store for you at the Connecticut Humane Society's Diamonds in the Ruff on Saturday, September 16, at 6 p.m. at The North House in Avon. CHS puppies will greet you at the door before you dazzle your taste buds with a plated, multi-course dinner and bid the night away in the auctions. And don't forget to dress to impress—there will be a photo booth with props galore.

New for this year's fundraiser is the Director's Circle; buy a table for 10 and receive admission for two to a private champagne reception!

To purchase tickets, a sponsorship or an ad in the program booklet, visit:
bit.ly/chsdiamondsintheruff

Gentle giant starts a new chapter

AS THE saying goes, you shouldn't judge a book by its cover...or, in the animal world, a dog by his cropped ears and tough-guy look.

That was Conrad's motto when he arrived at the CHS Pet Wellness and Adoption Center in Waterford. The American pit bull terrier could seem intimidating at first, with his 64-pound barrel-shaped body, those pointy ears, and a bark that came from so deep within it made him do a little jump.

But he was big because he loved food, and the throaty woof was simply to request more of it. And while he wasn't as cuddly looking as fluffy, prettier pups, he knew he could be a good snuggle buddy. All Conrad wanted was to perform "sit" for a treat and be with people.

He was a gentle teddy bear inside. Would potential adopters see that? But Conrad was also a senior at 8 years old and plagued by skin allergies.

Staff veterinarians prescribed baths and shampoos, special food, medication, and biopsies. The big lug even started sporting a protective cone after treatments, but didn't mind—he adored the attention and "spa" appointments that came with it!

After finally finding the right combination of treatments, Conrad's bald spots were furry again and the cone came off. With his allergy now under control, he was ready for the adoption floor.

After a while when Conrad wasn't getting enough eyeballs on him in Waterford, staff gave him a try in Newington. He'd flash his big, sloppy smile as people passed by, but when they cooed at nearby puppies, he put his head down, depressed.

He accessorized with bow ties to soften his look, and even starred in a local TV segment for National Pet Day, showing off his ability to catch treats in his mouth. Conrad and his friends at CHS still held out hope



he'd find new family members.

Fittingly, they arrived on Founder's Day weekend, when CHS marked its 136th anniversary. They'd come for a puppy, but the daughter in the family saw something special in Conrad. His new loved ones looked beyond that burley exterior to his goofy, eager-to-please personality and welcomed him into their lives. He had been at CHS for eight months, and it was finally time for the next chapter in his new home.

Senior pups become family in double adoption



AT 14 years old, Duke needed a new retirement home.

The tiny Yorkie thought he was already in the place where he'd spend his golden years. But when his human moved, the sign on the door said "no animals allowed"! On

top of that, his owner was unable to provide the treatment he needed for his bad teeth, stomach problems and a growth sitting right on top of his head.

So Duke, like thousands of other animals each year, arrived at CHS looking for a helping hand. Despite his advanced senior citizen status, he was still spirited and playful and deserved a second chance at love. He'd likely need several weeks of care in the CHS medical department. But that was

pretty normal at CHS, and, certainly, he was worth it.

After veterinarians evaluated and monitored Duke, they gave him a dental make-over and removed the mass on his head. Over the next two months, staff and volunteers helped him heal inside and out.

Meanwhile, a 9-year-old Welsh terrier named Merlin arrived at CHS after his owner moved. He was a healthy boy and ready for the adoption floor in no time, around the same day Duke was finally ready for a new home.

A local couple who had Welsh terriers in the family and a soft spot for senior pups soon came to visit Merlin in person, after seeing him on CHS' website. And that's when they spotted Duke. That little face—how could they say no to him? But they couldn't leave without Merlin either.

Adoption counselors introduced the two dogs, who were inherently good-natured and got along famously. The decision was easy: Duke and Merlin headed home that day in a double adoption with their new parents.

They settled in at home, with Merlin even claiming a leather chair as his own. These days, Duke and Merlin are spending their retirement just the way they are supposed to: lounging around and chatting about the good old days.

REX: THE PERFECTLY IMPERFECT KITTEN

REX LOOKED poised to step into the boxing ring at any minute to duke it out. But this tiny ginger kitten was more of a lover than a fighter.

His forearms, deformed from birth, rotated in toward each other, making him look like a miniature boxer. The lively little guy could stand erect pretty well on his now-muscular back legs, which had grown used to pulling double duty. And he'd hop around like a little bunny, occasionally putting his front arms down for balance.

To him, this was normal and all he'd known since learning to "walk." Now the 4-month-old was impressing everyone at the Connecticut Humane



Society and giving a "what's the big deal?" stare to everyone who marveled at his quiet determination.

He and his 3-year-old mama cat, Kanga, had been discovered in an abandoned apartment by a maintenance worker. Otherwise healthy because they'd been rescued in time, Kanga only needed to be spayed. Once she was cleared for adoption, she was off on her way with a new, loving family.

But Rex needed more attention: Could he live his life fully dependent on only his back legs, or would he need corrective surgery for the front limbs? CHS veterinarians made it their mission to find out, wanting to give him the brightest future possible.

They examined him, took x-rays and consulted an orthopedic specialist. X-rays showed irregular vertebrae in his tail and additional abnormalities in his front arms. Surgery wouldn't significantly improve his version of walking.

So Rex continued doing things his own way. And that was perfectly fine. He benefitted from extra blankets for



▶ See a video of Rex in action: bit.ly/rexthekitten

padding in his cat condo and when playing, but he batted around jingle balls and eyed the feather wand just like any other kitten.

He was having so much fun playing with volunteers and enjoying lots of love and smiles from anyone who gave him a check-up or a meal. This was so much better than the empty, lonely apartment. He no longer wondered if he would get fed or when someone would come and give him a scratch behind the ears.

And soon, he'd never again have to wonder what "home" would feel like. Rex found a mom who fell in love at first sight and didn't see a cat with misshapen arms—but a spunky kitten with an uncrushable spirit who only wanted to love and be loved.

Pets inspire supporters at ball

PETS IN NEED—including some in attendance—inspired over \$33,000 in donations at the Connecticut Humane Society's Faux Fur Ball April 22 at the Hilton Mystic Hotel.

More than 130 revelers bid, ate and danced the night away, all in the name of saving homeless animals. Proceeds ensure that care and medical treatment are ready and waiting for critters arriving at CHS' doorstep.

Guests met some of the little ones benefitting from their generosity: Frankie, Napoleon and Mugsley

attended as puppy representatives of CHS. The event featured food, live and silent auctions, raffles, a photo booth, trivia, and music. There was also a private champagne reception with CHS Executive Director Gordon Willard for sponsors and table captains.

Special thanks to leading sponsors RKD Alpha Dog; Chamber of Commerce of Eastern Connecticut; Brown & Brown of Connecticut; Dr. Jennifer Ormerod; Chelsea Groton Bank; and Blackrock Development LLC.

Photos courtesy : Lucy Guiliano

