

Compassion for Animals Since 1959 The Alberta SPCA is Turning 60!



Alberta SPCA Peace Officer Ryan Butterwick in a 2018 photo (left) and the Alberta SPCA's first Special Constable, Archie Bruce, in 1959 (right).

Compassion for animals has always been at the core of our organization and it continues to influence our work on behalf of animals. As we enter our 60th year, we are highlighting compassion as our theme and as the motivating force for what we do every day.

It was September 1959 that we were incorporated as a non-profit organization under the *Societies Act* in Alberta. Until that time, the Northern Alberta SPCA (now known as the Edmonton Humane Society) operated in the Edmonton area.

In the late 1950s, there was pressure on the Alberta Government to enact provincial animal welfare legislation, to both acknowledge farm animals as well as to better protect all animals. From there, the Alberta SPCA was born with a focus on animal welfare issues outside of Edmonton and Calgary. This meant livestock welfare issues could be responded to.

The early days of the Alberta SPCA were lean. Archie Bruce (above) was both the executive director and sole special constable and he served in that role for both the Alberta and Northern Alberta SPCAs. He did not have a work vehicle so he used his own.

In the mid-1960s, pressure intensified on the Alberta Government to create provincial animal welfare legislation. Bruce, along with Alberta SPCA President, Zennon (Zeke) Young, and Lou Hyndman Sr. developed the framework for what would become the *Animal Protection Act*, which came into effect July 1, 1967. With the legislation came a \$10,000 grant to the Alberta SPCA to enforce it, and with that, the Alberta SPCA was able to hire a second constable.

The Alberta SPCA has continued to evolve since those early days. We now have 11 Peace Officer positions, and offices in Edmonton, Okotoks, Innisfail and in northern Alberta.

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AnimalKind Returns with New Look

After a short hiatus, our AnimalKind Newsletter is back! See how the look has changed over the past 40 years on page 5.

For over 40 years the Alberta SPCA has kept our supporters up-to-date on the latest news with our newsletter, and to mark our 60th Anniversary, AnimalKind has a new look!

When our newsletter launched in 1978, it was known as *The Shelter*. In 1984, the name changed to AnimalKind to better reflect the work of the Alberta SPCA. In that first edition, we highlighted that Premier Peter Lougheed had been named our Honorary President, and Lieutenant Governor Ralph G. Steinhauer had been appointed Patron of the Alberta SPCA. The artwork and layout of that first newsletter was very basic, but the message was clear, the Alberta SPCA was working hard to improve the lives of animals across the province. As the newsletter evolved, more colour and better photographs were featured.

Our new AnimalKind newsletter has a modern look to reflect how our work with animals has evolved along with Albertan's expectations for animal welfare. You can see how the newsletter has changed on page 5.

See AnimalKind changes on p. 5

FROM OUR LEGAL FILES

Building Compassion for Animals

The Animal Protection Services Department consists of Peace Officers and dispatch staff that answer and respond to thousands of complaints each year. Many of these calls are difficult in nature, but our staff proceed with kindness and compassion for both the animals and the people involved.



At least 50 dead cattle were found on the Onyschuk property in May 2018

AnimalKind is published by the Alberta Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Alberta SPCA)

President:
Dr. Duane Landals

Executive Director:
Terra Johnston

AnimalKind Editor:
Dan Kobe

To find out more about the work we do for animals across Alberta, visit our website at: albertasPCA.org.

The mission of the Alberta SPCA is to protect, promote and enhance the well-being of animals in Alberta.

Not all the opinions expressed in AnimalKind are necessarily those of the Alberta SPCA.

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Alberta Rancher Fined for Causing Distress and Death of Dozens of Cattle

On November 5, 2018 Perryvale area rancher Jim Onyschuk pleaded guilty in Athabasca Provincial Court to one count under the *Animal Protection Act 2(1)* of causing animals to be in distress. Onyschuk was charged after Alberta SPCA Peace Officer Stuart Dodds attended his farm in May of 2018. There, he discovered at least 50 dead cattle on the property. Approximately 40 other cattle were found alive and to be in good condition. A post mortem on one of the dead cattle found it had died of starvation.

Mr. Onyschuk was ordered to pay a \$2,000 fine by the court. He is also prohibited for life from owning more than 30 head of cattle. Mr. Onyschuk was given one month to divest himself of the extra animals on his farm. As part of the sentence, the court has granted the Alberta SPCA the right to request an inspection of the cattle on Mr. Onyschuk's possession for a period of one year.

A second charge under the *Animal Protection Act* for failing to provide adequate food and water for the cattle was withdrawn by the Crown.

Drayton Valley Area Pair Banned From Owning Horses

Kathleen Cole and Jo Kamin of the Drayton Valley area each pleaded guilty on November 13, 2018 to causing animals to be in distress under the *Animal Protection Act 2(1)*. In March 2018, Alberta SPCA Peace Officer Stuart Dodds attended the property owned by Cole and Kamin where he found one dead horse, and four other horses to be in very poor body condition. The horses had access to poor quality feed and no access to water. The Peace Officer also found two dogs in a dog run with poor shelter and no access to food or water. The entrance gates to the dog run were frozen shut with no recent tracks in the snow. The Peace Officer returned to the property the next day with a veterinarian who determined the horses and dogs were in distress. They were seized and removed from the property. Pathology testing on the dead horse revealed it had starved to death.

Cole was charged with five offenses under the *Animal Protection Act*, and Kamin was charged with two offenses. In Drayton Valley Provincial Court, both Cole and Kamin pleaded guilty to one charge of causing or permitting an animal to be in distress. Both Cole and Kamin were ordered to pay \$500 fines. Cole is also prohibited from owning more than two horses for a period of 10 years; Kamin is prohibited from owning more than one horse for a period of 10 years.



Horses from the Cole/Kamin property recovering

FROM OUR LEGAL FILES

To report animals in distress outside of Edmonton and Calgary, call: 1-800-455-9003

2018 Investigation Statistics*

Complaints Received; 2,291		Animals Seized; 376	
Dogs	723	Cats	159
Cats	271	Dogs	86
Horses	487	Horses	63
Cattle	228	Cattle	4
Sheep	53	Other	64
Pigs	34		
Bison	7	Charges Laid	19
Other	303	Convictions	7

Total kilometers driven by Peace Officers in 2018, 590,577

*Statistics subject to change as files from late 2018 are concluded

Southern Alberta Woman Banned from Owning Animals

A southern Alberta woman was handed a ten-year ban on owning animals in March of 2018. The woman had six Sharpei dogs in her care, three were seized immediately while three others were seized after the woman ignored the Peace Officer's requests for the dogs to receive veterinary care.

When the Alberta SPCA was first called in July of 2017, the six dogs were in various states of distress. The dogs had chronic skin conditions that had been unmanaged, as well as infections due to the fact the skin conditions had not been treated. Several of the dogs also had eye issues; in one case there were self-inflicted wounds from incessant scratching, in another case it was because of corneal scarring due to constant wear of hair on the eyeballs. There were also dental issues with at least one of the dogs.

On March 23, 2018, the owner of the dogs was pleaded guilty to permitting an animal to be in distress and for failing to provide adequate care for the dogs. She was fined \$400 and given a 10-year prohibition on owning animals.



One of six Sharpei dogs seized in July of 2017 with numerous health issues

Rocky Mountain House Woman Sentenced for Killing Cat

A Rocky Mountain House woman was handed a two-year suspended sentence on December 5, 2018 for killing one of three family cats. The woman admitted to beating a male cat to death because she was concerned it was breeding with two female cats in the home. The Alberta SPCA was first called to investigate in June 2018, however it was the RCMP that ultimately charged the 47-year-old woman with one count of animal cruelty under the Criminal Code. The two other cats in the home were surrendered to an Alberta SPCA Peace Officer.

As part of the sentence, the woman was ordered to perform 50 hours of community service. She also received a three-year ban on owning pets.



Annual General Meeting

Saturday March 30, 2019

11:00 am

**Alberta SPCA Head Office
17904 118 Avenue NW, Edmonton, AB**

Alberta SPCA Peace Officers

Director: Ken Dean

Northern Region Supervisor:
Stuart Dodds

Edmonton Office:
Colin Loov
Karen Stevenson
Emma Fillion

Northern Alberta Office:
Vacant

Southern Region Supervisor:
Rick Wheatley

Okotoks Office:
James Dudar
Dana Murphy
Angie Savoy

Innisfail Office:
Ryan Butterwick

Choose Compassion

Demonstrating compassion for animals and people is at the core of what we believe at the Alberta SPCA. The benefits of encouraging young people to develop empathy and show compassion are wide-reaching. Compassion encourages positive social behaviour and good citizenship which helps to build strong and supportive communities. Compassion can be fostered through demonstrating care for others, learning about and understanding others' points of view, and recognizing and discussing different emotions that we, and others experience; these are also outcomes in the health and life skills curriculum. Compassion is a value that is ever more important and needed in today's world.



Character Building

The 'Choose Compassion – Show You Care' classroom poster is the fourth in our character development series. The poster and accompanying discussion questions and activities tied to the Alberta curriculum encourage students to widen their circle of compassion to include a greater diversity of animals, people and environment. The activities challenge students to be aware of others' needs and take action to help them, especially when they need it most. Teachers can receive the poster and activities (available in English or French) by visiting our booth at Teachers' Conventions held across the province.

To learn more visit: everylivingthing.ca/choosecompassion

Building Compassion Challenge

The Building Compassion Challenge held in December encouraged students (and the adults in their lives) to perform one act of kindness and compassion every day towards self, others, animals, and the environment for 15 consecutive days. The challenge was well received by teachers and left many students feeling "extremely happy, nice, and kind." While the challenge was only two weeks, it can serve as a launch pad for students to continue choosing compassion well into 2019 and beyond. Throughout the challenge students realized just how easy it can be to demonstrate kindness and compassion and how small actions can have big impacts.

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Does AnimalTales Make a Difference?

An external evaluation looked at teacher & student perceptions of the book program



Any class that completes the AnimalTales program is sent a class set of bookmarks, and is added to our Kindness Map

The Alberta SPCA AnimalTales free book lending program for K-6 students provides humane education resources for Alberta teachers to inspire compassion for animals, people and the environment while meeting objectives in the Alberta program of studies. It has been delivered by teachers to over 14,000 Alberta students since its inception eight years ago. Through reading animal-themed books and discussion, students explore concepts including developing positive relationships, conflict resolution, dealing with grief, responding to bullying, understanding and appreciating differences along with many others. Through literature, sharing, discussion, and guided reflection, the program aims to foster empathy and positively impact student perceptions about animals and our relationship to them.



AnimalTales is a free book lending program available to elementary teachers throughout Alberta

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ALBERTA SPCA NEWS

Your feedback is always welcome. Email us at info@AlbertaSPCA.org



40 Years of Alberta SPCA Newsletters

...continued from front page.

Our organization was instrumental in pushing for improvements to the *Animal Protection Act (APA)* in 1986 and in 2006 to meet the growing expectations of Albertans for animal welfare. The Alberta SPCA's mission to *protect, promote and enhance the well-being of animals* guides us in pursuit of better outcomes for animals. More recently, Alberta SPCA staff and board members have been advocating to modernize the *APA* to improve enforceability and to give Peace Officers more tools to better protect animals.

In 1981 we added an education department. It is the longest continuously operating education program in the province, with two full-time teachers with education degrees. Our department works tirelessly to ensure curriculum-related resources are available for teachers to intergrate humane education into classrooms. In 2014 we added the Pet Safekeeping Program, ensuring people fleeing domestic violence situations have somewhere to place their pets so they can enter a safe shelter.

Throughout our 60 years, the Alberta SPCA's number one focus has always been on the animals. As our staff decide how best to proceed with any situation before us, we always ask one simple question, "what is best for the animal?" Charges may ultimately be laid in some cases, but even if they are not, as long as we have helped the animal, we have done our job.

As we proceed into the next 60 years in our history, it is hard to predict how society will change. What is predictable is the Alberta SPCA's compassionate approach will continue as we strive to ensure every animal in Alberta be treated humanely.

The Pet Safekeeping Program is dedicated to helping victims of family violence leave abusive situations by providing temporary care for their pets.

Since the program started, the Pet Safekeeping Program has helped over 300 adults and nearly 220 children escape domestic violence by providing temporary care for over 500 pets.

In 2018, the Pet Safekeeping Program saw continued increase in intakes:

- 18% increase in pets
- 45% increase in clients
- 3% increase in children

Over the last two years, the program has seen a dramatic increase in intake numbers:

- 255% increase in pets
- 180% increase in clients
- 107% increase in children

The Compassion of the Alberta SPCA Extends to Those who Receive Help from our Pet Safekeeping Program

The Pet Safekeeping Program received a call from a local women's shelter regarding a young woman who was living in her car with a small kitten, Sprinkles, and a large dog named Cupcake. A worker from the shelter explained a woman (who we will call Lydia) was fleeing her fiancé, who had assaulted her a few nights before. Lydia was sleeping in her car with her pets because she could not take them to the women's shelter and would not leave them behind. She knew if she did, her fiancé would harm them as a means to control her. Her whole family was located in eastern Canada and she had no support in Alberta.

The crisis intervention worker advised Lydia about the Pet Safekeeping Program and a plan was formed to bring Sprinkles and Cupcake into care where they would be safe and receive required medical attention.

Lydia's pets were discharged from the program after 25 days and she moved to her own apartment that accommodated Sprinkles and Cupcake. Lydia plans to go to school in the new year and found a job she loves. Without the Pet Safekeeping Program and the efforts of the women's shelter, Lydia's story might have ended differently.

We're Social!



ALBERTA SPCA NEWS

Building Compassion for Animals

AnimalTales ...continued from p. 4

External Evaluation of the Program

In order to monitor program effectiveness and make recommendations on the future direction of the program, a formal external evaluation was conducted by two education researchers, Dr. Donna Crawford (Education Consultant) and Dr. Veronika Bohac Clarke (University of Calgary). They examined teacher use and student perceptions of the program in 18 grade two and five classrooms in urban, metro and rural areas in Alberta. The following is a glimpse into the experiences of the teachers and students who interacted with the program based



The AnimalTales package includes: four picture books, a teacher's guide, and activity cards, as well as online resources

on the external report, "Building Compassion through Picture Books: How grade two and five students and teachers experienced the AnimalTales book program" by Dr. Donna Crawford. The full report is available on our website: www.everylivingthing.ca/AnimalTales.

Student Perspectives

Eighty-seven students were individually interviewed following exposure to AnimalTales. Students were able to identify lessons learned from the books, discuss kindness in general and how animals ought to be treated. Many of the schools had a school-wide focus on empathy so it was difficult to discern the impact of the AnimalTales program in isolation. However, in their interviews, students spoke specifically about what they had learned from the program.

Here's one example:

"I would bring the books back next year, to teach everybody else what a pet can actually do and needs and what people can do for pets. We had not talked about that before." **Grade 5 student, rural**

Along with general impressions, students were asked questions about the specific books and activities in AnimalTales and what they learned from them.

The following represents an example from grade 2:

Hey, Little Ant, by Phillip & Hannah Hoose

Hey, Little Ant documents the exchange between a boy and an ant he believes he should squish. The ant makes a compelling argument as to why he should be spared and the book concludes by asking the student what he/she would do in this situation. He is also encouraged by his friends to squish the ant.

Despite the anthropomorphization of the ant, the book does an excellent job of highlighting commonalities that ants share with other animals and people.

Table 1: Student Reflection on Hey, Little Ant

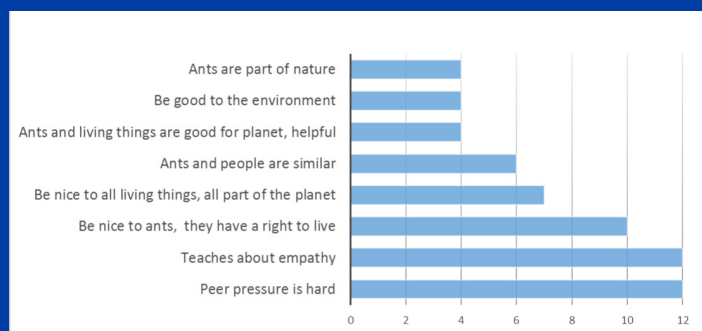


Table 1 (right) represents a summary of student comments from the interviews.

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EDUCATION (CONTINUED)

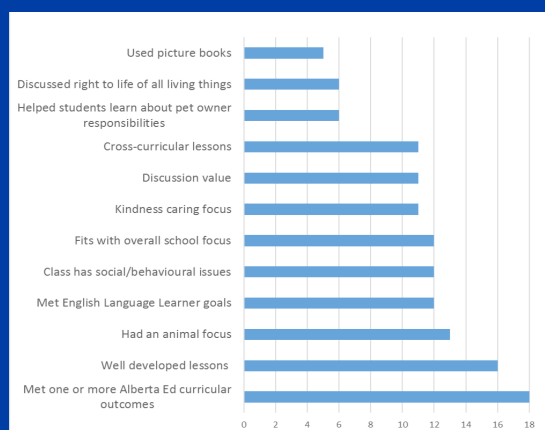
For more information on Humane Education, visit our website for teachers: everylivingthing.ca

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Teacher Perspective

According to the researchers, the success of literature based programs is contingent on the teachers' enthusiasm for the books and lessons. In order for AnimalTales or similar programs to be successful, teachers need to 'buy-in' to the program. All 18 teachers reported having a positive experience personally, as well as for their students. Table 2 (below) highlights the different rationales teachers had for using the materials.

Table 2: Reasons Teachers Used the Program



The main reasons teachers brought the program into the classroom was that it met Alberta curricular outcomes, and included well developed lessons and activities. Additionally, teachers identified other ways they felt that the program fostered empathy:

"Our best class was when we compared ants and people and came to the conclusion that the more we know about something or someone, the more we understand them and have feelings for them. We extended that to people we meet in our classes from other schools or countries. If we know them, we will be able to understand them and have empathy for them." **Grade 2 teacher, urban**

"Having resources with animals as the focus helps the kids transfer the concept of kindness back and forth between animals and people. We can focus on treating all living things with kindness and how you treat animals is how you treat others." **Grade 2/3 teacher, metro**

Conclusion

Students at both grade levels reported learning about compassion, kindness and how others, including animals, are impacted by their actions. This occurred both through the use of the books, activities, discussion and various efforts by the teacher to engage the students in learning. The program is best delivered in conjunction with classroom or school-wide initiatives that foster empathy and compassion. A literature-based program provides an accessible way to promote humane education initiatives and discuss animals without having to bring one into the classroom. The Alberta SPCA will continue to build upon and expand AnimalTales to provide Alberta teachers an effective tool to foster empathy.

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Threads of Compassion

Compassion is a thread that runs throughout the education program. AnimalTales, our free book lending program, incorporates compassion through the themes addressed in the books such as relationship building, problem solving, conflict resolution, and valuing diversity. Students explore the books' topics and engage in activities to foster compassion as well as other character traits such as kindness, responsibility, and respect.



Students participated in the Building Compassion Challenge by researching endangered species and how to protect them.

Compassion plays a role in 'Class Action' service learning projects as students identify an individual or group in need in their community and create and carry out a plan of action to make a difference. We like to acknowledge these acts of kindness and compassion by adding them to our Kindness Map to help inspire others to choose compassion.

Visit our map: everylivingthing.ca/map

What You Can Do

Reinforcing compassion building in young people requires us all to be good role models. Demonstrating kindness and respect to all living things and choosing compassion, especially when it is difficult, provide simple ways to be a positive role model. By doing our small part we can make a positive impact in the lives of others.

