Have The Courage

Campaign encourages horse owners to make a difficult but kind decision before winter

Lynsay was still in her teens when Gooseberry came into her life. The gelding was not quite three years old and needed quite a bit of training when Lynsay welcomed him into her world. And while she was teaching him, Goose (as she calls him) was doing the same for her.

“They are amazing. Man they teach you things,” Lynsay says of animals. “Responsibility, you need money to pay for things. Hard work, animals need a lot of care.”

The hard work paid off and one day, Lynsay says, the pair just clicked, “We were a good little team,” she adds. “We would do everything together.”

Gooseberry ended up spending 24 years in Lynsay’s family. In that time Lynsay graduated from university, got married and had children. Over the last few years, however, she could see Goose was showing his age. Lynsay knew he wouldn’t do well enduring another Alberta winter.

“It’s hard on those horses,” explains Lynsay. “The risk of coming out and finding your horse down and not able to get up; that’s a panic. That’s a horrible situation to be in and I really wish no one would be in that situation.”

Lynsay understood it was time. To delay this heartbreaking decision was to risk Goose’s welfare and potentially allow him to suffer, but Lynsay had the courage. Lynsay chose to end his life peacefully and to ensure he did not suffer. Gooseberry was euthanized this past summer.

...continued on p. 3

Making Masks, Helping Animals

When the pandemic hit, Jean Henderson could not sit still

The pandemic has affected us all in different ways and for Jean Henderson, it has prevented her from fulfilling her prolific volunteer opportunities. However, not even a worldwide health crisis could prevent Jean from using her time to help others.

Jean started making masks in her home; her way of helping prevent the spread of the virus. She also wanted her efforts to help a charity, and she chose to donate all proceeds to the Alberta SPCA.

Jean had small expectations for her campaign. She hoped to make a few masks, raise a little money, and help out a charity. It was nice idea but neither Jean or our organization could have predicted how this goodwill effort would take off.

...continued on p. 3

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...continued on p. 3
Animal Kind is published by the Alberta Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (Alberta SPCA)

President: Dr. Duane Landals

Executive Director: Terra Johnston

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 Animal Kind are necessarily those of the Alberta SPCA.

In a perfect world we would like to see all of our legal cases resolved through the courts, but we know the world is not perfect right now. We continue to investigate our files fully and with the same vigour, and we lay charges when warranted (13 cases have resulted in charges in 2020). If those charges are eventually set aside by the courts due to circumstances beyond our control, we take solace knowing that the animals received our help, and their living conditions improved, regardless of the legal outcome.

EHS Employee Found Not Guilty of Causing Distress

In September of this year the case involving charges against an Edmonton Humane Society employee came to a conclusion more than two years after the Alberta SPCA began an investigation. As a quick reminder, charges were laid after three cats were forgotten in a transport vehicle for over three weeks after being brought to Edmonton from Grande Prairie in the spring of 2018. Thankfully, the cats survived the ordeal.

A trial was held earlier this year and last month the judge found the employee not guilty of causing animals to be in distress under the Animal Protection Act. We respect the court’s decision. While the decision means no single person was ultimately declared legally responsible for the incident, we do know the public attention on the case resulted in changes to policy and procedures that will help prevent a similar situation from arising again.
Common Occurrence

Alberta SPCA Peace Officers attend situations throughout the fall and winter where they see senior horses struggling. Elder horses need extra care and attention to meet their dietary and health needs, and to keep them warm during Alberta’s sometimes extreme winter conditions. Even still, many suffer through the cold months despite their owner’s best efforts.

“Owners may have to make that hard decision when they consider whether the horse can make it through the winter,” says Alberta SPCA Peace Officer Stuart Dodds.

The Alberta SPCA encourages owners to have the courage to make difficult but responsible decisions to euthanize animals before they come to be in distress. While it may be difficult to say goodbye to an equine who has been a part of your family for decades, that attachment should not prevent owners from making a decision that is appropriate for the animal.

“Aged horses often have teeth problems and they’re not utilizing the food properly,” adds Peace Officer Dodds. “And so you have to put so much more in to them just to maintain that condition.”

Lynsay admits she struggled to know when the right time was to put Gooseberry down, but she tried to take a practical view. She says, “If I can’t maintain you, I have to let you go.”

Another Difficult Decision

Unfortunately, Lynsay has another difficult decision on the horizon. Her 17-year-old mare, Aspen, has a lame leg following an injury, and she knows her girl will struggle this winter. So, before the snow flies, Lynsay says, “We’re going to let her go to greener pastures because I don’t want to come out when she’s struggling in the winter, or the ice. I need to know that she’s safe.”

And even though Aspen is not a senior horse, her health challenges are significant. Lynsay is at peace with her decision, acknowledging it comes from a place of kindness.

“That truly is the best thing we can give back to them is let them leave earth with grace and dignity.”

Factors to consider when trying to choose the right time to euthanize an animal include;

- Are they losing weight?
- Are they tired and lethargic?
- Are they in pain?
- Are they enjoying life?

For more tools to help make end-of-life decisions for horses, visit our website at albertaspca.org/animal-care.

Making Masks ...cont’d from front page.

Six months later and the numbers from Jean’s campaign are staggering. She has made over 3,200 masks and raised over $15,000. And those are the totals as of mid-September. With the pandemic far from over, so too are Jean’s efforts. As the orders continue to come in, Jean continues to churn out masks. She’s worn out several sewing machines only to find others willing to donate their machines to the cause. And numerous people have donated material and other sewing supplies, ensuring more money from the sale of the masks is available to be donated to the Alberta SPCA.

We are truly inspired by Jean’s efforts and her willingness to support the work we do. If you need masks and would like to support us at the same time, reach out to Jean at JeanHenderson1947@hotmail.com. Your purchase protects people and animals at the same time!
Cat Corner: Weight Management

Obesity is the number one nutritional disorder in cats, and it is approaching epidemic levels. Obesity indicates an excess of body fat that can lead to compromised health and is a significant animal welfare issue. There are many health impacts associated with obesity including, but are not limited to, diabetes mellitus, hepatic lipidosis, urinary tract diseases, arthritis, dermatopathies, and shortened lifespan. The good news is, obesity can be overcome by making a few changes in how you care for your cat.

Fluff or Fat?
It can sometimes be difficult to tell if your cat is overweight - and many with obese cats are unaware their cat may have this condition. Body condition scoring charts (available on our website) can help determine the body condition of your cat by assessing them visually and getting hands on to feel what is underneath their fur. The best way to ensure your cat is at a healthy weight is by consulting your veterinarian.

Killing with Kindness
Cats are very convincing that they need food and treats and have us trained to respond to their desperate cries. Instead of using food or treats to placate them, try offering petting or playtime to distract them. Socializing and play also help to develop the bond you have with your cat and may reduce any guilt associated with not feeding them unnecessarily. Playing with your cat also helps them to get some much needed exercise and provides enrichment through opportunities to express normal behaviours.

Reducing Weight
Obesity treatment is mainly focused on calorie restriction to promote weight loss, and encouraging more activity through play. Your veterinarian can determine a target weight range and set up a plan to reduce your cat’s weight. The amount of food necessary for a cat depends on the calorie content of the food, and your veterinary team will help figure out the appropriate amount by doing a formula calculation.

Instead of allowing cats to free feed, restrict food to certain times to assert control of the quantity being provided. Try using feeding devices or food puzzles that encourage cats to work for their food, which makes meal time more enriching. If you have a number of cats, feed them separately to control the amount of food each is consuming. As cats are solitary hunters, separate feeding also reduces food competition. The provision of treats should also be considered as part of a diet plan as treat giving can be very satisfying for owners, but provide excessive calories for your pet.

...continued on p. 6.
COVID-19, OFW & Pet Ownership

COVID-19 has created far-reaching impacts beyond physical health implications. Vulnerable and marginalized populations such as lower income families, seniors, racial and ethnic minorities, victims of family violence, the homeless, and those with chronic mental health illness are more likely to live in crisis as result of the pandemic.

Health and economic impacts of this virus disproportionately affect vulnerable and marginalized social groups. The One Family Welfare department has seen a spike in phone calls from pet owners dealing with homelessness, addictions, and senior health issues. Programs and services offered by One Family Welfare are more critical than ever as the physical health implications and economic depression associated with the pandemic influence acute mental health.

When humans are in crisis so are their animals because animal welfare and human welfare are deeply connected. Staff at the Alberta SPCA have witnessed first-hand how the pandemic has affected pet owners in Alberta.

We are seeing an influx of phone calls from panicked pet owners facing financial stressors which are affecting their ability to care for their family pets. Many are struggling with substance abuse and homelessness because of economic issues. Over the last few months, the Pet Safekeeping Coordinator has had her hands full with many complex cases.

Every pet owner that accesses One Family Welfare programs and services has a unique and often heartbreaking story. We have taken a few of the most recent and noteworthy case files and shared them below to provide a small glimpse into the world of One Family Welfare during COVID-19. The names and identifying details have been changed to protect client confidentiality.

Roger and his 14-year-old cat were living under a tarp for several weeks without adequate protection from the heat and rain. Roger lost his job due to changes in the economy and eventually overstayed his welcome with family/friends as he couch-surfed. He refused to apply for government assistance because he had always been independent and felt those who need it more should be the ones to use government help. Eventually, with the support of OFW staff, his cat was placed in our Crisis Care Program while he worked on finding stability. He was put in touch with a housing support agency and is now in the process of securing stable housing.

Marcy, a social worker from an addictions centre, contacted the One Family Welfare department to inquire about supports for her client Rebecca. Rebecca fled an abusive home in another province with her three pets. She was having a hard time coping with her trauma and substance abuse issues which made her recovery challenging. Rebecca had two cats and a dog that were living in a small car with her. She would not enter full-time programming because she worried about her pets as they were her family. The social worker explained, without utilizing their recovery program full-time, it was unlikely Rebecca would overcome all of her issues. After several phone calls with both Marcy and Rebecca, arrangements were made to bring the pets into the Pet Safekeeping Program.

Lydia contacted One Family Welfare in an emotional state because her father was hospitalized and no one in the family was able to look after his dog Lincoln. Ken (her father) was emotionally attached to Lincoln and was unable to focus on his health recovery until he knew his dog would be okay. To make matters worse, Ken was diagnosed with COVID-19 while in the hospital. Lincoln was quickly placed in our Crisis Care Program so the family could focus on Ken’s recovery, knowing Lincoln was safe.

Charlie became a client of OFW during the pandemic
Connecting School Supplies to Animal Welfare

Alberta SPCA staff and our board of directors recently held a fundraiser and product drive for the United Way’s Tools for School program; recognizing that a lack of needed supplies is a known barrier preventing children and youth from successful learning and participation in school.

As a supporter of the Alberta SPCA you might be asking, “why does this matter to animals?” Our response and central to our humane education programming is, young minds need our support to become caring, kind, compassionate and responsible individuals. Inspiring children to demonstrate compassion and empathy for animals, people and the environment supports our collective sense of belonging, well-being and a true sense of community.

As a Caring Community, we are aware that support comes in many forms. During the global pandemic, our organization has stepped up to support those with animals who are suffering from illness or economic hardship. Our Help for Animals feed program assisted over 250 families and almost 1,100 animals. At other times, the assistance has been more personal, such as a Peace Officer helping an owner with a very sick pet mouse. The owner had plans to take the mouse to a vet, but his transportation fell through. Our Peace Officer attended and carefully transported the mouse to be assessed by medical staff. Sadly, the mouse required euthanasia but his owner understood this was the kindest action to take, and we remain comforted knowing his pet is not suffering. And finally, we point to the assistance of our Pet Safekeeping Coordinator who continues to look after a cherished pet fish for a client in medical crisis.

These acts of kindness seem small, but they remain at the heart of a Caring Community. At an organizational level, this awareness and understanding of approaching situations with compassion guides us to work with people in support of better outcomes for animals. We inform and educate individuals through our Education, Animal Protection Services and One Family Welfare departments, and we believe our supporters - you - join us in this Caring Community.

Cat Corner …cont’d from page 4.

Successful weight loss needs to be gradual and can take months to achieve. If food intake is reduced significantly and/or if cats do not eat a new diet food for a few days, they could develop a serious liver condition called hepatic lipidosis caused by food restriction.

Maintaining Ideal Weight
Once target weight is achieved, maintaining that weight is equally, if not more challenging. This means it’s important to stay engaged in monitoring your cat’s body condition.

For tips on how cats like to play or adding food puzzles to engage your cat at meal time, visit our website: albertaspca.org/animal-care/

Body Condition Score Your Cat
www.albertaanimalhealthsource.ca/sites/default/files/uploads/body_condition_score_chart_cats.pdf
We’re Social!

Jessie, from Dan Bulbuc
Iggly, from Maureen Manning
Honey, from Mike Thygesen
Saydee Hoft, from Karen Turpin
George Hinrichs, from Michelle Hinrichs
Robert Hayes, from Carl Ness
Harley, from Judy Baxter
Hannah, from Joanne Thomson
Gordon Hanna, from Tracy & Stan Wadden
Marian Ewanchew, from Patricia
Dave, Jake & Hank, from Mike & Twyla Turcotte
Claire De Luca, from Tina De Luca
Debbie, from Germaine Walchuk
Pamela M. deConey, from Ann Jorgensen
Doreen Deets, from Judy Baldwin
Dibs, from Rachel Fiedler
Dale Dimmock, from Marg Blondheim-Whetstone, Brian Whetstone
Alfred Don, from Alco Gas & Oil Production Equipment
Ripley Doodle, from Shelley Simmonds
Griffin Dorn, from Jeanette Coulstring
Fawkes Dorn, from Jeanette Coulstring
Cecilia Eaton, from Bill Williams
Krypto Ellison, from Myrna Ellison
Marian Ewanchew, from Patricia
Sasha Jugnauth, from Derek Jugnauth
Kala, from Lois Wightman
KATO, from Cindy Turner
Keora Keora, from Carol McKeown
Naim & Jamal Khalil, from Andre Khalil
Victoria Kinash, from Sheri Caithness
Anita J. Klein, from Catherine Dupuis
Themla Fay Knoll, from Betty Gumdunson
Dr. Andy Kolski, from Cameron Kennedy
Katherine Kostinuk, from Melanie Goroniuk
Tony Kovach, from Anonymous
Rhonda Gaye Kropf, from Karl Kropf
Sasha Lach, from Mark & Cindy Lach
Barbara Lagroix, from Barbara & Agnes Vogel
Ellen Leiske, from Debbie Cooper
Loco, from Heather Loughlin
Leonard, Waltraud & Ronald Lumpe, from Marlon LaBrie
Kenny MacDonald, from Joanne MacKay
Mary, Atty & Leo, from Anonymous
Max, from Ann Marie Gonda
Fiona McLeod, from Antonia McLeod
Cameron McLeod, from Shirley & Walter Mischuk
Jackie McNutt, from Autumn Malsy-Boag
Milton, from Violeta Mariscal
Steven Minchau, from Lora Stromberg
Molly & Ellie, from Ms Michelle Duperre
Mr. Tibbs, from Darryl & Jean Hughes
Jean Murphy, from Gary & Rita Phillips, Adam Schuermen
Gerard Musterer, from Mark Mueller
Napolean, from Yvonne Collinson
Max Nevin, from Amber Nevin
Larry & Isabel Nixon, from Connie Ferguson
Noah, from Sherry Schwartz
Carol Nystrom, from Natalie Stachnik
Blackie Owens, from Christine Owens
Norm Prentice, from Cecile & Ralph E Atkinson
Mary Proud, from D. Lygo
George Proulx, from Dorothy M. Peterson
PSD Ned, from Ned’s Wish
Rider, from Karen & Brad Manustyrska
Riley, from Tracy & Stan Wadden
Betty Robinson, from Unit 44 Nurses
Sandy Rodewold, from Sandra Cooke
Dr. Ernest Rogan, from Jane Adams
Rosie, from Buffy Afseth
Sage, from Tiffany Zender
Myah Irene Saklofske, from Viktoria Saklofske
Sana, from Anonymous
Robert Arthur Sanders, from Order of the Eastern Star
Schneider & Samson, from Patty Hicks
William Scott, from Canary HLE
Shylo, from Sharon Coursene
Slobberpuss, from Dawn R. & Les Finning
Jean Smith, from Bonnie Weiss
Paul Alexander Smith, from Gail Lowe
Geraldine Smith, from Heather MacDonald
Skipper P. Smithies, from Rose Marie Smithies
Debra Snow, from James Snow
Sonny, from Rae-lynn Myrglind
Eileen Stamp, from Karen Cargill
Stella, from Julia Stanbridge
Streaky, Gracie & Bella, from Debra Mercer
Tesoro, from Karen Cumming
Judy Thompson, from Mike & Sandra Ballash
Darryl Towns, from Margaret & Donald Fregren
John R. Trollope, from Zennia Trollope
Elizabeth Tuxworth, from Josephine Cleopahrt
Tyson, from Raymond & Lena Tsuji
Simon Upright, from Chirag Shah
Valentine, from Claudette Lachance
Antoinette van Bart, from Linda Hilbig
Mary Watling, from Sarah Bonazza
Frank Watson, from Seanna MacKenzie
Watson, from Duncan Binder
Whispurr, from Anonymous
Buzz Willing, from Diana Lakusta
Harley Wilson, from Susanne Brick
Winston, Webster & Topaz, from Leona De Boer
Moe Wolff, from RA Consulting Inc.
Terry Ross Wolf, from Richard & Elaine Gosman
Zoe, from Elodie Mathison
Zoe, from Liz McBride-Finch

Tribute donations can be made by cheque, or on our website: albertaspca.org
ANIMALKIND RESPONSE FORM

If you believe Animal Protection, Education and One Family Welfare are vital to preventing animal cruelty, please support the Alberta SPCA’s programs by becoming a member and/or making a donation. Help us help the animals by filling out this form and mailing it to: Alberta SPCA, 17904 118 Avenue NW, Edmonton, AB T5S 2W3, or visit us at albertaspca.org.

Name__________________________
Address_________________________
City/Town_______________________ Postal Code_________________________
Phone__________________________ Email______________________________

Donations and Memberships

YES! I support the Alberta SPCA’s province-wide Animal Protection, Education and Pet Safekeeping programs.

☐ Enclosed is a donation of $________
   (Income tax receipts are automatically issued for donations of $10 or more.)

☐ I would like to renew my membership or become a member of the Alberta SPCA:
   ☐ $15 student/senior  ☐ $20 Individual
   ☐ $30 senior family   ☐ $35 family

I’m paying by:
   ☐ Cheque
   ☐ Credit card: ☐ VISA ☐ Amex ☐ MasterCard

$________ membership + $________ donation = $______(total)

Cardholder Name________________________
Card Number____________________________
Expiry _______ / _______
Signature________________________________

Animal Response Team (ART)

I authorize the Alberta SPCA to deduct $________ from my bank account* or credit card on the 1st day of each month or the next business day. I understand that I can change or cancel this monthly donation at any time, subject to providing written notice of 15 days or more.

Signature________________________________
Date____________________________________

Please withdraw this monthly amount from my:
   ☐ Bank Account (attach a cheque marked VOID)
   ☐ Credit card: ☐ VISA ☐ MasterCard ☐ Amex

Cardholder Name________________________
Card Number____________________________
Expiry _______ / _______
Signature________________________________

* To view a sample cancellation form or learn more about cancelling a PAD agreement, contact your financial institution or visit www.cdnpay.ca. You have certain recourse rights if any debt does not comply with this agreement. For example, you have the right to receive reimbursement for any debit that is not authorized or is not consistent with this PAD agreement. For more information on your recourse rights, contact your financial institution or visit www.cdnpay.ca.