



AlbertaSPCA.org

Fall 2025

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



Kind ANIMAL



Addressing the “Wicked Problem”

Have you heard of a wicked problem?

I hadn't before Dr. Ed Pajor presented on *One Health at the University of Calgary* at our inaugural Animal Welfare Symposium. According to Dr. Pajor, wicked problems are socially complex and involve many stakeholders with differing perspectives and expectations. These problems are not easily solved. They often require a shift in thinking – from a focus on finding a solution to committing to continuous intervention. Tackling wicked problems means changing mindsets, habits and behaviours across entire communities.

Dr. Pajor described animal welfare as a wicked problem, and I see his point. However, should we let this overwhelm us and give up on making things better? I don't think so (and for

the record neither does Dr. Pajor) but I do think it should make us think differently about how to approach challenges in our community.

What if we thought of animal welfare not as a problem to solved, but as a *verb* – actions we take every day to improve lives? What if we focused on root causes, worked collaboratively and aimed for change across systems?

Here's a great example. Back in 1978, the animal welfare community in Alberta held a similar symposium, hosted by the University of Calgary. Many of the pressing issues discussed then are still with us today. However, one problem did see real progress.

Dog poop in public places was a serious issue for the folks back then. It was both an environmental and health hazard. So, what did they do? The community came together and worked to change mindsets, habits and behaviours. They made it easy for dog walkers to get their hands on poop bags. They campaigned to make it socially acceptable to stoop and scoop. They changed bylaws to make it an offence to not clean up dog feces. Problem (pretty much) solved. This shows us change is possible – even on issues that seem entrenched.

We can make a difference. But it takes all of us working together, challenging norms and committing to action. This means we need to get wicked ourselves.

Thanks for everything you do!

Leanne Niblock, Executive Director

ANIMAL WELFARE SYMPOSIUM



Inaugural Animal Welfare Symposium a Success

On September 9, the Alberta SPCA proudly hosted the inaugural Animal Welfare Symposium, bringing together over 120 attendees from 31 communities and 43 organizations — all united by a shared commitment to advancing animal welfare and community well-being in Alberta.

A diverse group of knowledgeable experts provided attendees with new insights into a wide range of timely topics, including:

- Indigenous perspectives on animal welfare
- The roles and responsibilities of key stakeholders in animal welfare
- Associations between farmer stress and animal welfare
- The importance of modernizing municipal animal bylaws
- Animal welfare and One Health research at the University of Calgary
- Barriers to veterinary care

Beyond presentations, participants took part in expert-led facilitated discussions, focused on emerging questions and opportunities to address the root causes of animal welfare challenges in Alberta. These interactions sparked collaboration and highlighted the importance of unity across sectors. Key takeaways from the day were also captured in real time by a local visual facilitator turning complex ideas into clear and engaging visuals.

The Animal Welfare Symposium provided a much-needed space for meaningful connections and insights that will guide and inspire our work in the months ahead. We left the day energized and motivated, ready to continue championing change for Alberta's animals.





**Thank you to the sponsors
who made this event possible!**

Networking
Event



Lunch



Wealth Management
Dominion Securities

Stephen Michalyk
Portfolio Manager & Wealth
Advisor

Session



In-Kind



EQUIPMENT SALES | SERVICE | SUPPLIES | PRINT PRODUCTION

VISIT:

AnimalWelfareSymposium.ca/2025
for highlights from the day.

Speaking for Those Who Can't: Alberta SPCA Gives Neglected Dogs a Voice in Court

In a recent case where an owner pleaded guilty to causing dogs to be in distress, the Alberta SPCA submitted a community impact statement for the court to consider at sentencing. Our goal is to help the courts understand just how seriously cases of animal neglect and cruelty affect our communities.

The dogs in this case were emaciated, with bones visibly protruding beneath their skin – some too weak to walk or even lift their heads. They suffered in silence, with empty bowls, open wounds and untreated illnesses. These animals were not only denied food and water but also companionship, safety and the most basic kindness.

Each of these dogs felt pain. Each of them endured fear, confusion and suffering at the hands of a person who was responsible for their care.



WHY A COMMUNITY IMPACT STATEMENT

A community impact statement (sometimes called a victim-oriented or harm-to-community statement) is:

- A way for a community or community-representative (could be an organization like Alberta SPCA), to express how a crime or wrongdoing affects communities beyond just the immediate victims.
- Meant to help the judge understand the broader harm: loss of public trust, costs (financial, emotional), effect on welfare standards and public expectations.
- Used in sentencing or in other judicial determinations after a defendant is found guilty (or pleads guilty), so the sentencing can reflect all dimensions of harm caused.



INFLUENCING SENTENCING TOWARD PREVENTION, DETERRENCE AND REHABILITATION

When determining a sentence, the court considers not only the harm caused but also whether the sentence is sufficient to deter others and prevent re-offending. The community impact statement adds meaningful weight to these considerations.

In the cases we deal with, such a statement may support measures such as a probation period, a prohibition on owning animals, or restitution.

SPEAKING FOR THOSE WHO CAN'T SPEAK FOR THEMSELVES

While animals are not legal persons under Canadian law, organizations like the Alberta SPCA act as their advocates. The suffering of the animals is a matter of public concern, and we're uniquely positioned to document and present that suffering in a way the courts can consider.

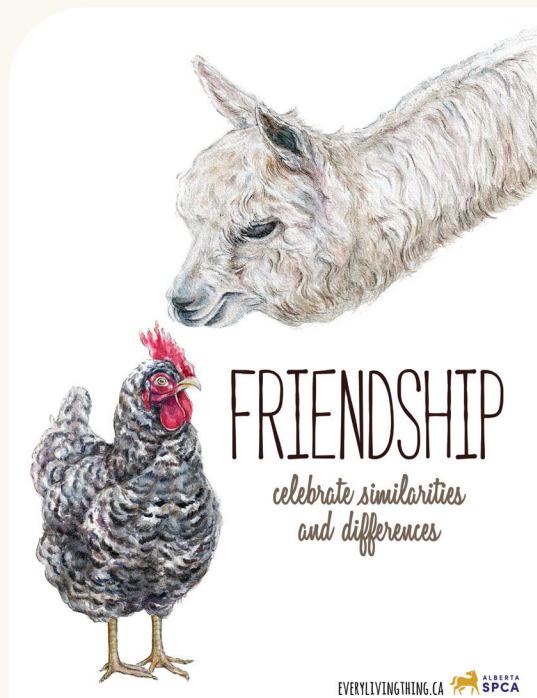
Our statement helps ensure that the harms suffered by animals become part of the legal record in a fuller way. The court is expected to deliver a sentence for this case soon.

We chose not to include photos of the dogs at the time they were rescued, as the images were very distressing. Instead, we share photos of their recovery – after they received veterinary care and are on their journey toward a better life. As soon as the dogs are recovered and ready, they will be available for adoption through our shelter partners.



“This case represents not only a heartbreaking instance of cruelty and neglect but also a violation of the standards of compassion and care that we, as a community, expect and uphold. Let this case serve as a turning point – one where Alberta chooses to uphold its laws, to protect the voiceless, and to honour the efforts of those who stepped in to save what lives they could.” - Excerpt from the Alberta SPCA’s community impact statement

This Year's Education Focus is Friendship



Teachers can request this classroom poster at everylivingthing.ca

Friendships are essential to everyone's well-being. No matter your age, meaningful relationships help us feel supported, connected and valued. Animals can play an important role in developing these skills. Caring for and connecting with animals fosters empathy, responsibility and the importance of belonging. Extending these connections with the environment helps students understand that balance, care and interdependence are essential for the well-being of every living thing.

This year's theme of Friendship will focus on nurturing our connection to others. When youth practise friendship rooted in empathy, communication and respect, they strengthen the skills needed to support success in both school and outside the classroom.

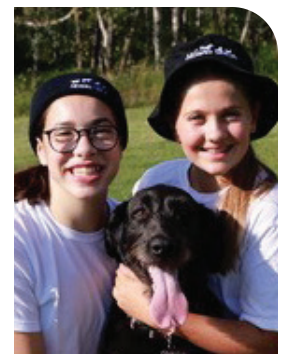
As always, the poster is available in both English and French and has been designed by Edmonton watercolourist, Gloria Ho.

Encourage the teachers you know to sign up for the everylivingthing e-newsletter to have the poster mailed to their school for free. The e-news contains information, ideas and classroom ready resources to help foster empathy and compassion towards animals, people and the environment. Teachers can subscribe at everylivingthing.ca.

Looking for ways to support the Alberta SPCA? Why not host your own fundraiser!

You can support the Alberta SPCA by raising awareness and funds in your community through your very own fundraising initiative. Every fundraiser, no matter how big or small, helps to protect, promote and enhance the well-being of animals in Alberta.

One recent example is a fundraiser held by Annie and Maren, who donated the proceeds from pet portraits and dog cookies they sold at their event, Shabbark in the Park. The possibilities are only limited by your imagination — shovel snow, collect bottles, hold a community yard sale or host a cribbage tournament. You'll find a fundraising toolkit on our website (under Ways to Help) to provide tips to a successful fundraiser.



IN LOVING MEMORY

Abby, Liz Willisko
Albert Duff, Teresa & Terry
McCarney
Alexander-the-Great, M. Patricia
Murphy
Amelia Bernice Morrison, Amelia
Morrison
Andreas Leitz, Jack Roth
Anne Kotyshyn, Mavis & Steve
Valenti, Catherine Dixon,
Michelle Buresi
Barbara Ann Alton-Carlson, Sharon
Taylor
Bear, Jacquelyn Fulford
Bertha Mills, Heather Hopwood
Betty White, Donald Patterson &
Lynda Bowes
Bev Comin, Larry Comin
Bill Lyle, James E. & Joan Savage
Birgitta Wallace Ferguson, Ingrid
Urberg
Brad Radke, Rita McCallum
Brenda Jo-Anne Heisler, Irene
Nutbrown
Bryan Orr, Debria Jamieson
Bryna Clarke, Sydney Deitch
Casey Reynolds, Julie Reynolds
Clayton Spence & Missy, Mary Jane
McLaren
Damon, Penney Pike
Daniel Dettonnancour, Darlene
Wong
Darryl Sandquist, Gabrielle Butler,
Deirdrie Cormier, Thu Bob Duncan,
Farron Whitworth, Natasha Rowden,
Cory Fuller, Cedar LNG LP
Dennis Staniland, Carolyn Field
Dorothy Anne Crosby, Peggy
Plathan
Edith Foster, Ian & Iris Mason
Edith Foster, John Foster
Florence Merle Jensen, Cheryl
LaRocque, Wanda Tomiyama,
Kimberley Robinson, V Joughin,
Laurie & Kevin Kozak, Lianne
Trewin
Floyd Doering, Linette Franklin
Frankie Paisley, Magaretha Shed
Garry Corey, Russell & Brenda Kane

Gedo, Taylor Sowiak
Georgie Rose, Emily Todd
Gladys White, Karen Schultz,
Sandra White
Harold Schultz, Barbara & Agnes
Vogel
Henry, Delaney Nickerson
Hugh Fuller, Carolyn Matras
Indie & Delilah, Irma & Michael
Bradley
Janet Hornby, Edward Hornby
Jeanette Wolski, Adriana Footz
Jeanne Bernice Jensen, Lynda
Anderson
John Krankowsky, Grace Gardens
Funeral Chapel, Eddy & Patricia
Zarowny, Terry Laboucane,
David Pashulka
Joyce Crittenden, Nancy Farrell
Julia Palladino, Joann Grotski, Maria
Cerminara
Karen Ann Costen, Doris MacKinnon
Karla Krypa, Joan S. Clark
Kevin Mangau, Dr Angelina
Morales-Izquierdo
King, Peter Foreman
Laura (Parnham) Gibbons, Sam
Chapple, Glen Gibbons
Lily, Erin Lisa Beckwell
Link Steffler, Elaine & Ken deBoer
Marge Oakes, Dawn & Les Finnigan
Marjorie Dorethia Ward, Karen
Smythe, Bill Powell, Pardon
My Garden, Paris Warkentin,
Bob Skelton, Paige Family,

Karen Franklin, Alison & David
Crerar, Lynn Eyton
Mary Ann Thurber, Christine &
Darren Hayduk, Shauna Hansen
Megan Nutbrown, Irene Nutbrown
Michael Kinnear, Norrie Power
Skating
Mikey, Marlena Petryga
Miro Stejskal, Elaine Porter
Molly, Rochelle Loewen
Nancy-Faye McCagg, Pearl-Ann
Gooding
Ollie Barker, Lorelei Anselmo
Pam Genert, Melody MacMillan
Paul Lauzon, Tawna & Jason McKay
Randall Worthington, Shirley Mason
Rhonda Gaye Kropf, Karl Kropf
Robert (Bob) Richard Gibbon, Brett
Gates
Ronald August Knopp, Myrna
Schreiner-Head, Sandy Rene,
Mel Movold
Rose Tomkow, Devlin Drinkell-Seidel
Roxy and Camryn, Thomas Lee
Shirley Dalby, Jim Dalby
Steven Gonzales, Sally Jackson-
Dent
Sue Miles, James E. & Joan Savage
Terry Massey, Jeff Massey
Turtle, Alem Sium
Waltraud Hartlieb, Lucy Troup
Wendy Darlene MacKenzie, Paul &
Angie Vanhooren
William "Bill" Paul Biccum, Deanna
Goudie





ANIMALKIND RESPONSE FORM

FALL 2025

If you believe Animal Protection, Education and Pet Safekeeping are vital to preventing animal neglect and abuse, 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 _____

Monthly Giving

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 debit 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.