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THE HUMANITARIAN

SASKATCHEWAN SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS



IN THIS ISSUE

TAKE THE GREAT CANADIAN GIVING CHALLENGE!

STRYKER K-9 CARE FUND: GETTING TO KNOW RELEK

95 YEARS OF SERVICE: THE HISTORY OF THE SASKAPCA

SASKSPCA EXPANDS OUR TEAM

LEARNING WITH ANIMALS AT SOFIA HOUSE

UPDATED CODE OF PRACTICE

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Take the Great Canadian Giving Challenge!

Help the SaskSPCA win \$20,000 in the Great Canadian Giving Challenge and make a difference in our community! Your donation in June can make it happen. Scan the QR code to donate now!



Reporting Animal Cruelty

If you suspect an animal is being neglected or abused, report it to the proper authorities immediately.

DOGS, CATS, AND OTHER PETS:

In Saskatoon:

Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan: 306.382.0002

In Regina:

Regina Humane Society: 306.543.6363

Elsewhere in Saskatchewan:

Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan: 1.844.382.0002

LIVESTOCK IN ALL PARTS OF SASKATCHEWAN:

Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan: 1.844.382.0002

Remember:
*If you
see something,
say something!*

Want to support the SaskSPCA during this milestone year?

Use the enclosed donation form to donate
\$19.28 in honour of our 95th anniversary!

Stryker K-9 Care Fund: Getting to know Relek

Relek is a German Shepherd who served with the Saskatchewan RCMP in the role of Police Service Dog for nine years. Relek retired in September 2022.

Relek was trained in Basic General Duty and Human Remains Detection.

During his years of service, Relek was able to provide closure to a grieving family when he located their loved one's remains, and he saved the life of an older adult who had gone missing in inclement weather.

In retirement, Relek enjoys playing with his Kong toy and is treated to the occasional cheeseburger.

All of us at the SaskSPCA would like to thank Relek and his handler for their years of service with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.



About the SaskSPCA Stryker K-9 Care Fund

The Stryker Fund was established in 2015 to assist the owners of retired law enforcement dogs with the costs of routine and emergency veterinary care. The program is named after Police Service Dog (PSD) Stryker who served with the Saskatoon Police Service's K-9 Unit. To learn more about the Stryker Fund, including how to apply for program and how to make a donation, visit www.saskspca.ca/stryker. ●

95 Years of Service: The History of the SaskSPCA

The early years in Regina

On March 7, 1928, the Saskatchewan Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SaskSPCA) was created by an Act of the provincial legislature. The creation of the Society aimed “to prevent cruelty to dumb animals of all kinds and to inculcate the principles of and the desire for better and more humane treatment of dumb animals.”

Before 1928, the SaskSPCA was active for over a decade in Regina, operating as the Regina SPCA. The focus was primarily on humane education, with lessons taught in Presbyterian Sunday schools. To educate the community, the SaskSPCA also released an instructional manual for the proper care of animals. During this time, animal cruelty investigations were left to the police. In 1922, the (Regina) SPCA members took the first steps to organize a provincial chapter under the *Benevolent Society Act*. The hope was that a provincial SPCA would further the humane work of the organization.

After its inception, the SaskSPCA remained centralized in Regina for many years. Early members of the SaskSPCA executive included local doctors, lawyers, veterans, and a provincial judge. The SaskSPCA continued to make humane education a priority. An investigator was hired to work four hours daily, and Dr. L.L. Hewitt of Regina was the first official SaskSPCA veterinarian.

The growth of local SPCAs and Humane Societies

In the early years, the SaskSPCA was an umbrella organization for creating local (city) branch humane societies. In the mid-

1960s, branches were opened in Moose Jaw, Lloydminster, and Prince Albert.

The SaskSPCA served as the Regina branch until the Regina Society for the Humane Care of Animals was incorporated in 1964, separate from the SaskSPCA. In 1968, the Saskatoon branch was incorporated as an independent organization, the Saskatoon SPCA.

In 1975, the Yorkton branch of the SaskSPCA was established. The Yorkton branch was incorporated as an independent organization approximately three years later, becoming the Yorkton SPCA.

Even after local societies incorporated separately, they could appoint representatives to sit on the SaskSPCA's board of directors. This process was later revised with local society representatives serving in an advisory capacity to the provincial SaskSPCA board. Today, each local society operates autonomously without representation on the SaskSPCA board of directors. While all organizations are independent, there is ongoing cooperation and communication between the societies as we work to improve animal welfare.

Enforcement of animal cruelty legislation

Beginning in the 1970s, the SaskSPCA handled enforcement of *The Animal Protection Act* in all areas of the province. We employed skilled Animal Protection Officers to investigate reports of animal cruelty in locations outside the four largest cities of Saskatoon, Regina, Prince Albert, and Moose Jaw. We devoted considerable effort to building a strong and effective enforcement program but were always keenly aware that we could do more to prevent animal cruelty.

In 2014, our Board of Directors decided not to renew our contract with the Ministry of Agriculture to enforce *The Animal Protection*

Act. Enforcement is now handled by a separate organization — Animal Protection Services of Saskatchewan (APSS). Our Board felt the time was right to focus on education and other areas where we can significantly impact animal welfare.

Partners in prevention

Having given up our role in enforcement, we can now devote our resources to education and the prevention of animal cruelty.

The SaskSPCA continues to work with APSS, local SPCAs and Humane Societies, rescue groups, veterinarians, industry, government, producers, and pet owners. We all have a role to play in animal welfare. Working collaboratively, we can share ideas and develop workable solutions to ensure that all animals are treated humanely throughout their lives.

A growing and evolving animal welfare organization

Looking to the future, the SaskSPCA continues to develop and introduce new programs while expanding existing ones. We want to make a real and lasting difference for Saskatchewan's animals.

Through partnerships with provincial organizations such as STOPS to Violence and the Provincial Association of Transition Houses & Services of Saskatchewan (PATHS), the SaskSPCA raises awareness of the complex relationship between interpersonal violence and animal abuse. We have developed ViolenceLink.ca as a resource for those seeking information on the violence link.

In 2016, we announced a new initiative to create a certification and registration program for animal rescue groups operating in the

province. This process has evolved, and in January 2022, the Saskatchewan Animal Rescue Standards were submitted to the Ministry of Agriculture for consideration that these standards be referenced in The Animal Protection Regulations. The standards can be viewed online at PetRescueToolkit.ca.

In November 2020, the SaskSPCA launched the Emergency Pet Food Bank to help families during the COVID-19 pandemic. After a year of operation, the program was reviewed, and the decision was made to create a permanent pet food bank program. To date, the SaskSPCA Pet Food Bank has distributed, through our partners, over 68,000 pounds of food in 13 Saskatchewan communities.

We hope you have enjoyed this brief history of the SaskSPCA. Check back in future issues of *The Humanitarian* as we spend the next year celebrating our 95th anniversary!



Do you recognize anyone in these images? If so, send us an email and tell us who they are!
info@saskspca.ca



SaskSPCA Expands Our Team

The SaskSPCA is pleased to introduce two new staff members who have joined our team.

Colleen Ostoforoff joins us as our new Fundraiser. Colleen is a not-for-profit professional with almost thirty years of field experience in arts and education programming, marketing, operations, and fundraising. Throughout her multi-faceted roles, Colleen believes it is important to continue cultivating strategic partnerships with local, provincial, and national partners.

Colleen's past employment opportunities allowed her to work in Washington, DC, Toronto, Thunder Bay, and various points throughout Saskatchewan. She has worked in many fields while exploring the needs of large and small grassroots organizations.

As someone that flourishes in developing and building stronger grassroots organizations, Colleen is thrilled to work alongside an incredible team to help strengthen the welfare of animals in Saskatchewan.

Currently, Colleen leads a double life not only as an arts aficionado where she is an active musician and composer, but she is also a passionate dog lover, and sports car and motorcycle enthusiast.

Danielle Robertson is the SaskSPCA's new Program Development Coordinator. Danielle recently graduated from the Animal Bioscience program at the University of Saskatchewan. She discovered her love for animals while volunteering at a wildlife rehabilitation where she cared for patients and led educational programs.

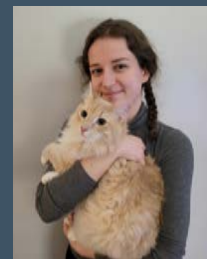
For the last two years, she has worked at the WCVM Veterinary Medical Centre, supporting veterinarians, patients, and owners through companion animal injuries and their recovery. Her extensive background in various fields of animal health has harboured an appreciation for the complex dynamics involved in supporting the physical and emotional well-being of animals and their people.

Danielle is passionate about maintaining the human-animal bond, and she enjoys connecting with the community through this shared admiration. When not spending time with her two cats, she expresses her creativity through dance.

Welcome, Colleen and Danielle!



Colleen Ostoforoff



Danielle Robertson and her cat, Phillip.

Learning with Animals at SOFIA House

SOFIA House is a second-stage shelter for women and children who have experienced interpersonal violence. We offer programs for women and children, both together and separately. Our children's program focuses on making the children feel safe and secure, building self-regulation skills, learning about healthy relationships and boundaries, setting personal boundaries and respecting others' boundaries.

Thanks to a partnership between SOFIA House and Avana that allows our building to be pet friendly, we have been able to introduce hedgehogs that will help us showcase the importance of boundaries. We have also collaborated with the Provincial Association of Transition Houses and Services of Saskatchewan (PATHS) and the SaskSPCA; they provided us with a pet care kit. Our pet care kit included all the initial set-up supplies, such as the cage, a wheel, a bag of paper shavings for bedding, a hideout, food and water bowls, and even our first bag of food. The only cost we needed to worry about was the hedgehog itself.

When we got our hedgehog, we were told she was just a few months old, and they couldn't even tell us if she was female or male. We had her for exactly 27 days before learning that she is, in fact, a female, and she is also a mama! During a SOFIA House tour, we showed off our new pet and discovered a baby. We named the mama Rosie, and the baby is named Coffee Bean.

After a Google search and a trip to the pet store, we learned not to disturb the hedgehog and her baby for the first week or so as not to threaten the new mom. Since we could not interact with the hedgehogs, we used this to talk about how moms care for their animals and human babies.

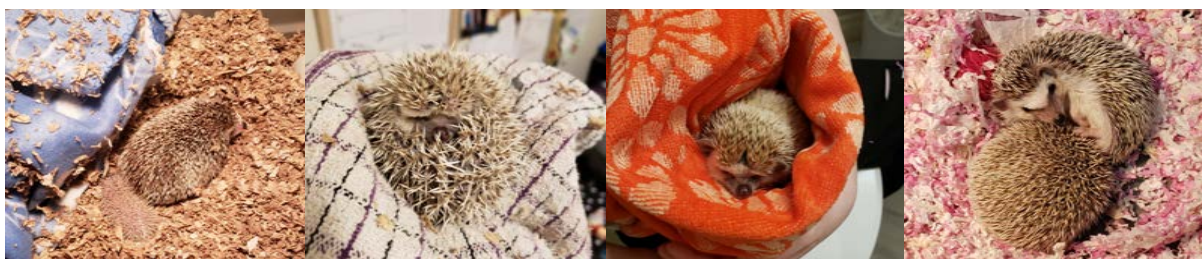
All pets are a great way to teach boundaries and nonverbal communication, especially hedgehogs. When a hedgehog feels unsafe or scared, the spines on its back stand up, and it may also hiss. Their defence mechanism is such a visual and tactile response that the youth must respect the hedgehogs'

boundaries and build trust. They do this by helping keep the cage clean; they take turns feeding hedgehogs and ensuring they have fresh water, giving treats, holding them, or just talking to them.

Funnily enough, one of the reasons we decided on a hedgehog is because they are solitary animals. They generally need less attention than rabbits or guinea pigs, which are social animals and thrive in pairs. Once we learned that Coffee Bean is also female, and we wouldn't have any more surprises, we decided to keep them both; the empathy the kids displayed in not wanting to separate mom and baby was incredible.

Overall, the partnerships and pet care kits have been highly beneficial, and we wouldn't have been able to do this without the support of Avana, PATHS, and the SaskSPCA.

Article submitted by SOFIA House. You can learn more about SOFIA House by visiting their website: sofiahouse.ca.



Updated Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle Released

The National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC) and Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC) are pleased to announce the release of the updated *Code of Practice for the Care and Handling of Dairy Cattle*. The updated Code is now available at www.nfacc.ca/codes-of-practice/dairy-cattle. It replaces its predecessor, developed in 2009, effective April 1, 2024 (unless indicated otherwise in Requirements with a later phase-in date). The 2009 dairy cattle Code will remain in effect until March 31, 2024.

"Canadian dairy farmers already follow some of the most stringent standards in the world, and the new Code of Practice will help them continue to provide the best in animal care while staying consistent with our industry's history of continuous improvement," says Pierre Lampron, President of DFC. "This commitment to quality and care means dairy farmers are always looking to stay ahead of the curve and improve their practices, reflecting the most recent science on the welfare of their animals."

A *What We Heard and How We Addressed It* report from the Code Development Committee is also available here. The report summarizes how input from the public comment period, and from a 2019 top-of-mind survey, was considered in finalizing the Code. Committee members thank everyone who contributed their feedback, which led to several improvements in the final Code. While not all concerns could be addressed, the Code Development Committee worked hard to balance producer achievability, available research, and stakeholder viewpoints in the Code's development.

"The new Code provides important updated standards for the welfare of dairy cattle in Canada," said Dr. Jeffrey Rushen, Humane Canada representative on the dairy cattle Code Development Committee. "The requirements and recommendations are science-informed and will evolve the welfare practices of dairy farmers to better meet the needs of their animals."

"Canadian dairy farmers care about protecting the health and welfare of their farm animals. This updated Code of Practice will help them continue to enhance the care and handling of animals while boosting consumer confidence that our food system is meeting the highest standards," said the Honourable Marie-Claude Bibeau, Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food.



Canada's Codes of Practice provide critical guidance for the care and handling of farm animals. They serve as the foundation for ensuring that farm animals are cared for using sound management and welfare practices that promote animal health and well-being. Codes are used as educational tools, reference materials for regulations, and the foundation for industry animal care assessment programs.

NFACC's Code development process is a unique consensus-based, multi-stakeholder approach that ensures credibility and transparency through scientific rigour, stakeholder collaboration, and consistency. The development of the Dairy Cattle Code was led by an 18-person Code committee that includes participants from across Canada including dairy farmers, animal welfare and enforcement representatives, processors, researchers, veterinarians, and government representatives.

Aiding in their work was a five-person Scientific Committee that included animal science and veterinary expertise in dairy cattle behaviour, health, and welfare. A public comment period was held from November 29, 2021 – January 27, 2022 to allow the public and all stakeholders to provide input.

Canada's Codes of Practice are a powerful tool for meeting rising consumer, marketplace and societal expectations relative to farmed animal welfare. Codes support responsible animal care practices and keep everyone involved in farmed animal care and handling on the same page.

The *Dairy Cattle Code* was the first Code of Practice to be updated through NFACC's Code process in 2009 and has now undergone its second update utilizing this process. For more information on the Codes of Practice and NFACC's Code development process visit www.nfacc.ca.

The project was funded in part by the Government of Canada under the Canadian Agricultural Partnership's AgriAssurance Program.

About the National Farm Animal Care Council (NFACC)

NFACC is a collaborative partnership of diverse stakeholders created in 2005 to share information and work together on farm animal care and welfare. It is the national lead for farm animal care issues in Canada and operates as a Division of Animal Health Canada. For more information on NFACC, visit www.nfacc.ca.

About Dairy Farmers of Canada (DFC)

Dairy Farmers of Canada is the national policy, lobbying and promotional organization representing Canadian dairy producers. DFC strives to create stable conditions for the dairy sector in our country. It also seeks to maintain policies that promote the sustainability of Canadian dairy production and promote dairy products and their health benefits. Dairy farmers have set a goal of net-zero emissions from farm-level dairy production by 2050. For more information, visit www.dairyfarmers.ca.

Article courtesy of nfacc.ca.

Cultivating Wellness Gathering Recap

On April 28th and 29th, animal welfare professionals from across Western Canada joined the SaskSPCA at Dakota Dunes Resort for Cultivating Wellness: A Gathering for Humans in Animal Welfare.

The two-day gathering explored the mental health and well-being of animal welfare professionals and why it is so important for the humans and animals they work with.

Presenters and topics included Erin Beckwell on becoming trauma-informed, Anna Maria Buhr and Ruth Eliason on handling grief and loss, Jillian Carr on financial well-being, Dr. Trisha Dowling on mindfulness, Jo-Anne Dusel and Crystal Giesbrecht on intimate partner violence in the workplace, Dr. Savannah Howse on diversity and inclusion in a veterinary context, Dr. Rebecca Mycock and Dr. Leo Perlinger on veterinarians in the 2SLGBTQ+ community, Erin Wasson on setting boundaries, Nicole White on bystander workplace training, and Laura Zmud on debriefing.

"Honestly blown away by how great the conference turned out. I learned something from every presentation and feel motivated to share what I've learned and discuss it all with my coworkers. The location, flow of the day, food, and atmosphere were all great," explained an attendee of the gathering.

The SaskSPCA thanks the Cultivating Wellness Gathering Planning Committee: Catherine Beaupre, Erin Jellow, Kristy Mason, Rebecca Mycock, Tiegan Kowerchuk-Webster, and Laura Zmud. This event would not have been possible without your dedication and commitment. Your efforts are greatly appreciated! We also extend a thank you to the local businesses and individuals who provided silent auction and swag bag items for the Gathering.



Dr. Trisha Dowling presents on mindfulness



Laura Zmud presents on debriefing

The SaskSPCA would like to thank our sponsors for their support.



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