

***Preston County Humane
Society Newsletter***

prestoncountyhumanesociety.org

Spring, 2017

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Preston Paws

Teaching Kindness

One of our most important programs at PCHS is sponsoring subscriptions to the HSUS publication *KIND News* for classes in county schools. This year about 900 kids from kindergarten to sixth grade will receive the award-winning magazine. *KIND News* guides children “to respect animals and their habitat and interact gently with creatures large and small.” We’ve been pondering – does kindness come naturally to all children? How can it best be encouraged? Can we as an organization, and as individual members, do more to cultivate kindness?

Kindness is “Hardwired”

Researchers studying human development note that caring, empathy, and helpfulness are essential survival skills. Helping each other makes life better for all. So we believe kindness does come naturally, then grows with encouragement and practice. Consider also, as one writer says, that “animals have an almost magical hold on children”. Kids from the earliest age are fascinated by animals and are excited to learn the names and sounds even of animals they’ve never seen. What kind of sound does a monkey make? Who has big ears and a fluffy tail?

We All Want What’s Best for Kids

Kind people are happier, healthier people. There is a link between learning compassion for animals and being more just, kind and compassionate in relationships with each other. Teaching empathy for animals can lead kids to respect and treat others who are different from them with kindness. A survey by the Sesame Street team found 73% of parents say it’s more important for their children to be kind than academically successful. Kids aren’t so sure they believe this; they say the message they hear most often is about excelling in school.

Teaching by Example

Being a role model for kindness is a powerful and long-lasting teaching tool. We can all perform acts of caring each day and talk about them with the children in our lives. Including animals in our life and spending time with them – like taking care of a pet - is a wonderful way to demonstrate responsibility, kindness, patience, and respect. We can also show concern for birds, butterflies, and other creatures around our homes.

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When interacting with a pet we might point out a behavior or expression that tells us how the animal is feeling, fostering empathy. Daily small acts, like cutting plastic six-pack rings or carefully disposing of antifreeze, can become teaching moments for choosing kindness.

Children are always watching and learning – so never hit an animal or say hurtful things like “shut up, stupid dog” or “I can’t stand cats.”

Teach how to pet the right way, with a soft touch and avoiding sensitive areas. No pulling tails or patting too hard. Spooking or scaring animals is not fun, nor is taunting, yelling or throwing things. Help a child learn a pet’s discomfort signals and respect them; if an animal is trying to get away let it go, no chasing. Kids may be naturally kind, but these actions must be learned from caring adults.

Activities and Resources

Any activity including animals will be fun for kids and a chance to encourage kindness. Caring for a pet is great. In our area we also have many opportunities to observe animals in the wild. Reading books about animals and watching animal-friendly movies can involve the whole family. Perhaps make a family bulletin board to highlight kind acts, and always encourage respectful behavior and language.

The internet has excellent resources for fostering kindness in kids. The Humane Society of the United States (hsus.org) *KIND News* page offers teachers and parents coloring sheets and games to print. HSUS has an interesting booklet to read online (or print and share) called “The Bible’s Teachings on Protecting Animals and Nature” by Lewis Regenstein. On the parents.com website you will find “14 Little Ways to Encourage Kindness.” The Playworks site features “12 Activities to Develop Kindness in Children.” There are also wonderful animal-focused TV programs; one on PBS is highly recommended: *Wild Kratts*.

We All Need More of This – Focus on the Positive

One of the best suggestions is this: “Point out to kids good things that are happening and the good people who are helping others. Sharing an article about helping animals makes kids feel better about the world they live in and gets them thinking about ways they can make a difference.”



Your Humane Society News and Notes

Spay/Neuter Update

We are pleased to report a record-breaking total for 2016 spay/neuter financial assistance: 256! PCHS funds help pay the bill for 142 animals, Peterman Grant monies covered the full cost for 67 pets of low income families, and we spayed/neutered 47 feral “community” cats.

Already in 2017 we are on a roll, more than 30 animals helped so far!

Memorial Donations

PCHS has received donations to honor the memory of Roberta Owens, Carmen Uphold, James Hatcher, and Bonnie Wolfe. We wish to extend our sympathy and appreciation to their families. Also, Hunter McCartney and Jeremy Torjak are remembered by friends and family, continuing their legacies of caring and compassion.

PCHS Receives 2017 Grant

Our organization has been awarded a \$10,000 grant from the Peterman Foundation to support the spay/neuter mission of PCHS. These funds will cover the full cost of spay/neuter for pets of families that meet low income guidelines. Qualifying for such a grant and maintaining records of disbursements is a huge task; we couldn't do it without the expertise and dedication of our Treasurer, Debbie DeLauder.

Looking Forward to Spring and Summer Events

So much happens in Preston County this time of year it seems like every weekend is packed. We plan to be out and about spreading the word about PCHS – who we are, what we do, and why spay/neuter is important. Please join us at some of these great events:

United Way Day of Caring May 3 – Raymond Wolfe Ctr.

Along with United Way volunteers, we will be helping to sort and distribute donated pet food and kitty litter at Raymond Wolfe Center, Kingwood, on May 3rd from noon to 1pm. Everyone is welcome to come, with no income limit or signup required. It's loads of fun because we get to meet the cutest pets and see how much their families love them!

Family Life Expo May 20

Imagine the Craig Civic Center filled with hundreds of kids and their families, music, games, dancing, activities, giveaways. We'll be there promoting PCHS and offering spay/neuter assistance information. We always have a kids coloring table and a fun display. Watch the newspaper for times and



plan to stop in for a while.

Other Happenings

We'll also be at the Main Street Kingwood Street Fair this summer, another great event for kids and their families. This year Main Street celebrates a special anniversary with new activities and a planned community dinner. Again, watch for more info coming soon.

Our first-ever quilt raffle was quite a success last year – we made hundreds of new friends at events all around the county. This year's quilt with a West Virginia theme is sure to be a hit. It would make a great gift! We're hoping every member buys – and maybe sells – some tickets. As we say: "it's for a great cause."

January Social

Hope you were able to attend the fourth annual Members and Friends Social on January 26. It's become a really fun way to thank members and those who support our organization with an evening of food, prizes and conversation. We appreciated nice coverage of the event with lots of photos in the Preston County News. If you weren't able to attend, check out our website for information and photos:
prestoncountyhumanesociety.org

It's not just about socializing – every time we are out in the community, more folks learn about PCHS and the work we do

in our county.

Contact Information

Preston County Humane Society
P.O. Box 395
Kingwood, WV 26537
prestoncountyhumanesociety.org

Spay/neuter Program

Alix Evans 304-435-1808

To report animal abuse/cruelty/neglect call the Preston County Sheriff's Department – ask to speak with a Humane Officer. Call 304-329-1611

Poison Control Hotline available 24 hours/day. A charge may be billed to your credit card. 888-426-4435.

24/7 Veterinary Emergency Care
Fairmont exit off I 79 304-363-2227
Cheat Lake, off Rt. 43 304-594-1124

PCHS Board of Directors

President: Helen Nikirk

Vice President: Sheila Williams

Treasurer: Debbie DeLauder

Secretary: Ginger Larew

Membership: Deb Corley

Spay Neuter Program: Alix Evans

Education/Communications:

Dana Rexroad

Newsletter: Dana Rexroad

304-379-9821

danarex@frontiernet.net

Regular Monthly Meeting

Second Thursday of each month,
7:00 pm at Preston Memorial Hospital
in the first floor conference room near
the cafeteria. Please call to confirm the
meeting date.

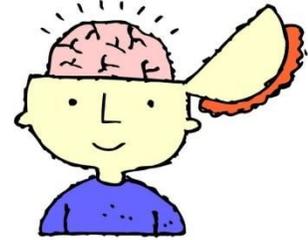
All are welcome to attend.

Still Time to Order Donuts for Easter

Time is short, but if you call right away you can be enjoying delightful Krispy Kreme donuts for Easter breakfast. Delivery will be on Thursday, April 13. Special flavors are (the very popular!) blueberry cake and chocolate cake, along with original glazed, chocolate iced and lemon, kreme, or raspberry filled. What a treat! To order, call 304-789-6374, before Monday April 3rd. Please leave a message if no answer. Also, we always have some extras - check on the 13th. Thanks for your support!

From the “Kids are So Smart” Department

A little girl was asked if she knows what “spay and neuter” means. “Yes”, she said, “It’s when two animals get married and decide not to have babies.”



Notice of Meeting Change

Please note our April meeting will be on the usual day, the second Thursday of the month, April 13, but a different place and time.

We'll be celebrating another successful donut delivery day by meeting for dinner at the Preston County Inn at 6:00 pm; a Board meeting will follow at 7:00.

All members are welcome to join us for dinner, for the meeting, or for both. We would love to see you there!

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Preston County Humane Society
P.O. Box 395
Kingwood, WV 26537