



Issue 6, Fall 2009

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## Freddy & Fianta: Two Metro Shelter Success Stories

*Contributed by Sandra Flemming, Metro SPCA Shelter Director*



**Freddy Before**

Freddy, an American Staffordshire Terrier, approximately a year old came to the Metro Shelter in Dartmouth on July 28th through Animal Control Services. He was emaciated, with a horrific facial injury that had already turned fetid and a myriad of other health issues including hook and worm disease and an ear infection. At the beginning, the shelter tried to find a foster parent who might be willing to take on this challenge, but his injuries were too much for most people to look at, let alone treat. So the staff at the Metro Shelter got busy doing what they do best...providing amazing medical care to heal his injuries.

Everyday the staff cleaned and redressed his wounds, and everyday Freddy would sit there quietly, never fighting the treatment and never directing the pain he felt at shelter staff, a true testament to how great a dog he is. As time went on and the wound got progressively smaller, he started to gain weight and his energy level increased to what it should be for his young age. He loved to play outside with any dog that he was introduced to and was a favourite of shelter staff. Just before he found his forever home, staff noticed that he had a lump forming on the top of his foot. A quick trip to the vet for a closer look showed that a large piece of buck shot had become embedded and, over time, became infected. Once removed, the foot healed quickly, just like his face, and Freddy was ready for his forever home.

Freddy was adopted on September 19th. The family who adopted Freddy are volunteers with the SPCA and treat the shelter staff with stories of Freddy every time they come in for a visit to walk other dogs who are still waiting for their own forever homes. Whatever happened to Freddy before he was found will probably never be fully known, but we do know that being found was the best thing that ever happened to him! *(continued on p.2)*



**Freddy After**

*Freddy & Fianta (continued from page 1)*

***“Freddy and Fianta are two great examples of the good that SPCA volunteers do on a daily basis.”***



Fianta, a young black cat, made her way to the shelter because of the watchful eyes of two good Samaritans who saw something that didn't look right and made the decision to investigate the situation. On Oct. 2nd, a mother and daughter driving to pick up the daughter's child at school saw something that caught their eye: approximately six kids were playing around and kicking a box.

The mother and daughter decided to wait until the kids left to take a peek into the box. To their horror, it contained a kitten with bloodied ears, who was not moving very well and obviously traumatized. They put the cat in their car and came to the Metro Shelter asking for assistance. Shelter staff brought the cat in and took her to the vet and, thankfully, aside from the bruising around the ears, a lump on her side and being infested with fleas, Fianta had no serious internal injuries. The staff cleaned her up, cared for her ears and Fianta was adopted on Oct. 13th to her forever home! Freddy and Fianta are two great examples of the good that SPCA volunteers do on a daily basis.

**YES! I will help the Nova Scotia SPCA investigate and prevent animal cruelty in Nova Scotia.**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone: \_\_\_\_\_

I will donate: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**I prefer to direct my donation towards the care of abused and abandoned animals through the SPCA branch in:**

- |  |                                      |                                     |
|--|--------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Antigonish      | <input type="checkbox"/> Cape Breton | <input type="checkbox"/> Colchester |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Halifax (Metro) | <input type="checkbox"/> Hants       | <input type="checkbox"/> Kings      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> La Baie         | <input type="checkbox"/> Lunenburg   | <input type="checkbox"/> Pictou     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Queens          | <input type="checkbox"/> Yarmouth    |                                     |

My cheque made out to the branch is enclosed.

**Mail to:**

Nova Scotia SPCA  
1600 Bedford Highway  
Suite 209  
Bedford, NS  
B4A 1E8

- YES, I need a tax receipt for my gift of over \$10.  
 NO, I do not require a tax receipt.

Donate online with your credit card at [www.CanadaHelps.org](http://www.CanadaHelps.org).

**Give us a PAW!** (Pre-Authorized Withdrawal). Spread your gift throughout the year by authorizing a monthly debit from your chequing account or credit card by filling out a form here: <http://www.spcans.ca/donate/documents/DonationForm.pdf>



### The Daily Wag

<http://dailywag.marthastewart.com/>

This is the official blog of Martha Stewart's French bulldogs, Francesca & Sharkey. Follow their daily adventures and lessons with mommy Martha in the garden and kitchen and check out the "adoption" section, in which F & S provide their insights and stories of adopted pets, along with occasional (human) guest, Dr. Pia Salk, animal psychologist and welfare activist (not to mention the niece of polio vaccine developer, Jonas Salk!).



## Branch Spotlight: La Baie SPCA

*Contributed by Deborah Germain*

La Baie SPCA was formed in 2005 by a small group of concerned people who all shared a common bond of wanting to care for the many unwanted, abandoned and mistreated animals in our community. For all of these individuals frustrated from working for years on their own, coming together seemed to bring the strength needed to form a branch with the SPCA.

Our first mandate was to begin fundraising for a much needed shelter to house the animals. As in any small community, this takes time and determination. Finding common bonds was easy but keeping our focus on the building became more difficult when there were animals needing immediate help. So, we began a foster program to try and manage some of the animals in need right away. We were able to obtain some assistance from our municipality, which enabled us to take on cases of abandonment and neglect.

Our beautiful area of Clare stretches along Baie St. Marie where we have many wharves that had become populated with feral cat colonies. The numbers were just too high for us to cope without a shelter and limited funds. We decided to handle only the immediate domestic situations until hopefully in the future we can implement a TNR program. There is now a separate group in Clare who are working hard to deal with the feral cats in our area.

La Baie SPCA has been fortunate to have a strong fundraising committee. They are dedicated, energetic and outgoing. We have established annual fundraisers such as a lobster valentine supper, a golf tournament, pet photos with Santa, and the committee beautifully decorates a house as part of a Christmas house tour. Whatever event we do, our kind and supportive community comes out to help. It is so heartwarming to see people coming together all for a good cause, in this case housing animals in need.

Education will be our next step as we need to establish more focus on what we do as an SPCA branch. We really want to focus on getting the message out to the general public of how they can prevent situations of animal abuse, abandonment, and over population. The more conversations you encourage, the more you pique the public's interest, and that means they know what to do when they are faced with these issues. Informing the public will start a chain of information, and we hope to continue building the chain by talking to schools, etc.



**Pussy Willow**

Like all branches, La Baie has had some sad cases of abuse. One of these was a cat found along a secluded back road. Trauma to her head had resulted in a broken jaw and left her with only the use of one eye. She was in very bad shape. If she could speak for herself that day when found, it's safe to say that her words would have been emotionally shattering.

We placed an ad in our local paper and received an immediate offer of financial help to close up her infected eye. Her recovery was successful and she has been placed in a foster home. Pussy Willow, as she came to be called, has been fostered for over a year now and is still waiting for that special person who can give her the warm and loving home she deserves. Pussy Willow sits by the window looking out and waits patiently for her turn to be adopted and we all wait with her with hope and determination for that day to come.

If anyone is interested in knowing more about Pussy Willow or any other animals we have up for adoption, please contact the La Baie Shelter at [labai-spcas@hotmail.com](mailto:labai-spcas@hotmail.com) or call 902-769-2589. Or visit [www.spcans.ca](http://www.spcans.ca)

## Preventing Dog Bites: Train Smart, Train Safe

Contributed by Adina MacRae  
[www.k9coach.ca](http://www.k9coach.ca)

Dogs can bring a great amount of joy to a household but they also come with a responsibility to keep your family and the public safe. According to the Animal By-Law in HRM, a dog can be deemed dangerous if it “attacks” another person or animal off their property. The by-law defines an attack not only by a bite or injury but if your dog “threaten(s) or give(s) the impression of threatening.”

This has a lot of dog owners concerned for the welfare of their dogs and many are seeking professional advice to help modify problematic behaviour. However, for every person that seeks the advice of a professional, there are dozens more who get their information from popular dog training shows that generally illustrate “success” by suppressing unwanted behaviour by establishing dominance over the dog. You may be asking what’s the big deal? As long as the unwanted behaviour goes away then problem solved, right? Unfortunately, the techniques often illustrated in popular culture are based on outdated research and lead to an increase in aggression in some dogs.

Two of the most popular dog training shows instruct owners to become dominant over the “alpha” dog. The trainers on these shows are still holding onto theories proposed in a paper by L. David Mech that was published in 1970 and is now disputed by the same author. Dr. Mech points to the research he has performed in the past thirty plus years, illustrating that the “hierarchies” established in wild wolf packs are by a breeding pair or the “mother wolf” and “father wolf.” There are no battles for dominance, rather a pair of wolves mate, produce a litter and form a pack with that litter and juveniles from previous litters (for more information on his current research, check out [www.davemech.org](http://www.davemech.org)).

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*“Unfortunately, the techniques often illustrated in popular culture are based on outdated research and lead to an increase in aggression in some dogs. Methods that stem from the desire to be “dominant” can actually cause your dog to be more dangerous.”*

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Victoria Stillwell

Unfortunately, the methods that stem from the desire to be “dominant” can actually cause your dog to better fit HRM’s definition of a dangerous dog. Most recently, the journal of Applied Animal Behaviour Science published the results of a year-long University of Pennsylvania study illustrating the risks of aggressive training. It was discovered that “alpha rolls,” where dogs are rolled onto their backs and held there, and “dominance downs,” where dogs are physically forced onto their sides, resulted in an aggressive response from at least 25 per cent of the surveyed group.

The study’s findings are backed by a 2008 American Veterinary Society of Animal Behavior (AVSAB) position statement on the use of dominance in animal training. The AVSAB recommends veterinarians not refer patients to trainers who adhere to dominance hierarchy theory and the confrontational training that typically results. The society went on to recommend the use of positive reinforcement to safely train animals, an idea that is also supported by the Humane Society of the United States. Joan Orr of Doggone Safe ([www.doggonessafe.com](http://www.doggonessafe.com)), a non-profit organization dedicated to dog bite prevention through education, recommends clicker training as a hands-off way of training a dog while reducing the risk of bites.

If your dog is reactive or aggressive with people and other dogs, it is best to consult with a trainer who is experienced in behaviour modification based on positive reinforcement. If you are trying to find a dog trainer to help you and your dog, be sure to ask about their opinions on dominance theory. If they instruct you to be the “alpha,” think twice before inviting them to work with your dog. As with any topic, there is plenty of information online and sometimes it is difficult to decipher myth from reality.

When you are first starting your research, look to the forward-thinking leaders in animal science like Dr. Ian Dunbar and Jean Donaldson. If you prefer watching television, look out for Victoria Stillwell’s “It’s Me or the Dog,” for a dominance-free approach to effective dog training. Remember a confident dog is a safe dog!

Contents of this page contributed by Cait Maloney

## Paw Prints on Girl Guides' Hearts

Starting early in 2010, we will be challenging all members of Girl Guides of Canada/Guides du Canada in Nova Scotia to take the 'Paw Prints on your Heart' challenge. The challenge encourages the girls and women to learn what the SPCA does and to make a practical contribution to the SPCA either through volunteering or by donating goods that are needed.

To support this program, we are creating special resource sections on the websites of both the Nova Scotia Girl Guides and the Nova Scotia SPCA. Resources will include background information, age-specific activities and local contact information.

The program is being organized by the Nova Scotia SPCA Education & Outreach Committee and is funded from a generous bequest. The driving force is Kelly Welsh, our Outreach Officer who will be supported by a network of outreach volunteers in the Branches and from Nova Scotia Girl Guides. In launching the challenge, Cait Maloney, Chair of the Education and Outreach Committee, said that "we are very excited to be able to carry our message to such a large group of young Nova Scotians. Working together is a natural fit as both our organizations are committed to serving and improving our community."

Kelly's next plan is to expand the program to other youth organizations in the province. As she says: "We believe that focusing on youth education will help break the cycle of animal cruelty that is far too common in Nova Scotia."



**Coming soon to a school near you - the 2010 Nova Scotia SPCA Poster contest with a theme of Humane choices. Children and youth are encouraged to submit entries and juried entries will be displayed at the 2010 SPCA AGM in April. More information will be posted on our website in early January.**



We were saddened to learn that the Colchester SPCA Shelter was the target of thieves in October. Despite fundraising challenges, this small Branch has managed to keep saving companion animals in the Truro area. You can help with a donation of cash or better still, by volunteering at the Branch. They can be contacted via their website <http://www.angelfire.com/ns/colchesterspca/> or by email: [colchesterspcaanimalshelter@hotmail.com](mailto:colchesterspcaanimalshelter@hotmail.com)

## Special Animal Cruelty Constables Needed

Nova Scotia SPCA recently held a two day training session for special constables. Sean Kelly, Nova Scotia SPCA president said, "this event is the first step towards expanding the network of volunteers who respond to complaints of animal cruelty. I am profoundly grateful to volunteers Peter Woolridge and Glenis Sullivan for their efforts to get this program underway and to the staff who helped make it so successful".

Roger Joyce, Chief Provincial Investigator, Sylvia Jay an expert in animal behaviour and Dr Lesley Steele the veterinarian for the Metro Shelter and also made significant contributions to the weekend event. Roger said that, "without the commitment of these volunteers, the Nova Scotia SPCA could not be as effective as it is. However, we do need more constables to share the load."

Find out more about the requirements to become a volunteer special constable at <http://www.spcans.ca/cruelty/volunteerSC.html>

# Attention Animal Lovers!

Contributed by Jennifer Stewart



There are many ways you can help animals in need, if you have the time and passion. Our volunteers are enthusiastic, trustworthy, accountable, compassionate and feel the need to do something to help whether working directly with the animals or working behind the scenes in shelters, education and/or planning events and fundraisers. Volunteering provides a sense of pride knowing that you have made a difference in the life of an animal whether you work directly with them or not.

The Provincial Office and its branches and shelters are always looking for reliable volunteers for many areas. There truly is something for everyone! Some of the areas in which we are looking for volunteers include: fostering animals, dog walking and cat cuddling, maintenance & Repairs, outreach programs, education, advocacy, public-

ity & media relations, web maintenance, graphic design, fundraising committees/events, and administrative tasks.

Volunteers are the heart of the SPCA and are a valuable asset. Without volunteers, we would not be able to continue. We thank all of our current volunteers for their ongoing support and look forward to all newcomers. To learn more about volunteering, please visit our website [www.spcans.ca](http://www.spcans.ca) or contact the branch or shelter in your area.

## Gearing Up For Our Annual Donation Appeal

As a non-profit charity that receives very little government funding, our donors are our lifeline – literally! Quite simply, we would not exist without support from generous donors like you. Because of our supporters, the NS SPCA was able to rescue more than 500 animals as a result of cruelty complaints during the first seven months of 2009 alone, and give them a new start in life. Our Cruelty Investigators also responded to more than 892 cruelty complaints in the first half of 2009 which is an increase of more than 30% over 2008! Our efforts to stop animal cruelty extend beyond investigations and because of donations we are increasing our efforts in advocacy, humane education, outreach and public awareness.

Sadly, the trend for cruelty complaints will continue to rise and with that, so will associated costs. This is where YOU come in. You can help continue to make a difference with our fight to stop animal cruelty and increase awareness and education. Our annual donation appeal will be taking place in November and we are asking for your continued support.

There are number of ways to make your donation including: returning the donation card in our annual appeal, over-the-phone or online (Canada Helps) Visa or MasterCard donations, one-time cheques or a monthly pre-authorized withdrawal through your bank or credit card. You can choose the method that works best for you (see p.2 for a donation form).

**We would like to remind you, our donors, that we are not affiliated with any SPCAs outside Nova Scotia, in particular, the Canadian SPCA who do canvas in our area. All our materials clearly indicate that it is from the Nova Scotia SPCA, but if you have any questions, contact our office at 902-835-4798 or 1-888-703-7722.**



*Do you love animals? Do you want to help spread the word about the SPCA and bring awareness to animal welfare issues? You could contribute to the next issue of the newsletter! Send your ideas and feedback to the newsletter editor at [khumes186@hotmail.com](mailto:khumes186@hotmail.com)*

The team for this edition: Kim Humes, Mary Hill, Adina MacRae, Cait Maloney, Jennifer Stewart, Sandra Flemming, Deborah Germain

## Board Notebook: August—October 2009



*Contributed by Mary Hill*

The Board of Directors of the Nova Scotia SPCA is comprised of a President, Vice President, Treasurer, Secretary, nine Directors-at-Large, and ten branch representatives. The Board meets monthly to discuss issues related to animal cruelty investigations, finances and fundraising, educational initiatives, public relations, branch developments, and the operation of the Metro Shelter, which also falls under the responsibility of the Nova Scotia SPCA. This Board Notebook feature provides a summary of the Board's activities and decisions during the past three or four months to keep Society members, supporters, and the general public informed about the work of the Nova Scotia SPCA.

### August

In August, the Board set a strategic direction for the future of the Society by officially constituting the Metro Shelter in Dartmouth as a provincial animal care and adoption centre for animals seized or surrendered through cruelty investigations province-wide. The Metro Shelter's location within the most populated area of the province, access to 24/7 emergency veterinary care, and a comprehensive veterinary services contract were key factors in the Board's decision. Given the financial burden that will be taken on by the Metro Shelter to care for animals from outside of the Halifax area, the Provincial Society will subsidize the shelter as necessary and seek financial support from other SPCA branches for animals seized from within their geographic jurisdiction.

To help with recruitment and retention of volunteer Special Constables for investigating animal cruelty, the Board approved a payment of \$20 per cruelty case in recognition of the training requirements, performance expectations and time commitment required of the volunteers.

The Board also approved significant changes to the Society's policies with the creation of three new policy manuals covering governance, employees and animal care. The three new manuals are publicly available through the Nova Scotia SPCA website and replace a paper-based Board of Directors manual that had become obsolete.

### September

Due to significant delays in the hiring of an Executive Director, in September the Board approved the creation of a temporary, part-time Board Liaison position to assist with managing the operations of the Provincial Society and preparing for the transition to the full-time Executive Director.

The Board discussed development of a training policy to ensure equitable access to Society financial resources to support training needs, including training for branch staff and volunteers. Scott Millar, Director at Large, briefed the Board on Director's liability issues, presenting an overview of his research on the matter. The Board also discussed advocacy activities related to the rodeo associated with the Maritime Fall Fair, and plans for approaching the Halifax Regional Municipality about establishing a Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) program for feral cats.

### October

During the October meeting, the Board focused on plans for the next six months. Notable topics discussed included the upcoming strategic planning session, the transition of responsibilities to a new Executive Director, renaming of the Metro Shelter, changes to investigations reporting, creation of the 2009 annual report, and how Executive affairs will be handled during the six-month absence of the President.

The Board of Directors meets the last Monday of every month. You can read approved minutes of Board meetings online at [www.spcans.ca](http://www.spcans.ca).

To find out who is on the Board and how to contact them, click on "About the SPCA", then click on "Board of Directors".



## Events Calendar

Contributed by Jennifer Stewart



**Santa Pix:** This is a lot of fun and is a great opportunity for pet lovers to get your pet's photo taken with Santa -a great keepsake for years to come! It will be held at the following locations throughout Metro – some with extended hours to give everyone an opportunity to participate: November 28th, Vetcetera, Bedford, 10am until 2pm; November 29th, Tantallon Veterinary, 1pm until 4pm; November 30th, Sunnyside Mall, 6pm until 9pm; December 1st, Halifax Shopping Center, 12pm until 8pm; December 5th, Chapters Mic Mac, 10am until 6pm; December 6th, Bark & Fitz, Doyle St Halifax, 12pm-3pm. If you are interested in volunteering for any of our Santa Pix, please visit our on-line sign up sheet at: <http://www1.mysignup.com/cgi-bin/view.cgi?datafile=santapix>

**Tree of Lights:** This will be held at Halifax Shopping Centre from December 11th-22nd and December 16th-22nd at Sunnyside Mall (regular mall hours). For \$5, you can customize a decoration for the tree and turn on a light. There is also a wonderful assortment of merchandise for sale just in time for Christmas! If you would like to volunteer, visit our on-line sign up sheet to register for shifts at: [http://www1.mysignup.com/cgi-bin/view.cgi?datafile=spca\\_tree\\_of\\_lights](http://www1.mysignup.com/cgi-bin/view.cgi?datafile=spca_tree_of_lights)

**Pogue Fado Charity Nights:** The Pogue Fado has generously included the NS SPCA among their charities that they wish to support. In an effort to help generate funds, they are having 50/50 draws on Wednesday evenings. The SPCA dates are Oct 28, Dec 9, Jan 20, and Mar 5. If you're out and

about, please stop in to the Pogue and show your support!

### From our Branches around Nova Scotia:

**Hants County SPCA**—Please visit <http://hantscosp.ca> for more information on these events—**Entertainment Coupon Books:** Hundreds of pages of money saving coupons for only \$30! Call 798-4428 (leave message) to place orders—great gift idea!; **2010 Calendar:** Price \$10. Please check our website for updated information; **Craft & Bake Sale:** Nov. 13th, 9am-6pm & 14th, 10am-4pm at the Hants Co. War Memorial Community Ctr., Thomas St., Windsor. New crafts and lots of baked goods available.

**Pictou County SPCA**—**Pictou County SPCA Precious Pet contest:** For the month of November at Highland Square Mall. Prizes for the top cat and dog. Pet owners who want to submit their photos of pets can do so by dropping them off at the shelter, lotto booth in the mall or at M&M meats.

**Kings County SPCA**—**Annual Lottery Draw:** Ticket numbers are drawn every day in February with the winner receiving \$100 cash. The winner on the last day of the month receives \$1,000. Tickets will be going on sale by mid-November in time for people to purchase them as holiday gifts; **Volunteers:** We are currently recruiting volunteers. Volunteers must be a member of the SPCA (to be covered by the Liability Insurance), have a Police Record Check and attend an Orientation session. Once that is done they are assigned to a knowledgeable volunteer or Team Leader who shows them the ropes. Volunteers must be over 16 to work on their own, 10- 16 yr olds must be supervised by an adult. **Youth Group:** Currently being developed to assist with fundraising events, support our regular fundraising and some promotional & educational activities with their peer groups.

**Colchester County SPCA**—**Annual Christmas Table:** This will be starting on Nov19th and will run until Christmas located just outside the Zellers mall entrance door. It will run Nov 19-21, Nov 26-28, Dec 3-5, Dec 7-12, Dec 14-19 & Dec 21-23. Crafts, baked goods, raffle draw, and animal related items will be for sale as well as our 2010 SPCA Calendar; **Dog Tags:** The Colchester County dog tags will be available after Dec 1st; **Volunteers:** We are in need of reliable volunteers to help on a regular basis. Please contact us for more information.

**All branches and shelters throughout Nova Scotia are always in need of donations of cash, supplies, and food. A donation of time is also appreciated, and can sometimes be even more helpful. We cannot survive without volunteers giving generously of their time. Please contact your local branches for their specific requirements. Visit [www.spcans.ca](http://www.spcans.ca) for more information and for links to our branches.**