

ACT Updates

Official Newsletter of the Animal Cruelty Taskforce of Southern Arizona

From Victim to Victory... Our Success Stories!



As we enter the spring of 2009, the Animal Cruelty Taskforce celebrates another year of hard work helping protect the animals of southern Arizona. Nearing a milestone anniversary, ACT has spent almost a decade providing professional trainings to educate law enforcement and animal care professionals about aspects of animal cruelty and neglect, including the relationship between animal crimes to other forms of violence. Although individual ACT members have spent much of their careers successfully investigating and prosecuting animal cruelty and neglect cases, the passage of laws leading to the formation of ACT and resources provided by the taskforce provide strength to their efforts.

Unfortunately, not every animal cruelty case that falls into ACT's hands has a happy ending. Whether the bad news comes in the form of not being able to save an animal's life or watching a case go cold, either situation can be incredibly frustrating to anyone hoping to see justice served on behalf of an animal. Regardless of the outcome of criminal cases, ACT members continuously put forth their best efforts for every

animal and celebrate the many successful moments. The following cases are a few of the highlights from this past year. Each of these animals received necessary medical care with the help of the Humane Society of Southern Arizona's Second Chance Fund and all but one resulted in a successful prosecution!

Flor [shown above] is a young Chihuahua mix that was taken to an emergency vet, unable to deliver her puppies. After her owner refused medical care and attempted to treat the dog on her own, Flor was seized by the Tucson Police Department and rushed to emergency care. Her puppies did not survive, but Flor was able to make a full recovery. Though she was brought to the attention of ACT in 2007, Flor's case finally closed this fall when her owner was convicted of misdemeanor animal cruelty. Flor's amazing foster parents were then able to make her adoption official.

On February 7th, 2008, Harrison, a Basset Hound, was taken to the emergency vet after an at-home surgery attempt by his owner to remove a grape-fruit sized tumor from his back caused excessive bleeding. The availability of medical funds allowed Harrison to receive the immediate medical care he needed and through the duration of his case. Harrison's case was closed in just over six months; his owner was charged with animal cruelty and was sentenced to complete a diversion program and pay restitution for his medical care. *CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE*

ACT Updates is published twice a year for the benefit of Arizona's law enforcement, animal control, veterinary and animal protection communities.

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**ANNOUNCE-
MENTS:**

ACT Online!

Want more information on animal cruelty prevention and investigations? Visit the Animal Cruelty Taskforce website for timely updates, a listing of trainings, helpful links and education materials, downloadable resources and much more. www.act-az.org.



CONTINUED FROM FRONT COVER

Bella [shown left], is a very sweet one-year old Boxer suffering with Valley Fever whose case began June 2nd. She was so emaciated veterinarians did not believe she would survive. Bella was incredibly thin and weak, was unable to stand for very long and could not extend one of her rear legs. After great work by the Tucson Police Department detective and prosecutor assigned to her case, Bella's owner plead guilty to animal cruelty charges. Bella is still growing stronger and has more than doubled her weight. She is well on her way to becoming a healthy and happy dog.

You may have seen Bobcat [right] on the ACT website or in the news this last summer, but in case you missed this wonderful dog's story, Bobcat was found by workers at a construction site the morning of August 11th. HSSA staff and ACT members were able to respond to the workers' call and found that the majority of Bobcat's back was covered in open burns believed to be caused by prolonged exposure to the sun. Although no owner was identified, Bobcat's injuries served as a reminder to southern Arizonans about the dangers of the desert sun and the impact it can have on our animals. Bobcat will likely have permanent scars as a reminder of his ordeal, but in less than two months of his rescue, his wounds had closed and he was given a second chance at life with a new family.



In order to lengthen this list of successful cases and prevent animal crimes from being committed in the first place, ACT has provided an impressive list of trainings and videos ranging in topics from evidence collection and addressing the link between animal cruelty and interpersonal violence to more specific issues like animal sexual assault, identifying cruelty and neglect in less common animals kept as pets and understanding new animal-related laws. Seminars for the public, such as this year's *Animal Law for Laypeople* and regularly held court-ordered Animal Cruelty Education classes for offenders, are also important to the ACT mission to ensure that southern Arizona pet owners are informed and caring for their animals responsibly.

Illegal Roadside Animal Sales:

Arizona House Bill 2485 went into effect in September 2008, adding another layer of protection to keep animals from being sold on street corners, public parking lots or other inappropriate venues. Many of the individuals engaging in these practices are "backyard breeders" of dogs and cats and may not be able to provide medical or breeding histories on their animals; or in some cases may intentionally misrepresent the animals they are selling. The Animal Cruelty Taskforce is currently producing law enforcement training materials and public education materials on this subject and hope to have them ready for distribution in March or April 2009. This will include a short training film for police and animal control officers. The materials will be available to ACT member agencies and other statewide organizations at a nominal fee. For more info, contact Marsh Myers at (520) 881-7401 or email at mmyers@hssaz.org. Or visit our website at www.act-az.org.



CRIMES AGAINST EXOTIC ANIMALS & LIVESTOCK SEMINAR

(For veterinarians, law enforcement, criminal justice or animal control professionals ONLY.)

March 18 from 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

This training will provide information on identifying less-familiar animals and recognizing when these species have been the victims of abuse or neglect. Seminar participants will also learn about how the laws in Arizona apply differently depending on the species of animal.

Pre-registration is required. Deadline: March 16

Online: www.hssaz.org/events.html

Phone: (520) 881-7404

Email: jsilva@hssaz.org

OUR HUMANE HISTORY – A Public Seminar!

April 22 from 7:00 – 8:30 p.m.

This seminar provides an in-depth look into the history of humane societies and SPCAs, why these organizations were formed and some surprising facts on how they have protected more than just animals!

Pre-registration is required. Deadline: April 20

Online: www.hssaz.org/events.html

Phone: (520) 881-7404

Email: jsilva@hssaz.org



Officer Sam Pankey of the Florence Police Department with a friend.

*enforcement
education
training*

COLORS OF COMPASSION CARDS HELP ABUSED ANIMALS AND CHILDREN!

Produced by schoolchildren as part of a communitywide art contest, these packets of six individual cards are available with a donation of \$20 or more to benefit the Humane Society of Southern AZ's Community Outreach Department.

The cards are available during regular business hours at the HSSA Gift Shop located at 3465 E. Kleindale Rd.; by mail or phone by contacting Pennie Liebig at (520) 881-7406 or Inge Koopman-Leyva at 881-7405; or log onto the HSSA website at www.hssaz.org.

Donations are tax deductible, minus the value of the cards.

ACT Honors Its Retiring Members:



Det. Sharen Smith, Tucson Police Department: For years, Det. Smith [shown left between ACT Co-Chairs Mike Duffey and Kathleen Nunez] has been the foremost animal cruelty investigator for the Tucson Police Department, the largest law enforcement agency in Pima County. During her tenure in this role, Det. Smith was instrumental in providing training, direction and expertise to not only members of her department, but to the Taskforce in general. Det. Smith served in a variety of capacities for ACT, including as an instructor and a long-time member of our Steering Committee. Det.

Smith was responsible for the investigation of many high-profile cases, including shutting down a cock-fighting operation in central Tucson. ACT thanks this outstanding officer for her years of service to the people and animals of Tucson and southern Arizona.

Gary Dhaemers, 88-CRIME Program Director: Mr. Dhaemers is retiring after 34 years of dedicated service to the citizens of Pima County. Gary has been the Director of 88-CRIME for the past eight years, during which time his efforts helped solve many important cases. Prior to becoming the Director of 88-CRIME, Gary served as Lead Criminal Investigator for the Pima County Attorney's Office and was assigned to investigate large scale narcotic trafficking with various organizations, including the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area Task Force, the United States Customs Service, and the Metropolitan Area Narcotics Tactical Interdiction Squad. In his 20 years with the Pima County Sheriff's Department, Gary served with the Homicide Detail, investigating homicides, suicides, and officer-involved shootings. Gary was the lead detective investigating many high profile cases, including State v. Curtis Bishop, a capital murder case, and the abduction and murder of Vicki Lynn Hoskinson. Gary's support of victims of crime has provided them with comfort and hope, and has given them faith in the criminal justice system. Thanks to Gary's efforts, the 88-CRIME program expanded its role in helping to solve crimes against animals and has become an invaluable part of our team! The ACT membership offers him its best wishes in his future endeavors.



Humane Society of Southern Arizona
Attention: ACT
3450 N. Kelvin Boulevard
Tucson, Arizona 85716

Address Service Requested



ACTion

FOR ANIMALS

2009
Fundraising
Effort

"I'll accept Heather's Challenge!"

This year, every donation will be matched dollar-for-dollar by an anonymous donor up to \$50,000 total!

Take Heather Rowe's "\$50K Challenge" to Help Prevent Animal Cruelty!

Join KOLD News 13's "Animal Defender," Heather Rowe, and help us raise badly needed funds for animal cruelty prevention!



CAUTION: ANIMAL DEFENDERS ON DUTY!

Photo courtesy of Marsh Myers, HSSA

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Payment: Check (payable to "HSSA")
 VISA AMEX MC Discover

Credit card #: _____

Exp. Date: _____

Signature: _____

IMPORTANT NOTE: The Humane Society of So. Arizona is a private, nonprofit organization. Donations are 100% tax-deductible.

■ Donate online using our secure website at www.hssaz.org!