

Animal Welfare in Focus

A publication of the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies

Spring / Summer 2010



This is a Humane Community!

by Steve Carroll, Chief Executive Officer

How many federal politicians does it take to change a lightbulb? None, federal politicians can't change anything. A tired joke, perhaps, but in the context of animal cruelty legislation it rings true. Our government continues to pat itself on the back for strengthening penalties – although, in effect, weakening enforcement, prosecution and conviction – for the animal cruelty offences of the Criminal Code. Notwithstanding the reams of clear and demonstrable evidence linking violence towards animals and violence towards vulnerable women, children and the elderly, our "tough on crime" national government stands alone in their singular inability to see the connection. Their efforts are akin to the mechanic who, upon returning your car to you, says 'I couldn't fix your brakes so I made your horn louder.'

More than two years on, what difference has their 'achievement' made? We're researching impacts and outcomes but, anecdotally, can report the following. Two provinces have moved to significantly strengthen provincial offences in part due to the inadequacy of both the federal government and the Criminal Code in bringing animal abusers to justice. Pursuit of charges by the police, the Crown and the courts against abusers under the federal Criminal Code legislation has dropped off while the application of progressive provincial animal cruelty legislation has picked up speed. Does this mean we should give the feds a pass on dealing, once and for all, with the archaic 1892 legislative framework?

To be sure, Canada needs strong federal animal cruelty laws but *laws alone are not enough to combat the horrific abuses* we read about regularly in the nation's press. In the final analysis, what matters is what we do as Canadians who care deeply about the welfare of animals. This is a community-level issue. It starts in our homes and how we value animals and teach our children to respect and care for animals. It extends to our neighbourhoods and the responsibility we

accept to ensure animals are well treated. Without greater awareness of animal cruelty and the will of Canadians to stand up and say 'enough is enough' to the abusers in our midst, laws will go only so far in addressing this deplorable situation.

At the CFHS, we believe humane communities can be and should be a defining characteristic of a healthy community. In this respect, it is up to each of us to take ownership of the concept of humane communities, promote humaneness to our children and neighbours and, without hesitation, report any suspected animal abuse to the local humane society, SPCA and/or police. Think 'Neighbourhood Watch' but with a specific focus on reducing crimes against animals.

To that end, we are inviting you to contact us (www.cfhs.ca, info@cfhs.ca) to obtain the 'Humane Community' poster pictured here. This is a good way to promote the concept of a humane community and, at the same time, put animal abusers on notice that the community is watching. The reverse side of the 8.5" x 11" poster includes information on how to identify animal abuse and what to do if you suspect such crimes. We need Canadians to be vigilant but not vigilantes. We would love to see at least one sign prominently posted on each street in each community across Canada but we need your help to do this. Change starts with us. You can do your part for your community today.

Please contact us for more information and to purchase your Humane Community poster online go to www.cfhs.ca/store. Thank you.



The "E" Word

By Shelagh MacDonald, Program Director

No matter what the reason, euthanizing an animal is always a very sad thing. Most pet owners have had to make that painful but caring decision to end the lives of their beloved pets peacefully and humanely by their veterinarian when their time has come.

Humane societies and SPCAs too often have to make that difficult decision to end animals' lives. Some of the reasons animals are euthanized at shelters include poor health, temperament, lack of resources including space, and lack of suitable homes. In some cases, animals are euthanized due to overcrowding when shelters have run out of space, foster homes or other resources to care for the animals. Overcrowding threatens the lives of all animals in the shelter due to stress and weakened immune systems, as well as increased risk of disease transmission, so it must be addressed.

The overpopulation of cats and dogs and the resulting euthanasia of animals in shelters are community issues caused by irresponsible

or uninformed pet owners and unscrupulous breeders. Sometimes, humane societies and SPCAs are painted as the villains because they are the ones doing the dirty work. But most of these organizations are underfunded charities bursting at the seams and doing the best they can to care for as many animals as possible with their limited resources. They wish they could save them all and never have to euthanize. The reality is that sometimes there are just too many animals in need and simply no more room.

There are some humane societies and SPCAs that will not euthanize animals due to space constraints and will keep every animal as long as it takes to find them a home. While this sounds like the perfect solution, there can be concerns with this approach. In most cases, these are limited admission shelters that only take animals in if they have room. This means they sometimes turn away animals in need. It can also mean that animals are kept for years in a shelter environment, which can really take a toll on some animals.

Open admission shelters give every animal a chance. Some may be deemed unadoptable for health or behavioural reasons that cannot be addressed. And with finite space and resources, some animals are euthanized when the shelter is overcrowded and more animals are coming in. The ultimate goal, of course, is to end the euthanasia of healthy and adoptable animals.

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2. 5 Myths About Animal Shelters
 3. Is there such a thing as a good death?
 4. From Plans to Action

The euthanasia of animals in shelters is clearly an animal welfare issue. But it is also a grave human welfare issue for shelter workers. Animal shelter personnel deal with death more than any other profession, including doctors and veterinarians.

Nobody takes a job at a humane society, SPCA or other animal shelter because they want to kill animals. They choose to work there because they love animals and want to care for them. How unjust that they must then be somehow involved in euthanizing them. To make matters worse, many shelters lack the resources to use sodium pentobarbital, the preferred method of euthanasia. This puts even greater stress on shelter workers.

The CFHS is currently working on the implementation of a national euthanasia training and certification program for shelter workers, as well as developing a program to improve access for shelters to the best euthanasia methods when it is necessary to euthanize. While the goal is to eliminate euthanasia performed for space reasons, there are valid and humane reasons why animals are euthanized in shelters. It is imperative that we provide those individuals doing this difficult task with appropriate training and the best tools available.



5 Myths About Shelter Animals

By Adrienne McBride, Legal Intern

Animals for adoption at local shelters all across Canada are often over-looked by families and individuals looking for the perfect companion. There are several myths and misconceptions that must be dispelled, in order to increase adoptions at humane societies, SPCAs and other animal rescue organizations.

MYTH 1: There is something wrong with adult shelter animals; otherwise their original owner would not have surrendered them.

There are literally thousands of reasons that animals are brought to shelters such as:

- The death, illness or change in living situation of an owner;
- The animal was removed from an abusive situation, for its own protection;
- A new baby may suffer allergies;
- Poor judgement, such as not having sufficient time to properly care for the animal.

Unfortunately, the list is endless. A common theme among these reasons is that the animal has done nothing to deserve being brought to the shelter – it is a change in the owner’s life that results in the animal becoming homeless. In reality, a shelter will not re-home an animal that is unsafe or too ill.

MYTH 2: Adult shelter animals have unknown medical and behavioural issues. You just never know what you are adopting.

Once an animal arrives in the shelter, it is checked by a veterinarian, observed in a foster home or by trained shelter staff, and its temperament is evaluated. Although in some cases medical history or past behaviours may be unknown, the shelter staff is able to paint a fairly complete and accurate picture of the animal, which helps determine what type of owner and living arrangement would be best. Temperament testing will determine if the animal is suited to live with other animals or children, if it can live in an apartment or would be better suited for the country. The dog is tested for aggressive tendencies and fears. Any medical concerns will be addressed by a veterinarian and made known to potential adopters.

Those who seek pets from pet stores or classified advertisements will not be given the benefit of such a thorough assessment. Truly, it is pets acquired from these sources that owners will know very little about.

MYTH 3: Adult shelter animals cannot form a strong and loving bond with their new owners.

The reality is that anyone who is willing to open their heart and home to an animal will be rewarded with love, loyalty and companionship, regardless of the animal’s age. Although it may take a few days or weeks for your new pet to adjust to its surroundings, it is important to be patient, doing what you can to meet their needs and waiting for them to seek comfort from you. The pet will soon understand that its new owner has offered them a second chance, in a loving environment, and will reward that with a strong and loving bond.

MYTH 4: It will be almost impossible to train and socialize a mature pet.

Mature pets can actually be easier to train because they are more focused and can concentrate better. Older animals may in fact already have most of the training that a puppy or kitten would require, and therefore are better suited to join a busy family. They are usually house/litter trained, past their destructive adolescent phase and their personality is already developed. New owners will know if they are getting a bouncy, excitable pet or a mellow, low-energy pet. With dogs, shelter staff or foster homes have likely been working on leash training and basic commands. Overall, adopting a mature pet means less time training and more time bonding.

MYTH 5: “I’ll never find the pet that I’m looking for!”

Searching for the right pet should take time, research and commitment. You may have to visit the shelter several times before you find the right match for you and your family. Here are some tips to help you find the right pet in a shelter;

- Talk to shelter staff – let them know what type of pet you are looking for and your living and family situation. Staff may alert you when the right pet arrives.
- Broaden your search – look at several local shelters, contact local rescue organizations and use websites like petfinder.com.
- Pre-apply to shelters or rescue groups – this ensures your information is already on file and you are pre-approved when the right pet becomes available.

Many animals waiting in shelters for a new home are happy, well-adjusted, healthy pets that are simply looking for a second chance to demonstrate love, loyalty and companionship to a new owner.

Forever Friends

Murial Baines
Catherine Bensley
Armelda Buchanan
Enid Mary Harris
Mary Catherine Healey
Olive Lindsay
Gladys Quail
E.G. Winstanley

In Memory of . . .

Ira Isreal & Leah Silbar
Anna Szetle
Gordon Minto

Spikey Andrews
Henry
Cindy-Lu

*Make a donation to the CFHS
in memory of your loved one (person
or pet) and their name will appear
in our next edition of AWIF.*

Thank you!

**Traveling With Your Pet
Amateur Photo Contest**

ENTER YOUR PET PHOTO!

Do you travel with your pet? Did you capture a purrfect pet moment on your travels? We invite all amateur photographers to get snapping and show us their best pet travel pictures! You could WIN 1 of 3 Fabulous Prizes!

Visit www.cfhs.ca/contest to learn more.

There are three separate contest dates and draws in Canada:

Atlantic	March 1 to May 20, 2010
Central	May 21 to August 19, 2010
Western	August 20 to November 18, 2010

Grand Prize

Win 1 of 3 fabulous 5-night stays at ANY Pacrim Hospitality Services hotels in Canada! Winners will be published in *Pet Country Magazine*.




Yes! I'd like to support the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies.

- Please accept my gift of \$ _____
- Please send me information on monthly giving (SAM)
- Please send me planned giving information
- Please add my email to the monthly Hum@ne News e-newsletter _____
- Please do not trade my name



<input type="checkbox"/> Cheque	<input type="checkbox"/> American Express	Card # _____
<input type="checkbox"/> Visa	<input type="checkbox"/> MasterCard	Expiry Date _____
Donations of \$10 or more will receive a tax receipt.		Signature _____
Make cheques payable to: CFHS		Charitable registration # 11883 0884 RR0001

Please use the enclosed postage-paid envelope to make your donation.

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2010 Summit: A Meeting of the Minds

by Steve Carroll

On April 30th, a range of leaders from Canada's animal welfare sector met in Ottawa to strategize on strengthening our individual and collective capacities to better serve animals across the country. Representatives reflected an excellent cross-section of large, small, urban, rural, English and French organizations. The day-long meeting covered a lot of territory. This is the first time a national meeting of member and non-member agencies has been held in decades. The CFHS is proud to have taken the lead on this. The BC SPCA, Ottawa Humane Society, Calgary Humane Society and Fredericton SPCA were instrumental in driving this process.

We began by considering the current reality of animal welfare in Canada and the conditions in which we work individually and collectively. These realities touched on key issues including public awareness, organization credibility, professional standards, communication and marketing, and facilities. Concerns were voiced over the tension we all face between limited resources available versus unlimited demand on our resources, the punishing emotional environment and the toll it takes, and the need for a cohesive national vision of animal welfare. We agreed there were tremendous opportunities before us to grow animal welfare across the country, a common desire to work together, a growing culture of respect for animals among the public, tremendous staff and volunteer dedication and commitment.

Learning Inspiring Networking Knowledge-sharing
TOGETHER

As we progressed through the day, we considered our 'desired state' five years from now. We identified a number of benchmarks we will work toward:

- a national unified voice for animal welfare in Canada;
- adoption and implementation of the 'Five Freedoms' (Freedom from thirst, hunger and malnutrition; Freedom from discomfort; Freedom from pain, injury and disease; Freedom to express normal behavior; Freedom from fear and distress);
- self-regulation as a sector;
- a certification program based on agreed upon national standards for operations, fundraising, accountability and transparency, ethical behaviour, financial management and governance;
- national spay/neuter protocols; and,
- standards for humane euthanasia.

Developing agreed upon guiding principles will be the starting point for designing a shared vision. As next steps, we will develop a communication platform to ensure clear and open dialogue among animal welfare agencies, hold a teleconference within the next six months to gauge progress and assess our future as a network, and plan for another face-to-face meeting in May 2011.

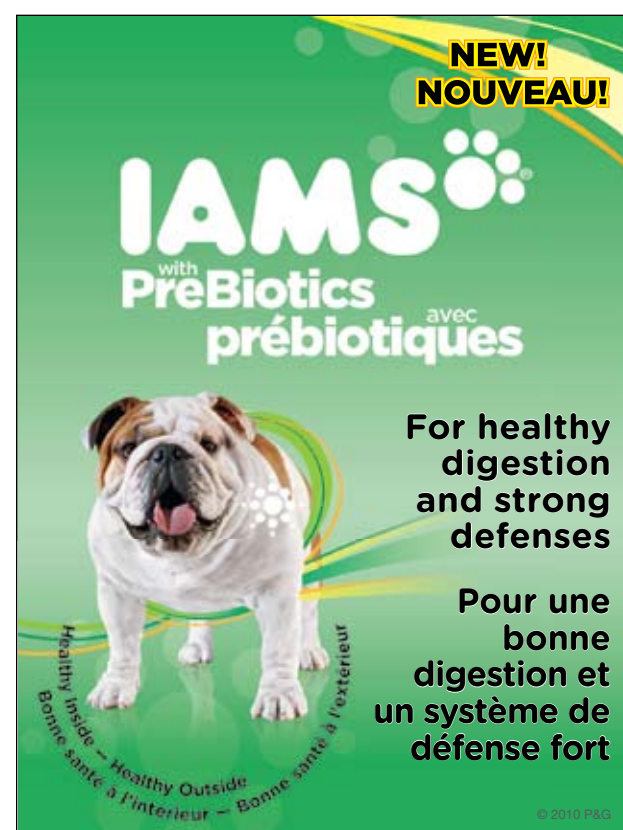
Why is this important? You put your trust in the CFHS and other animal welfare agencies to do our very best for animals in Canada. It is incumbent upon us to ensure we honour your expectations that animal welfare agencies work well together, act as professionals and save animals lives. With this important first step in unifying the animal welfare sector, we expect we will all be stronger and better positioned to do just that. In the next issue of AWIF, I will provide a further update on this initiative. In the meantime, thank you; we will work to earn your support and trust each and every day.

Pets are guests too! Find your Purrfect Place to Paws

You now have more pet-friendly hotel choices than ever! Take advantage of the pet-friendly accommodation program called the *Purrfect Place to Paws* while on vacation and reap the benefits. Pets and their families will receive welcome packages and a contribution will be made to the CFHS for each night's accommodation.

Find your pet-friendly hotel online at www.purrfectplacetopaws.com or call toll free at 1-877-672-7387 (PETS).

This program is made available through the collaboration of the CFHS and Pacrim Hospitality Inc.



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Is There Such Thing As A "Good Death"?

by Steve Carroll

Animal welfare in Canada today faces a wide range of unique challenges. Livestock care, animal transportation and humane slaughter are areas in which some improvements have been achieved in recent years but, still, much work remains. On the companion animal front, humane education programs encompassing responsible pet ownership and spay/neuter promotion are readily available at virtually all humane societies and SPCAs across the country. To succeed, a lot of these programs depend on the support and financial contributions of caring community members. Many of these programs are an "easy sell". After all, who can argue with the merits of educating children, promoting spay/neuter or improving animal care regulations?

Other programs are not so easy. Building support for establishing national standards, a training/certification program and improved access to appropriate protocols to assist staff at local SPCAs and humane societies in providing euthanasia services is a tough sell. For some readers, this may be interpreted as euthanasia promotion; it is not. It is, however, a recognition that euthanasia services will always be required and that we need to ensure we do everything possible so that the animal is provided with what the Greeks referred to as "easy death": euthanasia.

At the same time, we cannot ignore the fact that euthanasia takes a great toll on more

than just the animals in our care. The act of compassionately euthanizing an animal places a tremendous burden on those who have the unenviable task of administering final and humane care. Without question, CFHS member agencies across Canada do everything they can to support and assist their staff and volunteers in dealing with the emotional and psychological impacts of euthanasia yet, still, we learn of the human cost of animal euthanasia: cases of burn-out, stress, high staff turnover and other even more consequential negative outcomes. The euthanasia of animals hurts everyone, particularly staff charged with this duty. The emotional and psychological toll at the front line level is inestimable and can be devastating. Sadly, in too many jurisdictions, humane euthanasia (including training, support and access to the best euthanizing drugs) remain out of reach.

In this issue of AWIF, the article "The E Word" provides background on the complexity of the euthanasia issue and the challenges before us. What is the CFHS doing about this situation? First, we're working with Health Canada's Veterinary Drug Directorate to identify the barriers (systemic and attitudinal) that inhibit development of a national euthanasia training and certification program aimed at providing humane societies and SPCAs with the tools each needs to ensure both animals and staff experience the euthanasia process with the minimum of stress, pain and anxiety. Second, we're

working with the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association and its provincial counterparts to explore how we can move forward while not putting veterinarians, shelters/staff and other parties at undue risk. Third, we're working with a number of our member agencies to outline a pilot project that would see development, implementation and evaluation of new euthanasia protocols tested at the local level.

We believe this is a sound start. It is science and evidence-based with the collaboration of recognized experts from the academic community and, hopefully, the support of CFHS champions like you who understand the unique human-animal bond.

Our responsibility is not just to the animals but to those who serve and care for them and, in some cases, are the final human contact an animal will ever know. The least we can do is ensure those brave and compassionate enough to undertake this sad task can do so with minimum anxiety, pain and grief. We need your help to do this. Governments do not fund this type of initiative so we are turning to you. With your financial assistance - \$10, \$25, \$50, whatever you can offer - we can work toward a more compassionate and humane Canada, for animals and for those who care for them when they need help the most. If we must euthanize, let's do whatever we can to ensure we meet the ideal of euthanasia: a good death. Thank you.

From Plans to Action

by Shelagh MacDonald

In the previous issue, we reported on the new Strategic Directions for the CFHS and promised to give an update on our program priorities for this three-year period. We have identified three main program areas, in addition to our ongoing work with various external stakeholders such as the Canadian Veterinary Medical Association, the National Farm Animal Care Council and the National Companion Animal Coalition.

Our three focus areas are: continuing to work on legislative initiatives such as animal cruelty laws and transport regulations; addressing the on-line trafficking of companion animals; and implementing a national training and certification program to improve euthanasia protocols in animal shelters.

The government has been promising changes to the regulations for the transport of animals for a few years now. Every year more than 600 million farm animals are transported to slaughter in Canada. Currently cattle and sheep can be confined in a truck for as long as 52 hours! For most other farm animals the maximum is 36 hours. The CFHS is calling for shorter transport times, maximum loading densities, mandatory ventilation on trucks, provisions to prevent the transport of sick and injured animals, training for truckers hauling animals, as well as greatly improved enforcement of transport regulations. We will continue to push for meaningful changes.

Most of our readers probably know that the CFHS has worked for the past 9 years to get changes to the animal cruelty section of the Criminal Code. The provisions we have now were originally enacted in 1892 and prevent the prosecution of many animal abusers. A

Senate bill was passed in 2008 but it only increased the penalties, leaving the serious problems of enforcement, prosecution and conviction with the 1892 offences still in place.

As we expected, it has been difficult to get the attention of Parliament now that a bill has passed on this issue, but we are working behind the scenes to build support among various industry groups as well as trying to regain the government's interest in animal cruelty legislation reform.

The CFHS has major concerns about the huge volume of postings for companion animals for sale on on-line classified websites. While some of these are postings by people legitimately looking to re-home a pet, many of them are backyard breeders, puppy mills and other unscrupulous individuals seeking to make money from breeding companion animals, mostly dogs. Many of the postings present a façade of home-raised puppies lavished with care when quite the opposite is true.

Much more education is needed to help the public avoid deceptive sources, such as many of the posts on classified websites. The CFHS will be launching an awareness program to show the public that when they buy from these sources they are contributing to the success of these uncaring and unprincipled people who are making substantial profits from suffering and neglected animals. We will also work to encourage classified sites to implement some standards to prevent puppy mills and backyard breeders from posting on their sites.

Every day, thousands of animals are waiting for their forever-home at humane societies,

SPCAs and rescue organizations across Canada. Most of these agencies post animals available for adoption on their websites and on Petfinder (www.petfinder.com). The CFHS encourages the pet-seeking public to consider animal adoption as their preferred source when looking for their next pet.

Animals are euthanized in shelters for a number of reasons, including health and temperament, but also for lack of resources including space and a shortage of suitable homes. No matter what the reason for euthanizing animals, it must be done in the most humane way possible by knowledgeable and caring individuals. It is an emotionally challenging task that takes a toll on the people performing it. We owe it to the animals as well as to the shelter staff to provide them with the best tool to do the job, as well as proper training to prepare them for this difficult work. That is the aim of this project.

The CFHS is consulting with its member societies as well as other humane societies, SPCAs, municipal animal facilities, veterinarians and government regulatory authorities to develop and implement a system that will improve shelter euthanasia, while respecting strict requirements for training and certification, as well as proper record keeping and storage of the drugs. One of the main components will be a national training and certification program for euthanasia technicians.

We are excited about our ambitious plans for the remainder of 2010 and the following year and we look forward to keeping you informed on our progress and activities.

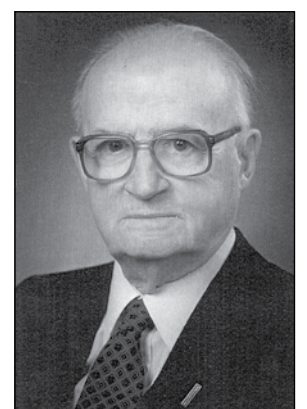
2010 Frederic A. McGrand Trust Grants Program Update

The Frederic A. McGrand Trust is a capital fund established by the late Senator F.A. McGrand in support of humane societies and SPCAs in Atlantic Canada. It originated as the Rose E. Doyle Foundation, named in memory of Senator McGrand's daughter, with a wider scope of interests, and then became the Frederic A. McGrand Foundation in 1980. In 1987, at Senator McGrand's request, administration of the trust was turned over to the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies. Senator McGrand promoted a philosophy of respect for all life. One of his favourite sayings was, "A handful of soil is not a handful of dirt, it is a handful of millions of living things." His thinking was well ahead of his time.

When the trust fund was turned over to CFHS in 1987, it was with the stipulation that the interest generated by the principle of the trust would be used to support animal welfare organizations in the Atlantic Provinces of Canada. The CFHS Board of Directors established the McGrand Trust Management Committee (MTMC) to administer the trust. Each year, the MTMC invites humane education-focused funding applications from Atlantic Canada animal welfare agencies.



For 2010, the MTMC has awarded grants to five outstanding applicant organizations. The name of each grant recipient and the focus of the funding use is identified below.

Organization	Funding approved for...
Burin Peninsula SPCA, Newfoundland	'Reach Out to Youth' school education project
CAT Action Team, Prince Edward Island	an event to involve and educate the public and regional politicians on the plight of homeless cats
Fredericton SPCA, New Brunswick	creation, printing and distributing humane education materials for a classroom presentation program
Hants County SPCA, Nova Scotia	an educational program directed at fostering more awareness of animal welfare issues among primary and junior grades
Kindness Club Inc, New Brunswick	an educational pet care awareness brochure



Senator F.A. McGrand

We wish these organizations well in pursuit of these important community endeavours and look forward to sharing updates with you over the next year.

Canadian Federation of Humane Societies
Fédération des sociétés canadiennes d'assistance aux animaux

A newsletter of the
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The Canadian Federation of Humane Societies (CFHS) is the only national voice of humane societies and SPCAs. We work collaboratively with our member societies and Canadians coast to coast to promote respect and humane treatment toward all animals.

La Fédération des sociétés canadiennes d'assistance aux animaux (FSCAA) est la seule voix nationale des sociétés d'assistance aux animaux et des SPCAs et SPAs. Nous travaillons en collaboration avec nos sociétés membres et les Canadiens et Canadiennes d'un océan à l'autre afin de promouvoir le respect et le traitement sans cruauté de tous les animaux.

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