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A happy and healthy Sweet Pea, adopted into a safe and loving home.

DEAR FRIEND OF THE ANIMALS,

For Humane Society Police Officers, the coming of spring means a brief lull in weather related animal cruelty reports. For a short time the calls about pets left out in the snow with no shelter and frozen water bowls stop. Unfortunately, all too soon the calls start coming in about pets left out in the sweltering summer heat with no shade and no water. Even during this break in the weather, the Humane Society of Berks County is intervening on the behalf of abused, starved, injured, and abandoned animals.

These cruelty investigations, the rescue of endangered pets, and the prosecutions of perpetrators they result in, are among the most important things the Humane Society of Berks County does. They are also among the most expensive things we do. Pennsylvania's laws provide Humane Society Police Officers with the authority to investigate and prosecute cases of cruelty and require extensive (and expensive) training and certification of Humane Society Police Officers. However, although these animal cruelty laws simply wouldn't be widely enforced without humane societies like ours- the State provides no funding for any of these things.

The Humane Society relies on the generosity of individuals like you to be there for animals in need. Animals like Sweet Pea. Sweet Pea, a small orange tabby cat, became the unfortunate pawn in an ugly case of domestic violence. The abuser took the all too common action of terrorizing his family by abusing the family pet. The victim of a violent rage, Sweet Pea was stabbed in the side with a screwdriver, beaten with a hammer, rolled up in a carpet, and left for dead. Without the intervention of Humane Society Officers, Sweet Pea would likely have died.

Fortunately, Sweet Pea was rescued and given the vital surgery and medical care he needed. After weeks of recovery, Sweet Pea was adopted into a loving and safe home. The individual who nearly ended "Sweet Pea's" life in order to traumatize his family was convicted on multiple animal cruelty and criminal charges.

Sometimes animals face more calculating abuse, and the outcome is less happy. Recently, the Humane Society of Berks County was called in when police, issuing an arrest warrant on drug charges, discovered evidence of a pit bull fighting operation. As a result of the discovery, the Humane Society seized over a dozen dogs. Because one of the suspects fled to another state, these poor dogs had to be kept in kennels as evidence, waiting for the wheels of justice to turn. When a court order finally stripped ownership of the dogs from the suspect a long year later, most of the dogs could not even be placed in adoptive homes. Sadistically trained since they were puppies to brutally kill any other animal they came in contact with, their previous owner had insured that they could never know a loving home. The eight to twenty-six year prison sentence the abusive owner received was cold comfort to the poor dogs.

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Other times the cases Humane Society Police Officers handle are horrible and result in little or no justice at all. Sometimes even the strongest cases result in a slap on the wrist in the courts. Like the man who beat three kittens to death and threw them out a fourth floor window in front of a witness and only received a fine and probation. Other times the cases don't even get that far. Like the case of the sick individual who killed cats, wrapped them in trash bags, and left them on our doorstep. He was never even caught. Despite this, perhaps because of it, the Humane Society of Berks County's Officers continue to be there to investigate, prosecute, and be an advocate for defenseless animals in these tough cases.

Cases like these are hard to talk about, but important not to forget. At the Humane Society of Berks County, we like to talk about the thousands of successful adoptions from the Humane Society each year- up **17% last year**. We focus on the hundreds of lost pets we return to their owners each year- up **59% last year**. We boast of the thousands of animals we help to get spayed and neutered, resulting in fewer unwanted and homeless pets- up **20% last year**. We are proud of our education programs that help children and adults to be better companion animal caretakers- up **100% last year**.

However, we also know that there are hundreds, even thousands, of animals facing abuse, starvation, and cruelty who need our protection just as much. We cannot provide this protection without you. Your financial generosity can make the difference between life and death, suffering and health. Without your support, we face a very real crisis in determining how effectively we can enforce the law and be advocates for the voiceless animals.

Ninety percent of our funding comes from the individual contributions of people like you and the remainder comes from service fees. The Humane Society of Berks County receives no funding from national animal welfare groups (Humane Society of the United States, ASPCA, etc.). We are a private, independent, and local animal welfare organization. Your donation helps animals right here in Berks and surrounding counties.

Please help us to continue to be there for the animals who need us. Thank you for making the most generous gift you can **today**. I know from looking into the eyes of the animals we rescue that they thank you, too.

Best Wishes,

Karel J. Minor

Executive Director



The official registration and financial information of the Humane Society of Berks County may be obtained from the PA Department of State by calling, toll free within Pennsylvania, 1-800-732-0999. Registration does not imply endorsement.