

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Generous Donation Brings Wealth of Benefits to Animals of Nova Scotia

Giving away money is not something a charity usually does, but the Nova Scotia SPCA did just that when it turned a generous bequest of \$180,000 into two grant programs to benefit its branches and committees. The bequest was received by the provincial Society in early 2009. The Board of Directors decided to divide the funds into three streams, with one third used to support the ongoing costs of cruelty investigations in the province, one third to be given in equal amounts to the Society's branches and the Metro Shelter, and one third to support special projects proposed by branches and provincial committees.

"While the significant costs of cruelty investigations are increasingly difficult for us to cover with donations alone, the Board recognized the need to invest in front-line animal care as well as proactive solutions such as education initiatives, spay/neuter assistance and trap-neuter-return programs to ensure the full spectrum of our mandate is supported," explains Jim Kochanoff, Treasurer. The result was much-needed financial support for a wide range of projects across the province, many of which will benefit animals for years to come. The bulk of the funding, over \$75,000, went towards necessary shelter upgrades throughout the province (note that the recent facelift at the Metro shelter was entirely donated and not part of this program). Spay/neuter assistance and trap-neuter-return programs were the recipient of over \$25,000, and over \$12,000 went to education projects at the provincial and branch levels.

When asked how they would spend their discretionary funds, many branches identified spay/neuter services as a priority, to enable adopted animals to be spayed or neutered before moving to their new homes and to enable owned animals from lower income households to be spayed or neutered through financial assistance to their owners. Low-cost spay/neuter assistance is widely recognized in the animal welfare community as a critical factor in reducing the number of unwanted animals who find themselves abandoned or in the care of a shelter every year. Through the special projects funding, the Metro Shelter was awarded \$5,000 to launch a new low-cost spay/neuter program for the Halifax Regional Municipality. Brittany Hilton, chair of the Society's Spay/Neuter and TNR Committee, worked with local vets over several months to create a new sustainable program that meets the needs of veterinarians, pet owners, and the SPCA. The funding will allow the new program to start accepting applicants.

Another priority area that emerged through both grant streams was shelter upgrades to improve quality of life for shelter animals and increase the efficiency of shelter operations. "The capital and maintenance costs of running an animal care facility can be excessive," explains Mr. Kochanoff. "It was clear that many of our shelters that have been operating for several years or even decades were in need of work to bring them up to today's standards and to improve the care experience for animals, staff, volunteers and the public," Mr. Kochanoff states. Often, basic but sometimes costly upgrades to shelter facilities will have a dramatic positive impact on disease control, enabling more animals to remain healthy while they wait for the new owners.

The grant funding will also significantly advance the education and outreach work taking place through branches and the provincial Society. Cait Maloney, Chair of the provincial Education Committee, was successful with a grant that will almost double the amount of funding available for education, enabling the committee to reach more young people, in particular. "Expanding our efforts to reach children and youth by utilizing effective, proven approaches to education and outreach has been a priority of the committee for over a year," explains Ms. Maloney. "Now we have the funding needed to make it happen."

Remembering the Nova Scotia SPCA in your will or through a life insurance policy is a wonderful way to leave a legacy that will benefit the animals of Nova Scotia. For information on planned giving and the many other donation options that are available, visit our website at www.spcans.ca and click on "Donate," or call the Provincial Office at 902-835-4798.

The Nova Scotia SPCA is a non-profit organization dedicated to preventing and suppressing animal cruelty in Nova Scotia. The Nova Scotia SPCA relies heavily on the generosity of its supporters and donors for the funds required to prevent, investigate and prosecute cruelty cases in Nova Scotia.

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