September 1, 2007 marked the date Mary “Tief” Tiefenbrunn assumed her new role as Executive Director of the Champaign County Humane Society. Tief brings with her a background in the animal welfare arena, as a founding board member of the Companion Animal Resource and Education (CARE) Center, a volunteer with Illinois Birddog Rescue, and as a board member of the Humane Society for the past two years, all contributing to a solid grasp of companion animal welfare issues. In addition to this valuable experience, she earned a Juris Doctor from Loyola University Chicago School of Law, and served as a Law Clerk for the past 8 years to the Honorable Justice Robert J. Steigmann.

Prior to making the decision to attend law school, Tief earned a Bachelor of Arts in Theatre from Hofstra University in New York. She was a Stage Manager for Children’s Theatre Company, North America's largest children’s theatre in Minneapolis, Minnesota, and was a freelance Stage Manager for professional theatrical productions in New York, Chicago, and Minneapolis.

Tief intends to continue to improve the quality of life for our shelter residents, increase adoptions, and expand our education and community service programs. She plans to continue to build relationships with other animal welfare groups in our community in an effort to address pet-overpopulation issues that all agencies face.

Reinvigorating our fundraising programs and working with the board and current shelter staff to develop long term plans are primary objectives. To that end, Tief looks forward to communicating the value of our organization to the community and welcoming members of the community to partner with us in accomplishing these goals.

Tief and her partner Bill share their lives with two rescued bird-dogs, Rocky and Daisy, and a feline friend, Suzy. Sadly, since the writing of this article, a second cat and CCHS alum, Cody, succumbed to a very aggressive form of Squamous Cell Carcinoma. Under Tief’s direction, the Board of Directors is confident that CCHS will become an even stronger, more professional, and more well-rounded humane organization. We are thrilled to have her on board.

CCHS Welcomes New Executive Director
By Gloria Sax, Board President

Buying Versus Adopting: The Hidden Cost
By Grace Casillas

When it comes to acquiring a new pet, many people don’t understand the difference between buying and adopting. They don’t see anything wrong with a pet store as a source for a puppy. Anyone can walk into a pet store and buy a puppy, as long as they have the money to cover the cost. A salesperson is not going to determine the buyer’s competence as a guardian for the dog. He is not going to ascertain if the buyer’s living situation is appropriate for a dog. He is not going to counsel the buyer on the potential expense of the dog, over the dog’s lifetime, for feeding, grooming, vaccinations, routine medical exams and extraordinary veterinary care. Once the sale is made, a salesperson is not going to be concerned about the future welfare of that puppy; the transaction is complete.

In contrast, adopting a puppy from the Champaign County Humane Society or other animal shelter is a different experience. The welfare of the animal is of the utmost importance. Potential adopters complete an application, which is then reviewed and approved by CCHS staff, to ensure that the dog is going to a suitable home. An animal shelter’s primary concern is to place animals into compassionate, caring and forever homes. To that end, it screens adopters carefully, with an emphasis on making a good match between canine and human companions.

CCHS, like other shelters, takes the responsibility of finding homes for its animals very seriously. Animals relinquished to shelters have already experienced the stress of being uprooted from their homes. Changes in living situations, such as moving, divorce, illness and even death can result in the relinquishment of an animal that has spent its entire life with one family, in one home. Frequently, it is a case of an owner not being prepared for the obligation and commitment to care for the cute pet store puppy. When acquiring a pet is an impulse purchase, the likelihood of the animal ending up homeless increases.

If pet stores are not choosy about the people who buy their puppies, they are even less particular about the puppies they sell. Most puppies sold in pet stores come from large commercial breeding operations, which have come to be known as puppy mills. The Humane Society of the United States describes...
From the Executive Director

**Reflections on Homeless Animals Day**

On August 18th, CCHS joined nine other animal-welfare agencies at the Urbana Market at the Square to recognize National Homeless Animals Day. The event marked the first-ever collaborative effort by a recently formed consortium of East-Central Illinois animal welfare organizations. These groups began meeting earlier this year to explore the concept of joining forces to address companion animal over-population in our area. Other communities have succeeded in reducing the euthanasia of healthy animals by taking this collaborative approach, and to its credit, our community is hoping to follow their lead.

I served on the committee that organized the August event, and was assigned the task of creating a Homeless Animals Day poster. As a result, I spent considerable time reflecting on homeless animals and what a “homeless animals day” should be all about.

It seems that in recent months, the animal welfare community has been quite vocal in response to two crises. Nationally, the Michael Vick scandal has brought the criminal and barbaric conduct of dog-fighting enthusiasts into the open. Locally, many concerned citizens have expressed their outrage and concern regarding the cruelty associated with the retail puppy trade and commercial dog breeding facilities. When issues like these come to the fore, animal welfare advocates are re-energized and people who ordinarily are not involved at their local animal shelter start volunteering to wage protests, raise money, and write letters to the editor. I suppose it is an aspect of the human condition: action comes only when one’s sense of outrage outweighs one’s sense of inertia.

Unfortunately, while the fur is flying over puppy mills and dog fighting, the “crisis de jour” at animal shelters is the same as it was yesterday and will be tomorrow: another homeless animal has been dropped off to face an uncertain future in a strange, and often harsh, environment. The vast majority of shelter animals are not the victims of heinous cruelty. The media spotlight does not shine on their plight. Instead, the “silent majority” of animals in need are victims of nothing more than ignorance or indifference. We don’t recognize it as outrageous because it is so commonplace.

How could we ever afford the energy required to maintain a sense of outrage about a “crisis” that is perpetual? How can we afford not to?

As I tried to envision my homeless-animals-day poster, my mind kept returning to the lyrics of John Mayer’s song, “Waiting on the World to Change.” He speaks of the frustration felt by his generation and their sense of powerlessness. He refers to them as “misunderstood.” In the refrain, he says that because of these conditions they are “waiting; waiting on the world to change.” It seems to me that Mayer has beautifully, though inadvertently, described the life of shelter animals.

But there is a significant difference between the plight of Mayer’s generation and the animals whose cages I now walk past every day. While I can appreciate the frustration of Mayer’s generation, and at times I even share it, I also believe that when people respond to their circumstances by “waiting” they have made a conscious choice to do so. People can take action. They can organize. They can rise up. They can lead. The homeless animals that wait in our shelters are not there because they have chosen to be passive. They are simply misunderstood. They are simply powerless. And they simply wait.

For them, I too want the world to change. And for that change, I refuse to wait. I invite you to join me in my impatience. I am confident that by working together, whether as individuals or institutions, we can bring about the change we seek and create a better world for our animal companions.

Mary “Tief” Tiefenbrunn

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**PawPrints** is the newsletter of the Champaign County Humane Society. The CCHS, incorporated in 1951, is a nonprofit, nongovernmental organization dedicated to preventing cruelty to animals, promoting animal welfare, and educating the public about humane care and treatment for all animals. CCHS is an “open door” shelter and accepts all animals in need, regardless of age, physical condition or adoptability. PawPrints is a copyrighted publication; permission to reprint any item is given, provided that CCHS-PawPrints is acknowledged. All inquiries and article submissions should be directed to the PawPrints Editorial Committee, in care of CCHS. This issue was designed and edited by Brad Hudson, Gloria Sax, Judy Gray-Stuart and Tief.

Contributing photographers were Ben Cleary, Gina Papke, Jim Payne & Miriam Young.

Portrait of Tief, Daisy and Rocky this page by DMS Photography, copyright 2007. Used by permission. Special thanks to Patricia Wentzel.

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**Champaign County Humane Society**
1911 E. Main St.
Urbana, IL 61802
217-344-7297

**Shelter Hours**
Adoptions
Monday - Friday 2 PM to 7 PM
Saturday 11 AM to 6 PM
Sunday: 11 AM to 4 PM

Relinquishing an Animal
Monday - Friday 2 PM to 4 PM
Saturday/Sunday - 11 AM to 1 PM

www.cuhumane.org

By donating to Community Shares of Illinois where you work, you and your fellow employees are joining a committed group of individuals who share your passion for a just society, your desire to help people in need and your commitment to social change. Champaign County Humane Society is a member of Community Shares of Illinois. Visit www.cs-il.org.
A Service Dog's Own Story
by Siobhan Senier

When former Urbana resident Beth Finke toured the country to promote her memoir “Long Time, No See” she says the questions after her presentations were all about, guess what? The dog.

“That book was about losing my sight, having a kid, adjusting, staying married,” she sighs, then immediately breaks into a smile. “But really, all everyone ever wanted to know about was my Seeing Eye dog!”

Many people are curious about Seeing Eye dogs—how they are trained, how they know how to do the seemingly miraculous things they do. At her “Long Time, No See” presentations Beth wanted to refer audience members to good books about guide dogs. “But there weren’t any,” she says, “So I decided to write my own.”

"Hanni and Beth: Safe & Sound," a picture book for children between ages 4 and 10, was published October 15 by Blue Marlin Publications. It is the touching tale of the relationship between Seeing Eye dog, Hanni, and Beth. Told from the point of view of Hanni (her name rhymes with Bonnie), the story depicts her feelings as a playful dog -- as well as her devotion as a loyal companion-- whose number one job is to keep her partner safe. Their teamwork and love for each other are evident on every page. The book also contains four pages of "Notes," which further describe the Seeing Eye School and how Beth and Hanni became friends and partners.

Beth moved to Chicago in 2003, but soon she'll be back in town with her Seeing Eye dog Hanni to promote this beautifully illustrated children's book-- you can see this dynamic duo at the Urbana Free Library and Jane Addams Bookstore on Saturday, November 3. The Urbana Free Library program at 11 am is intended for kids, no books will be sold at the event. If you want a signed copy of "Safe & Sound" -- complete with a rubber stamped impression of Hanni's paw print -- you'll have to come to Jane Addams Bookstore, 208 N. Neil in Champaign to meet Hanni and Beth between 2 and 4 pm on Saturday. More information about the book signing is available at 217-356-2555.

The book is also available in Braille (no pictures) from a non-profit organization called Seedlings (www.seedlings.org) A portion of the proceeds from every print book sold will be donated to Seedlings to help them continue to produce high-quality Braille books for children.

“Safe & Sound” is Beth’s second book. In 2003 the University of Illinois Press published “Long Time, No See,” a moving and often funny memoir about Beth's life in Champaign-Urban, her experience losing her sight as a young woman, sticking through subsequent tough times in her marriage, and raising a son (now 21) who has significant physical and mental disabilities of his own. The book made The Chicago Tribune's list of favorite nonfiction books for 2003, as well as the Book Sense 76 Top Ten List of University Press Books.

Beth continues to write for National Public Radio, Chicago Public Radio, Woman's Day, the Chicago Tribune, Dog Fancy, The Bark and other publications. She teaches a writing course for senior citizens for Chicago's Department on Aging and works part-time at Easter Seals Headquarters in Chicago. "I'm their Interactive Community Coordinator," she explains. "That's just a fancy-schmancy title that means I moderate the Easter Seals Autism Blog." Beth says she is the only blind woman in America being paid to moderate a blog -- so far no one has challenged her claim.

Beth also has her own personal blog. "It's a dogblog, of course!” she laughs. The "Safe & Sound" blog follows Beth and Hanni's travels on their book tour, you can link to it from her website at www.bethfinke.com

"Everyone who sees a Seeing Eye dog in action wonders about the dynamic between dog and human being, and now Beth Finke reveals all the intelligence, caring and love that goes into this unique partnership by letting a dog, Hanni, tell her story. The pairing of Finke’s clear and animated writing with LeTourneau’s precise and expressive illustrations perfectly reflects the lively relationship between proud and responsible Hanni and proud and intrepid Beth, not only showing young readers how remarkable Seeing Eye dogs are, but also how a person without sight can live a full, creative, and pleasurable life.”

- Donna Seaman, Booklist editor and author of Writers on the Air

Hanni and Beth will be in the area soon, including these appearances:

On WILL radio’s "Focus 580" program,
Friday Nov. 2 at 11 am

At the Urbana Free Library,
Saturday morning, Nov. 3 at 11 am

At Jane Addams Bookstore,
208 N Neil in Champaign
Saturday Nov. 3 from 2-4pm

At this last venue, Beth will sign books and stamp Hanni’s paw print in them.
Special Thoughts
Your special thoughts are meaningful to those who send them, to those who receive them and to those who are helped by them. We make every effort to list memorial and honorary donations correctly; if there is an error, please let us know. This issue contains all the special thoughts recorded at CCHS from March through June 2007.

In Memory Of
Murphy Armstrong, in memory of my friend, I miss you Brigadier and his parents
Barbara Asteberry
Helen Baldwin
Janet Hansbold, Grace Walton, Yvonne Duderer, Judith Johnson, Phil & Paula O’Brien, Mary Margaret Graham, Joan Williams
Jim Bickel
Elizabeth Grebar
Bill Boswell
Jim & Shari Eide
Brooklyn, good friend to Harriette Weatherford and Tom Schaeges
Jack & Shelley Stifle, Karen Koenig, Yvonne & Carol Mitzahi, Barbara Meyer
Calvin, beloved cat
Anonymous
Casey
Amanda McWilliams
Phyllis Casselman
Charles McLaughlin
Amber, beautiful companion of Paul and Joyce Cottingham
Nina Cottingham
Charlie, a treasured friend and CCHS alum
Carla Woodcock
Chelsea, beloved companion of the Kam family
Margaret Capps
John S. Clifford
Patrick J. Clifford
Robert Cox
Isabelle Brink
Cardi Cruse
Terry & Shelley Scott
Deacon, there will always be a void in our lives without you
Rick & Cheryl Mund
Connie Difanis
David & Jeannie Crockett
Jenny, beloved pet of Ken and Jean Dugan
Dogs-R-It
Brenda Dyr
C-U USBC WBA
Howard Garver
Margaret Garver, Phil & Janet Warner, Ronnie & Janet Parker, Sherry & Danny Bryant, Ellen & Lawrence Boseler, Walter & Ruby Jacobs, Mary Bedder, James & Janet Jacobs, Mr. & Mrs. Bobby Lovelace, Shirley Dye
Gertrude, Grace’s beloved cat
Grisswoald Family
Mary Beth Greene and her beloved pets
Ken and Nancy
Amy, loved by Patti Gierz
Dogs-R-It
Glenna
Joseph & Jane Sanahan, Jane & Robert Bradley, David & Carol Lins
Marian Glennon
Ivy Glennon
Ruth Goodyear
C-U USBC WBA
Hannah, a CCHS alum who gave 15 years of unconditional love
Elizabeth Braver, Anne Hart
Heracles
Patricia Morris
Gene Hool
David & Sylvia Davis
Ibsen
Howard Berenbaum & Megan McLaughlin, Faye Leish
Ellen Cilenti Jepsen
News Gazette Newsroom Staff
Anita Kurth
Patricia Vaughn
Kelly, our beloved dog
Martha & Howard Lamb
Bill Lankford
Ann Chu & Umberto Raiaioli
Edward and Maurine Lotz
Jerry Lotz
Luke
U. of Illinois College of Liberal Arts & Science Administration
Thomas “Bob” McCabe
Chuck & Sarah Lee
Maddy
Diane & George Miller
Maggie
U. of Illinois College of Liberal Arts & Science Administrative Staff
Max
Nancy Loch & Lena Bevory
Buster, Beloved chow of Ted and Kay Mcharry
Delora Seibrecht
Queenie B. Mills and her beloved pets
Lady and Pele
Jeannie Difanis Crockett
Murphy, beloved companion of Mike and Lyn Jones
Ranger, Rich & Heidi
Natalie Misa
Anonymous
Max, beloved companion of
Bob Martin
Karen Koenig
Lucille Moore
Joseph & Ellen Noonan, Eileen & Bill Koen, Amanda & Roger Hauser, Robert & Rebecca Wathers
Rosie, beloved pet of
Rosie Mossman
Dogs-R-It
Beryl Mumm
Margarette Wilson, Jack & Barbara Bonnell, Susan Chapman
David Nance
Sheeryn Hanako, Robert Martin
Ozzy Mann
Elizabeth Sudlow
Oscar
Elisa Libman
Reveler
Wayne Schillinger
Lexus, loving companion of
Martha Osterhoff
Sherry Slade, Wayne Schillinger, Jim & Lois Campbell
Dolly
Joyce Hoffman, Lincoln Book Bindery Staff
Warren Pacey
Jack & Shelley Stifle
Peabody, a friend’s lovely cat companion
Judith Fair, Helen Satterthwaite, Alice Gillies, Sandy Broadrick-Allen, Linnel Poppelbaum, M. E. Dowd
Piper, Snickers, Samantha and Ace
Judith Heck
Bud Pottorff
Connie Brown
Quincy
Vanda, Robin, Heather, RR & Holly
David Sanstrom, love also from
Max
Stan & Joan Sharp
Shadow
U. of Illinois College of Liberal Arts and Science Administrative Staff
Skipper, in loving memory
John Pruetz
Lynn Stalker
Betty Schmeling
Stan
Trish & Siobhan, The Somervilles
SPC Lucas Stacevich
Richard & Ava Tomson, Thomas & Barbara Kleiss, Violet & Walter Jenkins, Lowell & Ellen Memmenga, Hugh & Janet Gallivan, Carolyn O’Farouke, Beverly Denson
Gizmo, beloved companion of
Mary Stuart
Caroline Hibbard
Tess, beloved companion of the Spodek-Ostrow family
Bernard & Prudence Spodek
Toby, Mrs. Grabow’s little white dog
Jane Facer
Molly Troutt, Happy “Molly Day” 2007
Andrew Troutt
Adam Van Melle, in loving memory of your love of animals!
Robin, Stan & Raine
Warren, for the 15 happy years you graced our lives!
John, Fiona, Jack & Julian
Margaret Williams
Betty Russ
Glenna Wilsky
Marcia Bushboom
Ruth B. Wilson
Lyle & Margaret Johns, Fonda Smith, John & Kay Place, Jack & Patty Murray, Glenn Bush, James Murray Family, Pat & Fred Smith, George & Margaret Morris, Roger & Nancy Flack, Don & Carol Turner, Charlotte Baxter, William & Sandy Wilson, William Croup, Paul Wilson
Mary Emma Ziemer
Judit & Rich Blaney
Kids Care – Generous kids who ran lemonade stands, or bake sales, or asked for presents for animals instead of birthday gifts
Kate Bell, Aidan Hendron and the 2nd graders at Holy Cross School, Lily & Casie Morgan, Kate Love, Miranda Glennon-Nerone
Margaret De Cardy
Dale & Carol Eliason
Emily and Richard Lankau, Congratulations on your marriage
George & Sharon Lewis
Amie Pankau
Kim Pankau
Michelle Roberts, Bryce, Cameron and Abbott
Elizabeth Andrejasic
Marcia Rotunda, Happy Retirement!
U. of Illinois Office of Technology Management Staff
Tres, in honor of her new life with Brett McLeod
Sherry Slade
Janet Wesse
Kathy Chao
Our thanks to those who have collected much needed items or raised funds for CCHS, Amy Wiltszus, Claire Wooley and Karen Wooley, Sandy Bayles, Barbara Deem, Kristine Herman, Scott Lindburg, Amber Owens, Lisa Dally, Elise Abn, Brenda, Emily and Anna Black

In Honor Of
Fern Cozad, thanks for putting up with me!
Roy E. Cozad
Kathy Chao, Happy Birthday!
Janet Wesse
Carole Chapman, to a great Mother, Grandmother and teacher!
Stephen, April, Christina, Gabrie, Grace, Nathan, law and all your former students

In Memory Of

Our thanks to those who have collected much needed items or raised funds for CCHS, Amy Wiltszus, Claire Wooley and Karen Wooley, Sandy Bayles, Barbara Deem, Kristine Herman, Scott Lindburg, Amber Owens, Lisa Dally, Elise Abn, Brenda, Emily and Anna Black
Try End-of-Year Giving: It might be “less taxing” than reading this article
by Mary “Tief” Tiefenbrunn

I’ve been on the job for less than 60 days and already I’ve been given an impossible task: Write an article that people will actually read . . . discussing the Internal Revenue Code. When I was assigned this task, I politely informed the PawPrints editor that his expectations were perhaps unreasonable (“preposterous” would be more accurate, but I didn’t want to appear irascible); however, I would give it my best shot.

That said, given the nature of the subject matter at hand and my intense desire to meet objectives, I will shamelessly employ the time-tested technique relied on by school teachers everywhere: You will be quizzed on the content of this article at its conclusion.

Have you ever wondered why you receive so many requests for donations at the end of the year? Yes, it’s partly because thoughts of “giving thanks” and “goodwill toward mankind” naturally give rise to feelings of generosity and savvy fundraisers know that it is lucrative to tap into those feelings. But it is also because those same savvy fundraisers have toiled over the Tax Code, looking for ways that charitable giving can reduce a donor’s annual tax burden. Who can resist a classic win-win scenario?

The basic win-win aspect of charitable giving of course comes in the form of the warm feelings it gives the giver and the financial support it provides the receiver. However, because the United States government uses laws and regulations, e.g., the Tax Code, to encourage desirable behaviors, the “win” for the charitable giver is a little sweeter than just a warm fuzzy feeling. The charitable giver gets a tax break as a reward for doing good.

Keep in mind that charitable contributions only help you at tax time if you itemize deductions. That means you have to (1) keep track of your donations and (2) file the long Form 1040 and Schedule A. It makes sense to itemize your deductions if your total deductions will exceed the “standard deduction” for your filing status. For example: If you are a single tax payer, your standard deduction for 2007 will be $5,350. If your charitable donations, plus other deductible expenses, such as mortgage interest, real estate taxes, and state income taxes exceed that amount, you should itemize your deductions for a bigger tax break.

In addition to the basic tax-deduction described above, the Tax Code provides some rewards for giving that might be particularly helpful to individuals who already plan on making generous end-of-year contributions.

Here’s one example of a win-win giving plan available now, but perhaps not after January first. Under the Pension Protection Act of 2006, individuals who are 70.5 years of age or older by the end of the year can make a charitable gift to CCHS by transferring funds to us directly from an Individual Retirement Account (IRA), without paying federal income tax on the distribution. This provision applies to gifts of any size, up to $100,000. This qualified charitable distribution (QCD) also counts toward the required minimum distribution from traditional IRAs, so if you are currently being taxed on such distributions (which may also cause you to pay tax on Social Security benefits), this option may be especially beneficial. This provision is currently set to expire as of December 31, 2007.

Another way to reduce your tax burden while making a gift to CCHS is by donating appreciated assets. As you probably know, if you sell stock, bonds, or real estate that has increased in value during 2007, you will have to pay capital gains tax. However, if you donate that asset to a charitable organization before the end of the year, you avoid paying the capital gains tax and you can take a deduction for your charitable donation. Before making a gift of appreciated assets, you may want to consult with your financial planner or accountant, just to make sure that it is a good idea for you.

These are just a few of the ways that charitable giving can be a win-win option at tax time. In another edition of PawPrints, we’ll discuss the tax benefits of making charitable giving a part of your long term financial and estate planning.

Now, because I always follow through on a threat, here is the year-end-giving quiz:

The Internal Revenue Code . . .
(a) is a warm and fuzzy statute
(b) encourages charitable giving by making it tax deductible
(c) applies only to revenue earned indoors

In order to utilize the Charitable Rollover Provision, you must be:
(a) at least 70.5 years old
(b) clicker trained
(c) dedicated to paying as much income tax as possible

Before making a charitable gift of stock, you should
(a) check with your doctor about possible adverse reactions or side effects
(b) consult with your financial planner
(c) look left, look right, then look left again

The Editor of PawPrints has
(a) a lot of nerve
(b) unreasonable expectations
(c) a thankless job
(d) all of the above

Answer key:
(1) b; (2) a; (3) b; (4) c

Standard deductions for each filing status:
Single (or married filing separately): $5,350
Head of household: $7,850
Married filing jointly: $10,700

Pingua considers her tax options with the same enthusiasm most of us exhibit.
Dog Fighting’s Real Victims
by E. Barbara Meyer

"From the moment you read that indictment, it turns your stomach. It’s incomprehensible to me that this could happen - the fact that this actually exists in our society”.

When NFL Commissioner Roger Goodell made this statement at a press conference in July he reflected the shock and disgust of a nation. While many Americans were aware of dog fighting before the Michael Vick scandal, few had given any thought to its horrific reality. The members of the Champaign County Humane Society did, when in 1982 they passed a resolution of condemnation against all blood sports.

Organized dog fighting rings in Champaign County are reported infrequently. Stephanie Joos, Director of Champaign County Animal Control, can recall only one case in the last five years. Raids and arrests have occurred in South Holland, Decatur, Pontiac, and Springfield. In Chicago, dog fighting is considered epidemic by the Chicago Police Department. It estimates that 25% of kindergarten through sixth graders in the city have attended a dogfight. The CPD has created a special task force to address the issue, along with DAWG (Dog Advisory Working Group), a coalition of Chicago Police and community groups.

In urban areas, informal street fights are more common than highly organized dog fights. The organizers are less likely to be concerned about their dogs’ injuries or provide veterinary treatment to maimed or dying dogs. The dogs are likely to have been raised for ferocity alone, making them a significant danger to humans as well as to other dogs.

The real victims of this horror are the dogs. It’s estimated that pit bull type mix-breed dogs make up half of all dogs admitted to rescues and shelters in urban areas. When rural shelters are included, that population is only reduced to 30% of all dogs admitted. In Urbana-Champaign, dogs impounded by animal control officers for running at large, neglect, or viciousness are cared for at the Animal Services Facility in Urbana (ASF). Dogs are also held there in conjunction with pending court cases, which can place a tremendous burden on the facility. Joos reports that in 2005, ASF was required to hold seven pit bull mixes for 99 days. She cautions that any dog, but especially the energetic pit bull, can go “stir crazy” after that length of time. Special housing and handling are also required if they are deemed dangerous.

While the overall return-to-owner rate at ASF is 45%, most pit bulls and pit bull mixes are never claimed. Owners can’t or won’t pay the fines, and the requirement stipulated in state law that the dog be sterilized after its second impoundment further discourages people who believe a dog has to be intact to be tough. Unsocialized, untrained, neglected, and scarred, most of these dogs must be euthanized. They are simply not good candidates for adoption and present too great a risk to the community to rehome.

At CCHS, we see a slightly different side of the breed. We now use the more descriptive term, “bully breed,” to refer to American Pit Bull Terriers, Pit Bull mixes, American Staffordshire Terriers, Cane Corsos, American Bulldogs, English Bulldogs, and Mastiffs. The term has a double meaning. On one hand, it refers to the bulldog ancestry present in these dogs, and on the other it offers the caution that these dogs are going to require an experienced and knowledgeable owner. Bully breeds make up 17% of the dogs brought to CCHS. Virtually all are owner relinquished, which means they were cared for by someone with at least enough compassion to bring them to us when they were no longer wanted. We see less of the characteristic scarring around the head, neck, and front legs -- the tell-tale signs of dog fighting. Generally, these dogs are brought to CCHS for the same reasons other dogs are relinquished: the dog is too much trouble, too hyperactive, too annoying, or requires too much time.

CCHS performs temperament evaluations on all dogs we receive. This gives us clues about sociability, sensitivity, fear, and aggression. We consider the dog’s history and the observations of the staff to determine whether a dog will be put up for adoption. As an additional precaution, if determined suitable for adoption, the bully breeds are classified as “special adoptions.” Special adoptions require the new dog owner to enroll in training classes or meet with a private behaviorist to ensure that the special needs of the dog will be understood and accommodated. Even though carefully screened, bully breeds spend more time at the shelter than other dogs and are less likely to be adopted overall. Shelter Manager Kate Meghji states that “many potential adopters are completely unwilling to adopt even the nicest ones”, and cited one of her favorites, the sweet and gentle George, who was with us from May to the end of August before he was finally selected.

One of their more endearing traits, loyalty and devotion, was deliberately bred into them in order to make them easier to handle in the fighting pits. They are the most abused of all dogs, and we owe them. We owe them kindness and loving respect, and whether by careful rehabilitation or humane euthanasia, we owe them an attempt to make up for the horrors that have been inflicted upon them.
Buying vs. Adopting, continued

them as “abusive factory farms that treat dogs like production machines.”

Puppy mills are the most common source for pet stores due to their reliance on a continuous supply of puppies. Pet stores will claim to sell puppies acquired from reputable breeders; however reputable breeders do not sell to pet stores. Reputable breeders screen their clients as carefully as shelters do. Buying a puppy from a pet store only perpetuates puppy mill cruelty, or what the HSUS calls “the miserable industry that churns out puppies for profit.” At the worst facilities, the dogs live in outdoor cages and are exposed to extremes of climate. The standards of many animal welfare agencies would characterize conditions at these commercial breeding facilities as inhumane.

The role of the “class B” broker retail trade. The broker purchases commercial breeders and then sells the need for the retailer to maintain a variety of responsible breeders. Their from one broker, who can provide puppies.

This process often involves crating and trucking puppies over long distances in conditions that are dangerous to their health and well-being. The stress they endure increases the puppies’ ease.

Pet stores that utilize large commercial breeding operations are counting on their customers being interested in the latest designer toy dog than in being well-informed about animal welfare issues or the nation’s over-population of dogs and cats.

Fortunately, anyone who has ever adopted a pet from a shelter knows the rewarding feeling of having saved a life. The difference between buying and adopting is clear. When you adopt from a shelter, you support the humane treatment of animals. When you buy from a pet store, you perpetuate the system of selling dogs through unregulated and often ruthless channels. For true dog lovers, the choice is not difficult.

Betty, pictured above, is one of the puppies recently adopted from CCHS
Garage Sale, continued

Sale hours Saturday were lengthened, with the bag sale starting two hours later than in the past. We heard lots of great comments from shoppers who appreciated the ease of navigating our redesigned layout. The Czars and Czarinas deserve special thanks for their efforts to manage their departments.

Donations from hundreds of generous supporters overflowed Kesler Hall and the auxiliary space—a moving van donated by Hutchcraft Van Service. A second semitrailer donated by Cornerstone Courier of Buckley was dedicated to collecting the unsaleable clothing and shoes, which along with the remainder clothing, shoes and other fibers, were sold to a clothing reseller in St. Louis. By delivering our goods ourselves to the reseller, our price per pound was doubled.

The success of the Garage Sale was possible through the generous donations of local businesses. Once again, Alexander Lumber, Champaign, lent us the plywood that formed our tables; Blum’s Office Machines, Champaign, supplied the cash registers; the U. of I.’s Division of Intercollegiate Athletics lent us six-foot tables; Schnucks, Urbana, let us borrow shopping carts; Champaign Do-It-Best Hardware and Champaign ACE Hardware gave us masking tape; Lowes discounted two cases of it; Rogard’s gave us masking tape and marking pens; and ACE Hardware of Mahomet and Panera Bread on Kirby Ave, Champaign gave us garbage bags. Bidwell Concessions once again gave us a percentage of their profits from their stand at the sale.

The newest corporate supporter was the City of Urbana’s U-Cycle, which provided totes for recycling and contracted a 4-cubic yard dumpster for cardboard on our behalf. U-Cycle helped make recycling efforts of cardboard, paper, glass and plastic much easier.

Thanks go to all the volunteers, donors and shoppers who participated in this annual event! Next year’s sale is May 23 and 24.

Exercise equipment, bicycles and other oversized items were organized outside Kesler Hall at 5:30 am on sale day.

The view of the main sales floor from the entrance to Kesler Hall, prior to the doors opening to the public.

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