

**New Brunswick**



**Nouveau Brunswick**

**Spring 2009**  
Newsletter

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*Providing a voice for those who cannot speak for themselves.*

## **Contact your MP!**

Let your Member of Parliament know you want New Brunswick's animal welfare laws updated!

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# **Speaking up for the animals**



Recent efforts by caring New Brunswickers have put animal welfare in the spotlight this winter. Yet, public outrage over poor animal cruelty legislation must transform into action if any changes are to be made, says the president of the NB Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals. Joy Bacon of the New Brunswick SPCA says reaction to the recent cruelty court case has ignited a flurry of public criticism of the federal legislation. "It is unfortunate that it takes a horrific incident to draw attention to the weak animal cruelty legislation and relatively insignificant penalties in this country," says Bacon. "But the anger and dismay many people are feeling needs to translate into action if there are to be any changes to the law." This winter, a Fredericton court acquitted a man on five Criminal Code counts of killing a dog. He admitted to hitting them and another dog on the head with a hammer. One dog survived and the man was found guilty of injuring that dog as well as failing to provide adequate water for the animals. "Currently, animals are deemed as property under law and their owner can dispose of them in any manner that doesn't cause undue pain or suffering." Efforts to update the federal animal cruelty legislation nationally have been unsuccessful to date, despite efforts by Ontario Liberal MP Mark Holland and the national lobby group for SPCAs and Humane Societies, the Canadian Federation of Human Societies (CFHS). Mr. Holland is undeterred. He has introduced another private member's bill to have the legislation changed this year. "The NBSPCA is encouraged by the outpouring of public concern that has stemmed from the court case," says Bacon, "But the emotions people are feeling need to translate into positive action for change."

# Message from the President

By Joy Bacon

As I sit writing this letter on a very early spring day, I continue to be thankful that we live in a province where people care so much about their fellow creatures. That was made very evident to each of us as we recently witnessed the outpouring of support for change in the federal laws around animals as property. Sometimes it takes something very tragic to remind us all that much work is still necessary before we are able to relax and know that those creatures who so dependent on us as human beings can be ensured a degree of safety and protection.

While the circumstance triggering the outrage was terrible, the fact that people stepped forward and made their outrage known in positive ways through rallies, petitions and personal contact with decision makers helps me know that as a larger society we are least starting to move in the right direction. I, along with others, would urge our lawmakers to make the changes in law necessary to ensure that companion animals are acknowledged as the sentient beings and friends to humanity that they have been, are and will continue to be.

The winter has been extremely busy for our inspection staff. While it is encouraging that people are continuing to report circumstances where animals are in abusive or extremely neglected conditions, I believe it is discouraging especially to our inspectors that the conditions continue to exist. One could hope that with a legislative change that acknowledged companion animals as something more than property, those unfortunate people who continue to neglect and abuse animals would be able over time to change their point of view and NBSPCA inspectors would receive fewer and fewer calls. While this may seem to be a bit of a “Utopian point of view”, I personally continue to believe such a change is possible. In the meantime the NBSPCA will continue to pursue change, respond to calls about animal neglect and abuse, educate animal owners on an individual basis and hopefully by this summer be implementing new regulations with respect to pet establishment licensing as recommended by the Joint Task Force in 2005.

While NBSPCA has a strong and active volunteer base, the majority of activities require funding. The Society is vulnerable to the downturn in the economy in a couple of ways. The downturn may push individuals and families into making inappropriate choices with respect to their pets and as such calls to NBSPCA may increase. On the other side of the coin, many individuals and families have found their discretionary spending limited and that has had and is likely to continue to have an impact on donations. Donations form a significant part of the NBSPCA funding. We do remain hopeful however that whenever possible people will continue to support our work.

In closing I would like to invite each of you to attend the NBSPCA Annual General Meeting to be held Sunday May 3, at the Delta Hotel in Fredericton beginning at 1 pm.

## Attention!

*New Brunswick*



The New Brunswick SPCA will hold its  
**Annual General Meeting**

**Sunday, May 3**

**1 p.m. – 4 p.m.**

**Delta Fredericton**

**225 Woodstock Rd, Fredericton**

*Hope to see you there!*

## Spring 2009 edition

The NB Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (NBSPCA) is a provincial organization whose mission is to promote responsible, caring and compassionate attitudes toward animals. Our primary objective is the prevention of cruelty, neglect, and abandonment of animals in our province.

President: Joy Bacon

Executive Director: Glen McGuire

Editor: Vanessa Packman

Visit our web site: [www.sPCA-nb.ca](http://www.sPCA-nb.ca)  
We're also on Facebook!

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**Pass it on!**

***Please share this newsletter  
with another animal lover!***

# Message du Président

Par Joy Bacon

Au moment où je rédige cette chronique, on est au tout début du printemps et je pense à quel point je suis contente de vivre dans une province où la population se préoccupe tellement du bien-être des animaux. Cela a été très évident à chacun d'entre nous tout récemment lorsqu'un grand nombre de personnes ont exprimé leur soutien pour la modification des lois fédérales qui traitent les animaux comme des biens. Parfois, il faut un incident tragique pour nous rappeler que nous avons beaucoup de chemin à faire avant que les animaux qui dépendent tellement de nous bénéficient d'un niveau adéquat de sécurité et de protection.

Quoique les circonstances ayant mené à cette expression de colère soient horribles, le fait que les gens ont exprimé cette colère de façon positive en assistant à des manifestations, en signant des pétitions et en communiquant avec les preneurs de décisions me convainc que nous sommes sur la bonne voie. Un nombre élevé de personnes, y compris moi-même, encouragent vivement nos politiciens à apporter les changements nécessaires à nos lois afin que les animaux soient reconnus comme les êtres sensibles et les amis des humains qu'ils ont toujours été et qu'ils seront toujours.

Notre personnel de protection des animaux a été extrêmement occupé cet hiver. Il est encourageant de constater que les gens continuent à signaler des cas d'abus et de négligence, mais, tout comme les inspecteurs, je trouve décourageant le fait que ces conditions continuent d'exister. On peut espérer qu'avec un changement à la loi qui reconnaît les animaux comme étant plus qu'un simple bien, les gens qui maltraitent et négligent leurs animaux seront capables de changer leur point de vue au fil du temps, et les inspecteurs de la SPCANB recevront de moins en moins de plaintes. Il s'agit peut-être d'un point de vue utopique, mais je continue personnellement à croire qu'un tel changement est possible.

Entre-temps, la SPCANB continuera à pousser pour des changements, à donner suite aux appels sur la négligence et l'abus des animaux et à sensibiliser les propriétaires d'animaux individuellement à leurs responsabilités. Nous espérons également que de nouvelles dispositions seront mises en oeuvre pour réglementer les établissements hébergeant les animaux familiers, tel qu'il a été recommandé par le Groupe de travail sur la responsabilisation des propriétaires d'animaux familiers en septembre 2005.

De nombreux bénévoles actifs appuient le travail de la SPCA, mais la majorité de nos activités exigent des fonds. La récente récession touche la SPCA de plusieurs façons, dont deux façons particulières. La conjoncture économique pourrait pousser certains gens à faire des choix inappropriés relativement à leurs animaux familiers et le nombre de plaintes reçues par la SPCA pourrait augmenter. De plus, les dépenses discrétionnaires de nombreuses personnes sont limitées et cela a déjà eu et continuera d'avoir un impact sur nos dons, qui représentent un pourcentage considérable de nos revenus. Nous continuons d'être optimistes et nous croyons que les gens continueront à appuyer notre travail dans la mesure du possible.

En conclusion, je tiens à inviter chacun d'entre vous à assister à l'Assemblée générale annuelle de la SPCANB, qui aura lieu à 13 h le dimanche 3 mai à l'hôtel Delta à Fredericton.

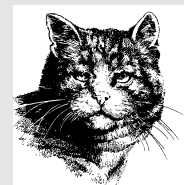
## *Bits and Pieces*

The newly expanded 2009 NBSPCA Resource Directory is now available.

Send an email to [spca@nbnet.nb.ca](mailto:spca@nbnet.nb.ca) to receive your free electronic copy!

The Kibble Pet Food Bank Network has expanded to three outlets. We are delighted to welcome the Hampton Food Basket and the Mobile 1 Kitchen in Moncton to our team! The Sussex Sharing Club is our third member.

Demand for pet food among low-income pet owners has doubled since our October launch. Please consider donating pet food to help owners keep their animals where they are loved and cared for. This is both easier for the animals and people, as well as reduces the number of animals surrendered to shelters or being abandoned.



### *Dates to remember*

**Month of April  
National Prevention of Cruelty to  
Animals Month**

**May 3 to 9  
Be Kind to Animals Week**

**May 16 to 18  
Higher Education for Pet  
Professionals conference**  
Delta Fredericton Hotel, Fredericton

**Saturday, June 6  
ACFA Championship &  
Household Pet Cat Show**  
9 am to 5 p.m.  
Capital Exhibition Centre, Fredericton

# A day in the life of an Animal Protection Officer



Behind the NBSPCA cases that grab headlines are a corps of dedicated Animal Protection Officers offering their best in the face of the worst. These part-time professionals devote long hours under often harsh conditions to help animals.

Whether driving rough country roads to remote farms, spending hours on the phone with members of the public, climbing mountains of paperwork, or testifying in court, the work demands persistence and finesse. The following is a glimpse into the casebook of one NBSPCA Animal Protection Officer during the busy winter months of January and February. Names are omitted for confidentiality.

Jan. 17, 2009: Complaint regarding a large number of dogs and cats not being cared for. Left a compliance order for the owner to contact me within 24 hours, as he was not at home. 80 km., 1 hr.

Jan. 17, 2009: Complaint regarding a dog left outside with no shelter. On responding I found the dog outside with an adequate house. The dog is a long-haired Husky, who seemed to be in good health. I left a message in the owner's door to contact me, as there was no one home. 70 km., 1 hr.

Jan. 17, 2009: As I was in the area, I checked on a complaint that cattle were outside without shelter. The cattle have access to a treed area that I believe gives them minimally-adequate shelter. Hay and water is available. 50 km., 1 hr.

Jan. 17, 2009: Complaint concerning two horses that were not being properly fed. On investigation I found the owner had just picked up 30 bales of hay and had adequate feed on the site. The horses scored well on the standard examination of condition. 75 km., 1 hr.

Jan. 17, 2009: Visited an income-assisted housing project where a tenant had moved out, leaving a dog with 9 pups in the apartment. The dogs were seized and a seizure notice posted; the dogs taken to a boarding kennel. 250 km., 4 hrs.

Jan. 18, 2009: Recheck. Met again with the owner of 17 dogs and 8 cats. He has agreed to surrender all his animals to the NBSPCA. Will arrange transportation of the animals for boarding. 80 km., 1 hr.

Jan. 18, 2009: Complaint that a short-haired dog is outside 24/7. Found the dog has shelter, but it is not adequate considering the breed. I left a compliance order to have the owner contact me within 24 hours. I will discuss the situation with him. 70 km., 2 hrs.

Jan. 20, 2009: Recheck. The owner has not complied with a previous order to provide a shelter for three dogs. I informed that the owner of the consequences, that the dogs would be seized and possibly charges laid if there was no compliance. 150 km., 2 hrs.

Feb. 2, 2009: It is reported the dog at this address was being left unattended for extended periods of time. The owner wasn't home. The dog was tied to a doghouse and tracks in the fresh snow indicated it had been given fresh water earlier in the morning. I left a compliance order to have the owner contact me. Later that day he called me and let me know that although he sometimes leaves for more than 24 hours the dog is attended to. The dog looks healthy. 100 km., 2 hrs.

Feb. 2, 2009: Reported that the dog at this address is tied outside without a shelter. On investigation I spoke to the owner and issued a compliance order to have proper shelter built for the dog. The dog has access to the back porch and can get under the front deck. I told the owner that this shelter would not protect the dog adequately from adverse weather conditions. The dog appears to be in decent shape but a little thin. The dog was inside the house when I arrived RECHECK REQUIRED. 50 km., 1 hr.

Feb. 2, 2009: Recheck. No doghouse has been provided as required by previous compliance notice. The owner was informed that should his dog be left outside for extended periods without shelter it will be seized and he would be responsible for all costs incurred by the seizure. MONITORING REQUIRED. 200 km., 2 hrs.

It's demanding work where those who wear the badge frequently go beyond what's asked of them to care for and protect those who cannot speak for themselves. How do you think you'd do as an Animal Protection Officer for the New Brunswick SPCA?