



Tap into a Better World

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Los Angeles Times
SUMMER
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The Inside Scoop

My senior cat, Tigger, had some medical problems earlier this year, and we have been struggling with him not pooping in the box since then. Because of your article (“Litter-ly Speaking,” September/October), I bought a new extra giant open litter box, and he has been using the box ever since. We can’t thank you enough!

— AMY CROSSLEY, APEX, NORTH CAROLINA

Hippo-Huh?

I read “The Healing Ground” (September/October) with great interest. How could pygmy hippo Hannah begin her life at the National Zoo in Washington and wind up in the backyard of someone living in California? This is appalling and I am having a very hard time wrapping my arms around this. I am from the Washington area and although I do not visit zoos, I understand that this particular zoo is a role model for other zoos. How can this be?

— REBECCA ABRAMS, NORTH POTOMAC, MARYLAND

THE HSUS’S DEBBIE LEAHY RESPONDS: At one time it was common for zoos to sell unwanted animals to dealers who would in turn sell the animals at auctions or to canned hunt facilities, poorly run roadside zoos, circuses, or collectors interested in creating their own private menageries. Today, accredited zoos have tightened up their disposition policies and states are passing stronger laws to prevent unqualified entities from having animals like Hannah. We have a ways to go, but things are getting better.



This Issue’s Muse

Long an admirer of pet rats, Laura Maloney had a chance to adopt a pair of her own when The HSUS responded to a hoarding case in January 2011. The HSUS chief operating officer later adopted a second pair from a Maryland rescue, part of a large group abandoned outside a school. Though short-lived—only Louise, shown above, survives—rats’ clever and fun-loving personalities have inspired Maloney to become an ambassador for the species.

The Need to Breed?

Conscientious breeders may not engage in inhumane practices like puppy mills do, but that doesn’t make them heroes (“Taking a Stand,” September/October). Every puppy they breed results in some other puppy being killed by a shelter for lack of a home. As long as there are more dogs than there are homes to care for them, it is inherently inhumane to breed more of them.

— BARBARA PERESS, LANTANA, FLORIDA

THE HSUS’S KATHLEEN SUMMERS

RESPONDS: It would be wonderful if every person who wanted a dog would adopt from their local shelter, but the reality is that many people, for their own reasons, will purchase a puppy from a breeder. Many responsible breeders do breed rescue and work in other ways to help end pet homelessness; by producing small quantities of well-raised puppies, they offer an alternative to puppy mills.



Facebook fans weighed in on our question from the September/October issue: What qualities would you celebrate in a postcard to your pet?

CYNTHIA A. HILL MILLER

Finnegan, you keep my most sacred thoughts. You bring a big smile to all those who see you riding next to me in the car. Your sigh in the evening right before we fall asleep lets me know all is right in your world. My companion you will always be, now in all our adventures and after you pass with all the wonderful memories. I love you Finnegan Button Beeler Brown. xxoo

MICHELLE HUBER

Dear Kitty Mia: Good things truly do come in small packages from the local shelter. Our lives have been brightened immensely from the moment you leapt out of the cardboard carrier. From the way you like to push pens and random objects under the living room rug, to the way you go nuts when we bring out your favorite feather toy, and to the way you chatter to us, you never cease to make us smile.

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What is your pet’s favorite toy? Tell us at [humane society.org/aafacebook](https://www.humanesociety.org/aafacebook), where you can also vote for your favorite wildlife viewing spot. 🐾