



Potter League  
*Enriching Lives*

# Paw-Print Press *Autumn* 14

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The Robert Potter League for Animals, Inc.  
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## Checking in with Peter the Cat, a.k.a. Tucker



*When Peter arrived at the Potter League, he was terrified of people and unwilling to be handled without a claw-filled struggle. The staff spent lots of time over the next few weeks working with Peter, getting him socialized to people and earning his trust. When the Potter League said goodbye to Peter on adoption day, we knew he was in good hands. What we didn't know is just how perfect those hands were.*

To my friends at the Potter League,

After two weeks of cuddles and singsongs and soft talking and hard play Tucker (previously known as Peter) is settling into his new home! He is becoming brave in his exploration, and subtly lets me know where I have forgotten to dust. He

still gets scared, yet is becoming more and more relaxed and settles into a comfort hug and purr.

I often think of his rough beginning as a stray, the struggle he must have had as a feral cat, the effort Potter Staff put into saving his life, and I get teary eyed. Then my heart just soars as he cuddles, purrs and gently reaches a paw out to touch my hand and pull it closer to him while tucking himself into the comfort, safety and love of my arms. Tucker has given our old dog a new zip in his wobbly step, and when I felt there was nothing left I now have a purpose. There is potential in these little feral cats, lots of potential. Sure it was a rough start, but we believe that the Potter League has the "magic" to see what lies deep within these souls.

Thank you for giving our wonderful kitty a chance and thank you for bringing the purr back into my life! The Gustavson Family

# Humane Education “Assistant” Pepper Retires and Welcomes River

After years of volunteer work at the Potter League, Pepper joins her owner, former Potter League Humane Educator, Lynne Mallonee in retirement. Lynne adopted Pepper in 2002 and Pepper started volunteering at the inception of the Reading Fur Fun Program, a literacy course for reluctant readers. Reading Fur Fun is offered as an after-school program at the YMCA, in group homes for boys, in an elementary reading resource room and at a public library. Lynne trained Pepper, and she received both her Canine Good Citizen (CGC) certification and her Therapy Dog International (TDI) certification. Pepper continued volunteering at the Potter League’s Camp Happy Tails and school programs with Humane Educator Anastacia Southland after Lynne’s retirement.

When asked about working with Pepper, Anastacia stated, “It has been such an honor working with Pepper. She has been my rock for the past three years.



*Pepper at “work”*

No matter what we were doing, whether it was teaching 20 excited preschoolers about dog safety or playing “Rover” in our adoption skit, I always knew that Pepper would greet the situation with a smile and wag of her tail. I could drop her leash in the middle of a classroom and know that she would heave herself heavily onto the floor with a sigh until I called on her for her part. She will definitely be missed by the kids and especially by me, but I know she will have a wonderful retirement, full of swimming, chasing squirrels, and lounging around on cool floors.”

So who will fill the opening in the humane education department? Our very own River, an adorable puppy, who is super smart and willing to take on the role. River is one of the Potter League’s Fetching Friends Transport Program dogs from Alamo, Texas. Anastacia met River and knew that she had a great temperament for the position. River is in the office two days a week and is doing great with her training. “She has the wonderful ability to be a totally different dog depending on what the situation calls for, from leading a game of chase and tackle at playgroup to gently kissing a toddler’s cheeks,” Anastacia said. “I’m looking forward to getting her out into the schools and can already see the beginnings of a great new partnership.”



*River joins the Potter League*

## Camp Happy Tails Full Day and Extended Day Camps

Camp Happy Tails had another fun and exciting summer, with 99 campers taking part in games, educational activities, and time with animals. This year saw the introduction of four sessions of full day camp at the Potter League, and the addition of extended day options for working parents.



The extra time allowed campers to participate in more involved projects, such as designing dog food recipes and

testing them on shelter dogs, painting pet portraits, and learning to sew cat toys. Other highlights included creating and testing agility courses, fun with ferrets, training puppies, making bird feeders, and a visit from 4H with chickens!

Afternoons were spent volunteering in the shelter. Each child was assigned a shelter rabbit or guinea pig to take care of for the week. Responsibilities involved giving food and water and cleaning the cage daily. Campers were proud to supervise their pet’s care and really loved helping out; many said it was their favorite activity all week!

Other camp volunteer work included socializing the adult cats, helping to walk dogs, creating advertisements for the shelter pets, and making enrichment toys. Campers went home each afternoon with the satisfaction of a job well done!

## Getting to Know Sarah deVries, Behavior Services Manager



*Sarah deVries and one of her many four-legged friends*

Sarah's interest in animals started at a young age but it wasn't until her early 20s that she realized she wanted to work with animals as her career. Sarah was living in San Francisco and began volunteering at the local shelter, Pets Unlimited, on Fridays nights after working all week. She found the time she spent at the shelter extremely rewarding and knew that she wanted to work with homeless animals who needed help to find a new home. After doing some research, Sarah discovered that one of the

most renowned dog training schools was located just around the corner from where she lived. She was accepted into the San Francisco SPCA Academy for Dog Trainers program where she immersed herself in an intense 7 day a week program for 6 weeks with leading dog trainers Jean Donaldson and Janis Bradley. There she studied animal learning, dog behavior, behavior problems including fear and aggression, the history of dogs as well as interview skills and client compliance. Sarah stated, "I was in my element. I was so enthusiastic about what I learned and knew I found my calling."

Sarah moved back to the East Coast and started her own business where she provided positive reinforcement training services, pet sitting and dog walking in the Newport area. She was hired at the Potter League in 2011 as an Adoption Counselor and was able to incorporate her extensive customer service experience with her animal knowledge and training. Sarah was promoted to Behavior Services Manager in August of 2013 where she continues to grow our training center services for both dogs and cats. She has been instrumental in the development of our Kneady Cats program and other enrichment programs implemented at the Potter League. *(see article on page 6)*

"What I have learned from my experience is that we are always counseling and training people on how to train their dogs. Luckily, I like people, too!" When asked what is the most rewarding part of her job, Sarah responded, "Other than puppy kisses and soft, cuddly kittens, I enjoy working with and supporting our volunteers to build our programs for our animals so that everyone is getting what they need out of the experience. Sheltering doesn't need to be depressing. The animals give back to us every day, and the people who donate their time to the animals are an inspiration."

### Contact our Free Behavior Helpline!

One of the most common reasons people relinquish animals is because they are experiencing a behavior problem with their pet. Sound familiar? The Potter League can help. Our Behavior Helpline offers advice so dog and cat owners can work through a variety of behaviors with their pet from house soiling to food aggression. Problems are often easily solved by implementing simple changes to a daily routine or through additional training.

Contact our  
**Behavior Helpline**  
at  
**401.846.8276 ext. 119**  
or  
**helpline@PotterLeague.org**

## Save the Date

### Holiday Critter Glitter

Thursday, December 11 to  
Sunday, December 14

**4 Days  
Only!**

### Artisan Craft Fair

Saturday, December 13

### Have A Heart Cocktail Party & Auction

Friday, February 6, 2015  
at OceanCliff in Newport



## *Celebrating Our Past, Looking to Our Future*

Every animal that comes to the Potter League receives a medical evaluation from one of the highly-qualified, caring veterinarians in the community who donate their time to the Potter League. And now we have a new and improved medical suite to meet the animals' needs.



During construction of our new shelter, the Potter League built space and partially outfitted a veterinary suite with the plan to re-examine on-site veterinary care needs in the future. At the time of construction we knew that critical staffing and programmatic changes would be necessary to fully utilize the veterinary space. We wisely held off equipping the surgical area at that time for two key reasons: 1) to have adequate time to thoughtfully plan and practically develop the program for advancing health care at the Potter League and 2) to save on construction costs for something we weren't yet ready to implement.

Not only does 2014 mark the 85th anniversary of the Potter League's founding, we also celebrate the 5th anniversary in our 'new' animal care and resource center. Our plan to hold off the outfitting of the veterinary suite and starting new programs for medical care was a good one. Now we have successfully paid off campaign debt, worked through four years of our strategic plan, revamped programs, improved both philanthropic revenue and earned revenue streams, and upgraded our technology infrastructure. We have re-vamped the League's organizational chart, created new positions, hired and trained new staff. These steps were important to stabilize the Potter League after dramatic change and a period of profound growth.

The Potter League has just furnished the surgical suite with equipment so it can be used for surgeries for homeless animals in the shelter. With grants from the Program for Animal Welfare at the Rhode Island Foundation and from the Loeb's Family Foundation, specialized equipment has been purchased including all the medical instruments and supplies for surgery. We have hired a veterinary associate to assist our per-diem and volunteer veterinarians. We are now ready to fully utilize the veterinary suite as envisioned when our new shelter was designed.



We are committed to doing anything and everything reasonable and within our power to provide the necessary veterinary care and medical treatment for animals while we work to find them new homes. We are pleased to announce that we are making great strides to meet this goal. Our mission is simple--to care for all. We are proud that the long-held dream to have a surgery suite and improved medical care is now a reality.



## **Save the Date**

**February 6, 2015**

**Have A Heart Cocktail Party & Auction**

**at OceanCliff in Newport**

***New Venue, New Party!***

Sponsorship and underwriting opportunities available.

Contact Susan for more information at 401.846.0592 ext.125 or [SusanR@PotterLeague.org](mailto:SusanR@PotterLeague.org)

# The Potter League's Training Center offers Fun for Every Season

The Potter League offers an array of classes from group training classes including recall, loose leash walking, tricks, specialty classes which address barking, door dashing or leash reactivity, and play groups. For some fun as well as working on training skills, sign up for an agility or Doggy-O class. In addition, a number of events are held throughout the year such as our Doggy Biscuit Hunt in the Spring, Dog Days of Summer, Howlapalooza Costume Parade in the Fall, and Cafe Dog and Dance Troupe in the Winter.

All classes are open to any owner and their canine companion, not just Potter League alums. Classes are held in a state-of-the-art training facility with a professional trainer. For more information on classes and class schedules visit [www.PotterLeague.org](http://www.PotterLeague.org).

The Potter League also offers private behavior consultations, either at your home or at the shelter with Sarah deVries, our Behavior Services Manager. Please contact Sarah deVries at 846-8276 ext 104 to schedule an appointment.



*Doggy Biscuit Hunt*



*Dog Days of Summer*



*Cafe Dog*



*Dance Troupe*

# Free Doggy 101 and Cat Conversation Classes offered Monthly

Thinking about adding a dog or cat to your family? Have a new pet and want to learn more about how to care for your new friend?



Spend an hour with our adoption and behavior staff learning valuable information about what to expect when you bring home your new dog or cat. These informational classes are held monthly and are highly recommended for all potential and new pet owners.

The classes are free and open to everyone, not just Potter League adopters. For a schedule of upcoming meeting dates, visit our website [www.PotterLeague.org](http://www.PotterLeague.org). Pre-registration is required for either class by contacting the front desk of the Potter League at 401.846.8276 ext.100



## Join Our Monthly Giving Program



*Friends Enriching Lives* is an easy and efficient way for you to make a monthly gift and provide reliable support that is so vital to the animals and programs at the Potter League.

Visit [PotterLeague.org](http://PotterLeague.org) or contact Susan at 401.846.0592 ext.125 or [SusanR@PotterLeague.org](mailto:SusanR@PotterLeague.org) to enroll today.



## Enrichment Programs to Improve the Lives of Cats and Dogs

The Potter League animal care staff is constantly striving to improve the lives of animals while they are in our care at the shelter. While these programs relieve stress in the animals, they also help make them more adoptable. Because there are not enough hours in the day for the staff to do it alone, we enlist the help of many of our wonderful volunteers to assist with these programs. Two of our favorite programs are Kneady Cats and Quiet Time.

When under-socialized kittens come into the shelter they are often terrified of people simply because they have never encountered humans. Because it is important to get kittens used to being handled at a young age, soft and cozy Kitty Kangaroo Pouches are the perfect first step to getting these scared kittens over their many fears. The pouches allow the kittens to feel secure yet they are also being exposed to human scent, voices and common everyday sounds.

If you've ever been to an animal shelter, you'll notice that as soon as you walk down a kennel hallway, all the dogs get excited and come to the door because #1 they loooooove humans and #2 when they see humans coming toward their kennel they think they might get fed or walked! This excitement and arousal can turn off some adopters and it can also increase a dog's stress and frustration. Our goal with the Quiet Time program is to teach dogs to settle in their kennel and just enjoy human contact. Our Quiet Time volunteers are part of our Head Start program and their main duty is to sit in a chair in the kennel and just "be" with the dog. Many read books or do crossword puzzles and talk quietly to the dog. Since human contact is the most enriching part of a shelter dog's day, the Quiet Time program is a win-win for all.



Senior Animal Care Associate, Casey Martel, demonstrates a cat utilizing a Kitty Kangaroo Pouch

## The Potter League welcomes Gail Lawson as Volunteer Coordinator

Anyone who has spent time at the Potter League over the past year may recognize the face behind the desk of the volunteer office. Gail Lawson, the recently appointed Volunteer Coordinator, started helping out in the Fall of 2013. She had recently moved back to Rhode Island from Connecticut where she and her husband raised their two children. Gail was anxious to lend a hand wherever the Potter League needed her. She has a variety of work experience including a career in nursing and she also is a Master Gardener and has been active in organic farming and farmland preservation. Growing garlic is Gail's favorite gardening endeavor in addition to tending gardens around her house.

Her gardening experience has come in handy this year. A volunteer named Rosie Kissel started a garden which will yield various vegetables next summer for our shelter animals awaiting new homes.

"My husband and I are both huge dog lovers. We have had a Cocker Spaniel, a Black Lab, and most recently, our much loved Border Collie mix, Scruffy. I'm sure it won't take long to adopt another dog now that I am working at the Potter League!"



Gail Lawson

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## Volunteer Department Begins Online Applications and Scheduling

As of August 1st, volunteer applications are being processed directly into the Potter League's volunteer software called Volgistics. Once applications are reviewed, new volunteers can schedule their training classes on their own, savings hours of phone calls and endless emails by the Volunteer Department. This automated system was implemented by the Potter League's Volunteer Coordinator Gail Lawson, along with the help of volunteer Andie Dwyer. This is just the beginning of more exciting technology and programming changes coming from the Potter League.

## In Memoriam

Beau Reilly, my beloved rescue cat and constant companion of the last 15 years through many ups and downs, died this past summer at home in Jamestown. Beau was the latest in a long line of cats I have owned, and I hope I do none of them dishonor by saying that he was the best so far. Beau was lionhearted, intensely loyal and highly sociable. He was the perfect pet.

Beau lived through many a scrape, so I think he'd just about used all his nine lives. Perhaps in the end he just decided it was time. My sadness will be brief; for one thing, it is tempered by 15 years of nothing



but good memories and for another, I'll be honoring his memory by adopting another rescue soon enough.

Rest your bones, old fellow. I'll see you in my dreams.

Sheila Reilly

## Tell Us Your Story

In Memoriam is a new feature the Potter League has added to its biannual newsletters. Interested in telling your story? Contact Erin Dollard at ErinD@PotterLeague.org or 401.846.0592 for more information.



## Cremation Services at the Potter League

Each of us has animal companions who weave themselves into our hearts and the fabric of our daily lives. At the Potter League, we understand the strength of the bond between you and your animal companion, and we are dedicated to help you find closure. We offer a variety of services to provide support and comfort during this difficult time. Please contact us for more information.

The Potter League for Animals

87 Oliphant Lane • Middletown, RI 02842 • 401.846.8276

[www.PotterLeague.org](http://www.PotterLeague.org)

## Long Time Volunteers Chuck and Bertha Perron Remembered

It is with great sadness that the Potter League said good bye to two long time volunteers, Chuck and Bertha Perron. Chuck, 80, passed away after a brief illness on March 20th and Bertha, 79, his wife of 54 years, joined him exactly 6 months to the day on August 20th. Anyone who has been to the Potter League over the past 14 years would recognize this pair, always volunteering together socializing cats,



garden work, cutting the expansive lawn of the shelter and at events such as Have A Heart Party and Heart & Sole Walk for the Animals. Combined they contributed over 1,700 volunteer hours here at the Potter League not to mention the numerous time they also volunteered at their church in Somerset, Massachusetts. In 2003, Chuck was recognized as the Potter League's Volunteer of the Year. Pearl Gonzalez, who has seen many volunteers in her 28 years of employment at the Potter League stated, "We dearly miss Chuck and Bertha, two of the greatest volunteers we have ever had. They were so helpful for every event and always offered to lend a hand with whatever work was needed around the shelter. They will be forever remembered in our hearts." The Potter League staff and volunteers will truly miss this inspiring, kind hearted pair.



## Tile & Paver Legacy

Touch an animal's life by leaving your mark.....

Our animal care and education center is an exceptional facility for sheltering animals and providing essential programs to the community. These services and programs enrich and save the lives of so many animals. Here is an opportunity to make a commemorative gift by reserving a tile or paver.



\$500  
outdoor  
6" x 9"  
Paver



\$1,000  
indoor 4" x 4"  
Black Marble  
Wall Tile



\$2,500  
indoor 8½" x 11"  
Black Marble  
Wall Tile

Potter League  
Enriching Lives

For an order form, contact the Development Department at [Development@PotterLeague.org](mailto:Development@PotterLeague.org) or 401.846.0592 or visit our website

The Potter League 87 Oliphant Lane, Middletown, RI 02842 • [www.PotterLeague.org](http://www.PotterLeague.org)

## Ways you can help the Potter League this holiday season!

Every year we search for that perfect holiday gift. We want our gift to be something special, something that shows how much we care. A gift of any size makes all the difference to the animals. This is our favorite time of year and we are grateful for the outpouring of community support we receive in so many unique ways. Here are a few suggestions to provide inspiration for a gift that will be most meaningful to you and your family.

### Make a gift in honor or memory of someone special

A gift in tribute to a person or animal is a wonderful way to show you care about them and the animals at the Potter League. You may also consider a more permanent, commemorative gift by reserving a tile, paver or stone bench. To make a donation call our Development office at 401-846-0592 or visit our website for more information.

### Volunteer

Volunteers assist staff in our adoption, training, development and education departments. For more information contact Gail at 401-846-8276 ext 106 or GailL@PotterLeague.org.

### Donate in support of our mission

Donate to a fundraising appeal, through our website, workplace giving programs or via the U.S. mail. Your gift will help save lives of homeless animals, and enable the Potter League to continue to provide vital services and programs for people and pets in our community.

### Host your own fundraiser for the animals

Gathering shelter supplies from the Potter League Wish List is a great project for schools and youth organizations. Businesses and individuals alike are welcome to host their own special event. For more information contact Susan at 401-846-0592 ext 125 or SusanR@PotterLeague.org.

### Shop at the Potter League

Stop by our very own BloomingTails for the purr-fect gift for all occasions. Choose from a colorful selection of collars and leashes, interactive pet toys, gift certificates for training classes and more. *Make sure to join us for our Critter Glitter Jewelry Sale December 11 - 14.*

### Become a corporate or business partner

Your love of animals can be a great business opportunity and a way to show that you care. Your company's involvement can support the human-animal bond while reaping solid corporate benefits in return. Learn about our Corporate Humane Heroes Programs by contacting Erin Dollard at 401-846-0592 ext 116 or ErinD@PotterLeague.org.

FSC Logo here

## Your Payroll Deduction Will Save Lives

### Consider Joining Your Workplace Giving Campaign!

*For 85 years, the Potter League has made a difference in the lives of animals. Your contribution goes directly to exceptional care for thousands of homeless animals. Together we can reduce pet suffering and neglect.*

To donate through your Workplace Giving Program, please follow these procedures:

#### United Way Campaign:

Write our agency name, Potter League for Animals, in the appropriate place on the United Way pledge form.



#### Rhode Island & Southeastern Massachusetts

#### Combined Combined Federal Campaign (CFC):

Give online via CFC –Employee Express, CFC Nexus or MyPay, or you can complete a paper pledge form provided by CFC. Please make sure to note our five digit code #37967.



#### State Employees Charitable Appeal (SECA):

Write the Potter League's **four digit code #3450** on the pledge form.



For more information or questions, call Susan at 401.846.0592 ext 125 or email SusanR@PotterLeague.org

The Potter League proudly feeds Hill's Science Diet to all the cats and dogs in our care. Hill's Pet Nutrition has a mission to help enrich and lengthen the special relationships between people and their pets. Learn more about Science Diet® and Prescription Diet® pet foods at HillsPet.com.

