

SUMMER 2020



GREATER BIRMINGHAM
HUMANE SOCIETY

SIMON SAYS

Be Kind

Saving Simon

Your love helps a suffering dog find healing and compassion



On Good Friday, GBHS was alerted to a video that had been posted on Facebook showing a dog, covered in mange. His skin looked like that of an elephant. He was bleeding, and his head hung low. His back leg was broken and twisted, and he struggled as he tried to limp away in fear. No one tried to help him.

GBHS has several donors who give every month, and that funding is what enabled us to rescue this poor creature Easter weekend. When he arrived at the GBHS hospital, he was nearly dead. His immune system was threatened by a severe case of mange, and his breathing was labored by heartworms. GBHS named him Simon.

Your love and generosity gave Simon a second chance. As he recovered, Simon received cards and letters from all over the country offering love and prayers. Even the University of Alabama mascot, Big AL, sent him a "get well" video message. This precious life came to us terrified, withdrawn and near death.

But look at him now!

When he was at the GBHS hospital, he would regularly go into the surgical recovery area and comfort puppies and kittens. Now, Simon is in his new foster home complete with dogs, a cat, a little girl, and lots of snuggles, soft blankets, and nutritious food. Every day when his foster mom comes home, he welcomes her with wags and kisses. Simon has not only you, but also a cardiologist, an orthopedic specialist, and the GBHS veterinary team providing the complex treatment his many illnesses require.

As soon as his skin is healed and his heart is strong enough, Dr. Vaughn at Veterinary Specialists of Birmingham will determine if he can withstand surgery to repair his pelvis and back leg. Your donations made Simon's story possible. He has become a symbol of the transformative power of kindness and compassion - - at a time when we all need that encouragement. Thank you.

Please make your contribution today. Consider becoming a monthly supporter so that GBHS can continue the life-saving rescue of abused and abandoned animals like Simon.



Record Numbers Foster During Pandemic!

Your gifts sew the silver lining that makes fostering possible...

While people everywhere were staying home and staying safe, so were hundreds of GBHS animals! The Snow Drive Adoption Center closed March 23rd to comply with Birmingham's COVID ordinance. Hundreds of families responded to our call to become GBHS Foster Homes but it was your support that helped us find places to live for all. Over 200 animals were placed in 48 hours, and with your help that number grew to more than 650 within weeks.

Kate Hollingsworth, Director of Volunteers, helped streamline the foster application process, and put the training online. Since March Kate's been "going through tons of applications on a daily basis." Volunteers like Heather Echols worked around the clock to equip inexperienced foster families with everything they would need for success. Meanwhile, GBHS found itself "at its lowest occupancy in years," said Allison Black Cornelius, CEO.

"While the dark cloud of the pandemic loomed over the entire world, the emptying of the shelter has been a silver lining as GBHS welcomed many new foster volunteers," said Hollingsworth. "Kind-hearted individuals and families opened their homes to dogs and cats of all ages, breeds, and sizes. Puppies, kittens, seniors, long-haired, short-haired—no animal was left behind," Kate added.

And according to a report from NBC News, shelters and animal advocacy organizations across 17 states, including Alabama, reported an overwhelming outpouring of community support for shelter animals during the nationwide shut-down.

The best news of all! Most of the animals fostered during the COVID shut-down were adopted by their foster families, like Maggie the kitten, who purred her way into Margaret and Greg Ellis' hearts while she was in their care. Josie the Chiweenie found a home with the Teague family when her foster family used their social media and circle of friends to promote her.

"We're so incredibly grateful for all the fosters who stepped up to provide loving, temporary homes for our shelter animals," said Lauren McCray, GBHS Adoptions Manager. "We could not do what we do without them." More than 500 animals have found homes through the Foster Program since March 25th, and hundreds more heartworm positive dogs are in foster to adopt homes.

If you or anyone you know would like to become a foster, contact Kate Hollingsworth at khollingsworth@gbhs.org.



MAGGIE



JOSIE

These animals need your help. Please become a monthly supporter today!

Takin' it to the Streets!

Forced to close as an animal shelter, GBHS fills its building with food, medicine, and supplies.

The COVID shutdown forced the adoption center to close March 23rd, The animals were placed in foster homes, but we were left with something that is rarely heard at any animal shelter - silence. And that emptiness led us to do something extraordinary. The GBHS mission doesn't stop when the animals are gone, it just allows us to serve the people of our community in a whole new way. In a matter of days our 30,000sf. Adoption Center was transformed into the GBHS COVID-19 Regional Pet Pantry.

Three semi-trucks holding over 300,000 lbs. of pet food and supplies made their way to the GBHS Adoption Center. Hundreds of incredible people like YOU brought food, litter, toys, and bedding for those in need. The rooms that used to echo with joyful barking and meowing, were now filled with food, supplies, medicine, and treats - - all for the people of our community.

During our 25-day distribution period, a lean GBHS Team welcomed their community with masked smiles and overflowing hearts. Your endless support, gifts, and encouragement allowed us to reach hundreds of hurting people in our community. They told stories of how their family members had been lost to COVID-19, or how they would have had no way to feed their beloved pets without the GBHS COVID-19 Regional Pet Pantry.

Some may say the world stopped due to COVID-19, but you proved that some missions are even bigger than a pandemic.

25 DAYS
OF DISTRIBUTION

1402
OWNERS

5347
ANIMALS

300K^{LBS}
OF **FOOD**

37 ANIMAL
RESCUE GROUPS SERVED



I was asked to write a letter for this quarter's newsletter. Usually it is easy for me to write you about the dogs and cats we've helped, but this time I find the task almost impossible. So much has happened these past few weeks, how can I possibly write anything that wouldn't seem trivial or insensitive to the turmoil and debates going on around us? So, whenever I feel overwhelmed and ill prepared for an assignment, I turn to the founders. My dad always says there's nothing new under the sun and turns out he's right, again.

Dr. John Herbert Phillips, founder of the Greater Birmingham Humane Society, the Birmingham City School system, and the city's public library system, wrote and delivered the words below to his entire student body. Dr. Phillips believed in the humane treatment of all people and all animals, equality for all men and all women, and the ideals of unity and brotherhood. No matter your position of the issues of today, the words he wrote and said that day in 1905 seemed worth reflecting on now...

Not long ago, there was inaugurated here in Birmingham an interesting campaign for the removal of fences. "Tear down the fences" was the cry raised by the newspapers and taken up by the people; and, as a result, the fences that once enclosed our city parks and many of our beautiful residences have already disappeared. The reasons generally given for this movement are superficial: we must imitate the larger and older cities; it adds to the beauty of our streets; it is economy. Many people dispense with their fences, merely because it is a fad to do so.

Has it ever occurred to you that there is a deeper meaning and a more far-reaching significance in this simple fact of the removal of the fences in our city? The facts of our lives are effects; even the passing of the fences is an evolution. What is the real significance of this fact? What is its logical relation to history?

To me, there is an air of serene confidence and trustfulness about a residence without a fence around it.

It implies a great deal of faith in the honesty and good-will of the neighborhood and is a very high compliment to the children of the next-door neighbors. It suggests that the owner of that residence is at peace with all his neighbors, and that the children of that neighborhood are not considered rogues and vandals.

I am pleased every time I pass that beautiful unfenced residence across the street. The owner of that residence seems to say to me and to every other passerby, "You are a very decent, respectable man; I trust you. You and I do not need fences." An unenclosed residence suggests friendliness and community of feeling. It suggests unselfishness and large-heartedness.

In the cities of Europe, the residences of the wealthy are generally enclosed with high stone walls so that the passer-by cannot get even a glimpse of the green lawns, the flowers, and the beautiful shrubbery within. There is an air of distrust and selfish exclusiveness about those forbidding stone walls. As I pass them, they seem to say to me, "You are not to be trusted. These flowers and these lawns are not for you; you cannot, you shall not enjoy them." But an unfenced residence gives me an assurance of welcome. It seems to convey this message from the man within to the man without: "I trust you; look at my gardens and my flowers and enjoy them with me."

The residence of the middle ages was a castle with high stone walls ten feet or more in thickness. There were windows to let out arrows rather than to let in light. There was the moat filled with water, the draw-bridge and the portcullis. In the watchtowers were sentinels to keep a sharp lookout for approaching enemies. It does not take the reader of medieval history or the traveler in Europe long to find out what the people of those days thought of each other. Every home was a fort indicating suspicion, fear, and war. The people had little love for their neighbors, little faith in mankind.

From the fortified dwelling of the fourteenth century down to the fenceless residence of today is a long, long story—a story of bloodshed and revolution, a story of human tragedy and world suffering, yet a story of the gradual development of brotherly love and of faith in man. The cities of the old world in ancient times were enclosed with high stone walls for the protection of the inhabitants. Some of the oldest cities of the new world also were surrounded with walls. When the French settled in Quebec, the first thing they did was to build a wall around the town to protect themselves against the Indians and against the English. The remnants of this old wall may still be seen, as may remnants of the town walls in St. Augustine and Santa Fe.

The old walls serve no purpose today: the progress of brotherly love, faith, and goodwill has rendered them useless. They stand only as silent witnesses to the suspicion, the hate, and the faithlessness of other days. Fences and walls suggest a wild land filled with wild beasts and barbarians; a primeval forest filled with bloodthirsty savages.

The growth of faith in humanity during the last half century has swept away international barriers. Nation trusts nation more and more as the years pass, and the whole world is rapidly becoming a community of nations without walls or fences. The nation that

isolates itself from the rest of humanity by a great wall, will soon find itself in the condition of China. It must tear down its walls and enter the great community of nations or suffer the humiliation of defeat and disgrace.

St. John, in his vision, caught a glimpse of the good time coming, when he prophesied, "There shall be no more sea." The great oceans that once kept the nations apart are today great highways of commerce and friendly intercourse. There shall be no more sea as a barrier to brotherhood; and, with the increase of faith upon the earth, we may hope for realization of Tennyson's dream, "The parliament of man, the federation of the world."

Every great charity, every organized effort for the relief of human suffering and the uplifting of the race, demolishes whole sections of our sectarian fences. Only a short time ago in Galveston, a Roman Catholic priest, a Jewish rabbi, and a Protestant minister served together on the same committee to relieve the suffering of a stricken people. In the presence of that great calamity, theological distinctions and differences of creed were forgotten; and all were united in one great faith, one great hope, and one great charity.

"By faith the walls of Jericho fell down." It was not by the use of battering rams or dynamite, but by the silent progress of the army of Joshua around the walls. By faith, also, the walls about the cities of the old world fell down; by faith, the castles of the middle ages have disappeared; and by faith the barriers that have so long separated the nations of the earth have been eliminated.

The greatest lesson in all history is the lesson of faith. Faith in man is the cornerstone of all progress: credit is the basis of modern trade and the keynote of our entire commercial system. Faith in mankind is the basis of government, the foundation of democracy. Without faith there could be no organization, no combination of labor and capital, no trades and unions, and no trusts. Nowhere is this principle so conspicuously demonstrated as in our own country.

Here, the fences separating the Jew from the Gentile have almost disappeared; and the Irishman and the Anglo-Saxon dwell together as brethren. By faith, arbitrary race and social distinctions are passing away; and in an atmosphere of fraternity and equal opportunity, each individual stands or falls by his own merit. In the public schools, there are no educational fences restricting the opportunities of knowledge and culture to the favored few. The doors of opportunity are open for all who, through faith, will enter.

To meet with success in any vocation today, a man must trust and be trusted. The men who get themselves and their friends into the most serious troubles in the business world are the men who cannot be trusted; the boys who get into constant trouble in school or college are the boys who cannot be trusted. Faith is the cornerstone of the school, of business, of government, and of civilized society.

"To tear down the fences" is the mission of education, of science, and of religion. It is the mission of democracy. Every advance in true culture, every deed of heroism and of charity, every invention and every discovery in science, knocks out a stone from some partition wall. And as the walls of Jericho fell by faith, so shall the social and industrial barriers that still impede the progress of the race soon disappear, and the glorious dream of universal brotherhood become a realization.

Faith in man is the great spiritual force, the battering ram that is slowly but surely breaking down the walls of the ages; and faith in man is the index of faith in God.

- John Herbert Phillips, 1905

The Greater Birmingham Humane Society believes all things living should be treated with dignity and respect. We need your help to continue to spread that message within this community. We are grateful for your past investment in this ideal, and we are in need of your continued support to realize Dr. Phillips' vision – a world in which no person or animal is abandoned or abused.

Thank you,



Allison Black Cornelius