



TattleTails & Tidbits



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Hope For The Holidays

It's that time of year where thoughts turn towards traditions, gatherings, and celebrations of hope and giving. It's a time of nostalgia for some, reunions with loved ones we haven't seen for awhile, and of setting our intentions on what we hope to see in the coming new year.

But it is also a time of stress, hardship, and mental anguish for many others. There are many who have lost hope and who struggle to find their own light in this world. No matter how difficult things seem, it is important to try to remember the beauty in this world that is literally all around us. We can be reassured the sun will come up tomorrow and a new day will begin. The animals remind us to live each day in the moment. They show us the magic and depth of unconditional love. They teach us tolerance and forgiveness. What better way to celebrate the holidays than to stay close to our animals and feel all the gratitude for them that our hearts can hold. Happy Holidays from all of us to all of you and your animal and human families!

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www.springfarmcares.org

People Again! Joy To The World!

by Bonnie Reynolds

Once upon a time two women dreamed an impossible dream. They intended a sanctuary for animals. But it would also be a sanctuary for people. A place of peace. A place of sunshine and light where people would be taught by the very animals who sheltered there. A place that would change people's understanding of animals. A place where they would learn of the telepathic connection and bond of love and forgiveness between all things, whether living or inanimate.

There was no money with which to accomplish their dream. But the two women believed that they were the captains of their own souls, who could create their own common reality. Where angels fear to tread, they threw themselves, hearts and souls, into the creation of their dream.

Thirty years passed. The animals came, but the money to care for them came as well. Tragedy struck, but it turned to triumph. A third woman joined them, then a fourth, both dedicated to the dream. Beautiful buildings were built, as homes for the animals and places of welcome and learning for their human students. Beautiful people came, to absorb the peace and to learn what the animals had to share with them. And an understanding of the telepathic connection and bond of love and forgiveness between all things spread to hundreds, then thousands, then tens of thousands of eager minds.



But then darkness engulfed the enchanted place of peace and sharing. A sickness, and an overwhelming fear of that sickness, spread through land after land. Kings and emperors decreed that people shut themselves in their homes, stay away from one another, not touch, not embrace, not even sing or praise Creation together. We had to shut our doors to people. No longer could people come, to learn from the animals, not even to pet or to sit or stand quietly with them. The animals became depressed. Why? Where were the beloved people with whom they were so eager to share? What had happened to them? Did they no longer wish to share the wonder of the love and forgiveness between all things?

Darkness prevailed and grew ever deeper for more than two years. Without people, purpose itself shriveled and was hard to remember—hard for the animals and for the four bearers of the dream. Nothing seemed to matter anymore. Not as it had used to. Even Christmases, always before so bright and joyous, passed by hardly noticed.

Then the sickness left the land. Emperors and kings allowed us to come out of our touch-starved prisons.

And the people returned! Smiling, laughing, eager people, wanting to learn, wanting to soak up the peace, and to share the wonder of the love and forgiveness between all things. Oh, how we had all missed them. The hearts of the four women sang. The animals chirped and purred, neighed, brayed, bleated and oinked, overjoyed at the return of their friends and students.

Now a blessed year of “Welcome Back” is drawing to a close. Christmas will shine again, jingle and sparkle and shed its warmth and love again.

And how deep has our understanding of the importance of our people become. Our new dream is to create a world where never again will we and our animals be separated from one of the world's greatest gifts.

People.

What's In a Name?

by Dawn E. Hayman



Carley choose her name when Dawn asked her what she would like to be named.

As an animal communicator, I am often asked about choosing names for our animal companions. How do we pick a name that they like? Can we ask them for a name? Do names even matter to them? What about silly nicknames we call our animals? Does that bother them? These are all great questions.

In my experience, names matter a lot, but maybe not for the reasons you may think. If you think for a second about your relationship with your own name, you will see that this is a topic of great depth. Some of you love your name. Some of you hate your name. Some of you have changed your name. Your name represents you and introduces you to the world. As a human, you have the choice to use a nickname, a middle name, or to change your name if you see fit. But our animals are introduced to the world by what WE call them. And sometimes, that name can fuel a whole lot of chaos in their lives if it brings up something scary or negative when people meet them.

Take, for example, a Doberman named Killer. This is an actual true story. I was asked to communicate with Killer because he was shy around people. When I connected with him and asked him what was going on, he shared with me that he could not understand why people were always afraid of him. It made him feel sad and very insecure. So he developed a way of just avoiding people so that they were not afraid of him. It turns out that Killer was actually a gentle giant who totally loved people. I suggested to his people that they change his name to something more friendly and approachable that matched his personality. They changed his name to Danny. They reported back to me a few weeks later that indeed they now had a totally different dog.



Barn cat Tabby (right) came home one day with another cat walking beside her who we'd never seen before. We did a double take as we could barely tell them apart. We called him Ditto as a joke but the name stuck and he loved his name.

Words have feelings and emotions attached to them. This includes names. What we name our animals can very much influence how others see them and interact with them. But it also can affect how they see themselves. We were called to work with a young large Thoroughbred mare who was terrified and refused to come out of her stall. She was new to the barn and they couldn't figure out what the problem was. When I first met her, I was overwhelmed by her huge size. She was rather intimidating especially when she was scared. Her people shared that she was timid about everything in life. When I asked them for her name, they told me it was Mouse. Everyone thought it was funny because of how big she was. But in actuality, she was as timid as a mouse. She quite literally saw herself as this little helpless creature. The reason she would not come out of the stall is that the floor had a zig-zag pattern on it in the aisle of the barn. She was terrified of walking on it. When we covered it with sawdust, out she walked. But I also suggested that they change her name to something more confident. They had hoped she'd be a show horse but were disappointed at how little they could do with her because of her fear. Mouse became Braveheart and went on to be a very successful show jumper. Sometimes names can mean everything.

In general, our animals love the light playful nicknames and terms of endearment we use for them. They understand and feel our loving intentions and it makes them feel loved and special. As long as our intention is heartfelt, that is the energy that gets conveyed to them. So when choosing names for your animals, sit with them for a bit and really feel and appreciate who they are and how they want to be introduced to the world around them. See what comes to you. Try it out with them and see how they react. And always be aware of the energy and meaning behind the names you choose. Energy is a very real thing and can make a lasting impact - both positive and negatively - in their lives.

Pearl: A Brief Stay Filled With Love

by Christine Schneider, DVM cVMA, CHPV



Our sanctuary is full. Like most other sanctuaries and shelters, we are contacted daily about cats needing homes. Unfortunately, because we need to ensure that our current residents are receiving the best possible care, we have to turn a lot of people away. But there are times where we can dedicate a small space to a momentary presence that to others may just be a small blip on the radar. One of those instances was when a delivery driver arrived at our door with a cat he had saved from a coyote attack. The coyote spooked at his truck and the driver then darted out of his van and picked up the cat. He had been driving around with her all day, trying to find a shelter or a veterinarian who could take her in. No one could help.

We offered to at least scan for a microchip and evaluate for any obvious wounds or injuries that needed to be addressed. Inside the van was a large box where a cat was sleeping so deeply, I wasn't even sure she was alive. I gently touched her side and she awakened with a loud "MEOW!" A brief glance at this new cat obviously presented an elderly and sick creature; she needed a safe space to land, even if it might not be a long stay. She did not have a microchip and was found in an area where there weren't any immediate houses. We knew we had to take her in. We named her Pearl. The name somehow seemed to fit her.

A more thorough exam of our new resident revealed some devastating results. She was very underweight, covered in fleas and mud, meaning she had been outside on her own for a while. Her breath had a distinct smell of uremia, indicating severe kidney failure. Abdominal palpation found a large mass (which I later confirmed with ultrasound to be originating from her spleen). But, Pearl was purring, enjoying the attention she was receiving and contently eating the food we offered to her. We administered some fluids to help with dehydration and planned to continue more diagnostics and treatments the next day, after she'd had time to relax and adjust to her new environment.

However, the next day her condition had rapidly deteriorated and it was obvious that her chronic conditions had begun to affect her ability to thrive. The multiple comorbidities she was suffering from made it impossible for us to consider radical medical interventions. And although her body was failing her, Pearl wasn't experiencing pain or suffering. It was decided to allow a hospice-assisted natural death for Pearl (as long as her condition didn't change) – she was given a comfortable place to sleep with heating pads, fluids were administered to maintain hydration and blood pressure, and medications were given to help keep her comfortable.

Pearl passed away comfortably, on her own volition, less than 24 hours after arriving at the sanctuary. She was only here for a short while but during that time, she became a part of Spring Farm and a reminder of our purpose. Previously, her fate was to be an anonymous snack for a wild animal or to pass away alone during the previous night's cold frost. But, upon her arrival, Pearl was a "somebody" and was surrounded with compassion and care. Pearl may have been out on her own for a while, but she left this life surrounded by love. We thank the delivery driver who rescued her and tried his best to tend to her needs in his truck all day, and then, at the end of his shift, driving for miles looking for help for her. Pearl left this life knowing that people cared and that she was not alone. And that was what mattered most to her.

The Gift of Gratitude

by Dawn E. Hayman

Several years ago, we started a tradition around Thanksgiving and Christmas to have me ask the animals at Spring Farm CARES to give us a message. The question I asked each of them was: "What are you most grateful for in your life?" The answers were amazing, humbling, and inspirational. We started sharing these messages in newsletters, on our website, and eventually on Facebook. This year again, there will be one animal message per day, from Thanksgiving (November 24) through New Year posted on Facebook and on our website.

Over the years many of you have shared with us what these messages have meant to you. We have heard of families who sit down at breakfast each morning and read the message aloud and talk about it. You have shared that many of you print the messages and put them at the holiday meal place settings and each person reads their message aloud at the beginning of the meal. Others have told us that the messages have gotten them through anxiety and depression during the holidays. And one of our friends shared with us that she uses them with their Alzheimer/Dementia day care patients at the start of their day. Over and over again we have heard from people who silently read them each day without comment but who depend on these messages now to get them through the hectic holiday season. It is a reminder to all of us that indeed there are so many things in life for which to be grateful.

To give you a preview of the types of profound truths that the animals wish to share with you, I have included several messages from years past throughout the remainder of this issue.

I hope you enjoy them! (You can also view previous years messages using the link below to our website blog.)

To View the Daily Animal Messages for 2022:

Follow us on Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/springfarmcares>

Go to our Website Blog: <https://www.springfarmcares.org/blog/category/animal/messages>



From Gizmo: "I know a thing or two about feeling hopeless and despondent. I dedicate my message to those of you who may feel lost or feel the loss of someone else around you. I understand a heavy heart as mine has been heavy before too. I felt like life had no meaning and there was no sense continuing on. Boy was I ever wrong. What changed my mind and healed my heart was the love and belief of someone stepping in and saying to me, 'I want you to be here.' Just to feel wanted again was incredible. We all need to belong. And when we feel we don't belong, it is important to understand that we each have a unique place in this world and a beautiful plan. But if we separate ourselves out from our own destiny, then we become disconnected. Believe me, I know this is true. If you have the ability to be the light in someone's darkness, it is a gift that is as precious as life."

The Hooded Warbler - Gem of the Forest Understory

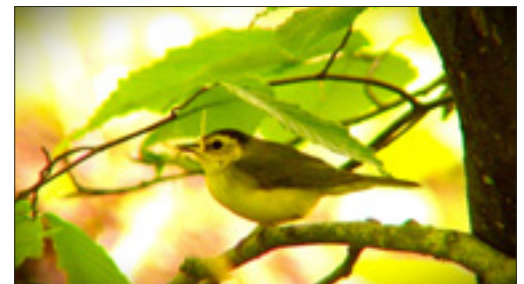
by Matt Perry

One of many bird species that has benefited from Spring Farm CARES' habitat preservation and restoration projects has been the Hooded Warbler. Like other warbler species, the Hooded Warbler is about the size of a chickadee and weighs only as much as four pennies. However, there is plenty of color and charisma packed into that small package. The Hooded Warbler is decked out in bold yellow and black plumage. The male is particularly striking, sporting a jet-black hood and bright yellow face mask. The species also produces a distinctive whistled song which is a near-constant reminder of their presence, even when the bird itself so artfully eludes our gaze. Indeed, like other members of the warbler clan, the Hooded Warbler is heard far more than it is seen. However, on one June day, while working in our old woods, I happened to see a female Hooded Warbler carrying leaves and other nesting materials into a tangle of blackberry brambles. Over the course of an hour, she made multiple trips to a well-concealed site in the forest understory. Her route to the building site was circuitous by design. Her objective was to prevent potential nest predators from discovering its whereabouts.



Several days later in the same area, the male Hooded Warbler was issuing bright, terse alarm calls. That was an indication that nest construction was done and egg laying and/or incubation had begun. I wanted to confirm this, but I had to be careful. If I walked through the brambles looking for the nest, I risked drawing the female away from incubating, and that could be detrimental to the embryos developing inside the eggs. It would be safer to wait until the parents were feeding young before I tried to see the nest. A week later, I returned, and by that time the eggs had hatched. Although I still didn't know precisely where the nest was, I saw the parents flying through with food and I could hear the high-pitched begging calls of chicks. Just as she had behaved when building the nest, with each food delivery, the female used a convoluted route. She was still determined not to betray the nest's location. Interestingly, when the male brought food, he wasn't nearly as stealthy in his approach. It was by watching his movements that I was finally able to get sight of the nest. On that visit I had brought a video camera and tripod. My plan was to quickly set it up near the nest, turn it on, and then depart the scene, thereby causing as little disturbance as possible. Although birds fear the presence of a person, they have no natural fear of inanimate objects like cameras. After an hour, I returned to the site, retrieved the camera, and quickly vacated the scene.

A review of video from the nest was interesting. As I had hoped, the parents ignored the camera and resumed normal behavior directly following my departure. While I watched in person it was the female that provided most of the meals. However, the video confirmed that the male supplied an equivalent amount of food to the nest. Evidently, he didn't feel comfortable feeding the young while I was nearby. Perhaps it is his bolder plumage that compels him to exercise a greater degree of caution. After all, if you want to keep a location secret, it's best not to carry a brightly colored flag when you go there, and the warbler's plumage is easily as bold as any flag. As expected, the food brought in consisted of insects. Inchworms seemed to be the most common fare. The pair fed each of the four nestlings in equal amounts and all appeared comparable in development. The week-old young were already well-feathered and would be fledging in a matter of days. As well as bringing in food, both parents took away all fecal material from the nest. These "fecal sacks" are compact and easy for the parents to deal with. They pick them up like



dirty diapers and drop them somewhere well away from the nest.

When the young finally did leave the nest, their parents continued to feed and watch over them, but for practical reasons, they didn't do it as a unit. The pair split up the brood. Two became the male's responsibility and the other two stayed with the female. The family soon abandoned the nest area and drifted around the greater forest habitat. By the end of August, the Hooded Warblers, along with most of their songbird neighbors, had left the forest and were bound for wintering grounds in the tropics. We look forward to spring when they will return to the sanctuary and once again regale us with their vibrant colors and melodic songs. Perhaps some of the young raised this year will be building nests and raising families of their own. We shall see.



From Mary: "I like when there is a sense of quiet around me. Sometimes life moves too darn fast. What the heck is the hurry? You all speed around like you have to be somewhere that you can't get to fast enough. But you rarely stop to enjoy where you are. If you'd enjoy each moment, you would actually get to where you are headed much quicker and with way more joy and peace. I have had a lot of change in my life. Many times I didn't belong where I was. Sometimes I was alone and frightened. Yet, it was all that change that brought me exactly to what I was looking for – a family. If I hadn't gone through the discomfort of change, I'd still be alone and afraid and certain that there was no hope for anything else. Instead, I ended up finding sheep friends and lots of animal and human

friends who treat me like I'm special. Slow down. Be in the moment. One thing is certain. Things will change. They always do."



From Leo: "Sometimes it can be the simplest of things that make me happy. Why do humans think it strange that animals have the same kind of feelings that humans have? We don't question if humans have thoughts and feelings? Anyway, there are days that I love to see the light starting to dim as the sun sets and the clouds turn all sorts of special colors. It is beautiful and it reminds me that there is so much out there in the world that is larger than I am. I don't have to understand everything to appreciate it. I hope you can find happiness and beauty around you too. It's there. I know that. Because it is everywhere. There are magical insects and majestic trees. And the wind on certain days brings the most amazing smells. All of life makes me happy. But what makes me most happy is the chance I have been given to live it."

More Animal Messages of Gratitude



From Brandy: "I love to share my heart with humans. And actually, that is also the very thing that brings me happiness. I love when people are drawn to me that have never had anything to do with horses. So many times I have been the first horse that someone has ever touched. I love to feel the amazement and wonder when they experience and feel how a big animal can be so soft and kind and fit inside their heart. I love getting inside someone's heart and leaving softness. I think that humans should practice this with one another. Simply being kind is a gift you can give to someone that can change their lives in ways you will never see. Just be kind. Be present. And breathe softly. You literally can change the world that way. I know for sure that is true."



From Evelyn: "I love being a pig. I love life! Where I live, I get to see so many things. I love hearing the donkeys calling out first thing in the morning. They let us all know they are there and we are welcoming another day. I love to hear the nickers of the horses. I love the honking goose and the quacking ducks. All these sounds are around me all day. It reminds me that I am safe at home. At night, when it's quiet in the barn, I can hear the contented sighs of all my friends. Life is really good here. I am a lucky pig. And I am grateful for every second of this."



From Yeti: "I love my physical body. I love to feel the strength of my legs when I run in a big circle. I love to leap. I love to play. Nothing feels better than to feel appreciated. I think it is a good thing to let the ones you appreciate know how much you appreciate them. Start right now. Hop, hop, hop into this. No sense waiting. Go for it. People waste too much energy worrying what not to say then to just say what is aching to be said. I see it all the time. You think you are superior with language but you don't even know how to use it. It's like have a super-fast body and are only walking at a slow pace. Get out there and use what you have been given and spread joy and appreciation. That's what I do. I just can't reach as far as you can. But that doesn't stop me

from reaching!"

We wish you and your family all the very best for the Holiday Season and the New Year ahead. Thank you for your generosity and compassion. Because of you, animals find a safe haven, human hearts are opened, and lives are changed.

**With heartfelt gratitude,
From All of Us at Spring Farm CARES**