

AMERICAN★HUMANE
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FALL 2024 NEWSLETTER



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Dear Friends,

As we approach the end of another impactful year, I am filled with gratitude and pride for all we have accomplished together at American Humane. Over the past few months, our team has been working tirelessly to improve the lives of animals both at home and across the globe.

This past season, we made significant strides in our mission. I am incredibly inspired by our Rescue Team, with the support of PEDIGREE Foundation, who deployed in response to hurricanes Debby, Helene, and Milton, providing life-saving care to animals affected by these storms. We had the heartwarming privilege of reuniting a retired Military Working Dog with his former Army handler after years of separation—a testament to the enduring bond between these heroes. We announced the top five finalists of the Hero Dog Awards, and I encourage you to join us in celebrating their incredible stories by attending the gala in Palm Beach on January 8. It's an evening you won't want to miss! We celebrated the premiere of our second documentary, *Escape from Extinction Rewilding*, narrated by the legendary Meryl Streep, which highlights urgent conservation efforts to protect endangered species around the world.

Additionally, Global Humane was proud to present the 2024 Wolfgang Kiessling International Prize for Species Conservation to Dr. Arnaud Desbiez, honoring his outstanding contributions to global wildlife preservation. On the heels of this remarkable recognition, our Global Humane Conservation Fund of Africa (GH-CFA) announced its installation of a groundbreaking AI-enabled rhino protection system in South Africa, safeguarding Southern White Rhinos in collaboration with Founders Lodge by Mantis.

On a personal note, I was honored to be featured in Forbes, where I shared insights on what it means to lead with urgency, passion, and resilience in an increasingly complex world. It was a reminder of the critical work we're doing together to combat indifference, misinformation, and the politicization of animal welfare.

Through it all, our work is only possible because of you. Your dedication fuels our mission and keeps our momentum strong. As you explore this newsletter, I hope you find inspiration in these incredible stories that reflect the deep compassion and love we share for animals.

Thank you for your unwavering support from all of us at American Humane and the animals we serve.

Sincerely,

Robin R. Ganzert, Ph.D.
President and CEO



When Hurricanes Hit American Humane’s Rescue Team Protects Animals in Crisis



Carolina, and Florida following the destruction of Tropical Storm Debby, Hurricane Helene, and Hurricane Milton, working tirelessly to bring hope and relief to animals and their owners in crisis. For weeks, the team operated around the clock to ensure the safety and well-being of animals in the hardest-hit areas. Driven by compassion and an unyielding commitment to service, the American Humane Rescue Team reached 247 affected communities and provided direct support to over 421 animals. Living out of their trailers to remain close to those in need, the team demonstrated unwavering dedication, often braving dangerous conditions to make a difference.

One particularly moving rescue occurred in Asheville, North Carolina. In the wake of Hurricane Helene, our team came across 13 golden retriever and black lab puppies, just 14 weeks old, whose owners, overwhelmed by the storm’s aftermath, were unable to care for them. American Humane mobilized swiftly, relocating all 13 puppies to a shelter outside the affected area within 24 hours. Each of these little ones has now found a loving forever home, thanks to the swift and coordinated response of our team and partners.

Also, in the aftermath of Hurricane Helene, our American Humane Rescue Team received a heartbreaking call from a North Carolina family. The owners of a house had learned that their



When disaster strikes, it doesn’t just damage homes and infrastructure—it puts at risk the most vulnerable lives in our communities, including our beloved animals. The 2024 hurricane season was no different. With several devastating storms tearing through the Southeast, communities from Louisiana to North Carolina faced heartbreaking losses. Many lives were taken, both human and animal.

In the face of such tragedy, we at American Humane are incredibly proud of our Rescue Team’s relentless dedication to protect and serve those without a voice. This remarkable team was on the ground in Louisiana, Georgia, North



tenants had fled, leaving behind two dogs to fend for themselves—a small Chihuahua trapped inside, and a medium-sized black Border Collie tied up outdoors. With conditions making the roads nearly impassable, our team pushed through the treacherous journey, determined to reach these animals in distress. After navigating flooded streets and debris-covered paths, the team arrived at the home. Carefully, they removed the Border Collie from the backyard and placed it in a crate for safety, while the Chihuahua was gently placed in a kennel, finally secure after days of abandonment. Both were transported to a local shelter, receiving warm care and the chance to be adopted into loving homes. The family who had called us was deeply grateful, knowing the animals had been saved from a dire situation. For the rescue team, it was another moment of triumph in their mission—to protect and provide for those who cannot help themselves, no matter the obstacles.

Throughout the 2024 hurricane season, our Rescue Team provided lifesaving care to hundreds of animals across multiple states. Their efforts included delivering 4,105 pounds of dog food—equivalent to over 13,000 meals—and 1,445 pounds of cat food, enough for more than 15,000 meals. Beyond food, they distributed 220 essential pet care items, offering critical support to cats, dogs, chickens, horses, and more.

In Palm Beach, our local office organized a supply drive, amassing five dog crates, 375 cases of cat food, 40 pounds of kitty litter, six dog beds, collars, leashes, harnesses, blankets, bird feed, and countless treats for animals impacted by Hurricanes Milton and Helene. Every item delivered, and every pet saved, tells a story of resilience, survival, and hope.

This success would not have been possible without the generous support of the PEDIGREE Foundation, a dedicated partner in our disaster relief initiatives for the past five years. PEDIGREE's grants have been instrumental in enabling us to continue our rescue efforts in communities hit by



natural disasters, in addition to the backing from local law enforcement, fire departments, animal control, and shelters.

As we continue to navigate the challenges of each new disaster, it is vital to remember that animals depend on us just as we depend on them. The American Humane Rescue Team stands ready to answer that call whenever it comes, devoted to making sure that animals in need receive the care they deserve. Together, we're ensuring that even in the darkest times, hope and kindness prevail.



Introducing the 14th Annual Hero Dog Awards Finalists

American Humane has narrowed the field of 25 courageous canines down to five incredible finalists for the 14th Annual Hero Dog Awards!

The Hero Dog Awards is a nationwide competition that searches for and recognizes America’s standout dogs in five categories: therapy dogs, service and guide dogs, military dogs, law enforcement and first responder dogs, and emerging hero dogs.

Meet the five remarkable American Humane Hero Dog Awards® finalists!

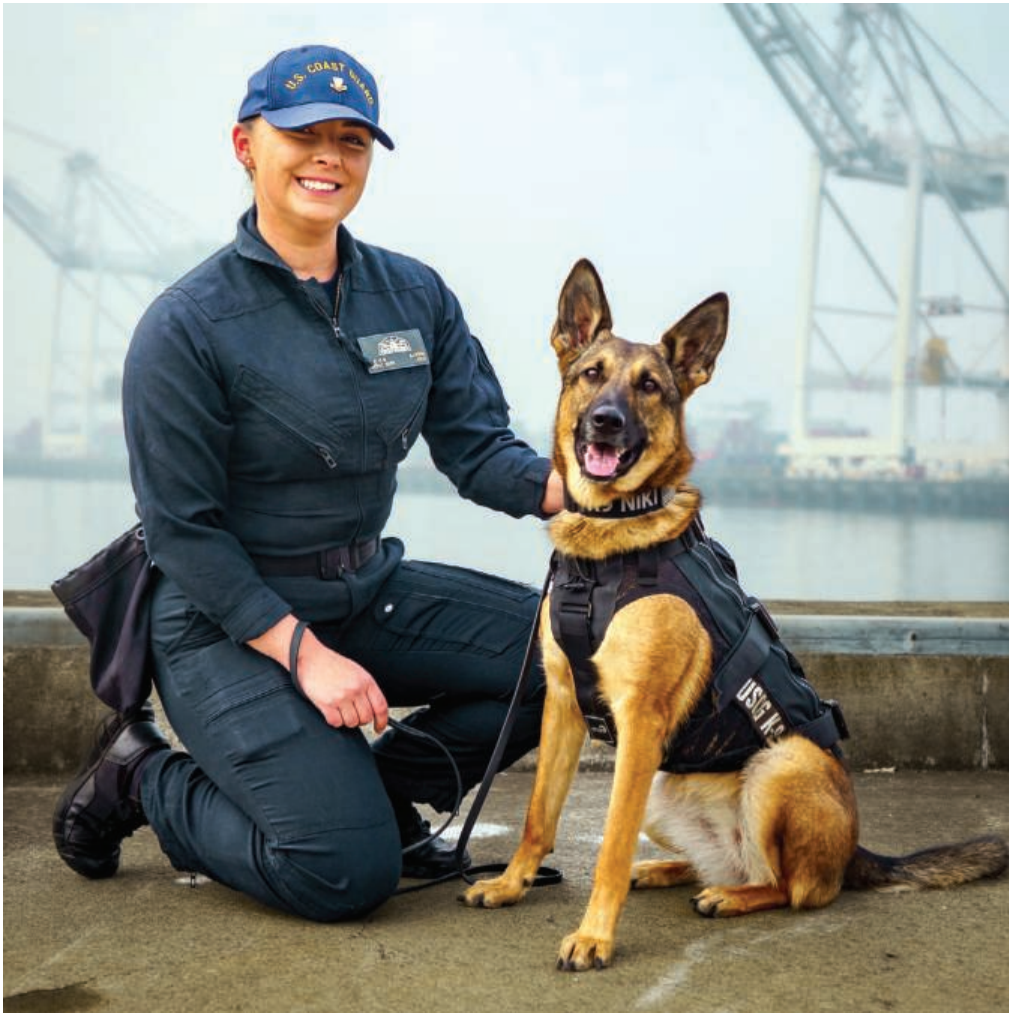


DAYO is the nominee for the Therapy Dog category, which is sponsored by Pets Best Pet Health, and has been a certified therapy dog and a regular visitor of the George Mark Children’s House in San Leandro, CA—the first freestanding pediatric palliative care center in the U.S. His presence brings smiles and comfort to patients, families, nurses, and staff alike. Dayo also lends his support at Camp Erin, a bereavement camp where he helps children cope with loss and

extends friendship to adults with disabilities. Children eagerly read to him during the Pleasanton Library’s Paws to Read program and during the school year, he helps high school students manage exam stress. Finally, his visits brighten the days of patients at Lucile Packard Children’s Hospital and Kaiser Permanente, including those in radiation, oncology, and urgent care. Dayo is truly a beacon of joy to everyone he sees.



SAMPSON, the nominee for the Service and Guide/Hearing Dog category, has dedicated nine incredible years to supporting his handler, making a profound impact on both their lives. After a devastating accident in 2006 that left his handler with 23 broken bones and a traumatic brain injury, it seemed like life would never be the same. But with Sampson’s unwavering support, recovery became possible. His handler not only healed but also earned a degree in neuroscience and founded a company that helps people with disabilities overcome barriers in science.



K-9 NIKI, a Belgian Malinois Shepherd mix with the United States Coast Guard, is the nominee for the Military category. From the beginning, she showcased exceptional skills and unwavering dedication, standing out among military working dogs. Throughout her career, K9 Niki participated in over 250 high-stakes operations and logged more than 4,000 working hours. She secured major events like the Rose Bowl, Seattle Sea Fair, and the U.S. Olympic Team Trials and played a crucial role in protecting high-ranking officials and vital maritime infrastructure. She also aided in the conviction of a dangerous felon who had been on the run for two years. K9 Niki’s keen detection led to the discovery of a firearm, significantly advancing the case. Her community engagement includes educational visits to schools, where she inspires young minds about the vital roles of military dogs.



BO is the Law Enforcement/First Responder category winner, sponsored by Sam Rose. He is a 17-month-old Bloodhound and began his remarkable journey with the Gastonia Police Department in North Carolina. After rigorous training, Bo began working as a Police K9, quickly proving his invaluable skills on two separate occasions by locating an elderly dementia patient and an 11-year-old autistic child who had gone

missing. Bo's achievements didn't stop there. In a notable case, he tracked down robbery suspects despite heavy scent contamination, leading to their capture. Bo's most touching moment came in May 2024 when he found a 7-year-old child who had been taken at knifepoint. Bo's incredible work continues to bring joy and hope, making him a true hero and an inspiring presence in the Gastonia Police Department.



PENNY, the winner of the Emerging Hero/Shelter Dog category, which is sponsored by Lulu's Fund, was found after she had been thrown from a car and left on the side of the road. Penny had suffered severe injuries, including a crushed pelvis and multiple broken legs. A rescue shelter stepped in to help Penny, who had endured days of agony from abuse and neglect. Despite the grim prognosis and the need for extensive surgeries, Penny's spirit shone brightly. She bravely faced her treatments, including a leg

amputation and numerous surgeries. Her foster family, who fell deeply in love with her, officially adopted her in November 2021. Today, Penny is a symbol of hope and perseverance. She helps teach children empathy and to fight stigmas around differently abled animals. Her story has inspired many of the students to advocate for animal welfare, showing that even those who have been broken can heal and thrive with love and determination.

Thank you to our sponsors, including Sam Rose, Pets Best and Lulu's Fund. Without them, the 14th annual American Humane Hero Dog Awards® would not be possible.

You're Invited

14TH ANNUAL

**AMERICAN★HUMANE
HERO DOG AWARDS™**

**Wednesday, January 8th, 2025
6:00 PM**

**The Breakers
Palm Beach**

One South County Road,
Palm Beach, FL 33480

Hosted by
**Christie Brinkley &
Carson Kressley**

Meet the 2025 American Humane
Hero Dog and all the category
winners. Walk the red carpet for
this very special gala honoring our
nation's working dogs.

Tickets may be purchased online at AmericanHumane.org/gala
or by contacting events@AmericanHumane.org or (561) 537-5887.

American Humane Reunites Retired Military Working Dog with his Former Army Handler After Years Apart



Recently, American Humane reunited a retired military working dog, Dasty, with his former U.S. Army Sergeant and handler, Michael, during a touching reunion in Green Bay, Wisconsin. Dasty is a 10-year-old Dutch Shepherd and served as an explosives detection and patrol dog.



In 2019, Michael was deployed to Logar Province Afghanistan. It was a significant personal sacrifice—at the time, Michael's wife was pregnant with their first child—but he considered it his responsibility as a leader.

At the base, service members slept in tents without heat or air conditioning, going without running water for weeks at a time. For Michael, Dasty offered comfort, companionship, and a sense of home while away from his pregnant wife. Dasty was an unofficial mascot for the base, raising everyone's morale during a difficult time. He also saved countless lives while serving in Afghanistan, locating multiple IEDs. He did exceptionally well in combat, remaining steady and focused even when bullets were flying.

While in Afghanistan, Michael and Dasty conducted combat missions in support of multiple countries. Additionally, following their deployment to Afghanistan, Michael and Dasty were reassigned to Fort Myer in Northern Virginia where they participated in multiple Secret Service missions for Presidents.

Michael and Dasty were separated in 2022 when the former left the Army to be with his wife and two young children. When he heard of Dasty's retirement, Michael reached out to American Humane for help transporting Dasty to his forever home. American Humane has also pledged to cover their veterinary bills for the rest of his life, ensuring that Dasty can enjoy the comfortable retirement he deserves.



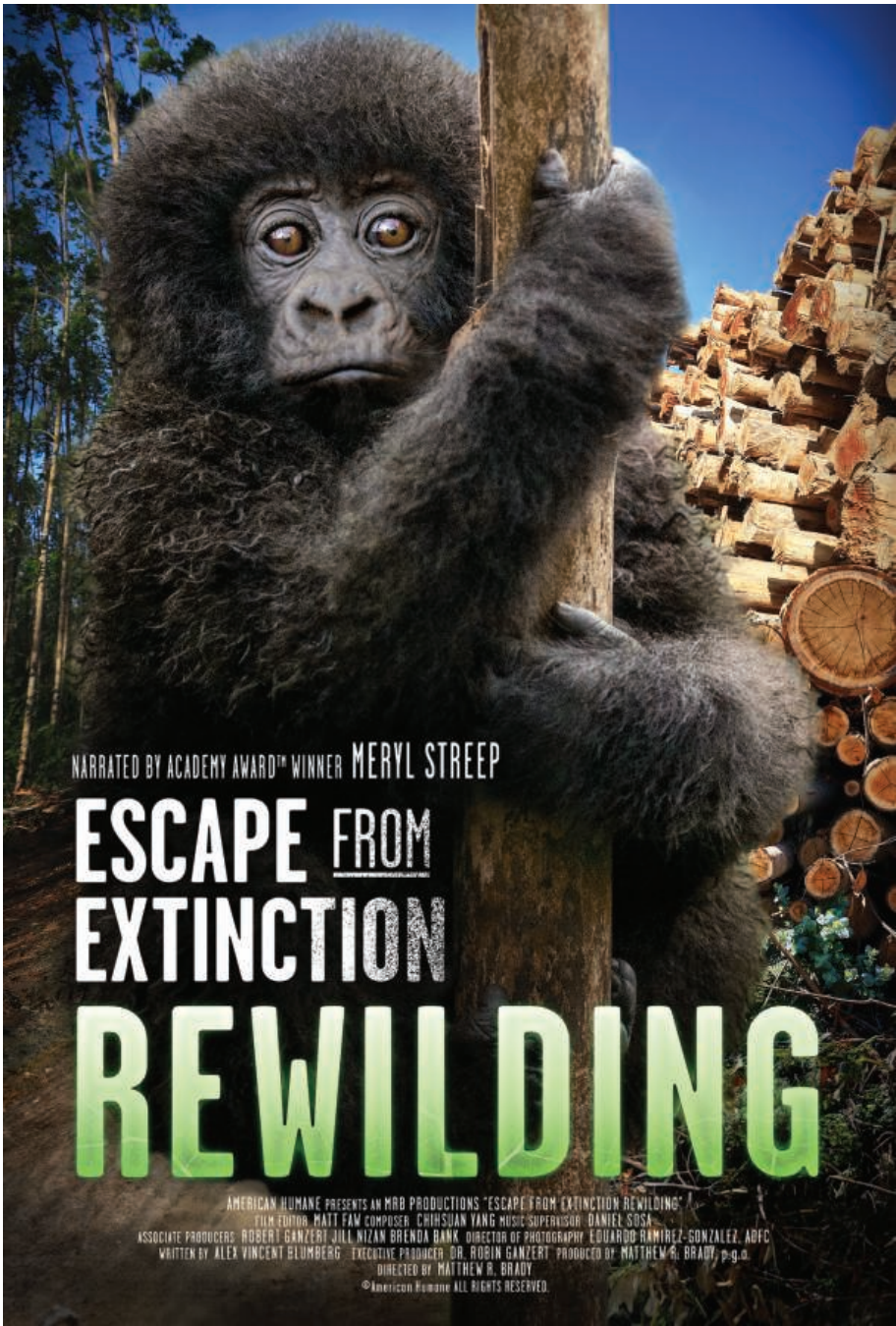
Escape From Extinction Rewilding Premieres

This Fall, we celebrated the premiere of our new documentary, *Escape from Extinction Rewilding*, which screened in theaters across the United States and in Spain. Narrated by the iconic Meryl Streep, this powerful film highlights groundbreaking efforts to restore natural ecosystems and save endangered species through rewilding, a sustainable and timely strategy given the looming threat of extinction facing nearly 1 million species.

Escape from Extinction Rewilding follows dedicated wildlife experts and conservationists as they work to return vulnerable species to their wild state, showcasing how we can all make a difference.

One reviewer said: “This is a must-watch for anyone who cares about the future of our planet. It is a thought-provoking and inspiring documentary that offers a glimmer of hope in the face of a global environmental crisis.”

Please stay tuned for news on where to stream *Escape from Extinction Rewilding* at home and for upcoming announcements on future film projects by American Humane!



Escape from Extinction Rewilding has received numerous accolades this festival season, including “Best Film” at International Film Festival The Hague, “Best Wildlife & Nature Documentary” at DOC LA, “Best Documentary (Environmental)” at the Oregon Independent Film Festival, “Best Documentary” at The Atlantis Awards, “Official Selection” at Breckenridge Film Festival and International

ChangeFest, “Best Environmental” Seasonal Nominee at the Montreal Independent Film Festival, Nominee at Tokyo International Cinema Awards, and Semi-Finalist at the Chicago Filmmaker Awards. We have accomplished this much so far, and the film is in the running for recognition at several upcoming festivals.

Global Humane Awards Dr. Arnaud Desbiez with the 2024 Wolfgang Kiessling International Prize for Species Conservation



This Fall, Global Humane has awarded Dr. Arnaud Desbiez, President and Founder of the Wild Animal Conservation Institute (ICAS) in Brazil, with the 2024 Wolfgang Kiessling International Prize for Species Conservation. This award was created in honor of Wolfgang F. Kiessling, the founder of Loro Parque and a global leader in conservation.

Global Humane’s Wolfgang Kiessling International Prize for Species Conservation recognizes leading

conservation scientists who are making positive and meaningful changes in conservation and species preservation. With the future of up to one million species under pressure, it is important that we recognize and celebrate animal conservationists who are racing against the clock to save them.

With the support of zoos, ICAS has developed innovative strategies ranging from basic research

to complex modeling, citizen science, and certification, while focusing on environmental education, advocacy, and communication.

“I am greatly honored to be the recipient of the 2024 Wolfgang Kiessling International Prize for Species Conservation”, said Dr. Desbiez. “This award will help shine a light on the plight of our South American giants, the giant armadillo and giant anteater. It will also honor the hard-working multi-disciplinary team at ICAS dedicating their lives to the species as well as help celebrate our long-term partnership with zoological institutions.”

In addition to Desbiez, the following conservation leaders were selected as finalists for the 2024 Wolfgang Kiessling International Prize for Species Conservation:

- Dr. Robert Aruho (BVM, MSc.), Head of Conservancy, Veterinary Services and Mountain Bongo Program at the Mount Kenya Wildlife Conservancy.
- Dr. Kathleen Dudzinski, Founder and Director of the Dolphin Communication Project.
- Dr. Danté Fenolio, Vice President of the Center for Conservation & Research at the San Antonio Zoo.
- Dr. Alejandro Grajal, President and CEO of the Woodland Park Zoo in Seattle.
- Vivek Menon, Founder and Executive Director of the Wildlife Trust of India.



The Palm Beach Post

September 5, 2024

Vanishing Wildlife Needs Tech Lifeline

By: Robin Ganzert

Elephant Endotheliotropic Herpesvirus (EEHV) is a leading killer of the endangered Asian elephant—a majestic creature that can weigh up to 12,000 pounds. Among documented cases, the disease has upwards of an 80 percent fatality rate and is most common in young elephants, threatening the species when animals are at their most vulnerable.

From what scientists understand, the virus lies dormant in most Asian elephants and can flare up without warning. In July, for example, two elephants succumbed to the illness at the Dublin Zoo. But now, thanks to new scientific breakthroughs, the virus may become an illness of the past.

This summer, a bioscience company announced the first administration of a new vaccine against EEHV. The vaccine uses mRNA to create an immune response to the disease in elephant calves which blocks the virus’ entry and attachment to host cells. The medical technology—similar to the vaccines leveraged to fight COVID-19—will hopefully give elephants a newfound resistance to the virus.

It’s a leap forward in our ability to care for animals under our stewardship, and one that is much needed as we confront the sixth mass extinction. Studies show that species are currently disappearing at a pace more than 1,000-times the natural rate of extinction. Other experts estimate one million species are currently on the verge of disappearing forever.

Human behavior is a big factor in the concerning trend. With the march of commercial and residential development, few truly wild habitats are left. Fragile ecosystems are being destroyed and species are forced into smaller and smaller geographic areas. And once there is even a modest chink in the armor of biodiversity, a domino effect is triggered that can lead to devastation.

Fortunately, although human behavior threatens nature, it can also help to save it. Foremost is the role that new technologies can play in protecting vulnerable wildlife. The EEHV vaccine for Asian elephants is far from the only breakthrough.

Artificial intelligence is empowering conservationists to better track herds of endangered wild animals, giving us a better understanding of their behavior and needs. Exciting new “rewilding” projects around the world are helping to restore habitats with the plants and animals needed to create a healthy ecosystem. And advances in artificial insemination technology are helping to bolster population levels of at-risk species.

Other scientists are hoping to push the envelope even further to foster biodiversity. One company is leveraging advances in bioengineering to enhance the numbers of critically endangered animals, as well as de-extinct species that have already disappeared. Scientists are reconstructing animal DNA and subsequently blending it with close genetic relatives to birth living, breathing creatures. For example, the strategy is currently being explored for the dodo bird.

Conservationists around the world are ignited by a passion for nature and protecting our planet’s biodiversity. We are filled with a deep empathy for all forms of wildlife, and scientific innovations help to turn that empathy into concrete results. More time, energy, and money should be invested into these cutting-edge conservation efforts.

Robin Ganzert is the president and CEO of American Humane, the country’s first national humane organization. She is the author of “Mission Metamorphosis: Leadership for a Humane World.”

Climate Change 2024: Dr. Robin Ganzert On Leadership Through Challenge

BY GEMMA ALLEN

Last week as New York welcomed more than 6,500 people from over 100 countries to attend 600 events to mark Climate Week, the stakes felt higher than ever before. As the world grapples with the everyday impacts of climate crisis, the time is nigh to galvanize global action to one of the most significant challenges of our time.

Dr. Robin Ganzert, President and CEO of American Humane, the United States’ first national humane organization, has been on a mission to inspire action through environmental awareness throughout her career. As one of the less than 25% of women to lead global charities, and in a space that has become hyper-politicized, she has firsthand insights into the cultural and political cost of championing a cause long cast as idealistic and abstract. A reality she is determined to change. Her current focus is on biodiversity - the essential species and habitats that underpin the ecosystems supporting our various industries and human livelihoods.

To coincide with climate week, she took this topic to Capitol Hill, where she presented an advanced screening of American Humane’s latest documentary, *Escape from Extinction Rewilding*, narrated by Meryl Streep, which opened in theaters on September 27.

I spoke to Dr. Ganzert about her role as a female leader and activist at a time when urgency and commitment is in dire need, and how she maintains momentum for her organization in the battle against indifference, misinformation, and politicization.

How to make people care?

Since it first hit the headlines in the 1970s, the topic of Climate Change has been fraught with avoidance and denial. For a time made easy by the fact that its impacts were not visible, yet now they are almost impossible to ignore. Climate disasters such as wildfires, flooding, hurricanes, and heatwaves are now everyday news stories. It is estimated that in the USA, from 2017-2023,

5,500 people died in climate disasters, costing >\$1 trillion in damage.

You might think that considering these terrifying realities, Dr. Ganzert’s work would be easy. Yet the battle for public attention and action is greater than ever before. This summer while temperatures reached such highs in particular states, pharmacists warned of the risk of evaporation and life threatening damage to mail-order medications, new denial, a viral approach to climate denial claiming global warming will be beneficial at best, harmless at worst gained significant momentum on YouTube.

Dr Ganzert says her work has shown that while there will always be a level of denial, much of the avoidance is rooted in priorities, a key of which is economic. Her aim is not to undermine but to address the competing priorities and remind people that the environment and the economy are two sides of the same coin. Protect one, and you protect the other. Ignore either, and we risk losing both.

The Power Of Storytelling

So when the public sentiment is one of stress and uncertainty, how can you capture the attention of a cause that can seem so abstract? For Dr Ganzert, one of the oldest and most powerful ways to capture attention is through storytelling. Stories told with the intent not to incite fear, but to demonstrate the power of change.

Unlike many environmental documentaries that can seem scolding and alarmist in their push for hard-hitting impact, “*Escape from Extinction Rewilding*” is a look at real-world efforts happening right now to turn developed or blighted areas back into viable habitats for threatened species. This is not just a story; it’s a call to action.

“Preserving biodiversity is critical for wildlife and is key to human survival,” Dr. Ganzert says. “The existence of every living being— plants, animals, and people—is intertwined. Removing too many Jenga blocks could cause the whole tower to crash down. Storytelling is a powerful tool that connects people with wildlife that lives beyond their backyard,” she shares. “Documenting powerful stories of hope, spirit, and survival helps viewers better understand these species’ challenges and the need for innovative conservation efforts like rewilding to protect them. After all, you cannot protect what you do not love, and you cannot love what you do not know. This aims to create a sense of urgency, but more so hope.”

Fighting misinformation the old-fashioned way

Yet we know hope alone is not a strategy for success, especially on Capitol Hill. Climate change has become a highly politicized, divisive partisan battleground, with discussions trapped in an ongoing tug-of-war over policy and priorities. We have seen the fare of dignitaries, politicians, scientists, and celebs who have championed this cause with little collective or corrective action. I asked Dr Ganzert what makes this moment and this campaign any different?

She says environmental policy cannot be written in a vacuum or it risks misinformation. “A lot of folks love fly-ins,” she shares, but I believe it has to be about a lot more than that. It’s about all of us working together. I spent the guts of nine months going door to door, office to office, to pave a runway for a meaningful and sustainable conversation this week. Good old-fashioned shoe leather is used to get this message heard.”

However, we know if politics is anything, it is a game of sides, but one she says she does not want to play. Her focus is on telling a real and compelling story that cuts through the political noise and humanizes the impacts of the ecology of our planet.

“Climate change knows no political party, no presidential candidate,” she shares. “The reality is no matter what your politics, we all need to eat, we all depend on clean water, fertile soil, and stable climates—farmers, ranchers, and fishers around the globe rely on these ecosystems. This is not about sides; it’s about basic economics. We need legislators and policymakers across the board to understand the scale of impact and ensure every weapon at our disposal should be deployed to fight it.”

The Paradox of AI

The most significant weapon of our time is, of course, artificial intelligence, a potential game changer

in environmental conservation. It holds the promise to revolutionize how we monitor ecosystems, manage resources, and combat climate change. However, its use also raises significant concerns due to the energy consumption and resource demands. The question that arises is how we can harness its potential while mitigating its negative impacts?

She shares that the balancing act of climate justice and artificial intelligence is one of the toughest that we will face in modern times. The benefits and risks are both equally enormous and these two worlds need to meet in very intentional way.

She points to the example of technologies like advanced gene editing, which aims to resurrect extinct species or at least restore their critical functions within ecosystems. “Imagine restoring species that were essential to pollination or forest maintenance but were wiped out by human activity?” she says. Yet these same AI models can increase the use of harmful pesticides in agriculture when prioritizing food yields over the environment, again applying additional pressures on biodiversity.” She shares that active and intentional transparent dialogue between environmentalists and industry, is the only way forward. We need earnest collaboration across government, industry, and academia rather than a blind hope in pipe-dream technologies.

Maintaining Momentum and Hope

While a balanced use of AI brings new hope for Dr Ganzert is hugely inspired by engaging with younger generations, who she says have experienced the human-animal bond like no other. “Pet ownership has skyrocketed; attendance and zoos and aquariums has reached record numbers. This is exciting as the future of biodiversity lies with the next generation who understand that animals and nature make us better humans. They see the issues clearly, and humanely. Not marred by political agendas which have no basis in science or facts.”

While the challenges are increasingly complex and nuanced, her leadership remains grounded in creating and advocating for solutions. On November 5th, Dr Ganzert will show *Escape from Extinction Rewilding Documentary* to the British parliament as part of a global campaign that also includes screenings next Spring for the European Union parliament in Brussels. She is seeking to share a key message with all audiences, regardless of political leanings. That is our planet is in serious and undeniable danger and the future of our ecosystems depends on our willingness to innovate thoughtfully and collaboratively on a global level.

Commentary: Protect Your Pets Before a Natural Disaster Strikes

BY TOM EDLING AND RICHARD GOLDSTEIN

From severe storms to wildfires, statistics show that natural disasters are occurring more frequently and with greater intensity. In fact, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) reported that 2023 saw more billion-dollar weather disasters on record and that 2024 is off to a vicious start.

Animals are often the first to sense a natural disaster coming, thanks to their sensitive hearing, smell, and ability to detect changes in atmospheric pressure. It is important to consider how we prepare for our pets' safety in the light of natural disasters.

A total of 66% of U.S. households own a pet, and according to a recent survey, 76% of respondents said they would stay at home with their pet during an emergency if they couldn't bring them with them, and 80% would give up their spot in an emergency shelter if they couldn't keep the pet with them. Even so, animal shelters often see an uptick in abandoned pets in the wake of natural disasters or major storms. With the help of organizations like American Humane, communities and pet parents can be better prepared for an emergency, reduce the number of pets lost, and increase the number of pets rescued and reunited with their owners.

This work has been on full display in recent years as American Humane — supported by companies like Zoetis — has been deployed to wide-ranging problem areas, including to Guam following a deadly typhoon and to Spokane, Wash., last summer where hundreds of animals were cared for after a devastating wildfire. But not all animals are as lucky. That is why a few preventative measures can be crucial when it comes to keeping our loved ones — both humans and pets — safe and secure.

Simply put: Pet preparedness saves lives.

Experts recommend having a pet disaster kit ready in case of emergency. Just as we prepare the essentials for ourselves in the case of an evacuation, doing the same for our pets can save time — and lives. It's recommended to

have a first aid kit, leash, bowl, sanitation materials, and ideally seven to 10 days of food, medications and water at the ready.

It's also important to have photocopies of veterinary records, such as vaccinations and rabies certificates. Pet descriptions, photographs, microchip numbers, and a contact phone number are also essential and should be stored in a waterproof container.

This is why Zoetis partners with American Humane to raise awareness of the importance of pet preparedness by distributing pet preparedness kits to pet owners in disaster endemic areas of the country over the past several years, most recently in Terrebonne Parish, Louisiana.

Past events show that having this information can drastically increase the chances of being reunited with a family dog or cat in the event of an emergency. For example, following Hurricane Katrina in 2005, over 15,000 animals were rescued — yet only 15% were reunited with their owners. Under-resourced shelters often do not have what it takes to identify every lost pet's owner, so being prepared can make the difference in being able to recover a lost pet.

Whether it be hurricanes, wildfires, earthquakes or tornadoes, natural disasters of all kinds threaten humans and animals alike. Preparing your entire family, including your pets, for a disaster boosts survival odds for people and pets alike during major weather events.

Most pet owners don't think about losing their pets due to natural disasters. But in the midst of both hurricane and tornado season and as other natural disasters batter the country, make sure you go the extra mile to prepare.

Dr. Tom Edling is the Chief Veterinary Officer at American Humane. Dr. Richard Goldstein is the Chief Medical Officer and Head of Medical Affairs at Zoetis.

Robin Ganzert, Standing Up Against Animal Cruelty

BY ROBIN GANZERT

An alarming uptick of high-profile animal cruelty cases is hitting America. A group of Oregon teenagers recently shot a family cat — subsequently filming the animal's agony. Earlier this year, a Wyoming hunter paraded a wounded wolf around a bar before killing it. And weeks later, an Alabama man was charged with hanging a dog from a tree and beating it.

This unacceptable trend should be a wake-up call for policymakers and the public. Elected officials have a responsibility to explore better approaches to protect animals. Parents have a role to play.

Similar to an amendment passed in the United Kingdom last year, social media platforms should be encouraged to aggressively monitor and remove pictures, videos and other content that promotes animal abuse. Punishments for cruelty violations should be intensified to discourage bad behavior. And more law enforcement resources should be allocated to better investigate and enforce animal crimes.

Some states are taking steps in this direction.

This year, Arizona considered legislation to expand the definition of pet cruelty to include "intentionally, knowingly or recklessly failing to provide the medical attention necessary to prevent unreasonable suffering to any domestic animal under the person's custody or control." Meanwhile, a series of bills is being pushed in New York that could make penalties more severe, among other elements.

In Kentucky, one of my organization's animal ambassadors has helped push a proposal nicknamed Ethan's Law over the finish line. The law harshens the sentence for torturing cats and dogs. Ethan, a rescue dog who won the 2022 American Humane Hero Dog Awards, was previously left starving in the parking lot of a Kentucky animal shelter and is the legislation's namesake.

Policymakers nationwide should continue pursuing

proposals that get tough on animal abuse. But that won't remedy the stomach-churning trend alone. Proactive efforts at school and home to educate and introduce animals into the lives of children at an early age can be a complementary strategy that prevents cruelty before it even takes root.

Frequenting zoos and aquariums, for example, is one great way for young Americans to connect with the wonders of nature. Communing with animals ranging from curious otters to agile Pallas Cats can help create an emotional connection that influences behavior down the road. Not only do the experiences give children a healthy appreciation for animals, but they can also inspire them to become part of the next generation of animal welfare champions.

Many zoos and aquariums have educational — and fun — programs for families. And for families that don't have easy access to institutions like these, there are plenty of other opportunities to socialize children with animals.

One example is taking youngsters to visit a local animal shelter — and perhaps volunteering when old enough. And having a family pet for them to love is another. Research consistently shows that children raised with family pets experience various social, emotional and developmental benefits, including more self-esteem and less loneliness.

Recent high-profile cases of animal cruelty are heartbreaking. Policymakers have a responsibility to ensure laws reflect the seriousness of these crimes, while parents should expose children to the love of animals at a young age. Together, we can suffocate this epidemic of animal abuse.

Dr. Robin Ganzert is president and CEO of American Humane, the country's first national humane organization.



Tips for a Humane Thanksgiving Table

Thanksgiving is centered around the table and the holiday is an opportunity to enjoy food with those who give our life meaning. Today we are especially conscious of where the food we eat during these happy times comes from. We not only want good, healthy, food this Thanksgiving season – we want to support farmers and ranchers who hold themselves to a high standard and care deeply about the well-being of their animals.

This desire for humanely raised products isn’t just anecdotal, either. A recent American Humane survey found that nearly 3 in 4 respondents (72%) are concerned about the welfare of animals on farms. Additionally, 79% said that they need to feel good about the meat, eggs, and dairy brands they choose.

We are thankful that an increasing number of food producers, farmers, and ranchers are working to improve and verify the welfare of animals in their care by becoming American Humane Certified™. These certified farms can also help us all make mindful choices when it comes to our holiday meals.

Turkey is an iconic and beloved Thanksgiving dish that has become synonymous with the holiday. Thankfully, Butterball turkeys are American Humane Certified, which gives people who want to cook with compassion an option to do just that with Thanksgiving’s most iconic dish.

To highlight these American Humane Certified producers’ efforts, and help others set a humane table, American Humane has a cookbook called The Humane Table. This book showcases mouth-watering recipes featuring

ingredients that are compassionately produced by farmers, ranchers, and other organizations that boast the American Humane Certified seal.

The Humane Table is a great way to help us eat ethically, not just during Thanksgiving, but all year long. So, please join us in setting a humane table; it’s yet another way for us all to help make the world a better place for both animals and people.



GH-CFA Rhino/Elephant Rewilding Story

The Global Humane Conservation Fund of Africa (GH-CFA), a program under Global Humane, announced the installation and operation of a state-of-the-art, AI-enabled rhino protection system on several Southern White Rhinos in cooperation with Founders Lodge by Mantis in South Africa. This initiative was achieved with the support of the Wilderness Foundation Africa and the Busch Gardens Conservation Fund.

The solar-powered devices provide real-time alerts through algorithms which have been optimized over several years. When abnormal behavior is detected, an alert with the exact GPS location is sent to the control room. This enables fast and accurate response by rangers who can quickly find the rhinos in potential danger and protect them from poaching threats. Additionally, the devices provide valuable management and ecological data. This AI Rhino Protection system was developed by the conservation company Rouxcel Technology.

“By merging cutting-edge technology with tried-and-tested wildlife protection methods, we’re elevating the safety of rhinos within protected areas,” said Taryn Gillson, Global Humane Regional Director, Africa.

Since 2007, poaching has surged, fueled by sophisticated criminal networks. Despite international bans dating back to 1977, the illicit trade in rhino horn persists and relentless agricultural expansion continues to erode rhino habitats, fracturing their territories and threatening their survival. The southern white rhino is considered near threatened, with just over 10,000 individuals remaining in South Africa.

Across the continent, GH-CFA is spearheading a range of rhino conservation initiatives. From expanding rhino rangelands to forging partnerships with local communities, GH-CFA is pioneering novel approaches to ensure a future where these majestic animals thrive.

GH-CFA will also use this initiative to gain familiarity with the AI System and assess its potential future use in connection with further rhino conservation efforts across various sites.





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