



## FROM ADOPT TO ADAPT

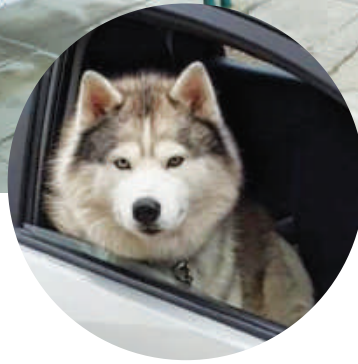
### The Dakin Difference

Dear Friend,

*It's amazing how companion animals adjust and adapt to the world. Over the years, I have witnessed thousands of animals move from homes to shelters to temporary foster homes to new adoptive homes. While their adjustment time varies depending on the individual animal, they inevitably adapt to their new surroundings. It's also pretty astounding how they always seem to know what we need. I'm sure you know what I am talking about. Whether it's curling up in our lap when we are sad, or sleeping quietly next to us when we are under the weather; animals see a need and provide comfort, care and support. Perhaps it is a bit of subconscious inspiration coming from our companion animals that has inspired us to **adapt to the changing needs of the animal welfare movement - providing services to support the human-animal bond.***

*Throughout this issue of Inside Dakin, you'll find the various ways Dakin adjusted and adapted to the changing world. Here, I'd like to focus on why this is an exciting*

*see **DIFFERENCE** on back*



*Pets stay inside cars while waiting at the curbside Vaccine Clinic, instead of becoming anxious about other pets in close proximity*

### When Adaptation Furthers Compassion

When COVID-19 hit, our services had to be reconfigured, with many becoming appointment-only, including adoption and clinic services. As more of our community felt the economic crunch of pandemic layoffs, their need for pet food drastically increased.

**Our focus began to shift from helping animals inside our walls to helping animals wherever they most need it; in our communities.**

Thanks to your love of animals, the pet food shelves were restocked, keeping beloved companions fed. An impactful program, the Kitten Street Team, was launched to reduce the population of outdoor cat colonies through humane TNR (trap/neuter/return).

Clinic PLUS expanded its offerings to include affordable Healthy Pet Packages - exams bundled with other treatments. More pets were treated at curbside Vaccine Clinics, thanks to the appointment-only system.

Clients used to arrive early at Vaccine Clinics and wait for hours to be seen on a first come-first served basis. With a goal of offering medical clinics/vet services that are affordable and accessible, we knew we needed to minimize our clients' time away from work or home, make the process easy and the wait time as brief as possible. Appointments accomplish this.

With less walk-in traffic, animals on the adoption floor are less stressed,

*see **ADAPTATION** inside*

# Cat Enrichment Works Magic

Even when you only see a few cats available for adoption on our website, there are always many more of them not listed while they receive treatment for medical or behavioral issues. A few years ago, most cats brought to Dakin were fast-tracked onto the adoption floor, but now many arrive with complications, and attentive care helps them become adoption candidates. Volunteers like Carole DeMetre visit them to keep their spirits up and offer enrichment no matter how long their stay - a couple of weeks to months - making enrichment essential to their health. We asked Carole some questions about her work:

## Q: What is involved in cat enrichment?

**A:** It depends. For outgoing cats, we play with their favorite toy, maybe give them a cuddle session or toss treats around to indulge their prey drive.

*Some cats are withdrawn, so I'll go slowly and build their confidence starting with eye contact, particularly slow blinks to communicate that I'm a friend. It's been amazing to see the turnaround on some of them.*

## Q: Was there any particular cat you bonded with?

**A:** Big Red was a beautiful orange cat who hid under a blanket. I sat on the floor by him and gently lifted the blanket, giving him slow blinks. Next, I tried "touch" with my extended finger. Then I tried a head pet which he leaned into and purred. Eventually, he came out from hiding and was extremely sweet. He was so confident, and would eventually greet me at the door with meows. He was adopted right away when he became available and is loving his new home.

*"The right approach sets the right tone for their progress."*



Carole DeMetre checking in with Harpy

## Q: What do you think would happen to cats without enrichment visits?

**A:** People wouldn't get to see their true personality, just their shelter personality. Cats don't like change, and in a shelter, they go through a variety of changes and people coming at them. If we work with them first, then when they're adopted, they'll probably adjust more quickly.

## Understanding Builds Bridges

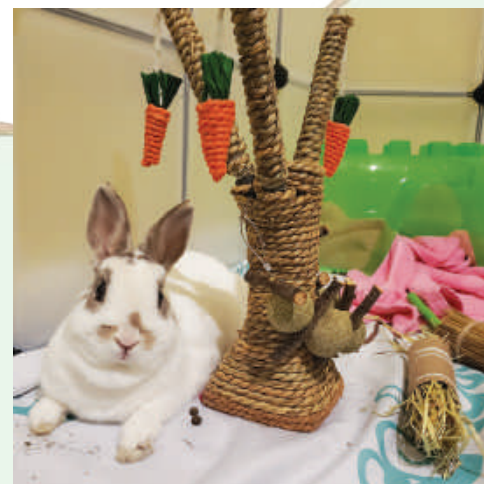
One of the most important values Dakin staff and volunteers embrace is to give every animal the best possible outcome in our interactions with them and their people. We may not know much about that person's culture, upbringing, or why they are making a particular decision for their pet. Seeking to understand without judgment allows for much to be gained, and the best possible outcome for the animal. And that was the case with Tumble the rabbit.

The domestic rabbit came to Dakin recently. He belonged to Pam, who didn't want him any longer. She confided this to her friend Sarah, who said she'd find him a home. "My friend was going to let him loose outside and I didn't want that to

happen," Sarah noted when she brought Tumble to Dakin. Sarah, who is allergic to rabbits, tried rehoming him to no avail.

Sarah's actions are a great example of how so much more is accomplished when we remain open-minded and receptive. If Sarah had criticized Pam for her plan to release Tumble, his outcome may have been different and Sarah might not have been allowed to help. Maybe Pam thought that all rabbits could fend for themselves outside (domestic rabbits can't).

At Dakin, we know that if we really listen to people, we'll sustain a meaningful interaction between us and those who need us. Our primary belief as an organization is that people are good and



will make good decisions for animals when they are treated with kindness and understanding, and when they have enough information and resources. If you find yourself having a moment like Sarah's, when open-mindedness could save a vulnerable animal, we hope you'll join us in following that path.

Tumble was adopted soon after his arrival at Dakin and is adored by his new family.

*\*All names in this story are fictitious*

# DAKIN MILESTONES

100,000<sup>th</sup>

Spay/Neuter patient

Sadie, a 5-year-old beagle with a uterine infection in need of spay surgery, was celebrated as Dakin's 100,000<sup>th</sup> spay/neuter patient.



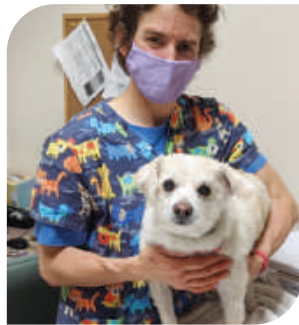
LEADERSHIP:  
*when devotion  
meets commitment*

Dakin's Leadership Giving Society members play an important role in the lives of animals and Dakin's future. These members demonstrate a level of commitment, leadership and generosity that is truly transformative for the lives they touch. Members are part of a compassionate community of like-minded friends who together believe in elevating the lives of animals and the people who love them.

*"As a life-long animal lover, I admire the work Dakin does to support pets and the people who love them. From pet food assistance programs to the spay/neuter clinic, I know our donation makes a difference to our neighbors and the entire region."*

**—Kathy Osborne, Dakin Leadership Giving Society member**

To learn more about the Leadership Giving Society, contact Director of Development and Marketing Stacey Price at [spprice@dakinhumane.org](mailto:spprice@dakinhumane.org)



300<sup>th</sup> Clinic PLUS patient

Peanut was brought to our Clinic PLUS recently when his person noticed him limping. Peanut has a congenital leg deformity that is starting to bother him now that he's a senior, but his person made sure to get him evaluated by our medical team.

200<sup>th</sup>  
Dog Grooming client

Our groomer, Carol White, has given 200 dogs remarkable transformations!



500<sup>th</sup> Cat Fostered by Jerry Marchand

10 years ago, Dakin Volunteer Jerry Marchand lost his beloved cat Little Bit. As he held her for the last time, he promised her that he would honor her legacy by becoming a feline foster parent. Jerry has fostered more than 500 cats and kittens since that time, showing that love is eternal.

We continue to be there for pets and people when they need us because of **YOU!**

## ADAPTATION *continued*



Alanna and her office cat, Sassy

resulting in 18% fewer 10-day rabies quarantines due to accidental bites/scratches. Some staff offices near the adoption floor are now suitable for animals who need quiet space. Sassy, a highly-reactive tabby cat, was a challenge until she finally trusted her human friend and officemate, Alanna. After that, Sassy never left her side. She would not have fared well

on the adoption floor, and needed a calm space and a devoted caregiver before meeting her adopter recently.

Appointment-only operations offer clients more privacy and time with staff when discussing heartbreaking situations, including giving up their pet, and end-of-life decisions. We know these are terribly sad and stressful conversations, and we

want to honor the dignity of both our clients and their pets.

The world of animal welfare is always evolving. The events of the past year have shown us all the need to stay fluid to seek out and help those most in need. Your support of Dakin means more than ever, as we constantly explore the best ways we can help animals wherever they are.

SAVE THE DATE

# Available Community Animals

Looking for a pet to bring into your home and heart? Visit Dakin's "Available Community Animals" on our website to see who's looking for you!

## PAWS ON THE TOWN

Dine at participating restaurants on Tuesday, June 22 and a portion of sales will be donated to Dakin. And, support participating restaurants all month to win prizes!



# TUES JUNE 22

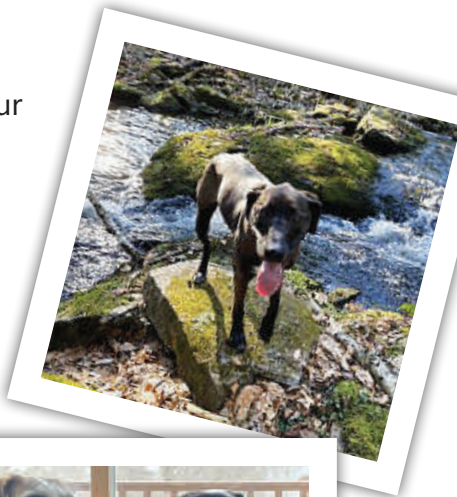
## BARKS & BREWS

Join us for some outdoor, dog-friendly fun with Fort Hill Brewery in Easthampton, MA



# SUN SEPTEMBER 19

For more info visit [dakinhumane.org](http://dakinhumane.org)



THE SHOP AT DAKIN

### DIFFERENCE *continued*

time in animal welfare. As I have more conversations with people in shelters throughout New England and beyond, I'm inspired to hear how providing support and care for both people and animals is becoming a common theme. Supporting animals and the people who love them has been a long-standing value at Dakin. The human-animal bond is one that is mutually beneficial.

Dakin can help support that bond and provide services that enhance the lives of both people and animals. I am excited that you can join us for this next phase of animal (and human) welfare.



Sincerely,

Carmine DiCenso  
Executive Director

### Dakin has a brand new online shopping site!

- Visit [bit.ly/HomeAgainDakin](http://bit.ly/HomeAgainDakin)
  - Purchase online
  - Pick up at Dakin

100% of proceeds support Dakin programs and services for the community



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

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