



2016

ANNUAL REPORT



Potter League
Enriching Lives



ENRICHING LIVES

BOTH ANIMAL & HUMAN

Our Mission

As the heart of a humane community and in partnership with that community, the Potter League for Animals is dedicated to making a difference in the lives of animals. We promote the humane treatment of all animals and provide shelter and care for lost or unwanted companion animals. Through education, commitment to a standard of excellence in the care of animals, and fostering relationships between people and animals, we enhance the animals' lives and enrich the human experience.



A
MESSAGE
from our board president

Dear Potter League Friends,

In conversations throughout the community, I've had the privilege of hearing from countless people how their lives have been touched by the Potter League for Animals. Stories of adopted pets who have been welcomed into homes and hearts; anecdotes about the bunny and puppy playgroups; college students who volunteer because they miss their own pets; each is unique but all share a common theme. The Potter League is a place where the lives of animals and humans, alike, are transformed.

The past year has been a time to reflect, with gratitude, on how much we've accomplished and the enormous impact that Christie Smith has had throughout her 35 years as executive director. With her well-deserved retirement just around the corner, Christie's commitment to the Potter League continues to shape her legacy. Her deep and genuine love for the organization has created a tremendous foundation from which to build. Though she will be dearly missed, Christie's successful leadership leaves the Potter League ready and willing to embrace the tremendous opportunities that lie ahead.

Highlights of the past fiscal year include the development and implementation of the 2016-2019 strategic plan, which will serve as a guide in our transition to a new executive director. The plan is based upon our core values and the Potter League's mission to enrich the lives of animals and humans. Our search committee is currently working hard to ensure that our next executive director has the passion and the expertise to move us forward in writing the next chapters of the Potter League story.

What remains constant is our gratitude to the people who make it all happen. Thanks to your support, the Potter League continues to serve as a trusted community resource for animal welfare. Our extraordinary staff and volunteers accomplished much in FY2016, including:

- Placed 989 animals in their forever homes
- Conducted 649 humane education classes for 6,322 students
- Held 145 behavior training classes to help pets and their people
- Transported 470 dogs and puppies through our Fetching Friends Transport Program
- Helped 1,986 animals to heal with our Animal Care Fund

As a member of our Potter League family, YOU are changing lives. I invite you to stop by the shelter at any time, or visit us on social media, and see for yourself how your generosity translates into joy, healing, support, security and, most of all, love for the animals who come through our doors and the people who bring them home.


Thank you for placing your trust in us and for allowing the Potter League to successfully serve the needs of our community.

With gratitude,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mary".

Mary Edwards

Potter League Board President

Animal No:	Potter League for Animals		
Animal No:	Kennel Card		
Animal No:	Name:	Age:	Sex:
Animal No:	ZEUS	4 YEARS	NEUTERED
Animal No:	Color:		
Animal No:	BLK TIGER & WHITE		
Animal No:	Breed:		
Animal No:	DOMESTIC SH \ DOMESTIC SH		
Animal No:	Markings:		
Animal No:	Review Date:	Intake Type:	Reason:
Animal No:	07/10/2016	OWNER SUR	PET ASST
Animal No:		Feeding:	
Animal No:	DOMESTIC SH \ DOMESTIC SH OWNER SUR PET ASST		



a
MESSAGE
from our executive director

Dear Friends,

This annual report marks another one of my “lasts” as I march toward retirement on December 31, 2016. This will be my final annual report; the last opportunity to share with you our accomplishments and progress in transforming and enriching lives. It has been an honor to lead this organization for 35 years and with great pride I share the remarkable changes made over the past three decades.

We have made great progress reducing the number of homeless animals and made advances to prevent animal suffering. There is more collaboration between organizations, new advocacy and legislative efforts that protect animals in humane ways, and programs have been created to continually respond to changing community needs. Behavior and foster programs, transport of dogs and cats from high risk situations, expanded humane education classes, and improved veterinary care have all been part of the evolution of the Potter League’s lifesaving work.

My proudest accomplishments are knowing that fewer animals are homeless, that we have a 100% placement rate for healthy dogs and cats, and that our live release rate for FY2016 is over 93%. All of this is possible because of you. As devoted supporters and passionate animal lovers, your generosity makes life-changing differences every day. Your support enables the Potter League team to treat more dogs and cats with severe injuries, behavior issues or lingering medical conditions. Together we provide long-term care and are able to provide life-saving success.

Enriching Lives – Both Animal and Human. This is the theme for our FY2016 annual report, and it also best reflects the values, beliefs and goals of the Potter League’s newly adopted strategic plan. The results of the past year are highlighted in this annual report. But the future of the Potter League’s commitment to the community requires that we touch our neighborhoods, providing services where needed most and doing the right thing for every animal...and owner. Watch for these changes from the Potter League as we reach out to the most vulnerable people and animals. It is just the right thing for us to do.

Thank you for all that you have given to the Potter League and to me personally. I will be taking many important friendships and lessons with me. The most important lesson, and my advice to each of you, is to believe in the essential goodness of everyone, to believe in the intrinsic value of the lives of all species of animal, and to do as our cats and dogs do — sleep whenever possible, eat with gusto, run and play in the sun, and greet loved ones with joy every single day.

With warmest thanks for a wonderful 35 years,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, reading "Christie". The script is fluid and cursive, with a large initial "C".

M. Christie Smith, CAWA
Executive Director



MAKING
a

DIFFERENCE

About Us

Founded in 1929, under the name “Newport County League for Animals” our mission was to take care of abandoned, sick, lame, overworked or cruelly-treated animals. Since its inception we have undergone changes in name, location and scope of services.

As an open admission shelter, the Potter League is able to help as many pets as possible. We accept approximately 2,000 animals annually, including both owner-surrendered as well as strays from the neighboring communities. We consistently maintain a Live Release Rate of 90% or higher through placement to new families, returned to owner or released to another organization or rescue group.

For the past 35 years, under the talented and dedicated leadership of Christie Smith, the Potter League for Animals has focused on developing and expanding its own proactive programs and services aimed at earlier intervention to reduce animal relinquishment.

Through a variety of services including dog obedience programs, Potter Pet University, and a behavior help line for all animal’s guardians, the Potter League has become a trusted animal welfare resource for the communities that it serves and beyond. We have heavily invested in providing funds for medical care for sick, injured or elderly animals. Foster programs expand temporary care for those requiring special attention or behavior rehabilitation. Animals are spayed or neutered prior to adoption and financial assistance is given to help others sterilize their pets.

In support of our mission to foster relationships between people and animals, the Potter League for Animals offers programs that promote humane values and compassion for animals to schools and local organizations throughout Newport County and neighboring Bristol. More than 600 educational classes are taught each year, in addition to after-school programs, badge programs for scouts and the Pet University for adults. Further, Camp Happy Tails provides a summer outlet for the area children. Additionally, we save hundreds of dogs and puppies from overpopulated shelters in the south and match them with forever families through our Fetching Friends Transport Program. We conduct “Pet Loss Support” groups every month to help bereaved pet owners and those deciding upon euthanasia for their animal and we provide “Pet Safe Haven”, offering temporary housing for animals whose owners require hospitalization or are victims of domestic violence and have no one to care for their pets.

The Potter League strives to work collaboratively and in partnership with local community-based organizations as well as with animal welfare and rescue groups nationwide. We are a founding member of the Ocean State Animal Coalition and its high-volume subsidized spay/neuter clinic. The Potter League serves as an animal emergency location for disasters and has been instrumental in helping animals following catastrophic events. As an advocate for all animals, the Potter League monitors statewide legislative issues and works to ensure that those passed into law are beneficial and sound.

We are proud to be the Animal Resource Center of Newport County and to offer our unique support and programs to the voiceless, helpless animals who rely on the care and compassion of humans.

ADOPTIONS

989 Animals
Adopted

↑ 2.8%
Adoptions Increase
2015-2016

364 Animals were returned to
owners or transferred to
other shelters or rescues

1,509 Total Animals
Received

The Potter League creates “happily ever afters” 6 days a week, 8 hours a day for a total of 2,496 hours every year. The Customer Care Team presents pets available for adoption to the public helping to find the perfect pet for their family. We emphasize open dialogue, positive interactions and superior knowledge of our adoptable pets. Through our new Special Adoption program, developed within the last seven months, we have taken great strides in matching pets with behavioral or medical challenges with new owners. Realizing there is no such thing as a perfect pet, we have worked hard to provide the new owners with structure, support and knowledge in order to ensure a successful pairing. We think the new moms and dads of pets like Cucumber, Zelda and Angus (among many others) might agree that the effort is worth the payoff! Every companion animal deserves to be safe, loved, and part of a family. This past year, you helped make this a reality for over 900 homeless animals.



1,986

Medical
Examinations
by Veterinarians

400

Animals
Spayed &
Neutered

913

Potter Pet
Tags Issued

181

Animals
Fostered

1,500

Animals
Microchipped
& Vaccinated

VETERINARY CARE:

Rugrat came to the shelter as a stray. He was very matted, had inflamed skin due to a flea allergy, infections in both of his ears, was dehydrated, and had cataracts and dry eye. Vaccines were given, medication was prescribed for his skin condition, he received fluid therapy for the dehydration, and it was determined that he would need eye medication for the rest of his life. This was all just to get Rugrat medically cleared for adoption. Oh and one more thing; he needed to be shaved down and groomed. Unfortunately this is commonplace when it comes to the care required for many of the animals that we take in and care for at the Potter League. We provide everything from basic vaccines to diagnostic work-ups, medical treatments, and surgeries that improve and save lives. Through donations to our Nuala Pell Animal Care Fund, we were able to care for over 1,900 animals this year, providing their much deserved second chance and a new start with a healthy, happy life with a loving family.

SPAY/NEUTER:

They are cold, alone, hungry and afraid. They are tiny kittens that can not find their Mom, hoping someone finds them. Every year we take in these tiny babies that are abandoned or lost. Spaying and neutering can help put an end to these situations. We keep them warm and take good care of them, but sometimes even our best efforts are not enough. Every dog, cat, and rabbit adopted from the Potter League is spayed or neutered prior to adoption. Through our initiatives, we are looking forward to a day when there will be no animals born without homes.

FOSTER CARE:

Sometimes all an animal needs is to be in a home in order to bring out their true personality. We do our best in the shelter environment, but sometimes it is the foster home that has the magic touch. One such home was with Renee Roberts. Renee had previously fostered nine dogs for us – all of whom were adopted, but sometimes the foster home ends up being the best home. Such was the case for little Rooster, a shy Chihuahua that came to the Potter League as a transport from California. Rooster went into foster with Renee, was adopted and sadly returned. Renee and her husband Hans decided that Rooster's best home was with them. Rooster is currently living with Renee and her husband in Guam.



FETCHING FRIENDS TRANSPORT PROGRAM

470 Animals given a second chance through
the Fetching Friends Transport Program

The Potter League continues to transport dogs from overcrowded shelters across the country; in fact, this year we helped even more dogs by taking in a total of 336 dogs - an increase of 55% of dogs from 2015.

Transporting of dogs and puppies from overcrowded shelters has long been one of our focal points at the Potter League; however, the most exciting news this year is that we were able to transport 134 cats and kittens from dire situations in Rhode Island as well as other parts of the country. While the Potter League continues to fulfill its mission of helping homeless animals of Newport County, reaching far and wide when we have the space and resources increases the number of animals we can help find a better life. Our total number of animals transported in this year was 470, this number is 81% more than the previous year, and we are proud we could make such a significant contribution.

A grayscale photograph of a woman with short hair and glasses, wearing a dark shirt, holding two small puppies. She is looking down at them with a gentle expression. Another person's hands are visible, one supporting the puppies from below and another petting the top puppy. The background shows a wire cage, suggesting a veterinary or shelter environment. Overlaid on the top right are three colored banners with white text.

HELPING PETS

IN RHODE ISLAND

& BEYOND

SIT! STAY! PLAY!

enhancing the

HUMAN-ANIMAL BOND



635

Behavior
Assessments
of Shelter
Dogs & Cats

145

Training
Classes Taught

565

Dogs Enrolled
in Classes

1,494

Dogs Attended
Playgroups

165

Dogs Attended
Free Adopter
Training Classes

451

Calls & Emails to the
Behavior Helpline

BEHAVIOR & TRAINING

Strengthening the human-animal bond is a key element of the Potter League's mission. We work hard to be the community resource center for all things animal related. The Potter League's Behavior and Training Center provided 3,197 dogs and cats with a variety of training programs including playgroups and obedience classes for all pet owners as well as classes for our adopters. Our Behavior Helpline, private consultations, pre-adoption lessons for experienced as well as first time pet owners, and follow-up support for adopters all provide the assistance necessary to keep pets in their homes.

Our in-shelter behavior programs and assessments help the dogs, cats and rabbits become better candidates for adoption. Animals with a history of behavior problems, shyness, under-socialization and issues related to anxiety, stress or fear in the shelter environment are given the help they need. For many, an individualized behavioral modification plan is created and these animals receive specific support. Data is collected to monitor behavior changes and plans are adjusted as needed. A Special Adoption program for animals with the most challenging or unique needs aims to match pets to the home perfect for them and to provide counseling and tools to the new owners.

The Potter League behavior specialists and staff depend on our volunteer corps to help. Our valuable Level 1 and Level 2 volunteers spend quality time exercising and providing much needed TLC and enrichment to our shelter pets. The Head Start Dog Team, Kneady Cat Team and Rabbit Team are highly skilled volunteers who help ensure every animal makes progress to a point where they are good candidates for adoption and keep them physically and mentally stimulated throughout their Potter League stay.

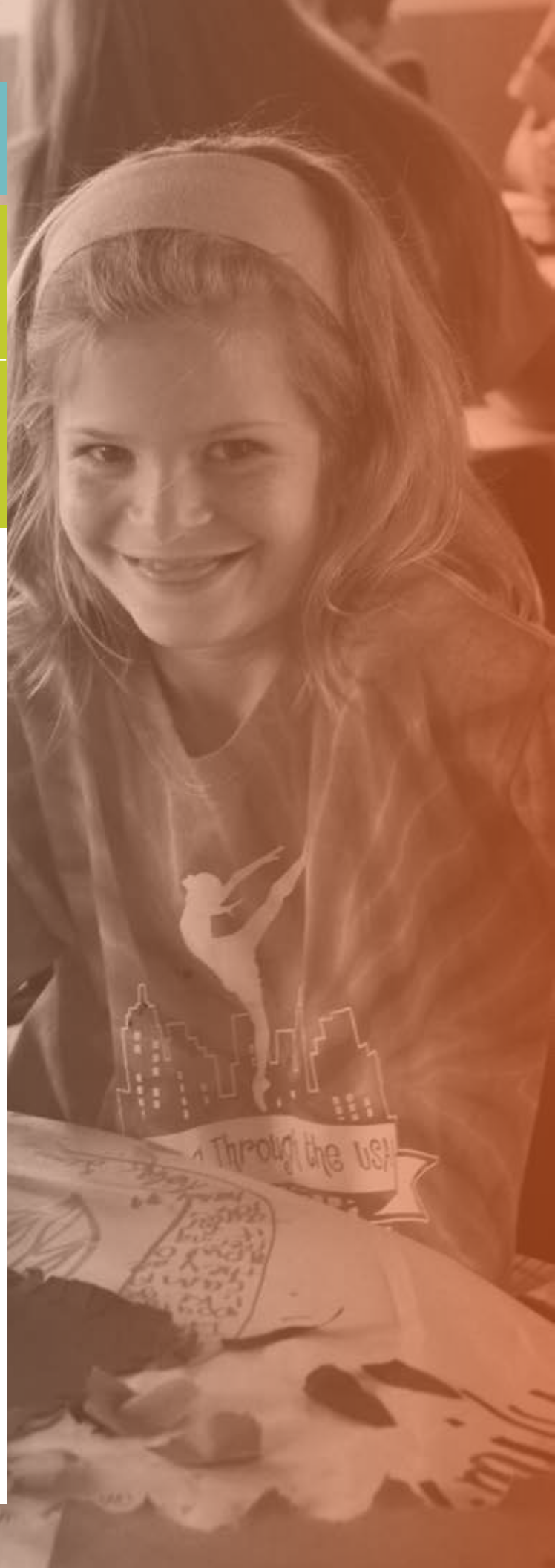
Working together, we provide life-changing care and life-saving opportunities for more and more animals. The Potter League continues to provide an ever-increasing level of care to fight pet homelessness and enrich lives.

HUMANE EDUCATION

6,322 Students

649 Various Humane Education Lessons

In support of our mission to foster relationships between people and animals, the Potter League for Animals offers programs that promote humane values and compassion for animals to schools and local organizations throughout Newport County and neighboring Bristol. Humane education plays a vital role in our commitment to reducing pet overpopulation, homelessness and unnecessary suffering. Starting at an early age, the Potter League encourages children to value and care for animals and all living things. Our education program presented 258 lessons to over 5700 students in area schools. The Reading Fur Fun literacy program provided 60 reluctant readers an opportunity to improve their reading skills by reading to our volunteers' non-judgmental canine companions. Another 700 students and their families were served through day camps, Camp Happy Tails summer camp, the Girl Scout Patch Program, birthday parties, school tours and after-school programs. The Be Kind to Animals Week Poster Contest, celebrated the first week of May throughout the country, had a banner year for entries. Well over 200 entries from talented students in grades 2-12 throughout the state were received thanks in part to additional publicity on social media. Poster winners in the six designated categories were honored with an awards ceremony in the Morris Education Center at the Potter League for Animals.



VOLUNTEER & OUTREACH

25,873 Volunteer Hours Donated **1,200** Active Volunteers

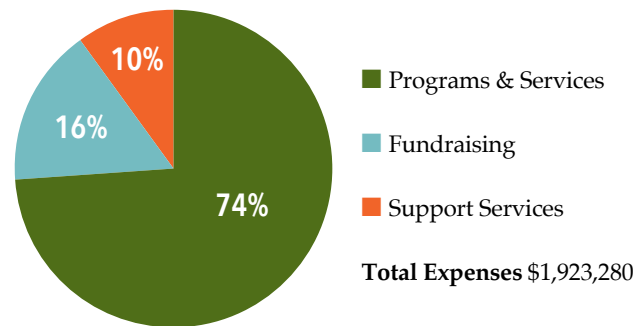
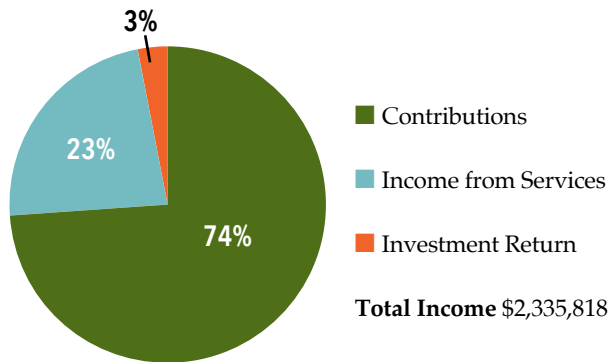
Building on the work of prior volunteer coordinators, the volunteer department has greatly improved how the Potter League uses, interacts and tracks volunteers. We make it easy to apply and become a volunteer, as well as using volunteer software, allowing volunteers to self-schedule, which has proven to be an enormous help to volunteers and staff. Our streamlined orientation is effective and efficient in recruiting and retaining anyone interested in volunteering. We now have a very clear picture of how many volunteers are utilized on an annual basis and what they are doing while they're here. We have clearly defined that of an "active" volunteer to mean anyone who has volunteered any amount of service within the last 12 months, whereas volunteers who do not return within three months following their orientation class are archived. The active database now includes only volunteers within these parameters, and the resulting number of active volunteers continues to be between 1,000-1,200. There is now a concise list of volunteer assignments and an accurate log of volunteer hours that makes it possible to assess individual programs.

Involving the community with our work has grown through partnerships with local universities and schools, including our new partnership with Salve Regina University students. Partnering with schools has allowed the creation of three programs, providing us with consistent reliable volunteers who can make a significant contribution to helping out in many different areas throughout the week and year.

We always strive to have the best volunteer program possible. This past year the Potter League received a scholarship from the Humane Society of the United States for an assessment of our volunteer program. This grant allowed us the opportunity to hear directly from the volunteers and their likes, dislikes, and what they thought needed improvement. The feedback from the survey was overall excellent and the suggestions are being incorporated into our goals for improving the volunteer program. In an effort to achieve these goals, we have started hosting "The Inside Scoop" presentations for volunteers, bi-annual meetings are being held for each of the teams, clear guidelines developed for working with all animals in the shelter and educational programs offered for advancing to higher levels of animal training / leadership positions.

Without these amazing people, the Potter League would not be able to keep up with the daily demands of an animal shelter and its many programs.

2016 REVENUE & EXPENSES



Source: FY2016 Audited Financial Statements. Copies of the Audited Financial Statements are available by request or on the Potter League website

POTTER LEAGUE DONORS

"It takes a village" is a common phrase heard at the Potter League for Animals, and it couldn't be more true. The Potter League is truly grateful to all the individuals, families, businesses, organizations, corporations and foundations for their generous support. Every contribution has a lasting impact on the animals and helps to foster better relationships between people and their animal companions. Your contributions of time, talent and treasure allow us to continue to carry out our life-saving mission of making a difference in the lives of animals and the people who love them. This list is comprised of gifts totaling \$250 or more, received between August 1, 2015 and July 31, 2016 and does not include event tickets or goods and services purchased at our special events.

\$25,000 +

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* Deceased

A black and white cat is the central focus of the image, sitting on a white surface and looking upwards and to the left. The cat has dark fur with white patches on its chest and paws. The background is a light, neutral color with a subtle gradient. Overlaid on the image is text in orange, white, and green.

WE CAN'T DO WHAT WE DO

without our

AMAZING SUPPORTERS!

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