



LARIMERHUMANESOCIETY
SUMMER 2023

A PUBLICATION OF LARIMER HUMANE SOCIETY
To further the compassionate, safe, and responsible
relationship between animals and people.



PETSPECTIVE

IT'S A PUPPY PARTY!

THE IMPORTANCE OF SOCIALIZATION CLASSES FOR YOUR NEW COMPANION

You did all of the research. You scoured through every adoption site. You bought the highest rated dog bed, the matching leash and collar set, the all-natural chew toys, and you've already rearranged your morning schedule to make time for walks around the block. Then you brought home a puppy! And now, you're in completely over your head. Sound familiar?

Puppies are bundles of joy and cuteness, but they're not born knowing how to behave and interact with the world around them. They require time and attention to learn appropriate ways of interacting with humans, other dogs and animals, and the various stimuli and environments they will experience down the road. Not to mention, proper socialization is needed during the first 8-16 weeks of puppyhood – also known as the *critical socialization period* – and a puppy missing out on this socialization period can be the difference between a well-rounded dog and a dog displaying undesirable behaviors into adulthood.



This is where Larimer Humane Society's Puppy Socialization Classes come in. Recognizing the need to support puppies and their owners in our community, we launched a brand-new training course this spring, designed for puppies to gain the experiences, skills, and confidence necessary to develop into a well-rounded dog. Why? You spoke up and we listened! Via social media, word of mouth, and a community needs survey, our community expressed a desire for public dog training.

Our Behavior Team got right to work and created training curriculum with the help of Colorado State University graduate intern Kiyo Tamesue. Studying animal shelter management with a focus on dog behavior, Kiyo spent the summer of 2022 building the curriculum and running mock classes with volunteers. "The feedback I received from the volunteers was indispensable and played a critical role in helping me refine and iron out kinks in my curriculum," said Kiyo. "The biggest challenge was organizing each module in a way that would be time-effective, fun, engaging, and educational for both the puppy and human participants."

Kiyo identified four key elements that she wanted incorporated into the curriculum: supervised one-on-one play, clicker training and positive reinforcement, exposure to a wide variety of novel stimuli and situations, and owner education. "Our goal was to develop an affordable and widely accessible, science-based puppy socialization course that would improve the welfare of dogs in our community and strengthen the dog-human bond."

Our classes are designed for puppies between 8-16 weeks old. The experiences a puppy has

Continued on page 2

during the first 16 weeks of their life will have a profound and unchangeable impact on their personality and social outlook for the rest of their life. This is called the *critical socialization period*. Due to the developing brain, a young puppy has windows of opportunity to maximize their worldview with regard to new experiences, social partners, and changes in their environment. The dog (and owner) will live with the effects of the dog's early exposure (or lack thereof) to new people, places, and things, forever.

Not only do these classes directly support puppies and their parents, they are also an important investment in animal welfare for our community. One of the most prevalent reasons for pet surrender at Larimer Humane Society is due to the display of undesirable or destructive behaviors that the pet parent doesn't know how to manage. These situations can be stressful and may require behavioral intervention. If one does not have the time nor the money to invest in correcting such behaviors, surrendering their pet to a shelter becomes a viable option.

"Unfortunately, many of the behavioral challenges we see in dogs that come into the shelter are directly related to

inadequate early socialization. Puppies who are not socialized properly during their critical socialization period are at a much higher risk for life long behavioral difficulties that can often result in a diminished quality of life, relinquishment, or at times, humane euthanasia," said Kiyo.

Dedicated to serving our community and its pets, it's important to us that dogs who access community resources, such as dog parks, open trails, and other dog-friendly establishments are happy, healthy, and thriving, ensuring a safe community for all. "The classes serve to set up puppies in our community for success, which will in turn help to keep more animals in homes and less animals from coming into the shelter," said Shelter Manager Brett DeWester.

Our mission is to further the compassionate, safe, and responsible relationship between animals and people. Offering puppy socialization classes is a direct reflection of our mission, supporting new puppy owners as they build solid and healthy relationships with their pup, ensuring a long-lasting and loving companionship. "If our classes do that, even to a small extent, I will feel incredibly proud and grateful," said Kiyo.

Why do YOU support Larimer Humane Society?

FEEDBACK FROM OUR DONORS

Larimer Humane Society recently mailed a brief questionnaire to over 2,000 donors. Displayed is a sampling of the responses we received, which will help us make informed decisions and improve our organization. Thank you to all who took the time to share their thoughts and opinions!

Essay Question Responses:

What is it that determines your level of trust and respect for Larimer Humane Society?

knowledge of your programs
your care and concern
animals are given a second chance
written communications responsible organization
commitment of employees and volunteers
really good facility services provided
social media responses animal protection
my experience adopting dogs & cats

Services Ranked According to Importance:

- 1 Pet Adoptions & Post-Adoption Support
- 2 Veterinary Care for Shelter Pets
- 3 Emergency Response (including natural disasters)
- 4 Cruelty Investigation & Protective Custody
- 5 Lost & Found Services
- 6 Veterinary Care for Community Pets
- 7 Foster Care

ASK THE EXPERTS

Dear Larimer Humane Society,

My dog and I have a favorite trail near our house that we frequent in the summertime, but I'm always a little concerned that my dog will have a chance encounter with a wild animal and not know how to handle it. What is the best way to keep myself and my pets safe around wildlife?

— Dog Mom

Hi Dog Mom,

Thank you for reaching out! This is a popular topic of discussion as the weather gets warmer and people are eager to access the outdoors with their pets. When discussing wildlife safety, there are two distinct perspectives to consider: the safety of people and their pets, and the safety of native wildlife. Here at Larimer Humane Society, our Animal Protection and Control officers work to ensure that people and their pets remain safe from public health risks associated with wildlife encounters. On the other hand, wildlife centers most often work to protect and rehabilitate wildlife while promoting safe coexistence with the public. To provide tips and advice from both perspectives, we reached out to our friends at Northern Colorado Wildlife Center for a little help with this topic.

One of the most important public health risks that Animal Protection & Control works to prevent is the transmission of animal-borne diseases. Oftentimes, these diseases are spread from wildlife to domestic animals, so it's of utmost importance to remain vigilant. Rabies, for instance, is an infectious disease that is almost always fatal to unvaccinated pets, and is most commonly found in skunks and bats but has also been found in raccoons, foxes and coyotes in Larimer County. As such, if you or your pet has had physical contact with a wild rabies vector species, or if you encounter a wild animal that is acting strange or aggressive, immediately contact Animal Protection & Control at 970.226.3647 ext. 7. In these instances, do no attempt to touch or intervene with the animal.

Similarly, Larimer County has continued to experience cases of Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) in both fowl and mammals. While the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) considers the risk of transmission to humans, pets, and wild mammals as low, we still encourage pet owners to keep clear of wild mammals and fowl to minimize the risk of infection.

Maintaining an appropriate distance from wildlife not only keeps us safe, but keeps our beloved wildlife safe as well. The experts at Northern Colorado Wildlife Center encourage you to keep an eye on your pets while in public spaces, and ensure dogs (and cats) are always on leash or in an enclosed pet area. This allows people to easily remove their pet from a dangerous



Pictured are two red fox siblings being escorted to a grassy, rural area in Fort Collins. They were rescued from a window well by rehabilitators through the Northern Colorado Wildlife Center.

situation, and it allows wildlife to escape much more easily if they feel threatened. It's best to never intentionally approach any wild animal, especially if your pet is with you. When possible, admire wildlife from afar and avoid feeding, chasing, or harassing wildlife.

If you see a wild animal that you think needs help, it's always best to talk to a licensed wildlife rehabilitator before you intervene. In the spring and summer months, in particular, good Samaritans often happen upon baby wildlife and assume they are in need of help. Most often, these animals are not orphaned and can be reunited with their parents. As a rule of thumb, don't intervene with wildlife unless they are clearly injured or otherwise in need of help. This can include visible injury, blood, parasites (flies, fleas, etc.), or signs of lethargy. Always call a licensed wildlife rehabilitator if you're not sure!

Here in Colorado, wildlife can also be found close to home. To avoid unnecessary encounters between your pet(s) and wildlife, there are lots of humane ways to keep wild animals at bay. Motion activated lighting, noise machines, and sprinklers are a great way to keep a wide variety of wild animals away, including raccoons, rabbits, skunks, coyotes, and raptors. Be sure to inspect your home for holes, damage, or other entry points before wild animals start looking for nesting or denning sites. Fill cracks in your foundation, cap chimneys, cover dryer vents, trim trees and shrubs, take down wreaths, and cover window wells to avoid conflicts before they happen. If you ever need advice for a specific situation, your local wildlife rehabilitation center is always a great resource.

We live in a great, big world that has plenty space for all wildlife, people, and pets to enjoy safely. We hope this information will help you feel more comfortable and confident in the event you encounter wildlife.



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JOIN US

Get ready to lace up your sneakers and grab your furry friends because the annual Fire Hydrant 5K & Expo is back and better than ever! Join Larimer Humane Society on June 3 at Spring Canyon Park in Fort Collins for a morning of fitness, fun, and furry friends! Whether you're a runner, walker, or just love animals, the Fire Hydrant 5K has something for everyone.

Don't forget to check out our expo, where you'll find local vendors, giveaways, and activities for the whole family. And the best part? This event raises crucial funds that provide second chances to the thousands of animals who come through our doors every year.

REGISTER AT FH5K.ORG



VIP REGISTRATION

Want to upgrade your experience?? VIP registration is \$65 and includes an upgraded tech shirt, finisher medal, and free coffee and breakfast burritos thanks to our friends at The Human Bean and Santiago's Mexican Restaurant.

GENERAL REGISTRATION

DEADLINE MAY 30
Adult: \$35 **Youth:** \$25 (14 & under) **VIP:** \$65

LAZY DOG REGISTRATION

DEADLINE JUNE 3
Adult: \$45 **Youth:** \$35 (14 & under)

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LOVELAND

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CONTACT US

3501 E 71st St, Loveland, CO 80538

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larimerhumane.org

MISSION

To further the compassionate, safe, and responsible relationship between animals and people.

VISION

Larimer Humane Society is a trusted, responsive community leader, providing programs and services essential to the high quality of life for animals and people in northern Colorado.

ABOUT LARIMER HUMANE SOCIETY

Larimer Humane Society is an independent nonprofit agency. We are not a division of any county or city and are not funded by any national animal-welfare organizations. We are a 501(c)(3) corporation and we are governed by a volunteer board of directors. We turn no animals away.