



The Bond

Communities step up for cats in crisis • Empathy in the digital age • Life-saving options for people and pets escaping violence • Resources for Spanish language readers



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animal you have known who has made a profound impact on you; a companion animal who taught you something about life or saw you through a difficult time. We'd love to hear your story! Please see page 1 for "The Bond" story and photo contest.

On behalf of every human-animal bond we've helped to keep intact or strengthen, I thank you for your dedication to RedRover and the animals.



NICOLE FORSYTH
President and CEO



Nicole with her dog Arrow, 2006

Greetings!

REDROVER SEEKS TO STRENGTHEN the bond between people and animals, and this issue of *Companion* is a celebration of that bond.

For you and many others, I imagine a friendship with an animal brings great comfort, especially during a difficult time. A beloved pet may be one's closest friend, someone who loves unconditionally. Our companion animals may also be our greatest teachers, reminding us to focus on

the present and prioritize playtime. At RedRover, we are committed to helping preserve the bond people have with their pets. Our RedRover Readers program works with children to help them step inside the paws of an animal and practice responding with empathy. Our RedRover Relief and RedRover Responders programs ensure that people are not separated from their pets during a crisis.

Sometimes, there is one animal with whom the bond is particularly special. For me, this bond occurred with Arrow. Arrow reminded me to see the best in everyone and embrace opportunities. He was always smiling, an eternal optimist. He danced his hello for me every day, and during a difficult time in my late 20s, he truly was my best friend.

In preparation for our 30th Anniversary next year, help us celebrate "The Bond." Perhaps you have an

In Your Words



"I HAD THE EXTREME PLEASURE to be able to work with RedRover in getting a client's animal to safety after she had fled domestic violence and relocated to a safe haven and was therefore unable to bring her animal with her.

I am so thankful to RedRover for the work they do every day to advocate for animals... They were extremely professional, kind, and understanding individuals deeply committed to animal safety. I cannot thank them enough for their services."

♥ **PARKER ATKINSON, WOMEN AGAINST ABUSE, PENNSYLVANIA**

Read more great stories at RedRover.org/GreatNonprofits.



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Companion is published quarterly by RedRover and is distributed to its members.
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“The Bond” story and photo contest

DO YOU HAVE A STORY about a pet who changed your life? In honor of RedRover’s upcoming 30th anniversary, we’re announcing our story and photo contest that celebrates the incomparable bond between humans and animals. Enter your photos and stories that showcase the importance of your connection with an animal (past or present) for a chance to be featured in a future issue of *Companion*.

Contest guidelines:

- Highlight one specific story about you and an animal in your life, whether past or present, that conveys the importance of your bond.
- Submit a photo that includes all individuals featured in the story.
- Story must be 200 words or less.
- Photo must be high-resolution (at least 300 dpi) in JPG format.

Now is the time to flip through your photos and memory banks to share the stories and images that make you laugh, cry and, most of all, appreciate that special connection with an animal you’ve loved. ♥

Enter your story and photo by emailing info@RedRover.org.



A bright future for empathy in schools

HOW DOES TEACHING EMPATHY make a difference in communities? Students and teachers alike are seeing positive changes as a result of the RedRover Readers program — and they're sharing their stories with us.

After participating in the RedRover Readers program, Los Angeles elementary student, Adriano, advises others to “be kind to the animals in your home. Make sure they have clean water and food. Donate blankets to your local animal shelter so pets won’t have to sleep on a cold cement floor.”

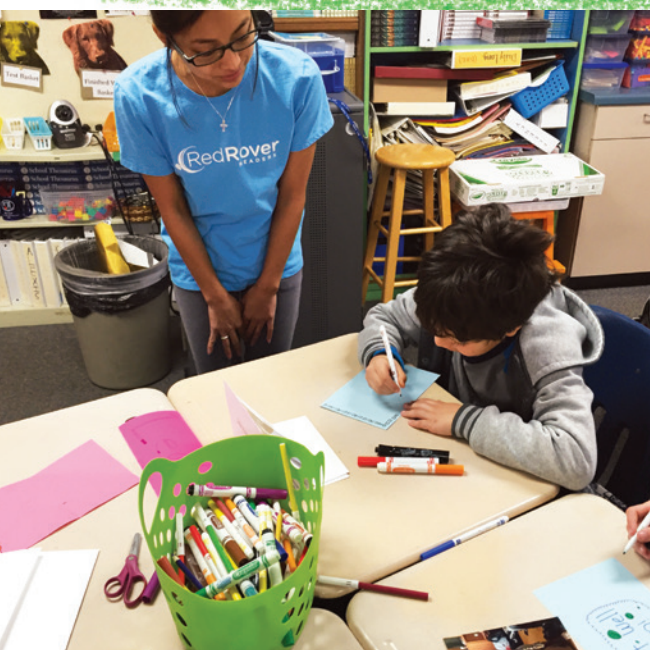
We have seen students start to change their attitudes towards animals in a positive way; they are more empathetic to animals and to each other.

Teachers tell us that the program helps them learn more about their students and their home lives, and they see a powerful difference in their

students’ attitudes about animals.

Oklahoma elementary school teacher Kelley Connel shared this after using the RedRover Readers program with her students:

“We have seen students start to change their attitudes towards animals in a positive way; they are more empathetic to animals and to each other. What an awesome program to have for your school. It is exciting to see new things in the lives of our kids.”



Be kind to the animals in
your Home.
Make sure they have clean water and food.
Donate blankets and towels to your local
animals shelter, so the pets won't have
to sleep on a cold cement floor.

RedRover is now expanding the RedRover Readers program to include digital content. We just launched our first bilingual (Spanish/English) interactive e-book and game called *The Restricted Adventures of Raja*. This high-tech addition to the RedRover Readers program will help us reach a wider audience and meet children where they often are — on electronic devices. Students can use the new app on their own or with their parents and teachers. The app also includes parent and teacher resources to help students better understand animal

body language and practice skills needed for developing empathy — all while playing a fun game and reading an interactive story.

The Restricted Adventures of Raja app is available now on iTunes and Google Play. With your help, we can bring empathy-based education into more classrooms and homes, helping to prevent animal abuse and cruelty, and create a more compassionate world for people and animals. Thank you for your support! ♥

Please share information about the RedRover Readers program and e-book app with your local elementary school: RedRover.org/e-book



Do you know an educator who wants to **change the lives of children and animals?**

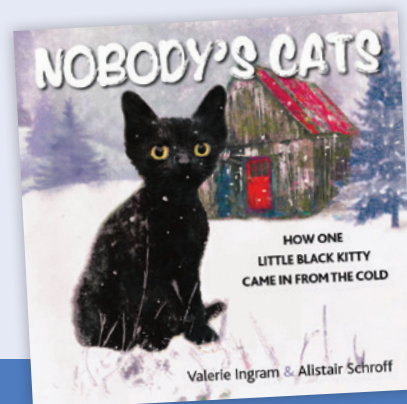
Tell them to join us for the next RedRover Readers online training course **starting October 4:** RedRover.org/Readers-Training



A new hero for kids and animals

Another inspiring child hero for animals! Share with children the heroic journey of one little boy who helps the cats in his neighborhood in the new RedRover Readers book, *Nobody's Cats: How One Little Black Kitty Came in from the Cold*, by Valerie Ingram and Alistair Schroff. ♥

Are you helping cats in your community? We'd love to hear from you! Share your stories by emailing Readers@RedRover.org



RedRover Readers promotes empathy in children

Using specially selected, humane-themed children's literature, educators who have been trained to implement the RedRover Readers curriculum promote empathy and critical thinking in children and engage them in thoughtful discussions, giving children opportunities to decide for themselves how to care for others around them.

Sanctuary for people and pets escaping violence

REDROVER'S DOMESTIC VIOLENCE

SAFE HOUSING GRANTS provide funds to help domestic violence shelters become pet-friendly, so that no one has to choose between safety and family. This groundbreaking program continues to grow and make a powerful impact.

Pets play a profound role in domestic violence situations. Studies found that up to 48% of women have delayed leaving their abuser, or have returned after leaving, out of fear that the abuser would harm their animals.

For some survivors, having a shelter that offered sanctuary to both them and their pets meant the difference between life and death.



Since the program's introduction in 2012, RedRover has awarded over \$150,000 in Safe Housing grants to help 41 domestic violence shelters across the country offer a co-sheltering option to their clients. Some of those programs have been so successful — and have found that the need for co-sheltering is so great — that they are making plans to expand their facilities and services.

For some survivors, having a shelter that offered sanctuary to both them and their pets meant the difference between life and death. As one survivor told her advocate at Harbor House in Wisconsin, "If I couldn't go there with my dogs, I would have probably gone back to [my abuser]. If I had to go back, I knew what was waiting for me. I know going back would have probably killed me in the long-term."

Co-sheltering also made a big difference in the lives of her dogs. "After about two weeks they totally changed," she told a local newspaper that featured her story. "I actually realized, wow, look how different they are. I think they were depressed." Her own life reflected the



When I didn't have that constant fear anymore, I realized there is another way. Having your animals with you adds so much to your recovery.

impact as well. "When I didn't have that constant fear anymore, I realized there is another way. Having your animals with you adds so much to your recovery."

We asked some of our Safe Housing grant recipients what advice they have to offer shelters who are considering co-sheltering. The Rose Brooks Center says:

"Just dive in! The idea of allowing animals in a human shelter can sound daunting, but there are so many benefits. You do

not need a fancy pet shelter to make this program work; all you need is a group of passionate people who are willing to problem solve. There are so many different ways to make this program work — you just have to start somewhere." ♥

INTERACT ONLINE

Visit SafePlaceforPets.org to see if there are any domestic violence shelters in your area with pet housing or resources for victims who also have pets.

Communities step up for their cats (and wildlife)

By RedRover Director of Field Services, Beth Gammie

REDROVER RESPONDERS have always been there for communities trying to care for animals in natural disasters and cruelty cases. Lately, we've also been helping communities care for their free-roaming cats through trap-neuter-release (TNR) efforts.

We were humbled to be part of such an innovative collaboration between government, animal welfare organizations and medical clinics to create a humane solution that valued all lives.

In April, your support made it possible for RedRover Responders volunteers to be part of an impressive collaboration in Bucks County, Pennsylvania, to humanely care for a large population of free-roaming cats in Core Creek Park. This public park was home to increasing numbers of cats, estimated to be over 300.

The community realized that something had to be done — to help these cats, and also to reduce their impact on people using the park, on birds and other wildlife affected by the high numbers of feline predators. Denise Bash from Animal Lifeline and Michelle Miller from Rescue Purrfect teamed up to find a solution with all those involved, including park staff, colony caretakers and wildlife groups.

The group formulated a comprehensive plan to do a humane mass TNR event with some special features built in: All of the free-roaming cats in the park were trapped, and the adult, friendly cats were placed into adoptive homes; feral cats and those who were otherwise

not good candidates for adoption were placed in barn homes or returned to the location where they were trapped; and cat rescues took on fostering and adopting out the rescued litters of kittens and their moms. Each cat received complete medical care: spay/neuter,

vaccinations, microchip and treatment for parasites, wounds and injuries.

RedRover Responders volunteers came from all over the U.S. and Canada to set up a temporary shelter to care for the cats before and after their surgery and treatment. An after-care program for the returned park cats was established, including a medical fund to provide care as needed for the remaining cats living in the park.

The island of Maui also came together to help their free-roaming cats, led by Maui Humane Society (MHS). In June 2015, the RedRover Responders team joined the effort and helped trap over 200 cats for MHS spay/neuter clinic (which treated over 700 cats). We returned this June to continue the effort.



Pennsylvania and Maui are examples of communities taking the time — and providing the resources — to take care of their community cats and lessen their impact on wildlife. We are so grateful that compassionate members like you are part of this effort to care for animals and communities in crisis. Thank you! ♥

To see photos from our latest deployments, visit us on Facebook: facebook.com/RedRoverOrg



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Share our stories! Leave *Companion* at your doctor's office, vet clinic, gym, lunch room or coffee shop. To protect your privacy, please clip out or blacken your name and address above.

More Spanish resources from RedRover Readers

IN SCHOOLS ACROSS THE U.S.,

there is a high demand for resources in Spanish. Our newly translated *Rufo liberado* and our bilingual (Spanish/English) e-book app, *The Restricted Adventures of Raja*, are two of the

Spanish resources that RedRover is making available to teachers, students and parents. RedRover also offers the *RedRover Readers Guide to Reading to Build Empathy* as well as full curriculum that goes with *Rufo liberado* and the e-book app.

[Learn more about RedRover's bilingual e-book series and other Spanish resources at \[RedRover.org/Readers\]\(http://RedRover.org/Readers\)](#)

