



RedRover®  
SUMMER 2023

# companion



**Helping keep pets with the families who love them**

Humane education — building connections in the classroom •  
Unchaining dogs and bringing communities together • On-Call  
Angels make Happy Tails possible





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## DEAR REDROVER SUPPORTERS,

I have some big news to share. After much deliberation, I have decided to leave RedRover in order to take a position as the U.S. Managing Director for Earth Rangers, a kids' conservation organization empowering kids to protect animals and the planet.

RedRover has been a huge part of my life for the last 17 years, and I will continue to support and champion this organization. I'm so proud of the work we have accomplished together through the years. Our RedRover Responders team has deployed more than 260 times across the nation to help animals displaced by natural disasters or rescued from cruelty and neglect, to help dogs live a life free from chains, to assist community cats in disaster-prone areas, to build safe havens for domestic violence survivors' pets, and more. Through the RedRover Relief Safe Escape and Safe Housing programs we've awarded more than \$4.8 million in funding, providing more than 500,000 safe nights for survivors' pets. Our Urgent Care grants have helped thousands of animals receive life-saving veterinary

care. Our RedRover Readers program has reached more than 121,000 children, helping them to develop the skills for empathy to help prevent animal cruelty and neglect, and trained more than 2,400 teachers, humane educators, and volunteers to implement the program. And our *Kind News*™ magazine has reached more than 280,000 children — helping to broaden their understanding of animals and inspiring actions to improve the lives of animals.

We have an incredibly strong staff in place dedicated to RedRover's mission, and I know programs and projects, like what you see featured in this issue of *Companion*, will continue to flourish. Starting August 1, RedRover's two Vice Presidents will temporarily take the helm — Karly Noel as Interim President and Susie Robert as Interim CEO — until a new President and CEO is hired. I am going to deeply miss the people, the work, and the mission that I love so dearly, but I am also excited for this

new chapter in my life helping kids, animals, and the environment!

Thank you for all you do to support RedRover! If you have a favorite RedRover story or memory you'd like to share, I would love to hear it! Please send them to [info@redrover.org](mailto:info@redrover.org) or fill out our survey at [RedRover.org/memory](https://RedRover.org/memory).

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nicole".

**NICOLE FORSYTH**  
President and CEO



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*On the cover: This spring, we returned to Detroit to assist Dog Aide in building safe, secure enclosures for Macho (pictured here) and nine more cherished family dogs so they could live a life free from chains.*



# Humane education — building connections in the classroom

## THIS MAY, PROGRAM COORDINATOR II MINHHA LAM HAD THE OPPORTUNITY

to read to a group of first graders in-person at Peter Burnett Elementary in Sacramento, California, for the first time since the pandemic hit. Almost forgetting how much she missed the youthful energy, genuine curiosity, awe, and wonder that children have for stories about animals, the kids were so excited to hear her read that her nerves quickly dissipated. For her second visit to Ms. Choy's first-grade class, Minhhan read *Alya and the Three Cats* written by Amina Hachimi Alaoui, one of the more recent additions to our RedRover Readers Program books. The kids were captivated by the story and the illustrations, and they stayed engaged with the discussion questions throughout the reading.

After each reading, they reflected on what they learned from the book, and then did a post-discussion activity. The kids had many questions about the journey that both the human characters in the story as well as the animals went through, and they were eager to share their own thoughts and experiences of taking care of pets and observing the animals in their lives. ♥



"It was so rewarding to see the kids engaged and excited about reading. I left the classroom feeling inspired and hopeful about the future of literacy, and about how these kids will hopefully grow to build better connections with others, both human and animal alike."

♥ Minhhan Lam,  
Program Coordinator II



## Trainings equip teachers and parents to provide new stories

### IN PARTNERSHIP WITH MONADNOCK HUMANE SOCIETY

in the mountains of southern New Hampshire, President and CEO Nicole Forsyth led RedRover Readers trainings with teachers, librarians, and parents to inspire critical thinking in children around quality, humane-themed literature.

Nicole spoke about how children's past experiences with animals can be positive or negative, and include abuse. Her advice was to "provide another narrative" using books like *Buddy Unchained* by Daisy Bix, the story of



a dog who went from neglected to pampered pet. It's all about asking the right questions to draw on children's memories and allow them to think, feel, and teach one another—a simple yet game-changing strategy for educators who are used to doing the talking. Attendees practiced their new skills by leading lessons for their fellow attendees. One wrote, "Kids NEED this." Everyone left with curriculum guides on humane-themed books on a range of domestic and wild animals, subscriptions to *Kind News*, and a new enthusiasm for approaching their teachings. Visit [RedRover.org/Readers](https://RedRover.org/Readers) to see how to bring a RedRover Readers training to your community! ♥

## kindnews

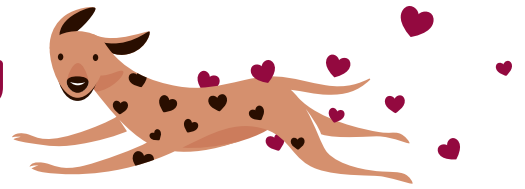


**Want to brighten children's lives and help them make a difference for animals?**

Adopt a classroom with a subscription to *Kind News*™ magazine! Learn more at [KindNews.org/adopt](https://KindNews.org/adopt).



# Unchaining dogs and bringing communities together

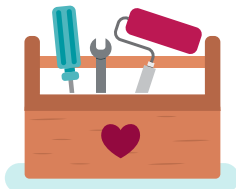


## THIS SPRING, OUR REDROVER RESPONDERS VOLUNTEERS WORKED BACK-TO-BACK DEPLOYMENTS

building safe enclosures for dogs that live outdoors through our Community Programs efforts. In April, we partnered with our friends at Dog Aide in Detroit, Michigan, and then in May we made our way to Bennettsville, South Carolina, to work with the Humane Society of Marlboro County.

Both organizations have the same goal: to improve the quality of life for people and their pets through relationship building, education, and by providing vital resources such as pet food, vaccines, veterinary care, and spay/neuter surgery. The communities we work in lack adequate systems to support healthy, thriving environments for both animals and people. These communities are experiencing housing, food, and income insecurity, which affects everyone in the home, including pets.

Community Outreach programs like Dog Aide and Unchain Marlboro are vital in providing support and life-saving care for hundreds of families, and RedRover is honored and humbled to play a small role in their daily work. Together, with both staff and volunteers from our partner organizations, we've built 22 enclosures, removing 22 dogs from chains or tethers so far this year. We've nurtured lasting relationships with folks, tearfully hugged the most grateful families, and laughed in joy together as dogs did their first zoomies in their new space.



For many of us, our dogs live in our home. For some, they may be allowed on the couch and others on the bed. Some families may keep their dogs crated or tied outside, or invest in doggie day care. When we first started this program, we knew it may be hard to understand, especially for those of us who are privileged enough to come from a very different lived experience than the folks we are supporting. Our implicit bias can make it difficult to comprehend

*"I feel incredibly lucky that families have invited me into their homes and their lives, sharing stories of both their triumphs and struggles, their beloved dogs, and their hopes for the future."*

**Devon Krusko**, Field Services and Community Programs Manager

where others are coming from, and our internal judgment may arise. Meanwhile, 70% of dogs globally are free-ranging, and there are many different thoughts and opinions surrounding care, training, and breeding.

RedRover is so proud of our community outreach work, and we believe that people are doing the best that they can with the information and resources available to them. "I feel incredibly lucky that families have invited me into their homes and their lives, sharing stories of both their triumphs and struggles, their beloved dogs, and their hopes for the future. What an incredible gift and honor to be welcomed and accepted by a community I am not from," shares Field Services and Community Programs Manager Devon Krusko. We'll return to Detroit this fall, where a vast number of people and pets look forward to their turn to receive services that we're thrilled to provide! We're keeping pets with the people who love them, and it doesn't get any better than that. ❤️



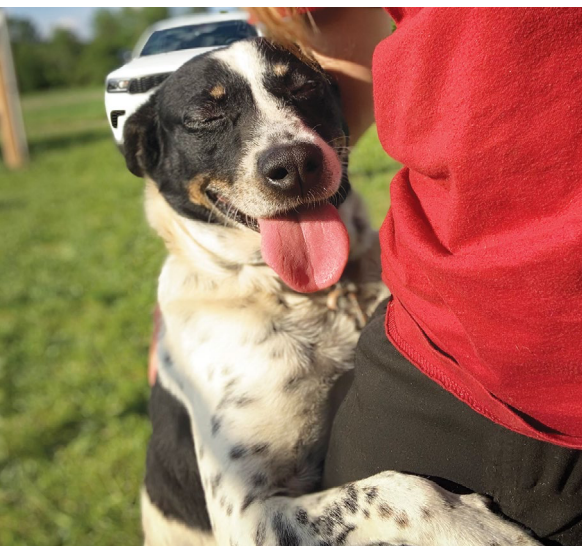




## RedRover Responders Online Training

Our **RedRover Responders** volunteers shelter and care for animals in crisis, and provide support for communities and animals in need. Join our volunteer team! Learn more and take our free, self-paced online training:

[RedRover.org/JoinResponders](https://RedRover.org/JoinResponders) ♥





# On-Call Angels make Happy Tails possible

**AS ALASTER STRUGGLED WITH PHYSICAL AND MENTAL HEALTH ISSUES**, rodents had nested inside their work vehicle, and the repairs were shockingly expensive. These two financial blows were tough, but they paled in comparison to the possibility that they might lose their handsome tabby cat, Basil.

Basil suffered repeated blockages from bladder stones. Each visit to the veterinarian strained Alaster's already limited financial resources, and it was clear Basil needed more than medicine—he needed a perineal urethrostomy surgery to prevent pain. While they worked with



the veterinarian to reduce the cost, they were still facing an expense they simply could not afford on their own.

The veterinarian offered one last suggestion: they could apply for a RedRover Relief Urgent Care grant. Friends and family chipped in, Alaster applied for an Urgent Care grant, and an On-Call Angel donated to fund the grant. After learning their application had been approved, they could rest assured that their boy was soon going to be okay.

The day of the surgery came, and after so much suffering, Basil was on the road to recovery. One month later, Alaster reached out to us to share this amazing update:

**"After a long road, Basil is thriving thanks to help from RedRover. Since the procedure, he has shown incredible signs of improvement! Basil is now able to play, run, jump, and climb with ease. Thank you, thank you, thank you to RedRover for allowing us to give Basil another chance to live happily and healthily. We are forever grateful."**

## We are grateful too!

Kindhearted people make it possible to help families when they need it most, and thanks to our On-Call Angels, Basil got the care he needed. To learn more about becoming an On-Call Angel and how you can help an individual pet get urgent veterinary care, visit [RedRover.org/On-Call-Angels](https://RedRover.org/On-Call-Angels). ♥

## Introducing *Survivor Stories*

### IF YOU'RE A SUBSCRIBER TO OUR PURPLE LEASH PROJECT

**E-NEWSLETTER**, you may have seen our inaugural Survivor Story—a brief look into the lives of domestic violence survivors and their pets through the RedRover Relief Safe Escape grant program. These stories affirm that no one should have to choose between enduring abuse and leaving their pet behind—all of us can work together to make a lifesaving difference for pets and families in crisis.

As Violet\* contemplated leaving her abuser, she feared what would happen to her dog, Baby.\* When the violence became intolerable, Violet tearfully brought Baby to the animal shelter and said her goodbyes, believing there was no other choice.

Violet jumped at the opportunity when her domestic violence shelter advocate explained they could apply for a Safe Escape grant to cover the cost of boarding Baby:

**"It meant everything to have RedRover cover boarding costs for Baby! I definitely thought about Baby when making the decision to leave and stayed with my abuser longer because Baby is like another child to my family.**

**I was on the brink of losing him when RedRover stepped in and helped with boarding fees. Thanks to your services, I was able to reclaim Baby and place him at a local pet resort for boarding. I'm so very grateful!"**



All of us at RedRover share this gratitude and appreciation for the second chances at happy, peaceful lives you make possible for survivors and their pets.

**Thank you for your compassionate heart, and for your help in bringing us closer to our goal of 25% of domestic violence shelters nationwide becoming pet friendly by 2025! ♥**

*\*Names have been changed to protect privacy*



# Another Safe Housing Milestone



**REDROVER HAS REACHED A MILESTONE** by awarding \$572,502 in Safe Housing grants in this latest round of funding, the most ever for a single round! Of the 12 shelters awarded grants, **7\* can welcome pets for the first time.**



## DV Shelter Grantees

- **Sunrise of Pasco County, Inc.\***, Pasco County, Florida — **\$60,000** (funded by PetSmart Charities)
- **Peace River Center for Personal Development, Inc.\***, Polk County, Florida — **\$60,000** (funded by PetSmart Charities)
- **Women's Advocates**, Ramsey County, Minnesota — **\$18,200**
- **Turningpoint for Victims of Domestic and Sexual Violence**, Pierce and St. Croix Counties, Wisconsin — **\$60,000**
- **Domestic Violence Resource Center**, Washington County, Oregon — **\$16,502**
- **Steps to End Domestic Violence\***, Chittenden County, Vermont — **\$57,000** (funded by PetSmart Charities)
- **YWCA of Kitsap County**, Kitsap County, Washington — **\$40,800**

## RedRover + Purina Purple Leash Project DV Shelter Grantees

- **The Women's Safe House\***, St. Louis County, Missouri — **\$60,000**
- **Safelight Inc\***, Henderson County, North Carolina — **\$60,000**
- **F.A.I.T.H. Inc.\***, Rabun County, Georgia — **\$60,000**
- **Schuylkill Hope Center\***, Schuylkill County, Pennsylvania — **\$60,000**

## Animal Shelter Grantee

- **Big Sky CARES**, St. Tammany Parish, Louisiana — **\$20,000**

The next Safe Housing grant application deadline is September 1.

To learn more, visit [RedRover.org/SafeHousing](https://RedRover.org/SafeHousing). ❤

# 25 BY 2025

**Save the date. RSVP for the 25 by 2025 call today!**

Thanks to support from PetSmart Charities, we have officially launched the 25 by 2025 campaign! Our goal is to ensure 25% of domestic violence shelters are pet friendly by 2025.

RSVP today at [RedRover.org/rsvp](https://RedRover.org/rsvp) for our special Zoom call on August 16 to learn how you can help.



## Purple Leash Project Milestones



We're so proud of our Purple Leash Project partnership with Purina! Since its inception in 2019, together we have:

- Awarded 43 Purple Leash Project grants, totalling \$1.14 million
- Seen domestic violence pet-friendly shelters increase from 10% to 17% nationwide
- Helped Safe Voices domestic violence shelter to become the first pet-friendly shelter in Maine
- Received media coverage through The Washington Post, TODAY show online, People magazine, Yahoo News, Parade magazine, Women's Day and more
- Raised awareness through national events such as the Westminster and National Dog Shows, the LPGA tour, and events targeting legislators: the Annual Congressional baseball game and Pet Night on the Hill ❤





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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.

## Prepare your pet emergency kit

**Stock up on the items you may need during a disaster now** so you don't get caught unprepared. Below are basic items you should include in your pets' disaster kits. Store your disaster kit supplies in an easy-to-grab container.



**One-week supply of food**

.....



**One-week supply of fresh water**

.....



**Medication**

.....



**Copies of vaccination records**

.....



**Photographs of you with your pets to prove ownership**



**Photographs of your pets in case you need to make "lost pet" fliers**

.....



**Pet first aid kit**

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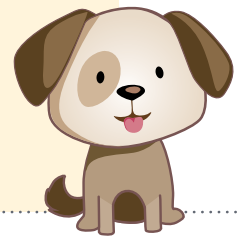


**Temporary ID tags**

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**Carrier or leash for each animal**



For more preparedness tips, visit

**RedRover.org/  
DisasterTips**

Follow us on social media and help us share lifesaving resources during natural disasters.