

ANIMAL UPDATE "YAPPYTALK"

Paws for a PURRpose merges art with animals

By Mary Spencer
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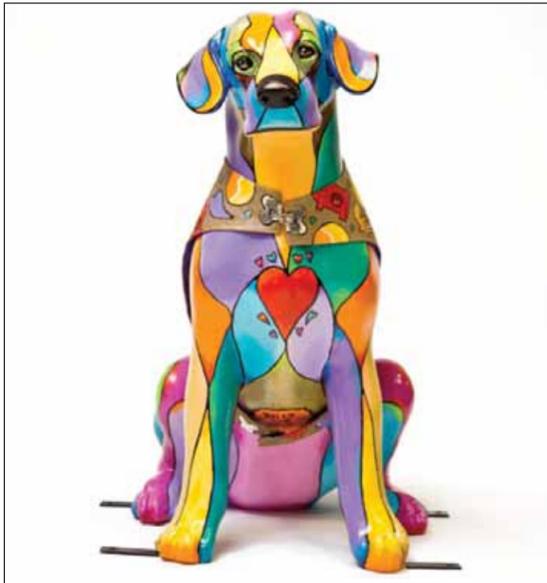
The art (or adventure) of raising money for animals, through evenings of fun parties and special events, is one of my favorite sports. Hardly a weekend goes by without one of Dallas' many animal groups hosting another unique shindig at a trendy location —



Mary Spencer

full of delicious food, Kitty Kocktail Coolers, Muttie-Martinis, hound dog music, "Must-Have" silent and live auction "winnings" — all assembled together with compassionate animal loving folks. Everyone is there for the purpose of helping animals and sharing a memorable evening with like-minded friends.

Coming up in a few weeks is a special and unique event, which will benefit animals all across Texas. "PAWS for a PURRpose," fits all the criteria above while combining the creative talents of numerous well-known artists with their love of animals. The brainchild of "PAWS for a PURRpose" is Allison Gregory, a noted young artist in Houston who cut her teeth (so to say) by contributing her artistic talents to the infamous "Cowparade" and "Gibson Guitartown," where large scale fiberglass cow sculptures and guitars were dramatically painted by



Photos courtesy of Mary Spencer

well-known artists and displayed throughout Houston, then auctioned off to benefit selected charities.

In these two events, Allison's four hand-painted cows alone raised a quarter of a million dollars, benefiting Dell Children's Cancer Hospital. During the last few weeks, I felt fortunate meeting this beautiful blonde, willowy artist and hearing her story of why she decided to use her talents (and encourage others to do the same) in hopes of making the same type of monetary difference in the animal world. True to suspect, I found Allison a pure delight — truly an extraordinarily talented woman making extraordinary things. Allison, a self-taught artist, was born in San Antonio, Texas and picked up her first paintbrush when she was five

years old. Her passion and interest in art proved to be integral in her creative process and this drive and inspiration led her to California for the next eight years, where she earned two degrees, graduating with honors in Studio Art and Design. Through the last decade, Allison has participated in 58 exhibitions to date (including major art fairs), while working with prestigious galleries throughout the world.

Although her bio will blow your mind, what impressed me was Allison's unconditional love of animals — especially her six rescued, special needs cats, who not only furnish her life with love and spontaneity, but the desire and commitment to help all animals in need.

"Animals rule my life," Allison said. "If I had a nickel

for how many times I clean litter boxes daily, clean up surprise hairballs all over the house (or step in them), or administer meds, I would own my own vet hospital! I'm not quite sure what it is, but somehow cats in need just find me, as I have yet to ever choose or 'pick out' an animal at a shelter."

Proudly, Allison explained her inception of Paws: "I was humbled beyond words when I realized that my art could make the world a better place, and raise lots of money for great causes. Since animal welfare is my passion in life, I thought it would be great to do something similar, but with dogs and cats."

Allison continued: "Art is to be admired, therefore when we (artists) create a piece, it becomes a tribute to that pet we have loved, or to animals in general. As an animal activist/vegetarian, my dream of creating "PAWS for a PURRpose" came to light last November. I felt like it was my duty as an artist to use the special talents I have been given to benefit those without a voice. While I have always supported shelters and nonprofit animal organizations, I felt that was not enough. Although living a life of a vegetarian and advocating for animal rights does make a difference by 'saving one life at a time,' I wanted to do something bigger that would make a serious impact on a national level.

"After much research on the various shelters and various animal welfare

see YAPPY on page 12

Recipe of the Week

Chicken Suiza Bake



Now that it's cool enough to use the oven again, this Tex-Mex-inspired casserole will be a staple in my house! I buy a roasted chicken at the supermarket so I don't have to take the time to cook one: dinner is ready in 45 minutes.

- 4 cups shredded cooked chicken
- 1 1/2 cups chicken broth
- 2 cans green salsa - 7-ounces each
- 1/4 cup chopped cilantro
- 1 4-ounce can chopped green chiles
- 12 corn tortillas - cut in half
- 4 cups shredded Colby jack cheese
- Salt to taste

Heat the oven to 350 F. Spray a 9 x 13-inch baking dish with pan spray. In a bowl, combine all of the ingredients except the cheese and tortillas; season with salt and mix well. Line the bottom of the prepared baking dish with tortillas. Top with half the chicken mixture and half the cheese. Repeat the layers, then bake for 30-35 minutes, or until the cheese starts melting and begins to brown. Remove from the oven and let stand 10 minutes before cutting.

Recipe by Sara Newberry

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YAPPY cont'd from page 8

organizations, Texas Humane Legislative Network was chosen because I felt this was the type of organization which would benefit the largest number of animals, all across the state. THLN is the voice of all animals, and the statewide representative for all animal organizations. Every time THLN succeeds in passing another law in the legislative session, thousands of animals lives are saved."

Through the efforts of THLN director Rick Bousquet, a plan was formulated to make this project, creating the first statewide public art project ever to help animals at this magnitude. By including the South Texas College of Law in this project, a winning combination materialized.

PAWS for a PURRpose has become one of the largest art events in Texas, featuring 60 life-size, hand-painted dog and cat sculptures created by 42 top Texas artists, displayed in major cities across Texas. The pieces are each artist's unique creation and exhibit a variety of breeds, poses and decoration. Even Willie Nelson got into the act. In support of the project, Willie signed a mini-cow called "COW-boy Country" designed and painted by Allison herself.

After the initial unveiling of the inventive sculptures this summer, they were displayed at the South Texas College of Law in Houston. They have been on display at prominent businesses in Dallas, Houston and Austin since September, and will be moved to the Downtown Club in Houston Center for the big party and auction Nov. 7. As mentioned above, all proceeds

from the live auction and sponsorships support the Texas Humane Legislation Network (thln.org) established to promote the humane treatment of animals through legislation, education and advocacy, and South Texas College of Law's Animal Law Clinic (stcl.edu), which provides law students hands-on opportunities to build and enhance their skills, while developing a sense of community responsibility toward animal welfare and professional identities as animal lawyers.

Unlike so many live and silent auctions, attendance at the Nov. 7 event is not mandatory to acquire these great art pieces. Online bidding at pawsforapurrpose.com is happening now and highly encouraged.

By participating in PAWS for a PURRpose, everyone can make a difference for the animals throughout Texas, while supporting Texas artists and acquiring a fabulous new piece of art. It makes no difference whether you are a serious collector or just happen to fall in love with these whimsical, colorful cats and dogs. Sporting names like "Cat Nippy Hippy," "Barkfast at Tiffany's," "Patchwork Pooch," "Spottie Dottie," "Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Bark Club Band" or "Garden Mutt," how could any animal lover possibly resist these one-of-a-kind sculpture masterpieces?

**Lakehill Prep students rank above average**

By Gigi Ekstrom

The Council for American Private Education (CAPE) recently reported that average SAT scores for 2013 graduates from religious and independent schools significantly exceeded the SAT College and Career Readiness Benchmark, a combined score of 1550 on three SAT tests (critical reading, writing, and mathematics) that is associated with success in college.

For college-bound seniors in independent schools across the nation, the combined average SAT score was 1662 (112 points above the benchmark) while the average for religious school students was 1595 (45 points above the benchmark). Public school students scored 1474, which was 76 points shy of the standard.

Lakehill students had a combined average SAT score of 1782, which was 232 points above the benchmark, 120 points above the independent school average, and 348 points above the state average.

On the ACT, Lakehill students earned a composite score of 24, surpassing both the state and national averages.

The average Texas composite score remained at a record high of 20.8, while the national average was 21.1.

"We are extremely proud of our students," Lakehill Headmaster Roger Perry said. "These outstanding scores reflect years of preparation, and they will open many doors for our students."

"This high level of success is possible only because our students, their families, and their teachers have provided years of ongoing dedication to academics."

RAVEN cont'd from page 4

Much I marvelled this ungainly fowl to hear discourse so plainly,

Though its answer little meaning – little relevancy bore;

For we cannot help agreeing that no living human being

Ever yet was blessed with seeing bird above his chamber door –

Bird or beast above the sculptured bust above his chamber door,

With such name as 'Nevermore.'

But the raven, sitting lonely on the placid bust, spoke only

That one word, as if his soul in that one word he did outpour.

Nothing further then he uttered – not a feather then he fluttered –

Till I scarcely more than muttered, "Other friends have flown before –

On the morrow he will leave me, as my hopes have flown before."

Then the bird said, "Nevermore."

Startled at the stillness broken by reply so aptly spoken,

"Doubtless," said I, "what it utters is its only stock and store,

Caught from some unhappy master whom unmerciful Disaster

Followed fast and followed faster till his songs one burden bore –

Till the dirges of his hope that melancholy burden bore Of 'Never-nevermore.'

But the raven still be-guiling all my sad soul into smiling,

Straight I wheeled a cushioned seat in front of bird and bust and door;

Then, upon the velvet sinking, I betook myself to linking

Fancy unto fancy, thinking what this ominous bird of yore –

What this grim, ungainly, ghastly, gaunt, and ominous bird of yore

Meant in croaking "Nevermore."

This I sat engaged in guessing, but no syllable expressing

To the fowl whose fiery eyes now burned into my bosom's core;

This and more I sat divining, with my head at ease reclining

On the cushion's velvet lining that the lamp-light gloated o'er,

But whose velvet violet lining with the lamp-light gloating o'er

She shall press, ah, nevermore!

Then, methought, the air grew denser, perfumed from an unseen censer

Swung by Seraphim whose foot-falls tinkled on the tufted floor.

"Wretch," I cried, "thy God hath lent thee – by these angels he has sent thee

Respite – respite and nepenthe from thy memories of Lenore!

Quaff, oh quaff this kind nepenthe, and forget this lost Lenore!"

Quoth the raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil! – prophet still, if bird or devil! –

Whether tempter sent, or whether tempest tossed thee here ashore,

Desolate yet all undaunted, on this desert land enchanted –

On this home by horror haunted – tell me truly, I implore –

Is there – is there balm in

Gilead? – tell me – tell me, I implore!"

Quoth the raven, "Nevermore."

"Prophet!" said I, "thing of evil! – prophet still, if bird or devil!

By that Heaven that bends above us – by that God we both adore –

Tell this soul with sorrow laden if, within the distant Aidenn,

It shall clasp a sainted maiden whom the angels name Lenore –

Clasp a rare and radiant maiden, whom the angels name Lenore?"

Quoth the raven, "Nevermore."

"Be that word our sign of parting, bird or fiend! I shrieked, upstarting

"Get thee back into the tempest and the Night's Plutonian shore!

Leave no black plume as a token of that lie thy soul hath spoken!

Leave my loneliness unbroken! – quit the bust above my door!

Take thy beak from out my heart, and take thy form from off my door!"

Quoth the raven, "Nevermore."

And the raven, never flitting, still is sitting, still is sitting

On the pallid bust of Pallas just above my chamber door;

And his eyes have all the seeming of a demon's that is dreaming,

And the lamp-light o'er him streaming throws his shadow on the floor

And my soul from out that shadow that lies floating on the floor

Shall be lifted – nevermore!

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