

## ASPCA Announces Humane Award Winners

**Eight animals and people will be honored for their heroic deeds at the ASPCA Humane Awards luncheon on October 30.**

Posted: September 18, 2008 3 a.m. EDT

A seeing eye cat and a cadaver dog that served in Iraq are among the winners of the 2008 ASPCA Humane Awards. These animals and six other winners will receive their awards at the ASPCA Humane Awards luncheon at New York City's Rainbow Room at Rockefeller Center on Oct. 30.

The Humane Awards recognize animals that have performed heroic deeds and people who have worked on behalf of animal welfare over the past year. "The Humane Awards luncheon honors those who have gone above and beyond for animal welfare and animal heroes who have dedicated their lives to help others," said Ed Sayres, ASPCA president and CEO. "It's a wonderful event that celebrates the important role companion animals play in our lives."

ASPCA asked for nominations for the awards in February, receiving hundreds of entries. Winners were selected in eight categories: ASPCA Cat of the Year: Libby, a 10-year-old tabby who served as a seeing eye cat for Cashew, a senior dog who was blind and deaf. While Cashew was still alive, Libby spent her days helping her canine companion find his way around the house, guiding him to his food bowl and helping him avoid obstacles in the house. Libby still misses Cashew to this day, according to her owners, Terry and Deb Burns.

ASPCA Dog of the Year: Ilia, a 5-year-old black lab/golden retriever mix. Ilia lives with Cole Massie, a 10-year-old boy who has cerebral palsy. As Cole's service dog, Ilia accompanies Cole everywhere — even traveling more than 7,000 miles on six airplanes to be by Cole's side during surgery.

ASPCA Firefighter of the Year: Adam Deem, a firefighter with the California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection. Deem was working the Moon fire in Northern California when he came across a 6-month-old bear cub, suffering from burns to all four paws, crying for its mother. With the mother nowhere around, Deem wrapped the injured cub in his firefighter's jacket and took him to the Fire Incident Command Center, where the cub received treatment. The cub is now recuperating at Lake Tahoe Wildlife Care.

ASPCA "Tommy Monahan" Kid of the Year: Mimi Ausland, a 12-year-old girl from Bend, Ore. To help out her local animal shelter, Ausland developed a website called Freekibble.com, where people can contribute to her cause by playing a trivia game. Since April 1, 2008, Ausland's website has helped her donate more than 29 million pieces of kibble, enough to feed 240 dogs and 601 cats.

ASPCA Law Enforcement Officer of the Year: Diane Balkin, Chief Deputy District Attorney for the City and County of Denver. Balkin has been an advocate for humans and animals for nearly 30 years, sending a message that animal abuse will not be tolerated. She promotes animal welfare by prosecuting those who neglect or abuse animals. She also speaks at conferences nationwide about animal cruelty prosecutions and the link between cruelty to animals and violence to humans.

ASPCA Henry Bergh Award: Dr., Phil Bushby, professor at Mississippi State University College of Veterinary Medicine. Dr. Bushby is an advocate for spaying and neutering, with a goal of exposing veterinary students to shelters across Mississippi and educating them about the problem of pet overpopulation. He hopes to encourage students to find ways to help solve the pet overpopulation problem.

ASPCA Presidential Service Award: Stache, a 4-year-old black Lab, and his handler, Jim McCans. Stache is a cadaver dog, called to participate in nearly two dozen searches. In the last year, Stache and McCans traveled to Iraq to search for missing American service men and women. The pair participated in nine separate recoveries and nearly lost their lives when an explosive device exploded in their path. Stache suffered from temporary hearing loss after the blast but has since recovered.

ASPCA Lifetime Achievement Award: Mamdouha S. Bobst, a humanitarian, philanthropist and animal advocate. Bobst and her late husband, Elmer, have supported health research and university centers both in the United States and Lebanon. She and her husband helped finance the renovation of the ASPCA Adoption Center in Manhattan, and she founded the Mamdouha Bobst hospital at the Animal Medical Center in New York City.



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