

American Humane Association Honors Animal Welfare Workers

Group recognizes four professionals and one company for efforts in field.

Posted: October 23, 2008 3 a.m. EDT

A veterinarian, a lawmaker, a journalist, an animal welfare leader and one company are the recipients of the American Humane Association's awards to recognize their contributions to the care and treatment of animals.

American Humane, a national organization that works to protect animals and children, presented Karen Hill Sheppard, DVM, with the Dennis J. White Award for excellence in leading trainings sponsored by the Denver-based group. Sheppard, Huntsville Animal Services director, improved the quality of life of the animals and people in Huntsville, Ala. She was recognized as Administrator of the Year by the Alabama Animal Control Association and as Outstanding Veterinarian of the Year by the Alabama Veterinary Medical Association.

The Rutherford T. Phillips Award was presented to U.S. Rep. Susan Davis, D-Calif., honoring a legislator who made significant contributions toward improving animal welfare. Davis, an advocate for children and animals, is a long-standing member of the Congressional Friends of Animals Caucus. She helped American Humane raise awareness in Congress about the link between animal abuse and domestic violence.

The Media Award went to journalist Sharon Peters of Colorado Springs, Colo., for raising awareness of animal issues. Peters is on the board of directors of Safe Place, a Colorado nonprofit that finds homes for pets of the terminally ill, and she volunteers at the Teller County Regional Animal Shelter. Her articles on pet issues have appeared in USA Today.

The President's Award for superior commitment to the well-being of animals was awarded to Del Monte Foods/9Lives. The company was recognized for its support of animals and also of the efforts of groups like American Humane. Del Monte is a consistent sponsor of American Humane's animal adoption initiatives and a champion of its own campaign to promote the adoption of more than 1 million cats from U.S. shelters.

Doug Fakkema was honored with a Lifetime Achievement Award for his focus on the well-being of animals. Starting as a shelter worker in 1971, he has dedicated nearly 40 years to animal welfare — working, managing, teaching and ultimately leading. He's worked for animals on a national and international level, and is a proponent of humane euthanasia.

The awards were presented at American Humane's Professional Development Conference 2008 in San Diego.