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K – New Brunswick SPCA marks 127 years of speaking for animals

FREDERICTON, NB – The NBSPCA launches its 127th year on March 25 with an exciting range of animal welfare projects. Since it first erected a stone fountain in Saint John's Market Square to give thirsty horses a drink, the New Brunswick Society for Prevention of Cruelty to Animals is working to ensure healthy, safe conditions for animals around the province. Laws and technology have changed since the society was created in 1881, and the tasks the organization faces have changed with them.

Along with ensuring livestock and companion animals receive the food, shelter and medical care they need, SPCA officers are faced with the ongoing challenges of puppy mills, pet overpopulation and prosecuting those who willfully neglect their animals. The society works to educate the public on animal care requirements while partnering with the justice and social services communities in shared mandates to serve all New Brunswick residents.

In the last year, the NBSPCA has created a comprehensive list of the province's eight SPCA shelters and veterinarian clinics it has shared with the tourism and emergency service communities. Service providers and travelers now have access to these time-saving details should they face an animal-related emergency.

Public interest in animal welfare is expanding, too, resulting in increased demand for NBSPCA services and programs. NBSPCA inspectors responded to more than 3,500 calls involving 6,000 animals in 2007, triple the number of five years ago. Recent news stories are proof of how this dedicated, largely volunteer organization is striving to meet the challenges of pet overpopulation and neglect head on. However, with slim legal recourse and resources often stretched to the limit, the task is as large as ever. Visitor numbers to the www.spca-nb.ca web site have more than doubled in the last six months as concerned residents look to the society for resources and information.

In the coming year, the NBSPCA is excited to host the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies annual meeting in Fredericton, May 1 to 5. Proactive efforts, public education and hands-on workshops will all be on the agenda. This is the first time the national voice for animal welfare has met in Atlantic Canada in several years, and members are looking forward to sharing information during the five-day session. Details on NBSPCA activities, animal welfare resources, and how to become a member can be found on the group's web site, www.spca-nb.ca or by calling (506) 458-8208.