

Dear Mayor Joe Curtatone,

We have bought a dryer for the animal shelter. The approximate value of the dryer is \$418.71. At home depot they gave us ten percent off. The purpose of this gift is to help the animal control shelter out. Somebody kindly donated a used washer and they could not use it because they did not have a dryer. So we bought the dryer and now we hope it will help the animals to keep clean and comfortable. We also hope the dryer will take a little bit off their work load. The funds were raised by selling *Poetry for the Species*, a collection of poems by kids in the Somerville public schools. We sold them in different places such as Davis Square and around the neighborhood. They were \$3.00 for the Healey and Brown School families and \$5.00 for the public. We really hope this makes the difference in an animal's life and the animal controls daily work!

Sincerely,

Abigail R. Powers-Lowrey
Grace K. Takvorian
Maya L. Cooleybeck





Young journalists use poetry to help homeless pets in Somerville

Wicked Local Somerville

Posted Mar 12, 2011 @ 10:38 AM

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Somerville — Nine-year-old Grace Takvorian is not new to fundraising for animal protection. In fact, last June, the mayor and Board of Aldermen praised Grace for her effort in raising \$1,500 to assist the Somerville animal control office in its struggle to care for and place the city's homeless pets.

Grace went on to raise more money at Art Beat 2010, and to use her writing skills to further her work by publishing a book review of "Our Rescue Dog Family Album" by animal expert Diane Pomerance, Ph.D. Grace's contributions and leadership are well recognized and supported by her schoolmates and fellow writers, and came to inspire "the best Valentine we could think of."

Early in January, Grace's former teacher, Celia Taylor, happened to mention that she had donated a used washing machine to animal control but it unfortunately was not of much use to them without a dryer. When people who knew Grace and her abilities as an organizer and writer found this out, the word was, "We'll get them a dryer." Valentine's Day and poetry were in the air that early January 2011, and a writing project thus emerged.

Grace first recruited editors to assist her. Fifth grader Abby Powers-Lowery and fourth grader Domi Mathews, who attend the Healey School with Grace, and Maya Cooleybeck, a fourth grader at the Brown School, were quick to sign on.

Determined to publish "Poetry for the Species" as an act of love and kindness for Valentine's Day, the four editors solicited poetry from students of all ages from all over the city. Relatively vast amounts of poetry were submitted, and the editors were almost overwhelmed with reading and considering each poem as a possible contribution. But they not only met their deadlines and contributed poetry of their own; they managed to raise another hundred dollars for animal rescue before the book was even published, during their participation in conjunction with their student magazines, "Happeningnow!everywhere," "12!" and "Snowflake!" at the Celebrate Somerville event Jan. 29. Then, working quickly, they put together a beautiful book that was published on Feb. 14, and which is on sale for \$5 a copy. They have done this work and are putting in more time and effort to sell the book, in order to help homeless pets.

Grace tells us, "It's a lot of hard work but it's also fun and exciting."

Because of the economy, many people cannot afford to keep their pets and are giving them up in large numbers, so that the animal control office needs help in providing the services that animals need. Besides raising cash, people like Grace have been soliciting donations of care and maintenance items such as old towels, rags, bedding, bleach, pet food, and other pet supplies. Having the equipment to enable them to keep up with their constant need for laundered towels, bedding and rags is hoped to "lighten their load" so they may concentrate on other critical needs.

The goal of the fundraiser "Poetry for the Species" is to raise enough money to purchase a clothes dryer for Somerville Animal Control.

The public is invited to help by buying and enjoying a copy of this book. Publication costs for the book are being donated by their magazines, which maintain their own means of print production, so that all the money raised will go to helping the pets. People can also donate needed items including old towels and rags or surplus pet food and supplies, and should contact helpthepets@happeningnoweverywhere.com or the animal control office directly.

If you want to check their progress, go to <http://12zine.com/home12snowflake> where there is a thermometer that doesn't tell you the temperature but how much money they've raised so far. What is incredible is that conception-to-fruitition turnaround time of this project is less than 8 weeks! While you are on that webpage you may buy a print or virtual copy of the book (as you wish) and you can also view and share the complete contents of two kids' magazines to which this writing and fundraising project is connected. It is hoped that the public will support wholeheartedly this fundraiser, which is nonfattening, wholesome and homegrown.

These poets and journalists know that writing is powerful and poetry especially so, and soon they will have proof to sustain their future commitment.

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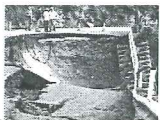
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