

# Help Us Find Them Homes Lewyt Humane Awards Luncheon Program



## WELCOME

Master of Ceremonies  
**Brian Balthazar**  
Executive Producer, HGTV  
TV Personality, Comic

## HONOR YOUR MUTT-I-GREE®

**J. John Stevenson**  
President, North Shore Animal League America

## NEW YORK STATE CITATION

**The Honorable Michelle Schimel**  
Member of the Assembly, 16th District  
New York State

## BIANCA'S FURRY FRIENDS

**Beth Stern**  
National Spokesperson and Volunteer

## ENTERTAINMENT

**Scott Blakeman**  
Comedian

## REFLECTIONS VIDEO

## HOMEWARD BOUND

**Joanne Yohannan**  
Senior Vice President, Operations  
North Shore Animal League America

## Humane Awards



**Sandra Atlas Bass Philanthropist Award**  
presented to  
**Dorothy Graham**

**Outstanding Corporate Supporter Award**  
presented to  
**New York Mets**

**Scarlett Award for Animal Heroism**  
presented to  
**Goey, 10 year-old Mutt-i-gree®**



# Message from the President

Dear Friends,

Welcome to our 2015 Lewyt Humane Awards Luncheon, a day to celebrate what it means to be compassionate, generous, and caring.

First, allow me to congratulate today's three honorees: Dorothy Graham, the generous recipient of our Sandra Atlas Bass Philanthropist Award; Joey a 10-year old puppy mill survivor recipient of the Scarlett Award for Animal Heroism who, by assisting his human companion, Peggy O'Connell, has become an indispensable member of our foster care family; and finally, the Amazin' New York Mets, recipients of our Outstanding Corporate Supporter Award. For the past 11 years, they've graciously invited us into their homes — first at Shea Stadium and now at Citi Field — for our popular, canine-friendly Bark in the Park fundraiser.

In every way, our honorees — and all of you — provide us with the means to realize today's theme: "Help Us Find Them Homes." It's a message we all understand, not only from an animal welfare perspective, but also from a deeply personal point of view. After all, we're a room full of people whose homes are made even homier by the presence of our pets, our Mutt-i-grees®.

In fact, as I write these words, I can imagine that at every table in this room at least three people have passed around their smartphones so their tablemates could swipe through a collection of photos featuring their Mutt-i-grees. Those photos are treasures. They spur precious memories and reinforce our connection to our beloved pets and to each other.

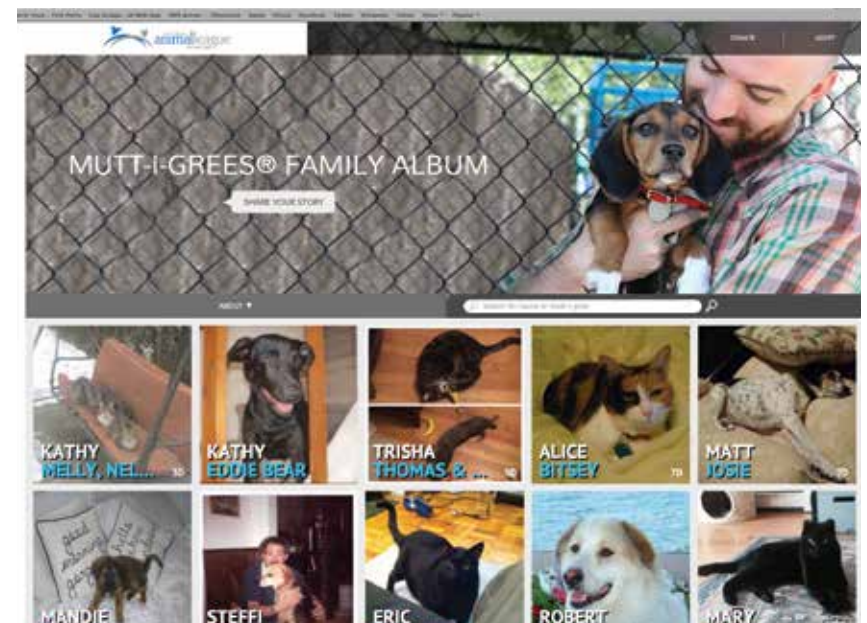
But don't limit this experience to your smartphone. Take it one exciting step further and join the Mutt-i-grees Family Album®. Every home has a family album of some sort, and no doubt it's filled with photos of your Mutt-i-grees, past and present. I urge you to take that album off the shelf and put your Mutt-i-gree online via the Mutt-i-gree Family Album!

You can read more about this newest addition to our Mutt-i-gree Movement on the back cover of this program. It's easy, fun, and will help us tell the story of the Mutt-i-gree Movement, one beautiful homecoming at a time. So don't procrastinate. Make it this weekend's project. The world is waiting to meet your Mutt-i-gree!

Finally, thank you for helping us find them homes for more than seven lifesaving decades. We cannot succeed without you — and we can never thank you enough.

Warm regards,

J. John Stevenson  
President, North Shore Animal League America







# Our Rescue Efforts

Dear Friends,

For me, today's luncheon is one of the best events on our calendar. The name says it all: We honor our Lewyt legacy by recognizing the humane contributions of some of our most dedicated supporters. I extend my sincere congratulations to all of our fantastic honorees: Dorothy Graham, the New York Mets, and Joey.

Help Us Find Them Homes. What a powerful theme for this celebration, and what a perfect connection to our ongoing fundraising for Bianca's Furry Friends. When this fabulous facility is completed, we'll be able to help even more animals find homes — and you'll have made it possible.

With that in mind, I want to tell you about two Mutt-i-grees® and their journeys home. Max, a tuxedo kitten, came to us in 2005, just six months old. We adopted him to a family that eagerly wanted him. Eight years later, however, they moved, and poor Max didn't fit into their plan. They left him at a municipal shelter in the fall of 2013, which is when we brought him back to our campus.

Suddenly homeless, Max didn't like cages or cats. After all, he'd always been king of his domain. Our administrative offices weren't home, but they were the next-best thing. So for several months, Max spent a lot of time distracting me from work by sprawling across the piles of papers on my desk. Then, this spring, a friend of one of our adopters — a woman who wanted a big, older, mellow cat — fell in love and took Max home...this time, for good!

And now there's Thurman, a sweet dog who came to us in 2006 from Tennessee, just nine weeks old. A family quickly adopted him, but eight years later, back he came: a child had developed allergies.

Thurman is currently our office foster, waiting for some of Max's good luck to rub off. He loves people and will nudge for more pets. But as an older animal, he's a challenge to place. Still, he's safe with us until the right person comes along, someone who'll give him his truly permanent home.

Thank you for enabling us to care for animals like Max and Thurman. Your tremendous support gives us the time and resources we need to help these special seniors find their loving homes.

With gratitude,

*Joanne Yohannan*

Joanne Yohannan, Senior Vice President of Operations

# A Message From Sandra Atlas Bass Luncheon Chair

Dear Friends,

Once again, it is my pleasure to serve as chair of this wonderful event. I thank North Shore Animal League America for its continued confidence in me — and in all of us here today — as we celebrate perhaps the most important words in everyone's vocabulary: a forever home!

They say that home is where the heart is. Well, for us, home is where the cat is — or the dog — or in many cases, that's plural, as in dogs and cats! Our companion animals are the breathing, purring, tail-wagging hearts of our homes. Their unconditional love warms our spirits and shelters us from many of life's difficulties. For me, beloved pets make any house a home. So the theme for today's luncheon is "Help Us Find Them Forever Homes."

For more than seven decades, everything North Shore Animal League America has accomplished has had one core goal: rescuing and nurturing needy pets so they could be placed into loving homes. At the same time, Animal League America's gracious hospitality has given us, its loyal supporters, a home, too — a place where we can express our compassion, share our common concerns, and count on each other for the support we need to help this outstanding organization continue and expand its lifesaving, no-kill mission.

I thank you for being here today — for coming "home." And I congratulate our honorees: the Amazin' New York Mets, the generous Dorothy Graham, and the heroic Joey. I also want to express my deep gratitude to Beth and Howard Stern for their leadership in the development of Bianca's Furry Friends Feline Adoption & Wellness Center, which today's event will bring even closer to reality.

We all can be proud to support yet another achievement for Animal League America — one that will mean forever homes for so many, many Mutt-i-grees.

*Sandra Atlas Bass*

Sandra Atlas Bass  
Chair







# Greetings From Beth Stern

Dear Friends,

There's a quote I saw online that I think everyone reading this letter will appreciate: "If you don't want pet hair on your clothes, stay off the furniture."

For me, that pretty much sums up my priorities when it comes to our house-full of wonderful felines — our six cats-in-residence as well as our always changing repertory of fosters. Even if they're just passing through on the way to permanent homes, while they're with us, they are home. In fact, Howard and I have to admit at times that they seem to own the place, or at least they think they do. And as for people who don't like this arrangement ...all I can say is this: stay off the furniture!

Photo by Howard Stern

I'm so proud to be part of North Shore Animal League America, the world's largest no-kill rescue and adoption organization, a place where finding homes for needy pets is everyone's priority. And I'm thrilled to be part of this wonderful occasion, the 2015 Lewyt Humane Awards Luncheon.

Today's honorees make up a very special group: a generous and compassionate woman named Dorothy Graham, an adorable Pomeranian Mutt-i-gree named Joey, and a wonderful sports organization known as the New York Mets. I thank and congratulate all of you for everything you do to help Animal League America's precious dogs, cats, puppies, and kittens find safe and loving homes.

Personally, this is a joyous event for me, because as you know, the net proceeds from today's luncheon will support the ongoing development of Bianca's Furry Friends Feline Adoption & Wellness Center, a cause so near and dear to my heart. We're extremely excited about this innovative expansion, and I hope you'll read more about this world-class project on page 9 of this program.

Bianca's Furry Friends is yet another way in which each of you is helping us find them homes. Together, we make a great team — you might even call us a "home team." Thank you for sharing the dream of rescue, nurture, and adoption — and for being here today to help make that dream come true.

My warm regards,

Beth Stern, National Spokesperson and Volunteer

## Bianca's Furry Friends Feline Adoption & Wellness Center

For more than 70 years, North Shore Animal League America has been the undisputed leader in the no-kill movement. Our goals and ideals have informed every program we've introduced, demonstrating our commitment to compassion and excellence while creating a model for other organizations to follow.

Consider just a few of our multi-faceted efforts: our nationwide Mobile Adoption Programs; our much-imitated National Humane Relocation Program; our worldwide Adoptathon; our groundbreaking Mutt-i-grees® Curriculum; and our compassionate Seniors for Seniors Program. These and other outstanding programs have enabled us to save more than 1,000,000 dogs, cats, puppies, and kittens — and enrich the lives of millions of happy adopters.

And now, thanks to your loyal support, we're about to introduce yet another lifesaving innovation: Bianca's Furry Friends Feline Adoption & Wellness Center, or BFF as we affectionately call it. This 14,000-square-foot facility will give our felines a comfortable, cage-free environment with all the amenities, including a surgical suite, exam rooms, a feline behavior department, grooming facilities, a 24-hour nursery, and a kitten adoption area.



Although we continue to raise funds for this \$7 million project, we're also making tremendous progress. We've completed many required feasibility studies and, following an exhaustive search, selected as our architects the prestigious Bacon Group, Inc., which boasts 20 years of experience designing outstanding animal care facilities across the country.

Because this facility requires a second-floor addition to our current adoption center, construction will be conducted in phases. All animals will be relocated to other areas of the campus for their safety and to allow adoptions to continue uninterrupted. This is a complex undertaking, but we're fully committed to continuing our fundraising so this facility can provide the best possible care for our felines — and become a model for shelters around the world.

We thank all of our donors, especially you, whose presence today will greatly further this project. And of course we thank our indomitable spokesperson, Beth Stern, who with her husband, Howard, has worked tirelessly to make this facility a reality.

By expanding our no-kill promise, BFF will help Animal League America continue as the premiere rescue and adoption organization in the world.



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## Thank You

Thank you, friends, for your dedication,  
your generosity, and your compassion.

The leadership, employees, and pets of North Shore Animal League America extend our heartfelt thanks to Sandra Atlas Bass, Beth Stern, Brian Balthazar, Scott Blakeman, our honorees, and all luncheon sponsors and supporters.

## Our Host Brian Balthazar



Brian Balthazar is a force to be reckoned with. His vast experience as a leader in television news and morning show production, his role as a primetime cable television executive, plus his time as entertainment journalist — on camera and off — have earned him a uniquely hyphenated list of skills and talents.

In the behind-the-scenes world of daytime television, Brian is known for launching the popular fourth hour of NBC's "Today" show, "Today with Kathie Lee and Hoda." At the same time, he was nurturing a hobby as a standup comic, appearing at various Manhattan comedy clubs. And in his "spare" time, he was in front of the camera as a featured reporter for NBC-owned local stations and for United Airlines in-flight entertainment.

Brian was also a director of programming at HGTV. Under his creative leadership, "The House Hunters" franchise and "Selling New York," among others, consistently ranked as the network's highest performing programs, leading to the HGTV's highest rated year in its history.

Brian has remained closely tied to current events and pop culture, thanks to the launch of his website PopGoesTheWeek.com. His mix of quirky humor and journalism has made him a frequent guest and expert on entertainment news, viral trends, and celebrity buzz on many national television programs, including "Today," CNN's "New Day," and MSNBC's "Politics Nation with Al Sharpton." He's heard regularly as an entertainment contributor on SiriusXM and Cumulus Radio, and has been interviewed and quoted in many prominent publications.

After a stint at AOL, where he served as vice president of programming and executive producer of digital content production, Brian joined ABC's daytime talk show "The View," where he was co-executive producer, working alongside Whoopi Goldberg, Rosie O'Donnell, Rosie Perez, Nicolle Wallace, and others.

In March 2015, Brian returned to HGTV as vice president of programming and development.

Brian is the proud companion of a two dogs, Friday and Princeton. We are delighted to welcome him to North Shore Animal League America's 2015 Lewyt Humane Awards Luncheon.



Our Special  
Entertainment  
**Scott  
Blakeman**

Scott Blakeman has performed his progressive style of political comedy around the world, including at the Montreal Just For Laughs Festival, the Jewish Historical Museum in Amsterdam, the Edinburgh

Fringe Festival in Scotland, and closer to home, at the Landmark on Main Street, in Port Washington, N.Y., with Robert Klein earlier this year.

During his influential career, he has made more than 30 national television appearances, and was the warm-up comedian for the "Late Show with David Letterman." Scott can also be heard regularly on National Public Radio, co-hosting political coverage, delivering commentaries, or as a guest. In addition, he writes a frequent blog for The Huffington Post.

Scott is an original member of Laughing Liberally, and has been the resident comedian on MSNBC's live coverage of the White House Correspondents' Dinner. Scott is well known for his unique brand of Jewish comedy, which he performs regularly at the 92nd Street Y, in Manhattan, and at the legendary New York Friars Club, where he is a member.

He also headlined "Radical Menses and Maniacs, New Jewish Humor and Music," at La Mama Theater in Manhattan. And working with Palestinian-American comedian Dean Obeidallah, Scott co-created "Standup for Peace: The Two Comedian Solution to the Middle East." They perform at colleges, theaters, Temples, and Jewish and Arab community centers across the country.

Considered the most popular and innovative comedy instructor in New York, Scott taught the Standup Comedy Workshop at the New School for more than 25 years. He now offers the course privately, one on one, and via Skype. One of his many successful former students is Jon Stewart, of Comedy Central's "The Daily Show with Jon Stewart."

Scott is honored to be part of today's event for two major reasons. He is a proud member of the Pet Lovers Community on Facebook, and he is so thankful that his beloved little pal Beni, a handsome tuxedo cat, was in his life for more than 10 years.

We are delighted to welcome Scott to North Shore Animal League America's 2015 Lewyt Humane Awards Luncheon.

Sandra Atlas Bass  
Philanthropist Award

**Dorothy  
Graham**

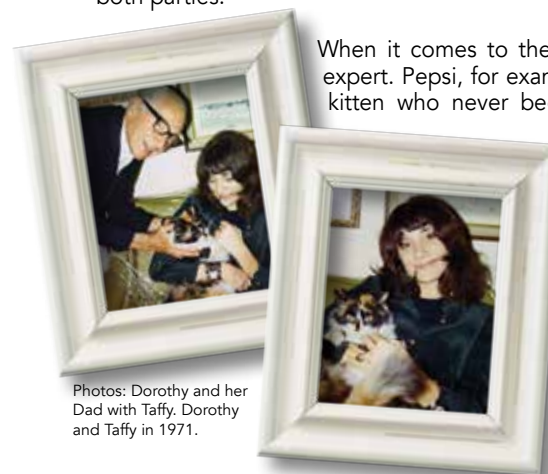


Dorothy Graham, recipient of The Sandra Atlas Bass Philanthropist Award, has spent her life in the company of remarkable cats, including Mitzi, Taffy, Shameless, and Pepsi. Each was an individual who contributed something unique to Dorothy's life — and to her "cat fanatic" family. In honor of those felines and in memory of her beloved parents, Dorothy has become a generous supporter of Animal League America and its no-kill mission.

A Long Island native, Dorothy has spent her professional life as an administrator in both the nonprofit and public sectors, providing services for low-income and indigent communities in California. Yet her ties to Long Island endured, and when it came time to honor her parents, Victor and Olga, and their lifelong compassion for animals, she turned to Animal League America, where she found a perfect match for her no-kill philosophy.

Not surprisingly, Dorothy focused her attention on felines, donating several cat-condos, supporting our Cat Sanctuary, and, in her mother's name, funding a feline exam room in the Special Recovery Center. But the project closest to her heart is our Seniors for Seniors Program, which she supports through the Olga Graham Fund.

"The human-animal bond is always critical," she says, "but perhaps never more so than as we age. For widowed seniors or those living apart from their children, animal companions are wonderful antidotes to isolation. But most important is the mutual love seniors share with their pets. By encouraging adoption of senior pets and by helping with veterinary care and other expenses, we can nurture this bond and help seniors and their pets flourish in a relationship that's beneficial to both parties."



Photos: Dorothy and her Dad with Taffy. Dorothy and Taffy in 1971.

When it comes to the pleasures of feline companionship, Dorothy is an expert. Pepsi, for example, who died in 2012, came to her as a semi-feral kitten who never became fully domesticated. "He wouldn't allow you to pick him up," she remembers, "but he'd snuggle when he wanted to and purr loudly. He was a great comfort in moments of sadness, such as when my mother died in 2005. I could talk to him about anything, and he'd look at me with deep yellow eyes of wisdom. He was truly my best friend."

We thank Dorothy for sharing her profound love for felines — and all animals — with Animal League America, and for being our kind and generous friend.