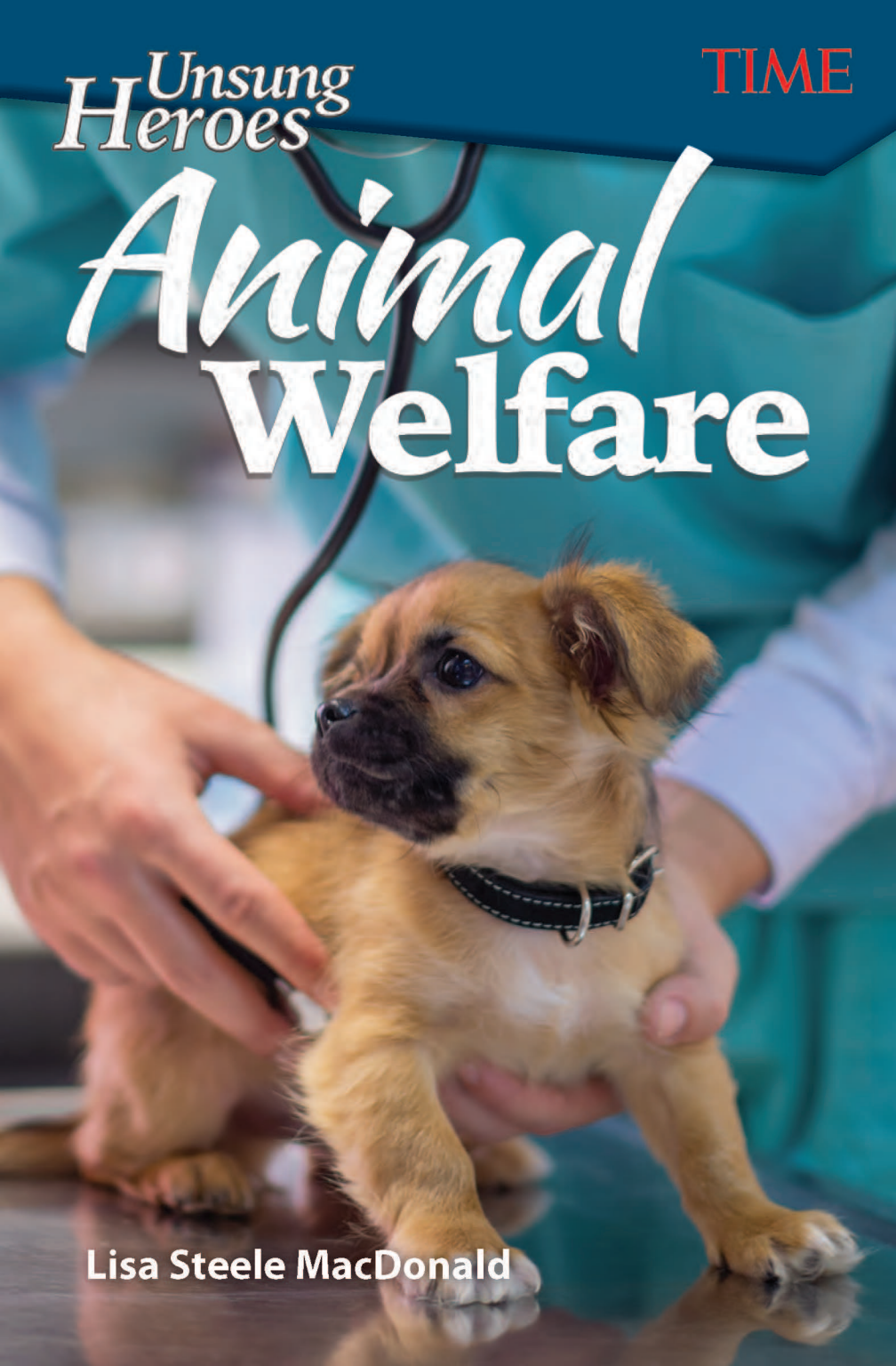
Unsung Heroes

TIME

Animal Welfare



Lisa Steele MacDonald

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Who Wants to Be a Hero?

Do you share your home with a beloved dog, a mischievous rat, or a beautiful bird? Do you consider your pet a member of your family? Most pets are lucky to live with responsible, loving owners who protect and take care of them.

Sadly, this is not the case for all animals. Each year, over six million pets need homes. Some of these animals are homeless or housed in shelters, while others are **fostered** by volunteers. It is very difficult to find homes for so many animals. The good news is that many people and organizations work hard to help find homes for them.

A hero is someone who shows great courage. Some ways to be brave are to work at things that seem impossible, to protect those who cannot defend themselves, and to do a job that is good for society. Look around, and you will see heroes for animals everywhere.

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Creating Change

Caroline Earle White and some of her friends formed the Women's Humane Society in 1869. They were upset by the beating of horses and the number of homeless dogs. That same year, they opened the first dog shelter in the United States.





Busy, busy, busy

Many shelters and rescues depend on volunteers to help care for the animals. Volunteers can help exercise or groom animals. That way, employees can spend more time on other urgent tasks.

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Everyone Can Help

If you are interested in helping animals, you have many options. You can help wild animals, pets, or both. You can volunteer your time, or help spread the word. Sometimes, the variety of choices can be overwhelming, but helping animals is a noble **cause**.

One way to learn about what you can do is to find out how other people have helped animals. Listen to your heart, and see which person or action speaks to you.

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green sea turtles

They Called It What?

Humane societies are groups that work to end suffering. A group of men met in 1824 at Old Slaughter's Coffee Shop in London. The men named their group the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA). It is **ironic** that one of the first humane societies for animals met in a shop with *slaughter* in its name!

You can find animal **advocates** anywhere. They can be young or old, rich or poor. Some of them may be part-time volunteers or full-time employees. They share a desire to make the world a better place for animals.



Volunteers relocate sea turtle eggs to keep them safe before they hatch.

Everybody Helps

No one **agency** is responsible for protecting pets. The work is done by a **network** of businesses, groups, and volunteers. That means that no one can tell exactly how many animals need homes each year. It also means that anyone can help—including you.

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Leading by Example

Many celebrities love animals. They use their fame to help spread the word about what animals need. They also use their money to help fund programs that create change.

Country singer Miranda Lambert puts her fame and fortune to good use. She **cofounded** a foundation to help animals. Its mission is to end animal abuse and to find good homes for animals. Her charity runs many programs, including a shelter in Oklahoma.



Betty White



Miranda Lambert

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Actress Betty White looks out for animals, too. She supports animal-health research. This helps scientists improve animals' lives. Some of their findings help reduce pain for animals that need medical care. This research is also being used to test and diagnose diseases in some animals.

STOP! THINK...

Use the chart to answer the questions about where people go to find their dogs or cats.





Pet Sources		
Adopted from a shelter or rescue	37%	46%
Taken in as strays	6%	27%
Acquired from friends or relatives	20%	28%
Purchased from a pet store	4%	2%
Purchased from a breeder	34%	3%

*2015–2016 American Pet Products Association Survey

- Where do most Americans go to get a dog or a cat?
- What positive trends do you see from the chart concerning where pets come from?
- Why do you think more people buy dogs from a breeder than a pet store or taking in a stray?

*Numbers may total more than 100% because some people report more than 1 pet.

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