How a Purr-fect Photo Can Change a Life. - Pages 4 & 5

SCSPCA Takes Foster Care to the Next Level! - Page 6
FROM THE DIRECTOR

Hello Fellow Animal Lovers,

As many of you may know, I joined the Santa Cruz SPCA last year and am thrilled to be here! I have been volunteering in shelters since I was a young girl, but five years ago I decided to transition my career to animal welfare. I am ecstatic to be working with such a wonderful team here at the SPCA, surrounded by dogs and cats that make every day a joy. Over the last nine months, I’ve enjoyed learning about what makes the Santa Cruz SPCA a special, unique, and impactful organization for animals, and in February I was honored to take on the role of Interim Executive Director.

Our talented and dedicated team is eager to take what we have been doing for the past 80 years – and do it better than ever before! This year we will focus on designing and implementing innovative ways to approach animal behavior, evaluation, and enrichment, in order to maximize each animal’s shelter experience and place them into loving homes in far less time! This, of course, cannot be done without continuing to build and rely on our wonderful team of volunteer animal heroes. Take a look at page four and five to read about how our volunteers are using photography to boost adoption. While you’re at it, flip to page six to read how we are taking foster care to the next level!

For several years we have been working behind the scenes to plan a new forever home for the Santa Cruz SPCA. As we look to the future, we are excited to see some approaching milestones for this new shelter. Progress in one form or another has been happening every day – including completion of the first round of permit review. We are very grateful to have a team of dedicated volunteers giving their time to make sure everything moves forward as quickly and effectively as possible.

There is a lot happening in our current facility – while we work toward our new forever home. I hope that you are as excited as we are about our next chapter. There are many different ways to help us on this journey, so if you are looking for new ways to be a part of our work, please let us know! We would be thrilled to have you join us!

On behalf of the team here at the Santa Cruz SPCA, I would like to thank you for your support in so many different ways. We could not do this important work without you.

Abbi Davis
Interim Executive Director
Delilah (PREVIOUSLY “SYLVIA”)

Delilah is the beautiful cat that I adopted from the SCSPCA a couple of days before Thanksgiving in 2007. I still love her as much as the day we met and our family takes great care of her. She even relocated to England with us -- we couldn’t leave her! Here she is at my daughter’s 5th birthday party. They are great friends. Thank you for all the work you do in helping to find wonderful matches.

– Jane F.

Marty (PREVIOUSLY “MISS TICKLE”)

We embraced the Home for the Holidays Challenge last year -- and we are absolutely glad we did! The jolly SCSPCA Facebook posts of a little white stray lured us in and hooked us for good. Miss Tickle, now better known as Marty, was unwanted, passed by, and stuck in the shelter for a record-holding 3+ years. She has trust issues which is why she was looked over for the many outgoing, face-licking, lap-jumping animals at the shelter. With a little extra time, encouragement, and patience, she is slowly overcoming her fears. She’s an absolute sunshine and a heck of a flirt. We utterly love our little weirdo!

– Sandra M.

Hazel

Everyone agrees that our home feels more complete now that we have added Hazel to our family!

When she first came home, Hazel explored the bedroom nervously for about an hour, then settled on the bed to give herself a little bath. Then she was ready to curl up with us and purr, purr, purr. She’s been calm, happy, and confident ever since. We couldn’t be happier! The best news is that she and our daughter have bonded instantly. The minute she enters the room, Hazel runs over to her purring. They play and snuggle like old friends.

– Deb and David A.

Riley (PREVIOUSLY “DIXON”)

A little over three years ago, you allowed us to bring Dixon (on the right) home to make a best friend for our current dog Roxie. My favorite movie is the “Fox and the Hound,” so looking at these two jump and play -- more often than not lay -- brings the song “Best of Friends” to my mind as I watch them grow together. We have renamed him “Riley.” He loves to match pitch with emergency sirens, hog the bed, and follow us everywhere. He has been the greatest gift to Roxie and our family. Thank you for helping us find the perfect match!

– Julie and Sean F.
When people say a picture is worth a thousand words, it’s true. However, we could argue that -- in an animal shelter -- a picture could find a thousand homes too! Photos have the power to evoke intense emotions and are powerful in how and what they can make a person think, feel, or do. They can draw you in, turn you away, make you happy, make you sad, make you act, make you wait, make you share, or make you pass on by.

That is precisely why a great photo of a shelter animal is quite possibly one of the most important things we can do to help find them a home.

A picture of a shelter animal taken from behind bars, in bad lighting, or in a non-engaging position can do an enormous injustice by not revealing who that animal is or what they could be. A captivating, high quality photo can allow a person to see the animal’s personality and of course – complete adorableness. They can then visualize that animal as their own.

— Mandi Hart, SCSPCA shelter manager.
A PICTURE COULD FIND A THOUSAND HOMES

As a small shelter with a lean staff, keeping top notch photos rolling in every time a new animal arrives is next to impossible. However, nothing is impossible when you have wonderful volunteers who are willing to help!

With the assistance of Steve Sloop, from Shelter Art Foundation, a nonprofit designed to teach shelter volunteers the basics of pet portrait photography, our photography team took shape. After only one course with Steve, volunteers learned to set up clear and compelling shots, use professional level photography equipment, and navigate photo editing software. We were even loaned the equipment to get the team started right away!

Photographing an animal is no easy task! They are moving, wiggling, and wagging subjects. Yet, our patient photography volunteers work hard until the job is done. They feel a sense of pride in the fact that their work could very well be the reason an animal finds a home – and often does!

Are you interested in joining our volunteer photography team? Email Brenna@spcasc.org to learn how to get started!
Volunteer Spotlight

JOANNA ROTTKE

Since the 90’s, Joanna has been involved with the Santa Cruz SPCA in one way or another -- talk about longevity! She began volunteering all those years ago, which led to the adoption of her first dog and then on to her faithful support as a regular donor. In 2010, she adopted a second SCSPCA dog and a few years later, answered a call to become a foster mom. Since then, Joanna has fostered in conjunction with our UnChained partnership and also through our Adoption Ambassador program. In fact, she was one of our first trained AdAm fosters when the pilot program began.

Over the last two years, she’s helped to successfully foster and adopt out four shelter dogs through the specialized foster program. Joanna thinks it’s fun and rewarding -- for both her and her foster friends! “Fostering is a wonderful way to help dogs transition from a shelter to a forever home. I enjoy helping to reveal their true personalities, working on basic training and socialization, and ultimately helping to make them more adoptable.”

Even while she’s got a dog in foster, Joanna continues to help the SCSPCA by regularly volunteering at community events and working in our Adoption Center and Gift Shop in the Capitola Mall. “There is just so much to do and so many ways to help out,” she says. We sure are fortunate to have the dedication and multi-faceted support of a volunteer like Joanna. The SCSPCA and the animals we serve are all the more successful because of it!

ADOPTION AMBASSADORS: Taking fostering to the next level

Most people know what it means to foster an animal – and they probably know all the reasons animals can benefit from being in a foster home. But did you know that the SCSPCA has taken fostering to the next level?

The Adoption Ambassador (AdAm) Program is an innovative home-to-home foster set-up that gives foster families specialized training on marketing and promoting their animals, interviewing prospective adopters, and when the right match has been made – empowering them to finalize adoptions!

“As an Adoption Ambassador, I’m helping to ease the adoption process on both the dog and the adopter. The dog gets the benefit of a real home while waiting to be adopted and the adopter gets all of the valuable insider info – from the dog’s house training habits to their behavior in a home – all without ever having to go into the shelter” says Joanna Rottke, one of the first AdAm trained fosters.

AdAm fosters are often paired with shelter dogs who are generally well-behaved but might be overlooked due to breed, color, or age. They are then encouraged to regularly take their foster dog to popular area hot spots like parks, beaches, adoption events, and dog-friendly businesses. AdAm fosters are also trained to take quality videos and photos of their foster animal to share on social media and with friends and family.

It’s only a matter of time before the adoption interest starts pouring in. Our AdAm fosters are able to take it all the way home by interviewing, selecting, and counseling the new adopter. Once the adoption is complete, all that’s left is a loving send-off as adoptee and adopted embark on a new life together.

Do you think you’d be the perfect Adoption Ambassador? Email brenna@spcasc.org for details on how to get started!
COMMUNITY SERVICE COOKIES
Jeremy Timmons, from Brook Knoll Elementary immediately thought of helping homeless animals as part of his 4th grade service project. He researched dog biscuit recipes and came up with the idea to make a batch and hand deliver them to the SCSPCA four-legged guests. As you can imagine, the dogs were more than happy to taste test Jeremy’s peanut butter and banana bone-shaped biscuits. Two of the dogs were not interested in the treats but Jeremy was still able to make their day by giving them some pets and love. We are so lucky to have compassionate kids like Jeremy in our community!

BAKING US PROUD
After her family adopted a dog from the SCSPCA, Emi Anderson decided to help the other dogs at the shelter who had yet to find homes. She chose to host a bake sale near her San Jose home and the delicious goodies raked in $258.65 for the animals! The SCSPCA is thankful for students like Emi who help our four-legged community members in need.

AN INSPIRED BIRTHDAY PARTY
Cavan Smith, a Mount Madonna fourth grader, loves animals and decided to help the ones in need at the Santa Cruz SPCA. While celebrating her birthday at the Santa Cruz Gymnastics Center, Cavan opened donations instead of presents! With the help of her guests, she was able to collect money, food, and toys for the cats and dogs at our shelter – and the animals have been enjoying the gifts ever since! Thank you Cavan – we appreciate you including us on your special day.

COMPASSION DRIVE
Kind Girl Scout Troop 10211 was working toward their Bronze Award and decided to do a donation drive for the Santa Cruz SPCA. They brought armfuls of gently used towels, blankets, and homemade treats for the dogs. This compassionate group of 4th and 5th graders visited the shelter to drop off their donation and were able to meet a few of the furry recipients of their kindness. Thank you to troop 10211 for your hard work for the Santa Cruz SPCA!
**Community Connection/Recent Partners**

**SANTA CRUZ DERBY GIRLS’ NON-PROFIT PARTNER OF THE YEAR**
Guess who made the cut as the Santa Cruz Derby Girls’ 2018 non-profit partner!? Hint... wagging tails, wet noses, and lots of fur are on the daily agenda. The Santa Cruz SPCA is excited to join forces with this fellow non-profit and their amazing women on wheels. The SC Derby girls have a long history of giving back to the community by selecting a worthy non-profit for which to provide volunteer support, publicity, and a portion of their ticket proceeds. We look forward to this amazing new partnership and are already enjoying each of their home bouts, adoptable puppy posse in tow. **Would you like to attend a bout and cheer on the Santa Cruz Derby Girls? Visit their website, www.santacruzderbygirls.org, for more info!**

**ART AND SOUL EVENTS PET PORTRAIT NIGHTS**
We are excited about what has turned into a VERY popular painting partnership with Art & Soul Events, the creator of Paint Your Pet Night! We look forward to regular painting nights in the future — as the last few sold-out events resulted in fun of epic proportions. Each participant was given a sketch of their pet (based on a photo submitted ahead of time) and were then coached through the painting process, all while sipping on a beverage of choice. The end-product was a portrait most would put on home display — they were THAT good! A portion of each entry ticket was donated to the SCSPCA and our last host, East Cliff Brewing Company, even donated 15% of the night’s bar sales! **Interested in participating in a future event? Keep your eye on our website’s event page or www.artandsoul.events.**

**DON’T FORGET!**
Good eats and lots of treats! Get your sunny-day shopping done at Deluxe Foods of Aptos — one of our long-time community partners! They’ll have everything you need for beach snacks, park picnics, and backyard BBQ’s — from staples to hard-to-find gourmet specialties. If you mention the Santa Cruz SPCA at checkout, 5% of your sale will be donated to help the animals!

**SANTA CRUZ SPCA**
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