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SPCA
142ND YEAR

The San Francisco Society for the
Prevention of Cruelty to Animals

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Greetings from the Boar



We are tremendously proud of the impact that the SF SPCA continues to make in San Francisco and abroad. In a year that has been a struggle for so many Bay Area residents, you, as supporters, have stepped up your efforts to ensure the animals in our community don't suffer. And because you have stepped up your efforts, we are stepping up our services to animals during these difficult economic times.

As the birthplace of the no-kill shelter movement, the Society has always practiced the principals of no-kill in our organization. We never euthanize healthy or treatable animals and because of our robust Shelter Medicine program at the Leanne B. Roberts Animal Care Center, we proudly report a 97% live release rate.

But we believe that the real victory is measured when we prevent an animal from entering the shelter system. We are steadfast in our efforts to prevent animals

from reaching this point. We continue to be leaders in developing programs which support the foundations of no-kill: preventing overpopulation and keeping animals in loving homes.

One of these programs is the Community Cares Initiative, which launched as a pilot program in May as the outreach arm of the services provided to the community by the SF SPCA. On the last Saturday of each month, a crew from LBRACC and a team of volunteers sets up shop in Bayview Park, offering free vaccinations to the residents of an underserved corner of the City. In the four months since the program began, 550 dogs have been vaccinated – what we think is a roaring success. In the past two months, a free spay/neuter clinic component has been layered into the program to service both owned animals and the feral cat program.

Just as importantly, the SF SPCA's Humane Education, Animal Assisted

d of Directors



Therapy, Foster, Behavior and Training and volunteer programs cultivate the culture of engaging animals in our everyday lives. These animals are more than pets, they are family.

We would like to take this opportunity, as another year draws to a close, to thank you for choosing to make the San Francisco SPCA a beneficiary of your time, your donations and your support.

Sincerely,

JENNIFER SCARLETT, DVM
Interim Co-President

JASON WALTHALL
Interim Co-President

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Correction: In the Annual Report section of the last issue of Our Animals, published in Winter 2009-2010, the total Sources of Support was misstated. The correct number is \$12,980,000 which excludes non-operating income provided by gains/losses on investments. In the accompanying chart, Fees for Service was misprinted as 33%. The correct figure is 38% as shown in the table.



*On the cover: Brunhilde, dog companion to Phyllis Harding
Laura Rogers Canine Photography, laura@rogerscaninephotography.com*

The Queen of Pacific Avenue

Friendly Feral Cat Mourned

The reign of Olivia, a feral cat who charmed a neighborhood in Pacific Heights, is over. The basket where she slept in the entryway of the residential building at 1770 Pacific Ave is now filled with flowers and cards.

She was struck and killed by a car April 3 when she crossed the 1700 block of Pacific Avenue, the street where surrounding residents knew and loved her and a neighborhood she'd changed for the better.

"People who lived next door to each other and never talked to each other began talking to their neighbors," said Shirley Costello. "They talked about Olivia."

Those closest to her called the solid gray cat Olivia, the name chosen for her by neighbor Virginia Andrus. Those who lived near 1770 Pacific Ave. called her Sidewalk Sally.

Her primary caregiver, Omar Brubaker, estimated she was between 3 and 4 years old. Brubaker fed her breakfast each morning, either on the building's front steps or in the first floor hallway. He'd replenish the food throughout the day. He kept water in the garden, which happened to be Olivia's favorite spot for afternoon naps. He put a basket with blankets in the entryway.

It wasn't just Brubaker who took care of Olivia, it was many neighbors. Jennifer, a cat-loving neighbor and one of Olivia's best friends, donated a heat-retaining plate, which Jule Ann Maloney or Brubaker would put in the microwave and then wrap in Olivia's blankets. From time-to-time other neighbors and friends added extra blankets and throws to replace those that disappeared. One woman left a cashmere scarf. Sometimes a neighbor would sit on the ground or on a stoop and offer Olivia a friendly lap. She'd usually accept the invitation.

The sidewalk in front of her house was very much hers. She would often block people's path to engage in the cat-world's most friendly social gesture: the flop on the side.

Neighbors knew she loved interaction. "She was special," Shirley Costello said. "Everyone enjoyed her antics."

Even though Costello moved to a new neighborhood, she made regular return trips to visit Olivia.

Her journey to the neighborhood began more than two years ago when volunteers at the San Francisco SPCA's feral cat program trapped Olivia and her small kitten in Visitation Valley at the site of the old Schlage Lock factory, which was being torn down to make way for new construction. It was part of an SF SPCA effort to trap, fix and relocate the suddenly displaced feral colony.

Olivia and her kitten were spayed and taken in by an SF SPCA volunteer who attempted to socialize the two cats for adoption.

But Olivia and her kitten didn't like living indoors and made no secret of it. Instead, they took to the sidewalk.

"The only other home they ever knew was the sea of concrete surrounding the factory," said Mary Ann Buxton, the SF SPCA's feral cat program coordinator.

Buxton said the kitten mellowed out, and was eventually adopted by a family in Angels Camp where she reportedly took quickly to domestic life.

Olivia however held firmly to her outdoor life, and chose the garden and the warm bed in the entryway of 1770 Pacific Ave to be her home.

Although she preferred the outdoors and the passing parade of people, this recent winter Olivia started to come inside to explore the hallways and ground floor units.

On March 25 something amazing happened. She made her way into Brubaker's third-floor condominium, spent the night, and soon started eating her meals inside. Once and a while she even hopped into bed with Brubaker and his wife to avoid the cold outdoors.

During the day she poised herself by the front door, ready to dash back outside to greet her many friends,

lounge on her beloved slabs of concrete, and play on adjoining flower beds.

Perhaps Olivia was ready to compromise, spending days on the street and nights inside as a contented domestic cat.

“I thought that would be our new routine,” Brubaker said. “But that was not to be.”

A car struck her the before Easter. Brubaker rushed her to a pet hospital, but unfortunately it was too late.

Since that Saturday morning Olivia’s many neighborhood friends have come by 1770 Pacific Ave

to express their sadness and loss. Her little bed in the entryway is now filled with notes, cards, pictures, flowers and even poems expressing how much she meant to everyone. Though she may be gone, Olivia will certainly never be forgotten.

As a memorial for this special cat, donations can be made to the San Francisco SPCA Feral Cat Program. Volunteers for this program are always needed. For more information call 415.522.3539 or email us at feralcats@sfspca.org.





The annual Bark & Whine Ball is the primary fund-raiser for CLAW (Criticr Lovers At Work), the benefactors of the San Francisco SPCA's Cinderella Fund, a life-saving effort that embraces the neediest animals at the shelter.

A Night on the Town

Annual Bark and Whine Ball Nothing to Sniff At

The Dick Bright Orchestra, accustomed to entertaining a high society crowd, tweaked the old Journey pop hit to fit this particular fun-loving bunch of San Francisco swells. As the band sang “Don’t Stop Retrievin’ ” the celebrants on the dance floor included a dachshund in a skirt and a bulldog in a bowler hat.

Were the dogs diggin’ it? Well, they were smiling and moving to the beat. Nearby, the belle of the ball, Anna Marie, worked the room. The two-year-old Romanian rescue dog ran to and fro, a set of wheels supporting her paralyzed hind legs.

Anna Marie is otherwise healthy and happily living in her new home. Still, her presence served as a fitting reminder of the selfless generosity behind the Bark and Whine Ball. While these dogs romped at the Bark and Whine, other animals in the care of the SF SPCA were mending, healing and preparing for their journeys to new homes. The fund provides much-needed medical care for homeless dogs and cats who might otherwise be euthanized because of serious illness or injury at other shelters.

The annual event is the primary fund-raiser for CLAW (Critic Lovers At Work), the benefactors of the San Francisco SPCA’s Cinderella Fund which is a life-saving effort to embrace the neediest animals at the shelter. Over the past ten years, CLAW has raised nearly \$900,000 for the SF SPCA.

The 14th Bark and Whine Ball was held March 25 at Herbst Pavilion at the Fort Mason Center where the event has been moved to accommodate the ever-growing guest list.

Skeptics with less canine savvy might question the wisdom of putting folks in their finery indoors with a pack of dogs who don’t necessarily know each other.

But somehow, it works, both as a fund-raiser and as a fun night out.

“This event is just so special,” said Nancy Trogman, president and a founder of CLAW. “It’s been a success from the beginning.” The ball began at the old Federal Reserve Building in the Financial District, outgrew that site and moved to the Gift Center. Trogman noted the new venue is the largest yet, easily accommodating the 600+ guests at this year’s fete, with room to grow and ample parking.

The dogs loved the whole thing, including the patch of grass thoughtful organizers provided out on the wharf for doggie potty breaks.

Trogman has an everyday reminder of CLAW’s good deeds in her home. She adopted a Cinderella Fund dog in December named Pricilla, an 8-year-old miniature poodle, who was found running the streets of San Francisco Thanksgiving Day.

Once at the SF SPCA, she received the care she needed, including having one leg amputated.

“That hasn’t held her up a bit,” Trogman said with a laugh.

Pricilla lives with Smokey, a 7-year-old gray cat.

“He’s bigger than the dog,” Trogman said.

The proceeds of the ball include ticket sales, a silent auction (including many items with canine themes) and donations from corporate sponsors.

Trogman said founders were optimistic that they’d come up with the perfect event for this city.

“Here in San Francisco we really love our animals,” she said.

Join us for Bark and Whine Ball 2011 on Wednesday, March 30 at Fort Mason’s Festival Pavilion. Please contact us at 415-522-3548 or visit us at sfspca.org

Cinderella Fund Works Magic

Supporting the Neediest Animals in Care



Thanks to the generous support of dedicated and selfless donors, the Cinderella Fund is making miraculous, life-saving efforts a routine occurrence.

The fund is the primary beneficiary of the Bark and Whine Ball and provides medical care for the neediest animals in the care of the San Francisco SPCA at the Leanne B. Roberts Animal Care Center. It directly addresses the Society's core mission: Saving and protecting animals, advocating their welfare and enhancing the human-animal bond.

Dogs and cats often arrive at the shelter in dire condition. Sometimes the result of abuse, sometimes the result of neglect and sometimes the innocent

victims of old age; these animals would often be euthanized at other shelters.

Here, in the loving embrace of the SF SPCA's Cinderella Fund, they are given new life.

The fund pays for treatment, surgery, medication and the tender, loving care that makes them ready for adoption to a loving, forever-home.

The fund makes the extraordinarily compassionate veterinary staff and state-of-the-art facilities of the Society's public hospital (at the Leanne B. Roberts Animal Care Center) available to these animals followed by a place at Maddie's Adoption Center. The success of these animals is a living testament to the importance of the SF SPCA's Cinderella Fund.

Caring for Surviving Dogs & Cats

The Sido Program

The Sido Program finds new, loving homes for dogs and cats whose guardians die or can no longer care for them. Luke and Emily, two Burmese mix cats, found themselves homeless rather suddenly. The same fate befell Tatiana, a 5 ½-year-old Rottweiler mix, and Tito, a 9 ½-year-old Rottweiler mix.

Fortunately for those animals, their loving guardians had put a plan in place. All four had been enrolled in the Sido program, which allows pet guardians to provide for the care of their animals should they die or become unable to care for their cats or dogs. They bequeath their pets to the SF SPCA, which in turn goes to extraordinary lengths to find new homes for their beloved animals.

That these special guardians have taken measures to provide for their pets after they're gone is evidence that these animals have come from loving and caring homes – not always a given with shelter animals.

Some of these cats and dogs may be old, but they still have much to give. They prove day after day that quality can be more important than quantity.

Elizabeth came to Maddie's Adoption Center and was browsing in the cat area. She had one essential requirement. She needed pets that were not afraid of her electric wheelchair.

As she was going down one hallway, Luke, an 11-year-old Burmese mix expressed curiosity and interest. He ran to the door. He ran along the window, keeping pace with the wheelchair.

"He was fascinated," she said.

Luke seemed to understand. He was a Sido cat whose previous guardian also had difficulty getting around. Elizabeth adopted Luke and his 12-year-old sister Emily.

"They are both active, alert and happy," she said in mid-April, just one week after taking the pair home.

Luke, the more happy-go-lucky of the two, quickly made the adjustment. Emily was a bit more cautious, but has progressed nicely.

"They are always together," Elizabeth said.

Tatiana and Tito, two Rottweiler mixes, came to the SF SPCA together as Sido dogs last August.

Because of Tito's numerous health issues, Meagan Hobbs, a veterinary tech at the SF SPCA, became well-acquainted with the pair.

The dogs lingered in the shelter. A neighbor of their previous owner, who had cared for the dogs while the guardian was dying and had helped enroll the dogs in the Sido program, suggested the dogs be separated to facilitate Tatiana's adoption.

Hobbs knew just the family, her parents Norm and Kelly Thorpe. They owned a steak restaurant in a rural Idaho and had room to spare. Because of their remote location, Kelly Thorpe said they would be unable to provide Tito the ongoing care he required, particularly chemotherapy.

"We met her and fell in love with her," Kelly said.

They adopted Tatiana in December and Hobbs took Tito home on foster care (He was soon adopted by someone who had seen him on the SF SPCA website). Tatiana quickly took to the wilder climes of Idaho.

"She absolutely loves it," Kelly said.

Tatiana also, to her delight, discovered snow.

"She loves to play in it, roll in it and eat it," Kelly said. It's also clear that Tatiana came from a loving home. "She's very friendly and affectionate," Kelly said. "We didn't train her. She came that way."

And how's Tito doing?

Hobbs tried to arrange a reunion when Tatiana and Kelly were in the Bay Area in April. But Tito couldn't make it. He was on a camping trip with his new guardian.

For more information about the Sido Program, please email development@sfspca.org or call 415-554-3029.

Phoenix Rises

On February 2, Phoenix, a two-year-old American Blue heeler, sat huddled in a cage in the euthanasia room at the Stockton Animal Shelter and waited his turn. His body bore a new wound and the scars of several old ones.

Fortunately, the loving embrace of the San Francisco SPCA was just around the corner. What was once certain death turned into a new lease on life for the dog whose body was wracked with injuries—possibly from abuse, an animal attack or a car accident.

Abbie Newhouse, a dog transport volunteer for the SF SPCA, was at the shelter to pick up some other dogs. She met Phoenix on a trip to Stockton the day before, but didn't see him on this trip.

When she learned of his fate, she was on the phone immediately with San Francisco's Marti Watts and Helen Colombo of the Dog Intake team. She explained Phoenix's plight and Watts and Colombo didn't hesitate. They told her to bring the dog home.

"If we didn't help him, no one would," Watts said. On March 5, Phoenix was happily romping with his two humans in the fenced-in backyard of his two-acre permanent home in suburban Lafayette. Phoenix had been picked up as a stray in the Central Valley.

"It was his physical condition that got me," Newhouse said. "I couldn't stop thinking about him. He seemed like such a nice dog."

Soon, Phoenix was happily on his way to the San Francisco SPCA and a new life.

Dr. Jennifer Scarlett, the head of shelter medicine, examined Phoenix and found an old, scarred wound and a broken tail, but was unable to determine the source of the wounds.

Thanks to the efforts of the Cinderella Fund, which is granted by generous donors and helps animals in the care of the SF SPCA, Phoenix was given much needed medical treatment. This was the first step in being readied for adoption.

Phoenix was also badly in need of socialization and some old-fashioned TLC. In addition to the efforts of SF SPCA staffers and volunteers, Phoenix received some extra attention.

Laura Gretch, of the SF SPCA Development Department, fostered him by day in her second-floor office. "He was just awesome," Gretch said. "He was climbing on my lap within a few days. He was as gentle as all get-out."

Gretch took Phoenix on daily walks. He was friendly with people, although he acted a bit frightened around men. A few weeks later, the still-skittish Phoenix was adopted by a young San Francisco couple. They led him away from the shelter on a leash. They were a couple blocks away on 16th Street when a noisy truck scared Phoenix. He broke his collar and ran back to the safety of the shelter, following the route of his daily walks with Gretch.

It was decided that Phoenix would do better in a quiet, rural setting.

Dr. Jennifer Babineaux had been following his case since meeting Phoenix during treatment in the Leanne B. Roberts Animal Care Center, and she had the perfect solution.

She knew a couple in Lafayette, Fred and Phyllis Stanin, who she thought would be ideal guardians. They had lost their dog, Bucky, in early February.

So she called them.

"We weren't going to get another dog right away," Phyllis Stanin said. "But after three or four empty weekends we changed our minds."

They looked at a photo. "His face is just so amazing," she said. They drove into the city to meet him.

"It was love at first sight. What an amazing, well adjusted guy he is, despite how much he's been through," she said. "Such a sweetheart."

Once at the Stanin's Lafayette home, Phoenix's name was changed to Frankie. He quickly made the adjustment

to suburban life; he enjoyed meeting people and dogs on walks around the Lafayette Reservoir and even took to the busy streets of downtown Lafayette.

“He adjusted beautifully,” she said. “Frankie is especially happy in his new yard; he loves the far reaches by the back fence the most. He loves to explore. He’s so happy when he’s chasing a squirrel or digging for a mole.” She’s had him to the family vet to have sutures removed from the wound. His coat is growing back. He’s in good health. He may have to have his tail amputated. Stanin said SF SPCA vets at the Roberts Center have promised to pick up seventy-five percent of the costs.

“The hospital at the SF SPCA has been just fabulous,” she said. “And so has the entire staff.”

She took particular note of Donna Shiono, the client care associate who facilitated the adoption.

“She went to length to make sure we knew everything about his background and his medical records,” Stanin said. “Everyone was so forthcoming with all the

information to make sure we could make sound decisions about the adoption,” she added.

Stanin said it also was apparent that Frankie had benefited from his time with SF SPCA volunteers.

“The animals there are better adjusted,” she said, noting how she and her husband have adopted from a variety of shelters over the past 30 years. “It really makes a difference. Those guys have turned Frankie into a well-adjusted little guy.”

The Stanins have flexible work schedules and are able to be with Frankie nearly all the time. It took just two days for Frankie to appear fully settled in.

“He’s amazingly sweet,” she smiled. “He wants to be petted. He rolls over and wants his belly rubbed.”

It’s apparent that Frankie has had a rough life, possibly the victim of abuse. In addition to major wounds, he has other scars on his body.

“He’s healing beautifully just where he should be, in his loving home.”



A Place for Saving Lives

The Leanne B. Roberts Animal Care Center



Gina Elsinetti came home one Friday night in March to find her 9-year-old Maltese, Puffy, lying on her bed – a change of pace for the energetic dog who usually ran to greet her. She assumed he was worn out from playing with his housemate, Fifi, a 1-year-old Maltese.

But by the next morning, Puffy was unable to walk or stand and support his weight. There was no doubt in Elsinetti's that she would drive from her home in Burlingame to the Leanne B. Roberts Animal Care Center at the San Francisco SPCA.

"The only people I trust are at the SF SPCA," she said. Her trust was earned twelve years ago when an earlier Maltese was suffering from an ailment her regular veterinarian had difficulty diagnosing. She and the dog

were sent to specialists in Davis and Berkeley and still no resolution. She spent more than \$5,000.

Finally, she tried the old SF SPCA infirmary, where vets diagnosed the dog as having a tumor in its stomach lining. They found the problem and began treatment in two hours, at a cost of only \$200.

Elsinetti stayed with the SF SPCA, and is now a loyal patron of the new state-of-the-art Roberts Center that extols the compassion and caring that have become the hallmark of the new facility. She is one of the 10,000 people who each year trust some 14,000 pets to the veterinarians and staff of the organization that has been serving and protecting animals in San Francisco for more than 140 years.

When she arrived with Puffy, staffers at the reception desk quickly took the dog to one of the exam rooms.

Elsinetti waited and soon learned that Puffy had thrown his back out, apparently sliding on her new hardwood floors during a romp with Fifi.

“I thought it was something he ate, and he was constipated,” she said.

Puffy was kept at the hospital where his treatment included anti-inflammatory medication and acupuncture.

The vet called her that night and told her Puffy was resting comfortably, and again the next morning to give her an update on his rapidly improving condition.

“If my own doctor did that I’d be impressed,” she said. “The attention to detail was extraordinary.”

Elsinetti picked Puffy up on Sunday evening. He’s home and doing just great, once again enjoying all-out play sessions with Fifi.

In early March, Madeline Ferraz brought in her nine-year-old cat, Pepper, for routine surgery to remove bladder stones. Instead, Pepper’s condition proved to be more complicated than first assessed and she required two surgeries and a one-week stay in the hospital.

Pepper is recovered and is enjoying life once again with her ten-year-old companion cat, Cammie. And Ferraz credits her recovering to the life-saving facilities of the Roberts Center and the extraordinary efforts of Dr. Jack Aldridge, the senior veterinarian on the center’s staff.

“I almost lost her,” Ferraz said. “His level of commitment was amazing. He did what he needed to do to save her life. He took the extra steps.”

Ferraz said Aldridge performed heroically. “She was his patient,” she said.

Aldridge had come in on his day off to perform a second operation. He called her every night with updates. He also invited her to come in and visit Pepper.

“I was not surprised but very pleased to see how clean it was,” she said.

“The new hospital is amazing,” Ferraz said. “I was really struck with everyone there, from the techs, to the personnel at the desk to the vets themselves. They have a high level of commitment and they all enjoy being there.”

“Pepper has lost two pounds, which having tipped the scales at 18 pounds is not a bad thing,” Ferraz said with a laugh. “Once home, she was jumping on the bed like her old self.”

She even was taking her medication with a pill pocket, a trick Ferraz learned at the Roberts Center’s pharmacy to deal with Pepper’s former reluctance to cooperate with taking her meds.

Ferraz said her bill totaled \$7,000, which is competitive with private animal hospitals. She was able to pay, but said the SF SPCA offered no-interest credit or was willing to design payment plans.

Byron Rourkacha is a dedicated and loyal client of the SF SPCA. He adopted two kittens at Macy’s Holiday Windows in 2004. He adopted another male kitten in late April.

One of the older cats recently came down with a urinary disorder, although he didn’t know that at the time. He did what for him was the natural thing. He brought Maxie to the Roberts Center at the SF SPCA.

“I was struck by two things,” he said. “One, the facility itself is really clean, and two, everyone on the staff, from the front desk, to the vets, to the techs, to the pharmacy, was very friendly and helpful.”

Maxie was quickly and successfully treated in one visit. Rourkacha was happy with the visit, and says all follow up care will be at the Roberts Center.

Catherine Art has been bringing her cats to the SF SPCA for veterinary care for twenty years. She recently adopted Jackson at the SF SPCA, bringing her current cat population to four. Jackson, eight years old, came with a variety of medical issues, including kidney failure and diabetes. When she got him, he weighed just six pounds.

Art had an earlier cat with identical medical issues.

“So it was a great connection to make,” she said. “Jackson was a really sweet cat who just needed a second chance.”

Jackson would require a number of vet visits to monitor his condition, and Art was very pleased with the quality of the Roberts center’s vet care.

She was particularly happy with the follow up, including e-mails from the veterinary staff.

“They care,” she said. “They’re interested in Jackson’s welfare and that’s a big deal.”

The Leanne B. Roberts Animal Care Center is dedicated to caring and healing. We are grateful to the donors, led by the Roberts family, who made its construction possible.

Finding Final Serenity

Providing Selfless Support in Animal's Final Days

It didn't take long for Harriet Rafter to fall in love with Amber, a gentle soul in the furry and aged body of a tan Akita/Chow Chow mix. Rafter, a volunteer with the San Francisco SPCA, came into the shelter every Sunday to serve the dogs breakfast and take them for walks. But there came a day last March when her life changed. She met Amber.

"I was impressed because she had a roommate who was terrified of everything and who she treated well," Rafter said. Plus, she found the twelve-year-old easy to walk. Amber was a kind and friendly companion. The two got along swimmingly.

Thus began a loving relationship that ended tragically. On April 6, Amber was hit by a car, never recovered and was euthanized in Rafter's arms a few days later.

Though Amber was a loving companion, there were problems getting her adopted.

"She had some medical issues and she couldn't do stairs," said Alison Lane, the SF SPCA's foster care coordinator. "Nobody wanted to adopt her." They took her to another shelter where she was turned away.

It was arranged that Rafter would take Amber under the SF SPCA's Fospice Program, a combination of foster and hospice care in which the SF SPCA assumes medical expenses for aging dogs and cats.

On June 6 Amber went home with Rafter. As a first order of business, Amber quickly dispelled the inaccurate stereotype that Akitas and Chows are stubborn fighters.

"Amber was perfect for me," Rafter said. "She was calm and dignified and had beautiful manners, totally self-confident – exactly the dog I needed."

Though there were some issues of extensive medication and treatment Amber would need, Rafter knew what she was getting into and has no regrets.

"For 10 months I had a dog so beautiful that people raced across the park to pet her, a companion so well-behaved, I could trust her reactions no matter

the situation," she said. "I loved caring for her, which was easy – just a matter of pills and adjusting to her decreasing pace and mobility."

Rafter had special praise for the SF SPCA's head of shelter medicine, Dr. Jennifer Scarlett and vet tech Laura Mullen.

"With such a team, fostering is easy and affordable for all," she said. "And the generosity of donors allowed Amber the relief of acupuncture which helped her to walk and enjoy life."

On that fateful day in April, Rafter and Amber were walking to Golden Gate Park. Rafter chose a route that avoided stoplights because Amber had a difficult time making it across the timed crossing. They were in a cross-walk near the park when a car struck Amber, dragging her a short distance. She was rushed to a pet hospital, and later transferred to the SF SPCA's Leanne B. Roberts Animal Care Center. She had no broken bones or apparent major internal injuries. But she was unable to stand and was put on pain medication.

"It was pretty obvious it was time," Lane said. "She wasn't showing any signs of improvement."

Rafter came into the Roberts Center on Sunday, April 10 to spend the last day with Amber. Lane and Mullen were also there. Later that day Amber was euthanized by Dr. Deb Clyons.

"Amber was fairly calm, quiet and relaxed," Lane said. "It was a nice way to say goodbye." Rafter said she misses Amber terribly.

"But I would not have missed a minute of the previous 10 months," she said. "It is a tribute to how much joy Amber gave me that I look forward to adopting or fostering again when the time is right. She gave me so much more than I ever gave her."

Volunteers and support are needed for the SF SPCA Fospice Program. Please contact us to volunteer your home or to make a donation. foster@sfsPCA.org or 415-522-3542.

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Loving Homes to the Rescue

Animals and People Find Each Other at the SF SPCA



When John Super stopped by Maddie's Adoption Center last September, he was looking for a cat, maybe two. He left with three. It was love at first sight when Super stepped into Maddie's which housed three 5-year-old black siblings: Jack, Janet and Chrissy.

The three cats, named after the characters on the old TV sit-com, "Three's Company," greeted Super. He smiled and asked, "Why not?"

The three kitties came in together and the SF SPCA had offered some adoption incentives (like a cat tree) hoping the bonded trio would be able to go to their home together. But it was a challenge; very few clients come in looking for three cats.

Super was a special case. At one point, he'd lived with as many as five cats. Most recently he had four, but one by one, over several years, he lost them to old age. He was left with his two dogs and three birds, but wanted cats back in his life. Mission accomplished!

Jack, Janet and Chrissy were a ready-made family because they've been life-long companions. When meeting during their daily meanderings, they stop and exchange quick nuzzles. They groom each other, they share food and sometimes they slumber in a pile, forever littermates. They've grown into adulthood with plenty of feline nurturing. They are, in short, complete cats. "They're wonderful," Super says.

Sometimes he leaves a laundry basket on the floor. When he goes to collect it, he says he's likely to find a cat or two, or three, in the basket.

He'll occasionally play "cat trapping," by leaving a small box out. "One gets in, one gets out, somebody else gets in," he says smiling.

The cats get along great with his two small dogs – a 15-pound mutt and a 12-pound dachshund mix.

"As far as the dogs are concerned, these cats just replaced the cats I had," he says.

He does have one complaint: "Sometimes those animals run all over my head when I'm trying to sleep!" he laughs. "And I can't tell which one started it."

He solved the problem of identifying feline triplets by getting three different colored collars. He says he can tell them apart when he sees them two or three at a time and can compare them against each other. "But," he adds, "it's impossible if it's just one."

They also have similar personalities, sharing an affectionate, loving and trusting nature. The three have seamlessly made the transition to Super's animal-rich home.

"They're living the good life," he says.

Visit sfspca.org to see all of the animals available for adoption.

Partnership Profile: BMW

An Interview with Henry Schmitt of SF BMW

After forty years and now three generations of business in the Bay Area, BMW of San Francisco is joining forces with the SF SPCA to support local animals and show their pet-loving community that caring for animals runs in the family.

Henry Schmitt's father Dieter opened the BMW dealership back in 1964. "That was a long time ago," says Henry, "when people would wave when they saw another BMW." As their business has grown, the Schmitt family has become extremely committed to giving back to the community where they've found their success.

Why is it important to give back?

"We've gotten to know a lot of people over the years and there are a lot of worthy causes out there. It feels good and we're very grateful to be able to give back."

What motivated the decision to partner with the SF SPCA?

"I've had so many dogs over my whole life. I love animals, my father also loved animals, so for me, the SF SPCA was kind of a natural fit. What's great is that anyone can have pets, anyone can have that companionship. I think it's fun for people to celebrate that. It made a lot of sense to pair two things people love: cars and pets."

So you have pets at home?

"We've had Jed the English bulldog now for seven years. We also have a toy beagle that my son wanted when he was ten years old. Lucy's a little pistol, a hound dog. She can smell that fox all the way in Petaluma and wants to go for it. My wife Michelle and son Alex picked her out of this book of dogs when Alex was ten years old. We went to Monterey to pick her up she's been a member

of our family ever since. She's a great dog. She's our protector, full of energy. Now she's fourteen and our seven-year-old English Bulldog finally is at the same energy level. It took her seven extra years to mellow out!

How have your pets been influential in your life?

"What worked for my dad, and for me too, is realizing this is a hectic business. It's stressful, there's a lot going on and you can detach as much as you can but you're still so involved. When I get home and I have Jed in my lap and I'm petting him, it just lowers my heart rate. I noticed that with my dad. He used to be a pretty uptight guy. He was a hard working business guy, a German guy, but when he got around his pets, he was a totally different person. He was mellow. He was a person of leisure; it was like the missing ingredient. [Pets] take you away from yourself."

Moving forward, when people see the BMW/SF SPCA affiliation, what do you want them to get from it?

"We're good citizens and we care about pets. They need to be taken care of. We want to connect with a worthy cause. Cars and pets are fun. I feel like life's too short not to take a little time to have a good time. When you can go for a drive in this beautiful city or take your pet out, that's a great thing."

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