



WOODS
HUMANE SOCIETY

FALL 2017

SHELTER TAILS

Celebrating the Human-Animal Bond



It's a Dog's Life

The Power of Collaboration

Take Your Relationship
to the Next Level

Turquoise
Adopted 3/21/17
Photo Credit: Mimi Ditchie

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From the Director's Desk

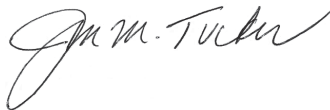
Dear Friends,

Your passion and commitment to the welfare of animals has helped propel Woods Humane Society to new heights. Thanks to you, we are serving more animals and people than ever before! Our fiscal year of 2016/2017 was one for the record books that included our merger with North County Humane Society, expansion of our facility in San Luis Obispo, and record-breaking achievements in total adoptions, spay/neuter services, humane education, and more. Thanks to you, we also raised more dollars than ever before which has made all of this progress possible. We hope you feel a great sense of pride as you work in partnership with our staff and volunteers to maximize our impact for the community.

As we move ahead, we know there is much more to be done to truly make San Luis Obispo County a safe and nurturing place for the animals. With your support, we are taking the next steps to open a much-needed low cost spay/neuter clinic on our Atascadero property. Beyond that, we are moving carefully and strategically toward expansion of services in North County. It is our intention that all areas of the county have access to affordable spay/neuter services, a place to surrender or adopt a pet, and resources to promote a strong and joyous human-animal bond.

Thank you for enabling Woods to grow as a resource for the animals and the people who love them. Your support changes lives. Your support saves lives. On behalf of each and every wet nose, wagging tail, and soft purr, thank you for making a difference.

Best wishes,



Jill Tucker
Executive Director



Jill and her best buddy
Ryder McPuppypants

(left to right) Heather Massoni, Shelter Medicine Coordinator; Adriana Gomez, Surgery Assistant; Kate Hanson, Surgery RVT; and Dr. Leslie Sklena, Director of Veterinary Services celebrate a record-setting year.



It's a Dog's Life

Surrendered because he couldn't get along with other dogs, Kai did a lot of one-on-one work with our trainer before he was ready to try again. There were some bumps along the way but Kai finally found his perfect new family! We love to hear about the "happily ever after" and hope you enjoy this update as much as we did.

Kai is such a good boy. He fits in with my family perfectly. His life consists of hikes almost every day, tons of walks, a bunch of cuddling and playing at the park with his girlfriend Aspen. She was rescued from Woods three years ago by a neighbor!

He is a good listener, although we are still working on getting excitable around other dogs, he has been really wonderful on all his walks and we only had one incident with a bigger dog... but the other dog started it.

He is super gentle with babies and kids. He loves the cat and they chase each other around the house, and cuddle! He no longer gets anxious in the car, he even sits up and watches the cars go by. We went to the river this past weekend and he was in doggie heaven. His anxiety still peaks out when we leave, he hates being alone... but he's got a yard and toys so he manages. He's very loyal to all of us and takes turns sleeping with everyone, especially if you're having a bad day. In the morning he even goes room to room giving everyone kisses!!

Everyone wants to meet him and they comment on how sweet he is and how handsome. They can't believe anyone would give him up and neither can we. We love him so much and are beyond happy he ended up with us. Thanks for taking such good care of him when he was with you. You do good work. You're animal angels.

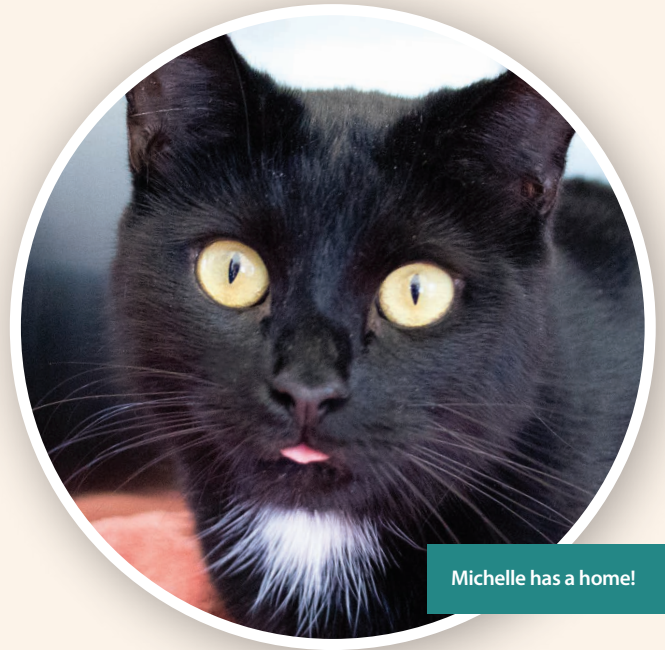


The Power of Collaboration

We've learned some things this last year about collaboration, cooperation and coming together. The merger between Woods Humane Society and North County Humane Society has provided a wonderful opportunity for both organizations to gain from each other's strength so that together we are doing even more for the animals in our county than either of us could do alone.

For many years, North County has been committed to providing a place for cats with Feline Immunodeficiency Virus (FIV) and Feline Leukemia Virus (FeLV). In San Luis Obispo our philosophy has been that there is a home out there for just about every cat and dog. When these two ideas came together we decided to bring FIV and FeLV cats into our adoption programs at both locations and the results have been very gratifying.

Finding a home for Michelle and almost a dozen other special cats was the direct result of blending our passions and strengths and speaks to the power of our collaboration. Just days after our merger in January, we decided to experiment – we brought Michelle, a petite black cat with FeLV to our San Luis shelter. Though she had tested positive, she was otherwise healthy and showed no symptoms. We made sure that she was housed by herself and strategized with our staff and volunteers on how to find her a family who would be able to meet her special needs. We were so very pleased and grateful when Michelle was adopted, ensuring that her life, though short, will be filled with comfort and love.



Michelle has a home!



Over the winter our dog pods got some much needed refurbishing



New flooring and wall covering makes cleaning easier and the center divider creates a visual barrier to keep our canine guests calmer

He Came Back!

As I become fully aware of my surroundings and all the tendrils of sleep fall away, it is clear that the racket of the others is increasing in volume; all together the noise is chaotic and rambunctious. This can only mean one thing—they are here! It's the morning and they are back! As this recollection hits home, I lose all sense of self control and suddenly add my voice to the now deafening welcome. It will only be a few more minutes until I get my own personal greeting and time in the play yard.

I see her now as she comes down the row. She stops at each kennel for a second or two and opens the doors to the outside. I recognize her immediately—she is the one who loves to run and makes those ridiculous noises whenever I act cute on purpose. As she reaches my door, I give her a hearty hello and she responds in kind.

Moments later she is at the back of my kennel and she lets me out to join my friends! This morning routine is one of my favorite things because I get to blow off some steam with like-minded individuals. As we do our business and check in with each other, I see the girl letting out others into the adjacent yards.

Later on I'm resting in my kennel and all at once everyone acknowledges a new arrival—voices rise in a slow crescendo as he makes his way towards me. It's my friend from yesterday! I distinctly remember him because we spent a long time together outside in the yard and he gave me belly rubs and lots of treats. Today he stops at my kennel briefly before heading back the way he came. I'm a little disappointed he left but after a while the girl is in front of my kennel with a leash, and I almost forget why I was sad.

As we near the front doors, I see that my new friend is waiting there for me! When I glance back at the girl, she has this strange look on her face; I think it is utter happiness. Then she is saying goodbye and I have no idea why. Hoping to calm her down, I give her a couple of licks. It's not until my new friend and I are out the front doors that I realize this is something different. This experience is all at once frightening but exciting and then I look up at him, he smiles down at me and says, "Let's go home!" With that glance we make a promise - I will give him all my love and he will give me a H-O-M-E!



Take Your Relationship to the Next Level

We know you love each other but honestly, could things be better? Perhaps you both lack the confidence to navigate certain social situations so you just end up staying at home and you've stopped inviting people over because it's just easier that way. Or, maybe you just need a new activity to put some life back into your time together.

We've got the answer! Positive reinforcement training at Woods University builds confidence, improves communication, enhances your mutual bond, and adds enrichment to your lives. So...why wouldn't you?

Woods University continues to grow and innovate. We now offer as many as ten classes each week. There's something for everyone – from Puppy Social Hour, C.H.A.R.M. School, Petite Pals, Beyond Basics and Feisty Fido to our newest classes: R.E.L.I.E.F. for the Fearful Dog and Fun-gility.

Please make a date with your special someone to spend some quality time at Woods University. You'll both be glad you did.

Learn more at www.woodshumane.org/WoodsU

Questions? Call us at (805) 543-9316

SAVE THE DATE

WIGGLE WAGGLE WALK FOR WOODS

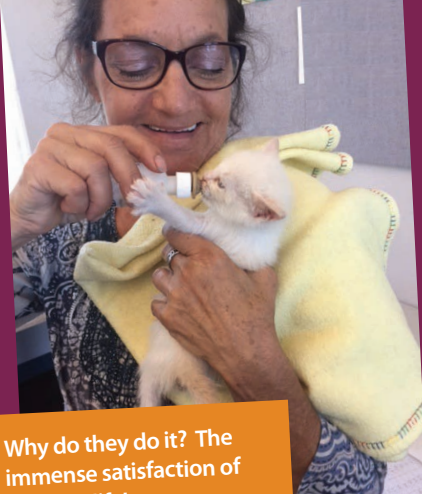
SATURDAY, OCTOBER 14TH

WWW.WOODSHUMANE.ORG/WALK2017

What if sending an email, posting on Facebook, or talking to family and friends could save the life of a homeless pet? It can!

As always, the financial success of our annual walk for animals depends on you, our supporters. When you decide to become a fundraiser and reach out to your family and friends, the number of people helping homeless animals in our community expands exponentially. Our online tools make it easy to reach out to everyone you know and if you have questions, we'll help you get started. Please register and start fundraising today – make this the year you decide to go the extra mile for animals!





Why do they do it? The immense satisfaction of saving a life!



Compassionate volunteers offer a helping hand.



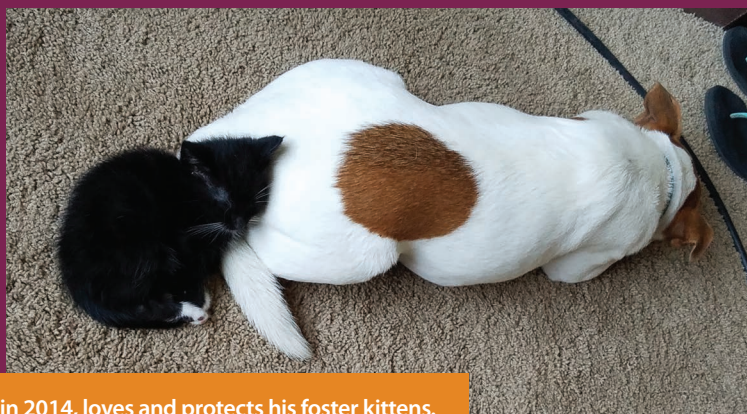
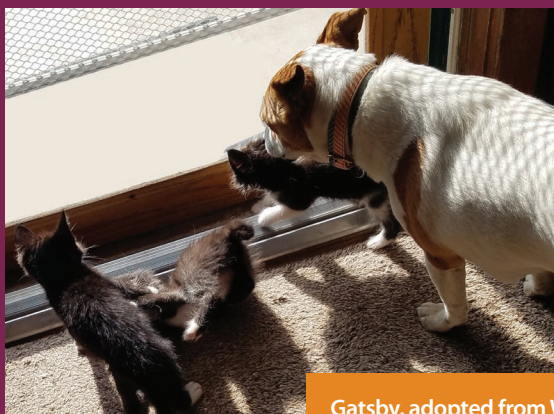
THE LIFESAVING WORK OF FOSTER VOLUNTEERS!

College students, home-schoolers, retirees, folks who work from home and even a few with very accommodating work places...these are some of the people who volunteer to serve as fosters. This spring and summer over 225 tiny kittens have found refuge in 56 foster homes!

Kittens must be spayed or neutered before they can be adopted and they need to weigh at least two pounds before they can have surgery so finding foster care is crucial. Like all babies these tiny kittens need lots of care so they can thrive and grow.

Starting in the late spring and through most of the summer, we receive calls looking for help with kittens almost every day. We can't take them all but with the help of our amazing team of foster volunteers we do our best. Sometimes the babies arrive with their mom – that's the best because she does most of the work for the first month. Other times we'll be presented with newborns who, even with round-the-clock care, have to fight for survival. For the first few weeks these tiniest ones will need to be bottle fed every two hours – truly a labor of love. As they grow and transition to solid food they still need lots of attention and socialization so they'll be healthy, happy, well-adjusted and ready for a forever family.

If you have an interest in joining this dedicated team please contact one of our Foster Coordinators. In north county email Tom at tlott@woodshumane.org; in south county email Chantalle at clittle@woodshumane.org.



Gatsby, adopted from Woods in 2014, loves and protects his foster kittens. He shares his favorite toys with them and even serves as a pillow!

Humane Ed Classroom Program Teaches a Record Number of Kids to "PAWS" Before they Pet

It is 10 a.m. in one of the Kindergarten classrooms at Lillian Larsen Elementary School in San Miguel, and what might have been a rowdy group of 20 children is standing in near perfect stillness and silence, watching with eyes bright and smiles on their faces. Each child gently extends a small fist, or "Doggie Paw," down to Ollie the Border Collie, who makes his way slowly around the circle, sniffing each little hand with a wet, tickly nose that makes several of the children giggle quietly. But they are patient. They are calm. They are humane. And, most importantly, they are safe.

These kids, just like almost 4,500 other students last school year, have just learned "PAWS Before You Pet!" an acronym that Woods' Humane Educator Jamie Relth uses to remind kids to be safe and kind around dogs. It stands, roughly, for Permission, Animal-Language, Wait for the dog to approach, and Sniff, with the hope being that kids will assess a dog's body language (after learning to recognize signs of fear, anger, anxiety, or happiness) and see if it chooses to come closer for affection.

Jamie remembers from her own childhood that kids (and adults) can often let their excitement about animals override their fear of or their empathy for them. She believes if people are thinking only of themselves, they might not realize that what they are doing to a dog is threatening, frustrating or startling it—all of which could lead to a bite. She works to get kids to pause for a moment and remember that animals have feelings. She is planting a seed of humane education in their minds that may protect them, and dogs, in the future.

Numerous kids and classes have been inspired and empowered by these lessons. Some have raised funds or collected donations for Woods after learning about what it takes to care for so many homeless animals. After the spay-and-neuter lesson, an entire sixth grade class made flyers about the importance of "fixing" overpopulation.

Our plan, with Jamie in the lead, is to keep the momentum going this school year. We even envision building a team of educators who one day will fan out across the county to reach every single child.

Jamie says, "You never know. Any child in any classroom might see our lessons and go on to be an adopter, an animal advocate, a veterinarian, or, you know, just a safe, humane citizen." And that makes it all worthwhile.

To request a Humane Education presentation for your classroom or to learn how to involve your children in one of the many other programs at Woods visit www.woodshumane.org/HumaneEd.



Woods reached 4,500 children in 2016/17, a 43% increase over the previous year!

Help us drive adoptions!

Join us on Facebook and Twitter – the more you share our cats and dogs the faster they find homes.



**Woods
Humane
Society**

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Our Mission

To serve, protect and shelter homeless companion animals; To place animals in humane environments; To promote responsible pet ownership, provide humane education and reduce pet overpopulation; To celebrate the human-animal bond.