



WOODS
HUMANE SOCIETY

SPRING 2018

SHELTER TAILS

*Celebrating the
Human-Animal Bond*



Sunny: Finally, Officially, Home!

2017 By the Numbers

Meet Our New Staff

Sunny
Adopted 10/28/17
Photo Credit: Mimi Ditchie

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Gabrielle Amster
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Rachelle Hiser
Adoption Program Manager, Atascadero

Braeleigh Doble
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Caitlin Amaral
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Eric Stockam
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Humane Education Coordinator

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Tom Lott
Volunteer and Foster Coordinator, Atascadero
Maintenance Coordinator

Mark Van Cleve
Maintenance Coordinator, SLO

Chantalle Little
Rescue and Foster Coordinator, SLO

Dani McKinsey
Intake and Adoption Coordinator

Shelle Clark
Adoption Support Coordinator

From the Director's Desk

Dear friends,

As we kick off 2018, the Chinese Zodiac's "Year of the Dog," we reflect upon 2017, which for Woods was most certainly the "Year of the Cat." January 1st saw the completion of our merger with North County Humane Society in Atascadero. We integrated their cat adoption program and welcomed their dedicated staff into the Woods team. With our now combined resources, cat adoptions soared in North County and countless cats that had been there for years found loving homes in our community. In the spring we unveiled a new state-of-the-art cattery at our San Luis Obispo location that can now comfortably accommodate more cats and kittens. Additionally, throughout 2017 we experienced our longest "kitten season" ever, taking in a total of 680 kittens as litter after litter came through our doors. Our community's investment in the new cattery, and the tremendous support of our donors, volunteers, foster families, and adopters has paid off. Cat adoptions were up at both locations by over 50 percent!



Jill and her best buddy Ryder McPuppypants

The dogs certainly had their fair share of attention too. Despite a little bit of downtime early in the year to make some improvements to our kennels, we managed to adopt out 1,190 dogs in 2017 – a new record! The dogs we were able to assist came from near and far as members of our community kept coming through our doors to adopt them. We anticipate that 2018, the "Year of the Dog," will indeed be one where Woods saves the lives of more dogs than ever before.

On behalf of all of us here at Woods, thank you for making this work possible. It is because of you that we have been able to save more animals and bring unconditional love and joy to so many families. We ask for your continued support as we navigate another big year for Woods Humane Society with the launch of our new spay/neuter clinic in Atascadero. With animals to save and others to "fix," we turn your dollars into love, care, and hope.

Best wishes,

Jill Tucker
Executive Director



MEET OUR NEW STAFF



**GABRIELLE AMSTER
& MINNOW**

As we've grown so too has our need to ensure the sustainability of all we've accomplished. In the past year we invested in brick and mortar and have seen how that has paid off in terms of soaring adoption numbers. We now need to protect what we've built by investing in our financial stability. After a national search, in November we were thrilled to welcome Gabrielle Amster to the newly created position of Director of Development.

After earning her degree in Communications & Journalism at the University of New Mexico, Gabrielle launched her career in non-profit fundraising with positions at The United Way and the University of Virginia. She has worked in animal welfare for the past 11 years, previously as the Director of Development and Marketing for Animal Trustees of Austin and as the Director of Growth and Sustainability at the Santa Fe Animal Shelter. Gabrielle feels blessed to join the Woods team and be a part of an organization so beloved and important to the San Luis Obispo community. She looks forward to meeting you in the coming year!



**DR. LESLIE SKLENA
& ROO**

In June 2017, Dr. Leslie Sklena eagerly joined the team at Woods Humane Society as our Director of Veterinary Services. A California native and Cal Poly Animal Science graduate, Dr. Sklena earned her DVM from the Atlantic Veterinary College in Prince Edward Island, Canada. After shoveling snow from her driveway for the last time, she returned to California to practice companion animal medicine in the Sacramento area.

Prior to coming to Woods she spent several years as a shelter veterinarian providing the best care possible to the homeless animals of San Diego County. In her most recent roles, she oversaw the medical operations of high volume shelters, acted as the medical liaison for community stakeholders, and was part of the team to spearhead the community outreach program that provided low cost sterilization services. Dr. Sklena is thrilled to be back on the beautiful Central Coast and grateful to be a part of the Woods family.

YEAR IN REVIEW 2017

2017 was another record breaking year.
Here are a few of the highlights:

2,667 animals found new loving homes

1067 dogs **919** cats
123 puppies **558** kittens

Our surgical team performed **4,264** spay and neuter surgeries

5,504 children participated in one of our Humane Education programs, an 86 % increase over last year

We celebrated a **97%** live release rate

531 cats, dogs, puppies and kittens...lots of kittens were fostered until ready to enter our adoption program

Woods University provided training for **403** dogs and puppies

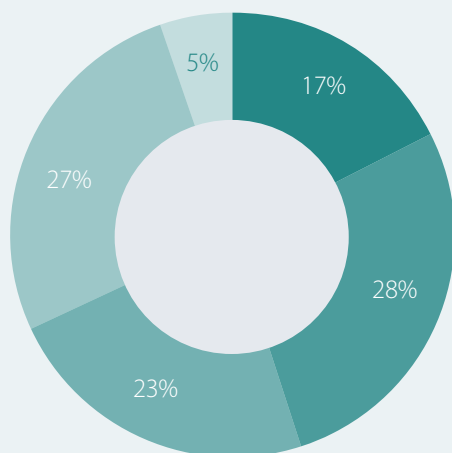
Volunteers gave **24,830** hours of service, equivalent to **12** full-time staff positions!



You, our supportive community, have made these life-saving achievements possible. Together we will accomplish even more in 2018.

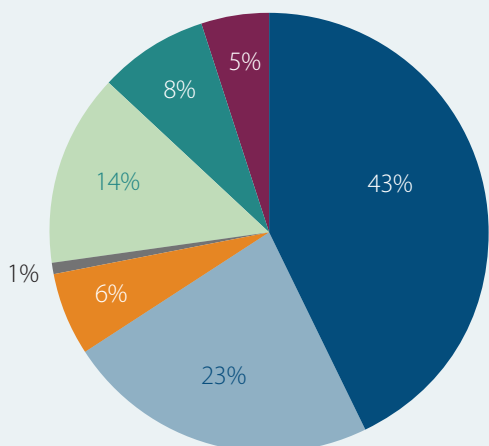
Thank you!

BY THE NUMBERS



WHERE OUR ANIMALS CAME FROM IN 2017

- ◆ SLO County Animal Services • 460
- ◆ People who needed help to rehome a pet • 726
- ◆ Unwanted puppies and kittens • 600
- ◆ Overcrowded shelters in nearby counties and LA • 701
- ◆ Shelters affected by Hurricane Harvey • 136



INCOME 2016/2017

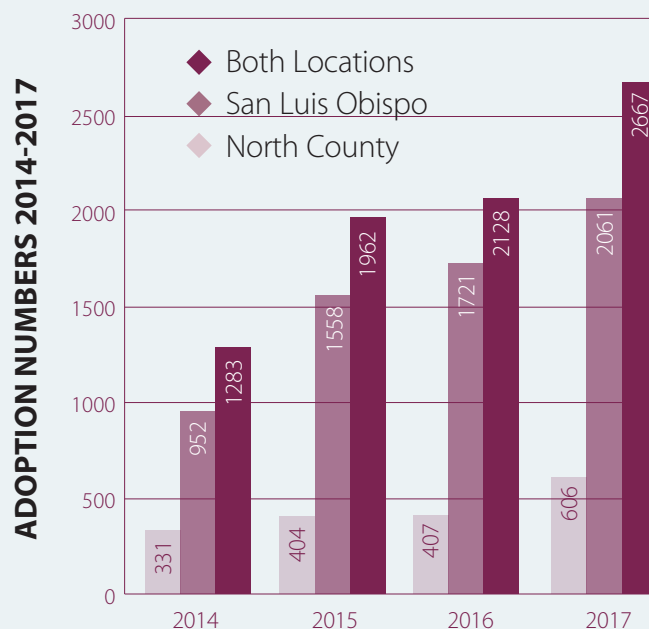
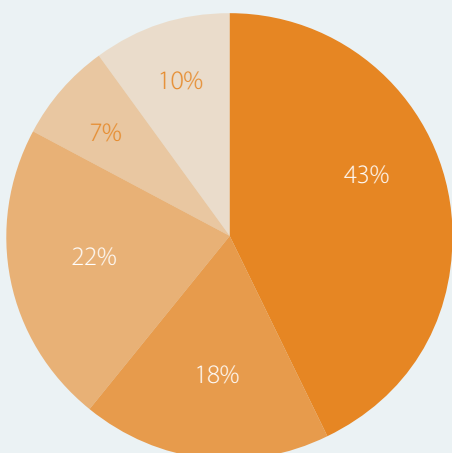
- ◆ Bequests • \$1,406,063
- ◆ Donations • \$749,434
- ◆ Grants • \$194,414
- ◆ Retail Sales • \$40,604
- ◆ Fees for Services • \$457,745
- ◆ Special Events • \$246,459
- ◆ Interest Income • \$116,217

Total Income \$3,261,431

EXPENSES 2016/2017

- ◆ Program salaries and wages • \$1,106,698
- ◆ Veterinary • \$481,478
- ◆ Operational Expenses • \$560,608
- ◆ Management and general • \$186,241
- ◆ Fundraising • \$255,619

Total Expenses \$2,590,644



Sunny: Finally, Officially, Home!

by Sue Berry

Sunny was just one of those dogs. Her big brown eyes, one of them with a fleck of blue, looked straight into your soul. She made connections easily; loved people and had a tail that never stopped wagging. She was already spayed when she was picked up as a stray in Monterey County. She was friendly, easy going and understood basic commands. We estimated her age as somewhere between three and six.

No owner ever came forward to claim her.

Sunny came to Woods with other dogs from an overcrowded shelter, all various sizes and colors, some small and fluffy, some big and loud, some scared, some excited, all hoping for a second chance.

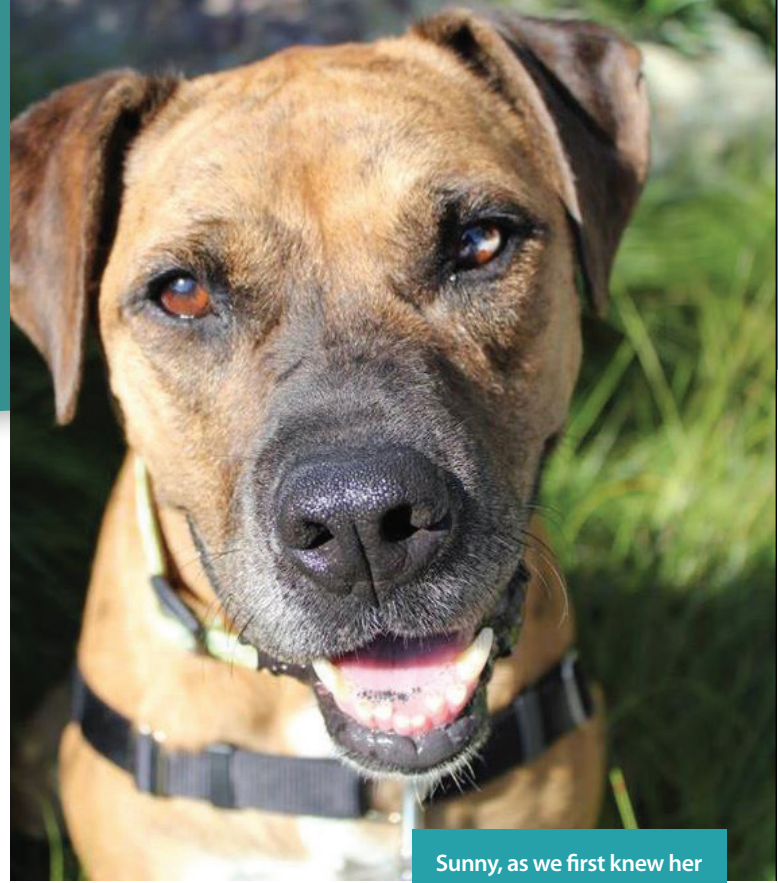
The first family who adopted Sunny owned a ranch with room to run and play but two days later she was returned. She had wanted to chase the other animals on the ranch and that was not allowed.

Sunny was adopted again, this time by a family with children. Again, two days later, she was back. She wasn't comfortable with their toddler so once more she was available for adoption, but not to a home with small children.

Adopters kept coming through our doors, choosing new family members and buying them new toys and collars and leashes. They left with their new loved pet while Sunny waited for her turn.

Kennel life can be stressful for animals. After being adopted and returned, Sunny was showing signs of serious stress. She was anxious about the barking. She was anxious about the daily cleaning which involves noisy pressure washers. She was anxious about so many visitors walking through the kennels. She didn't like to play with other dogs and began letting everyone know with constant barking that she was not enjoying any of it. We tried as many ways as possible to reduce her stress. I brought her to my office during cleaning time, far away from the barking dogs and noisy pressure washing. We took her for hikes, we took turns spending time with her playing games, giving belly rubs and snuggling on the couch in the breakroom.

Months passed and Sunny waited. We knew she just needed the right home, the right person who could see past her



Sunny, as we first knew her

anxiety to the heart of gold we all saw within her. She was a frequent visitor to the Behavior Department where she was a star pupil with basic obedience training. She went to school visits with our Humane Education Coordinator. She spent countless days napping in my office while I worked; content with a chew toy or just to sleep quietly on a bed. She snored. It was adorable.

Woods believes that it is our responsibility to support our adoptions even after the animal goes home. We have a well-established follow up program involving phone calls and emails in the days and weeks following an adoption. We offer training support with our certified instructors for behavior challenges and we willingly accept returned animals whenever an adoption doesn't work out. We felt Sunny simply had not found that right fit so we changed our counseling techniques, updated her profile with new information and gave her another try on the adoption floor.

Sunny was losing weight. Her soulful eyes tugged at our heart strings. We knew that the longer she was in a kennel, the harder it would be for her. Our Veterinary team ran lab tests to be sure there was no underlying medical issue at work. Everything was normal.

Each time she went into a home it became harder for her to adjust. She was becoming distant, even with those who spent a lot of time with her. Finally a couple came forward to adopt Sunny. They had no children or other pets; they were not worried about her behavior, and this time seemed like a great fit. For weeks and even months after the adoption, we followed up with the adopters and they seemed content.

Two full years passed and then we learned Sunny had been picked up as a stray in Santa Maria. Her microchip was registered but the contact information was no longer valid, so she came back to Woods Humane Society. She arrived a bit older, grayer and slower, but she remained our beloved "Sunny Bunny".

When she was adopted and returned once more, we knew we had to try something different for this dog! We took video of Sunny showing how nicely she walks on leash and how snuggly she could be. We placed a plea on social media; we just knew her perfect person was out there. We knew that someone would be willing to look past her challenges, her anxiety, and her face now grey with age. We had to find someone who would be willing to work through any behavior challenges with our trainers and who would allow Sunny time to adjust in a home.

Sunny was adopted by a couple with big hearts and endless patience. They met with her several times. They talked about her challenges; her history; her story. They asked thoughtful questions and did their research to be sure they felt capable of handling anything that might come up.

They looked into Sunny's soulful brown eyes, one with a fleck of blue, and said "Yes, we want you. Yes, we will be there for you. Come with us and we will be a family."

Thanks to our Veterinary team we knew Sunny had a clean bill of health. Thanks to our Behavior team we knew Sunny was capable and eager to learn new things. Thanks to our staff and volunteers who spent countless hours with her, we knew Sunny could form strong bonds with people who loved her. Thanks to our donors, we had the resources to do all of these things and give Sunny the second... and third... and fourth... and fifth chance that she needed. Thanks to our Facebook followers, her story was spread far and wide until her final adopter came through our doors.



Sunny loves to lounge in the sun on her very own deck.

AN UPDATE FROM SUNNY'S FAMILY:

"We are absolutely in love with her and she has been doing great... she's gotten more comfortable in the house and is showing some silly personality. We've been giving her a lot of love and attention and she has just eaten it all up. We have a good sized backyard and she loves to sit on the edge of the deck and keep watch or just lounge in the sun. She's been enjoying the toys we've gotten for her and we quickly realized that certain types of toys don't last as long as others. Ha! She loves getting belly rubs and has been doing well on walks. We think that she is a perfect fit to our home and we love every second with her!"

Sue Berry serves as the Director of Operations at Woods Humane Society. With 14 years as a professional animal welfare advocate, Sue brings a wealth of knowledge and unquenchable passion to her role.

SAVE THE DATE

WOODS WALKS THE RUNWAY

Friday, March 16

Once again Kelly's Casuals will be presenting a fashion show to support the work of Woods Humane Society – North County. Join us at the Atascadero Pavilion from 1:00 to 3:00 pm. Tickets available at woodshumane.org/runway



Wine4Paws.com™

WINE 4 PAWS

April 7 and 8

For the 10th year we invite you to indulge in a weekend of wine tasting to benefit the homeless cats and dogs of Woods Humane Society. With over 80 wineries taking part you are sure to find the perfect spot to kick back and relax.

CHIHUAHUAS DE MAYO

Saturday, May 5th

Do you have the fastest Chihuahua in San Luis Obispo County? Even if you don't you and your petite friend are sure to have a fabulous time at this fun-filled event featuring food, music, a costume contest and, of course, Chihuahua races.



THE 18TH ANNUAL WOODS GALA – TIKI TAILS

Saturday, June 9th

Nestled among the grape vines, Ancient Peaks Winery's Oyster Ridge facility is the setting for this year's elegant celebration. Join us for a scrumptious dinner, auctions, music, and perhaps a little hula dancing.



Visit our website or follow us on Facebook to learn more about all of these events.

THE KITTENS ARE COMING...

Can you help? Last year Woods Humane Society placed 472 kittens in foster care! Some were just days old and required round-the-clock care, others just needed a safe place to be until they were old enough to enter our adoption program. We'll train you and provide all the supplies you will need. Interested? Please contact one of our Foster Coordinators. In North County email Tom at tlott@woodshumane.org; in SLO and south email Chantalle at clittle@woodshumane.org.



Woods' volunteers fostered 472 kittens last year – we need your help!

WOODS HUMANE ALLIANCE

January-December 2017

We gratefully acknowledge this generous group of donors who have provided major support for the homeless cats and dogs on the Central Coast.

PROTECTOR

(\$5,000.00 to \$9,999.99.00)

Adamski, Moroski, Madden,
Cumberland & Green
Donna Berg
Charter Spectrum
Margaret Collier and Raul Castillo
Jaime Colome
Regina Cowan
Jim and Carlen Eckford
In Memory of Ed "Fast Eddie" Ewing
Edwin and Jeanne Woods Family
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Gazin Foundation
Glide Foundation Trustees
Ty and Debbie Green
Harold J. Miossi Charitable Trust
In Memory of June Gator
Alia Mai
Dean and Mildred Miyazaki
MOCA Foundation
Morgan Family Foundation
John and Prudy Noon
Mary Beth and Peter Oppenheimer
Gabrielle Paladino
Petco Foundation
PG&E Your Cause
Sammy and Michael Pineau
Rabobank
Sparacio Charitable Foundation
The Marianne and Stacy Cocks Fund,
a Fund of The Community
Foundation San Luis Obispo County
The Peter and Mary Russo Family
Foundation
Eric Watkins
Francine Woods
Barbara Zajac
Betty Ziegler

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(\$2,500.00 to \$4,999.00)

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American General Media
Bank of the Sierra
Jenny and Bruce Benedict
Nicholas and Mary Cook
Ethel Frends Foundation
Heart to Heart Real Estate
Lee Heller
Henry W. Bull Foundation
HWY 101 Communications
KSBY News
Bernice Lacks
Lemos Pet & Supply
McCarthy Wholesale
Kenneth Miller
Parker Wealth Advisory Services
Precision Polishing Inc.
In Memory of Scott Sayer
Jeanne Sprague
Rennie Stoltenberg
Sharon Tanner
Tractor Supply Co.

ADVOCATE

(\$1,000.00 to \$2,499.00)

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Anonymous
John Anthony
Linda Asprion
Stuart Atkins
In Memory of Josephine Avila

Gregory Bailey
Derek and Gabriella Banducci
Vernon Baynard
Margie Beaman
Gary and Linda Beatson
Jeffrey Bisely and Lettie Huaracha
Sheila Blake
Doris E. Bouadjemi
Edward Bowie
Debbie Boyd
Stephen Brehm
Brown Family Foundation
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Judith Carter
Lisa Christensen
Kari Coady
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The Richard and Shirley Walker Fund
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Marian Francis Saldo
Susan Sayer
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B. Christine Shea
Sally Shennum
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TRI-X Incorporated
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Roberta Wallace
Jodi and Mark Whittaker
Edwin and Caroline Woods
Susan Wright
Kathryn Wullner Thomas
In Memory of Christine Yecny
In Honor of Yogi
David Zwarg

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(\$500.00 to \$999.00)

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Don and Karen Antonel
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Pete and Gwen Bachman
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Karen Gibson
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Joanne Gingras
Giovanni's Fish Market
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Karyn Grencius
Alice Griggs
Eva Grimm
Robby and Frank Gussman

10 Shelter Tails

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George Hauser
John Hawkes
Robin Hayward
Greg Heggli
Craig and Kris Hendricks
Nancy and Richard Hensley
Theodore Henson
Peggy Hernandez and Gregory Power
Laura Herzberg
Arylane Hill
John Hofschroer
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Mike Terry
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Quillan Trombley
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Ke-Ping and Susan Tsao
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In Memory of Karen Walraven
Virginia Walter
Stephen White
Elizabeth and James Whitehead
Jim and Deborah Whitson
Lola Widner
Phyllis Will
Rex and Janice Wolf
Jackie Wright
Stephanie Yang
Jocelyn Yonemoto
Lucia Young
Stuart and Susie Young

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Todd Andrew
Sharon Angles
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Mariel Rose Apodaca
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Sue Dokulil
James Dorf
Rosalie Draeger
Alberta Drake
Maureen Dresp
Grace and Kevin Dumas
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Robert Edgar
Mark Elliot
Donald and Marguerite Erickson
Eureka Burger
Nancy Fairchild

Carolyn Fergoda
Robert Fiori
Mary Flores
Patty Ford
James and Wendy Forester
Jacquie and John Forry
Mary Fox
Lynne Frank
Jeffrey Freeland
Melissa French
Harold Galvan
Rose Garing
Mary Gearing
James Gentilcore
Christopher George
Michael Geringer
Roger Gibb
Timothy and Marie Gillis
Bryan and Beverly Gingg
Robert and Rosalind Gingg
Girl Scout Troop 41085
Jeff Glenn
Susan Goff
Dale Gomer
Natalie Goodwin
Jerry and Sandy Gothe
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Leslie Stanley
Jennifer Steele
Alan Stevens
Karen Steves
Karen Stoeckel
Daniel Stubbs
Marco Sturken
Patrick M. Summers
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Roger Swanson
Michelle Symonds
Rich and Cindy Tarver
Patricia Taylor
Linda Teeple
Shan Thomas

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Marcia and Tommy Torgerson
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Mary and Roger York
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Lynda Ziegler
Mark and Laura Zohns

A Legacy of Giving

Founded in 1955, Woods Humane Society has grown from a small, volunteer-run organization to become the only full-service humane society in San Luis Obispo County. Throughout the decades Woods Humane Society has enjoyed tremendous financial support from members of our community and bequests have played a major role in ensuring our financial wellbeing. The generosity of those who have included us in their estate plans has allowed us to care for tens of thousands of homeless pets as we developed a full range of services. These visionary benefactors have positioned us to look to a future where every animal has a home where it is cherished.

You can continue the legacy by making a planned gift to Woods Humane Society. Your kindness will ensure that we can continue to work tirelessly to save the lives of homeless pets. When you make a gift we will welcome you into our Legacy Circle, invite you to enjoy an annual donor luncheon and, with your permission, acknowledge you in our newsletter. For more information contact us at giving@woodshumane.org or (805) 543-9316 x 33.

We would like to acknowledge the visionary members of our community whose legacy gifts have come to us in 2017. These gifts are providing life-saving resources for homeless animals in our community.

Junefaye Cardinale
Regina Cowan
Stella Farrar
Kathleen Fay

Laura Knox
Marie McAulay
Elsie Powers
Lynn Riedinger

Sharyn Sugarman
Jack and Karen Witter
Virginia and Ray Wysock

LEARN FROM THE BEST

While there are lots of ways a trainer can earn a certificate, to become certified by the Certification Council for Professional Dog Trainers (CCPDT) is a pretty big deal. The CCPDT is the only independent certifying organization for the dog training profession and it requires the completion of rigorous, monitored exams to demonstrate mastery of humane, science-based dog training practices. In San Luis Obispo County there are only six trainers who have received this certification and three of them are here at Woods!

Staff members Michelle Rizzi and Eric Stockam, and volunteer, Chelsea Mills, have each completed the arduous study and hands-on experience required to earn the designation of CPDT-KA. Using positive reinforcement training techniques they help dogs learn to navigate the world successfully. Every day they share their expertise with Woods' staff, volunteers, new adopters and clients of Woods University. You and your dog deserve the best!



Chelsea, Eric and Michelle, three of SLO County's best, work their magic in our training facility – an area we call Pod 3

WOODS UNIVERSITY *offers:*

- two basic training classes, C.H.A.R.M. School and Petite Pals;
- a weekly Puppy Social Hour;
- a trio of unique classes, Feisty Fido, RELIEF for the Fearful Dog, Fun-gility; and
- Beyond Basics where dogs can earn an AKC Canine Good Citizen certificate.

Learn more about our classes at woodshumane.org/WoodsU.

Help us drive adoptions!

The more you share and comment, the faster our cats and dogs find forever homes.

Join us on Facebook and Twitter!



**Woods
Humane
Society**

875 Oklahoma Ave.
San Luis Obispo, CA
(805) 543-9316

2300 Ramona Road
Atascadero, CA 93422
(805) 466-5403

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.