Pet Assistance Foundation

A compassionate presence in the community since 1955.

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PAF Administrative line:

1 (310) 732-1230

Above: two shots of Cedric, a 22 lb. terrier pup looking for a new home. Call 310-732-1230 for information on adopting. Top right: Mary Finley, our dynamic South Bay Chair, shows off Dodger to a potential adopter at Rolling Hills PETCO.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

On Animal at a Time…and More

As the New Year approaches, it is time to reflect on what we have accomplished this year. For **Pet Assistance** (**PAF**), 2017 has been a monumental year. We have started to make major state legislative inroads by addressing the larger dimensions of pet overpopulation and the animal misery it engenders. Our years of a "boots on the ground" approach to rescue, and the continuing impact of our spay/neuter hotlines have strengthened our determination to bring about fundamental changes to reduce the pain and suffering daily endured by too many companion animals.

Our collaboration with **Social Compassion in Legislation** (**SCIL**), led by Judy Mancuso, propelled us into the big arena of state legislation. **PAF** made major contributions to the passage of **AB 485**, performing primary research to arm **SCIL** with critically needed data, speaking out at State Senate and Assembly hearings, and soliciting the support of other humane organizations. By mandating that California pet stores no longer sell commercially bred dogs, cats or rabbits, **AB 485** effectively slams the door on the sale of animals from the notoriously cruel, profit-driven enterprises known as puppy, kitten and rabbit mills. Pet store animals for sale must come from municipal shelters or 501c3 humane organizations. Governor Brown signed the bill on October 13, 2017.

While we are proud of the role we played in this endeavor, **PAF** is but one of a growing number of humane organizations that acknowledge there would have been no bill without the leadership, political acumen, and perseverance of Judie Mancuso and her dedicated colleagues, who successfully navigated this historic bill, the first of its kind in the country, along its arduous legislative path. Once again, we express our gratitude to Assemblyman Patrick O'Donnell for having the foresight to author it.

There is irony here. Isn't it amazing that **SCIL**, a small organization, operating on a shoe-string budget, was able to get this landmark legislation passed despite the initial reluctance, if not outright opposition, of the major humane organizations whose resources are in the hundreds of millions of dollars? They didn't back this bill, for reasons known only to them, until learning of its probable passage by the legislature.

With respect to helping one animal at a time, we endured once again the depressing challenges of the kitten season, rescuing many malnourished adult

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President's Message, continued

cats and kittens from desperate situations: caught in the engines of cars, left to die in dumpsters, abandoned in factories, mobile home parks, schools and neighborhoods. For the umpteenth time we mull over the factors that contribute to animal abandonment. Irresponsible pet owners who do not spay and neuter due to ignorance or laziness, the high fees at municipal shelters for owner turn-ins, the weak or largely unenforced spay/neuter ordinances, and the dearth of humane education in the schools and communities all play a part.

So daunting are the challenges that we console ourselves with a sense of relief that we are doing some good by helping that one animal. Yet we know that this alone is not enough. Somehow, we must simultaneously strengthen our resolve to address the fundamental issues contributing to the massive companion animal suffering that exists.

We approach our 68th year as a compassionate presence in the community with a renewed sense of hope and optimism. The passage of **AB 485** has energized the humane community, lifted our spirits, and empowered us to move ahead with renewed vigor. Be assured we are committed to relieving animal suffering whether one animal at a time, hands-on, or many thousands at once, by affecting legislation, humane education, and access to low cost sterilization.

Friends of **PAF**, we need you now more than ever. It is your moral and financial support that allows us to continue. **PAF** wishes you and your loved ones a most joyous holiday, and we thank you in advance for your tax-deductible donation to carry on with our twofold mission of helping one animal at a time and MORE.

Yours in Compassion,

Wendy Aragon
President

Special thanks to our fabulous phone team. The Spay/Neuter Hotline is the foundation of our foundation!
Helen Giss - San Diego
Louisa Jacobs - San Fernando and Santa Clarita Valleys
Bonnie Van Alphen - Greater Los Angeles, San Gabriel Valley, Long Beach - Mid Cities, South Bay
Dawn Mehl - Inland Empire and Antelope Valley
Olga Peraza - Spanish Lines - All Areas
Mary Ann Travnik - San Diego

Important Tax Considerations for Donors

While the proposed tax bills are still being debated at the time of this writing, there are some important things to consider. So far, both the House and Senate plans involve removing personal exemptions, while increasing the standard deduction. This means many who currently itemize will no longer benefit from doing so. Although donations will remain deductible for those who itemize, the percentage of Americans itemizing would be expected to drop from about 33% to as low as 5%, as would the number of Americans with a financial incentive to make charitable donations. So for those who plan to itemize for 2017, but may not in the future if these changes go through, it could make sense to increase donations before the end of the year, while they will still decrease tax liability.

petco foundation

We are thrilled to be recognized by the Petco Foundation for our lifesaving work. A $7500 grant will help us continue facilitating affordable spay and neuter of pets in Southern California. Currently, we are excited to be able to expand our outreach to underserved areas, where animal shelters are overflowing, and efforts to reach pet guardians have been impeded by language barriers.

Pet Assistance Foundation
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A Holiday Story of Hope: *An Adopter Tells How a Little Dog Makes a Huge Difference*

"Jack has completely lifted Dad's mood. They are inseparable. Although Jack's first instinct is to shy away from men, he quickly sensed that he was there to be Dad's companion. Now they are always together. Jack accompanies Dad on his walks with homecare workers. They even take afternoon naps together on the couch. Since Jack's arrival, Dad is happier, and he has put on some weight. Despite the dementia that sometimes zones him out, Dad becomes more aware and interactive when asked about his dog. He smiles more."

Jack came into my father's life a month after hospice informed us that he was on his deathbed. Ater battling Parkinsons for over 10 years, on Thanksgiving Day of 2016, he was no longer able to eat or swallow any liquid. He just wanted to sleep.

Luis Valdivia and Jack

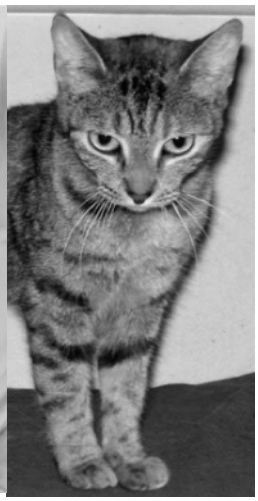
Dad (Luis Valdivia) had had a rough decade up to that point. He had fallen and broken his back, had prostate cancer, lost two younger brothers, his brother-in-law, my grandma (his mother-in-law) and our beloved family maltipoo, Fluffy. That Thanksgiving we had to call my nephew in the Coast Guard, stationed in New Orleans, to come to grandpa's side to say his good-byes. Soon Andrew arrived, and upon hearing his voice, Dad tried to wake up and interact. Within a few days we witnessed a miracle. He started to talk, ask for food and water, and was able to sit up again. What had happened was that his body detoxed from a decade of medication. By the time Andrew left, Dad was able to sit up and eat soft food.

Jack

About a month later, my sister Lily and I met Domino (now Jack) and Wendy (Aragon, PAF) at the Lakewood Petco. Having lost Fluffy a little over a year before that, we instantly fell in love with Domino. We knew my parents could give him a home, and hoped he could lift them from the depression brought on by so much loss in the past few years. Fluffy had been my Dad's companion for 15 years and grew up with my sister's children. So when Bob (Wonder, PAF) delivered Jack on December 23, 2016, he was Dad's new best friend! Having Jack around has done wonders for his depression and has slowed down the progression of his dementia. This sweet fur ball has become Dad's guardian angel. — Lucia Valdivia, M.A., P.P.S.

Why Not Welcome Some Serenity into Your Home?

Adopt a Cat



Pedro is a love—will follow you around like a puppy. An indoor cat who was left outside alone when his owners moved out of state. Pablo is super affectionate.He was found wandering in a parking lot, starving and full of fleas. Sweet Lydia came to us because she was so much smaller than her siblings. Fanny is a gorgeous Russian Blue type, and Serenity is the love bug who inspired this headline.

l. to r., Pedro and Pablo, Lydia, Fanny, Serenity. These are just a few of the beautiful felines we have awaiting homes. Call 310-732-1230 for information on adopting.

Volunteers make all things possible….

"If compassion was the motivating factor behind all of our decisions, would our world not be a completely different place?"
—Sheryl Crow

"Volunteering is the ultimate exercise in democracy. You vote in elections once a year, but when you volunteer, you vote every day about the kind of community you want to live in." — Author Unknown

"Help one another. There's no time like the present, and no present like the time."
— James Durst

Our best wishes and a heartfelt thank you to Rose Mary Ochoa, for her many years of service on our Spanish Language Hotline. Her compassion and dedication made a difference in the lives of countless Southern California pets and their peeople.

"Volunteers are love in motion."
—Author Unnown

This page, from top left: Freddie Acuesta hugs a favorite tabby at PETCO Downey; Kelly Bradford shows off Lavender, Donna Heisler (r) and great grandson Avery cuddle Dodger and Milo at PETCO Lakewood adoptions. Bottom right: young volunteers at PETCO Rolling HIlls assist kittens and customers.
Opposite page, top row: Ashley Wilkerson clowns around with Lydia at PETCO Lakewood; Lakewood volunteers Christine Malabed and Valerie Gorman take time off cleaning duties to cuddle with Spartan and Hops. Downey volunteer Taiz Galicia cares for a shy kitten. Bottom row: Serena Corral of Downey PETCO and Melina Balkapoulou of Rolling Hills PETCO pose with adorable adoptables.

"Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot, nothing is going to get better. It's not."
— Dr. Suess

"The smallest act of kindness is worth more than the grandest intention."
— Oscar Wilde

Lakewood Volunteers

Gretchen Almond
Kelly Bradford
Valerie Gorman
Dona Heisler
Kelly Hendergart
Chantelle Hollett
Sally Hollett
Christine Malabed
Dawn Salazar
Scottie Tucker
Jan Turley
Ashley Wilkerson
Stella Romero

Downey Volunteers

Freddie Acuesta
Monica Canton
Serena Corral
Jenny Deering
Taiz Galicia

South Bay Volunteers

Melina Bakopoulou
Joe Berlin
Nona Chai
Angelica Diaz
Gracey Elder
Valorie Ellis
Gracey Finley
Mary Finley
Dylan Giulani
Kristen Goff
Laura Haas
Madison Hama
Nikki Horusicky
Joan Juarez
Sophia Kang
Nanette Keeler
Min Kim
Julie King and family
Olivia Koutko
Anna Langdon
Donna Lofgren
Zoe Martinez
Ryan Murakawa-Rubin
Randi Newbill
Kira Nguyen
Marguerite Nunez
Allie Prado
Ethan Ramsey
Candice Ravel
Gabby Reynolds
Nicole Reynolds
Carlin Ritter
Elle Rosapapan
Claudia Rowe
Julia Rowe
Linda Rowe
Lauren Sherry and family
Monica Slivar
Amanda Slivar
Janet Slovak
The Snyder Family
Stephanie Stasso and family
Sophie Tangalakis
Kaytlyn Uchimiya
Lynda Williams

Lakewood Foster Parents

Lauren Campbell
Valerie Gorman
Christine Jira
Dawn Salazar

Thank You

from the bottom of our hearts!

PAF SAN DIEGO HELPS LOCAL RESCUE WITH FIRE PREPAREDNESS

Fire. There are few words more terrifying to Southern Californians, and that fear increases exponentially among those responsible for the lives of many who cannot save themselves. Last year, a rescue in Palmdale was caught in a brush fire. Dogs died, many were burned, and people were burned and bitten trying to save frightened dogs. So when PAF's San Diego Branch heard that a local rescue shelter needed a mode of transport to ensure disaster readiness, we listened:

Betsy Denhart: *I work for Pet Assistance Foundation. Mainly spay/neuter, but going to check if there are any funds available to donate to your cause. There are different branches. Are you in San Diego County? How many dogs are at risk?*

Marina Roche: *Omg I'm sooo scared! I just moved here n we had 2 fires in just 2 weeks. One was on gopher canyon if u recall. My kennels r fencing with major Major brush area. I'm trying to clean up leaves like a maniac but there are lots of trees. It's really bad. I was told by fire dep I need a vehicle ready to go. I have 15 large at the moment. I'm here on pins n needles daily.*

Marina Roche, founder of King of Hearts Foundation, takes the role of rescuer seriously. The dogs in her care have already been failed by humans, and she is determined not to let them down. We were impressed by her dedication and level headedness. She had done her homework, and had a plan.

The dogs at King of Hearts sleep better, knowing they'll never be left behind!

Marina Roche: *This trailer is the cheapest way to do it as I have a van with hitch. Found a shuttle bus but costs double. I really don't want to panic last minute.*

Thanks to private donations earmarked for San Diego County, PAF was able to fund the evacuation trailer. King of Hearts keeps it always at the ready, and scales the number of dogs she saves to the number she is confident she can keep safe.

Marina Roche: *Got the donation thank u soooo much!! I just picked up the trailer yaay. It's Huge!! I'll post it. It's really nice, heavy duty tnx much.*

Editors Note: The night before this issue went to press, we learned that the trailer had been put to use THIS WEEK, evacuating the shelter as fire approached. All the dogs are fine!

In general, donations are used where the need is greatest, or where they will do the most good. If you would like your donation to be used in a specific locality, as had some kind donors to the San Diego Branch did, please let us know, and we will be happy to accommodate you. We serve Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino and San Diego Counties.

Sadie's Story

"They could barely afford to feed me, so when they realized I had babies coming, they left me here. It's noisy and I'm frightened. With so many here needing homes already, what will become of me and my pups?"

Sadie was barely more than a pup herself, but there was a strong chance her life was coming to an end. Pet overpopulation floods our shelters and streets with far more dogs, cats, puppies and kittens than compassion alone can accommodate. Thousands are put to death each year, for a crime no more heinous than being born.

Will things never improve? Why does this tragedy repeat itself over and over, when we know a simple, outpatient surgery could have prevented Sadie's sad fate? The anwer to the first question is that things are improving, but slowly. During kitten season it feels like one step forward, two steps back. We know euthanasia numbers have declined over the years, and more people than ever are aware of the need to spay and neuter their pets. Unfortunately, "more" is not "all." And the answer to the second question is that "more" is not enough.

That's why we won't give up. We will continue our spay and neuter outreach, continue to educate, continue to work for legislation. We know *THESE THINGS WORK*. But improvement alone is not enough, because no matter what the numbers say, when you're working hands-on in animal welfare, every failure has a face. Like Sadie's.

Please give generously so we can keep working on behalf of the animals of Southern California, and consider leaving a legacy to the animals of tomorrow.

NOTE: Sadie and her pups were rescued. She is a dog from the past, pictured here to warn us and help protect dogs and cats of the future. Have a wonderful holiday season, and a blessed 2018!

Animals have wishes too, folks like you make some come true...

~A home for the holidays~
(Congratulations, Spartan and Hops!)

~Peace on Earth~
(Cedric and Justin)

~Not gonna happen~

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Long Beach, CA
Permit No. 2321

Administrative Line: (310) 732-1230

Toll-Free Spay/Neuter Hotline:
1(877) SPAY PET [1(877) 772-9738]