# Lives made happy™

Winter 2017 | A Marin Humane Publication

## shelter from the firestorms

being ready when tragedy strikes

## providing TLC

emergency boarding in times of need

## helping from afar

supporting shelters affected by hurricanes

marin humane

Lives made happy™

# The McKenney Minute

Dear Friends,

For more than a century, we've focused on the needs of animals and people in Marin County. We have strong ties to the people and businesses here. And we're fortunate to play a role in the lives of many in our community – from a pet they've adopted, a class they've taken, or a child they've sent to our summer camp, to someone they know who's needed special assistance for their beloved companion animal.

We also go beyond our borders to help other communities, whether it's work we do regularly – like bringing animals in from under-resourced shelters in the Central Valley so they have a better chance at finding a forever home here – or stretching ourselves beyond "business as usual" when something unexpected happens.

As you'll read in this edition of *Lives made happy*, it was anything but business as usual this past October. We transformed our Novato adoption center into an emergency shelter for the treasured pets of evacuees – more than 350 in all – in the wake of the devastating fires that raged in areas near us. As Marin's recognized agency in charge of animal disaster response, we helped support the county's evacuation center so that those staying there with their pets could keep their beloved companions close by. And when we were asked

by shelter partners to support animal rescue efforts on the ground in the hardest hit areas, we answered the call.

Our hearts are still with our neighbors to the north as they struggle to rebuild and recover. We are honored to be a resource, a place of safety, and a place of respite for those going through some of the most trying times in their lives. And as always, we couldn't do it without you, our generous supporters. We're so thankful for your generosity and we hope you enjoy reading about what your support has enabled us to do.

Warmest wishes for a joyous and safe holiday season.

Nancy

Nancy McKenney,
CEO & Chief Executive

ON THE COVER:
The Robinsons, who lost their home in the

Bill, who they thought had perished.

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# Shelter from the Firestorms

by Lisa Bloch

**This past September, powerful hurricanes hit Texas, Florida, and the Caribbean. Great devastation was left in their wake and animal shelters across the country focused on disaster preparedness and response. Many animals who were awaiting adoption in shelters in the affected regions were transferred out, some to Marin Humane. Little did we know we'd be facing our own natural disaster, this time much closer to home, in just a few weeks' time.**

The morning of October 9, a holiday, everyone in the Bay Area woke up to the news that large fires were raging out of control in several counties immediately north and northeast of Marin. People as far away as San Francisco could smell the smoke and see the ash. The fires – 17 separate in all – rapidly grew from 1,000 acres to well over 20,000 within a single day. By the time the fires were fully extinguished, they would burn more than 210,000 acres, 8,800 structures (many of which were homes), and force 90,000 people to evacuate. Forty-three people lost their lives.

ABOVE: A cat sits amidst the ruins of a burned-out neighborhood in Sonoma County.
RIGHT: Officers Hayes and Dalton carry a burned cat to safety after rescuing him from a storm drain.

Photo by Kevin McCallum/Santa Rosa Press Democrat

1

When word of the first fires hit, the staff of Marin Humane sprang into action. From many years of experience, our senior management knew that being in the county immediately adjacent to those affected meant we had to ready our shelter to receive animals displaced by the fire. The first step was to transfer out all our adoption animals to trusted local shelters and rescues to make room for the pets of evacuees. Safely transferring out more than 165 animals was no easy feat. We had to identify which shelter and rescue partners had room, prepare the animals for transport, make sure they arrived safely, and ensure every critter was accounted for. And it all had to happen at a moment's notice. Dogs, cats, birds, and rabbits were safely transferred to eight different local shelters and rescues.

Simultaneously, we had to ready our shelter to provide free emergency boarding for all the pets of evacuees who would soon be arriving. It was all hands on deck for Marin Humane staff and many of our volunteers. We worked around the clock to ensure a smooth hand-off when evacuees brought us their beloved animals for safekeeping.

"It was hard seeing people come in who'd just lost their homes in the fires," said Director of Shelter Services Keri Fennell. "Some were dazed, others were crying. You could smell the smoke on them and on their pets. Whole families arrived, many with just the clothes on their backs and their pets in hand."

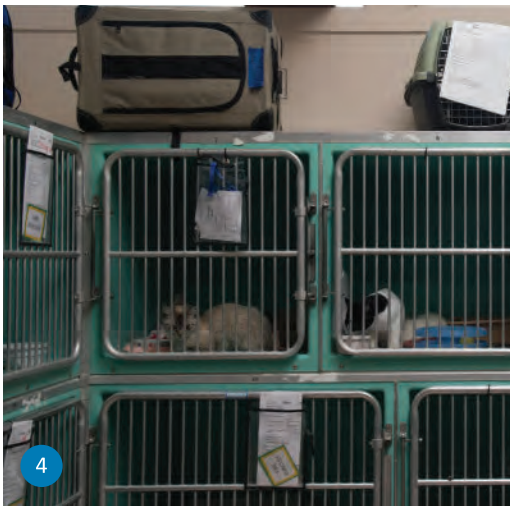
**Over the coming days, Marin Humane took in more than 350 pets of all types including dogs and cats, of course, but also birds, reptiles, rabbits, fish, and even pet turkeys. Our most unusual guest was a 100-pound tortoise named Alfonso.**

"Along with being able to house all these animals at a moment's notice, we had to ensure we were always following proper health and safety protocols – for both the animals and for staff," said CEO Nancy McKenney.

2

While being sensitive to the tremendous stress the evacuees were under, staff also needed to ensure they got solid information from every person bringing us an animal. If there was more than one dog or cat, could they be housed together? Were there any medications we would need to administer? Any special behavioral needs or allergies we'd need to be aware of?

All dogs and cats were given flea medication and vaccinations,


4

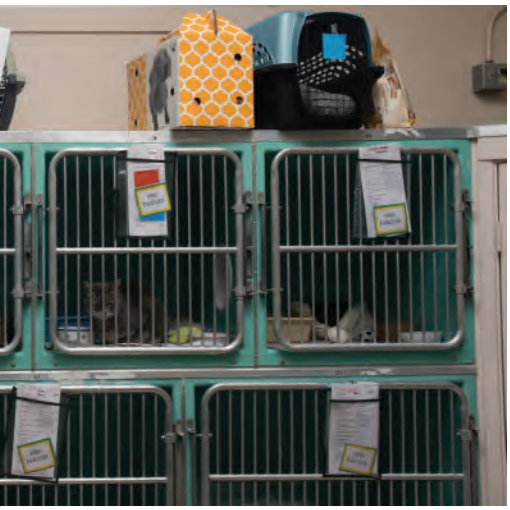
and over the course of their stay, all animals were monitored for medical conditions (see related story on page 6).

"At the same time we were dealing with all our new guests,

we got word that Marin County was opening an emergency shelter at the Civic Center in San Rafael where people could keep their animals with them, and we were asked to provide set-up, supplies, and staff to manage that aspect of the response," said Nancy McKenney. "Fortunately, we have clear protocols to follow in these situations, but it was still quite an effort to staff that location and ensure we were providing for our new residents."

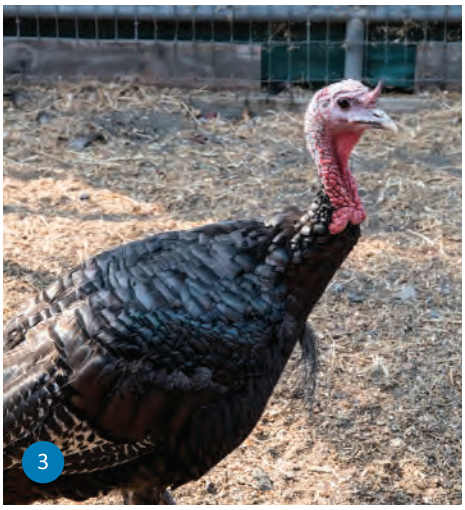
**The rapid spread and unpredictable path of the fires required Marin Humane to stay in constant contact with local and state officials.**

As the county's designated lead agency responsible for directing all animal disaster efforts, Marin Humane's Animal Services Captain Cindy Machado worked out of the county's Emergency Operation Center, relaying



timely and accurate information to shelter staff (see more on page 10).

Next, at the request of Sonoma County Animal Services, Marin Humane Animal Services officers were deployed to the fire region to help with animal search and rescue. On their first day of deployment, two of our officers rescued a kitty stuck in a storm drain. He sustained burns, but survived and was reunited with his guardians a few days later!




Fortunately, after a few days, many evacuees were able to start returning to their neighborhoods. They happily picked up their animals who'd been staying with us and were offered free microchipping, rabies vaccinations, pet food, and pet supplies. We also offered heavily discounted spay/neuter services.

Those who aren't yet able to take their pets home are welcome to come visit as much as they'd like. Connie, from Santa Rosa, has two kitties staying at Marin Humane and has come to visit with them every day since bringing them to the shelter. She said, "Being able to spend time with my cats means the world to me, especially since there is so much uncertainty in my life right now."

We're touched by the generosity of the community of Marin. We received an overwhelming amount of donations of pet food and supplies and many people have made financial donations, too.

We're still housing a few of these beloved pets. And it's our honor to do so.

1. Officers Russo, Dalton, and Hayes on the scene in Sonoma County.
2. Staff prepares to transfer adoption cats out of the shelter.
3. An evacuee's beloved pet turkey.
4. Cages are filled to capacity with the pets of evacuees.
5. Supplies for pet guardians staying at the Marin Evacuation Shelter.

# Providing TLC

by Julia Lamont

When we open our doors for emergency boarding, we don't just provide a safe place for people to keep their animals; we provide necessary, personalized veterinary care, free of charge.

In the wake of the North Bay fires, our clinic and Animal Care staff and volunteers kicked into high gear to handle the huge influx of animals, some of whom had health concerns that needed to be addressed. Many guardians didn't even realize their beloved pets were dealing with upper respiratory infections, kidney troubles, and more.

**Our hard-working Animal Care staff were the heart and soul of the operation, handling the daily feeding, cleaning, and medicating. Our veterinary assistants maintained an encyclopedic knowledge of the hundreds of animals here at the shelter and their needs, and supported our veterinarians at every turn.**

"We didn't have a lot of information to go on with several of the animals that were brought to us during the fires," said Keri Fennell, our director of shelter services. But we were ready to offer medicine and other treatments to keep all in our care comfortable, while transferring the few animals with more serious conditions to San Marin Animal Hospital and Pet Emergency Specialty Center of Marin.

Shelter Veterinarian, Dr. Anne Miller, collaborated with board member and relief veterinarian, Dr. Robin Rodi, to develop a system to track the symptoms, treatments, special foods, medications, and more for the animals in our care. This system made it easier for different parties, such as our other relief veterinarians Dr. Steve Dana and Dr. Marika Patchett, to step in at a moment's notice and assist with the care of the animals without having to learn the intricacies of our medical software. This is the sort of flexibility that made it possible to handle numbers far beyond our usual capacity.

Those numbers proved to be the biggest challenge because we insist on providing individual care to each animal. Our hard-working Animal Care staff were the heart and soul of the operation, handling the daily feeding, cleaning, and medicating. Our veterinary assistants maintained an encyclopedic knowledge of the hundreds of animals here at the shelter and their needs, and supported our veterinarians at every turn.

Keri says, "I'm so proud of them. It certainly wasn't business as usual, but during the crisis, we all came together."

LEFT: Animal Care Supervisor Liz McQueen consults with veterinarian and board member Dr. Robin Rodi.
ABOVE: Staff and volunteers review the medical status of shelter residents.

# Twenty Years on the Front Lines of Animal Service

by Julia Lamont

If you ask Animal Services Corporal Dave Stapp to sum up his 20-year career at Marin Humane in one phrase, he'll say, "I'm here for the animals."

Dave has been a field officer since his first day here at Marin Humane in July of 1997, after years of working in law enforcement. He had met many of the shelter's field officers while he was a Department of Defense police officer at nearby Hamilton Air Force Base. Right before the base was shut down, Marin Humane's former Animal Services Lieutenant Steve Hill was called out to the base to rescue an owl caught in a hangar and mentioned to Dave that Marin Humane was hiring new officers. Dave had always been an animal lover and had spent his summers working on ranches while growing up, so applying his law enforcement background to the profession of animal services felt like a natural fit.

> "You might not get a lot of glory and you're not going to get rich, but you'll get the experience of a lifetime."

Since he joined Marin Humane two decades ago, Dave has seen the field of animal services become increasingly progressive. With agencies providing more training for their officers and more educational services for the public, the notion of the "dog catcher" is fading into the background. Officers are now seen as helpful, integral members of the community. Dave says he now handles more wildlife calls than anything else, which he sees as a sign of positive changes. "Marin Humane has done so well with public education related to domestic animals - on spaying and neutering, on not buying and selling pets in pet stores – that we don't see as many stray and unwanted animals as we used to," he says.

Those wildlife calls can be pretty exciting, though! When asked to name the most memorable call or case from his career thus far, Dave relayed the tale of a call he went out on to rescue an owl stuck in a fake Halloween web put up as a decoration. "The poor little guy had flown into the webbing and I had to safely and carefully cut him out. Luckily, he was okay." Dave likes that story because it spurred awareness about a new danger facing wildlife.

Officers are bound to encounter sadness, too, and Dave says that's still the most challenging part of the job. He says, "I've dealt with a lot of death and it never gets easy." But when it comes to euthanasia, he views it as an important way he can help animals along their journey and wishes more people could see it that way.

In addition to being skilled with animals, animal services officers also need exceptional people skills. "You need to be able to communicate with people of all backgrounds," Dave explains. "We help everyone."

For people who are hoping to get into the animal services field, Dave suggests being prepared for work that's "difficult but satisfying." He loves knowing that at the end of the day, he's helped a lot of people and animals. He says, "You might not get a lot of glory and you're not going to get rich, but you'll get the experience of a lifetime."

# HOME SWEET HOME

by Nancy Weiler

When the North Bay fires erupted, some people only had minutes to grab their beloved pets and evacuate. Tens of thousands of people were evacuated and some needed a safe place to board their pets while they found places to stay. Marin Humane was there to help, taking in more than 350 animals, free of charge, and keeping them safe until their guardians could return home.

Here are a few moments captured when people returned to pick up their furry, feathered, and scaly friends and return home with them. It was truly “Home Sweet Home."

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# Behind the Scenes of Animal Disaster Response

By Captain Cindy Machado, CAWA

Photo by Kevin McCallum/Santa Rosa Press Democrat

The recent fires of the North Bay taught all of us many important lessons. For Marin Humane, all the years of planning and preparing to help people and their animals in large disasters was put to the test.

The first day of the disaster was a holiday so many staff members were off. But due to road closures, those who live in the North Bay, including myself, couldn't get to the shelter. In addition, some of our own staff and volunteers were evacuated themselves. Nevertheless, our team rallied to get to the campus and start immediate measures to free up space by transferring out our adoption animals to shelters throughout the Bay Area.

Photo by Nicole Osmer

**Getting in touch with our northern neighbors was very difficult. Little did we know the Sonoma County Animal Services animal shelter had lost all power. Normal communications were stretched thin as we attempted to get information to determine what the response needs were. Dealing with disasters always results in high emotions and a strong sense of urgency; however, it's critical to plan for the actual needs and not just the suspected ones.**

Marin County has a long history of incorporating animal services into the county emergency response plan. During a major disaster, our specially-trained personnel work side by side at the Emergency Operations Center (EOC) with other agencies involved in county emergency operations like police, fire, and health departments. As the extent of the disaster quickly unfolded, it was obvious that evacuees and their pets would soon be coming to Marin. The Civic Center in San Rafael became the hub for disaster services, including areas where people could be housed with their pets. Being on site at EOC enabled us to properly plan for the number of animals we'd be serving as well as getting the right resources secured.

While we were busy preparing for an influx of evacuees, we were also readying our Animal Services officers for deployment to assist Sonoma County Animal Services. Our officers were instrumental in many amazing animal rescues, from pulling cats out of storm drains to securing loose goats in fire-ravaged areas. Our field team provided animal assistance for almost three weeks straight, while also attending to our local needs.

It's important to always have a disaster plan that includes your pets. Whether you're at home, work, or on vacation, knowing how your family will respond when evacuation orders are issued is paramount to everyone's safety.

**For more information on planning for your pets during an emergency and developing a disaster plan for your family please visit our website at marinhumane.org or getreadymarin.org.**

# Helping from Afar

by Lisa Bloch

Just prior to the wildfires that ravaged Northern California, two other regions were hit hard by natural disasters. Hurricane Harvey wreaked havoc on the Houston area and Hurricane Irma devastated parts of Florida.

With every disaster, the animal sheltering network learns more about how to better prepare for, respond to, and recover from the devastation.

If there's the luxury of advance notice of a disaster, local animal shelters face the major undertaking of moving animals already available for adoption to other shelters and rescues. This frees up space for the animals anticipated to arrive from the disaster area.

Marin Humane added its name to the list of animal organizations willing to take adoption animals from the affected areas. In the case of Hurricane Harvey, we weren't needed as a transfer partner; however, we still wanted to help so we set up a special fund dedicated to raising money for the Houston SPCA. Our generous supporters donated more than $32,000 in just a few weeks.

In general, the best practice is to move adoption animals to locations that aren't too far away, since the method of transport and travel time can be very stressful and expensive. However, sometimes animals must be sent where there are the most available resources or options. That's why a few special flights from Florida made their way to the Bay Area after Hurricane Irma hit.

A large group of dogs and cats arrived at Oakland International Airport from Miami via a FedEx jet where they were greeted by members of the Golden State Warriors in hopes of finding their forever homes on the West Coast. These dogs and kitties were already in shelters awaiting adoption when the hurricane hit. More than 150 were transferred to shelters in the Bay Area (including 15 to Marin Humane) to make space for animals separated from their guardians during the storm.

We stand ready to help again when called upon.

# PREVENT CRUELTY CALIFORNIA

## Upgrading California's Humane Standards for Farm Animals

by Lisa Bloch

In 2008, Californians overwhelmingly passed Prop 2, the landmark legislation regarding the cruel confinement of certain farm animals. Two years later, the legislature enacted an additional law applying Prop 2's standards to eggs sold statewide, regardless of whether they came from California hens or not.

While California may have been on the cutting edge then, we've since been surpassed not only by other states but by corporations like McDonald's, Costco, and Taco Bell, in terms of where our food comes from and how it's processed.

Much of the pork sold statewide still comes from factory farms that confine pigs in cruel gestation crates where the animals are unable to even turn around. Veal from crated calves is still sold in the state, too. And eggs sold in liquid form (a third of egg products available in California) can still come from caged hens. That's why The Humane Society of the United States and a coalition of organizations—including Marin Humane—called Prevent Cruelty California are working to place a critical measure on the November 2018 ballot. The new measure will upgrade California's laws to prohibit the sales of products derived from the cruel and extreme confinement of farm animals. And, just as important, it will protect the consumer from substandard food with a higher likelihood of contamination.

**The effort needs more than 365,880 "hard" signatures by April for placement on the statewide ballot in November 2018.**

"Californians know that locking farm animals in tight cages for the duration of their lives is cruel and compromises food safety," said Wayne Pacelle, president and CEO of The Humane Society of the United States. "All animals deserve humane treatment, especially those raised for food."

Economic analyses from the egg industry itself show that it would cost only about a penny or two more per egg to go cage-free, something the largest retailers are already doing. In fact, McDonald's is going 100 percent cage-free and says it won't raise its prices even a penny. Costco, Walmart, Safeway, and more than 250 other major retailers have made similar cage-free pledges, with different dates of implementation. The ballot measure will help assure consumers that the food retailers will abide by the promised standards.

**To learn more about this important ballot initiative, go to preventcrueltyca.com**

# CALENDAR

stay current at marinhumane.org/eventcalendar

**Saturday, January 27, 2018**

**7 pm to 9 pm in the auditorium at Marin Humane**

Join us for a very special screening of the winners of the 2017 Animal Film Fest.

Tickets on sale at animalfilmfestival.org/on-tour.

## SAVE THE DATE!

**Join us for our most important event of the year – the Marin Humane Gala, Saturday, March 10, 2018 at the Clubhouse at Peacock Gap**

## JANUARY

### Behind the Scenes Camp

**Wednesday, January 3, 9 am – 3 pm**
**$65**

Kids 8-10 years will learn how we care for shelter animals, meet a variety of animal guests, and explore ways to help animals.

Register at marinhumane.org/events.

### Denise Fenzi

**Saturday, January 20 and Sunday, January 21, 9 am – 5 pm**
**$200 for a working spot, $75 to audit**

World-renowned trainer Denise Fenzi will be at Marin Humane for two amazing days of training. Topics include *Engagement, Toy and Personal Play, and Handler's Choice for Obedience.*

Register at marinhumane.org/oh-behave.

## FEBRUARY

### Humane Summer Camp Registration Opens

**Tuesday, February 13, 12 pm (noon)**

For more information visit marinhumane.org/humane-education.

### Dr. Susan G. Friedman

**Saturday-Monday, February 17-19, 9 am – 5 pm**
**$450 early-bird registration for all three days (single day tickets are not available) by Dec 31, $500 after.**

*Living and Learning with Animals: The Science & Technology of Behavior Change* is a seminar focused on the fundamental principles of learning and behavior, and the behavior change technology known as applied behavior analysis.

Register at marinhumane.org/oh-behave.

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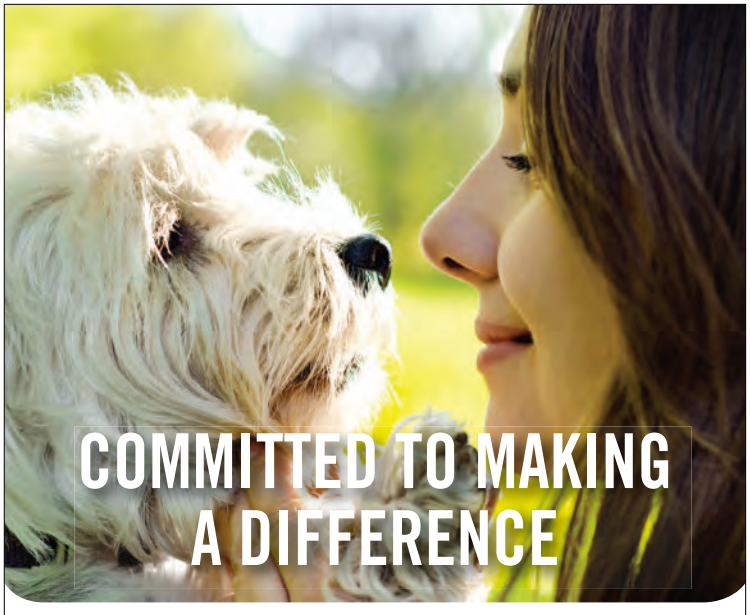


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## Marin Humane Thrift Shop

Visit Marin Humane Auxiliary's Thrift Shop in downtown San Anselmo! Shop for clothes, kitchenware, books, handmade cards, collectibles, and more. Proceeds support the Marin Humane spay/neuter program.

Item donations welcome!

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