called to rescue
how we're helping to save wildlife

pet safety net
casting a wider net to help those in need

career cats
a second chance for semi-feral kitties
Dear Friends,

This analogy may be a stretch, but I often imagine Marin Humane, and other humane societies, acting as the Statue of Liberty for animals—our organizations are beacons for bringing communities together to protect animals from neglect, abuse, and to find homes for the ones who need them. The phrase “Give me your tired, your poor, your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,” could be a call out to say Marin Humane welcomes all who have an animal-related need, and through our many programs and services, we transform lives for both animals and people!

Supporters of Marin Humane are drawn to our organization in large part because of their love for animals. This love can be found across socio-economic lines as well as geographic boundaries. So when we learn there are pet guardians struggling in our community—whether it’s with covering increased medical costs or even just to buy healthy pet food—we want to help.

Marin Humane will soon cast our safety net even further into the community, helping families with veterinary bills, animal training resources, or pet food. Our goal is simple: to keep pets healthy and in their homes with the people who love them. This expansion of services will be directed to those most in need—pet guardians of any age experiencing temporary financial difficulty. We’re hoping we can count on the financial support of individuals, businesses, and foundations throughout Marin and beyond. To those who’ve already made a gift to our Pet Safety Net, thank you! We’ll use the funds wisely and we’ll share the personal stories of the families receiving our help. For more on our Pet Safety Net initiative, see page 3.

In other news, Marin Humane recently received national and local recognition for our response to the October 2017 NorCal Fires and for our effective humane education programs. Both examples, along with the new Pet Safety Net, show how we’re more than your typical animal shelter!

I hope you enjoy the variety of topics covered in this edition of Lives made happy and please share with your family, friends, or co-workers. As your only open-door shelter in Marin, we need your support to continue transforming lives.

Warmly,

Nancy McKenney, MNPL, CAWA
CEO & President

ON THE COVER:
Marin Humane Animal Services Officer Adrienne Russo rescues a fawn.
Imagine you’re between jobs and struggling to make ends meet. Suddenly, your pet becomes seriously ill or injured. Your savings are gone, credit cards maxed out, and your beloved pet in pain. What choice would you make?

For more than three decades, Marin Humane has provided pet food, veterinary care, and other help to low-income seniors living in Marin. In the past two years, however, there’s been a 30% increase in the number of requests for help from people who aren’t seniors.

To ensure these pets get the care they deserve, we’re asking our friends to support the launch of our Pet Safety Net initiative which has two simple goals: to keep pets healthy and with the people who love them.

“Though Marin is often viewed as one of the wealthiest communities in the country, there are hundreds of families living here who are struggling to make ends meet,” shared Nancy McKenney, CEO of Marin Humane.

“We can’t solve all their financial problems, but we can make certain their pets have access to nutritious food, veterinary care, and other basic needs to live happy, healthy lives.”

Annie Humphrey, MSW, coordinates the program and added, “To ensure every dollar is spent wisely, we have a screening process to determine low-income status. Once eligibility is confirmed, we work with the families to determine what they can afford and what help they need.”

Another emphasis of the Pet Safety Net is to meet those in need where they are, literally. Instead of asking people from all over Marin to come to our campus in Novato, we’ll work with veterinarians throughout the county to provide care directly to those in need. Healthy food will be available at convenient retail locations.

Participants will also have access to free help like behavior consultations and training classes to ensure behavior problems won’t stand in the way of keeping their beloved pet. “We want to do everything possible to keep pets with their families,” said McKenney. “While we think Marin Humane is a pretty nice and safe shelter, it’s still an animal shelter. Keeping animals in their homes is almost always the best choice.”

“We’re so excited to offer this significant expansion of our services,” Humphrey added. “But the only way we can make it a reality is for caring animal lovers in our community to support this program.”

For more information on Marin Humane’s Pet Safety Net, please email ahumphrey@marinhumane.org or call 415.506.6255. You can make a gift online at marinhumane.org/LMH or by returning the envelope in the center of this issue of Lives made happy. Thank you!
Encounters with wildlife are fairly common here in Marin, due to our unique mix of open spaces and wilderness areas on one hand, and suburban developments or cities on the other. It’s a place where gorgeous redwood forests, rolling hills, and seashores meet busy roads and town squares. It’s no wonder that at the intersection of those two worlds, hapless animals might find themselves in precarious situations—just like our little owl friend.

In this particular case, school officials decided to call Marin Humane. Our Animal Services Officers respond to thousands of requests for assistance each year—often regarding emergencies. They are Marin’s first responders for animals in need of help.

While the majority of calls concern pets and other domestic animals, reports of wildlife in distress are also common. Especially in spring and early summer, Animal Services Officers have their hands full—sometimes quite literally—saving baby animals. There’s the nest of songbirds discovered inside an old motorcycle, the ducklings paddling helplessly in a storm drain, and countless other babies trying to safely make their way into this new world. Often, the police or fire department are called to the scene first and will immediately request backup from a Marin Humane officer trained in animal rescue.

Take the predicament of a fawn trapped in a 10-foot deep hole on a property that was undergoing construction. The owners noticed a female deer lying next to the entrance of
the loosely covered hole. When they went to investigate, they realized her baby had somehow found his way into the hole and couldn’t get back out. Animal Services Officer Adrienne Russo arrived within 30 minutes, developed a plan, gathered the necessary equipment, and carefully lifted the uninjured fawn out of the hole. After a joyful reunion, mother and baby immediately started running and disappeared together into the tall grass.

Here in Marin, the community is committed to rescuing and rehabilitating wildlife. In most parts of the country, and even the state, wild animals in distress are left to their own devices. Whenever their world intersects with humans, they are typically treated as nuisances or pests. Plagued by a chronic lack of funds and public support, too many municipalities are unable to provide the specialized and often delicate assistance required to rescue tangled hawks, injured foxes...or wayward baby owls. “Animal control” is often within the purview of the local police department, and rarely a fiscal priority.

Luckily for the animals, things are quite different in Marin. With the financial support from donations, as well as funds from the county, Marin Humane’s Animal Services Officers focus on the well-being of all our animals, including, of course, our wild neighbors. They keep the community safe by responding to emergencies and handling all types of animal-related complaints. Through extensive on-the-job training, they become experts in dealing with tricky cases often involving busy roads and public places.

After a wild animal is rescued from harm or danger, the officers determine whether it’s safe for the animal to be released immediately back into the wild, or whether they need a little extra help. In that case, our trusted friends at WildCare in San Rafael will work hard to heal and rehabilitate the patient. Like Marin Humane, WildCare advocates for peaceful coexistence with wildlife—not just by treating sick or injured animals but also by teaching children and adults to understand and appreciate wildlife.

This was also the case with our lost little owl friend. After his rescue, our officers brought him to WildCare, where he was carefully monitored. Luckily, it turned out he was in good health and was returned to his parents’ care just a few days later.

If you or someone you know needs assistance with an animal-related emergency in Marin, please call 415.883.4621—we’re available 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Support from donors like you helps Marin Humane create a more humane world for every animal. Donate at marinhumane.org/donate to help continue making this vision a reality.
No Place Like Home

By Lisa Bloch

Of the more than 1,400 pets that were relinquished to Marin Humane last year, many were from guardians who said they were moving and unable to find housing that would allow pets. It’s no secret that with the skyrocketing housing and rental markets, especially in Marin, people are facing heartbreaking choices. It’s not uncommon to see people in tears as they bring us their pet and say goodbye.

The second most common reason people give for surrendering their pet to Marin Humane is because of behavior issues the pet is exhibiting. These run the gamut from a dog barking excessively, to showing aggression to people, to a cat urinating outside the litter box.

Other reasons include the pet having medical issues which the guardian cannot afford, guardians who are themselves not well enough to care for their pet, and people who’ve passed away without making arrangements for their animal. And sometimes it can be a combination of all of the above.

As Marin County’s only “open-door” animal shelter, we’re grateful for the trust placed in us by guardians to find new homes for their pets, but going to an animal shelter should never be one’s first choice—it should be a last resort.

That may sound strange coming from someone who works for an animal shelter, but the fact is, no matter how nice a shelter is, it’s still a shelter and not a home. While the staff and volunteers try to provide as much care and love as they can, the shelter environment can be very stressful to animals. Finding ways to keep one’s animal or rehoming directly are always the better options.

While we can’t change the economy, we can provide resources to find pet-friendly housing. If your pet is exhibiting behavior that’s making life difficult, our behavior experts can help! Often, these “bad” behaviors can be remedied through simple training methods or even a quick visit to the veterinarian (litter box issues, for example, are often symptomatic of treatable conditions). We offer free consultations for animals of all types.

We provide pet care assistance for low-income seniors, including free food and financial support for veterinary care, and we’ll be expanding that safety net soon to include low-income people of any age.

If after trying those options you still believe you need to find an alternative home for your pet, we now offer a free service hosted on our website called “No Place Like Home.” It connects you with people looking to adopt an animal. It’s as simple as posting your pet’s photo, a description, and your contact information.

Of course, you can always relinquish your pet to us during our normal business hours. We ask that you fill out a questionnaire, bring any medical records you have, and pay any applicable fees so we can better care for your pet and find their next forever home as quickly as possible.
During her time here, Catherine has fallen for tiny Chihuahuas and 130-pound Rottweilers, which just goes to show that there’s no “right” choice.

"Even if you have an idea in your head of the perfect dog or cat for you, give other dogs and kitties a chance and you just might be surprised by which one steals your heart."

While Catherine loves bringing people together with their perfect match, she has plenty of hopes for Marin Humane that reach beyond the adoptions department. After all these years, she’s still blown away by the number of animals we see at the shelter no matter how much we promote the importance of spaying and neutering.

Another issue that’s near and dear to her heart is the number of scared, undersocialized dogs who arrive at Marin Humane. Not only do these pups require more work to become adoption candidates, but often the behavior issues stemming from undersocialization are what land them in the shelter in the first place. “I would love for more people to understand the importance of socializing their dogs,” she says. “So many of the dogs I see who are fearful are that way because they’ve lived in one household and never exposed to the bigger world.”

Luckily, Catherine is here for all the animals when they do arrive, and she will always be ready to take them under her wing - or into her lap.
Dexter—now Iggy—arrived at Marin Humane after being transferred from an overcrowded shelter in L.A. We noticed his left front leg turned outward and our veterinarians determined it was either due to a deformity or traumatic injury and decided the best course of action for Iggy was to amputate the leg. When Heidi Sanders arrived at the shelter for her volunteer shift, she fell in love with his sweetness, scrappiness, and exuberance. She wanted to prove to him the world wasn’t a scary place; she also thought he’d be the perfect companion for her other dog, Nico. Iggy now shares her home with Nico and Heidi’s daughter Abigail. He doesn’t even realize he’s a “tripod” as he races up hills, down stairs, and chases butterflies. He loves carrying sticks in his mouth and teasing other dogs with them. He’ll often sneak off with a sock to hide when Heidi is doing laundry. When he does rest—which isn’t often!—he and Nico like to curl up together. Heidi says watching him open up in his new home has been a joyful and rewarding experience.

Daisy Mae and Harley
Senior pups Daisy Mae and Harley found themselves looking for a new home. When Xanat Rodriguez came in looking for a companion to help her through a stressful time in her life, it was love at first sight. She said “They were the perfect size and past the high energy puppy phase. I went searching for one companion and I came out with two!” Daisy Mae and Harley like going on walks and hanging out with their new family, and Xanat says she’s feeling a lot better. When she’s on the couch working on a long college essay or stressing over deadlines, the dogs will chill out on her lap. She says, “Just having their company to look forward to after a long day is the best thing ever.” She and Daisy Mae have developed a particularly close bond. Xanat says, “It’s really nice to know that you mean just as much to your pet as they mean to you.”

Hami had been trying his darndest to find his forever home! He first arrived as a stray and was subsequently adopted and returned three times over the next six years through no fault of his own. What’s a big, affectionate, playful boy got to do? Hami was feeling anxious and insecure, not sure he wanted to give matchmaking another try. Then he met Kyra Nichols. Meowing and walking back and forth in the cat visitation room, Hami was apprehensive. Kyra sat quietly, extending a hand for Hami to smell. A sniff was followed by a nudge, then some gentle petting. Having already stolen Kyra’s heart, it was now up to Hami. He went right into the carrier and the two of them headed home. At home, Hami follows Kyra up and down the stairs, loves to be petted, greets him when he gets home, speaks to him in a chirpy meow, and is always ready to play with his toys. Kyra says he and Hami plan on sharing many happy years together.
**Elton**—now Bear—was found as a stray. David Winifred, his wife Wendy, and their sons, James and Zack, came to Kitty Corner, our adoption center in San Anselmo, looking for a cat who was up to the task of living with two rowdy young boys and a big black dog named Dash. Bear was a perfect match! He was big, self-confident, easy-going, and very friendly. Bear was a little worried about Dash at first but quickly grew more confident. He was also very excited about discovering the garage and its rodent problem. Needless to say, Bear sprang into action and the problem was soon gone. Bear and Dash have agreed to have an “arms-length” relationship although David has caught the two of them sleeping together. Bear follows everyone around the house and is still an enthusiastic hunter, but now makes do with a toy mouse. David says, “Bear has been a great pet for our boys—he fears very little! He’s eager to socialize with them, and that’s just what we wanted!”

**Russell**—When the Thomas Fire broke out in Ventura County last December, we immediately offered to help their local shelter by taking adoptable animals to make room for pets evacuated from the fires. That’s when Russell was relocated to Marin. Charong Chow and her daughter had already adopted a bunny named Mindy from us and were now eager for her to have a friend. “Bunny dating” is an important part of deciding to adopt a second one as not all rabbits get along, so our rabbit expert helped with the introductions. Russell turned out to be Mindy’s perfect date. Charong says, “They are the best of friends. They enjoy grooming each other and sharing yummy vegetable treats. Russell is very curious and likes to find treats inside cardboard tubes and going through box tunnels. Russell has changed our lives by being a great friend and a cute character. He’s energetic, smart, and very playful. He loves coming up to us and eating treats, and he loves licking us.”

**Rosamund and Rebecca**—now Bella and Pippa—were found as strays. They were young and scared, so we sent them to a wonderful foster home to recover from their traumatic experience. Meanwhile, Michelle Gilkey and her husband, Curtis Clough, were looking online for a bonded pair of female guinea pigs and drove all the way from Sacramento to meet them. They tell us the “piggies” love to sit on top of their igloos, and when the fridge opens in the morning they are greeted by loud “wheeks” as they stand up on their hind legs to get veggies. The four of them love to have snuggle time on the couch. Michelle spends time with them individually because of their unique personalities—Bella is chatty and energetic and Pippa is quiet and reserved. They love to watch them zoom around their cage and leap into the air. Sometimes Bella flips her igloo over and sits in it like a boat. They’re also social media stars! Michelle says, “We love our piggies and I constantly post pictures of them on Instagram.”
HOME ALONE:
Overcoming Your Dog’s Separation Anxiety

By Holly McArthur, CPDT-KA

Recently, a friend adopted an adolescent dog and called me about a problem she encountered within days of bringing her new companion home. Her neighbors were complaining about the dog barking, whining, and howling when she left him alone briefly. This is actually a common problem and it’s important to address, for the benefit of dogs and humans alike.

We need to remember that years of selective breeding have created dogs who WANT to be with us. It’s one of the things that make them so lovable. They really like us! So we shouldn’t be surprised when our dogs don’t like to be without us. We can do our dogs a great service by teaching them how to be alone. While no dog is happy to spend 12 hours a day, five days a week alone (that’s not much of a life for an extremely social animal), for most, being alone on a regular basis is part of life and it’s our responsibility to teach them the skills to handle it. Here are a few tips that may help:

1. Practice makes perfect. Often, when people first get a new dog, they spend a lot of time at home with their new family member. Sometimes, the new dog is never left alone during that honeymoon phase. Then, one day, the pet parent goes back to work and the dog is left in shock with no coping skills. The best way to prepare your pup is to leave him alone for many short periods from the first days of bringing your dog home. Initially, leave your dog to go outside and get your mail or to put something in the garbage—just a few seconds to a couple minutes at first. Gradually work your way up to more minutes until your dog is staying alone for half hour stretches and more.

2. Change your dog’s opinion about being alone. The world stops for many dogs when we leave them. Fortunately, many dogs just settle in and nap away until we return. And if your dog has a playmate there’s a chance the two will play and entertain themselves. But for those dogs who are truly alone or new to your home, you can do a lot for them by changing their emotional response to the situation. Try identifying a special treat Fido loves—it should be long-lasting, like a bully stick or frozen KONG. Only give him that treat when he’s alone.

Soon, you may find Fido downright happy to see you go out, since it signals that special treat is coming!

3. Provide activities to combat boredom. Your dog can’t read a book or surf the Internet to pass time while you are out so consider leaving him with mentally challenging puzzles. Things like a KONG Wobbler, a food puzzle, or a KONG stuffed with kibble and wet food mixed together and frozen so it’s a challenge will likely do the trick.

Worried about your dog putting on pounds? If you use Fido’s regular meal rations to fill these special items he can eat while you’re out. There’s no benefit to gobbling meals out of a bowl while you’re home only to be left alone with nothing to do. Hesitant to spend 50 bucks on entertaining toys or treats for your dog? It’s a lot cheaper than replacing a couch that’s been torn apart by a bored dog and much more pleasant than a knock on the door from the police after the neighbors have complained! It’s a small price to pay for harmony with your neighbors—and a happier dog. Learn more at marinhumane.org/oh-behave.
Leaving a Legacy of Love
by Nan Zimmerman

Did you know that almost half of the philanthropic support Marin Humane received in the past 10 years came from humane heroes who included us in their estate plan?

One of the most popular and smartest ways you can help animals is by designating Marin Humane as the beneficiary of your IRA or 401(k) plan. Because we’re income tax-exempt, when Marin Humane receives a distribution from an IRA or 401(k), the IRS doesn’t collect tax on the gift. If you leave retirement account balances to relatives or friends, they will have to pay income tax on the distributions, effectively splitting your hard-earned money with the government.

By naming Marin Humane as a beneficiary of your retirement account and naming relatives and friends as beneficiaries of other assets, taxes are reduced substantially and your legacy provides maximum benefit to beloved people and causes you care about.

Whether you decide to designate all or a portion of your retirement accounts to benefit Marin Humane, your powerful act will result in countless Lives made happy for decades to come.

For more information on including Marin Humane in your estate plans, please contact Nan Zimmerman at 415.506.6233 or visit the planned giving resources page at www.marinhumane.org/legacy.
Career Cats: Giving Semi-Feral Kitties a Second Chance

by Julia Lamont

Every animal deserves a shot at happiness. That includes the senior cat who may not have many years left, the shy, shut-down dog who’s still learning to trust, and it certainly includes the feral cat who was born into a life roaming outdoors with little to no human contact.

Most people would deem these cats “unadoptable” because they’ll never be comfortable living indoors or snuggling in a lap. In years past it was standard practice to euthanize most feral cats. Otherwise, the population would continue to grow unchecked, relegating more and more cats to a life of scrounging for food and dodging outdoor dangers like cars and coyotes—or so the argument went. Trap-neuter-release programs were a positive step forward, keeping populations in check, but they did little to provide feral cats with a more comfortable quality of life.

Luckily, more and more shelters, including Marin Humane, are giving feral cats a chance at a better life through new, progressive programs. Marin County is home to thousands of feral cats and they shouldn’t be punished for having been born into these difficult circumstances.

We started our Career Cat program in partnership with Marin Friends of Ferals, a local organization that specializes in the management and care of feral cat communities. We call these undersocialized felines “Career Cats” because they get a job to do: natural rodent control. Anyone with a barn, warehouse, greenhouse, shed, or large yard can benefit from Career Cats. In exchange for providing green rodent control, these special kitties require very little from their new adopters beyond daily food, water, and outdoor shelter.

Thanks to the generous financial contributions of cat lover Mark M. Glickman, who also funds our Joe Willie Project for senior cats and other kitties with special needs, our Career Cat program is growing every day.

As the program continues to grow, our need for volunteers grows alongside it. The more homes made available for these Career Cats, the more volunteers we need for trapping, relocating, and transporting—so we could use your help! You’ll work alongside the teams from Marin Friends of Ferals and Marin Humane to help transport cats to their new homes or to the veterinarian for their spay/neuter procedure. Even if you don’t have prior experience working with cats, you can still help us make a difference!

In 2017, 157 Career Cats were adopted!

If you’re interested in adopting a Career Cat or want to roll up your sleeves and volunteer, visit our website at marinhumane.org/adopt/career-cat-program.
JULY

**Hoppy Hour Rabbit Adoption Event**  
Monday, July 9, 4 – 6 pm  
Kitty Corner in the Red Hill Shopping Center, San Anselmo

**East Bay SPCA Adopt-a-thon**  
Saturday, July 21, 10 am – 2 pm  
Jack London Square in Oakland  
Hundreds of adoptable animals, vendors, activities, and fun!

**Fly Away Home Bird Adoption Event**  
Sunday, July 29, 11 am – 3 pm  
Novato Campus

**Bird Basics Class – FREE!**  
Sunday, July 29, 12 – 2 pm  
Novato Campus

AUGUST

**Hannah Branigan - Obedience FUNdamentals**  
Saturday & Sunday, August 11 & 12, 9 am – 5 pm  
Novato Campus

**Hoppy Hour Rabbit Adoption Event**  
Monday, August 13, 4 – 6 pm  
Kitty Corner in the Red Hill Shopping Center, San Anselmo

**Clear the Shelters**  
Saturday, August 18, 10 am – 5 pm  
Nationwide pet adoption event. Adoption fees waived for all animals.

**Bay Area Pignic**  
Saturday, August 25, 10 am – 2 pm  
Novato Campus  
Join us for a fun-filled gathering for guinea pigs and their humans.

**Student Service Clubs Fall 2018 deadline**  
Saturday, August 25  
For information, call the Humane Education department 415.506.6288

SEPTEMBER

**Bay Area Pet Fair**  
Alameda County Fairgrounds  
Saturday & Sunday, September 15 & 16, 10 am – 5 pm  
The largest pet adoption and pet lovers’ event in California.

Learn more about our events at marinhumane.org/events
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415.506.6229

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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