

HOPALONG & MARIN HUMANE MERGER Q&A

(for staff and board members)

1. What is the benefit of merging our two organizations into one?

Marin Humane's "Big Hairy Audacious Goal" (otherwise known as the one very ambitious goal we're focusing on) is to end pet homelessness in the Bay Area by the year 2030. We've done a great job addressing pet homelessness in our own backyard but want to help neighboring communities as much as possible.

Hopalong, long a trusted friend of Marin Humane's, has been finding homes for more than 1,000 companion animals every year. Most are from Oakland Animal Services, a municipal shelter that faces severe overcrowding. Like many animal rescue organizations, Hopalong operated on thin margins and being fully foster-based meant that few resources could be dedicated to important infrastructure. A couple of years ago, Hopalong found itself financially struggling and in need of support to continue its commitment to animals.

At the same time, we began to realize that our foster and mobile adoption programs needed support as well. Since we'd worked successfully with Hopalong for several years, it made sense to bring Hopalong under the Marin Humane umbrella. This merger will help ensure Hopalong can still fulfill its mission of finding homes for thousands of animals and bring Marin Humane one step closer to our ultimate goal of ending pet homelessness in the Bay Area.

Hopalong has a multitude of foster homes, partners, adopters, and donors from its 30-year history, all of whom are now part of the Marin Humane network. Hopalong has a strong presence in the East Bay and a proven track record of holding off-site adoption events throughout the Bay Area, supporting many of the shelters we worked with through our Pet Partnership program. Hopalong also has a strong Instagram following, which will be very helpful in reaching new people.

The Marin Humane name will now have visibility in the East Bay which will offer us the opportunity to tap into new resources (corporate sponsors and new volunteers, as two examples). In addition, Hopalong's four cat adoption sites in the Woodlands' stores throughout Marin and their Saturday dog adoption events will increase our presence in the county.

Before the merger, Hopalong had to send all its animals to area veterinarians – a time-consuming and expensive process. Being able to provide spay/neuter services through our awesome Veterinary Clinic to animals within the Hopalong program will provide significant cost savings and allow animals within both our programs to be altered at a faster rate.

Having access to Marin Humane's long-established Behavior and Training (B&T) program means Hopalong can take in more animals that may have behavior issues. The instances where B&T has provided support has enabled animals to stay in their foster or adoptive home.

Streamlining our processes allows us to reduce our length of stay, ultimately resulting in being able to help more animals. Referring back to UC Davis' Capacity for Care model, when an organization reduces its length of stay, the end result is more animals being helped. For more information on Capacity for Care, please visit [Overview of Capacity for Care](#).

2. Will there be two websites?

No. Hopalong will use the Marin Humane website.

The integration of one website into another is a complex process. Currently, Hopalong has its own section on the Marin Humane site, marinhumane.org/hopalong, and is featured prominently on the homepage. However, we hope to fully transition Hopalong's site to Marin Humane's by January 2023. The Hopalong URL, hopalong.org, will redirect automatically to marinhumane.org after that time.

3. Why does Hopalong still have their own email addresses?

Part of the transition plan includes Hopalong staff keeping their current Hopalong email addresses, for the time being. We are allowing time for the Hopalong staff to notify as many of their contacts in advance that the @hopalong.org email address is changing. For notification, we want about six to eight weeks to transition. Our IT department and MarCom teams will be consulted regarding messages and redirecting of any old Hopalong emails. We will announce soon when the email changeover will be complete.

4. Is Nancy the CEO of Hopalong and what is Juliet's role/title?

Nancy is the CEO/President of Marin Humane and Hopalong is a program of Marin Humane. Juliet's title is Director of the Hopalong Program; she is a member of the senior management team at Marin Humane.

5. Does Marin Humane manage all Marin County fosters for both organizations?

In the coming year, Hopalong will start overseeing the foster program for both organizations. This transition will happen after we've merged more aspects of our programs, including the aspect of recruiting, training, and assigning volunteers in all locations possible. The intention is to refer to Hopalong as the Hopalong Foster Program. There has been crossover with recruiting and finding fosters thus far, however we've needed to merge other areas first, including finance, administration, staffing, veterinary services, development, and marketing, and this is next!

6. What is Hopalong and/or Marin Humane going to do for veterinary services since Hopalong animals now get care from Marin Humane veterinarians?

We're hiring an additional veterinarian whose focus will be on Hopalong animals. This position will report to the Director of Veterinary Services (Dr. Evans). Some veterinary care for Hopalong animals is being scheduled at private veterinarians when we cannot accommodate the service at Marin Humane's Novato campus or the foster parent is located closer to a partnering veterinary hospital or clinic in the East Bay.

7. When will we start doing combined mailings and events?

Hopalong donors have been receiving news about the integration efforts in various mailings, newsletters, and magazines and we've invited many Hopalong donors to our Galas and to Woofstock (and will continue to). Our Development team and Juliet are planning an event on campus in November for Hopalong supporters and will be scheduling an East Bay event later in the year or by early 2023.

Through the end of 2022, direct mail appeals to the Hopalong donor base will continue to be primarily Hopalong-focused, while continuously referencing the partnership. By January 2023, we will move to a single, combined appeal, which will incorporate both logos for a trial period. Results will be analyzed in late Spring 2023 which will help us make any needed changes. The goal is to communicate, as clearly as

possible, the significant, positive impact of this merger to both Marin Humane and Hopalong donors and maximize giving.

Marin Humane needs to support the offsite adoption events and community outreach opportunities with Hopalong more and more as well.

8. Will there be Hopalong staff working at Marin Humane or vice versa?

This is yet to be determined but our goal is to be as accommodating to Hopalong staff schedules and commute constraints while also streamlining our work as much as possible. Juliet is often on campus for meetings and Terri is on campus every Wednesday working with Development. A Hopalong staff member is usually in attendance at the weekly Operations meetings.

Soon, we're hoping to create opportunities for Marin Humane staff to work from or at least visit the Hopalong location.

9. What are the plans for recruiting, training, and placement of volunteers in Marin and the East Bay?

Candace will continue to hold volunteer orientations to recruit volunteers for Marin-based volunteer opportunities (including volunteering at the offsite adoption events), while Samantha, Hopalong's new Volunteer Engagement Coordinator, will do the same for Oakland-based volunteer jobs.

Since both organizations use Volgistics, the volunteer database, the goal is to have one database of all Marin Humane + Hopalong volunteers by mid-December. The volunteer applications are the same, except the drop-down menu of volunteer opportunities. If someone wants to volunteer in Oakland, they get a choice of 7 options at Hopalong; if they want to volunteer at the Novato campus, there are a lot more options (both however will include the mobile adoption events).

We are also working on updating the volunteer webpage with messaging about the two options for volunteering: at the Novato campus or at the Oakland office.