

SUMMER 2025

ANIMAL FRIENDS

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President's Message Summer 2025

Inspiring Compassion,
Building Community

Since our founding, East Bay SPCA has remained dedicated to transforming the lives of dogs and cats while strengthening the bond between people and animals. Whether it's through exceptional medical and behavioral care for homeless pets or accessible services and educational programs, our holistic approach makes us a safety net for the community.

At the heart of our work is a simple but powerful goal: to inspire compassion. In this issue of *Animal Friends*, you'll see that mission in action — from students engaging with our Humane Education programs and developing into future animal advocates, to a young volunteer whose deep love for animals inspired her family to give back in her memory.

Collaboration is essential to building a more compassionate community — that's why we're thrilled to share news of our new partnership with the City of Livermore. Beginning this summer, we will expand our services to provide care and shelter for lost and stray animals in Livermore, while continuing our steadfast work supporting animals in Oakland, San Leandro, and across the East Bay. Partnerships like this reflect the impact we can make together.

As we look ahead, we are deeply grateful for your ongoing support. Thank you for standing with us to save animals, empower people, and create a more compassionate future for all.

With appreciation,

ALLISON C. LINDQUIST
President & CEO

Where Compassion Grows

Expanding Our Reach, Deepening Our Commitment



We're meeting animals and people where they are through partnerships, outreach, and programs designed to close critical service gaps. This summer, we're proud to launch our newest partnership with the City of Livermore, a collaboration that expands our reach and reinforces our long-standing commitment to animals who might otherwise fall through the cracks.

On July 1, 2025, East Bay SPCA began providing compassionate care and shelter for stray dogs and underage, ill, or injured cats found in Livermore.

This contractual partnership with the City of Livermore reflects a shared goal to ensure all animals receive the high-quality, compassionate care they deserve.

Through our Dublin campus, Livermore strays have access to veterinary care, enrichment, and every effort toward reunification or adoption into a loving home.

This new collaboration builds on our deep history of partnership: municipal, public, nonprofit, and



community. In January 2021, we began partnering with the City of San Leandro, providing shelter and support services for animals in need. Through that ongoing agreement, we help hundreds of pets each month find safety, care, and a second chance.

Meanwhile our steadfast work in Oakland, where our roots run deep, helps protect the human-animal bond. Our programs address challenges like income, housing, and food insecurity for pet families through advocacy, affordable services, and community outreach.

From emergency pet boarding and spay/neuter services to behavioral support and on-site education, our Oakland campus remains a vital hub for pet owner support. This includes the acceptance of nearly 3,000 stray animals over the past five years.



In all our locations, we prioritize animals who are vulnerable, overlooked, or at risk of being left behind. It's always been our mission to lift up those who need us most — people and pets.

We are grateful to the cities, agencies, and individuals who join us in this work. **Together, we're making our community stronger.**

Paws With a Purpose

Humane Education Brings Compassion and Connection to East Bay Classrooms and Beyond

"Who can tell me what it means to be compassionate?"

In a sea of second-grade students, hands fly up.

"It's when you have a friend and you ask them how they are."

"Being friendly!"

"Caring when someone is sad."

On a Tuesday morning in February, students set aside their usual routines to welcome two special guests: Heather Franco from East Bay SPCA and Elsa, a petite, white-and-tan dog with bouncy charm and expressive eyebrows. What followed was not just a lesson, but a moment of connection between young minds and a pet still looking for their home.

Every February, our Humane Education department delivers a Valentine's Day experience through **Smooches for Pooches**, an interactive program designed to build vocabulary around compassion, encourage responsible pet care, and shed light on the experiences of animals in shelters. At Havens Elementary students prepared skits on animal care, created valentines for available cats and dogs, and took turns greeting Elsa, carefully applying what they'd learned about animal body language and consent.



Empathy Outward

Elsa, like so many of the animals who work with our Humane Education team, is more than a teaching aide — she's a bridge.

For some children, this is their very first time interacting with a dog. For others, it's a chance to talk about their own pets, past or present. But for all of them,



it's a moment of human-animal connection that stretches far beyond the lesson plan.

"We want students to see animals as individuals with needs, personalities, and feelings," says Heather Franco, Humane Education Manager. "When children can meet animals like Elsa and understand their stories,

they're more likely to grow into compassionate community members."

That philosophy is present across all of our education programs, whether in a classroom or at our Oakland and Dublin campuses. Our educators create a safe space to experience the joys of animal companionship and care, and guide participants through complex ideas — like the challenges of long shelter stays, or the concept of animal consent. Through crafts, presentations, and animal interactions, students aren't just learning facts, they're practicing empathy.

Accessibility is at the forefront of these efforts, with scholarships available for camps and volunteer programs, and presentations and workshops geared towards youth, adults, and the developmentally disabled. Just as everyone deserves to experience the human-animal bond, we believe thoughtful, humane education benefits all.

Hands-on Advocacy

On a summer afternoon in Dublin, grade school-aged campers can be found in our community classroom, crafting colorful, cardboard houses for our in-care cats to enjoy. Meanwhile, in Oakland, teens wash and sort laundry so that recent arrivals to the shelter are welcomed with comfortable, clean bedding.

High school students contribute service hours through our



Rover Recruits program, which combines shelter tasks (like laundry and animal enrichment) with other learning opportunities. Our younger **Calico Crew** are immersed in our work through experiential education, animal-centric crafts, and dog and cat interaction. Both of the Shelter Scouts programs, Calico Crew (ages 8–11), and Rover Recruits (ages 12–17) enrich the lives of animals while gaining an expanded perspective on the importance of shelters.

Spring, summer, and holiday **School Break Camps** blend the joy of a day camp with immersive experiences exploring topics

like pet behavior, dog training, veterinary care, and animal advocacy.

A Brighter, Kinder Future

At the end of the hour-long visit with Havens' students, Heather accepted a heartfelt donation from the class, who fundraised for a week in advance of our visit. The students happily ignored the lunch bell, eager to tell Heather their own animal stories — and get one more belly rub in for Elsa.

If this is the future of animal advocacy, we're in good hands.

Visit:

eastbayspca.org/youth-programs to learn more.

A Cat's Tail of Survival

How Love and Luck Lead Her Back Home

When a good samaritan found Marsha hiding under a car, her paws were raw and red. She was badly burned, with large portions of her ears and face also injured. As San Leandro Animal Control got to the scene, Marsha required patient coaxing and gentle handling to get her into a carrier.



Marsha arrived at our Oakland shelter the next day, stable after an overnight visit to an emergency vet, but not yet out of the woods. Incredibly, she was able to walk and was even soliciting pets from staff. Marsha's resilience was notable from the start, though her healing journey was far from over.

"She was understandably in quite a lot of pain, but a sweet cat from the moment she showed up," said Dr. Josie Noah, Shelter Veterinarian.

Marsha wasn't microchipped, and the story behind her injuries remained a mystery, even as we created a treatment plan for returning her to full health. Her second- and third-degree burns were soothed with mānuka honey

treatments and bandaged for protection while our foster team found the perfect home for her to recuperate in.

Whether she was climbing on her vets or flicking her tail in an almost communicative way, Marsha's spunk was undeniable. Like us, Marsha's first foster, Jessica, fell in love fast, and was determined to learn more about this spirited survivor. While volunteering at the Red Cross, she asked her local chapter about fire-impacted individuals who'd come in around the time of Marsha's rescue. She was introduced to Stacey, who had lost everything in an RV fire, including — she thought — two cats.

A camera roll full of photos of Marsha confirmed that her owner had indeed been found. We learned Marsha's actual name was Bonnie, and that her brother, Clyde, didn't make it. Bonnie had traveled more than ten miles after escaping the fire. Stacey made immediate arrangements to visit the family member she thought she'd lost.

While Stacey navigated the devastation and challenges of losing her home, Bonnie healed in the care of fosters Jessica and Menghsin. After multiple surgeries to remove burned skin, months of recovery, and regular check-ups with our veterinary staff, Bonnie was finally ready to head home for good. While Stacey's living situation remained in flux, we knew she was committed to Bonnie's health and happiness.



As Bonnie's final check-up wrapped up, familiar faces from the shelter stopped in to say goodbye, and wish Stacey well on the road ahead. Before leaving, our Humane Advocacy team gathered a bundle of supplies to help ease the transition — everything Bonnie might need to stay healthy and comfortable.

A week later, Stacey sent photos of Bonnie perched in a soft carrier, about to explore the park in her teal harness: "Took Miss Bonkers out to touch some grass yesterday! Ultimately, she decided that she likes the indoors, I think... an excellent decision!"



For the Love of Felines

How Alexys' Family Honors Her Life

From the time she was an infant, Alexys Angela Garcia was always surrounded by animals. That deep love for animals continued as she grew older. When she was 11, her family, who are based in Livermore, brought her to East Bay SPCA to adopt her beloved cat, Vinny, and in high school Alexys continued her involvement with the organization as a feline enrichment volunteer. She thrived in this role and spent years supporting the cats in our care as often as she could, even with a busy athletic schedule.

After Alexys' untimely death in 2017, her mother Kinga and her family honored her love of animals by dedicating a spacious cat condo at East Bay SPCA's Dublin adoption center in her name. Earlier this year, to commemorate what would have been Alexys' 33rd birthday, Kinga and family dedicated a second cat condo in her name and held a pet food drive. Close to 10,000 pounds of cat and dog food were donated through the event, and

later distributed through our Pet Food Pantry, which supplies free pet food to pet owners residing in Alameda County.

"It brought people together," says Kinga. "It made people aware of how they can help animals and it brought us together to commemorate Lexy. Doing the drive on Lexy's birthday was really emotional but at the same time, it warmed my heart having people come together who loved her."

"We keep her light shining. I know if she was here she would still be doing things for animals," says Kinga.

Kinga and her family continue to honor Alexys' memory and stay involved with the organization that was such a big part of her life. We're so grateful to them for celebrating Alexys' life by inspiring compassion for animals.



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Established in 1874, East Bay Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (**East Bay SPCA**) is proud to be one of the nation's oldest shelters. East Bay SPCA is more than a shelter, transforming the lives of cats and dogs by enriching the human-animal bond through accessible and respected expertise.

Learn more at eastbayspca.org.



@eastbayspca

East Bay SPCA is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.
Federal Tax ID # 94-1322202.

Oakland Adoption Center
8323 Baldwin Street
Oakland, CA 94621

Dublin Adoption Center
4651 Gleason Drive
Dublin, CA 94568

**Theodore B. Travers
Family Veterinary Clinic**
8323 Baldwin Street
Oakland, CA 94621

**Oakland Spay/Neuter
Surgery Center**
410 Hegenberger Road
Oakland, CA 94621