CRITTER CHRONICLE

BAKERSFIELD SOCIETY FOR THE PREVENTION OF CRUELTY TO ANIMALS | OCT . NOV . DEC . 2023 | FREE

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Overcrowding: Be The Solution

Holloween Howl!

Happy "Tails" Adoption Story

420 days
- Male
- Chihuahua Mix
- Neutered
- Microchipped
- Vaccinated
- 1.5 years old

Animal ID#
160069

442 days
- Male
- Chihuahua Mix
- Neutered
- Microchipped
- Vaccinated
- 3 years old

Animal ID#
160045

441 days
- Female
- Domestic
- Spayed
- Microchipped
- Vaccinated
- 6 years old

Animal ID#
655297

ADOPT TODAY!

The Adoption Center is open, by appointment only, Monday through Friday 9:30 a.m. – 4:30 p.m. and Saturday 11 a.m. – 3 p.m.

Please call for appointments: (661) 323-8353 Ext 2.

FEES Dogs: $100-$400 Cats: $100

Includes spay/neuter, shots, ID Microchipping, bag of food and a new leash!

Events, Partnerships Making Pawsitive Impact

by Chuck Nordstrom, Executive Director

Greeting Friends,

Fall is in the air! As the last remnants of the scorching 100+ degree days fade from our memories, the cool autumn breeze is a welcome relief. We are pleased to announce that Kids & Critters Day camp was a hit again this summer, with many youngsters learning about Pet Responsibility while shelter dogs accompanied them. We would like to extend a huge thank you to **Sangera Subaru Bakersfield** for sponsoring 10 youths who would not have been able to attend otherwise.

The Book Sale was a resounding success, with many purchasing their reading materials for the year. It was heartening to see so many old friends who have supported our Book Sale for years.

Our Unleash Your Love campaign for the renovation of the cattery was also a smashing success. We have completed the new roof and skylights. We have had a little hold up on the interior renovations as there has been a huge outcry for help with stray cats. Once we begin the renovation process, it will impact the number of cats we can intake for a month or two. Therefore, we have delayed it a bit but are preparing to begin the next step very soon.

It's time to look forward to all that will be coming our way this fall at the SPCA. We are thrilled to welcome Subaru Loves Pets national campaign with open arms this October, and Sangera Subaru Bakersfield has partnered with us at the Bakersfield SPCA to promote adoptions throughout the month. It will culminate in a Halloween-themed Open House on October 28, with a low-cost microchip and vaccination clinic for dogs and cats. Kids will have a ghoulishly good time with trick-or-treat stations spread across the facility and a scavenger hunt. Attendees can also enjoy a slice or two of pizza for lunch, courtesy of Little Caesars Pizza. Be sure to mark the date on your calendar and check our Facebook and Instagram for more information.

We have some incredible items coming in for our annual Pawtiques and Treasures — Upscale Yard Sale — to be held November 5 to 7. Due to the large amount of wonderful estate items that have been donated, we are expanding to three days this year! Come and find all kinds of treasures, from antique furniture, china, glassware, collectibles and just a lot of fun and interesting items. It is a perfect opportunity for early Christmas shopping.

PAWTIQUES & TREASURES

The Board of Directors Fundraising committee, led by the awesome David Teeters, is already busy planning for the Annual Furry Paws & Foggy Nights dinner, with a live and silent auction, to be held at Seven Oaks Country Club in February.

That's all for now but stay tuned for news from your local SPCA animal shelter. Don't forget to adopt and not shop for a pet, and make sure all pets are spayed or neutered.

Overcrowding: Be The Solution

by Rose Rakow, DVM,
Stiern Veterinary Hospital

How do I start?

Since you are reading this article, you are already an animal advocate, most likely your dog or cat is already altered. But what about your neighbor's, your employee's, your boss', your son/daughter's, your grandchild's???

Currently we are in a crisis! By we, I mean, Bakersfield, Kern County, California and the United States. The number of pets, and for the limits of this article I refer to dogs and cats, FAR outnumber available caretakers. The number of households with dogs and cats are the highest they have ever been in the United States or even the world, usually with multiple pets per household. Yet the amount of dogs and cats in shelters, rescues and sanctuaries are exponentially increasing monthly.

We can potentially blame COVID and the pandemic, since temporarily elective services ceased for a short time and more people acquired dogs or cats while they were isolated, but that does not excuse or explain why it continued to increase.

How many people know someone, or maybe you are the someone, that feeds cats on your porch or in the neighborhood. Are these cats spayed and neutered? If not, feeding them just increases the cat population in that neighborhood, especially if well fed.

I play a game with the kids at the SPCA summer camp; we play with goldfish crackers. If they get it right, they get to eat the goldfish. (Okay so they get to eat them anyway.) The game is a "what if" game.

The game starts with a few assumptions… Cats can have up to three litters a year and can have two to eight kittens per litter. If we assume a cat will have two litters per year, only four kittens per litter and they have a 50:50 chance of being female; how many female cats will there be in two years?

Want to take a guess? From one un-spayed female kitten with the above assumptions, in two years you could have 81 female cats! If you figure male and female cats, that's 162 cats. Do you want the math? See the chalkboard graphic below.

Pet overpopulation has been a concern of mine since long before I went to college. Considering I graduated high school in 1982, that has been a very long time.

Daily/hourly on Facebook, Instagram or any other social media page you follow or "hate," there are postings of litters of puppies and kittens needing homes.

People post needing homes for pets they have had for years or months because of moving or not being able to handle them anymore. Posts from people finding dogs — picking them up, removing them from where they were found, taking them somewhere else and now need someone else to take that "found" dog.

Every week you can see on social media posts from up and down California, dogs in shelters with pleas for adoption, rescue, need to find home and urgent pleas to prevent euthanasia simply because there is not enough room for what is brought in. Every day, every week, hard decisions are made for which to keep and which to not. Some decisions are made a little easier by medical conditions or attitudes, but most are not. They are simply hard decisions. And God bless the people that must make those decisions. That is not easy; these people did not enter this business to make these decisions. They entered to save them, to find them homes and hearts. Many of those wondrous people lose a little of themselves every day doing what needs to be done.

Animal transports move dogs out of state or out of country to Canada weekly: hundreds of dogs from Kern County this year so far, thousands from California. Initially the dogs leaving here went to a home already pre-picked based on their description. Now most go into either a crowded foster system or a temporary shelter situation, which for many is not very short term. These rescues that they are going to are becoming saturated also. We will not discuss those situations where people have taken on too many dogs or cats that they cannot sufficiently care for them.

So, what is the solution?

Because it cannot go on as it has, either euthanasia rates will need to exponentially increase to keep up with the demand or stray dogs and cats will need to run free in the streets. It does not matter if the local animal shelter(s) have 200 kennels or 2,000 kennels, they will be filled and overflowing.

Short term – I do not think there is a solution, realistically. Everyone in animal rescue will keep beating themselves up to try to keep up with the demand.

Long term – the solution is what it has always been… spay and neuter. But EVERYONE needs to do it. Joe and Jane Public need to see the big picture. They need to see that one unaltered cat on their front porch can become 161 cats or more in two years.

I realize the cost of veterinary care has increased, along with the cost of everything else. What once cost $24.99 for a bucket of chicken, three large sides, biscuits and a cake is now $55.99, and does not include the cake.

Several organizations offer low-cost to free spay neuter services in "clinic" situations. Critters Without Litters is a local non-profit with low cost spay/neuter events. I know spots fill up quickly, but scheduling and actually showing up for the surgery is the first step, whether it is next week or in two months.

What can you do?

Be an advocate. Discuss and talk about not just the cute kitten trying to find a home, but how the parent was not spayed and how many more kittens will need to find a home in the next few years.

Help your neighbor, child, boss, employee, friend…see how much a difference it could make if there was just one less litter in the world.

Consider sponsoring or contributing to a neuter/spay event. Organize your neighborhood to spay and neuter its cat colony. Or if you do not want to be in the spotlight, convince your neighbor to do it. Offer to drop or pick up the pet for that person that works all the time and cannot seem to make an appointment, maybe even offer to make the appointment for them.

Because, sadly, there are not enough homes in Bakersfield, California, the United States, North America or even the world if this continues.

Happy "Tails"

If you're looking for a heartwarming story to brighten your day, look no further than Prince's tale of adoption. For almost two years, Prince had been living at the shelter, hoping to find his forever home. He was a sweet and loving dog, but for some reason, no one seemed to notice him. That is, until recently a wonderful family came along and changed his life forever.

Now, Prince is living the good life with his new family, and the shelter staff here couldn't be happier for him. While we miss him dearly, we know that he is exactly where he belongs. Seeing Prince thrive with his new family is a reminder of why we do what we do– help animals find the love and care they deserve.

So, if you're ever feeling down, just remember Prince's story and know that there is always hope for a happy ending. Adoption truly saves lives and brings joy to both the animal and their new family.

Shelter Pet Care Tips

Here are some tips for taking care of shelter pets:

- Give them time to adjust to their new surroundings. Shelter pets may be stressed or anxious, so it's important to be patient and give them time to feel comfortable in their new home. With cats especially, just open their crate/box upon arriving at home and let them come out when they are ready.
- Provide them with a safe and comfortable space. Make sure they have a cozy bed, plenty of toys and access to fresh water and food.
- Train and exercise them regularly. Regular training and exercise can help shelter pets learn new skills, release pent-up energy and bond with you.
- Show them love and grace. Remember that shelter pets may have had a tough past, so it's important to show them patience and love as they adjust to their new home.

BAKERSFIELD SPCA

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BAKERSFIELD, CA 93308
(661) 323-8353
BAKERSFIELDSPCA.ORG

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> **Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has.**
>
> MARGARET MEAD

MARK YOUR CALENDAR: HALLOWEEN HOWL SATURDAY, OCT 28!
PAWTIQUES & TREASURES 3 DAYS! FRIDAY, NOV 3 – SUNDAY, NOV 5!

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Critter Corner

Employee Spotlight: James Delgado

James Delgado
Maintenance Manager

Meet James! James Delgado is our highly skilled and dedicated on-site Maintenance Manager, with over five years with us. He is our go-to guy for all building and grounds maintenance needs. James is known for his reliability, friendly demeanor and willingness to lend a hand whenever it's needed. His wealth of knowledge and expertise ensures that all our buildings and grounds are always in top shape and up to code, which gives us peace of mind. James is also a great problem solver and can come up with creative solutions to even the most challenging issues. We feel incredibly lucky to have James as part of our team and appreciate the hard work and dedication he puts into his job every day.

Join our email list!

BE ENTERED TO WIN A STARBUCKS GIFT CARD!

New email list subscribers who sign up between September 1, 2023 and November 30, 2023 will be entered to win a $20 Starbucks gift card!

Sign up at **https://bakersfieldspca.org/email** or scan this code: