Art for Animals’ Sake
A parrot goes to school

San Francisco: Kitty City
The campaign for cats

Young People, Huge Hearts
Philanthropy by kids

First-time Fosterer
Kitten caboodle

Albert, shelter adoptee
Dear Friends,

Lasting societal change usually happens incrementally, but sometimes it can be nudged forward significantly by a specific, powerful impetus. I believe that something like this happened when then-President-elect Obama pledged to give his daughters a dog from either a shelter or a rescue group. “…(O)ur preference would be to get a shelter dog…” he said, then noted with self-deprecating humor that it might be “…a mutt, like me.”

Well, Bo may be a pedigreed pooch, but he was nonetheless a cast-off dog. Twenty-five percent of dogs in shelters are pedigreed. Mr. Obama’s public endorsement of shelter adoption is a giant step forward for the millions of homeless companion animals who wait patiently for a loving home. It offers us a teachable moment with a message that I hope will accelerate the changes in attitudes that are needed to solve this heartbreaking situation.

Every year in the United States approximately 6-8 million healthy, adoptable cats and dogs enter shelters; 3-4 million of them do not leave alive. In 2008, of the 88.3 million owned cats in the nation (nearly 34 percent of households own at least one), only 18 percent were adopted from a shelter. Even worse, of the 74.8 million owned dogs (39 percent of households own at least one) a mere 10 percent were from a shelter.

We want more homeless animals from shelters or rescues to find their way into loving homes. It would be wonderful if this became the social norm, like wearing a seatbelt or not drinking and driving. At the same time, and in combination with changing community values and the growing acceptance of adoption from shelters, has come a revolution in our understanding of the way homeless animals need to be housed and cared for. Shelters built in the past were holding facilities that were not conducive to people visiting the animals. Is it any wonder that the majority of people couldn’t bear to visit these places? Maddie’s Adoption Center at The SF/SPCA changed all that when it opened in 1998, and now its animal- and people-friendly design is emulated across the country and around the world.

Maddie’s has become a model for how homeless animals should be housed. It’s an environment where cats and dogs are treated with respect, and where their dignity is reflected in their surroundings and the care they receive. Our staff and volunteers give them treatment, training and lots of TLC. Then they help match the adopter and animal so the human/animal bond can be strong. And we provide excellent client service to ensure that animals...
and people are treated with respect and compassion.

Coincidentally, a bill was introduced into the California Assembly this spring that, if passed by the legislature, could have a substantial impact on the numbers of homeless animals adopted from shelters and rescue groups. It is exciting to see the state government take the lead with legislation that will promote the adoption of homeless pets. AB 233, presented by Assembly Member Cameron Smyth (R-Santa Clarita), will allow California taxpayers who adopt a pet from an animal shelter or rescue group to deduct the adoption fee on their state income taxes.

I believe that this is a very enlightened approach to the problem of dog and cat homelessness in our state; it is estimated that 800,000 cats and dogs are abandoned each year in California, and local governments spend approximately $250 million annually on sheltering animals.

Because of the current, severe economic situation, and with many people losing their homes or jobs, or both, increasing numbers of companion animals are being abandoned or surrendered to humane organizations. The passage of AB 233 will encourage people looking for a pet to visit their local shelter or rescue group; it will provide adopters with a financial cushion; and it will relieve the pressure on animal welfare organizations. The SF/SPCA has thrown its support behind AB 223, and is appealing to its supporters to write to their representatives, or to Assembly Member Smyth, urging support for this important and sensible piece of legislation.

Promoting the adoption of homeless cats and dogs is key to The San Francisco SPCA’s mission of saving lives. Working with animals from the Bay Area and beyond, it is our goal to save as many lives as possible and to improve their quality of life in the shelter and in the community. Our Humane Education program teaches children responsible pet guardianship and the importance of adoption. The Behavior and Training staff and Academy for Dog Trainers curriculum teach positive training methods to keep animals in their homes. And our veterinary services promote the wellness of our beloved animals. We have to address the problem of animals ending up in shelters from 30,000 feet up – there is no magic answer, just lots of hard work using many different tools.

It is only through your continued generous support that we can continue this important work.

For the animals,

Jan McHugh-Smith, President
I am sitting on the floor with a three-year-old black cat on my lap. He is trembling. He leans into my chest. I hug him. He purrs.

We don’t know his name, but that’s not important. The person who left him in the night depository of an animal shelter in the Central Valley, where he spent the cold night, didn’t bother to leave a note.

He is lucky. He’s now at Maddie’s Adoption Center at The San Francisco SPCA. In a few days he’ll be gone to a new home and a better life.

Nearly two years ago, I started volunteering as a cat socializer at this airy haven in the Mission District. It is a place of miracles. They occur daily, between the cats and the people who adopt them. As volunteers, we play a privileged role. We befriend the cats as best we can and do matchmaking for them. We then witness the special bonds between humans and animals as those connections are being formed.

On one of those early days, I greeted a mother and her two preschool daughters. They were looking for two kittens. After visiting several kitten-filled condos, they met their matches.

It all happened in spite of me. I told the mother that grown-up cats might be better with small children. She persisted. The quiet older girl had picked a shy kitten while her younger, bubbly sister had picked a high-energy kitten. I told them that picking kittens from different litters was a bit of a gamble; the animals might not like each other. But the mother was determined.

An hour later, after the adoptions went through, I boxed the kittens. As I came back into the lobby, I saw the mother and the two girls waiting – all beaming – by the front door. It occurred to me how special the moment was, all of these lives about to take a dramatic turn for the better. I imagined how the family would grow and change. The kittens would become an integral part of the girls’ lives – they’d be waiting at home after the first day of school, over the following years they’d climb on the kitchen table and interrupt homework or cuddle on laps while the girls read, they’d sit and watch as each girl got ready for her first date (and they’d be there to help deal with the first heartbreak), and after both girls were away at college two old cats would climb up on the couch and stretch out next to the mother.

I put the boxes on the floor and knelt down and said to the girls, “Now it’s time for the four of you to go home and grow up together.”

A few months later I saw the mother and her daughters at Maddie’s, walking through the hallways, looking into the condos. I was alarmed. Had the adoptions not worked? Was the family looking for new cats? Would they perhaps listen to my advice this time?

“Oh, the cats are doing just great,” the mother said, going on to explain how the kittens had bonded with the girls, predictably shy to shy and outgoing to outgoing, and, less predictably, with each other.

“Just browsing today?” I said.

“We’re looking at the cat trees,” the mother said. “I bought some power tools and we’re going to build one.”

I left them to the business of scrutinizing our cat trees for ideas. I didn’t want to delay these heroines. They had kittens waiting for them at home.

**Trista**

Trista was a painfully shy but beautiful young tortoise shell. I visited her often. At first she sat in one corner while I sat in another. After a few months she would sometimes stretch out on the shelf in her cat tree and allow me to pet her. On rare occasions, she’d come out and play, but scamper back in the corner after just a few moments. Once, a few months later, she sat on my lap, but for less than half a minute.

Trista had something extra in her condo, an item that had come with her to The SF/SPCA, a small scratching board covered in...
yarn with her name embroidered on it. I’d tell potential adopters that Trista and I often sat in opposite corners, very possibly thinking the same thing — “What happened to the nice old lady who made the scratching board?”

I would tell people this little scenario to entice them into Trista’s condo, but the results were always the same. Trista would stay huddled in her safe place and the people would move on.

One Saturday, a young woman stepped into her condo. Trista ran out, rubbed against the woman, then stood with her front paws on the woman’s leg and purred.

After nine long months at Maddie’s, at the age of 1-1/2, Trista had finally found the person she’d been waiting for. She went home that day.

Simon

For several months recently we were graced with the presence of Simon, a 15-year-old black cat with a snaggle-tooth smile. There’s not much of a market for old cats with bad teeth.

But here’s what Simon really was. He was an ambassador of goodwill sent to us from the cat world. He was unfailingly cheerful and affectionate. When a group of youngsters visited The SF/SPCA as part of a birthday party, he welcomed them to his condo. He was the perfect host, attentive and polite. He enjoyed the excitement, the petting, the attention.

I treasured our visits. He greeted me warmly, accepted some head scratches and then flopped on his back for some serious petting.

We had a joke. I always brought a toy and he was soon on his feet, eager to begin. I would tell him, “Simon, you’re too old to play.” Then he’d start batting and biting the toy.

At last, this gentle soul who greeted everyone with warmth and affection met Christine, a young woman he loved a little more than he did the rest of us.

When she came into his room he couldn’t take his eyes off her. He was her cat.

Christine adopted Simon. He is getting to know three younger cats. He often joins them on a window sill offering a sunny view. Sometimes he stretches out on his own bed. He is eating well. He is happy. He is home.

“Litter Did U Know” is the official (and popular) blog of The San Francisco SPCA Cat Behavior Program. Written by two “kindred and cat-obsessed spirits,” cat behavior counselors Daniel Quagliozi and Jamey Walker, the blog offers an inside view of cat-related goings-on at The SF/SPCA. Catch it at www.sfspca.org (choose Programs & Services, then Cat Behavior Advice).
A new art teacher associated with The San Francisco SPCA is a little on the short side and covered with pinkish-orange feathers. Her name is Soda and her personality sparkles. An eight-year-old Moluccan cockatoo (just a youngster), Soda has inspired a new classroom presentation offered by The SF/SPCA Humane Education Program.

Soda is joyful, silly, and a mimic – everything a healthy cockatoo in captivity is known for. Her dark eyes are round and shiny, and the phrase she repeats most often is “I love you.” She will belt it out with great emotion to a room filled with people. She will also whisper it softly into your ear when you least expect it. This experience is heartwarming. It is one of many reasons that led to my decision to try and share her with other people. I was already a volunteer in two SF/SPCA programs and wasn’t quite sure how Soda might play a role, but everything fell into place last summer.

During ten weeks of The SF/SPCA’s popular Animal Camps, I worked with SF/SPCA Humane Education Program Manager Laurie Routhier to develop an art class for children as young as five (entering 1st grade) up through 13 (entering 8th grade), starring Soda.

The structure of the sessions evolved almost naturally. Who didn’t want to meet a sassy parrot that could talk, laugh, whistle, and dance? Soda had the children’s attention from the moment they saw her and enjoyed the spotlight as they talked to her and she chatted back. She consistently said “Hi” and “Hello” to everyone in the room, directed “Hi, pretty girl” to the girls, and practiced her wolf whistle.

Because children learn much of what they know by watching those around them, I used this opportunity to be a good role model, and as Soda’s guardian, I talked about the long list of responsibilities in understanding and caring for an animal, including the fact that, with good health on her side, Soda could live 40-60 years or more. The kids were encouraged, through class discussion, to consider the needs
and feelings of others, the effects of their own actions, and their own place in the world relative to other living beings.

Though we didn’t want the children to handle Soda, I encouraged them to pick up the show-and-tell items I brought, including some non-fertile eggs (only slightly smaller than chicken eggs) she has laid.

The children also witnessed the special bond a human can have with a parrot, and the almost psychic ability a parrot has for sensing emotion and feelings and mirroring them. If you are excited or loud, Soda will be excited and loud. If you act calmly and in a loving manner, she will follow suit. The children saw this as the session progressed. As the students became comfortable with Soda and me, their own excitement grew, reflected in their peppering of me with questions, until the feathered crest on Soda’s head would fan upwards and she would utter shrill, rhythmic cries – the type of outburst that might come out of a jungle rather than a multi-purpose room. It would briefly remind everyone of Soda’s origins, and assure again that Soda had everyone’s attention.

Once the drawing paper was handed out, the children became quiet as they picked up pencils and studiously contemplated their new feathered friend. Soda settled down as well and posed gracefully on her perch for a long period as the children tried to replicate her image from their vantage point.

Why is drawing an animal a good thing? How is this activity a lesson in humane education? To begin with, the exercise calls on children’s observational skills, challenging them to really examine each detail of Soda, from her physical features to the personality she projects. It’s an effort to connect the students’ minds, hearts, and hands.

Further, getting to know an unusual animal like Soda enables students to extend their compassion to animals they may not have met before. Laurie Routhier points out that while many people grow up caring for a domesticated dog or cat, “Giving kids the opportunity to explore and bond with a variety of animals helps them to consider their life choices and to demonstrate respect for other species.” In addition to Soda, the Humane Education Program introduces children to guinea pigs, rats and chickens.

Laurie and I share a favorite memory of the children interacting with Soda. It happened more than once and typically toward the end of class, like a grand finale. As the children finished their drawings and staff started to collect them, one or two children would get up and stand next to Soda. One of the children would laugh, which would make Soda laugh, which made more kids laugh, which made Soda laugh even more. Then Soda started to dance, which made the kids dance, which made Soda dance and laugh even more.

To see Soda dance was to see her swinging and swaying her body as she traced and retraced the length of her perch. Most times the bright orange crest of feathers on her head was also upright and bobbing from side to side. I once counted at least eight children dancing around Soda, as if participating in a high-energy aerobics class. It was a fun and noisy scene and there was no doubt who was in charge, who was the teacher, and who was at the head of the class.
Adopting a Bird is not a Lightweight Decision

Anyone interested in becoming a first-time bird guardian or acquiring a larger parrot as a pet – Soda makes for a demanding companion – should consider the following:

1. Explore the Internet for information and books on the different species.
2. Talk to people who keep birds; consult bird experts in your area.
3. Small parrots can live 15-25 years; larger parrots can live past 60.
4. Parrots are family members; they need human interaction.
5. The bigger the bird, the bigger the cage will need to be.
6. Birds can be loud; respect your neighbors.
7. Understand diet needs; a bird’s health depends on it.
8. Birds require veterinary care just like other pets.
10. Parrot toys are a must; buy them or make them.
11. Parakeets and hand-tamed cockatiels are excellent starter birds.
12. Check with San Francisco Animal Care & Control and Mickaboo Companion Bird Rescue for adoptable birds.

San Francisco teachers interested in the Animal Art Program and a free classroom visit by Soda should go to sfspca.org and choose Programs and Services, Youth Programs, and Class Visits.

Note: Native to Indonesia, the Moluccan cockatoo is an endangered species, protected by international agreement. Birds like Soda come from captive-bred parents.

As the summertime SF/SPCA Animal Camp art sessions began to evolve into a program to take Soda out into regular classrooms, I knew a greater vision for Soda was being realized. I had found a way for a very intelligent and social bird to contribute to the larger community around her – which in turn will help keep her happy and healthy for many years to come. 🐦

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Fortunately, it’s easy to help them by donating used and new items: we always need towels, throw rugs, blankets, pet toys, natural chews, kennels, crates, leashes, and other practical goods (but no pillows or any linens that can’t be easily laundered). Unfortunately, we can’t spare staff to pick up donated goods, so we ask you to please deliver to The SF/SPCA. Thankfully, The SF/SPCA campus is open seven days a week (except major holidays), and, upon request, we can issue a receipt.

Please drop off your donations during our normal business hours at: Maddie’s Adoption Center at 250 Florida Street (at 16th Street) or Leanne B. Roberts Animal Care Center at 201 Alabama Street (at 16th Street).

**Treats for the Animals**

- Cat & dog food: unopened wet & dry (all brands welcome – please, no prescription pet food)
- Dog/Cat Treats: Natural Balance rolls
- Dog treats: Freeze-dried liver
- Pill Pockets
- Natural dog chews: pig ears
- Kitty grass

**Toys and Enrichment Items**

- Dog/puppy toys (should be washable with no moving parts that could be ingested)
- KONG food carrier toys
- Cat/kitten toys (catnip-free)
- “Ping pong” type cat toys
- Cat trees & scratching posts
- Cat/Kitten playgrounds & jungle gyms
- Collars & leashes
- Pet beds
- Pet carriers
- Dog crates
- Black wire folding crates (optimal size: 36” long x 22” wide x 26” high)

**Animal Supplies**

- Towels/blankets, full or queen size
- Throw rugs
- Grooming supplies (nail trimmers, brushes)
- Dog beds (all sizes)
- Cat cozies, Cuddle Cups
- Dog pens: Practigates™ P.V.C. plastic ring gates
- Bait bags
- Dog/cat carriers
- Clickers
- Cat litter (all brands, clumping and pellet)
- Newspapers
- Infant “Bjorn” slings (for use in Foster Care program)

**Gift Cards**

Gift Cards are always needed for emergency supplies, animal intake trips, and volunteer recognition.

- Safeway, Trader Joe’s – local grocery stores
- Pet Food Express, PetCo, babies – local pet supply stores
- Gas stations
- Office supply stores
- Local restaurants, movie theaters, book stores

Thank you for your support of our animals! Questions? Need information about donating a specific item or items in bulk? Want to donate to a specific SF/SPCA program? Please contact our Development Department at development@sfspca.org or (415) 554-3029.

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**The Animals’ Wish List**

*Times are tough, and donations are down, but the animals still need your help!*

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**Capital Campaign to Complete the Leanne B. Roberts Animal Care Center**

We’re nearly there! More than 80% of the Leanne Roberts Center is now paid for. The final project cost was $27,061,000, a savings of $2.8 million. The remaining campaign is now set at $5.1 million. Help us reach our goal. For more information, please contact Tina Ahn, SF/SPCA Development Director, at (415) 554-3025 or by email at tahn@sfspca.org.
Reed Andary started young. Shortly before his sixth birthday, his family saw a television show about stray animals, and Reed asked, “Mommy, is it okay if I ask my friends to bring donations for the homeless animals instead of getting birthday gifts?” Amazed, Mommy said yes. A tradition was born. Reed turned ten recently, the fifth consecutive year he’s sponsored these special birthday parties, which have raised some $3,500 for The San Francisco SPCA.

But there’s more. Word of this young man’s selfless acts have rippled throughout his community. For one thing, his parties have gotten bigger. Last year, for his ninth birthday, his parents rented a school gym for a giant sleepover.

Reed’s messages haven’t changed, though. He urges everyone to adopt from a shelter, and he’s made charitable giving popular among his peers. In fact, following Reed’s lead, other kids are starting their own charities. Neighbors, friends, classmates, and even the school principal are involved.

“Reed is an example of what happens when passion turns into action,” says SF/SPCA President Jan McHugh-Smith. “Simply by expressing that passion for animals, wanting to help them, he’s taken a leadership role. He’s an incredible inspiration.”

Meantime, in Ms. Tigerman’s second-grade class of Bungalow A at Lawton Alternative School, an ordinary shoebox provided the opportunity for some important life lessons. Wrapped in pretty paper, the shoebox became a “justice box” to raise donations for a good cause. For two weeks, students threw in their spare pennies; parents (and teacher) chipped in some loose change, too. Then the class came up with a dozen possible charities for their largesse and voted to give their collection to homeless animals at The San Francisco SPCA.

The pedagogical possibilities were many. The children could see for themselves that every little bit helped and that pooling their resources paid off. “I wanted to show them that it doesn’t take much to make your community a better place to live,” Ms. Tigerman explains. Not to mention that counting the money made for a fine lesson in arithmetic. Ms. Tigerman says that in addition to feeling justifiable pride in their collective achievement, students are enjoying their subscription to Our Animals.

For her past two birthdays, Alexa Duffy has asked her friends and family to give donations to The San Francisco SPCA instead of gifts to her. The first year, when Alexa turned nine, she and her mom kindly delivered the money in person to The SF/SPCA. The next year, when Alexa elected to repeat her act of generosity, her mother wanted her to really see where the money was going and arranged for a field trip to The SF/SPCA.
So Alexa’s entire birthday-party entourage of a dozen friends visited The SF/SPCA, including a fun-filled session with Simon, a 15-year-old feline party animal. Alexa and her mother were so enchanted by Simon that they almost adopted him then and there, but felt it wouldn’t be fair to their cats already at home. [Read more about Simon on pg. 5.]

Then Alexa and all her friends adjourned for cake and ice cream, followed by a slumber party. Talk about having a nice day! Alexa’s mom thinks the girls would agree that the highlight was visiting the animals, a session especially meaningful to Alexa, who lives with two parents, two siblings, one dog and three cats, and wants to be a veterinarian.

In the Jewish tradition, age 13 marks the dawn of maturity and religious responsibility. Claire Hoch-Frohman, inspired in part by her dog Desi and by a friend who volunteers at The San Francisco SPCA, took that mission seriously and redirected her bat mitzvah monetary gifts, splitting proceeds between one human-related charity and one animal-related charity. To top off this generosity, one of Claire’s parents works for a company that matches charitable donations, resulting in a total contribution to SF/SPCA animals of $1,000.

Finally, consider the can-do spirit of Philip Goss and Wyeth Coulter, two young men who raised money two years running for The SF/SPCA by selling pumpkins during the Halloween/Thanksgiving season. Their entrepreneurial effort bore abundant fruit; the dynamic duo collected more than $1,500 for the animals, and they came to The SF/SPCA for a behind-the-scenes tour last November.

For details, call (415) 554-3030.

Gifts of Love

All gifts to the Society in honor or in memory of a person or pet are gratefully accepted, and we will gladly notify others of your thoughtfulness.

In memory of:
Cosmo,
from Michael C. Anstadt

Free Spay/Neuter for:

- Feral cats through our Feral Fix Program
- Pets of qualifying low-income individuals
- Pets of homeless San Franciscans via Vet SOS (Veterinary Street Outreach Services)

Discount Spay/Neuter for:

- 25% - 100% off for low-income San Francisco residents
- 20% off for San Franciscans over the age of 65, regardless of income
- 20% off for San Francisco full-time students, regardless of income
- 10% off for San Francisco residents, regardless of income
- 10% off for existing SF/SPCA Veterinary Hospital clients

Only at

For details, call (415) 554-3030.
On March 4, The San Francisco SPCA capped off its 140th anniversary year with a sparkling commemorative event. Almost 300 supporters and friends crowded into the dramatic Julia Morgan Ballroom at the Merchants Exchange Building for an evening of elegant dining, lively entertainment and heartfelt memories.

The historic patina of the Julia Morgan Ballroom formed a perfect setting for the occasion, but the evening was not just about looking back. Instead, the event was firmly focused on the future, and the Society’s ongoing commitment to the animals and community of San Francisco.

Presiding over the fun was local icon Doug McConnell, host of the television series “Bay Area Backroads” and a long-time supporter of animal causes. The evening’s special guest was Victoria Stilwell, one of the world’s most recognized and respected dog trainers, and host of Animal Planet’s hit TV series “It’s Me or the Dog.”

President of The SF/SPCA Jan McHugh-Smith (President, SF/SPCA), Board members Belinda Levensohn, Sharon Bradford, Catherine Brown (Board Chair), Ransom Cook, David Bradford, Jeanette Roach, Event Co-Chair, Jan McHugh-Smith (President, SF/SPCA), Board members Belinda Levensohn, Sharon Bradford, Catherine Brown (Board Chair), Saira Malik, Kathy Walsh, Sabina Shaikh, Michele Stamatopoulos (Event committee member), Jill Kramer (CLAW founder)
Smith welcomed guests and thanked them for their support. She also extended her appreciation to all of the sponsors of the evening for their generosity, particularly Presenting Sponsors, Nestlé Purina - The One Hope Network and SF/SPCA Board Member Peter Read.

The dinner was also an opportunity for The SF/SPCA to acknowledge and demonstrate its gratitude to Critter Lovers At Work (CLAW), an all-volunteer fundraising group that has raised over $800,000 for the Society’s Cinderella Fund during the last 21 years. The Cinderella Fund serves the neediest dogs and cats at The SF/SPCA, those that are not only sick or injured but homeless as well. Through its continuing dedication, CLAW has been responsible for transforming the lives of thousands of these deserving animals. SF/SPCA Board Chair Catherine Brown voiced the profound appreciation of the Board and SF/SPCA staff for CLAW’s unwavering commitment. She presented an award to CLAW founder, Jill Kramer, who accepted it on behalf of all CLAW members, past and present.

The evening was also the kick-off of the public phase of The SF/SPCA’s capital campaign to fully fund the Leanne B. Roberts Animal Care Center. Described as the “flagship for animal welfare in America” by President Jan McHugh-Smith, the newly-opened Center is already fulfilling its promise of providing state-of-the-art veterinary care to cats and dogs, both with homes and without, and regardless of their financial status.

Co-Chairs of the capital campaign, Co-Vice Chair of The SF/SPCA Board of Directors Belinda Levensohn, and Board Member Sharon Bradford, spoke about the work performed at the new Animal Care Center, and the need for it to continue, while a video presentation mov-
ingly showed this work in action.

Three companion animals whose lives have been changed by the help given them by The SF/SPCA also made live appearances: Louie, an 11-year-old dog whose owner had passed away and is now waiting to find a new home at Maddie’s Adoption Center; Geordi, a fluffy white poodle who lost his eyesight through an act of cruelty but who was cared for by The SF/SPCA and now has a loving home; and Nona, an 11-year-old cat with cancer who is living out her life in love and dignity with a devoted SF/SPCA volunteer from the Society’s new Fospice [foster-hospice] Program.

The evening concluded with a spirited live auction. Items included having your dog or cat on the cover of The SF/SPCA’s award-winning magazine, Our Animals, and an all-inclusive round-trip for two to attend the 2010 Westminster Dog Show in New York City. Bidding grew quite brisk after one CLAW member pledged a whopping $50,000 if that amount could be matched by auction participants! Spurred by this challenge, dinner guests got cheerfully carried away, enthusiastically raised their hands and met the goal. That will add up to a lot of “glass slippers” – vital medical care – for many, many needy and homeless SF/SPCA animals.

Since 1868 The San Francisco SPCA has provided hope and help to the animals of San Francisco, and its lifesaving work has proceeded continuously through good times and bad, and during national and regional disasters. The SF/SPCA’s 140th anniversary is now over, but with the support of its many friends, the agency’s rich past is only prologue to a confident and positive future.

See more photos at www.sfspca.org.

Laura Heffron, Anita Jaffe, Renee Roberts, Suzy Varadi, Penni Tsavaris (Macy’s West)

Sue Hoeschler, Peter Stoneberg

Ted Kohr, Jim Sunseri, Brenda Sunseri

Drs. Craig Maretzki and Carlo Vitale (SFVS)

Pam Hill, Gina DiSanti (Presenting Sponsors with Nestle Purina – The One Hope Network)
Event Honorary Committee

Richard E. Dirickson,
Honorary Dinner Chair
Ransom Cook
Bernard M. Kramer, M.D.
Jill Kramer
William Lee Olds, Jr.
Jacqueline L. Young

Event Chairs
Sharon Bradford
Belinda Levensohn
Sharol McQuarrie
Jeanette Roach
Nancy Trogman

Event Committee
Charlotte Lee
Missy Nelson
Michèle Stamatopulos

Victoria Stilwell, special guest
Generous Legacies

With deep gratitude for having remembered the animals in their wills, The San Francisco SPCA pays tribute to the following thoughtful individuals. Individual donor support is the moving force behind all The SF/SPCA’s work for animals – now and in the future.

Allyson Anthony
David E. Arizmendi
Patricia F. Berman
Steven Cohen
Ina A. Cokeley
Christine Considine
Shirley S. Deutsch
Marcella I. Drennan
Judith B. Frankel
Elizabeth L. Gerstley
Kathleen Gilbert
Edward A. Harang
Harvey Clars Auction Gallery
Nancy L. Henry
Nina M. Hunt
Josephine Huwyler
Mary Lohneis
Monica C. Lopes
Albert R. Lubersky
H. Lundie
Lucille V. Manning
Signe A. McClellan
Veronica McLaughlin
Cynthia Mikkelsen
Ruth W. Mueller
Harold Nadel
Marilou Phillips
Frederic H. Pickrell
Ruth K. Sovig
Emily G. Storrow
Lois Szumski
Ellis Webster
Irma Weule
Agnes Whitelock
Richard F. Winckel
Fred N. Woods
Ruth E. Wright

The San Francisco SPCA’s website, www.sfspca.org, has a whole new look and feel – it’s beautiful! You can dig up tons of free stuff, including:

- Adorable dogs and cats
- Adoption tips
- Agility classes for dogs
- Animal Assisted Therapy
- Archive of recent Our Animals
- Academy for Dog Trainers

Visit sfspca.org.

HELP OUR ANIMALS FIND THE ROAD HOME

Donating your vehicle to The San Francisco SPCA is quick and easy!

Just call 1-866-473-7722 toll free.

Questions? Visit our website at www.sfspca.org or call 415-554-3076.
San Francisco has been named one of the nation’s top ten feline-friendly cities.

To compile the select list, the CATalyst Council, a coalition of professionals from the veterinary community, academia, nonprofits, industry and animal-welfare organizations, considered more than a dozen criteria, including cat ownership per capita, level of veterinary care, microchipping and cat-friendly local ordinances.

Why make a list of tabby-centric townships? Calling attention to these kitty cities is part of a new campaign to raise the status of the cat.

You see, while dogs have long been called (hu)man’s best friend, cats are actually America’s number one companion. According to a 2007 tally by the American Veterinary Medical Association, pet cats outnumber pet canines by nearly 10 million.

So why does America’s favorite animal need a boost?

Because, contrary to what you’d expect with a rise in cat popularity, the AVMA also discovered that between 2001 and 2006, cat visits to the veterinarian fell about 11 percent. So even while there are more cats, fewer of them are receiving the medical attention they deserve. A 2006 survey by the Society of Animal Welfare Administrators (SAWA) also showed that overcrowded animal shelters are seeing more cats given up than their canine cousins.

The CATalyst Council was formed to counteract this troubling situation. This national initiative intends to change the way people see and experience cats. The Council wants to revise society’s image of cats as aloof creatures that don’t require human contact or care. In other words, they aim to champion the cat.

“There is a higher number of cats than dogs surrendered to shelters nationwide, increasingly so in these economic times of financial strain and home foreclosures,” notes Jan McHugh-Smith, who is part of the CATalyst Council and a board member of the Society of Animal Welfare Administrators (SAWA) as well as President of The San Francisco SPCA. “We are eager to showcase these cities that demonstrate outstanding compassion and resources for cats and their owners in order to elevate the status of the cat.”

Steve Dale, a passionate and award-winning pet journalist based in Chicago, has volunteered to be the Council’s national spokesperson. “Cats are more likely to be neglected than dogs, more likely to wind up in shelters and less likely to be seen by veterinarians,” he says. “Obviously there is room for the nation to improve the overall status and care of cats.”

The top ten cities already ahead, catwise, are Atlanta, Boston, Denver, Minneapolis, Phoenix, Portland (Ore.), San Diego, San Francisco, Seattle and Tampa. The CATalyst Council also noted for honorable mention, Ithaca, N.Y.

Veterinarian Dr. Jane E. Brunt, the CATalyst Council’s executive director, summarizes her mission this way: “We are reaching out to all parties – the pet healthcare community, shelter and welfare organizations, government and the public – to ensure that cats receive the proper care and attention they need and deserve. It truly is all about the cat.” 🐾

Learn more about CATalyst and The SF/SPCA at sfspca.org.
Estate Planning Seminar

Long-Range Planning for You, Your Family, Your Pets and Philanthropy: Re-Evaluating

Thursday, June 18, 2009 at 6:30 pm
The San Francisco SPCA
Leanne B. Roberts
Animal Care Center
201 Alabama Street, San Francisco, CA 94103

Speakers:
Sheldon H. Wolfe, Esq., and Gary Rothstein, Esq., of Manatt, Phelps, & Phillips, LLP

Gain timely, up-to-date information about wills, trusts, estate plans, probable estate tax law changes and how to include your pet in your estate plans. Handouts will include Sample Pet Trusts and information sheet.

Space is limited.
Please RSVP by June 12th to Laura Gretch, Events Coordinator, at RSVP@sfspca.org or (415) 554-3052.
First-time Fosterer

A longtime San Francisco SPCA staffer takes on a couple of kittens, and the kittens win.

ARTICLE AND PHOTOS BY PAUL GLASSNER, SF/SPCA

Gracie did it first.

I was sitting at my desk at home writing a letter when this determined little fluffball clawed her way up my pants leg. Thank goodness for blue jeans; their thick skin provides a good gripping surface for tiny kitten talons as well as perfect protection for the person.

Once she reached my knee level, Gracie padded around the tops of my thighs and nestled down in my lap. And when Jack, her brother, heard the purr from above, he climbed up exactly the same way to investigate, and soon both of them were curled up in my lap asleep.

Adorable!

Allowing foster kittens to scale one's pants leg, while not explicitly prohibited by The San Francisco SPCA Foster Kitten Program Manual, isn't desirable behavior. I'm a seasoned cat person, and I know that today's one-pound feline leg ascender might become tomorrow's ten-pound living-room curtains climber.

OK, so I was a permissive parent. But I was so happy to be under the same roof with felines again. It was my first time fostering, my first time in 25 years in a pets-OK housing situation, and more than 30 years since I'd resided with kittens.

Fostering – taking care of sick, injured or underage animals at home until they're ready for permanent placement – wasn't invented by The SF/SPCA, but the organization was first to apply the concept on a grand scale. Each year 800-1000 lives, most of them underage kittens, are saved by The SF/SPCA Foster Program. The SF/SPCA supplies food and medical care, you provide the love.

Upon signing the foster agreement, I was given the starter kit:

Regular kibble. Baby kibble. Kibble pitcher. One case of basic food (a liver concoction). Sardine/tuna mix (add as needed to encourage eating). Turkey mix (bland yet flavorful, good for diarrhea should the need arise). A couple of cans of prescription food (extra yummy and

The path of a fly can be tracked by watching Jack and Gracie’s movements. Well, almost.
nutritious, formulated for cats recovering from surgery, if you can believe it). And the ultimate temptation (that is, the last resort): a few jars of baby food (yes, baby food for humans, which, as every parent knows, smells strongly).

Then came the durable goods: a flea comb, a scale (a little plastic kitchen-counter-top model for weighing food portions, ideal for calibrating kittens to the tenth of a pound), the marvelous pink heating disk (microwave for five minutes and it stays warm all night), and, of course, one plastic carrier containing the foster kids. At two pounds for the pair, the kittens were one of the lighter items.

Did you ever see cuter kittens? Look at those big, wide, wondering eyes, still blue. And those cute fuzzy ears. And those itty-bitty paws. And their absolutely lovable, tiny black velveteen noses. This is going to be good. Kids, I hope you like liver.

A few days earlier, I had been given the 21-page manual to read. I thought: How much does an experienced cat person have to know about kittens? Wouldn't the front and back of one page pretty much cover it? Feed them, handle them gently, cuddle and pet them, play with them, and keep the litter box clean. But I must say, for someone with nothing to learn, I consulted that manual often.

First-time fosterers get the easy cases. Jack and Gracie were five weeks old, but underweight. All I had to do was tend them for three weeks or so and get them to the magic goal of two pounds. Two pounds at two months, that's the Foster Program mantra, when kittens can be fixed and then go up for adoption. My two wards had just passed weaning stage, so they didn't even need mother's milk substitute.

The first six days went well. By the seventh day, though, neither had gained weight. To put this in perspective: healthy kittens, during their first month, triple in weight; and in the next month they more than double it again. A human adult jokes to a grandchild, "You're getting bigger every day!" But for a kitten it's true.

So I drove them in for a doctor visit and was told they'd stay at The SF/SPCA at least three days, where they'd be "monitored and hydrated," among other things.

But, but—I was monitoring! They were eating. And drinking. Oh, no, what had I done? What clue had I missed that now jeopardized their tiny lives?

The veterinary technician, as nice as could be, calmly nodded and smiled and almost convinced me that it wasn't my fault.

Three anxious days later I picked them up. Nice to be back home, eh, kids? I missed you.

Once again, the kittens were nestled in my lap, only now I was leaning way back on the couch not quite flat-out. I cooed at them in my high-pitched cat voice—we need not go into the sound-effect details here—and they both looked up at me wide-eyed, then marched up my abdomen and settled down side-by-side on my chest looking straight at me, both inches from my face.

Ecstasy!

Alas, only two days after their homecoming, I called The SF/SPCA for another appointment, as the manual instructed, because they had soft stools. (It's right there on page 10: "There are three types of cat stool...")

The kitties had giardia, an intestinal parasite. Using this plastic syringe, squirt exactly this amount of white chalky liquid into their mouths once a day for four days.

We got through that all right, but the kittens weren't as lively as they had been. Yes, they were eating and drinking, but their third eyelids were showing (the nictitating membrane, technically speaking) and there was eye discharge (manual, page 11).

Back to The SF/SPCA. Nothing was obviously wrong (all their test results were negative), so just keep feeding and weighing and watching. Meantime, today's veterinary vocabulary word is "conjunctivitis." Gently squeeze a squiggle of this antibiotic goo into both eyes of both cats twice a day for seven days.

Day seven arrived and the discharge was still discharging.

Oh, well, back to The SF/SPCA. But, hey, it was time for another round of vaccines anyway. (And, gee, I'm so glad these rent-a-kittens are on someone else's health plan!) Continued eye problems? Since the first goo didn't work, squirt a bit of this new gunk into both eyes of both cats every 12 hours for ten days. I almost corrected the technician: You mean another ten days.

By this time, of course, the cats knew that when I appeared with a towel, each would be captured, wrapped firmly in the towel and pretty much poked in the eyes. Carefully, gently, even lovingly poked in the eyes. Poor babies. Was I now a caretaker or a monster?

To their credit (and my surprise), the
kittens didn’t hold it against me. They were more interested in playing bumper cars with each other. When they began their chasing, it was like a game of tag. Now they settled for nothing less than tackling each other, wiggling their bottoms then charging full-speed and bowling over the adversary. They thrashed and tumbled across the room, then reversed roles again and again. I’d laugh for ten minutes at a time. Since Jack was bigger, I wanted to get Gracie a T-shirt that said, “My big brother beats me up daily. So you bet I’m tough!”

On day nine of the ten-day prescription, their eyes finally cleared. Victory!

“Clean” at last (healthwise) and with Jack tipping the scales at about three pounds and Gracie (definitely daintier) not far behind, they were checked back in to The SF/SPCA for spay/neuter surgery. My fostering job was done. Yes, it had taken eight weeks rather than three, but that was OK. They were now safely on their way.

Naturally, the little ones hadn’t merely climbed up my leg or simply walked all over me. They’d crept into my heart. I wasn’t about to let them go.

So there I was turning in my remaining foster supplies – not that I had much left, though I never had to use the post-surgery food or the baby food – and I felt odd. Guilty. I was now an experienced foster parent, truly valuable to the program. Yet I was running away from further foster duty, at least for now.

An old movie memory came into my head. In this scene, a soldier who’d somehow disgraced himself was being dishonorably discharged. In front of the man’s former comrades, the commanding officer ripped the regalia right off the man’s uniform, then sent the shamed scalawag on his way. Was I that much different?

The guilty feeling didn’t last long, however, because while it was true that I was no longer a foster parent, the next day I signed Jack and Gracie’s adoption papers and thus became a full-fledged parent. And I felt very good about that.

Now at a year and a half, Gracie and Jack haven’t been sick one day in their adopted lives. They have three cat trees. They appeared on the cover of the Fall 2008 Our Animals.

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