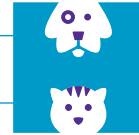


SAN ANTONIO HUMANE SOCIETY

WHISKERS

WINTER



2016

Vaccinating Your Pet

Remembering Prince

Where is
Buddy Now?

Being a
Foster Parent

Educating Our
Community

Teach Your Dog
to "Stay"

How Can Your
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Success Story: Polka



CONNECTING FRIENDS FOR LIFE

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LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT/CEO

Nancy F. Najim

Dear Friends,

It is a new year and we are excited about what 2016 has in store for the San Antonio Humane Society. First, we have to be thankful for 2015, as **8,412** pets were spayed/neutered, **15,558** volunteer hours were served, and **4,809** pets found forever homes. This means so much to us for many reasons. When we initially meet these pets, some are injured, abused, neglected, found as strays, and it is our goal to make them feel happy and loved. Though we may not see them grow into adults or become amazing companions for a lucky family, we feel confident in what we were able to do for them while they are in our care.

I am so proud of our amazing staff and volunteers who work very hard to care for thousands of pets who enter our doors. In fact for nearly 5,000 pets who were welcomed into the SAHS in 2015, their lives changed forever. A huge THANK YOU goes to donors like YOU, for giving us the opportunity to provide them with everything needed - healthy food, lifesaving medical care, a safe place to rest their heads, and tons of unconditional love.

Our mission and goal to save and help as many pets as we can in San Antonio and its surrounding areas, continues to grow each and every year and it is essential for us to maintain and build partnerships. In December the SAHS, along with Animal Care Services, Animal Defense League, and San Antonio Pets Alive, participated in the Whiskers In Wonderland city-wide adoption event. The result – 322 pets were adopted into loving homes!

This month is a very special one for us, as we are able to offer a unique opportunity, thanks to PetSmart Charities™, known as *Beat the Heat*. This allows individuals in need of having their female cat or kitten spayed for only \$20. Appointments need to be scheduled through SAhumane.org/spayneuter and more specials will be available throughout the year, so make sure to keep a look out.

Last but not least, I'd like to ask you to JOIN US – save the date now for our 2016 Friends for Life Luncheon that takes place on Tuesday, October 11 at The Mays Center at the Witte. We'd like to thank VCA Animal Hospitals for being our presenting sponsor for this event. For ticket prices and sponsorship opportunities, please visit SAhumane.org/donate.

Many Thanks,

Nancy F. Najim



CATCHING UP WITH CHIEF VETERINARIAN Dr. Courtney H. Bridgeman



KEEP YOUR PET SAFE WITH VACCINATIONS

Though vaccinations have become largely controversial in the US over the past couple of years, it is still widely accepted in the veterinary community that the benefit hugely outweighs any potential threat. In San Antonio, diseases such as Distemper and Parvo are still alive and well and carry poor prognosis for infected puppies, along with astronomical vet bills in the fight to save them. Therefore, it is necessary and responsible to make sure that all your pets are vaccinated against the major diseases that pose a threat in the area in which you live.

Puppies and kittens receive a series of vaccinations before they turn 16 weeks old. This series is aimed to keep their immunity high against the deadly viruses during the time they are most vulnerable. Though vets all have individual protocols based on the area they practice in - the age and size of the pup or kitten, and the perceived exposure risk - most protocols involve between 2 to 4 vaccinations for the "core" viruses of the species. The series is ended around 16 weeks of age with a final "booster" shot and a vaccination for Rabies, which is required of all dogs and cats over the age of 16 weeks in the state of Texas. Pups and kittens may end their series a little later if they are not started as early as 6 to 8 weeks.

For animals with an unknown vaccination history who have already hit 6 months of age, a veterinarian may decide to implement an "adult" protocol, which generally is two vaccinations one month apart. After the initial series of vaccinations has been given, your veterinarian will advise you as to what interval is most appropriate for your pet, the vaccination itself, and the exposure risk to your pet. This can be anywhere from annual boosters to every 3 years.

The vaccinations in San Antonio that are largely considered "core" (essential) vaccines for dogs are: Parvo, Distemper, Parainfluenza, Adenovirus and Rabies. Some veterinarians will also recommend Bordetella, Leptospirosis, and Lyme. For cats, Feline Herpes (Rhinotracheitis), Calicivirus, Panleukopenia, and Rabies are considered "core" vaccinations, with Feline Leukemia Virus recommended by some. In short, vaccination is easy insurance against major illness. Just do it.

REMEMBERING ROYALTY Prince Pitman

We would like to send our condolences to the Pitman family, as Prince, our El Rey Fido IV, has passed away. His reigning year took place in 2006 and he enjoyed several festivities that celebrated his royal status. Prince received recognition from many throughout the years and his family reflects: "We are very happy that Prince was able to help and promote the important and wonderful mission of the San Antonio Humane Society."



Photograph by:
Renee Spade
Photography

WHERE IS HE NOW?

Buddy



Buddy, a now 8 1/2 year old Boxer and Shiba Inu mix, made quite the impression on our staff over the past few years. We first met him in 2007 when he was a puppy, and in 2013 he returned to the SAHS and resided with us for little over 1 year. As you can imagine, we all fell even more in love with him during this time. We celebrated his 7th birthday in style, shared a video for all to see, and he even joined us at St. Mary's University for a Pennies for Pups campaign. At this event he met tons of excited kids who loved on him, hugged him, and he even gave out a few puppy kisses. Buddy's temperament is absolutely wonderful and we were so happy to hear from his forever family recently for our Where Are They Now feature.

They mentioned that they first saw Buddy at the shelter when they stopped by in hopes of finding a family pet. His owner Scott states, "He has been a great addition to our family. He is so gentle with our little niece and nephew! He loves walks and sleeping in the kids rooms. He is also great company for Grandma." When asked about his quirkiness, they shared that Buddy has recently started jumping up on their lawn chairs to sit with them and shows off a very stoic look when doing so. He also spins in circles before his sits and makes a complete circle before going up the stairs. Those traits certainly sound like Buddy!



BEING A FOSTER PARENT

Letting Them Go

"The first thing people ask me when I tell them I foster is; "HOW do you let them go??" . I tell them, "Practice!" The first kitten I fostered was a Tabby who had been through 3 fosters before me, and no one could get her over a cold. I had her with me for 3 weeks, and I absolutely fell in love with her! She was cute, affectionate and feisty! And I wanted to keep her. But I really couldn't. I already had 3 cats at the time, and if I were to keep her, I couldn't continue fostering- it would be too many cats in the house! (Did I mention that my husband is allergic to cats?) I took her back to the shelter, and cried all the way home! A few days later, I got a call from the shelter, they had 2 kittens that were 10-14 days old and did I want to take care of them? I was at the shelter to pick them up in a flash! I named them Elvis & Priscilla. The most adorable Tuxedo kittens I'd ever seen. I was up with them every 4 hours for bottle feeding, I bathed them when needed, let them sleep in my arms, always making sure they were warm enough. 7 weeks later, they were ready to go back and be adopted. But I wanted to keep them! BAD!! My husband told me that we could keep them, but that my fostering days would be over, because that would be 5 cats in the house, and fostering on top of that, well, his allergies just couldn't take it. So back they went. Again, I cried all the way home. But not as much, and not as hard. Each time I took kittens back, it got easier. MUCH easier. The more you do it, the easier it gets, it just takes PRACTICE."

- Jennifer Hawk,

SAHS Foster Parent

Check out our blog (sahumane.blogspot.com) for a personal story from Jennifer regarding a recent foster kitten duo of hers.

HUMANE EDUCATION

Teaching Our Community

2015 was an exciting year for our Humane Education program! We have been focusing on building up and creating new options for the San Antonio community. Some of our most exciting opportunities have developed in the form of partnerships with other community based agencies, as well as numerous schools around SA.

One such agency is the Good Samaritan Community Services. Together with the Good Sam, we have a monthly meeting consisting of 10 to 15 students who come out to the SAHS and form our L.E.A.S.H.E.S. (Leadership Enrichment and Student Humane Education Society) club. During the hour long club meetings, students learn about service learning, careers available in animal shelters, differences in dog breeds, and volunteer work, to name a few topics. The L.E.A.S.H.E.S. club also focuses on topics that affect youth in today's world – such as prejudices based on perceptions and presenting oneself in the most positive way. We discuss these topics and how they relate to animals and they unite the idea to the student's own lives.

Along with the L.E.A.S.H.E.S club, we have revamped our educational shelter tours available to community members. In November, the SAHS welcomed 110 Graebner Elementary School 4th graders from the San Antonio Independent School District. Along with having a tour of the shelter, the students were able to enjoy career presentations by staff members from our Development and Communication departments, as well as from our Spay/Neuter Coordinator and Animal Behavior Program Supervisor. We not only provide tours where we share our mission, but we are proud to include shelter speakers who can emphasize career opportunities in the animal welfare industry. This allows students to learn about a large array of educational topics at the SAHS and also lets them interact with our animal residents!

Along with our special projects and tours, the SAHS is delighted to host numerous Camp Humane sessions. Our Spring Camp Humane will take place through Spring Break (March 14-18). Visit SAhumane.org/springcamp for more details and how to register!



DOG TRAINING WITH JOE GONZALEZ

Training Your Dog to "Stay"

The two most desired commands from most students in our training classes are "Stay" and "Come." While these can be two of the most difficult commands to train our dogs in, I would like to focus on "Stay" at this time.

There are four key factors to developing a reliable stay. Position, duration, distance, and environment. Majority of the time, the average owner wants to focus solely on distance and duration. For example, a person might take their pet, who has no previous training, immediately out to a public park, give them the commands "sit" and "stay," then walk fifty yards away the very first time they're there. It's important to remember to be realistic and to keep in mind that dogs learn in progressive stages. Here are some steps to take when teaching your dog "stay".

1. In an environment without many distractions, stand no more than 1 foot away from your dog and command him into desired position ("sit" or "lay").
2. Make dog sit in position for 5 seconds.
3. At 5 seconds, reward good behavior using a marker word ("yes") or a clicker.
4. Reinforce with praise, affection, or a treat.
5. Release dog from position with release command ("ok").
6. Repeat steps until your dog can consistently hold their sit or lay for 5 seconds
7. Increase the amount of time gradually in increments of 15 seconds
8. Once your dog is able to hold stay for 3-5 minutes, proceed to add distance gradually; 3-5 feet at a time. (As you increase the level of difficulty with distance, you may need to decrease the time.)

Once your dog can consistently hold their stay for about 5 minutes or longer, you can begin taking your dog to new environments in order to help them generalize. Perhaps starting out with the back yard or front yard at first. Eventually making your way to a restaurant patio or public park!



HOW CAN YOUR DONATION HELP?

\$35

Covers a 1 night stay for 1 pet at the SAHS

\$100

1 month of flea & tick treatment for 10 pets

\$50

Provides rabies vaccines for 5 pets

\$250

Provides spay/neuter surgery for 5 pets

\$75

Provides 7 animals with microchips

\$500

Sponsors a 2 week stay for 1 pet at the SAHS

SUCCESS STORY

Polka

"I lost my dog Stormy on President's Day. She was 13. I'd never been so heartbroken in my life. But after a few weeks, I realized how much I missed having a dog, so I started looking on-line. I knew I wanted a shelter dog, and an older dog, because I wanted a calm dog, like Stormy had been. My husband and son tried to talk me out of it, reminding me how horrible Stormy's death had been for us, but I'm nothing if not stubborn.

"By Spring Break, I was obsessed, and I had seen Molly, a yellow lab, on the (San Antonio) Humane Society website. She'd been there a long time, and I thought I would bring her home. But when I met her, we didn't connect. I was sad, but I had seen some other dogs on the website, so I walked around.

"I had liked the picture of Polka from the website, because she had one ear up, and one ear down. And her story of being surrendered the day after Christmas broke my heart. Polka was "roommates" with a dog named Fairy, who was a lot younger, and Polka kind of looked over her shoulder at me and gave me this look (kind of like the one she's giving me right now because the kittens are on her bed again.) I knew then she was my dog.

"The first few days were shaky, because she wasn't exactly sure what was happening to her, and she wasn't familiar with the routines, AND it was raining! But things soon smoothed out and she became a trusting part of our family, and a very effective communicator, whether she wants to go outside, or for a walk, or just wants some cuddling.

"Polka loves walks and car rides, especially if she's going to Grandma's house, because Grandpa has tasty treats and is very generous with them. She has uncle and cousin dogs that come to all the family gatherings, and she loves the company, since all she has at home are cat pals. She LOVES my husband, and responds to his commands way more effectively than to mine!

"Her two nemeses are the lawnmower and the hose. She barks like crazy at the lawnmower, even when it wasn't running! And if I'm watering my plants or running the sprinkler, she has to stay inside, because she'll make the neighbors crazy with her barking!

"Polka is the sweetest, most loving addition to our family. Everyone loves her, because she's affectionate and well-behaved. I don't know what we'd do without her!"

-Mary Fechter



ADOPTIONS

- Open from noon to 7pm every day except most major holidays.
- Regular adoption fees range from \$30 to \$130.
- All pets adopted from the San Antonio Humane Society have been spayed or neutered and received their first set of vaccinations, de-wormer, and flea prevention. Cats are tested for FIV/FELV and dogs receive heartworm prevention. Both dogs and cats come with a microchip, 14 days free vet care for VCA hospitals, 30 days of free pet insurance*, a bag of Hill's Science Diet food, and a collar with a personalized tag. (*some restrictions apply)

VOLUNTEER

- Visit SAhumane.org/volunteer for orientation dates.
- Email orientation@SAhumane.org to reserve your spot for orientation.
- A volunteer orientation and follow up meeting are mandatory for each individual prior to volunteering.
- An orientation fee is required (per person) which covers a volunteer T-shirt or apron, badge, and insurance coverage while volunteering.
- Individuals 12-15 years of age are referred to as Junior Volunteers and must have a parent/adult (18 years of age or older) volunteer with them at all times and those 16 years of age and older can volunteer on their own.
- Volunteer hours are 8am-7pm, every day except major holidays.

FOSTER

- Think you're ready to be a foster parent? Contact our Foster Program Supervisor at foster@SAhumane.org
- Visit SAhumane.org/foster to download a foster application.
- We provide everything you will need to foster our dogs or cats; all you need to provide is a loving, temporary home, until they are ready to be adopted!

UPCOMING EVENTS

BEAT THE HEAT

When: Month of February

Where: San Antonio Humane Society, 4804 Fredericksburg Rd.

What: \$20 spay surgery for all female cats (appointment required).

SPRING CAMP HUMANE

When: March 14-18

Where: San Antonio Humane Society, 4804 Fredericksburg Rd.

What: A week long day camp for kids ages 9-12 who are wild about animals!

EL REY FIDO FUNDRAISING DEADLINE

When: March 10, 6pm

Where: San Antonio Humane Society, 4804 Fredericksburg Rd.

What: All cash donations must be turned in to the SAHS and all FirstGiving donations must be complete by 6pm.

EASTER

March 27, the SAHS will be closed to the public.

EL REY FIDO CORONATION

When: April 16, 10am

Where: Grand Hyatt San Antonio, 600 E. Market St.

What: Party with El Rey Fido XIV as he/she is crowned top dog of the city and enjoy a canine-friendly fiesta!

BIG GIVE SA

When: May 3, Midnight to Midnight

What: A community-wide day of on-line giving. Visit biggivesa.org and find the San Antonio Humane Society under the leader board to make a donation.

Visit SAhumane.org/events for info on all upcoming events.



The SAHS feeds our pets
Science Diet pet foods.