Placer County Animal Services

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Board approves plan for two new animal shelters

Plans for building two new animal shelters got a big boost this summer from the Placer County Board of Supervisors.

One shelter will be built in South Placer to primarily serve the rapidly growing populations there. The second

Tom Miller

will replace the existing shelter at the Placer County G o v e r n m e n t Center in Auburn.

On July 11, the board approved a plan for building both shelters, agreeing to add them to the list of

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Partnership paying off



Shelter teaming up with UC Davis

Sushi, a year-old Akita mix puppy, sits in the arms of county Animal Care Supervisor Cindy Leonard. The stray dog was brought into the county animal shelter with an injured hip and will have specialized orthopedic surgery at the UC Davis Veterinary Teaching Hospital through a partnership between Placer County and UCD.

ushi has a new lease on life.

This year-old Akita mix was brought into the Placer County Animal Shelter by a Good Samaritan who found her running loose, limping and in pain. X-rays revealed an old hip fracture that required specialty orthopedic surgery.

Unfortunately, the county shelter does not have the post-surgery care necessary for such a procedure. And the procedure is too costly to send out to a nearby animal hospital. Many veterinarians do not do the specialty surgery.

But thanks to a partnership with the UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine Teaching Hospital, Sushi will have the expensive procedure done for free.

The UC Davis Shelter Medicine Program provides unusual or expensive procedures to animals in area shelters.

The procedures are performed by senior veterinary students under the direct supervision of veterinary surgical staff.

"Correcting certain medical problems

increases the adoptability of that animal," said county Animal Care Supervisor Cindy Leonard. "Seldom do we find potential adopters who are willing to take an animal that will immediately incur a lot of cost."

The shelter is only responsible for transporting injured animals to Davis.

The Shelter Medicine Program will perform a host of specialty surgery procedures for the county shelter.

In addition, the program will provide pathology on cases that may include animals that are ill and not responding to medications, as well as do necropsies on any sudden unexplained deaths that may occur at the shelter. This enables shelter staff to treat ill animals and to head off any contagious diseases.

For Sushi, an otherwise young and healthy dog, the partnership between UC Davis and Placer County has given her the chance to become a long-time member of a loving family.

Animal Services responds to Ralston Fire



These friendly dogs camped out with their owner in Foresthill during the fire, snuggling in bedrolls against the night chill. Evacuees and their pets were able to remain together because county Animal Services and Red Cross shelters were located near each other.

nimal Services rushed into action this summer when the Ralston Fire threatened the remote mountain community of Michigan Bluff.

The fire broke out at the bottom of the Middle Fork American River Canyon several miles east of Foresthill Sept. 5. It burned 8,423 acres before fire officials declared it 100 percent contained Sept. 17.

Initially, the fire moved toward Michigan Bluff, and officials recommended voluntary evacuations in the Michigan Bluff and Baker Ranch areas east of Foresthill.

That prompted the county Office of

Emergency Services to ask Animal Services for help evacuating and sheltering animals.

Animal Control Manager Michael Winters, Animal Care Supervisor Cindy Leonard and eight staff members responded to the call.

Animal Services set up a staging area for large and small

animals with help from a volunteer group, A New Hope, and members of the California Veterinary Medical Association. The staging area was

next to a shelter established by the Red Cross in the Foresthill Veterans Memorial Hall.

Volunteers watched over evacuated animals night and day until the voluntary evacuations were lifted after two days.

Approximately 80 finches, two horses, two cats and a dog were evacuated from the fire area and taken to the Auburn shelter for safekeeping.

Program Manager Rui Cunha of nary Medicine Association.

the county's Office of Emergency Services praised Winters and his team for making sure everyone's animals had a way to get out and a place to go.

"Animal evacuations don't go well, or are an afterthought in many emergencies. Not in Placer County," Rui said. "Our Animal Services staff is top-notch. Our residents should be very proud of the work that they did during our most recent fire."



Animal Services staff and volunteers take a break after caring for animals during the Ralston Fire. From the left are Animal Services Manager Mike Winters, New Hope volunteer Kim DeWoody, Animal Control Officer Joe Spera, New Hope volunteer Lynn Howe and volunteer Pat Riley from the California Veterinary Medicine Association.

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new buildings the county intends to construct in the coming years.

The board action followed a six-month review of Animal Services by the Animal Services Ad Hoc Committee, an advisory group convened by County Executive Officer Thomas M. Miller. The committee had more than 30 members, including representatives from the county, local cities and nonprofit groups.

"The process Tom set up was a very good one, because it gave all interested parties a chance to voice their opinions on the future of Animal Services.

Board Chairman Bill Santucci

"The process Tom set up was a very good one, because it gave all interested parties a chance to voice their opinions on the future of Animal Services," 2006 board Chairman Bill Santucci said. "The county listened closely and came up with a comprehensive approach that deals with short-term issues and long-term needs such as the new shelters. It already is producing results, and will serve us well in the long run."

At the July 11 meeting, board members authorized county staff to:

- Select an architectural firm to start designing the South Placer shelter;
- Work with Placer County cities to find a site for the South Placer shelter;
- Work with the cities to determine their contributions to the shelter projects;
- Determine the extent to which nonprofit animal-service groups want to partner with the county to provide complementary services at the new shelters;
- Work to establish a fee on new residential developments that will help pay for shelterconstruction costs related to population growth; and
- Set up a permanent Animal Services

Advisory Committee to consult with the County Executive Office on animalservice issues.

The new fee will be incorporated into the county's existing fee program for new residential developments.

On July 24, the board took another important step: placing the two shelter projects into the county's Capital Facilities Financing Plan for the next 10 years.

The projected cost is estimated to be \$20 million: \$15 million to build a new shelter in South Placer and \$5 million to replace the Auburn shelter.

The South Placer shelter will be built first. As that project moves forward, the county will continue to work with the cities and nonprofit groups on planning, construction and operational issues.

When it opens, the county will move shelter services currently offered in Auburn to the new facility, so it can demolish the aging Auburn facility and build the replacement shelter.

The View Ahead

By Animal Services Manager Mike Winters

his issue of the Animal Services quarterly newsletter has a lot of information and articles for you on just a fraction of the things we are involved with on a daily basis.

Whether it's handling animal emergencies, working with wildlife or controlling the spread of disease, we do a lot more than just try to find homes for unwanted and neglected animals.

To begin with, not all animals that come to us are sick, injured or abused. We have a lot of healthy, happy and friendly dogs and cats just waiting for someone to adopt them.

All of our dogs and cats are behaviorevaluated, vaccinated, heartworm tested, spayed or neutered, licensed and microchipped at a fraction of the cost that you would pay at a pet store, so next time you're thinking of a new pet—think of us! All stray and adoptable animals are pictured on our website link to www.petharbor.com. This is the traditional time of year for giving thanks and giving and receiving gifts.

We want to thank all the county employees who continue to give to Animal Services through the Combined Giving Campaign and to the community members who have generously donated their time, talent and donations to our animal shelter and to the Animal Trust Fund.

Animal Services, under the direction of Placer County Health and Human Services, also is giving back to the community by honoring requests for \$25,000 in grants to community nonprofits to be used to provide low-cost animal spay and neuter to Placer County residents.

We want to thank everyone- from Serena Gamette, the eight-year-old Auburn resident who donated \$30 that she raised selling lemonade this summer, to the lady from the women's shelter who gave us \$500 for taking care of her dog when she couldn't.

Rabies- what you need to know

Rabies is not to be taken lightly.

There is no known cure and it is almost always fatal. Worldwide, it kills more than 50,000 humans each year.

Rabies is a preventable viral disease of warm-blooded mammals, including humans. It most often is spread through the bites of rabid animals.

In Placer County, the vast majority of cases occur in wild animals such as skunks, bats, raccoons and coyotes. Dogs and cats account for less than 10 percent.

Early rabies symptoms are not always obvious. Death usually occurs within seven days after the onset of symptoms. They include confusion, agitation, drooling, partial paralysis, difficulty in swallowing and fear of water.

Pets and livestock need to be vaccinated to prevent them from acquiring rabies and transmitting it to humans.

First, make sure dogs and cats are up to date on their rabies shots.

Second, keep cats indoors and dogs under your direct supervision, especially if you live in a rural area.

Third, spay and neuter pets to help prevent them from getting out and roaming the streets. If a pet gets in a fight with a wild animal, have it examined by a vet immediately. Fourth, enjoy wild animals from afar. Do not leave food out or garbage cans open.

Last, call Animal Control if you see wildlife acting strangely or if stray animals are in your neighborhood.

Be suspicious of nighttime creatures such as skunks, raccoons and bats that are out during daylight hours.

Any animal bitten or scratched by a wild animal, suspicious acting dog or cat or a bat that is not available for testing will be regarded as having been exposed to a rabid animal.

In Placer County, it is recommended that unvaccinated dogs and cats exposed to rabid animals be euthanized immediately.

An exception to this, if the owner follows strict guidelines, is for the dog or cat to be placed in strict isolation for six months and vaccinated before release.

Animals with expired vaccinations are evaluated case by case. Dogs and cats that are currently vaccinated are to be kept in strict isolation for 30 days.

Report animals suspected of rabies to Placer County Animal Services at 530-886-5500.

Animal Shelter

Wish List

For our dogs

Raw hides, bones, kongs, chew toys

Leashes

Collars

X-pens (new or gently used) Crates (new or gently used)

Grooming table (new or gently used)

Clippers

Peanut butter

Dog bandanas

Dog sweaters

Portable dog kennel (new or gently used)

Canned dog food

Gift certificates for local groomers

Gift certificates for local pet stores

Dog walkers

Nail trimmers

Volunteers

For our cats

Cat toys

Cat bandanas

Canned cat food

Scratching post

Gift certificates for local pet stores

Nail trimmers

Cat treats

Cat beds

For our horses

Horse blankets

Horse fly sheets

Halters

Lead ropes

Fly spray

Fly masks

Other pets

Gift certificates for local pet stores Rabbit chew toys Bird toys Rabbit houses

Don't forget a great way to help is through a donation to the Placer County Trust Fund for Animals

For more information, please call Animal Services at 530-886-5500.

An invaluable animal-care partner Gold Country Wildlife Rescue always ready to help

By Aaron Bendavid

Gold Country Wildlife Rescue

n evolving partnership with Gold Country Wildlife Rescue is helping Placer County Animal Services and the general public deal with wildlife issues.

Certainly, animal control officers have their hands full in working with domestic animals. Now, the growing number of wildlife encounters with the public is creating new problems.

Rapid growth in Placer County, easier access to wilderness areas and more leisure time have made encounters with wildlife more common. Animal Services has been on the front line assisting the public during emergencies. When help is needed, it can look to Gold Country Wildlife Rescue volunteers.

Our group has been around for more than 14 years. Its stated mission: to rescue, rehabilitate and release native wildlife back to the wild, and to be an educational resource for the public. Licensed by both the state and federal governments, our volunteers are highly skilled in handling wildlife emergencies. They typically handle about 400 birds, mammals and reptiles every year.

Volunteers are available 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

When citizens or agencies contact Wildlife Rescue's answering service, they will be put in touch with an on-call wildlife-rehabilitation



Spud the owl relaxes with **Aaron Bendavid** of Gold Country Wildlife Rescue. Spud cannot be released into the wild because of vision problems, but he has become an educational ambassador to schools and civic groups.

expert. The expert assesses the situation, and offers advice or dispatches a volunteer. In some cases, the caller may be asked to bring an animal to the on-call expert. Adult mammals, adult or baby deer and birds of prey such as owls, eagles or hawks always require a field response.

Volunteers also respond if the person reporting the incident is uncomfortable with handling the animal. Wild animals, even babies, are unpredictable and need to be handled with care.

Our group has established its own deer rehabilitation facility that presently is caring for eight animals. All are thriving and will be released back to the wild.

It is not unusual to find Animal Services personnel and Wildlife Rescue's volunteers working together closely.

What appears to be a wild animal is brought into the shelter by a member of the public. Is it a protected species, or a missing pet? Our group has been called upon many times to help answer questions about whether animals brought to the shelter are missing pets or protected-species wildlife. If necessary, our group takes possession of animals.

In the field, Wildlife Rescue sometimes assists when animal control officers have injured wild animals such as owls or hawks.

We often work together in cases where residents find fawns on their property and the mothers are nowhere to be found.

Animal Services and our group often cooperate on public displays and presentations. We have joined together to create interesting and informative displays at fairs and public gatherings. Members of the Wildlife Rescue's Education Outreach Team have joined animal control officers at school presentations.

Recently, Animal Services arranged for a surplus animal control truck to be donated to our group as a wildlife-rescue vehicle.

A number of animal control officers have attended training classes offered by Wildlife Rescue in first aid for wildlife or handling techniques.

There are many other examples of close cooperation between Wildlife Rescue and Animal Services. Both have their own areas of expertise. Together, they provide an invaluable resource for the residents of Placer County.



A baby coyote looks as peaceful as can be while being held by Carrie Ivins.



Sherry Bast shows off a baby raccoon that is not much bigger than one of her hands.

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