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City of  
**SACRAMENTO**  
Front Street Animal Shelter

December 2013

# Volunteers *focus*

TEAM FRONT STREET: WORKING TOGETHER  
TO SAVE LIVES!

## Getting Healthy at Front Street! Introducing the new Front Street Gym

Our team - volunteers and staff alike - work very hard here at Front Street. It is easy to remember to take good care of the animals we love. Sometimes we forget to take good care of ourselves!

We are proud to announce the opening of the new Front Street Gym! The gym is located in the trailer behind the Reception building (once the location of the Pet Food Pantry, and more recently, the bunnies!) The gym is open to volunteers from 7am-6pm. There is no cost for using the gym, but you must take an orientation first and sign a waiver (per Risk Management!)

Schedule your orientation with Ricardo Gaitan, our resident gym safety monitor. You can schedule directly with Ricardo by sending him an email at [rgaitan@cityofsacramento.org](mailto:rgaitan@cityofsacramento.org).

Start your  
New Year off  
healthy and get  
in shape with  
the new Front  
Street Gym!



## 2014 Volunteer Program Survey Help us be a better, stronger, & more effective team!



Every day here at the Front Street Animal Shelter, we strive to find new ways to save lives. We are very proud of Team Front Street, our incredible team of volunteers and staff who work tirelessly to save as many of our furry friends as possible.

Your participation in the 2014 Team Front Street Volunteer Program Survey will help us make our team even better. We want to hear from you on the things we are doing well and the areas we can improve.

Please take a few minutes right now to complete the survey. You will find it on the Volunteer Resource Site under the Volunteer Survey tab. Participating in the survey is anonymous. If you would like to be included in a drawing for a special prize, simply send me an email after you complete the survey and I will add your name to the hat! Please complete the survey by January 31st.

Thank you for helping us do better!

# Happy Beginnings—Tails of True Love!

## This is what it's all about! **ADOPTIONS, Rescues, and "Fur-ever Homes!"**

October was our highest adoption month EVER! We have already adopted more animals this year than we did in all of last year—and we still have a month to go!

**Neesa:** Here's a note from the Spencer family with an update on Neesa:

I wanted to write to give an update on a dog we adopted in November. We adopted Neesa just in time to join our family for the holidays and she has been a perfect fit from day one. She gets along with everyone, and cheers up everyone around her. She loves going for walks and, as you can see, also loves going for bike rides. We appreciate how kind the staff of the shelter is, how dedicated they are to their work, and of course how well Neesa was treated in her short stay and when she came back for her spay surgery. Thanks!  
The Spencer family



**Duchess:** What do our cats do after they are adopted? Drink Vodka and sit in a pan! LOL

Michelle adopted Duchess and it was love at first sight! "There's my girl! Duchess (Duchie) is my miracle kitty. She got a hold of some lilies in a birthday bouquet, ended up in the hospital for 3 weeks because of kidney failure, and thanks to Dr. Troy and the wonderful staff at Loomis VCA, my bank account, and lots of love, she is still with us! This girl has a mind of her own!! Her favorite thing to do is sit in a paper bag!!!" ... or a pot, as the case might be!

We are glad that Duchess is safe and healthy in her new home - thanks to Michelle's dedication.



Assistants needed for orientation and Shelter 101—if you would like to help, please contact Janice!

## Shelter Stats:

	Nov 2013	Nov 2012	Dec 2013	Dec 2012
Cats Adopted	134	99	135	153
Cats to Rescue or Transfer	23	62	31	18
Cats Returned to Owner	5	4	7	3
Dogs Adopted	153	105	138	190
Dogs to Rescue or Transfer	31	90	106	52
Dogs Returned to Owner	76	51	78	80
# of Volunteers who logged hours	200	121	172	125
Volunteer Hours	2629	1700	2359	1598



## These teams need your help!

- ◆ **Fundraising Team:** We have four events this year along with numerous other opportunities to raise funds to help save lives. If you are interested in helping out and able to commit to work the full year, please come to our next fundraising meeting on Jan. 22nd!
- ◆ **SMART team** - We are looking to fill our ranks with SMART volunteers! Do you want to help lost pets find their way back home? Can you use a computer? Then come to the training session on January 17th and join in!
- ◆ **Rescue Networkers** - We need more volunteers to help with the Rescue Network. This involves using Gmail, Google Calendar, and Google Drive to get at-risk dogs to rescue. If you are interested, please let Janice know right away!



# Keeping our Critters Healthy!

We have seen an increase of animals coming into the shelter sick. As a result we need to be extra vigilant about following proper procedures to ensure that our animals stay healthy, and that we, as humans, stay healthy too! Here are some recommendations from our veterinary staff:

- 1) When tidying up the dog kennels during the day, please do not use the scraper and take it from kennel to kennel. In the mornings, the kennels are disinfected after being scraped, but if you use the scraper in the afternoon any disease would be spread from kennel to kennel. Best practice to fluff the kennels is to use poop bags and pick up the poop and discard it. (Be sure to wash your hands!)
- 2) Help prevent the spread of kennel cough by sanitizing your hands between each dog and cat. We usually do this in the cattery, but we also need to do this in the dog kennels. If you work with a dog that is sneezing or acting sick in any way, be sure to tell an ACT right away to ensure the dog gets medication as quickly as possible. Also, sanitize your hands and change aprons so you are not spreading the kennel cough germs to the next dog. If we are low on clean aprons, please do your part and start a load in the cattery washing machine!
- 3) When cleaning the cat kennels, please use the following procedures to ensure that we keep our cats healthy and ourselves healthy too! We have seen an increase in ringworm, among other cat diseases, coming into the shelter and want to stop the spread. Ringworm is one of those parasites that humans can get, so please keep yourself and our cats safe!!

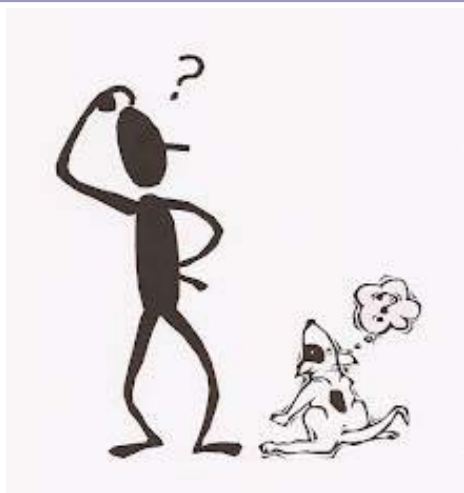
- Wear gloves when handling cats and change them between cats.
- Do not take cats out of their cage, but if you do, they need to go into their own cardboard carrier or a feral den. The cardboard box will not be used for any other cat - the feral cat dens must be sanitized before using again.
- Do not hold the cat up against your body. The ringworm spores are on the hair coat and hairs on your clothing will spread the spores from one cat to another. If you hold a cat, please use a plastic apron and discard it after each cat.
- Clean with Accell as much as possible. (Staff only)
- Do not combine cats or kittens unless they came in together.
- Do not add cats or kittens to the colony rooms until all the cats are gone and the room is cleaned.
- No cats or kittens in the conference room or the get acquainted room
- Adopters will need to handle the cats and kittens in their cages. They can wear plastic aprons if they are going to handle more than one animal. If we are low on aprons, ask the staff for additional supplies!
- Everyone needs to wash hands between each cat.
- Report any lesions ASAP to ACT staff and Veterinary staff.
- Treatment of adopted animals will be handled by the medical staff on an individual basis.
- No sharing of toys or bedding.

On a side note, please pay special attention to cleaning the inside of the windows in the cattery kennels. Use the vinegar window cleaner and ensure that all streaks and cloudy dirt areas are sparkling clean! :)

Let's work together to keep our critters all safe, healthy, clean, and happy!!







## Dog Training Vs. Dog Walking

### *What's all the fuss about?*

We can all agree that our shelter dogs need attention and stress relief in order to avoid going kennel crazy and to be more adoptable. But the controversy is - what is the best method and why take new training? For many years, our dog walking program was just that - based on getting as many dogs as possible out of their kennels and walked every day. There are many volunteers who derive a great pleasure from this method and truly enjoy walking the dogs. ...and there is nothing wrong with that!

Our new dog training program is not about taking away the walks. Walking is valuable for both dogs and volunteers! What we are looking to do is incorporate a systematic training program. Shelter best practices from across the country have shown that simply walking a dog does not increase its adoptability. Consistent training is the key!

There are several key behaviors that our new dog training program focuses on: Auto sit, Look at Me, 4 on the Floor, and Touch My Hand, among others. These are the behaviors that will provide the best long-term results for our dogs. These behaviors will help the dog to make a good positive first impression with an adopter, encourage the dog to interact with the potential adopter, encourage calm behavior when exiting or entering the kennel, help the dog redirect its attention while walking on a leash, and much more. The key is to have every volunteer work with the dog on the same behaviors and train the dog the same way.

There are many different methods of training dogs - and most of them are effective! The problem comes when one volunteer is working successfully with a dog using one method and another volunteer comes along and works with that same dog using another method. Can you imagine how confusing that would be to the dog?

This is our vision for the Front Street Dog Trainers: We want all of the dogs worked with and trained on a daily basis. Whether you take the dog for a walk or strictly work with the dog in the kennel, the training needs to be consistent. Eventually, we want to expand our dog training program beyond just the adoptables. Could you imagine how many more dogs would pass their BE and be put up for adoption - and be adopted quicker - if our dogs were trained from the minute they came into the shelter? (Does anyone else hear the angels singing?)

The first step to making this vision come true - and to save more dogs - is to ensure that all of our volunteers have the same training. We have many volunteers who have taken shelter training at different times and using different methods. We really have no way of knowing which techniques you have learned and which you still need. The only way to ensure that everyone has the same training and is using the same methods is to ask for everyone to take the training.

**For our experienced volunteers,** we are asking you to have a little patience. We know that you are good at what you do. We know that you are passionate and dedicated. We appreciate and value that! We



Please don't give treats/toys when there are more than one dog in the kennel!

know that you know many of the pieces of this program already. We are working on creating an advanced training course that will focus on the methods that are essential for consistent training. That doesn't mean we don't want you walking the dogs! We just ask that you train them first so they receive consistent messages from our volunteer team. So please be open to taking the new training. Your experience is valuable and your insights will be very important to our new volunteers.

**For our new volunteers,** this means that we are asking a big commitment from you. Training volunteers to train the dogs is a huge time investment. We want to be sure that those volunteers who are taking the training classes are committed to working with our dogs. Other shelters charge for the training and require a one-year commitment. We felt that this would be a barrier for some of our volunteers so we are not charging a training fee. Instead, we ask that you only sign up to take the dog training courses if you are fully committed to working with our dogs for at least six months and two hours per week. You will also be asked to sign up to work one-on-one with our dog training mentors, at first, to ensure that you are comfortable and confident in your new skills.

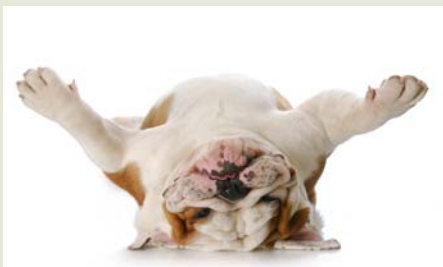


Many thanks for everyone's patience while we transition to this new focus for our dog training program! After all, it is all about helping our animals get adopted faster - and I know that each of you want that! Thank you!

## New Kennel Notes!

### Now for dogs AND cats!

After a full year of experimenting with the kennel notes on clipboards, we have come to the conclusion that the clipboards just don't work here. Instead, we now have half-sheet double-sided kennel notes printed on colorful card stock (not orange or yellow) and put in the kennel card packet. This will allow for notes on every adoptable animal - cats, too! Our staff will put the kennel notes in the packets during behavior evaluations for dogs. The cats will need our cattery volunteers to add the notes to the packet once they arrive in the adoptable cattery. Extra kennel notes will be available in the Volunteer area - please be sure that there are plenty of these available in the BE trailer and the cattery—and check to see if the animals all have one!.



## New Volunteer Training Checklist

We are always looking for ways to improve our volunteer program and better support all of you amazing and wonderful people who are willing to give your time here. In response to requests for more support for new volunteers and a way to show them the ropes and get them comfortable here at the shelter, we have devised a new volunteer training checklist. Starting in February, this will be given to all new volunteers at Shelter Basics 101.



Any current volunteer is also welcome to complete the checklist - just to be sure that you know where everything is, how to perform the basic shelter chores, and are able to assist new volunteers to complete their own checklist. The checklist will soon be available to download from the Volunteer Resource Site. Please be open and willing to mentor our new trainees!



# Meet the Staff:

## Suzi Marks

Senior Animal Care Technician extraordinaire!

go to Western Career College and study Veterinary Technology.

What do you like to do when not at the shelter? I'm trying to get back into things from my teen years. I did volunteer work for High Hurdles Horsemanship in Galt for about 6 months

(which I haven't done since having surgery back in March, but would like to get back to), and I have been enjoying riding bikes with friends. Mostly I'm busy trying to be the World's Best Mom. I don't always feel like I am making it, but as long as they know that I love them and I'm trying then I think I'm doing ok.

What is your favorite hobby? What's a hobby???? I like to be on the computer and take on line training that I can find related to animals and management. I like to watch TV. I read. I drive my kids

around like it is a full time job. I guess those are hobbies.

Tell us about your family? I have two kids that I could contain in a double stroller when I first started working here. They are teenagers now and both are taller than me. Karla is my feral kitten tamer and speaks all things cat. Seth is my dog chill master. He loves to go in with dogs that have trouble settling down and just relaxing in their kennel until they are able to relax too. Sometimes he falls asleep in the kennels and then is hard to find.

What have you liked best about your job? It's never boring. There is always something to do. It's almost never exactly the same thing twice.

What would you change if you could? I think once in a while I'd like it to be a little boring.

Thank you Suzi for all of your hard work!!

**ONE PERSON CAN DO ONLY AS MUCH AS ONE PERSON CAN DO, BUT ONE PERSON CAN'T ACCOMPLISH THIS MISSION ALONE.**

Meet Senior Animal Care Technician extraordinaire, Suzi Marks!

How long have you worked at Front Street? Started in September 2000

What did you do before you came here? Before I came here, I was working at the Sacramento Cat Hospital where I was a "Jill of most trades". I worked the phones, and getting weights and temps before exams, was the Lab Supply Tech, Surgical Tech, and worked as the Lead Technician on Saturday.

Where did you go to school? I graduated High School from Elk Grove High. I took classes at CRC, ARC, and Sac City College before deciding that what I wanted most to do was

## Volunteer Spotlight:

### Becky Correia

Becky has volunteered here at the Front Street Animal Shelter since 2006. You would most likely find Becky working with our big dogs, helping at special events or offsite adoptions, or in the trenches doing dog adoption counseling. In addition to volunteering here at Front Street, Becky also volunteers for Red Rover, Bad Rap Pit Bull Rescue, and the popular Villalobos Pit Bull Rescue made famous by the hit TV show Pit Bulls and Parolees. She has worked several disaster shelters for dogs including Hurricane Katrina and the Butte County fires. She has a huge heart for dogs (especially our often misunderstood Pit Bulls) and a beautiful smile that lights up the shelter. Becky is always willing to pitch in and lend a hand when needed.



Thank you Becky for all of your hard work for the Front Street Shelter!

## CALENDAR



### Volunteer Orientations:

- ◆ 2nd & 3rd Wed. each month
- ◆ Wed. 1/15 5:30pm
- ◆ Wed. 2/12

### Shelter I01:

- ◆ Every Saturday at 8:30am

### Cattery Class:

- ◆ Sat. 1/18 at 10:00am

### Dog Training:

- ◆ Dog series is now the first four Saturdays or Sundays of the month—sign up for all four consecutively!

### Adoption Counseling Class:

- ◆ Cats—January 11th 10:30am
- ◆ Dogs - January 25th 10:30am

### Offsite Outreach Events:

- ◆ Every weekend! Sign up online!

### Special Opportunities:

- ◆ Fundraising Team 1/9
- ◆ Rescue Network 1/10
- ◆ Volunteer Meeting 1/16
- ◆ SMART training 1/17

## Wish List

We would be most grateful if you could help us with these:

- ◆ Dryer Sheets
- ◆ Cat beds
- ◆ Kuranda beds for dogs
- ◆ Towels
- ◆ Gas cards



Follow us on Facebook at City of Sacramento Front Street Animal Shelter to keep up with more fun activities & animal stories!