



SAVE OUR STRAYS OF HUNTINGTON BEACH

Stray News

Issue #55

Spring 2016

SOSHB is a non-profit organization dedicated to improving the lives of lost and stray pets of Huntington Beach.

Save Our Strays to the Rescue

It started with a phone call. A long time member of Save Our Strays contacted President Karen Chepeka about an elderly neighbor who she had discovered was hoarding cats in her home in Huntington Beach. Hoarders are typically well-meaning people who truly believe they are helping the animals but the situation grows out of control and becomes unmanageable fairly quickly.

Animal Control had been to the home and confiscated many of the cats. What made this situation particularly horrible is that some of the cats had been living in cages in the neighbor's backyard for YEARS.

The challenge with rescuing animals, since Huntington Beach does not have its own shelter, is that there is no safe facility to house and care for them. These poor cats were in such terrible condition and their health was at such risk, we had to respond quickly to the situation. We took the remaining cats from the backyard



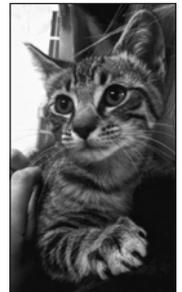
Molly

cages directly to one of our vets, Huntington Beach Animal Hospital, for examination and treatment. The cats were covered in fleas, their fur was matted and dirty and a few were suffering from an upper respiratory infection. We asked the vet to scan all the cats for microchips. If any cat had the misfortune to wander into the yard of the neighbor, they never left. They were "captured" and locked up for probably the rest of their lives.

One of the cats, named "Molly", had been living in a cage for over three years. She did have a microchip and we were able to trace her to her former owner. Unfortunately, since so much time had passed, the owner did not want her back. Molly had a severe upper respiratory infection that took weeks to finally get under control. Her fur was so matted she had to be shaved.

"Gordo", named by the vet staff, became an office favorite. He had been living in the backyard cage for about a year. He seemed to bounce back quickly from his trauma. The vet staff fell in love with him and he is now officially the office cat. He runs up to greet everyone who enters the office and welcomes them to his sanctuary.

"Anakin" and "Binx", two 12 week old brothers, had been locked in a shed with their mother. Their mother and a sibling had escaped from the shed while we were trying to rescue them. As of the writing of this article, we are still trying to trap them. Anakin and Binx were understandably shy when they arrived at the vet office but other than being covered in fleas and had worms, were in pretty good health. The staff spent lots of time holding them and socializing them.



Anakin

All these rescued kitties were vaccinated, spayed/neutered, treated for fleas and worms, given treatment for upper respiratory infections (as needed) and given tender loving care.

I wish this story had the fairy tale ending that we all like to hear. Molly is still at the vet office waiting for her special, loving home. She is the one who spent the longest time locked in a cage in the neighbor's yard. She is understandably a shy kitty who gets stressed very easily. The ideal home for her would be a quiet home with no children or other pets.



Binx

Anakin and Binx are also still at the vet looking for the loving home they have never experienced. They are very bonded brothers who need to be adopted together. Having survived the situation they did together, we could not separate them now.

If you are interested in finding out more information about any of these sweet survivors or could give them the home they deserve to have, please contact Save Our Strays at SaveOurStraysHB@aol.com.

The cost of the care for these sweet babies was significant and their ongoing care at the vet continues to add up. If you would like to donate to their care, you can make an online tax deductible donation at our website at www.SaveOurStraysHB.org/donations or mail a check to Save Our Strays of Huntington Beach, P.O. 4083, Huntington Beach, CA, 92605-4083. Please be sure to include "rescued kitties" in the memo line so we know the funds are designated for them.

Keeping Your Membership Current

When we mail you your newsletter, we have a date just below your name. If your date is highlighted, it means it's time to renew your S.O.S. membership. Your membership fees helps to cover printing and mailing costs of the newsletter and misc. other fliers throughout the year.

Stray News – Publishing Info

Stray News is published quarterly as a newsletter for members of SOSHB. You may reach *Stray News* at:

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Includes a year's subscription to *Stray News* and discounts at SOSHB events throughout the year.

FAMILY MEMBERSHIP \$25

Includes a year's subscription to *Stray News* and discounts for the whole family at SOSHB events throughout the year.

PATRON \$50

Patrons receive all the benefits of a Family Membership and are listed in *Stray News* and on the SOSHB website.

Save Our Strays offers numerous membership levels. To join or renew, please use the form below. Your membership expiration date appears on the address label of the SOSHB newsletter.

SPONSOR

Sponsors receive all the benefits of a Family Membership and are listed in *Stray News* and on the SOSHB website. Five levels of sponsorship exist:

Sponsor	\$100	Gold Sponsor	\$500
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SOSHB Membership/Order Form

Use this form to pay SOS dues and/or to order shirts & frames.

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- Family \$25
- Patron \$50
- Sponsor \$100
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T-Shirts: \$10 member \$15 non-member

Select T-shirt color: White Grey

of shirts requested in each size: ___M ___L ___XL ___XXL

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Select T-shirt color: Purple Navy Turquoise

of shirts requested in each size: ___M ___L ___XL ___XXL

Crewneck Sweatshirts: \$20 member \$25 non-member

Select color: White Grey

of shirts requested in each size: ___M ___L ___XL ___XXL

Hooded Sweatshirt: \$25 member \$30 non-member

Select color: White Grey

of shirts requested in each size: ___L ___XL ___XXL

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State: _____ Zip: _____

Email (optional): _____

Phone (optional): _____

Total Amount Enclosed: \$ _____ (Add \$5 per shirt for shipping/handling, or call 714-442-1446 for pick-up.)

Mail this form with your money order or check (payable to SOSHB) to:

Save Our Strays of Huntington Beach
P.O. Box 4083
Huntington Beach, CA 92605-4083

City Council Votes Against the Animals

by President Karen Chepeka

As many of you know, Save Our Strays of Huntington Beach was formed in 1999 with the primary goal of establishing a low-kill animal shelter in the City of Huntington Beach. For the last 17 years, we have worked towards that goal. Our vision was to have a partnership with the City of Huntington, similar to what the City of Irvine and the City of Mission Viejo have, a city-run shelter that has a non-profit group that supports and funds additional medical care, amenities and whatever needs the animals may have that would not traditionally be funded by a municipal entity.

At the May 2, 2016 Huntington Beach City Council meeting, the City Council voted 5-2 (Councilmember's Billy O'Connell and Erik Peterson dissenting) to sign a ten year contract with Orange County Animal Services and thus condemning our animals to ten more years of deplorable care and high euthanasia. This, despite an online petition started by Save Our Strays that had over 2000 signatures in support of Huntington Beach having its own shelter. Every speaker at the Council meeting (and there were many) spoke out in support of Huntington Beach having its own shelter.

In addition to approving the new contract, the City Council voted to allocate \$1.83M toward the County's new \$35M shelter, expected to open in late 2017 in Tustin. All the while, the Council claiming there is no funding for a shelter in Huntington Beach. Unfortunately, a new shelter will not resolve the issues raised in four grand jury investigations into the practices at the County shelter.

Elected officials are supposed to carry out the will of the people and in this situation, the will of the people was completely ignored.

Save Our Strays will move forward and work to ensure our animals receive the treatment they deserve. We have asked the City Manager's office to establish an oversight committee to hold the County accountable for their interactions with our animals and our residents. We have also asked them to provide a point of contact within the City for residents to contact if they have any issues/complaints with County Animal Services.

We will continue our efforts to ensure our pets have a safe environment to go to should they become lost.

We will re-group and discuss our next steps, whether that is our own privately run adoption center, a ballot initiative or other options.

Wags and purrs to all who supported our efforts! Together, we can provide the best care for our wonderful animal friends!

Stop Burnt Paws



I'm sure you've had the experience of walking out your front door barefoot on flagstone or blacktop on a warm day, and your feet feeling a burning sensation within seconds. The air can feel quite comfortable, in the high 70's to 80 degrees Fahrenheit, yet the sun-drenched pavement is scorching to the bottoms of our feet. We run inside to get sandals or flip-flops before walking out on hot cement again.

The pads of a dog's paws offer some protection against the heat of pavement, but very often that natural protection is not enough.

According to "Pet Sitters", 120 degree Fahrenheit surfaces (common on an 85 degree day) will be painful for dogs, but won't permanently damage their paws. However surfaces at 140 degrees will cause permanent damage within one minute, and at 150 degrees dog's paws will immediately burn and blister! In warmer climates like Florida, such daily hot surfaces are to be expected, and can occur in summertime all around the country.

A thermometer to measure surface temperatures isn't something most people carry, so taking precautions will help to ensure that your pup's paws are protected. **Place the back of your hand on the pavement for 5 seconds; if that hurts then the surface is unsafe for your dog.** "Dog shoes", disposable dog booties or socks are available if you have to take them onto dangerously hot surfaces. Walking them in the morning, staying on grassy surfaces, and moisturizing your pup's paws will also help.

Taking Time for Your Pet

Bringing a pet into your life can be a truly wonderful experience. Medical research has long shown that having loving animal companions can help prevent a host of health issues, lower blood pressure, increase life-span, etc. Anyone who has come home to a dog knows the wonderful heartwarming feeling of a creature who is just *that* excited to see you each and every time you walk in the door. Cat lovers will speak fondly of evening spent with cats on their laps, or of morning rituals, etc.

Bringing an animal into your home isn't all about the benefits to you, of course. Anytime you adopt an animal, you are making a commitment to that animal to care for them for the duration of their (or your) life. A certain amount of responsibility comes with this, and it goes beyond making sure that the animal has the food, water, shelter and medical care they need. Companionship is important for animals, so its is important to make sure that you are really making time for your pet.

Most people don't have the luxury of structuring their day any way they like, but you should make sure that you are structuring your free time to include quality time with your pet. If you work 9-5, for example, that is a long eight hours that you animal will be without you. Creating a schedule so that you have dedicated pet time, such a morning and evening walks with your dog, is useful. When you're at home, actively engage with your pet. Play tug of war or drag a toy mouse across the floor while you watch TV, or sit someplace where you can reach, stroke, and be interactive with they while you're relaxing. Obviously, some animals want more human attention than others, so be sure that you know and can meet the needs of any animal before you bring them home.



Letter From A Friend

Dear Save Our Strays,

Thank you very much for all your help! I contacted the vet's office and Toby will be there next Wednesday. Without your program, it would have been difficult for me to afford fixing Toby. I am very grateful for your program.

Thank you again!

*Sincerely,
Gaby Castillo*



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