



3,616....animals saved
93,640...transport miles driven
2,598....low-cost spay/neuter
vouchers issued
213.....pets adopted
through Petco



WELCOME 8TH GRADERS

We want to thank you and welcome you to our world—a world where animals are highly regarded and their needs are fully recognized.

Last December we received a packet in the mail from Ellen Avellar, an 8th grade teacher at Winton Middle School. An ardent animal lover, she has three rescue dogs, two of whom came from the Bully Rescue in Fresno. Additionally, she is one of our monthly supporters.

This last holiday season she decided to emphasize to her students the value of giving and of thinking beyond themselves. From three choices, she asked them to select one charity to receive their donations. Twelve chose New Beginnings. Enclosed in the packet she sent were decorated cards from each student and a check made out to New Beginnings.

The maturity and insight in these young citizens were easily seen in their comments on the cards they created. “I love how you use only no-kill shelters,” said one. A second student stated, “Everywhere I go I always see animals out in the streets in need.” “You guys give animals a chance to know what being nurtured feels like,” declared another.

We’re depending on kids like these to be the guardians of the future. Hopefully, from their teacher’s inspirational nudge, will blossom a lifetime of commitment to animal welfare. Looks like they’ve built a great foundation. With advocates like these in their corner, animals can look forward to the love and respect they deserve.



FOSPICE

What’s this? It’s a combination of Foster and Hospice. So, as you might suspect, it usually involves senior animals who need a home at the end of life. Rather a tough undertaking, it would seem, but relieving to know that an aging animal in need is comfortable for their remaining time. Currently we have six dogs under our Fospice care. They have come to us from the shelter or as a result of the death of their owners. We provide reasonable medical care before they go to their foster, where a loving home and medications are provided for as long as necessary.

One of our Fospice animals had been in the Merced County Animal Shelter but was accepted by Brittany, a shelter employee who works at the reception desk. You can visit Gus—he now comes with his new mom to work every day, is

surrounded with love and attention, has his own bed there and is totally spoiled. If interested in Fospice or fostering in general, please give us a call at 209-769-2122



A NEAR TRAGEDY

Grievous, horrific, heinous, incomprehensible. Such words come to mind when confronted with the story of the little dog who, had he not been found soon, would have died as a result of abuse.

The innocent little stray terrier was found by Merced County officers and taken to the shelter. The volunteer who took him from there to Valley Animal Hospital stated that he was "just the sweetest little dog." Before treatment of his injuries could be performed, he underwent surgery to remove the elastic hair band that bound his jaws together. The band was wound so tightly he was unable to scratch it off with his paws. It had been there so long that it was embedded, and the teeth and lower jaw were compromised due to lack of blood flow. Even with all that...he was still "just the sweetest little dog."

If only this newsletter could be ten pages long, it could be easily filled with all the many photos and thoughts sent by this little angel's new, adoring family. They renamed him Yuzu, love him unendingly and take him everywhere. They describe him as "magical" and feel he is a connection to their eldest daughter... "who is no longer with us but her very large heart is part of the daisy chain of events that brought him to us. Our daughter's death was in part due to human cruelty done to her beautiful soul by another cruel human, as is the case with so many innocent animals. I'd like to dedicate this as a thank-you to all who had a hand in his being saved...and for your part in helping heal us with Yuzu."

With each edition of our newsletter, we usually include a "medical article," and like this, the situation often involves animal abuse. With your kind donations New Beginnings has been able to relieve as much suffering as possible. We are humbled by the trust you place in us and your faith that we will be there for these creatures whenever we can. Thank you.



In Memory & Honor

We are honored to have received memorial donations in the names of:

Marilyn Johnson
Sue Hicks' foster fails,
Audra and Ivy
Sweet Spud Oakes
Kiki
Jan Falasco

Susie Rizzonelli
Don Gibson
Patsy Smith
Patricia Salm
Vito
Pita

We are honored to have received tributes in the names of:

Bill Dacus
Brownie Borrink
Dottie, Chance and Chad
Steve and Cathy Benner
Ian and Delia Albright



A RECORD JANUARY TRANSPORT

One can feel good about so many things, like acing a test or conquering a personal challenge. But for New Beginnings volunteers, nothing tops rehoming 218 cats and dogs, just in the month of January! We're in awe and not afraid to crow—just a little. Here's how it went:

• **January 10th—22** dogs traveled by van to the East Bay. Getting large dogs out last year was all too uncommon, but several went this time. Among them was a German Shepherd, possibly mixed with Irish Wolfhound. We were asked by a shelter employee to give him a chance, as he was a great dog but had been there a while, and was slated for euthanasia soon. He was evaluated and recommended for transport by the selection team—turns out he was adopted right away! Nothing gladdens our hearts more than hearing something like that.



- **January 12th**—A Wings of Rescue flight carried 98 cats and dogs to the Seattle area and British Columbia. Wings of Rescue helps not only New Beginnings but rescues throughout the United States and it's impossible to overestimate the good they do for animals. Flights are so much faster for the passengers than van trips. We're indebted to you, Wings.
- **January 18th—34** dogs were transported to the East Bay area.
- **January 24th—41** dogs and cats took the long drive north to the Seattle Area.
- **January 25th—23** dogs and cats were driven to the East Bay.

None of this just magically happens. Tons of hours go into doing selections, completing health checks, generating various lists and certificates and getting our furry friends loaded and delivered. But it means that animals, like the 218 here, are saved. That's why we can crow—just a little.



KITTEN ADOPTION

Kitten season is already upon us! To help all these cuties find a loving home we'll be having adoptions in the coming months. Come see all the cute little furbabies at Petco in Atwater and adopt your new BFF! Each a complete package, every little ball of fluff will be altered, vaccinated, microchipped and flea treated. Keep a watchful eye on Facebook and our website for Adoption Day details. Don't forget!



VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION LUNCHEON

Where are we without volunteers??? Nowhere!!! They're the ones who make things happen. They do it selflessly and without pay except for the gratification of helping animals thrive.

The New Beginnings Board members (volunteers themselves) are honored to host this appreciation luncheon each year. Not all of the details have been firmed up yet, but we know there will always be plenty of fun, friends and Mexican food supplied by the same caterer everyone raved about last year. And tee shirts! Anyone who has donated or volunteered in any capacity is invited to join us. Keep a frequent eye on Facebook for further information. Once the date is known, please call Marie at 209-777-2190 to let her know you're coming.



WE'RE GOING GREEN

It's no surprise to anyone that prices are going up, up and up, right? Certainly true of the stamps, printing, ink, labels, stickers and envelopes that are all a part of our newsletter which has always been completely donor financed. That's why we've adopted the idea of "going digital." Don't misunderstand—we will continue to mail out the newsletter unless you indicate you would like to change to digital. An additional benefit is that by "getting it out to the universe," so to speak, we'll be increasing our audience exponentially.

For right now, we are just stating our intent and getting on with the basics. **Starting simply, what we need initially is for our newsletter recipients who would like the newsletter to be sent to their email inboxes to tell us by scanning the QR code or going to the link below it.** Conversely, if you no longer wish to receive the newsletter, please text 209-769-8953 to let us know. Ultimately, people who go digital will either receive it in their inboxes or be able to access it on our website. Donating will actually be easier, as there will be a "Donate" button on the digital edition—no need for a stamp or check.

Last September 2022, we started our ninth year of newsletter publication. Incredible! We will continue on but just be a little more modern about it! We appreciate your help and understanding.



bit.ly/nb2023

New Beginnings for Merced County Animals

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Bake Sale Recap

It was predicted to be a very cold day in wet conditions, but boy did we get lucky!! We got to have our cake and eat it, too! We had scheduled our annual bake sale to be held in an open-air courtyard at the El Capitan Hotel. But knowing the conditions we'd be facing, Kim Garner, our hotel contact (and a very smart cookie), changed the venue to the Sequoia Room, a lovely conference room deliciously inside! Despite the weather, people flocked to the sale to select from our traditionally spectacular array of goodies, as well as to view the refurbished hotel. The sale did phenomenally well and, like icing on the cake, we were invited back to the same room next year. No more weather worries, and we can even set up the day before—pie in the sky!



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