



# North Bay Pets

a publication of the sonoma humane society

**DANES**  
BY THE DOZEN!

**Julia** finds the  
missing piece

**Can you  
Train a  
Cat?**

*Saved by the  
Angel's Fund*



# Reaching Out, Reaching Up

Exciting new developments are happening at SHS and this is great news for the animals! As we're in the planning stages for restoring the facility at the Healdsburg Center, we've been revisiting current shelter practices and asking a lot of questions. What housing arrangements could best meet the enrichment needs of our adoptable population? What new protocols could aid the well-being of displaced animals? What technology could help streamline the adoption process?

In exploring new ideas (and improving on old ones!), we've been expanding some of our programs – and seeing our adoptions increase by nearly 20% this year! In this issue of North Bay Pets, you'll read how reaching out is helping us reach up and make this happen.

By growing our outreach capacity, we are able to give adoptable animals increased exposure to loving people who might not otherwise know about our services. We're also attending more events throughout the county. Take a look at our events calendar online and come out to show your support. You might even get to rub noses with our cover model/"cat-lebrity", Murdock the Marvelous, who occasionally makes public appearances for his adoring fans!

Engaging community is just one aspect of our newly evolving Cat Programs. (See pg. 8.) As we continually seek to improve the lives of all the animals in our care, we recognize the importance of helping to keep animals from coming to the shelter in the first place. To that end, we are growing as a resource for people to explore alternative solutions to avoid having to surrender their pets – through behavior support or adoptions by owner.

With fresh new ideas for serving our community's pets and people, we are inspired as we head into a new season. Donor support for all of our endeavors is what keeps the compassionate connections happening. As you read the stories about the work we're doing, know that we are so grateful you're a part of it!



*Kiska Icard*

Kiska Icard, Executive Director



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The Sonoma Humane Society – ensuring every animal receives protection, compassion, love and care.

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Editor in Chief:  
Cindy Roach

Content Writer:  
Signe Ross-Villemaire

Contributors:  
Christi Cambor  
Kiska Icard  
Suzanne Kernek  
Liz McQueen  
Cindy Roach

Contributing Photographers:  
Sumner Fowler  
Anna Hilla  
Wendy Welling

Designers  
Melissa Ehret  
Wendy Welling

On the Cover:  
Local "cat-lebrity" Murdock soaks up the sun at St. Francis Winery's annual Blessing of the Animals. A true survivor, Murdock overcame many health challenges as a tiny kitten at SHS, including losing his eyesight due to a severe infection. Now living a full, happy life in a loving home, his positive outlook on life inspires people around the world! Read more at [sonomahumane.org/murdock](http://sonomahumane.org/murdock).



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## Queen of Hearts

"We wanted a country dog and we got a country treasure. She is a delight." Words like this from Queenie's adopters make us smile, and so do the photos they share showing a relaxed, happy Queenie! The graceful 4½ year old Australian Shepherd/Blue Heeler mix has a sensitive nature - prone to anxiety and fearful of loud noises - so finding just the right home for this speckled beauty took some extra special matchmaking. Our adoption counselors had a hunch about wonderful couple who were looking for a dog who would be a sweet, constant companion. Queenie's new guardians reported that after an adventurous first two weeks (which included a skunk encounter and reluctant visit to a new vet), she settled into their home well. She loves going out for walks first thing in the morning, trying to suss out what the resident critters have been up to all night. Other hobbies include lounging in her doggie spa (i.e. kiddie pool) on hot days, tossing toys up into the air and burying bones with her nose. While she's still apprehensive about some loud noises such as tractors and other farm equipment, her guardians work with this by reassuring her and providing a quiet space to go where she can feel safe. At SHS we work hard to get animals into homes where their needs will be met with love. To see Queenie thriving in her forever home is the best kind of job perk!



Queenie

*"We wanted a country dog and we got a country treasure. She is a delight."*

## Cuteness Round the Clock

Pretty Emma, so fun and affectionate, really stole our hearts. With her bright white fur (and pink skin subject to sunburn) and FIV+ status, she needed to go home with someone who could keep her indoors and be mindful of her health. We were so happy when Emma found such a loving caretaker. Emma's new mom reports that her little lovebug likes to keep a tight schedule - cuddling with her each night before bed and waking her up with kitty kisses each morning when the alarm goes off. She meows when she's hungry and purrs happily as she eats. Emma looks out the window waiting for her when she's gone and is so happy to see her when she gets home. Her new mom also shares "...she fills my heart with joy every day! Thank you for my beloved little companion, Sonoma Humane." It fills our hearts with joy knowing that Emma is now in a home where she is so well-loved and cared for!

*"...she fills my heart with joy every day!"*



Emma





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# Lappies in Action Flash Update

*It takes a village to build a community*

Even taking a strategic, organized approach going into our large scale dog Finnish Lapphund rescue in January, a few surprises did pop up. (You mean there are actually 61 dogs, not 36? And two more pups born the next morning? We can do this!) We were confident that, with your financial support and many staff and volunteer hours devoted to medical and behavioral rehab, these dogs would have a chance to live healthy lives (the success of which still gives us goosebumps!) What we couldn't have predicted was the incredible community that has formed with the adopters of these dogs. In addition to getting follow-up support from our Behavior and Training team, the extended family of Lappy adopters meets regularly at SHS for play dates. This group of unlikely friends drawn together by a common bond - sharing stories, comparing experiences, celebrating training milestones - is a happy by-product of the entire compassionate SHS community!

*Lappies hone their socialization skills at a recent play date!*

## Wells Fargo proudly salutes the Sonoma Humane Society



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Oopsie

Cats  
MAKE UP AT LEAST 60%  
OF OUR CURRENT ADOPTABLE POPULATION

What do you and your cat offer each other – Friendship? Comfort? Entertainment? From the ancient Egyptians who revered cats as demi-gods for protecting their crops from vermin, to our culture’s current obsession with cute cat videos (3 minutes is purported to be the longest a cat has ever ridden a Roomba – ask us how we know!), humans have adored cats for millennia. And we’ve been trying to understand them for just as long.

In the best of circumstances, our symbiotic relationship with cats reminds us to slow down and enjoy the simple pleasures. Take time to get to know a cat and you’ll learn how much your life can be enhanced by breaks for playtime and power naps. And nothing comes close to the contented feeling you get from that warm furball curling up by your side each night.

Cat Behavior

Cat behavior is very complex, often trickier to “read” than dogs. Judging by our “cat heavy” population at SHS, it seems all too often people are quick to give up when a relationship isn’t all purrs and snuggles. Cats end up in our shelter for many reasons, but the most common is owner surrender due to behavior problems. To help better address the needs of cats in our community – and the humans who love them, we’ve expanded our Behavior and Training department with a dedicated focus on Cat Programs. Building on the feline health and wellness protocols we have in place, our Cat Programs team works to give cats in our care, and cats in the home, a better quality of life.

Some predominant behavior problems people experience with their cats include litter box issues, handling concerns, overactivity, and not getting along with other animals in the home. Barring any health problems, these behaviors can usually be improved with training techniques. Our goal is to help the public address the issues and avoid having to surrender their cats. We believe that most people are willing to work with their animals and that great results can be achieved if they have the support.

"Cats are a mysterious kind of folk. There is more passing in their minds than we are aware of."

– Sir Walter Scott

"The constant challenge to decipher feline behavior is perhaps one of the most fascinating qualities of owning a cat."

– Carole Wilbourn, Cat Therapist

"Meow means ‘woof’ in cat."

– George Carlin

Can you Train a Cat?

Mirroring the philosophy that our Behavior and Training team uses in working with dogs, in our Cat Programs we emphasize that behavior modification or re-training can be done effectively with a positive approach. Punishing a cat using verbal or physical means will not help the situation, and in most cases will cause the problem to become worse. One common scenario that we hear about is a cat scratching up furniture. For this situation we recommend a three step approach: First, trim the cat’s nails or use a product like “Soft Paws” nail caps. Then, use a deterrent such as double-sided tape on the couch to make it less appealing to the cat. Last but not least, provide an appropriate scratching post nearby to give your cat an outlet to accommodate the need to use their claws.

To work toward our goal of keeping cats in loving homes, we’ve implemented a volunteer-run Behavior Hotline to offer advice to cat owners and help them trouble-shoot behavior problems. By 2015 our Cat Programs will also include an online resource library for the community to refer to.

Shelter Strategy

For the cats who do end up in our shelter, we want to make their stay as happy and healthy as possible. We provide comfortable spaces with views and toys for enrichment. We emphasize frequent socialization and affection with our volunteer “Cat Cuddlers”. Many of our cats are co-housed with other cats and thrive on the companionship. For the cats who don’t play so well with others, we’ve recently created a transitional space where multiple cats are housed individually but can be let out one at a time, free to wander to an enclosed “catio” to enjoy some safe outdoor time. And we’re working with them to develop behaviors that will help with successful adoptions and transitions into their forever homes. Part of our strategy is to decrease our cats’ length of stay here at SHS by scheduling regular behavior assessments and re-evaluations and increasing useful information about their behaviors for potential adopters.

Hope for Oopsie

Our Cat Programs Manager shares a recent success story that illustrates how a little patience and creativity can go a long way in helping to transform problem behavior: “Oopsie came to our Healdsburg Center as a stray with an abscess on his back. He was very frustrated when he was housed in a cage. He was so pent up and his behavior got really negative. He would grab onto our arms and try to bite. He didn’t care for other cats so we weren’t able to house him in our multi-cat rooms. We started to ‘think outside the cage’. He became my office foster and I spent a lot of time redirecting his behavior from biting me to playing with toys. He responded well and became a very well-behaved cat. He was adopted by an amazing couple. They fell in love with him despite his quirks!”

Oopsie is proof that despite all of our respective quirks, humans and cats can learn to understand and live harmoniously with each other. At Sonoma Humane Society this is what we want to see for every cat. We think the benefits of having a cat in your life are worth working for! ■

45% of all stray dogs who come in are reclaimed  
by their owners while only 15% of cats are redeemed

Are behavior issues getting in the way of purr-fect harmony with your cat? Please call our Cat Behavior Hotline at (707) 542-0882 ext.271



# A BAKER'S DOZEN OF HAPPY TAILS!

## • RILEY & PUPS •



**N**o effort is too great when a life is at stake." So goes the credo by which SHS operates each and every day. In the case of Riley and her puppies, 13 lives were at stake. Thanks to great effort by SHS staff and volunteers, with lots of assistance from our donor-supported Angel's Fund, 13 lives were saved!

Great Dane Riley's former guardians allowed her to get pregnant and were away on vacation when she gave birth to her 12 puppies. When their house sitter called with the news that complications had arisen with Riley and her pups' health, they were not willing to pay the expenses and requested that all the dogs be euthanized. The veterinarian reached out to Sonoma Humane Society for help.

When Riley arrived at our hospital, she was very underweight, lethargic and feverish. Among other issues, she was suffering from a life-threatening uterine infection. She was having a hard time producing enough milk to feed her hungry newborns. SHS staff

triaged the situation by keeping Riley comfortable and rotating the pups through feedings every two hours to make sure all would be fed. As Riley began to respond to medicine and nourishment, our Executive Director Kiska Icard took on fostering duties for the entire brood – bringing them home each night for puppy feeding rotation, and carting them back to work each day where staff and volunteers took shifts caring for the dogs.

As mom and pups got stronger and healthier, our Shelter Medicine and Behavior and Training departments implemented plans for medical treatments and training so that the dogs would go on to live healthy lives and have successful adoptions.

Riley had been suffering from Entropion, an uncomfortable condition that was causing her eyelashes to curl inward and scratch her eyes. Our veterinarian performed the corrective eyelid surgery necessary to remedy the problem, as well as spay surgery and

Gastropexy surgery to guard against a life-threatening stomach bloating common in Great Danes. The puppies also received this surgery when they were altered to ensure that they too would not be at risk going forward in life. Our donor-supported Angel's Fund makes it possible for us to take on these types of cases, and we're so grateful when our community contributes to help cover the costs.

In addition to medical care, over 700 volunteer and foster hours were logged getting the puppies ready for adoption! Lots of cuddling and playing helped to socialize the puppies and give them a solid foundation of positive interactions. The strong beginnings they received at SHS are being built upon with their new families who continue to nurture the growing dogs with conscientious training and lots of love. The great effort in rescuing these dogs is rewarded when we hear how well the puppies have adapted in their forever homes. **Next:** progress updates on two of the pups!

## (CHARLIE •

All of the socialization that Charlie received at SHS has paid off. His new parents admit that he shows so much love and enthusiasm when meeting new people and other dogs that it almost makes them jealous! Who can resist that wiggly charm? Charlie's fan club includes the 5 cats he lives with. He is still working on his 12-year-old Springer Spaniel brother who tries his best to ignore Charlie's youthful exuberance. This social butterfly understands the importance of bringing his game face for his admirers - Charlie loves his crate and crawls in when he needs a quick nap to recharge his batteries.

In addition to his remarkable ability to make friends, Charlie is proving to be quite intelligent. Housetraining and leash walking have been easy for him. In his puppy class, he has aced "sit" and "lay down", and is almost there with "stay". They report that he has a 75% success rate with "come" depending on distractions, "but is close to 100% if you have good treats."

## GEORGIA •

If you want a play date with Georgia, you should book now – her calendar fills up fast! Her pet-parents say that she makes friends easily and has regular play dates set each week. They report that this gentle, easy-going pup was comfortable in her forever home from day one. Home includes a Chihuahua brother named Amos. Georgia was about the same size as Amos when they brought her home, and now that she's grown to over twice his height, she still "looks up" to him as a role model. To round out her education, she's been going to a puppy class at SHS. She has learned "sit-to-say-please", "down", "stand", "wait" and "touch", and picked up housetraining and leash walking quickly.

Georgia's mom reports that it's been fascinating to watch her become interested in what's going on outside of her "personal puppy bubble". For example, she used to lie on the floor during car rides but now enjoys sitting on the seat and watching the changing landscape go by.





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# Julia

## piecing together a brighter future

A good Samaritan finds Julia covered in multiple fresh bite wounds, wandering alone in a local park. The German Shepherd mix arrives at SHS limping, weak and in a state of shock

Scars all over her body suggested that she had been repeatedly attacked by other dogs. Our veterinarian, Dr. Cambor, quickly noted another puzzle piece: Julia's tongue was protruding but she could not open her jaw. She speculates that the jaw is fused as a result of Julia suffering a trauma early in life.

Dr. Cambor consults with specialists to find out if surgery could repair Julia's jaw. The consulting surgeon recommends against surgery due to extreme risk of respiratory arrest and anesthetic arrest and a very small chance that Julia's jaw could be repaired with any appreciable degree of improvement.

Julia is not spayed. Since it is not safe to anesthetize her, we are not able to spay her. She will need to go to a home where there are no intact male dogs.

During behavior assessments it's noted that Julia is social with dogs when introduced off-leash, but should have more careful introduction while on-leash.

Julia loves people and responds well to affection and interaction.

As Julia recovers, she demonstrates how she has adapted to be able to eat. She can lap up kibble and water through a space in her teeth. Though still unsure of her surroundings in the first few days at SHS, Julia starts to put her trust in our caring crew.

Due to Julia's condition, she cannot open her mouth to pant so it is important to keep her from overheating on hot days. On summer days, our Behavior and Training team set up a kid's wading pool for her and discovered she loves playing in water to keep cool!

By assessing Julia's overall health, Dr. Cambor estimates that Julia is about 4

### "The missing piece"

As you can see, getting all the pieces to fall into place can be a very complex process, one that takes patience, understanding and time. We don't know what Julia survived in her past, but we do know her incredible resilience has helped her heal from it. Seeing her greet each day with a hopeful sweetness, we knew that once she found her forever home, our puzzle would be whole and complete. Just as this issue goes to print, our hearts are bursting to share the news of Julia's adoption! The "missing piece" – a loving, caring family for this wonderful dog – is now in place. We wish them a lifetime of love and look forward to hearing how their life together unfolds!

**Satellite Adoptions**   
Reaching out to help animals in need

Quick – what's the first thing that comes to mind when you're ready to adopt a pet? Do you picture yourself driving up to "the big metal dog" at Sonoma Humane Society on Highway 12 West and going in to visit all the whiskery faces who are so eager to see you? Did you know you can get that same kind of reception at our satellite adoption spots throughout the county? Or perhaps your future best friend is waiting to find you through the Adoptions by Owner feature on our website?

We've been growing our Adoptions and Outreach programs and seeing a big increase in the number of animals we place in homes! By reaching out to our community and finding new opportunities to connect more of our adoptables with loving people, we are making Sonoma County an even safer place for animals in need. Show your support by visiting one of our adoption partners. Who knows? You may come home with a new friend!



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Adoptions by Owner listings can be viewed at: [sonomahumane.org/adopt/adoptions-owner](http://sonomahumane.org/adopt/adoptions-owner)  
*(Local people who can no longer keep their beloved pets due to unforeseen circumstances can list them through our website. All communications and adoption arrangements are facilitated through the pet's owner.)*

You know how when you're assembling a jigsaw puzzle, you keep referring to the pretty picture on the box to give you clues on how to assemble all the moving parts? That process is similar to how our team comes together to get each animal in our care on the path to the best life possible. The "pretty picture" we hold as our end goal is the same for every animal: we want them to live happy, healthy lives in safe, caring homes where they are loved. Working toward this outcome starts with building up the edge and corner pieces, if you will, from any existing information available about an animal upon his or her arrival to SHS. Since oftentimes we don't get much background information such as health records, previous owner history, etc., building up these first pieces can be a little tricky.

Sometimes, as in Julia's case, an animal comes to us in a critical state. Our veterinary staff works quickly to triage the situation. Once their patient is stabilized, they begin to piece together more clues to shape a diagnosis. As the animal heals and begins to touch the lives of every department throughout SHS, facts about their health and personality emerge, giving us a better picture of their needs and how we can meet them. A committee made up of members from each SHS department comes together bringing collective insight and experience to strategize the best course of action to ensure a bright future for the animal.



The ANGEL'S FUND

TO GIVE IS DIVINE

\*

The sick ones, the broken ones, the ones covered with fleas and lice, some struggling to stay alive... these are the animals you help when you donate to SHS's Angel's Fund. For most animals arriving at our shelter, the road to adoption begins with medical treatment for anything from tummy troubles and skin infections to broken limbs and critical illnesses. As a "guardian angel", your generosity literally enables our veterinary team to provide the life-saving medical care that so many of our animals need.

Every animal we take in receives a complete medical evaluation to determine their unique health needs. Each one is vaccinated and given flea and deworming treatments, and spayed or neutered prior to adoption, but many are in very rough shape by the time they get to us. In 2013, of the 1,956 animals we rescued, 1,760 had extenuating conditions requiring medical treatment beyond routine care. To these animals, your compassionate contributions are miracles!

Your donations to the angel's fund have the power to heal:

Upper respiratory infections (cats), kennel cough (dogs), dehydration, malnutrition, diarrhea, dental disease, mass removals, minor surgical procedures, orthopedic surgery, skin, ear, and eye infections...And so much more.

Be an angel and click the "donate" button at [sonomahumane.org](http://sonomahumane.org) or call (707) 577-1903.

This year, the Angel's Fund has helped so many animals including Riley and her pups (pg. 10) and Julia (pg. 12). Here are just a few more who have been saved by Angels!



- 1. Henry was a stray who had been hit by a car. Brought to our hospital by a good Samaritan, he lost a leg but gained a life of love. Thanks to the kindness of strangers – and the Angel's Fund - our veterinarians were able to ensure that Henry not only survived, but thrives!
- 2. Baby Moon was brought to us as a stray with severe eye problems. Our team worked closely with a veterinary ophthalmologist to diagnose and contain a chronic viral eye infection. Baby Moon's outlook is now a lot brighter thanks to the Angel's Fund.
- 3. Mr. Noodles the kitten had been abandoned. He came to SHS covered with mites and lice and unwilling to eat. We are happy to report that, with help from the Angel's Fund, this mustachioed cutie was nursed back to health and is now thriving and full of life!
- 4. Found on the side of the highway, Diamond arrived at SHS missing most of her fur due to a severe skin infection. Thanks to the Angel's Fund, our veterinary team was able to treat her condition and help her get healthy. She is now living life with a full coat in a loving home!



Cathy was as dedicated as our donors come. For more than 20 years she set aside an annual donation to help the animals - those at the Sonoma Humane Society whom she was so proud to help. Some years she sent \$10 and others \$20. Every year without fail, Cathy saved a cherished donation she could send to us at the holiday season. And each year one of the animals in our adoption program was a very grateful beneficiary of that support. What Cathy gave made a world of difference for them.

A retired teacher living on a fixed income, Cathy didn't have a lot left over at the end of each month. And because she lived alone, she depended solely on her own resources to get by. Although she wished she could do more, during her lifetime those \$10 and \$20 donations were the most that Cathy could comfortably give.

And yet, without impacting her daily life, Cathy ultimately gave the Sonoma Humane Society a gift with very significant impact. Through careful planning, Cathy included the Sonoma Humane Society in her Will as the beneficiary of her Life Insurance Annuity. When Cathy

passed away last year her thoughtfulness and generosity paved the way for increased medical support in our shelter veterinary hospital. Her life insurance annuity, valued at close to \$100,000,

helped the Sonoma Humane Society expand its care for sick and injured animals and allowed more animals to benefit from long-term Fospice care. Her generosity will be felt by thousands of animals in need.

We regret that we cannot thank Cathy personally for the gift she has given or for the lives she is helping us to save. Like all of our legacy donors (those who leave a bequest to the Sonoma Humane Society) Cathy leaves behind a very special contribution; A gift with the power to strengthen our services for the needs of today and help sustain them into the future.

This tribute to "Cathy", was written for an anonymous benefactor. She, along with the listed legacy donors left charitable gifts in their

Will or Trust which were received by SHS between November 2013 and November 2014. Their generosity is reflected in every life we touch.

Bequests  
Nov. 2013 - Nov. 2014

- Florence Buckley Trust
- Jean E. Burns Trust
- Alice C. Campbell Living Trust
- Tina Crowley Trust
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- Nadine Foreman Trust
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The Sonoma Humane Society does not receive any funding from government sources. We depend on donations from our local community.  
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*Lately, Mark's commissions have  
gone to the dogs...  
and cats, birds, and  
hamsters, and turtles,  
goats, pigs  
and...*



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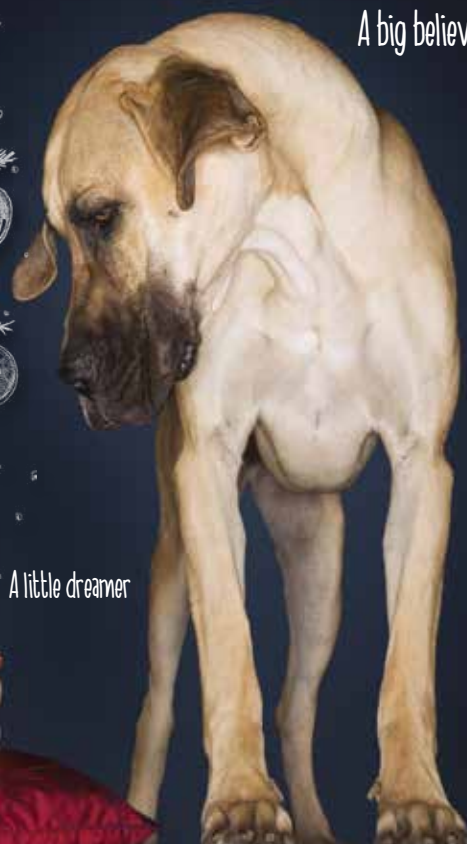
**When you buy or sell your  
next home, you help homeless  
animals find theirs.**

Mark donates 10% of his sales commission to the  
Sonoma Humane Society in your name  
when you buy or sell your home.

*You'll always get top-notch integrity, professionalism, friendly  
service and, on special request, maybe even a few dog kisses!*

**GIVE <sup>to</sup> HOPE  
Every Animal**

*A big believer*



*A little dreamer*



**SONOMA HUMANE SOCIETY**

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