



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **Humane Society of Sonoma County Responds to Clearlake Shelter Crisis, Rescues 30 Dogs**

**Santa Rosa, CA and Healdsburg, CA – February 13, 2026 –**

The Humane Society of Sonoma County (HSSC) responded this week to a severe animal welfare crisis at the Clearlake animal shelter, which recently changed management. While news reports and social media photos circulated widely, HSSC staff quickly realized that nothing could have prepared them for the conditions on site. Team members described the shelter as one of the worst they had seen in over 15 years of animal rescue work — a view echoed by peers across the Bay Area animal welfare community.



Photo courtesy of Clearlake Animal Association and Bruce Robinson

Three HSSC operations team members drove the rescue van to Clearlake to assist volunteers and partner organizations. Of the 116 dogs originally discovered at the shelter, 80 remained when

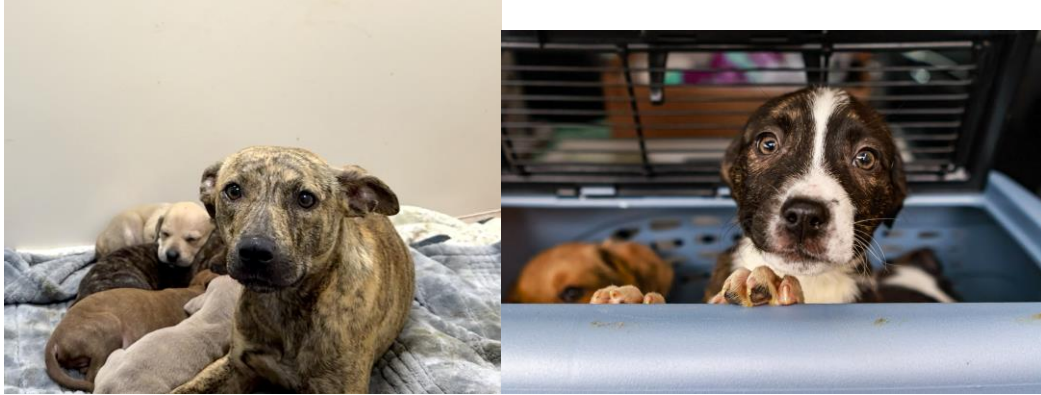
HSSC arrived, and the team was able to rescue 30 dogs and puppies. Even after these rescues, the shelter continued to house roughly 50 dogs — more than double its stated capacity.



*Gentleman(left) & Biggie(right) arrive at HSSC*

Distressing does not begin to describe the condition of the animals. Many were confined in crates filled with feces and urine, emaciated to the point that the duration of their neglect could not be estimated. Upon arrival at HSSC, the dogs underwent intake exams and vaccinations. Veterinary staff remained on site late into the night. to ensure all dogs received proper care.

Most of the rescued dogs are likely infected with giardia and potentially other conditions requiring strict protocols of isolation and treatment. A positive test for parvovirus, a highly infectious and potentially fatal disease spread through contact with feces, was confirmed. There is no cure for parvovirus; treatment focuses on supporting overall wellbeing while the body fights the virus. HSSC staff were able to order a specialized monoclonal antibody treatment that reduces the duration of clinical signs and significantly improves survival. Currently, approximately 15 puppies are in various levels of isolation based on exposure, with three testing positive for parvovirus and receiving intensive care.



Among the rescues were two nursing mothers. One mother dog had five neonates who were immediately placed in foster: receiving nutrition, and medical attention in a warm, safe, loving foster home while they recover together.

Despite the neglect, the dogs displayed remarkable resilience and friendliness. Each dog, large or small, greeted rescuers with wagging tails and curiosity.



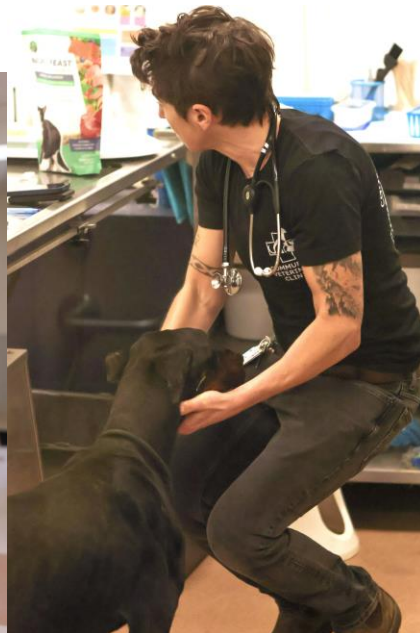
“The journey for these dogs has only just begun,” said [Executive Director- Cynthia King].  
“Healing them from neglect, starvation, and exposure will require more than our usual resources. We urgently need financial donations, food, treats, towels, and blankets”



*Animal Intake Coordinator- Darby Pierce assesses a neonate puppy*



*Left-Executive Director Cynthia King moves a puppy to ISO*



*Right Ada Norris, DVM, Senior Director of Veterinary Medicine, examines Gentleman*

“I could not be more proud of our team. Every single person who works here stepped up to make it work, including the long drives, late nights, and extensive cleaning. We all know that we are here for the animals, to take care of them with love and compassion, and to work together with respect and integrity.

Responding to something like this, no matter how heartbreaking, is why we are here. I know that so many of you feel the same way, and I deeply appreciate your ongoing participation and support.” [Executive Director- Cynthia King].

**Donate [here](#)**

### **About the Humane Society of Sonoma County**

Serving the community since 1931, the Humane Society of Sonoma County is a donor-supported safe haven for animals. They provide shelter, medical care, behavior support, and adoption services to homeless animals on their journey to happy and healthy lives. Last year, HSSC placed 1,747 animals into loving homes through their Santa Rosa and Healdsburg campuses. And adoption is just the beginning. As a resource to our community, they offer dog training classes and pet behavior support to help ensure the success of each adoption and strengthen the human/animal bond. Their weekly Low-Cost Spay/Neuter clinics, Community Veterinary Clinic, Community Action Team, and donation-supported Pet Food Pantry help owned pets stay safe, healthy and with the families who love them. HSSC’s Humane Education Program nurtures compassion for animals through youth summer and winter camps. Additionally, their outreach efforts and volunteer opportunities foster engagement and sustained support for their lifesaving programs. Visit [humanesocietysoco.org](http://humanesocietysoco.org) and follow all their feel-good stories on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#).