INSIDE

Passion through Tragedy
A Tale of Two Bulldogs
Committed to the Animals
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FOOD * WINE * BEER

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AS I SNUGGLE ON THE COUCH, recovering from an appendectomy, I just had to write to say how thoroughly happy we are with our new family addition.

Louis, either a Russian Blue or (I think) Korat, is nine years old and had some dental issues. Right after we adopted him he needed $700 in dental work. He is no spring chicken, but has turned out to be so gentle and so fun!

He adores playing with his favorite toy, a kite string. He will play with it until you get tired, then find a box to squeeze into, or take a nap on your hands while typing. Ha!

My son and I could not have been luckier. He’s the perfect cat for us! Playful and sweet. Thanks a million for giving him a chance for a new home—and for us the chance to love Louis!

THE SACRAMENTO SPCA fosters a loving and compassionate community for animals and people by providing assistance, creating lifelong relationships and saving lives.

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“Cats are connoisseurs of comfort.”—JAMES HERIOT
IT IS SUCH AN HONOR to join the Sacramento SPCA family. It is an amazing organization that touches tens of thousands of lives—feline, canine, human and others—every year. In the coming months, I will be working hard to learn more about the organization and the people who make it so successful—the staff, the volunteers and you, our wonderful supporters and advocates.

So, it’s only fair that I share some of my background and my passion for helping animals in need.

For most of my career, I have been a journalist—an editor, then a manager and, ultimately, an executive. I’ve worked at newspapers across the country: Norfolk, Va.; Owensboro, Ky.; Lincoln, Neb.; San Antonio; Houston; Reno; San Francisco; even Hagatna, Guam.

So how did I end up walking dogs and herding cats for a living?

It started with Hurricane Katrina. A dear friend and fellow editor (and a die-hard animal lover) asked me to join her in Gulfport, Miss., in November 2005. New Orleans had received much attention and help, but Gulfport was still struggling three months after the hurricane. Of highest importance to my friend, the Humane Society of South Mississippi was desperate. So we took three-week leaves from our jobs and drove down to see how we could help. The need was staggering. The aging shelter was full: four or five dogs in kennels designed for two, with more animals coming in daily as strays or—tragically—surrenders from residents who had survived the storm with their families intact only to learn that the long-awaited FEMA trailers could not or would not accommodate their pets. Each day, another traumatized family would arrive and stand there numbly as we led their cherished pet away. Those images haunt me still.

I started each morning cleaning kennels, and then spent the bulk of my day with the dogs—walking them, determining their level of training, and writing note cards to post on the kennels to let prospective adopters and rescue groups learn as much as they could about the dog. I had no experience at doing any of this—other than having had dogs and cats in my life since childhood—but if I didn’t do it, there was no one else who would. It was hard, heartbreaking work—and the rewards of seeing love come from disaster was equally overwhelming.

Back at home in Houston, I wanted to continue to help animals and became a very active member of Scout’s Honor, a community-based animal rescue/adoption organization that is 100% financed by donations and 100% volunteer-run. There is no physical address for this organization: it is a collective of “foster parents” who network with each other to rescue animals who are out of time at local shelters.

We would take the rescued animals into our homes and nurse them back to health, provide them training, and then work independently to find each a good permanent home.

My fosters included Crockett, a Tennessee treeing Walker coonhound. But, as we say in the South, “that dog don’t hunt”—which is probably why Crockett ended up at the shelter before being rescued. I spent nearly five months dealing with Crockett’s severely abraded tail that would not heal because he kept wagging it and hitting walls and furniture, as well as giving him house manners and leash skills. Placing a large dog in an urban environment is very difficult. I finally came up with the idea of posting pictures of Crockett in feed stores in small towns surrounding Houston. I was ecstatic to find him a multi-acreage home with children, horses and chickens to keep a watch over.

Then there was BooBoo, a rat terrier. Boo was very sick when we rescued him, with heartworm and the weight loss and cough that go with it. He had little energy and liked to hide in the laundry basket, where he felt safe.

My transition to a career helping animals in need started in 2005, when I traveled to Mississippi to help animals and their families devastated by Hurricane Katrina. It was hard, heartbreaking work—and the rewards of seeing love come from disaster was equally overwhelming.
ery. Boo prospered, but when a new baby arrived, it was harder for the family to give him the care and love he needed and deserved. Boo returned to me, and over the next few months, he healed completely while I looked for a permanent home. We finally found this in Dallas, and I still get email updates from his new family.

Then there was Maximus, a street puppy who is most likely part lab and part shepherd. He was younger than six months old and had no manners, was slightly cross-eyed and totally irresistible—so much so that I ended up adding him to my own family. He’s eight now and loves to visit our 80-acre property in the Scott Valley of Northern California and spend his weekends chasing squirrels and patrolling the woods.

These rescue efforts would have been unsuccessful if not for the kindness and gentleness of our Carolina dog, Zed. Zed is a gentle soul who only wants to give and receive love. He is a perfect host for lost and stray dogs, welcoming them into the house and often sharing his food with them. At one point, Zed was hosting Crockett, Boo and Max all at the same time. He seems surprised that, more than seven years later, Max is still “visiting.”

But none of these activities prepared me for the impact that accepting the position of executive director at SoHumane in Oregon would have on me. The past five years have taught me that my love for animals goes far deeper than growing up with a variety of cats, dogs, chickens, ducks and others, and has awakened a part of my heart that was yearning to do this important work.

The ability to daily make a difference in the life of an animal is something I not only cherish—it is something I now demand in my life. The opportunity to do that here in Sacramento with the SSPCA is a gift, and I am deeply cognizant and appreciative of the opportunity and responsibility I have been given. Toward that end, I hope you will complete the brief survey in this newsletter. Your answers will help us improve the work we know is so important to you and to our communities.

I look forward to meeting you in the coming months and hearing about your passion for the animals entrusted to our care—companions who ask so little, but give so much.

Kenn Altine
Chief Executive Officer

70 DEGREES
IS TOO HOT TO LEAVE A DOG IN THE CAR

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The ability to daily make a difference in the life of an animal is something I not only cherish—it is something I now demand in my life. ... I am deeply cognizant and appreciative of the opportunity and responsibility I have been given.
 MANY INDIVIDUALS are unable to have pets in their lives and miss the companionship and joy an animal can provide. They may be residents of a convalescent home or assisted living facility, patients in a hospital, or children living in a receiving home or homeless shelter. Regular visits from furry friends through the Sacramento SPCA’s Love on Loan program can make all the difference in someone’s life.

The Love on Loan program (just one of many animal-assisted therapy programs across the country) was started in 1984 by Sacramento SPCA staff and volunteers. The program enlists volunteers who take their own pets on visits to local nursing homes and children’s homes. Interaction with animals can be a powerful tool for igniting personal growth and transforming everyday experiences for seniors and children. Companion animals are remarkable because they have the ability to reach out to people on a very fundamental level.

The Love on Loan program was an immediate success, giving seniors and children an opportunity to experience the unconditional love and acceptance of a dog or a cat.

Social workers and psychologists who bring companion animals into nursing homes as part of their work with elderly people report that nursing home residents who refuse to interact with any of the people around them spontaneously and immediately open up to animals.

People who haven’t spoken in months talk to a puppy. It can break them out of their shell, and after one or two visits with a dog, they start responding to other things.

It can be wonderful for people to feel like they have a pet again.

Noah (the Shepherd) gives a little love to a student at the Pets for Stress event recently hosted at California State University Sacramento. Noah was adopted by Brian Campbell from the Sacramento SPCA and is an active member of the Love on Loan program.
A LOVE ON LOAN DOG is a dog that adapts quickly to new situations and environments (neither shy nor excitable), behaves in a neutral manner toward dogs of all sizes (does not bark, shy away from or try to play with), and actively seeks out people’s attention in a calm and friendly manner. A Love on Loan dog is a dog that will choose to engage with people he/she does not know over anything else in the environment.

If your dog possesses all the behavior and characteristics described above, your next step will be to contact Val Masters and schedule a time to meet her at the shelter. She will make the determination on whether or not your dog is an appropriate candidate for the Love on Loan program. To schedule an appointment with Val, you may contact her at vmasters@ssPCA.org.

The Sacramento SPCA is looking for volunteers who are serious about our very special organization and are willing to make a minimum commitment of one Love on Loan visit per month for a period of twelve months. Please contact Val Masters with any questions you may have. We appreciate your interest in volunteering at the Sacramento SPCA!
A TALE OF TWO BULLDOGS

...by Dawn Foster
Director of Marketing and Communications

There are many great ‘happy ending’ stories at the Sacramento SPCA, and every one of them is special. Two bulldog puppies, in particular, stole the hearts of our staff when their owners surrendered them because of unique medical conditions that appeared untreatable. From seemingly hopeless beginnings, these special boys not only received the love and medical care necessary to thrive, they became national stars in the process—which led them straight into the arms of two perfect forever families.

BUELLER’S COURAGEOUS JOURNEY began in January, when he was just eight weeks old and a breeder/owner surrendered him to the Sacramento SPCA. He was suffering from swimmer’s syndrome, a genetic defect that left the muscles in his rear limbs too weak for him to stand or walk. Bueller’s movement was confined to lying on his chest and paddling his feet, as if attempting to swim in a turtle-like fashion. He had urine burns all over his tummy because he couldn’t stand to go to the bathroom. Normally, puppies stand/walk around the three-week mark, so the Sacramento SPCA veterinary team immediately put together a strategy to get him on all four paws.

Following x-rays and a visit to UC Davis, the first steps to build Bueller a solid foundation began by taping his legs closer together in a more normal position. He spent the next few weeks building muscle tone through water therapy, swimming in a tub while suspended in a sling. His foster parents built a ‘baby bouncer’ to help him put weight on his paws and walk without needing to support his full body weight.

After months of treatment, love and lots of encouragement from his big canine foster brother Ozzy, Bueller learned how to stand, walk and even run! Every step of his progress was shared on the Sacramento SPCA’s Facebook page, which led The Dodo—a website that serves emotionally and visually compelling stories to promote animal welfare—to pick up his story. Overnight, Bueller became a national superstar.

So there was plenty of interest when it came time to find Bueller a forever family. The Sacramento SPCA staff knew they had to find someone very special, and asked the 35 applicants from across the country to write a letter explaining why they were the perfect match for Bueller. We also advised potential adopters that Bueller would likely require future orthopedic medical care.

On March 18, Bueller left the Sacramento SPCA Adoption Center with his adopted mother, Lindsay Taylor. His new parents had lost their beloved bulldog, Chubbs, to cancer in December. “We have so much love to give—really to any animal, but Bueller just pulled at our heartstrings,” Taylor said.

Today Bueller and his forever family are regulars at Sacramento SPCA events, including the 26th Annual Doggy Dash in April and Yappy Hour at Oak Park Brewing Company in May, where he and Batty, our other special bulldog, were the center of attention.

IN EARLY APRIL, the Sacramento SPCA received another special bulldog: his name is Batty and
he was born blind. Batty’s previous owner gave him up at five months of age because of his poor overall health and a lack of funds to provide the medical care Batty needed. He arrived in poor condition—covered in feces and with a large abscess on his chin.

After Batty was bathed, fed and placed in foster care, a visit to UC Davis determined that he has a rare congenital (birth) defect in both eyes, resulting in his irises being stuck to the back of his corneas, causing scarring. The eyes actually start out in that way, but in Batty’s case, they failed to separate normally during his development as a fetus. Batty may still be at risk for developing glaucoma later in life, but since his eyes aren’t causing a problem now, it was decided that removal was not necessary.

From the caring hands of the Sacramento SPCA staff to his foster family, Batty went from a neglected dog to a more confident and happy pup. He learned how to make his way around on a leash and received special equipment to help him navigate his new world: a Muffin’s Halo for blind dogs. Like Bueller, he received a lot of attention on Facebook, and was featured on The Dodo—where a young couple in Wisconsin learned of his need for a very special home.

When Cassidy and Brett saw Batty’s story, they knew that they had to meet him. They already had a blind rescue pit bull named Sotiras (meaning Savior) and knew that they could offer Batty the special care he would need. They reached out to the Sacramento SPCA, were the first family to apply—and didn’t think twice about driving across the country to meet the little guy.

They planned to arrive in Sacramento on a Friday and hit the road for the long return trip back on Saturday. Unfortunately, Brett experienced food poisoning on the trip out, which required a stop at the emergency room. After Brett was feeling better, they jumped back on the road. They arrived on Saturday afternoon, met Batty and ran down to the Sacramento SPCA to complete the adoption process. Since they had to be back in Wisconsin on Monday, they set off on the return trip on Saturday evening.

Cassidy posted on Facebook, “We are on the long ride home now, and he is absolutely wonderful. So full of love, cuddles and playfulness.” Batty (now named Ago, short for Agios meaning Saint) is happily settled in at his new home.
DESPITE SOGGY CONDITIONS, over 4,000 animal enthusiasts gathered with and without their canine companions at William Land Park on Saturday, April 9, for the 26th Annual Doggy Dash & Pet Festival. The event raised a record $188,000; proceeds will help the Sacramento SPCA care for more than 7,000 homeless animals in 2016.

In addition to the 2k and 5k walks, canines and their companions enjoyed the SPCA’s Bark at the Park festivities, including Pup Show, a high-flying disc contest and the ever-popular pug races! Guests watched canine demonstrations, participated in a variety of canine contests, visited with pet-friendly businesses, and enjoyed the Yappy Hour Beer Garden and some great food from Sacto Mofo food trucks.

DON’T MISS OUT NEXT YEAR! Join us next April for the 27th Annual Doggy Dash & Pet Festival!

“THE GREATEST OF A NATION AND ITS MORAL PROGRESS CAN BE JUDGED BY THE WAY ITS ANIMALS ARE TREATED.” — MAHATMA GANDHI
I had the privilege of recently talking with Olivia McLeod Straine, vice president of Straine Consulting and presenting sponsor of the Sacramento SPCA’s 2016 Paws, Pals & Putts Golf Tournament. I learned how her love for animals started, the role animals play in her daily life, and how these experiences have impacted her career.

A DYNAMIC JOURNEY

...by Dawn Foster
Director of Marketing and Communications

Olivia was raised in a household with exceptional housekeeping standards where animals were not permitted, and pets were considered a dirty and unnecessary nuisance. It wasn’t until she married Kerry Straine in 1992 that her opinion began to change.

Kerry Straine, president of Straine Consulting, enjoyed the company of several loyal Dachshunds throughout his childhood. When Kerry and Olivia married, he began a determined campaign to add a dog to their family. After nine years of Kerry’s persistence and hours of conducting her own research, Olivia agreed—and changed her life forever.

Kerry and Olivia found their first dog in 2001, a handsome Schnauzer they named Lincoln (held by Olivia in photo), and Olivia began to appreciate the mutually beneficial, dynamic relationship between humans and dogs. They developed an inseparable bond, as Lincoln became Olivia’s walking partner, loyal companion—and communications advisor.

Olivia recognized Lincoln’s ability to send and receive body language signals. This unique canine skill sparked her interest, as teaching business owners how to be more successful communicators is a foundation of the Straine Consulting philosophy. Olivia and Kerry decided to bring their canine partner to the office—and into the client training programs.

In 2006, Becca (held by Kerry in photo) joined the family. The Schnauzer siblings have traveled across the U.S. and Canada with the Straines, who are so attached to their canine companions that they once returned early from a European vacation to be reunited with them. They love to spend time with their dogs at their home in Carmel, and often host visitors at Carmel Valley’s Cypress Inn, which welcomes furry guests.

Olivia enjoys a leisurely walk with Kerry and the dogs after an action-packed day. “It’s important to take advantage of that moment,” an opportunity to decompress, reflect and spend time together. Lincoln passed away April 30, but the Straines still cherish the company of 10-and-a-half-year-old Becca.

Having Lincoln and Becca has had a deep impact on Olivia. In her practice, she sees people struggle to communicate and be genuine. Pets are naturally authentic communicators and express unconditional love—something humans can learn to do better through a relationship with animals. Olivia says, “Dogs foster communication between humans; they help break down some of the barriers. It’s much easier to walk up and say hello to a stranger who has a furry companion by his or her side.”

It’s fitting that the Straines have partnered with the Sacramento SPCA, sponsoring the Doggy Dash each year between 2009 and 2013. In 2014, they stepped forward as the presenting sponsors of the Paws, Pals & Putts Golf Tournament, and returned as the presenting sponsors of this year’s tournament.

And while having animals wasn’t a prerequisite to Kerry and Olivia’s success, their journey has been enriched and shaped by the animals who have shared the ride. They are passionate about the humane treatment of all living beings, believing that “the higher you go up the leadership ladder, the fewer rights and more responsibility you have.”

The Straines also support the Boys and Girls Clubs of Monterey and the Crocker Art Museum. The Sacramento SPCA deeply appreciates the leadership and support Kerry and Olivia Straine continue to provide as partners to improve the lives of animals and people in Sacramento.
BACK IN 1997, Dr. Kristen Robinson was doing her residency at UC Davis while also volunteering for the Sacramento SPCA. “Because of my medical training, I wasn’t able to own a pet, so volunteering was a way for me to work with animals. I was here when all SPCA operations were in the building where we now receive animals and perform spay/neuter surgeries. Everything was done in that building—adoptions, surrenders, administration, animal care, you name it. There used to be six to eight dogs in a kennel. It was so crowded back then.”

Kristen and her husband, Mike Cleary, adopted their first dog, Titus, together in 2000 and were involved off and on with the Sacramento SPCA over the years. It was when Mike retired in 2011 that he started to volunteer on a regular basis. In just six months, Mike was trained as a dog walker and went on to become a volunteer lead and dog walking trainer for other new volunteers. Over time, former CEO Rick Johnson took notice of Mike’s involvement with the organization and invited him to join the Board of Directors. Today, Mike is the President of the Board and led the search to find a new CEO for the Sacramento SPCA when Rick announced his retirement.

Both of Mike and Kristen’s current dogs are adopted from the SPCA. Greta, a six-year-old hound mix, was most likely a stray when she was brought to the SPCA. “Greta was about one-and-a-half years old when we adopted her, and she still needed to be house-trained and socialized with people, but she was just the sweetest dog.” Pippen is a four-year-old Cavalier King Charles spaniel who was surrendered to the SPCA when his family could no longer take care of him.

Mike told us, “Over the last 16 years we’ve been adopting from the SPCA, we’ve gotten so much joy from these creatures, that when we decided to put together our estate plans, we knew we needed to set aside something for the animals at the SPCA.” Mike added, “The SPCA is really a big part of our life, and as volunteers who spend a lot of time at the shelter, we felt comfortable leaving a legacy for the animals because we’ve been able to see first-hand the work that the SPCA does to save their lives.”

Mike started looking for an estate planner but discovered that with so many attorneys, it was hard to know who to trust. “You’re basically opening up your whole life and sharing all of your personal information with this person, so you need to be careful.” He heard about the seminars that the SPCA hosts with Mark Drobny, Esq., a well-known estate planning attorney in Sacramento who works extensively with nonprofits. Mike and Kristen attended a presentation and met with Mark to put together a plan. They liked how thorough Mark was in covering every aspect of the process, how objective he was with his advice,
that he charged a flat fee instead of hourly, and—of course—his connection to the shelter.

When Mike and Kristen learned about the SPCA Pet Guardian Care program, they knew it was a perfect solution for them and their pets. Mike said, “We travel quite extensively and if something were to happen to us, we know that—if it becomes necessary—the Sacramento SPCA will help make sure our animals are re-homed to a good family.” While Kristen’s parents are listed as the primary guardians of their pets, the SPCA is named as the secondary guardian in the event her parents are unable to care for their pets if or when that time comes.

With both of their own children being four-legged, Kristen and Mike said that by having their estate plan in place, there would be no confusion as to what Mike’s wishes were for his son and three grandchildren, and what their wishes were for their pets and the SPCA. “It’s a good feeling knowing that if something were to happen to us, our families and the Sacramento SPCA, an organization we care deeply about, will be taken care of in the way that each of us intended with no second-guessing. It’s all there in writing.” 🐾

For more information about estate planning or the Sacramento SPCA Pet Guardian Care program, please contact Development Officer Michele Steiner at (916) 504-2870 or msteiner@sspca.org.
“The ideal of calm exists in a sitting cat.” —JULES RENARD

IN HONOR OF
Rick Johnson
Marin Humane Society
Mouldings & Millwork Inc.

IN MEMORY OF
“Tara”
Rick Martinez
Family and Friends

“Tequila”
Marguerite R. Roth
Clyde Ralph Brown
Faith T. Fitzgerald, M.D.
Family and Friends

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Family and Friends

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Theresa Marie Mirarchi Hester
Lesa Gall
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Peggy Payeur
Allison Armstrong
Family and Friends

Memorial and honorarium contributions totaling $250 or more are listed in Heartline. Individual names reflect individual gifts.

THANK YOU
Gifts received
January 2016–May 2016

Kerry and Olivia Straine share a deep love for animals and a dedication to the Sacramento SPCA. Read about the impact their pets have had on their lives and their business, why they sponsored our recent Paws, Pals & Putts Golf Tournament, and more on page 9.

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TWEET US.
HELP US.

Follow the Sacramento SPCA on social media and be among the first to know. Join us today!

JOIN US!

DON’T MISS OUT ON THE FUN! Keep current on the latest SPCA happenings—including special events, Yappy Hours, volunteer orientations and so much more. Follow us on Facebook! Sign up for eTales, our electronic newsletter, by visiting us at sspca.org. (Submit your email address at the bottom of the home page to stay connected.)

SEPTEMBER 10 | 9 A.M.
Estate Planning Seminar

OCTOBER 8
Black & White Fur Ball

NOVEMBER 10–13
Fall Book Sale

DECEMBER 6 | 6 P.M.
Estate Planning Seminar
**HEARTBEATS celebrates Sacramento SPCA alumni!** To have your companion considered for our next issue, email a high-resolution, close-up photo of your SPCA alum to mktgcomm@ssPCA.org. Please include his/her name, age and adoption date. You can even include a little blurb about how much you love your pet! We’ll feature some top photos, based on quality, in Heartbeats.