

Squirrel Appreciation Day, January 21st



Just when you thought we had some down time between New Year's Eve and Valentine's Day, here's something worth putting on your calendar: Monday, January 21. Why? It's Squirrel Appreciation Day. I'm thankful for many things and my list runneth over, but I've never thought squirrels could be counted among them.

Until now. Squirrel Appreciation Day, founded by Christy Hargrove, a wildlife rehabilitator, gives us a moment to reflect on the wonders of the family *Sciuridae*, be they a shade of gray, pale orange, deep reddish-brown or black.

For background, these creatures are at it 24/7. As pure opportunists, they'll break into your attic any time. They'll jump out in front of your tires just to jolt you. They'll leave cracked acorns on your lawn when they think it looks too neat. Have overflowing birdfeeder

problems? Need an attic pilfered? Count on these ubiquitous rodents to show you a thing or two. Watch them skitter, hop, run, jump and fly as they test not only their might and moxie, but also your patience. Some fun squirrel facts for you:

- Squirrels shutdown NASDAQ because they chewed through electrical lines in 1994.
- Rocket J. Squirrel was created in 1959, and was drawn and teamed with a moose to form the Rocky & Bullwinkle cartoon.
- Squirrels use their tails for cushioning if they fall and as a means of communication from a distance.
- They have four front teeth that grow continuously, at a rate of about six inches per year. (Charming.)
- Comedian Rays Stevens released a song called Mississippi Squirrel Revival in 1985.
- Most ground squirrels kiss when they see each other. Mouth-to-nose and mouth-to-mouth. (Eww.)

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Calendar of Events

January 4th – Shelter Vaccination Clinic – 5pm
January 11th – Shelter Vaccination Clinic – 5pm
January 16th – Martin Luther King Day – Quick Clean – 7am – 9am
January 18th – Animal Services Comm. Mtg – 6pm – Co. Admin. Bldg
January 18th – Shelter Vaccination Clinic – 5pm
January 21st – North Beardsley Park Vaccination Clinic – 9am
January 25th – Shelter Vaccination Clinic – 5pm
February 1st – Shelter Vaccination Clinic – 5pm
February 4th – Rexland Acres Vaccination Clinic – 9am



OUR TAKE



ZIP

ZAP

ZIP: WELCOME TO OUR TAKE!! Wow look at the new version of our column and the newsletter Zap!

ZAP: Yes it is pretty nice if you like.....BROWN!

ZIP: Really Zap.....Why are you so down. I mean look at the new logo and how big our column can be now. This is really nice and cool.

ZAP: I don't like change!! Who cares that the logo is that big and red. Then that picture. REALLY JEFF!!! I am so ugly. U G L Y!

ZIP: Your eyes are to die for. You don't have this crazy nose like I do. Look at the honker that I have.

ZAP: Ok....True -- that thing is HUGE!!!

ZIP: Oh thanks for not rubbing it in. Anyways, we are proud of all the space we got from Jeff and we think that our column will be much better and more informative. Even have guests on occasion, special information columns and all kinds of surprises.

ZAP: Can we get Ubu the dog from NBC?

ZIP: That is a possibility. I am sure he would like to speak to our volunteers to help them understand dogs and what makes them man's best friend.

ZAP: And me.....Am I chopped liver??? Man's best friend my tail!

ZIP: Calm down Zap, it's a figure of speech. So in January be prepared, because we are going to have a special guest to start the year off and it will be a woofing good time.

ZAP: Meow Zip.....thanks for being a great partner. I know I can be crabby. Have a great month everyone and be ready! 2017 will be **awesome!**

2017

TRAINING



TIMEOUT

GOT COMPASSION FATIGUE? By Hilary Hager

Before coming to The HSUS over five years ago, I spent about 11 years working in two different shelters in Washington state, where I live. I wore about fifty different hats including managing volunteer programs. Being a “shelter person” wasn’t just a job for me; it was my identity. It was hard, it was often frustrating and even heartbreaking, but it was all I wanted to do.

When I left that job to work here, I really grappled with how I’d be able to re-shape who I was, if I wasn’t going to be a person who worked in a shelter. It took a while to get used to. When I accepted the position, I moved to Maryland for a year to get the work started, in hopes I’d be able to return to Washington to work remotely. I left my husband, our home and our four cats behind and took the dogs across the country (you can imagine how happy my husband was about that!).

It turns out I spent much of my career in sheltering grappling with compassion fatigue. Compassion fatigue isn’t “caring too much and getting tired”; it’s the decline of a person’s ability to feel and care for others that comes with being in mission-driven work. Most of us start in this work with tons of enthusiasm and energy, but in our zeal to save the world, we do too much, we fail to set up good boundaries and good habits, and then our ability to enjoy our work, the people we work with and for, and even our family and friends winds up taking a major dive. Because we’re caregivers, we run around trying to provide care to all the animals, and our coworkers, and pretty much else everyone under the sun ... before ever considering taking care of ourselves.

Animal protection work is really, really hard, and we are the people who choose to do it, to stand up and get busy doing what needs to be done, sometimes with negative impacts on ourselves. I really believe that there’s a way to do this work without it being so misery-making. Of course there is—but the only way to do it is to take care of ourselves, something we’re not really so great about doing.

We love the work and are wholly committed to it, but we also struggle with the same challenges, no matter where we are or what type of organization we’re in. The good news is that you aren’t alone in feeling challenged by the work. The bad news is that it’s hard all over. After countless hours of workshops and conversations, after research and reading (I especially recommend the book *Trauma Stewardship*) and listening to my own heart, here are some things I believe to be true:

1. We are terrible, but we have to remember that we can only thrive at caring for others if we’re taking care of ourselves. That means carving out the time in your life to do what you need to do for yourself. And yes, there’s time for it.
2. We are WAY too hard on ourselves. I ask in my workshops if people feel as though their best is good enough. It’s rare that I have more than one or two people who feel that’s true. This blows me away. Of course your best is good enough. It’s your best!
3. The biggest antidote to compassion fatigue is gratitude. We spend so much time and energy focused on what’s not going well, what isn’t working, and what’s wrong with the world for animals that we forget to spend any time thinking about what’s going perfectly well, what’s good and how people are doing the right thing.

Edited for space from <https://www.animalsheltering.org/blog/got-compassion-fatigue>



Hello! My name is Apryl Brown and I have been a volunteer at the shelter for a little over two years. I usually work with the puppies on Saturdays so I haven't had the chance to meet a lot of the other volunteers but I have truly enjoyed working with those I have met, and look forward to meeting more of you in the future.

A little about myself...I was born and raised in Ridgecrest, CA about 2 hours east of Bakersfield. It was a great place to grow up but there weren't any job opportunities for me after I graduated college so I moved to Bakersfield about 15 years ago after I was hired for a position at the county crime lab. I've only lived two other places in my life, San Luis Obispo for four years during school and Ammendale, Maryland for four months during a training class for work. One of my favorite things to do is travel and experience new places, so I try to take vacations as often as I can. I already have a road trip through the Pacific Northwest with my sister and her family planned for summer of 2017. Some of my other hobbies include reading, visiting family and friends and, of course, hanging out with my dogs, Luna and Archer.

I started volunteering because I wanted to give back to the community. I've always loved animals, especially dogs, so volunteering at the shelter seemed like the perfect opportunity. The day I turned in my application, there was a volunteer orientation with an open spot that same day...it definitely seemed like it was meant to be! Volunteering has brought me a wonderful sense of fulfillment, I love feeling like I am making a difference and helping improve the lives of the dogs until they can be adopted. Everyone I have met at the shelter has been so nice and it is great to see such hard work and dedication from both the staff and volunteers.

If I could live anywhere in the world where would I live?

I would live in Colorado near my twin sister. I don't think I would enjoy the cold weather but I would definitely enjoy being able to spend more time with my sister and nieces.

If you just won the lottery, what is the one thing you would spend money on?

I would pay for all of my friends and family to go on a dream vacation.

If you could have one superpower, what would it be and why?

I would choose the power to teleport, that way I could go wherever I wanted anytime I wanted. Also, I would never be stuck in traffic again!

News & Notes

MILESTONE HOURS (as of December 31 st)*					
Rhonda Montgomery	1830	Rhonda Smith	416	Sarah Abate	256
Deborah Waits	801	Rowena Yong	393	Jean Absher	255
Shawn Fernberg	741	Ben Neal	393	John Harrer	252
Crystal Struckhoff	535	Emily Barclay	362	Stan Cameron	247
Barbara Fowler	499	Teddi Rawles	348	Tabitha Sanchez	228
Barbara Beckstrom	479	Darlene Walker	348	John Pantoja	226
Megan Reyes	469	Nancy Ballinger	273	Linda Edwards	216

*These hours reflect the hours collected since March of 2014, when the program officially started.



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS	DAY
Marisol Acosta	1 st
Karson Gray	2 nd
Destiny Marshall	7 th
Jennifer Gutierrez	10 th
Anthony Ballard	11 th
Paola Reyes	11 th
Lizeth Salinas	15 th
Sarah Estrada	21 st
Jessica Hines	23 rd
Emily Barclay	23 rd
Andrea Guendulain	26 th
Teddi Rawles	29 th
Sunshine Neal	31 st

This section is reserved for special event news for the volunteers and the program.

If you have any announcements other than birthdays like anniversaries, milestones of a personal nature like winning the lottery, graduating from college or births!

This is the place for those things!

There will be announcements also regarding program changes or any other information regarding the program!

MONTHLY HOURS REPORT	DECEMBER
Core Volunteers	984
Employment Prep Program (EPP)	342
Mexican American Opp. Foundation (MAOF)	258
Work Release	501

Coordinator's Corner



I think you have noticed that the volunteer newsletter has expanded and has changed dramatically. I did this at the beginning of 2016 and have decided to do it again. Hopefully if there is anyone who wants to assist with the newsletter by coming up with articles and information that you think needs to be shared, I would love the help. One of my favorite new pieces is the Training Timeout section. You will find stories that are sent to me by ASPCA and other animal welfare groups that have found ways to help not only with volunteers, but staff too.

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Because we have had a recent influx of new volunteers (which is wonderful), I want to remind you that when we are working with or teaching some of the basics of the volunteer program to our newcomers, we need patience. Remember, you also were there once and when you react negatively, the new volunteer gets a bad vibe about the whole program, not just you.

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Along the same lines, you need to make sure that no matter what part of the shelter you are assigned to or what part of the shelter you have been trained in, you NEVER put a "spin" on the procedures you have been taught. When you perform a procedure in your own way or cut corners on a procedure and a new volunteer sees what you're doing, they will do the same thing. It becomes a serious version of the trickle down effect. Once it gets started, it's hard to stop. The procedures were written by the Director of this shelter, Nicholas Cullen. Once they were adopted, the Ambassador team and I added and updated the procedures to protect the smallest of the animals that we have here. When you get these procedures, it is essential that you read them over and over until you understand them. When you have to be retrained multiple times, you are hindering the program and not allowing other volunteers to get trained. Stay the course!

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As we begin the 2017 year, I hope that your holiday season was filled with fun and happy times with family and friends. I hope that your wishes for you and your family come true, your resolutions will be fulfilled and the off year of 2017 will be spectacular!

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Thank you for all that you do for the voiceless. They are the most important creatures!