

## February Is National Prevent a Litter Month



February is National Prevent a Litter Month and a vitally important time at North Shore Animal League America. The League is campaigning to raise public awareness of the necessity of spaying and neutering dogs, cats, puppies and kittens to ward off the vast numbers of litters that arrive at animal shelters each spring.

"When pets are not spayed or neutered, the results can be overwhelming," says Esther Mechler, Founder and Director of SPAY/USA, a program of North Shore Animal League America.

A single unspayed female cat, her mate and all of their offspring, producing two litters per year, with approximately three surviving kittens per litter, adds a dozen kittens to the feline population. While that seems to be a rather benign number, the numbers climb very quickly since the kittens produced can then have another generation of kittens five months later.

Littermates can litter, and soon there are 35 or 40 cats," said Meckler, who adds that each year close to four million unwanted cats and dogs, kittens and pups are euthanized. In addition, there are several million free-roaming, stray and feral cats that multiply unchecked unless responsible feeders and caregivers bring them in to be "fixed." The needless suffering and euthanasia of millions of pets each year could be easily diminished if each family alters their own pets - or strays they feed - before litters are born.

For more information on spaying and neutering and how you can help spread the word about this life-saving practice visit [www.animalleague.org](http://www.animalleague.org) and check for ways to help or get help at [www.spayusa.org](http://www.spayusa.org).

Taken from: <http://www.animalleague.org>

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### **Calendar of Events**

February 1<sup>st</sup> – Shelter Vaccination Clinic – 5pm

February 4<sup>th</sup> – Rexland Acres Vaccination Clinic – 9am

February 8<sup>th</sup> – Shelter Vaccination Clinic – 5pm

February 14<sup>th</sup> – Valentines Day

February 15<sup>th</sup> – Shelter Vaccination Clinic – 5pm

February 15<sup>th</sup> – Animal Services Commission – 6pm

February 20<sup>th</sup> – Presidents Day

February 22<sup>th</sup> – Shelter Vaccination Clinic – 5pm

March 1<sup>st</sup> – Shelter Vaccination Clinic – 5pm



**ZIP**

# OUR TAKE



**ZAP**

ZIP: Howdy Friends, Howdy Zap! What a wonderful Month it is! Love is in the air, Valentine's Day is almost here and we have an awesome subject to talk about.

ZAP: Oh sure rub in Valentines to me.....you know I am still single.

ZIP: Sometimes being single is ok. You don't have to buy flowers or candy for your significant other.

ZAP: Ok anyways we are talking this month about Microchipping! What a wonderful thing! As painful as it is, it sure has helped Zip like 6 times.

ZIP: Yes Zap, your right.....actually 8 times. I get distracted easily and wander off from my human. It just happens.....I try to keep my foc.....oh look at the pretty butterfly.

ZAP: Meow Meow Ha Ha Ha. Microchipping is so essential for just those times like Zip has. When a human wants one of our friends in the shelter it's automatic that they get a microchip. So when you go and adopt, you get all the shots and a microchip as part of the adoption fee.

ZIP: The microchip is in a HUGE needle, that gets pushed into.....oh food....I like food.

ZAP: ZIP FOCUS YOU FOOL!

ZIP: Oh yea.....so this needle is pushed into the scruff of your neck and a chip the size of a grain of rice is inserted into that area.

ZAP: Now we won't lie to you, the pain is about a 6 on a scale of 10. It hurts right away and then the area is sore, so don't be mad when your new forever friend might yelp or cry if you touch the sensitive area.

ZIP: But when someone like myself gets lost and someone else finds you, they can bring you back to the shelter and when you're scanned for a chip and it beeps.....WOOOHOOO! You can be returned

ZAP: I was microchipped late in life so it hurt more than a 6 I think.

ZIP: Drama, Drama, Drama!

ZAP: Well drama is better than being easily distracted, HUH!

ZIP: OOOOH BALL!

ZAP: ZIP! Hey ZIP! Oh man we lost him for sure this time. OK....off we go for another wonderful month of fun. See you in March!

# TRAINING



# TIMEOUT

## Poison Prevention Tips for Puppies and Kittens

New puppy and kitten owners are often like sponges, ready to soak up new information, so taking a few minutes to discuss poison prevention may help prevent toxic exposures in those pets for years to come. When talking with owners about caring for their new pets, just add a few key tidbits about poison prevention.

### Safe House

Pet-proofing the house can go a long way to help prevent pet toxicities. If everyone ensured that their pets couldn't get into the trash or cabinets, the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center reports, there would be thousands fewer poisoned pets every year.

### Crate Training

Likewise, crate training can keep a curious puppy or kitten from destroying things while the owners are gone that they'd rather have around, such as that fancy new pair of shoes – and that toxic vial of prescription drugs.

### Container Dangers

Emphasize to owners that the words “tamper-resistant” don't mean much to a puppy, since they can get into child-proof pill vials without much effort. The same thing goes for those tamper-proof rodenticide containers as well.

### Drop It

Something as simple as teaching a pet “drop it” can be a lifesaver. The APCC gets many calls in which owners see that a pet grabbed a pill and try to grab it, but the pet swallows it too quickly. And the dropped pill problem can be avoided altogether if owners make sure there is a closed door between themselves and their pets every time that they take a pill or refill pill minders.

### Safe Visitors

Visitors always present extra dangers, so counsel new owners to make sure all visitors know what is and is not OK to feed the pet, ensure that if the visitors have any medications with them that they are placed where the pet can't get to them, and that they know where the pet is allowed to go. You can also refer owners to this holiday safety tips page.

### Emergency Procedure

Add to your discussion the procedure your hospital wants to follow if toxic exposure is suspected. Should the owners call the hospital first? Should they call the ASPCA Animal Poison Control Center right off the bat? Make sure they have the appropriate phone numbers programmed into their phone – every second counts in an emergency.

### Pet Safety Kit

Finally, ensure that they have a pet safety kit at home. In addition to being invaluable with medical emergencies, these can be lifesavers for toxic emergencies to help with decontamination that should be done at home. Owners should be encouraged to store it with the family's emergency kit, take both kits on any family trip, and check the kits twice a year for expired items. (A great time to check them is when the time changes!)



My name is Jean Absher. If there's one thing I don't enjoy, it's writing about myself. I will try to keep it interesting.

I was born in Bakersfield, the youngest of five girls. I attended Saint Lawrence Catholic School from 1st. to 8th. Grade and then graduated from Foothill High School. Talk about culture shock! I went on to Bakersfield College and U.C. Santa Barbara, majoring in art. After a less than successful search for meaning in higher education, it was time to get a job. I applied at the Post Office, and, a year later I started my career as a letter carrier. It was a very good job.

I met my husband in Aug. 1986. We were married in Sept. 1987. My son was born Dec. 1988. Unfortunately my husband passed away in 1990. So basically, it's been the two of us since then (plus a few dogs, cats, birds and rats).

After 36 years of wind, heat, rain and, yes, even snow, I retired from delivering mail. I knew I had to stay active, so I increased the hours I spent at Jazzercise (which I love) in order to avoid the call of the couch. The animal shelter was always something I wanted to volunteer for. When I started in June in 2016, I loved doing the dishes (still do). Then Jeff asked me how I felt about cats. I know now the question is, "How do cats feel about YOU?" The staff at the shelter are extremely grateful for the volunteer help. It makes you feel appreciated. When I started I thought it would be about petting puppies and kittens. Now I know it's about finding them homes and keeping them healthy. THEY seem to appreciate THAT.

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

I would like to be in a two bedroom cottage with a yard someplace close to the beach. Santa Maria maybe.

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

See previous answer.

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

Finding the shortest line anywhere; I hate standing in line.

# News & Notes

MILESTONE HOURS (as of December 31 <sup>st</sup> )*					
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.



For those of you who participated in the free hours event with the Gleaners, we want to thank you very much.

While most county agencies participated, Kern County Animal Services helped out 1000 times its amount from 2015.

Approximately 7 cans of food was donated by staff in 2015, but with our free hours event to help the Gleaners, your help generated 389 pounds of donated food.

Thank you to everyone who participated and helped out with this special event.

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS	DAY
Valerie Zermano	1
Maggie Sanchez	10
Ben Neal	20
Kristen Danley	22
Kim Mason	25
Parker Jacobs	26
Tabitha Sanchez	26

MONTHLY HOURS REPORT	January
Core Volunteers	924
Employment Prep Program (EPP)	356
Mexican American Opp. Foundation (MAOF)	192
Work Release	550



# Coordinator's Corner



Happy Valentines day to all you you!

This month our lead story is about spay & neuter, and the National Prevent a Ilter Month. As volunteers I always ask you to be advocates for the animals. To make sure that they are going to a great family, not just a person or a group of people. The next step is to make sure that all animals are spayed and neutered. If we as volunteers do not help stop the over population of unwanted animals, there is NO way we can become a no kill facility. We have to work hard in our own network to do what we can help end this crisis.

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As I write this I plea to the core volunteers that we are still looking for more volunteers for certain times of the day and also certain jobs. Our morning shifts are in dire need of people to help with the morning clean. Puppy, cats and Petco all need help. If you know of people, friends and family, please talk to them about us.

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In the December issue, I announced the latest candidates that would be joining the Ambassador team. An Ambassador is someone that has been seen by other ambassadors, staff and myself going out of their way to make sure the job they are assigned is done the best or better. Other requirements include being at least 18 years old and have accumulated 100 or more hours. One of the candidates that was initially picked has not been able to continue on in her capacity, but here below are two of the candidates that were announced and a two new one that will be assuming the role of Petco/Cat Trainer and pups We want to thank these three individual for taking the next step and taking on a trainer title for the volunteer program.

**Lynette – Cats**



**John – Pet Detective**



**Bonnie – Petco/Cats**



**Chene - Pups**

