Supermodel Jasmine Tookes
uses her voice to help us
See the Light
about Pet Adoption

Read about the amazing beagle rescue inside.

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It has been an exciting summer in so many important ways from Spring Flng to Superheroes, Business of Saving Lives to Beagle Rescue, our 50th anniversary and Remember Me Thursday, we are bringing the plight of orphan pets to the forefront of the public’s minds by sharing the amazing strength, resilience, and compassion found in each of these beautiful animals and why it is our responsibility to provide for their care and well-being. It is not an obligation to ensure their health and safety—it is a privilege. Although the tentative last steps of the heads arriving from Virginia as they felt grass and sunshine for the first time broke our hearts, it also lifted our spirits knowing that these 43 dogs would have the life they deserved: the life that every animal in our care deserves in a loving forever home.

The Spring Flng and PAWMICHINCON helped us raise valuable funds and awareness among our friends, supporters, and our community and we are so grateful for everyone that came out to support these lifesaving efforts. Everyone seemed ready to be back out at major events and enjoy the camaraderie of fellow animal lovers for a good cause. We are so grateful for all our volunteers and sponsors for a successful event.

Our Business of Saving Lives workshop in June brought friends from as far away as Estonia and Kazakhstan, as well as participants from around the country. Our friend, Helka Landsmann, from Estonia came to share the incredible work going on in Ukraine as a result of our fundraising efforts here at the Center. We are honored to continue partnering with others in both Estonia and Poland to help with relief efforts for both individuals with pets and animal shelters in need. The war may have fallen off the front page but those in Ukraine continue to struggle to provide for the safety of the pets and people. Our colleagues, Galina, from Kazakhstan brought the amazing news that our outreach, along with those in many other countries, to the President of her country resulted in long-awaited national animal cruelty laws. We are proud to play a small role in this pivotal change.

We are honored to have a supermodel Jassmine Tookes as this year’s Remember Me Thursday spokesperson and we were delighted to host her and her family on a recent visit where we got to know her this year as the animals. Her support and commitment to our work will bring attention to orphan pets around the globe and we couldn’t be more thankful for her generosity.

As we celebrate 50 years of Helen Woodward Animal Center, I can only reflect with gratitude on the incredible staff, volunteers, and of course donors that make it all possible. Your Center never stops and rarely even slows down even in the “dog days” of summer. Today I want to thank you for all we have accomplished and invite you to join us for the next 50 years for the “future of animal welfare.”

For a more humane world,

Michael M. Arms
President and CEO

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Dear Friends of the Animals,

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Don’t miss a single issue

Every issue of Helen Woodward Animal Center’s The Companion newsletter is filled with stories about the relationship between humans and the animals that we love. Four times each year The Companion keeps you informed about the latest in animal care, the most recent in animal welfare, the very best in animal toys and the very latest in animal news.

Our writers cover a broad spectrum of topics from the most important role of a cat’s purring, a dog’s barking, or a horse’s neigh to the most important role of a bird’s chirping, a frog’s croaking, or a fish’s swimming. From the latest in animal care, the very best in animal toys, and the very latest in animal news.

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It was February when Helen Woodward Animal Center got a call from a local shelter that needed help caring for a dog named Dino. The 11-month-old Shepherd blend suffered from a medical disorder which left him unable to swallow his food normally. While other dogs can eat from a dish, Dino required the time and patience of someone to hold him upright during and after his meals, in order for food to make it to his stomach.

Dino's condition is known as megaeosophagus, a disorder in which the esophagus gets larger and loses the ability to swallow food. Common symptoms include vomiting, regurgitation, and weight loss, which can be life-threatening. Thankfully, the Center ordered him a specially-made Bailey chair, which he could use during meals to support him eating in an upright position.

In the six months since his arrival, Dino made huge strides thanks to expert care. When the day came that he was prepared to go up for adoption, it did not take long for a couple to see his photo on the Center's website and fall in love. Dino's adopters were able to take him home along with his Bailey chair, and offered the time and willingness to keep up his routine. Dino was certainly a staff favorite and every minute they devoted to his needs helped shape his future into what it is now.

Sponsored by: University of California Health System
Over 4,000 beagles at a Virginia mass-breeding facility, which were intended to be sold for lab testing, are getting a chance at freedom and a full life in part thanks to Helen Woodward Animal Center. An undercover investigation at the breeding facility revealed inhumane animal treatment, such as inadequate veterinary care and insufficient food. On July 21, as the Department of Justice began the process of shutting the facility down, the first 432 beagles were removed with some making their way to the West Coast. Helen Woodward Animal Center was honored to assist as 43 of these beagles arrived at the Center for medical checks before heading to foster homes in preparation for adoption.

Animal rescue organizations from California, Wyoming, and Texas were among the first to open their doors to the 4,000 canines. Helen Woodward Animal Center was one of just two California organizations to be a part of the first stage of this incredible life-saving mission. “This has been a challenging year for many shelters and we know that trying to find organizations that have the room for such a large number of canines is tough” stated Helen Woodward Animal Center acting Adoption Services Director Lallith Thompson. “We are grateful to have such an extraordinary group of foster families that can help us save these lives. These dogs really need love and human kindness to show them all of the wonderful things a normal dog’s life should provide.”

Because of the huge intake, the Center was in need of many supplies to send off with foster families including x-pens, toys, bowls, and leashes. A call for help went out to the community, and the community stepped up in a huge way by purchasing hundreds of items from the Center’s Amazon Wish List and by raising nearly $40,000 to help with the beagle rescue.

News of their story touched the hearts of animal-lovers across the globe. If there is a light at the end of this dark tunnel, it is the overwhelming love that poured into Helen Woodward Animal Center via emails, phone calls, donations, and adoption inquiries. As these deserving dogs began to heal and discover life beyond a kennel, messages came in from across the United States, and even from far-off locations such as Canada and Australia.

“We are amazed and so touched by the response and the donations,” stated Helen Woodward Animal Center VP of Development Renee Resko. “These beagles are just some of many animals we’ve been honored to help this year. I think the sheer number of these beagles has really been eye-opening to so many people and has helped remind the public how many lives are in need of rescue.”

Today, beagles under the Center's care are slowly but surely being matched with their perfect forever families. Before becoming available for adoption, the Center ensures that all of their medical needs are met. Each of the #3 beagles needed a spay or neuter surgery, and due to the large number of litters many of the females had, recovery time took longer than normal. Plus, all of the beagles needed dental treatment due to the unhealthy diets they had survived on over the last many years. Fortunately, while preparing for adoption, they each received TLC in their foster homes.

To reduce stress caused by being exposed to crowds, the Center took a gentle approach to adoption meet-and-greets. Instead of being inundated by hundreds of people hoping to meet them, potential adopters were asked to request an appointment and fill out a special application to determine their compatibility with a rescue beagle.

One by one, each beagle is moving onto bigger and brighter futures with their forever families. Before coming to the Center, they had never been on grass or even been given a toy. Today, with thanks to the Center and all who support us, they are learning the meaning of love.
Animals have 100% impacted my life for the better. Not only do they teach you so many valuable life lessons, but they also just provide you with so much love and happiness. I spend so much time with my animals and really value the relationship we have with one another.

**What drew you to Helen Woodward Animal Center?**

My mom actually told me about the Center. She had nothing but shining reviews and I knew I was going to have to experience it for myself. Almost immediately we planned a trip for all of us to go. It was such an amazing experience - the Center is beautiful and the staff was incredible and extremely informative, not to mention all the cute animals we got to see! I had the best day and I can’t wait till my next trip back.

**Why do you think Remember Me Thursday provides an important message?**

Pet adoption is something that is near and dear to my heart, but a lot of people may not have the knowledge or information on pet adoption. Remember Me Thursday provides the perfect opportunity to learn and open and hopefully change peoples minds who have once never open to the idea of adoption.

**What do you plan to do to get the word out about Remember Me Thursday?**

I am so excited to be able to use my voice and platform to spread the word about this campaign. I read that since starting in 2013, Remember Me Thursday has made more than 2 billion impressions on social media – that’s incredible! I loved learning about it and I really hope that I can help continue to spread the word to others who do not know about Remember Me Thursday and encourage them to adopt for their next family member!

**How do you think a campaign like Remember Me Thursday can impact pet adoption?**

I am passionate about this movement. I believe that a campaign like Remember Me Thursday can impact pet adoption tremendously. Knowledge is power and a campaign like this provides valuable information to people on the realities and benefits of adoption.

**Have you always been an animal lover?**

Yes! Ever since I can remember I was always drawn to animals. I grew up surrounded by animals including cats, rats & turtles just to name a few! In 2016, Jasmine joined forces with best friend and fellow model Josephine to create JOJA - a community where the two share their wellness, health routines, and active lifestyle, and just recently this year began selling their own line of activewear under the same name.

**What was your first pet?**

My first pet was a cat named Neko, who definitely made an impact on my life.

**What pets does your family currently have?**

We currently have two! Rogue is a little frenchie, and Rajah is a german shepherd husky mix. Rogue was my first dog I got on my own around ten years ago and she has been by my side ever since. Rajah was rescued when she was a puppy almost two years ago and now we couldn't imagine life without her.

**Superheroes Rescue... and have a great time with Cosplay for a Cause at PAWMICON!**

This year was our first year back in person with PAWMICON after COVID and we were so happy to be at Town and Country Resort where over 200 animal lovers from all over San Diego joined us with their furry friends in their “cosplay” best to support pet adoption and raise awareness about being a hero for rescued pets. There were 9 categories for the costume contest that included “Dynamic Duo”, “Pop Culture” and others with the winners including characters from Little Mermaid, The Princess and the Frog, Hulk, and Wonder Woman to name a few. The trivia contests put everyone’s “Comic Con” culture knowledge to the test and a good time was enjoyed by everyone. A virtual scavenger hunt rounded out the day’s unique activities. Special thanks to sponsors, Blue Buffalo and Fetch by the Dodo.

**Animal-loving Flimg goers celebrate the “Golden Age of Hollywood”**

The star-studded evening began with Helen Woodward Animal Center’s guests being greeted by Charlie Chaplin and Marilyn Monroe while a champagne girl provided entertainment and bubbles. Once inside the guests enjoyed puppy kisses by some of the Center’s most eligible adoptables along with delicious appetizers and a complimentary full bar and ice huge with signature drinks. The silent and live auctions ranged from jeweled treasures to exotic trips and culminated with special donation drives to support Adoptions, both emergency medical and transfer trips to save the lives of pets in overcrowded shelters around the country. Special thanks to Jamie Carr and Mary Czuten for chairing this year’s gala and to Jim Hooker and Portia Metras of Coldwell Banker for being our presenting sponsor. We would also like to thank Whittier Trust and our incredibly generous paddle raise munchers – Wendy McWethy, Rose Thiesens, Rose Johanson, Brenda and Dave Bickey, and Katie and Ken Shull. Along with over 300 guests and the incredible local restaurants that donated every delicious bite, you helped us to raise over $460,000 for pets in need.
Defending the Defenseless
How Center Funds are Helping Ukraine

In the months since Russia launched a full-scale attack in Ukraine on February 24, 2022, at least 12 million Ukrainians have fled their homes to escape the violence. Some made it out alive with their beloved pets, while others were separated during the chaos, and still many shelter animals are in desperate need of saving.

By banding together with international animal welfare partners, and with the help of our local community, Helen Woodward Animal Center has been able to send over $730,000 in aid to rescue and rehabilitate Ukrainian pets in crisis. Together with UAnimals, Estonia Society for Animal Welfare, and the Polish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, the Center is making a difference for defenseless animals by funding care for those who are homeless and critically hurt.

Amid the distraction, our partners in Ukraine have not turned away, but have rushed in to save the lives of stranded and injured pets. It is because of the bravery of people like Karina Daniszewska Stoska from the Polish Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals that this is possible. Backed by the Center, she travels tirelessly into Ukraine to bring food and medicine to animals, and on her way back she transports injured and starved animals to safety. During one of her most recent trips, she rescued a cat named Lucky who had been found with a gash/wound to the head and spine. Funds raised by the Center helped Lucky receive life-saving surgery to remove the bullet and heal her spine. A dog named Hope was also found with a broken spine, and received an operation and special wheelchair to help him walk again.

Meanwhile, desperately-needed shipments of food and medical supplies are being distributed by UAnimals to hard-hit areas in Ukraine where animals are being cared for as their guardians serve to the army or are being treated for injuries themselves. On July 5, a five-ton shipment of food and supplies was delivered to a shelter in Kryvyi Rih for distribution among shelters in low-supply across the region. It included veterinary medicine which arrived just in time, because on the same day three kittens arrived needing treatment.

Center funds are now being used to buy a new transport van for Happy Paws in Ukraine, a partner of the Estonian Society for the Protection of Animals. It will be used to deliver humanitarian aid to more than 60 shelters in war zones and to evacuate suffering animals in need of veterinary attention. It is because of your help, and that of our brave partners in Ukraine, that we are able to take action and save innocent lives.
A Legacy of Love and Healing of Former Therapy Dog Inducted into California Animal Hall of Fame

A former Helen Woodward Animal Center therapy dog was inducted into the California Animal Hall of Fame this year. Balonee spent thousands of hours comforting hospital patients, veterans, homeless families and more during his time in the Center’s Pet Encounter Therapy program. Center staff first met Balonee when he was abandoned in the parking lot back in 2016. He was 11-years-old, had been neglected and needed a lot of care.

At the time, he was being fostered by our Pet Encounter Therapy Manager Robin Cohen – who ended up adopting him. Robin saw his potential to be an incredible therapy dog – and that he was. From April 2016 to March 2020, Balonee took part in 795 Pet Encounter Therapy visits across San Diego County – bringing comfort to people of all ages. Even during the pandemic, Balonee continued to spread joy through Zoom, window visits and Pen Pal letters with help from Robin. He spent the final years of his life helping thousands of people overcome their hardships by offering up his unconditional love before passing at the age of 16.

“Although Balonee passed away at the end of 2020, the countless hours he spent nurturing thousands of clients encapsulates the healing power and beauty of the human-animal bond,” said Nicole Campos of the California Veterinary Medical Foundation.

Balonee leaves behind a legacy of love, loyalty and healing and we want to thank the California Veterinary Medical Association (CVMA) for honoring him.