



JON WEIAND/SENTINEL

Volunteers with the Center for Animal Protection and Education, or CAPE, meet with a group of rescued dogs at the Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter in Live Oak on Wednesday.

CAPE celebrates 20 years

Animal welfare

Center rescues all types of animals, educates the public

By JOHN SAMMON

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SANTA CRUZ — The Center for Animal Protection and Education, in marking its 20th anniversary, called for people to respect the right of all animals to live pain-free and with dignity.

"We are a voice," said center director J.P. Novic. "I think every person needs to ask themselves, am I being complicit in some way in the suffering of animals? We want to bring ethical and moral issues of humane treatment for all animals to the forefront."

Novic, 57, a Ben Lomond resident, and 30 volunteers provide a variety of services including rescue, sanctuary and foster care for homeless animals. The center also educates adults and children about the need to end animal suffering, and to give homeless animals a second chance at life.

The group formed in 1992.

"I was an occupational therapist, but my real love has always been animals," Novic said. "In the 1980s I worked for both the Palo Alto and Peninsula Humane Societies."

Novic said a pivotal moment came when she was appointed as a public member on an animal



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J.P. Novic, center, greets a rescued dog as volunteers from the Center for Animal Protection and Education gather at the Santa Cruz County Animal Shelter on Wednesday.

use committee acting as a representative for dogs, cats, primates, pigs, even including laboratory rodents. She said she saw some terrible abuses.

"Dogs, cats and companion animals who

live in our homes have some legal protections, but farm and laboratory animals used for food or

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research often have none," she said. "What is a felony to do to one animal is sometimes legal to do to another."

Center volunteers take animals from local shelters upon request, place them into foster homes, work to rehabilitate them and locate permanent homes.

Novic said the center depends on the kindness of the public to support its operations.

"We're advocates for all animal species," she said. "We support spay and

neutering of companion animals and most of the animals we rescue have

AT A GLANCE

THE CENTER FOR ANIMAL PROTECTION AND EDUCATION

GOAL: Advocates on behalf of all animals species. Rescues homeless animals, nurses them back to health, and finds homes for them.

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special needs. We rescue dogs and some farm animals."

Novic said the center was involved in a rescue in Turlock where 50,000 hens were abandoned.

"A turkey we rescued named Helen has visited classroom where children get a chance to interact with her," she said. "It gives the children a chance to look an animal in the eyes and it opens up their hearts."

Novic praised the work of local shelters.

"When they need help with an animal, they call us," she said. "To date we've placed over 1,900 animals."

The center funds the necessary vet-

erinary bills for each animal.

"One time we had a dog named Sadie, a little terrier, who had third-degree burns over most of her body," Novic said. "She had no hair. We took her in, nursed her back to health and found her a new home."

Novic said the center's work has been made possible because of the generosity of the people of Santa Cruz County.

"I think it's wonderful to work in a community with so many advocates for animals," she said. "It's imperative that we recognize that animals are conscious beings who feel joy, fear, pain and grief, and that we treat each of them with respect and kindness."