

GOODBYE AFTER 30 YEARS

# Adobe Animal Hospital to close Saturday

Recession has pet owners looking to cut vaccination costs

By JONDI GUMZ

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SANTA CRUZ — Adobe Animal Hospital will close its doors Saturday after more than 30 years in business, bidding farewell to more than 28,000 patients over the years.

The shutdown will affect not only pet owners, but nonprofits such as Project Purr and Animal Shelter Relief that relied on Adobe to provide low-cost medical care for rescued animals.

The decision to go out of business is related

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to the recession, said receptionist Lara Becker, one of 14 employees who will be out of a job.

Lisa Carter of the Santa Cruz SPCA believes other veterinarians are "on the edge" as pet owners trying to cut vaccination costs turn to pet stores. This month, Pet Pals in Soquel, Hansen Feed in Watsonville and Boulder Creek Feed and Pet offered Saturday vaccine clinics.

"People on unemployment can't afford care. I get calls every day from people asking for help," said Carter. "Our pet food bank is busier than ever. We have more dogs because of foreclosure. It's really impacting horses because they are costly to care for."

Employees at Adobe Animal Hospital got the bad news Monday, according to pet owner Nancy Allen, who stopped in to buy special food for her cat. She took her pet's records with her after seeing a notice about the

impending shutdown.

Dr. Craig Evans, the owner of Adobe Animal Hospital, was busy with patients Thursday morning and not available to comment.

According to the veterinary clinic's Web site, Evans has been associated with Adobe Animal Hospital since high school, joined the staff as a doctor in 1991, and realized his dream of owning the clinic in July 2006.

Other veterinarians on staff are Dr. Molly Tacka-

bury, who specializes in diabetic pets, and Dr. Kristin Wallace, who specializes in large animals.

Becker said the veterinarians plan to stay in the community, with Wallace switching to a mobile operation.

For Becker, who has been with the clinic for nine months, it's another recession-related pink slip. She lost a job last June due to school budget cuts.

"Adobe has been considered one of the best in the

county," said Kelly Luker of Little Pup Lodge, a boarding service in Soquel, crediting Adobe staff with donating thousands of dollars in free care to nonprofits that rescue neglected cats and dogs.

Project Purr's mission is to prevent the killing of healthy feral cats with a "trap-neuter-return" program, while Animal Shelter Relief provides adoption services to save the lives of dogs and cats left at shelters.

Adobe's shutdown will leave only one clinic discounting services for feral cats to Project Purr. That is Soquel Creek Animal Hospital, which began the partnership last year.

"It can be a \$350 endeavor," said clinic office manager Taci Canton.

First there's a test for feline leukemia and AIDS, \$50. If that's negative, then there's the spay, which can be \$222 if the cat is in heat, \$96 for neutering, two vaccines, \$50, and tagging the cat's ear.

"This is the time (to get it done)," Canton said. "It's spring and everyone's feeling frisky."

## ADOBE ANIMAL HOSPITAL

**WHERE:** 1600 Soquel Drive, Santa Cruz

**HOURS:** 7:30 a.m. to 6 p.m. Friday and 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. Saturday, which is the last day of operation.

**INFORMATION:** 475-6365

### RESOURCES

If you want information about low-cost spay or neuter service, three local nonprofits can help.

**FRIENDS OF WATSONVILLE ANIMAL SHELTER:** <http://www.fowas.org/spay%20neuter%20program.htm>. \$40 per animal. For low-income residents of Watsonville and Freedom.

**FRIENDS OF SANTA CRUZ COUNTY ANIMALS:** [www.foscca.org/spay.html](http://www.foscca.org/spay.html). Free to low-income county residents living outside Watsonville.

**PROJECT PURR:** [www.projectpurr.org/spayneuter.htm](http://www.projectpurr.org/spayneuter.htm). Feral cats only, 8-9 a.m. Monday through Friday.