



Dan Coyro/Sentinel

A mother and her five pups peer out from their new cage at the Animal Services complex in Live Oak.

Animals get a new shelter in Live Oak

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LIVE OAK — Animal Services staff members and volunteers tossed stuffed toys into dog kennels and relocated exceptionally large cats to more spacious accommodations Thursday, all part of working out the kinks at the county's new animal shelter.

Thursday was the first day animals inhabited the 16,100-square-foot facility at the corner of Seventh Avenue and Rodriguez Street.

In three hours, staff and volunteers moved 148 dogs, cats and rabbits into the state-of-the-art building tucked into the quiet, residential neighborhood.

The animals adjusted quickly to their new surroundings. Cats curled into the cozy nooks of their "cat condos." Outside, five puppies in a kennel with their mother bounced playfully in the morning sunshine.

Although the Live Oak site was the home of the county's animal shelter for several decades, it's been 5½ years since a shelter has operated there.



Dan Coyro/Sentinel

Volunteers get things squared away in the cat quarters of the newly remodeled Animal Services complex in Live Oak.

Animal Services has been housed in Scotts Valley since 2003, when the county took over animal control duties from the

SPCA and determined the old SPCA shelter on Seventh Avenue needed to be renovated. When upgrades proved too com-

plex, plans to construct a new facility were launched.



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The new Animal Services shelter opens today at the corner of Seventh Avenue and Rodriguez Street in Live Oak.

Shelter

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It's been a long process, but staff and volunteers agree the new open, bright, airy facility was worth waiting for.

"The animals deserve this and the staff deserve this," said Kay Mackenzie, a volunteer for the past seven years. "I'm so happy for them."

"It's major improvement," said Henry Brzezinski, the Animal Services general manager. "It's a great environment for the animals, for both space and health."

The new shelter is about 25 percent larger than the temporary Scotts Valley facility. Staff said the new building — with its soft yellow walls and cornflower blue and mint green accents — feels even bigger because the space is better-designed and more usable.

For example, the white cat condos that house the shelter's feline contingent include storage space below the cats' living area. Same goes for the rabbit pens, which look like giant terrariums.

The new facility also features solar panels, natural lighting, animal quarantine areas, 54 indoor and outdoor dog kennels, wireless Internet and countless areas for animals and potential pet owners to get acquainted.

There are even sound buffers to muffle the yapping and barking that nearby residents may hear.

"This is designed to be a good neighbor," said Susan Pearlman, who was project manager



Dan Coyro/Sentinel

Animal Shelter volunteer Ann Miya moves Clyde the cat into his new 'cat condo' Thursday as Santa Cruz County's Animal Services moved into their remodeled complex at Seventh Avenue and Rodriguez Street.

New Animal Shelter

LOCATED: Corner of Seventh Avenue and Rodriguez Street in Live Oak.

OPEN: Today. The grand opening and ribbon-cutting ceremony will be Oct. 25.

HOURS: 10 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday. Animals are available for viewing from 12:30-5:30 p.m.

INFORMATION: Call county Animal Services at 454-7203 or visit www.scanimalservices.us.

animal shelter tucks in nicely to the area, which is just off Highway 1 and Soquel Avenue. The new facility is also ideal because of its Mid-County location.

"I think people will come in more often," he said.

Also, the \$5.8 million project came in under budget and opened less than a year after construction crews broke ground, Pearlman said.

"I think everybody is going to think it's really worth it," she said.

The shelter opens at 10 a.m. today.

for the construction of the shelter.

Brzezinski said he thinks the

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