

# Moving in to their new digs



Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

ABOVE: These puppies and their mother (left) take over a new pen at the Santa Cruz County Animal Services shelter on the opening day of the new location at 2200 Seventh Ave. in Live Oak. BELOW: Volunteer Maureen Bird hoists a cat from a box into a new pen.

## Animal Shelter Santa Cruz County Animal Services opens today at Live Oak location

By TODD GUILD

OF THE REGISTER-PAJARONIAN

Teams of workers were bustling through the gleaming halls of the new Santa Cruz County Animal Services building Thursday, putting the finishing touches on the new facility that opens today.

Moving boxes sat in neat piles, waiting to be emptied, while electricians finished small wiring projects and workers readied the offices for today's official opening. The faint echoes of barking dogs reverberated down the hallways as teams of carpenters and shelter workers bustled through, putting the finishing touches on the building.

Despite the few rough edges, the building was ready for business, and 100 cats, 37 dogs, seven rabbits and four chickens and roosters had already made themselves at home.

"I'm so excited," said animal care technician Sarah Goldberg, who has been working with Animal Services for almost one year. "This place was built for the animals. I definitely believe the animals are going to be happier."

Goldberg was referring to the state-of-the-art cages for cats and the numerous large kennel areas for dogs. The new enclosures are expected to improve life in the



shelter, and are thought to be a vast improvement from the previous Scotts Valley shelter.

The center is dominated by several windows, and sunlight streams into every nook. In the kennel area, dogs can choose between indoor and outdoor sections, and

cats have room to socialize, or simply be by themselves.

Shelter officials say the improvements will reduce stress, and increase the overall health of the animals.

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# ANIMALS

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"It goes beyond the aesthetics," shelter manager Staycee Dains said. "It's lifesaving. The animals will be healthier and more adoptable."

The building has a separate room for "exotic" animals such as reptiles and small rodents, and several "getting to know you" rooms for prospective adoptions. In addition, there are medical treatment rooms, a staff training room, an office for animal control officers and one for volunteers.

The shelter boasts about 1,000 square feet more than the Scotts Valley site, but the new facility has several outdoor play areas for dogs, and a room full of state-of-the-art cages for cats.

"We made this building more

of a community center," general manager Henry Brzezinski said.

The project was funded through the Santa Cruz County Redevelopment Agency under their community facilities program, which also funded the Simpkins Family Swim Center and the Live Oak Library, said Susan Pearlman, the project manager for the building.

"I think it's a win-win for the

neighborhood," Pearlman said.

"The staff is very excited to be in the new facility," Brzezinski said. "I think from an operational standpoint it will allow us to serve the public in a greater manner, make it easier to care for the animals, and make them healthier."

The county bought the land from the SPCA in 2004, with plans to remodel the building.

Closer inspection revealed that too many repairs were needed, and the county decided to raze the building and begin anew. Construction began on Dec. 23.

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*The Santa Cruz County Animal Services shelter will open today at 10 a.m. at 2200 Seventh Ave. in Live Oak. For information, call 454-7303 or visit [www.scanimalservices.us](http://www.scanimalservices.us).*



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**A mover lugs a huge box of goods down a ramp to the new animal shelter in Live Oak.**