



#### FOUR THINGS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT THE FOHG:

- The nonprofit organization, founded in 1955, has many programs that can help pet owners and educate the public about the treatment of animals.
- The group needs your help to find a new permanent animal sanctuary.
- SPCA organizers can always use friendly volunteers to assist them.
- A temporary shelter is underway at 2685 Chanticleer Avenue, across from Grey Bears.

to repair the structure, re-house the animals for adoption, and get things back on track. According to Carter, it has been an ongoing process, but there is a silver lining to it all.

"The new building is larger," Carter says, "allowing the SPCA to rescue more animals from more shelters. We're in the process of putting fencing up, and it looks 100 percent better than when we moved in. The animals have yards and a half-acre playground in the back. I think overall, the animals are served better right now."

And serving the animals is what it's all about. The Santa Cruz branch of the SPCA, which was founded in 1938, relies completely on donations and on the generosity of contributors. And although the group does not receive any federal, state, or local government funding, that doesn't stop the needy pets from coming in, and it doesn't stop the SPCA from helping out.

Aside from adoption and seeking new homes for abandoned animals, SPCA programs include a humane education program, which helps to teach the community about compassion toward animals; a pet loss support group, which assists in letting owners grieve and heal after the loss of a loved pet; a special animals for special people program, which focuses on companion animals that assist people to cope with physical or emotional hardship; low-cost spaying and neutering, a fund that aids economically challenged individuals so they can own pets; and the pet food bank, which distributes over 7,000 pounds of pet food each month to financially challenged and senior pet owners.

After the devastating fire caused more than \$15,000 in damage, SPCA organizers are looking for a permanent location, and would like to purchase the temporary Chanticleer site for use as a permanent adoption center, since it is zoned properly.

"We don't want a shelter, we want a sanctuary here," Carter says. And to build that sanctuary, the SPCA needs help from local animal lovers.

## A Sanctuary, Not a Shelter

Even in the face of disaster, the Santa Cruz SPCA is a haven for needy critters | BY HANS FEUERSINGER

*Animal Shelter*

When an electrical fire gutted their Seventh Avenue headquarters on the night of March 20, things looked grim for the Santa Cruz chapter of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (SPCA). Not only were their offices gutted, so was the animal adoption center, which houses dozens of homeless critters. Thankfully, all 22 of the pets, which included dogs, cats, rabbits and a pig named Stuart, weathered the blaze unharmed. But it left the nonprofit organization and its furry friends without a home.

"The fire has been a major challenge," says SPCA Executive Director, Lisa Carter. "It was completely unexpected and shocking, but it was good to see that the entire community came to support us. Even the night of the fire, there were 50 supporters of the SPCA there. It was a very scary night, but as it turned out, everyone came together. One of the fire workers fell in love with Stuart the pig!"

SPCA volunteers have had to put significant time and effort into bringing the temporary Chanticleer Avenue adoption center up to snuff. Workers have had

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To volunteer your time at the SPCA, or to adopt one of the many loving animals looking for a home, visit [SantaCruzSPCA.org](http://SantaCruzSPCA.org), or call 465-5000. Send comments on this article to [letters@gtweekly.com](mailto:letters@gtweekly.com) or visit [gtweekly.com](http://gtweekly.com).