

CHANGING LIVES THROUGH RESPONSIBILITY.



# NEWS



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# Community News



## More Hope for San Antonio Strays

**Thousands of dogs and cats met their final days at this once catch-and-kill facility located in Brackenridge Park. For more than fifty years, under the umbrella of the Metropolitan Health District, lethal gas was used to do away with San Antonio's unwanted strays. Now, it serves as a state-of-the-art animal adoption center.**

Before November of 2004, this facility was one of San Antonio's best kept secrets. There was no veterinary care provided, no organized rescue groups to intervene, nor social media campaigns. Finally, the controversial article, "Death by the Pound," made the front page of Sunday's paper. This news rocked citizens in our city and started a public outcry. Much needed reform ensued. City government, civic leaders, new ACS leadership, and devoted animal lovers worked hand in hand to develop a strategic plan which now saves more than 75% of the animals entering the doors of Animal Care Services. It is a far cry from the old days where the animals that entered ACS never stood a chance of leaving.

The spacious and inviting center was made possible through city funding and a one million dollar gift on behalf of Petco. Named in honor of its former Executive Director, Paul Jolly, the facility took two years to construct. Its doors opened in late October under the care of San Antonio Pets Alive (SAPA). It is estimated that more than 3,000 dogs and cats will be adopted from the center annually.

Highlights of the grounds include scenic walking trails, open pavilions for training, and an innovative cattery. Here potential adopters interact with pets in a more intimate setting. The campus also hosts a low-cost spay/neuter clinic, Pet Shotz, where surgery and vaccines are provided at a reduced fee for the general public. The clinic is on track to sterilize 18,000 dogs/cats over the next three years. More than 55,500 spays/neuters were provided by animal welfare agencies in 2012 and this number is expected to increase by several thousand in 2013. What a remarkable achievement! SNIPSA sends our warmest thanks to the many key players responsible for bringing San Antonio closer to No-Kill.

**Success in 2013**  
**Adoptions: 653 dogs/cats**  
**Big Fix spay/neuter surgeries: 1,320**



Photos by Marie Langmore

## Big Fixin' Our Furry Friends

SNIPSA has been chipping away at pet overpopulation with its Big Fix Clinics for over four years. With 28 Big Fixes under our belt and more than 5,500 free spay/neuter surgeries provided for targeted areas of San Antonio, SNIPSA continues its grassroots mission of saving lives. Six times a year, an army of dedicated volunteers and seasoned staff organize a fully functional MASH style hospital in area community centers or neighborhood churches. The goal is simple – to make ourselves available on a Saturday within walking distance so pet owners have the opportunity to do what is right for their animals. Going door to door distributing flyers,

volunteers talk to pet owners about the benefits of spay/neuter. Having a sterilized pet is mandated by city ordinance unless a pet owner wants to apply for a breeding permit. Tougher legislation was part of the 2006 strategic plan to bring San Antonio to the forefront of No-Kill. We are inching closer to our goal as witnessed with a 47% decrease in animals being impounded to ACS in the same neighborhood that SNIPSA provided more than 1,000 free surgeries in a two-year time span. Who would have predicted the impact these clinics would provide to our neighborhoods – thousands of lives saved through thousands of hours worked!



## VOLUNTEERS

### The Nuts & Bolts of Getting the Job Done

Volunteer Power – we cannot emphasize its importance! Since SNIPSA opened its doors in 2006, volunteers have served as the backbone of our outreach. What started as one part-time employee in the upstairs playroom of the founder's home has evolved into a staff of five with a real upbeat office. The phone used to ring just a few times a week and now rings several times an hour. Not to mention the countless email requests and daily pleas we filter from area shelters needing help with stray animals. Whether it is transporting dogs/cats from area shelters, filing paperwork, answering the phone, bathing a dog, fostering countless rescues, or working a Big Fix – the tasks are endless. Thank you, steadfast supporters – even the smallest jobs are appreciated. We have some of the best helping hands in San Antonio!

## Special Thanks

Your support and belief in our mission has enabled SNIPSA to rescue and re-home more than 5,500 animals.

- Acres North Animal Hospital
- Amy McNutt Charitable Trust/ Courtney Walker
- Austin Highway Animal Hospital
- The Barking Lot
- Branding Works
- Dr. Stephanie Lisciandro
- George, Kymberly, & Blake Rapier Family Trust
- Kym's Kids
- Langmore Photography
- Lily's Cookies
- The Lunch Mamas
- Olmos Park Animal Hospital
- Olmos Park Wash & Fold
- Pearl Farmers Market
- PetSmart Charities
- The Rachel & Ben Vaughan Foundation
- San Antonio Area Foundation
- San Antonio Junior League
- Slone + Company Advertising
- Southern Merchandise and Distribution
- South Texas Veterinary Specialists
- Spring Branch Veterinary Hospital
- Studio Benton Photography
- US Signs
- Veterinary Imaging Center
- Whole Earth Provision



# Saving Lives.

## Pilots N Paws Gives Sanford Wings to Fly

To most of you, A263923 has no significance, but at San Antonio's ACS this represents an ID number assigned to every animal entering its system. Sanford was one of the lucky ones – picked up by ACS to be given another chance. His owner passed away leaving him chained in a yard and covered in mange. Following protocol, he sat at ACS waiting for next of kin to reclaim him. Days turned into weeks and no one came forward. SNIPSA learned of his plight and made arrangements to secure a foster home. It was heartbreaking to watch Sanford initially. He was painfully shy and spent the first few days hiding in the brush trying to be invisible. He had never experienced the freedom of living off of a chain. With time, TLC, and many delicious “chewies,” Sanford's soul emerged.

Then the magic happened. An applicant from the Midwest was interested. But how to get him across the country without using a commercial carrier? An Internet search led us to Pilots N Paws.

Pilots N Paws is an online volunteer organization where general aviation pilots connect with rescue volunteers to transport animals in need to safe havens. The non-profit was formed in 2008 and was granted the status of Humanitarian Flights where pilots use portions of their flight expenses as a tax-deductible donation. With over 3,000 pilots, Pilots N Paws has assisted in re-homing of several



Sanford photo by Alana Donovan.

● Sanford prepares for take off.

thousand pets. It is an ingenious idea to serve areas of our country with a deficit of rescue animals. Shelters in the Northeast sit empty while residents wait to bring an in-need pet into their homes. Depending on the logistics of travel, dogs reach their destination via a series of flights and volunteer pilots. Sanford flew two legs with two different pilots maneuvering World Series air traffic. What an amazing journey for this once-Texas boy!

To learn more, visit [www.pilotsnpaws.org](http://www.pilotsnpaws.org). Kudos to an incredible organization that has saved the lives of countless companions.

## The Gift of Life

Blockwalking before a Big Fix is always an adventure, and July's Big Fix was no different. Tied to a dog house lay a dying dog, missing most of his hair and so anemic he could barely raise his head.

The volunteer knew that, without intervention, he would be dead in a matter of hours. She returned later that night hoping he still may be alive, but knowing that either humane euthanasia or a blood transfusion was in order. Thankfully, Grito was still alive – his chest rising with each rapid breath. He was hoisted over a fence and loaded in a car, his skin reeking of severe mange. There was brief discussion about what to do between husband and wife and sure enough the non-sensible wife won out. He had suffered far too much in his short life and deserved a chance. Now the difficult part – where would we get a dog to donate blood at midnight?

Luckily, a pit bull mix was being fostered at the veterinarian's house and was a perfect



blood donor candidate. Blood was collected from one dog and infused into another. Within a half hour, Grito lifted his head. His tongue turned from white to a faint pink. He opened his eyes and responded to his name. It was remarkable watching him return to life over the next several hours. He was in the advanced stages of Ehrlichia causing spontaneous bleeding due to low platelets. This disease is treatable and Grito stood a promising chance of making a full recovery. The next day, Grito could stand and within a few days he could run. He was bathed and treated for mange. Within 2 weeks, he started to resemble a German Wirehaired Pointer.

How did a noble dog like Grito end up in this condition? Unfortunately, this is the plight of so many of our homeless animals – discarded for newer dogs, abandoned in a move or purchased for hunting purposes with no long-term plan. Unlike most, Grito had a happy ending. Spotted on Facebook by a couple who held this breed in high regard, he was adopted within a few months. He is now king of the household and best buds with another German Shorthaired.

It is donations like yours that help us save dogs like Grito. Thank you, SNIPSA supporters, for giving Grito many more dog years!

# SNIP•ITs

The joy of reading heartfelt messages from adopting families is the driving force of fostering – the reason we open our homes to animals in need. In the end we know any sacrifice is worthwhile.



## Daisy (now Violet)

Daisy, a Pit Bull emaciated and used for breeding, riddled with mange and heartworms, wandered up to our Big Fix. SNIPSA nursed her through the obvious medical issues and thought that was the end of the story, until one day, Daisy went blind. She was suffering from Ehrlichia, a tick-borne disease that caused spontaneous bleeding into her retinas. She lost one eye and volunteers worked round the clock to save the other. She was adopted by a wonderful woman at an adoption event and is now living the good life.

“I fell in love with Daisy the second we met. Her sweet face and amazing wag told me that she felt the same. Knowing what Daisy went through in the first years of her life is painful, but SNIPSA's care and support helped her become the pooch that she is now. The only thing better than Daisy's story of strength and recovery is spending every day with her. Daisy, now Violet, spends her days napping with cats, taking walks in her neighborhood and snuggling with her person. What a great life! Thank you SNIPSA for saving my sweet girl and helping us find each other.” — Mercedes



## Brutus (now Zach)

At first glance, little Brutus looked like any ordinary poodle puppy – fluffy, cuddly, and absolutely irresistible. Everything

was in his favor until we discovered a severe heart murmur. Congenital heart murmurs like Brutus' are fatal unless surgically corrected. Finding a veterinarian to perform open heart surgery was a hurdle, but Dr. Greg Liscandro stepped up and performed the intricate surgery needed to close a small vessel in his heart. Within weeks, Brutus was back to his normal self and full of puppy vigor. His story caught the eye of a prior SNIPSA adopter that shares the following story.

“Brutus, now Zach, is 11 months old. He is in perfect health and greets each day with joy. He is smart and curious and nothing fazes him. He is just a happy-go-lucky guy. After he recovered from surgery, Brutus/Zach visited his Foster Mom and fell in love with a sweet little foster she had at the time. Now Zach and his little sis, Lily, are inseparable. I am blessed to have these babies. They are a constant source of love and fun.” — Cindy



## Weesley (now Fancy Eloise)

Weesley arrived at a SNIPSA Big Fix via a shopping cart. Her owner had so many cats that she literally wheeled them to the clinic. She surrendered a few kittens to SNIPSA because she couldn't care for them any longer.

“I lost my 7-year-old tabby to a long battle with stomach issues and thought I would never open my heart or home to another animal. However, I found it very hard to live without a companion. I prayed for God to point me in the right direction. While browsing SNIPSA's website, I came across a picture of the cutest cat I had seen in a long time. The cat's name was 'Weesley' and I knew immediately he was the one. “He” turned out to be a “she” and ‘Weesley’ became ‘Fancy Eloise’. I feel so blessed to have been able to give her a forever home and that she chose me to be her forever Dad.” — Cody

Visit [www.snipsa.org](http://www.snipsa.org) to learn more about SNIPSA's mission or adoption.



# Canine Chatter.



• Dexter –  
2013 Face of the Race



## Six Years of Racing for the Rescues

September is always a fun-filled month as we prepare our annual Race for the Rescues. What started as a novel dog race has evolved into an event with everyone from serious runners to casual participants – all there to support the cause. San Antonio Spurs point guard, Cory Joseph, presented awards with visits from mascots Funky Monkey, WellMed Hound Dog, and ACS's Chips and Salsa. With more than 1,000 supporters, SNIPSA raised over \$70,000 to further our life-saving mission. Donations will support spay/neuter outreach in the community as each Big Fix clinic costs on average \$15,000 to spay/neuter, vaccinate, and microchip approximately 250 pets in targeted neighborhoods. We are grateful to our fans, sponsors, volunteers, and staff who step up when we come knocking. Thank you, SNIPSA friends!

## Volley For Paws

Bump, spike, dig, pass, block, slide... just a few of the moves taking place in the hot summer sun this past August at SNIPSA's Second Annual Volley for Paws. With eighteen teams participating, Team 4 Stars came out on top. SNIPSA raised over \$2,500 to assist with the medical care of rescue animals in our adoption program. Dozens more cheered from the crowd at Sideliners Grill enjoying drinks (maybe even a few brewskies) and munching on appetizers as they rallied for their favorite team.

## Be a part of the solution!

Do your part in helping San Antonio  
in its mission of saving lives.

Go to the back page to find out how you can help.

## Cinn-a-bells

Treat your pup to these all-natural  
tasty holiday treats.

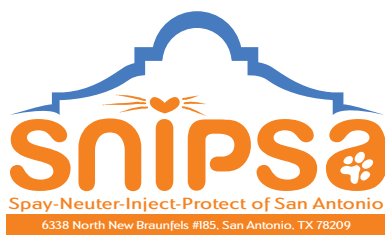
- 2 1/2 cups gluten-free flour
- 2 eggs
- 1 cup canned pumpkin
- 3 Tbsp peanut butter
- 1/2 tsp cinnamon



1. Preheat oven to 350 degrees.
2. In a medium bowl, mix together dry ingredients. In a separate bowl, whisk together eggs, pumpkin and peanut butter. Add egg mixture to flour mixture and knead thoroughly. The dough will be dry and stiff, add water to make workable if needed.
3. Roll dough to about 1/2" to 1/4" thickness, and cut out using a bell-shaped (or your favorite) cookie cutter.
4. Bake for about 35-40 minutes, or until hard and dry.

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(B) — Birthday



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#### SNIPSA Board of Directors:

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# What Can You Do?

## 1. Post on Social Media

Social media is an easy way to save lives because someone may see the plea and step up to help. Share articles, invites to adoption events and photos.

## 2. Item Drive

Hold an item drive for your local shelter or favorite rescue organization. Newspapers, treats, toys, collapsible wire crates, puppy pens, bedding, cleaning and office supplies are all valuable commodities to area rescues.

## 3. Photos & Film

If you enjoy taking pictures or making videos, shelters need you! Pets, especially the older or ordinary looking animals, need something to set them apart. A photo that captures their personality may be their ticket to a new home.

## 4. Clean

Laundry, cleaning, and general housekeeping are a must to keep an area shelter running. Even if you have just a few hours, offer to help empty trash, clean cages or sweep the floor. The animals need our help as well. Grooming, bathing, and giving the pooches a makeover can make a difference in finding a home.

## 5. Trap

There are thousands of stray cats living at large and there are progressive Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR) programs to manage these colonies. The success of these programs largely depends on volunteers willing to trap and/or feed the sterilized cats. Contact the San Antonio Feral Cat Coalition or volunteer for a SNIPSA Big Fix Clinic. We blockwalk leading up to each event to catch homeless cats in the neighborhoods we serve.

## 6. Speak Up

There are many misconceptions about rescues and why it is better to purchase a pet from a breeder. Mixed-breeds are not fraught with some of genetic problems we see with overbreeding. Plus, if you are looking for a purebred, 40 percent of the animals entering shelters are purebred.

## 7. Bake

Host a bake sale or a lemonade stand to support your local rescue organization.

## 8. Exercise

Dogs were once working animals. Today, we place our companion animals in kennels and expect them not to develop behavior problems. Daily exercise and mental stimulation goes a long way in curbing potential problems. Consider donating a few hours a week to teach a dog how to walk on a leash or stretch his legs.

## 9. Foster

Open your home to a dog or cat in need of temporary shelter. There are more animals entering city shelters than there is available space. The key to saving lives is foster care. Providing space, if only for a few weeks, may be all the time the pet needs to be featured at an adoption event or on the shelter's website. Medical care, food, and even a crate are often provided. You simply provide the TLC.

## 10. Errands

Our staff depends on volunteers to do errands such as hang flyers to promote animals/events, pick up pet food, deliver an animal to a foster's home and help out at adoption events. An organization is only as good as its volunteers!

Visit [www.snipsa.org](http://www.snipsa.org) or call 210-237-9400 to learn more about SNIPSA's mission.