

# How To Boost Return-to-Owner Rates



*Cindy & Jessica*

**Capt. Cindy Machado, CAWA**  
Director of Animal Services

**Jessica Hansen**  
Customer Services  
Representative

**Marin Humane Society**  
Novato, California

# About Us

- Founded in 1907 as a private non-profit
- We are contracted to provide 24/7 animal services with 11 cities and Marin County
- Our Mission: *We improve the lives of animals and people through advocacy, education, and support*
- 90 staff, 700 volunteers with \$6,000,000 annual budget



*Kodiak*

# Estimate of Animal Population in Marin County

2010 Marin County human population: **252,409**

**Dogs = 63,809**

**Cats = 71,987**

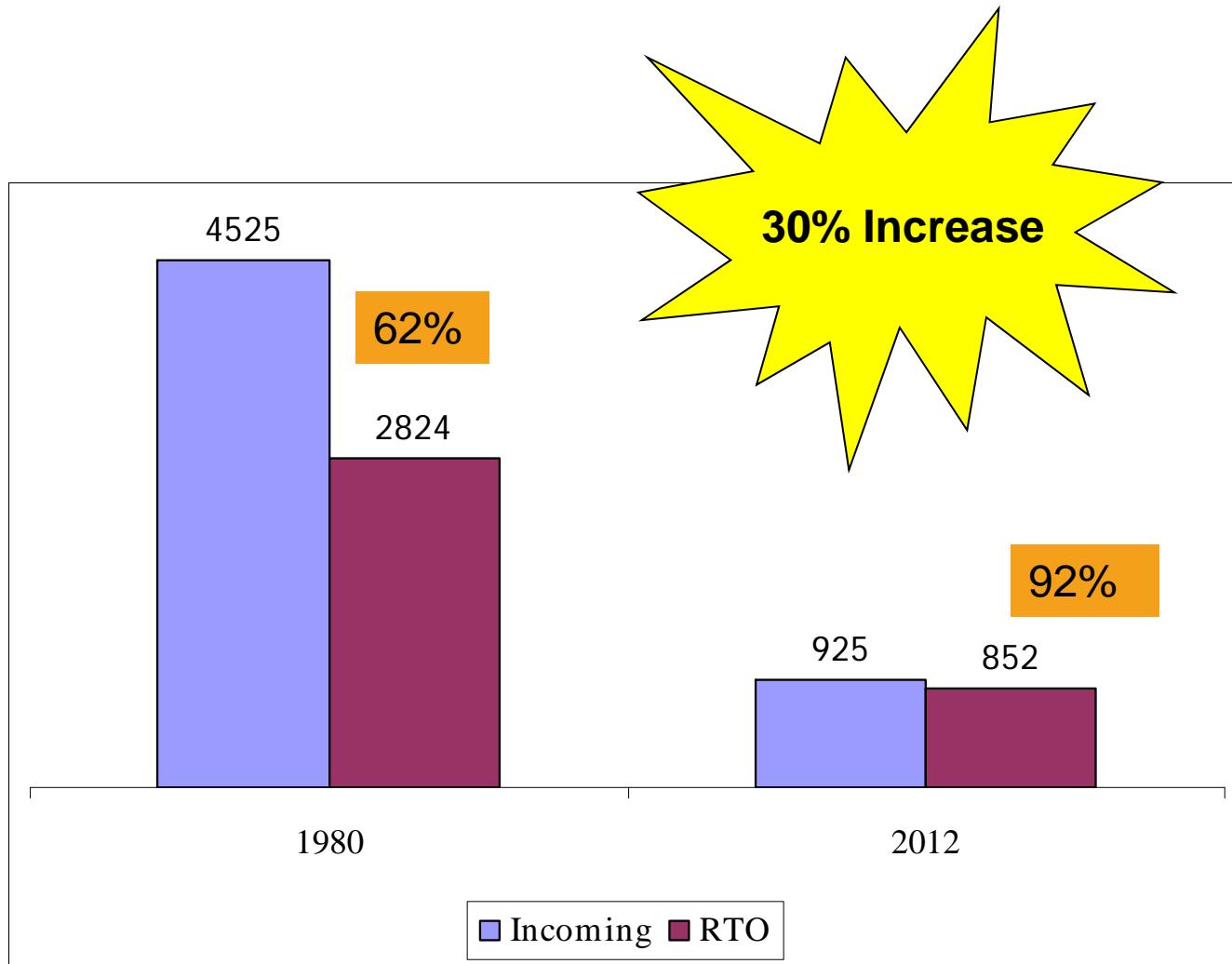
**Birds = 9,894**

**Horses = 6,361**

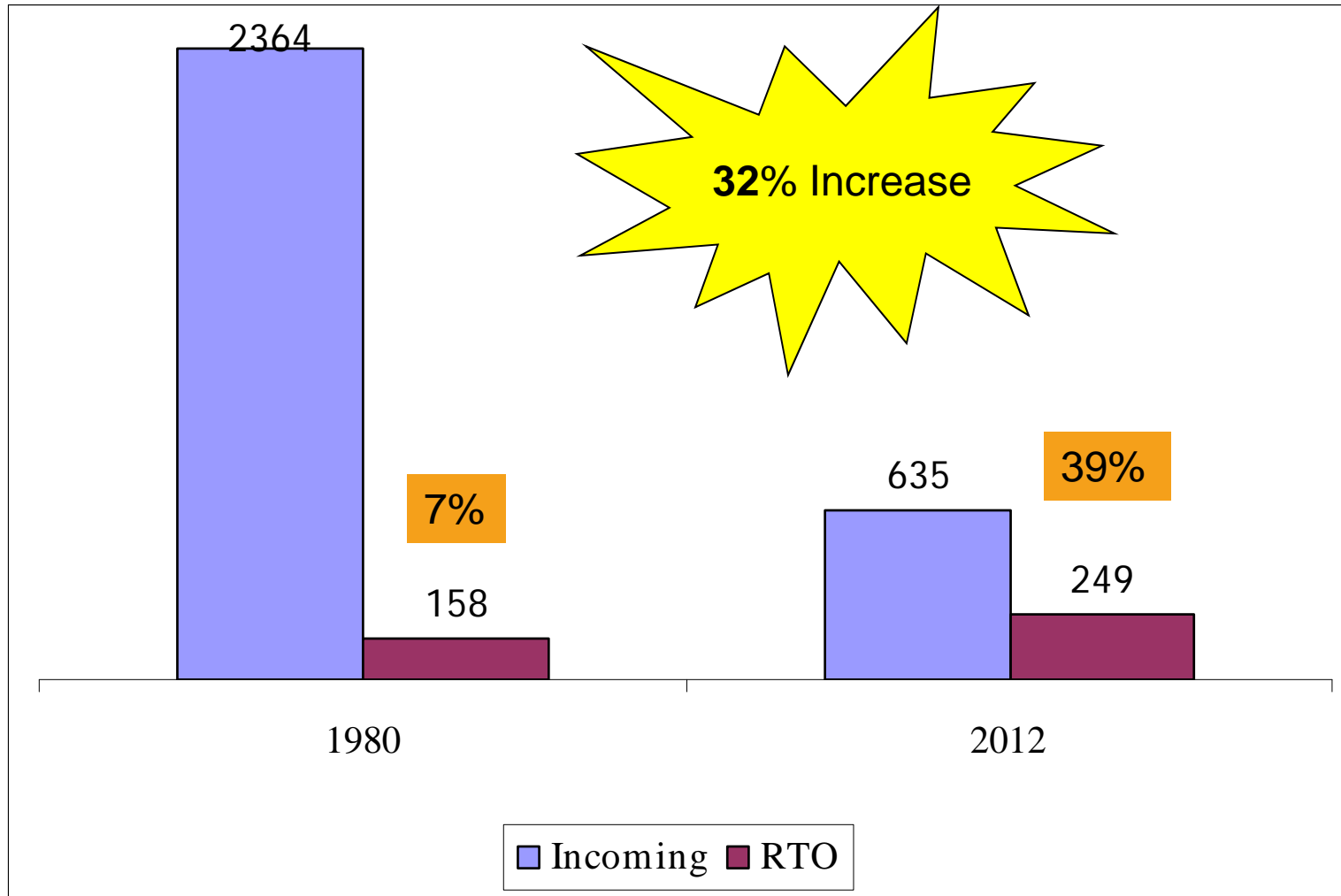
**TOTAL = 152,051**

*Based on AVMA calculation of human population, number of households and estimates of pets per household*

# RTO Rate for Dogs



# RTO Rate for Cats



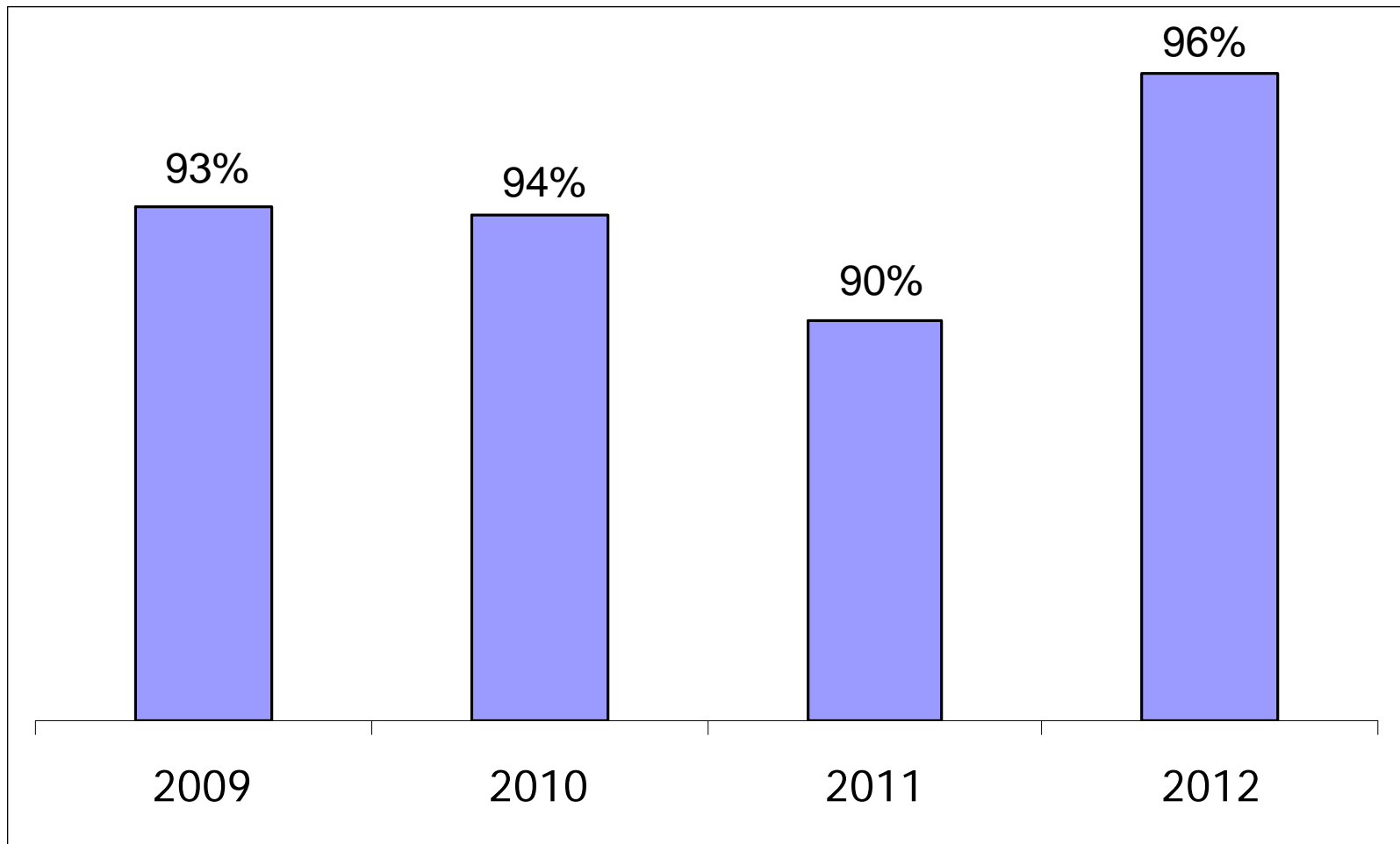
# \$100K Challenge 2012

- Deciding to participate
- Our goal: To save lives
- Increase RTOs
- Increase adoptions





# RTO Comparison Rate





# Our Top 10 Ways to Increase RTOs

# # 1 Promote Pet Safety

- Licensing
- Guardian ID tags
- Microchipping
- Safety collars
- Current pet photos
- Keep pet info up to date
- Behavior and training classes
- Keep a list of alternate contacts – neighbors
- Keep good notes and records



## # 2 Connect with the Community

- Lost and found reports
- Posting lost and found fliers
- Contact Homeowners' Associations (HOAs)
- Contact veterinary hospitals

# Connect with the Community

- Connect with your local church groups
- Look into bilingual community resources



**Lost Your Pet?**

Please check at the counter.

**¿Ha perdido  
su mascota?**

Por favor pregunte en la  
oficina de servicio aquí.

# Connect with the Community

- Work with local rescue groups



*Miss Kitty*

## #3 Utilize Animal Services and Volunteers

- Officers are busy locating pet guardians
- “Pet ID is your lost pet’s ticket home”
- Post FOUND posters in a three to four block radius from where an animal is found
- Customer service and officers work together
- Officers capable of scanning pets in the field
- Shelter Buddy capabilities on mobile devices





# FOUND CAT



**BREED:** Domestic Short Hair

**COLOR:** Brown Tabby and white

**SEX:** Neutered Male **AGE:** Adult **Case No.:** 171176

**COLLAR/TAGS:** None

**DATE FOUND:** August 2, 2012

**LOCATION FOUND:** Ignacio Blvd. X Alameda Del Prado in Novato

**PLEASE CALL MARIN HUMANE SOCIETY 415-883-4621**

PLEASE NOTE: Some city and county ordinances may restrict posting of these notices on telephone poles and other public property. Please check with your zoning department before posting.



# #4 Reunite Pets with Guardians

- Match lost reports with incoming found reports
- Match found reports with lost reports
- Have guardians fax or email pictures of lost pets
- Microchip company sends “lost pet alerts”



Please add [homeagain@petrescuers.homeagain.com](mailto:homeagain@petrescuers.homeagain.com) to your address book to ensure our emails reach your inbox. View as a webpage.

ONE MILLION PETS REUNITED **HomeAgain**  
A lost pet's best chance

# LOST

## SADE

### Is A Missing DOG Near You!

**PET INFORMATION**

SPECIES:  
**DOG**

BREED:  
**MIXED BREED**

LOST:  
**02/04/2013**

AGE:  
**3 YEARS, 1 MONTHS**

PRIMARY COLOR:  
**WHITE**

SECONDARY COLOR:  
**TAN SPOTS**

SEX:  
**F**

WEIGHT:  
**45**

MICROCHIP #:  
**985121013143117**



**LAST SEEN:**

EMERYVILLE, CA 94608 ESCAPED THE FENCE AT THE CORNER OF 36TH & ADELIN. PROBABLY HEADED TO PAC-N-SAVE 40TH & SAN PABLO.

**WAYS TO HELP:**

[Map Last Seen Location](#)

[Tweet on Twitter](#) [Share on Facebook](#)



# Lost/Found Report

Date Lost or Found: 8/15/12

City: San Rafael Lost or Found Location

Street: D St

X-Street: Bayview Dr

## Description

☐ Dog ☒ Cat ☐ Bird ☐ Rabbit ☐ Reptile

Animal's Name: Pepper / Lila

Breed:

Coat Length: ☒ Short ☐ Medium ☐ Long

Animal's Color: Black/grey w/ white belly

Other Markings/Features:

Animal's Age: 2 yrs Sex: ☐ Male ☒ Female ☐ U

Spayed or Neutered? ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown

## Identification

Wearing Collar? ☐ Yes ☒ No ☐ Unknown

Collar Color:

Collar Type:

Tags? ☐ Yes ☒ No If yes, type:

Microchipped? ☒ Yes ☐ No ☐ Unknown

If Yes, chip #: 98512100494 5157

## Owner or Finder Information

Name:

Home Phone: Cell Phone:

Work Phone: Other Phone:

Email address:

# HAVE YOU SEEN PEPPER?



If you have,  
please call us  
**595-9080**

Kennel Card

<http://mhs.shelterbuddy.com/customise/forms/kennelCard.asp?animal...>

Marin Humane  
Society  
Kennel Card

**Pepper**



Animal ID: 149238  
Shelter Tag:  
Status: Redeemed



Lost / Found Suburb  
San Rafael

Current Location: - #

Type: Cat  
Breed: Domestic Short Hair  
Mix  
Date In Shelter: 10/31/2012  
Primary MicroChip:  
Due Date Out: 11/10/2012  
985121004945157  
Scanned by: Kirby Kane  
Scanned by: Yukari Mikami  
Primary Color: Brown Tabby  
Secondary Color: White

## FOSTER ANIMAL

Sex: Spayed Female  
Adoption Amount: \$175.00  
Available For Adoption Date: 2 Years 4 Months 2  
Weeks  
Weight: 7.8 lbs

Suitability With Children:

Distinguishing Features / Markings: White nose down  
belly, and white paws. Black dots on pink nose, sun risk.  
Photo Available

Behavior Assessment Saying: Whooooohoo, Kitten Rush!  
Kawabunga, Dude!

Adoption Summary: Lila is a sweet little girl who has been  
sitting in this evaluator's lap, purring loud and clear. She and  
her brother Luke have been in a foster home for a few weeks,  
and now they are ready for their forever home. Lila can be  
cuddly and sweet, and the next minute she is off exploring  
and batting toys around.

Little 8 to 12 week-old kittens have not been using litterboxes  
for very long. If you choose a kitten, then establishing proper  
litterbox habits will be imperative. Confine your new kitten to  
a small area, so she learns where to "go." Once you allow  
her more access to the house, keep the litterbox in its  
established location. Choose this location carefully; cats like  
to feel safe and slightly secluded.

Lila wants a home where she will be loved and attended to.

1 of 2

2/6/2013 1:55 PM

# FOUND CAT



**BREED:** Burmese X

**COLOR:** Seal Point/Chocolate body

**SEX:** Female    **AGE:** Adult    **Case No.:** 173253

**COLLAR/TAGS:** None

**DATE FOUND:** 10-06-12

**LOCATION FOUND:** Ivy Lane off Martens Blvd. SR

**PLEASE CALL MARIN HUMANE SOCIETY 415-883-4621**

PLEASE NOTE: Some city and county ordinances may restrict posting of these notices on telephone poles and other public property. Please check with your zoning department before posting.

*Brownie*

# Reunite Pets with Guardians

- Online searches on:
  - ❖ Craigslist.org
  - ❖ PetAmberAlert.com
  - ❖ FidoFinder.com
  - ❖ LostMyDoggie.com
  - ❖ FindToto.com
  - ❖ HelpMeFindMyPet.com
  - ❖ Mickaboo.org (lost birds)
  - ❖ Pigeon.org (racing pigeons with bands)
- Tips for finding missing pets:
  - ❖ CatsInTheBag.org
  - ❖ MissingPetPartnership.org
- Emailing guardians about found pets

## Jessica Hansen

**From:** [redacted]  
**Sent:** Monday, December 10, 2012 9:55 PM  
**To:** LostAnimals  
**Subject:** New Contact Notification - Contact Us - Lost & Found

### New Contact Notification

#### Contact Information

**Event ID:** 1010475  
**Event Name:** Contact Us - Lost & Found  
**Supporter ID:** 373591716

**Title** Ms.  
**First Name** Theresa  
**Middle Initial** J  
**Last Name** [redacted]  
**Email** [redacted]  
**Phone** [redacted]

**Subject** found a male dog  
**Message** I found this small brown curled tail male dog with a tennis ball. I found him on Sunday at Tam High School at 5pm during the Christmas Basketball tournament. I was alone and I went around and asked as many people as I could if they lost a dog or if they ever seen this dog with my self and son and will take care of him. The owner steps up and seems fit to even keep the dog. He never came back for him. I was at Tam high for one request about a dog. Thank you Theresa D

[SF bay area craigslist](#) > [north bay](#) > [community](#) > [lost & found](#) [email this posting to a friend](#)

## LOST Golden puppy (mill valley)

Date: 2012-12-09, 6:31PM PST

[Reply to this post](#) [64j4x-3467568263@comm.craigslist.org](mailto:64j4x-3467568263@comm.craigslist.org)

Lost our Golden Puppy with one floppy ear and wearing a blue collar. His name is BOE. He is about 16 pounds - a chihuahua pomeranian mix. BOE is very friendly. We lost him at Tam High School where some teenagers with a shopping cart were seen with him trying to find his owner.

He was lost around 5:30pm

If you have any information please call [redacted]

Thank you!

please flag with care: [?]

[miscategorized](#)

[prohibited](#)

[spam/overpost](#)

[best of craigslist](#)



Boe



# #5 Use the Power of the Web

- Post lost and found forms
- Use social media - Facebook, Twitter
- Photos of strays automatically uploaded to MHS site
- Shelter Buddy - database searches for animals meeting description in area found

## Search Lost Pets

How to find your lost pet

- [Search our lost pet database below](#)
- Come to the [Marin Humane Society](#) in person as soon as possible. We are required to hold stray animals for six days, although we try to hold them longer. We will assist you in filing a lost report, looking through our stray, adoption, isolation and quarantine housing as well as looking through the Lost & Found books at the front counter.
- [Email us](#) or call our lost animal recording every evening after 6 p.m. The recording is updated daily and only includes animals who were brought in during the previous 48 hours. Call 415.883.4621, press 377 for lost dogs, 378 for lost cats and 379 for all other lost animals.
- For lost cats, email a photo with name, date, phone number, city where you believe your cat went missing to [lostanimals@marinhumanesociety.org](mailto:lostanimals@marinhumanesociety.org). Type "Lost Cat" in the subject line.
- Check neighboring animal shelters, canvass your neighborhood, tell your friends, neighbors, mail carriers, etc. that your pet is missing and post Lost Pet Notices around your neighborhood.
- Check out these tips for finding a lost or missing pet from [CatsInTheBag.org](#) or [Missing Pet Partnership](#).



You can download these lost pet notices to reproduce and the lost/found report to fax or mail to us.

[Lost Dog Notice](#)

[Lost Cat Notice](#)

[Lost/Found Report](#)

### If you find a lost pet

- Call the Marin Humane Society immediately at 415.883.4621 to report the animal.
- As soon as possible, please bring the pet to the [Marin Humane Society](#) or your local animal shelter. We will scan the animal for a microchip, and you can file a found animal report. If you want, you can leave the pet with us.
- If you are willing to put in the effort, you can post found animal posters in the area, and post a description of the animal on sites like Craigslist.org.

### Lost pet database

Use our lost pet database to search for found animals that are currently under our care. Please note that these do not represent all found animals so if you do not see your animal here, please still contact us. *Having trouble viewing the search results? [Click here](#) to open your results in a new window.*

[Home](#) | 
 [Search](#) | 
 [Search Found Animals](#) |

#### Found Animals

Pet Type

[Advanced Search](#)

Find Animals





Lhasa Apso cross  
Spayed / Neutered  
Male

**Date Found:** 2/13/2013

[View Details](#)



Rat Terrier/Chihuahua  
Male

**Date Found:** 2/13/2013

[View Details](#)



Terrier cross  
Female

**Date Found:** 2/13/2013

[View Details](#)



Golden Retriever cross  
Male - 2Mths (approx)

**Date Found:** 2/12/2013

[View Details](#)



Siberian Husky  
Male - 1Yrs 6Mths (approx)

**Date Found:** 2/12/2013

[View Details](#)



Shepherd cross  
Spayed / Neutered  
Female - 4Yrs 3Wks

**Date Found:** 2/10/2013

[View Details](#)



Domestic Longhair cross

**Date Found:** 2/8/2013

[View Details](#)



# #6 Enlist Media Support

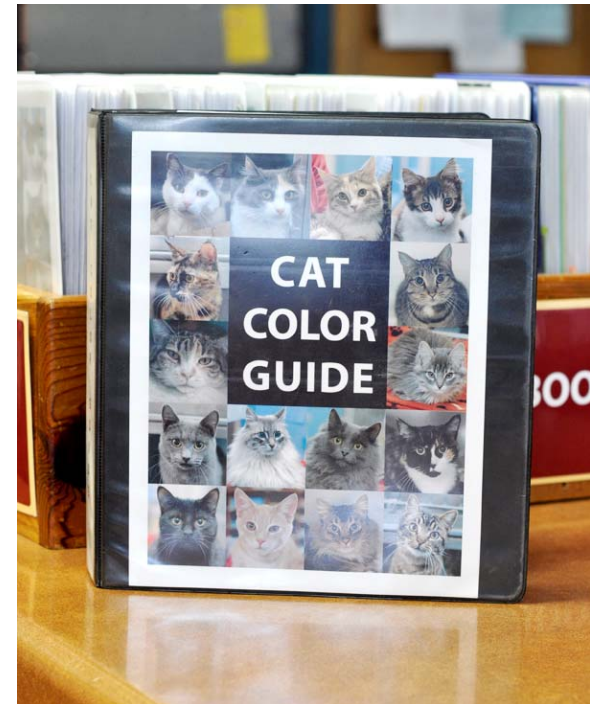
- Posting FOUND notices in smaller papers
- Helps highlight injured animals
- Send out press releases



*Heidi*

# # 7 Have Amazing Staff and Volunteers

- Email exchanges for missing pets
- Mini report and post on “Most Wanted”
- Encourage people to visit shelter in person (especially for cats)
- Cat color guide book



# #8 Involve Super Sleuthers

- Extensive research online to trace phone numbers and other leads (WhitePages.com)
- Maintaining old lost reports that can help track down frequently missing animals
- Research microchips that may not be registered - ask **“Who was the chip sold to?”**
- Contacting other shelters




*Nugget*



# Involve Super Sleuthers

- Letters sent to guardians

 <b>MARIN COUNTY ANIMAL SERVICES</b>	
<p>John Smith P.O. Box 123 San Rafael, CA 94901</p>	<p>February 1, 2013</p>
<p>Dear John,</p> <p>We are caring for a female short hair brown tabby that we believe may belong to you. In order to reclaim your pet you will need to call or come in during our regular business hours: Tuesdays through Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and until 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday evenings.</p> <p>There will probably be some impound and/or board fees that must be paid before we can release your pet(s) to you. These fees can be paid in cash, by credit card or by check, with some restrictions. You may want to call first, to find out what fees are required.</p> <p>If for some reason you are unable or do not wish to reclaim your pet(s), it would be in their best interest for you that we can explore options.</p> <p>If we do not hear from you within 30 days, we will assume that you have authorized us to make every effort to try to place your pet in a new home. We will make every effort to try to place your pet in a new home, too old, ill, or temperamental.</p> <p>Please call us at (415) 883-4621 or just let us know what you want to do.</p> <p>Sincerely,</p> <p>Marin County Animal Services Lost and Found Desk (415) 883-4621</p> <p>P.S. If by chance the pet(s) described in this letter does not belong to you, perhaps you can help us locate the actual owner. Please contact us anyway, so that we can correct our records and have the best possible chance of reuniting the lost animal(s) with their owner.</p>	<p><b>We are caring for a cat here in our kennels that we believe may belong to you. The female short hair brown tabby is wearing the following identification; microchip. In order to reclaim your pet you will need to call or come in during our regular business hours: Tuesdays through Sunday, 10:00 a.m. to 5:30 p.m., and until 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday evenings.</b></p> <p><b>Por la presente queremos informarle que en nuestro plantel tenemos en custodia a un perro de nombre "Max". El perro color blanco y negro traia la siguiente forma de identificacion: microchip. Si en efecto usted es responsable sobre este animal es nescesario que se comunicué o venga personalmente durante las siguientes horas de servicio De Martes a Domingo de 10:00 a.m. a 5:00 p.m y Miercoles hasta las 7:00 p.m. Con el fin de recuperar a su mascota.</b></p>
<p>171 BEL MARIN KEYS BLVD. NOVAJO, CA 94949 (415) 883-4621 FAX (415) 382-1349 WWW.MARINHUMANESOCIETY.ORG</p>	



*Lily*

# # 9 Customer Friendly Shelter

- Open 6 days a week, one evening until 7 p.m.
- Be available
- Field staff available 24/7
- Human friendly phone system
- Daily stray animal recording
- Location of injured stray animals



# # 10 Celebrate the Successes!

- RTO board in a central location
- Have morale boosters along the way
- Celebrate the milestones



# Happy Endings



# Other Tricks

- Trust your instincts
- Err on the side of the animal
- Be flexible



# In Summary

1. Promote Pet Safety
2. Connect with the Community
3. Utilize Your Animal Services and Volunteers
4. Reunite Pets with Guardians
5. Use the Power of the Web
6. Enlist Media Support
7. Have Amazing Staff and Volunteers
8. Involve Super Sleuths
9. Customer Friendly Shelter
10. Celebrate the Successes!

# Contact Us



Capt. Cindy Machado, CAWA  
[cmachado@MarinHumaneSociety.org](mailto:cmachado@MarinHumaneSociety.org)

Jessica Hansen  
[jhansen@MarinHumaneSociety.org](mailto:jhansen@MarinHumaneSociety.org)

# Contact Us



[MarinHumaneSociety.org](http://MarinHumaneSociety.org)

415.883.4621

# Upcoming ASPCApro Webinars

[aspcapro.org/webinars](http://aspcapro.org/webinars)

- Trail Blazing on Facebook to Save More Lives 3/13
- Customer Service for Social Change:  
A New Model for Customer Engagement 3/26
- Transferring Animals Out 3/27
- Foster to Surrender 3/28
- A Magical Social Media Journey 4/03