



# 2019 Year in Review

# 2019 by the Numbers

over  
**5,092**  
animals coming  
through Oakland  
Animal Services



more than  
**2,114**  
animals transferred  
to partner rescue  
groups

\* all numbers as of 12/11/19

more than  
**1,255**  
animals adopted



**1,000**  
dogs and cats spayed  
and neutered for free



over  
**696**  
animals fostered



# Oakland is for Animal Lovers

Dear friends,

In the fall of every year, the Friends of Oakland Animal Services board works together to plan our Year in Review publication. It's a gratifying task, though not an easy one—so much happens in a year at our city's shelter, and so many special animals, many of whom arrive at OAS under dire circumstances, touch our hearts along the way.

Our mission at FOAS is to provide homes, health, and happiness to Oakland's animals. This means that much of what we do is provide the resources and the opportunities to support Oakland's animal lovers in their work to better the lives of our city's cats, dogs, rabbits, guinea pigs, mice, birds, goats, snakes . . . as Oakland's only open-door shelter, the list of animals arriving at our doors is always surprising and never boring.

At the heart of every beat-the-odds story of a cat like Emmett, or a dog like Rosie (read on!), are the people who made their happy endings possible. The animal lovers of Oakland are a force to be reckoned with, and we salute everyone who has done their part to make 2019 a banner year for Oakland's animals.



Some of the animals we've profiled in this Year in Review received tender loving care from compassionate foster families thanks to the hard work of our OAS foster coordinator, a critical shelter staff position that is fully funded by FOAS. Many more animals, both in foster care and in our shelter, received life-changing, even life-saving, veterinary care and rehabilitation that would not have been possible without Mickey's Medical Fund, our



budget for medical care that your donations to FOAS support.

When we had to appeal for emergency funds in times of crisis for our shelter—like the serial cat shooter injuring and killing victims in the Dimond District, or the highly contagious canine influenza outbreak that forced OAS to open a second, offsite shelter facility this summer for dozens of sick dogs—FOAS donors stepped forward with overwhelming generosity.

And of course, through our PetFix program, just now beginning its third year of providing free spay/neuter services to Oakland cats and dogs, FOAS donors made it possible for loving pet parents in financial need—many of whom line up before dawn to secure a spot at one of our monthly first-come, first-served events—to fix more than 1000 animals in 2019!



As the decade winds to a close, we look back with pride and gratitude at what we've been able to accomplish with help from each and every one of our FOAS donors, and we're looking forward to celebrating our 15th anniversary with you In 2020. On behalf of every shelter animal who is now living their very own Oakland love story, we thank you.

With gratitude,  
Lisa Franzetta  
Program and Fundraising  
Director

## Everything's Coming Up Rosie



Rosie, giving her mom kisses

In May, an extra-large lapdog named "Queen" quickly became famous around the shelter for putting her giant head (and sometimes the rest of her body) in the laps of staff and volunteers, seeking snuggles and offering endless affection. Despite her loving demeanor, four-year-old Queen was in constant pain from a torn ligament in her leg. She was given painkillers as a short-term fix, but only surgery would prevent further degeneration of her leg.

The shelter called on FOAS: could Mickey's Medical Fund cover Queen's estimated \$6000 surgery bill? This FOAS fund was established specifically for OAS

animals like Queen, who have a serious but treatable condition and a good prognosis that would offer a much-improved chance at adoption and a happy, healthy life. FOAS donors quickly rose to the occasion, donating all of the funds needed for Queen's surgery.

But she wasn't out of the woods yet—Queen would need special care and rehabilitation as she recovered. Our foster coordinator found a wonderful family who agreed to care for her as she started physical therapy. They wouldn't be foster parents for long, though. "It took less than an hour from when she came home to realize we were never going to give this amazing dog back," shared her adoptive parents, who renamed this loving girl "Rosie."

In just a few months, Rosie regained most of the muscle mass in her injured leg and was cleared to start increasing her activity level. Rosie's new mom reports, "Rosie is truly making the most of the gift that FOAS gave her. She spends her days going on walks, napping in the sun on the back deck, wiggling and snorting with delight when friends visit. . . . Rosie is so special, the absolute sweetest, and we can't imagine our lives without her. We are especially glad that she's healing so well because she's got a big job ahead—she'll become a big sister in early 2020 when our twin baby boys arrive!"

## OAS PROGRAM SUPPORT: FOSTERING From Foster Baby to Bathing Buddy

"He is so funny. Total sweetheart. And a goofball. LOVES to get in the shower with me and play in the water." Whatever scene first comes to your mind when you hear these words . . . it probably doesn't involve a cat. But then again, you haven't met Emmett. Allow us to introduce you.

Born in June, OAS kitten Emmett (formerly named Jointer) was found as a stray with a broken pelvis, and he needed a foster home where he could have two weeks of quiet time to recover. His foster mom reported that "after a summer of fostering high-maintenance kittens, I thought we were done for the season." But when she got an email from the OAS foster coordinator seeking a temporary landing pad for the fluffy gray boy, she decided her family could take on one more kitten.



Emmett, when he's not playing in the shower

One of the critical positions at OAS that is funded by FOAS donors is our full-time foster coordinator, who makes it possible to move many of the over 5000 animals arriving at OAS each year out of the shelter and into homes as quickly as possible. Among these animals are hundreds of kittens, who are given lots of TLC, socialized, and even bottle-fed by their foster parents until they are ready for adoption.

And occasionally, as in Emmett's case, these foster babies never make it back to the shelter. Emmett's new mom reports, "Because of his injury, Emmett couldn't climb on anything, so my son slept with him on the hallway floor. Seeing the two of them together, I knew Emmett wasn't going back at the end of his two weeks. Now almost five months old, he's become a big, gentle, social boy. Even though we hadn't intended on adopting another cat, and integrating him with our older cats has been slow going, we know he's destined to be a laid-back little brother, and he's a great addition to our family.

Today, former foster baby Emmett is about 8 lbs and "looks like a little gray lion—when he's not sopping wet."

## We Raised the Woof for Oakland's Animals!

“Oakland Animal Services only receives **0.3% of the city’s annual budget.**

In 2019, we took in more animals than in 2018, but **our live release rate increased to our highest ever: 87%.**

This is due in part to every person who supports our work—donor, volunteer, adopter, staff—to help create a more humane Oakland, a better place for both humans and animals.



How we treat animals reflects who we are as a society, and you can be part of helping us build a more compassionate Oakland. We are so grateful for your efforts and so proud of our accomplishments.”

—Rebecca Katz, Oakland Animal Services director

What do Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf, beatboxing legend M.C. Radio Active, and a pitbull in a necktie have in common? They all teamed up to help FOAS “Raise the Woof!” at Oakland’s Impact Hub on October 17 for our first-ever fundraising bash for the beasts.

More than 200 FOAS supporters gathered for a very Oakland celebration, raising more than \$70,000 for Oakland’s shelter pets and honoring Alison Lufkin & The Lufkin Family Foundation, Linda Huber, Eric Zuercher, and Pat Luchak—all true heroes for the animals.



Oakland mayor Libby Schaaf, honorary event chair, with OAS alum Sliema



Special guest Samson, OAS alum

The party featured a unique silent auction (where else could you bid to secure the position of Oakland Mayor for the Day for your mutt?), a prize wheel, an event-themed photo booth, and OAS shelter kittens available for snuggle sessions. And to keep our guests powered up, there was a spread of fabulous plant-based fare and a (notably busy) bar staffed by OAS volunteers.

It was an epic night out, but more than that, it was a celebration of the incredible generosity that makes all of our work at FOAS possible. The funds raised at Raise the Woof! equate to medical care for injured Oakland strays; facility improvements to make our shelter animals comfortable and keep them safe and healthy; behavior assessments and training to help our dogs refine their manners and get adopted more quickly; free spay and neuter for the pets of Oakland residents in need; and so much more.

To our event sponsors, committee members, auction and in-kind food donors; to the many shelter volunteers who staffed the event; and to every one of our event attendees: THANK YOU for making a difference for Oakland’s animals. We’ll see you at Raise the Woof! 2020!

## One Thousand Animals Fixed in 2019!



At FOAS, we know that one of the biggest ways we can help relieve the burden on our city shelter is to prevent unwanted litters. We also believe that top quality spay/neuter services are a right for any loving dog or cat parent, regardless of their financial means. We are thrilled to report that as this Year In Review goes to print, we are on track to exceed a landmark 1000 Oakland cats and dogs fixed in 2019!

The FOAS PetFix free spay/neuter program launched just two years ago in December of 2017 with a small event where 15 dogs and cats got spay/neuter surgeries, vaccines, and microchips, with 100% of the costs covered by FOAS. As buzz about PetFix spread, particularly in West and East Oakland neighborhoods where veterinary services are scarce or absent, we worked diligently to increase our capacity, networking with numerous veterinary and nonprofit partners to meet the demand for accessible spay/neuter.

Thanks to the support of FOAS donors, we are able to provide this much-needed service to Oakland residents like Bill. Bill is one of those human cat magnets, and he has a record of socializing a number of semi-feral street cats who have decided to adopt him. Last spring, a handsome gray and white cat started coming around Bill's place.



Bill and Migo awaiting Migo's surgery

"Migo," Bill's name for him, was being fed by neighbors, but he finally settled on Bill, who started keeping him inside at night.

A friend of Bill's who was familiar with FOAS helped him make an appointment to have Migo neutered at an October PetFix event. Bill has mobility issues, and now that Migo has been neutered, he's been staying closer to home, to Bill's delight. "It also means he doesn't worry about him as much," Bill's friend reports, "especially after his last feline companion died from getting hit by a car."

Migo now enjoys hanging around and sunning himself in Bill's yard. "In the evening, Migo is a lapcat, and he and Bill just relax on his chair or bed. His sticking around more, as a result of getting fixed, has made Bill very happy. The microchip and vaccines were bonuses that Bill was delighted to get—and all this being free for Bill was such a godsend, especially since he's on a fixed income."

Are you an Oakland resident who needs spay/neuter surgery for your dog or cat? Find out more at [oaklandsanimals.org/petfix](http://oaklandsanimals.org/petfix).



Migo back home, recuperating from surgery and looking for snuggles

## Living Your Best Life



Nubbin, upon arrival at OAS

Nubbin's first weeks of life are a mystery. Somehow, this three-legged puppy managed to survive on the streets of Oakland. Her missing lower hind leg might have been a congenital condition, or perhaps her umbilical cord was wrapped around her leg, acting as a tourniquet when she was born.

When she was brought to OAS, the initial plan was to perform a less expensive surgery to cover the stump of her leg. Nubbin got around by dragging her little half leg, but the stump got scraped up and became painful as a result. However, our vets had hope for

something better for Nubbin, and agreed that when she was older, she could be a good candidate for a prosthetic leg—giving little Nubbin all of the abilities of her four-legged friends.

A prosthetic, fitting, rehabilitation, and follow-up care costs several thousand dollars. But Nubbin was young and healthy and had her whole life ahead of her—and we believed she deserved the best care possible.

We asked for your help in funding this care and you agreed she was worth the investment. We are only able to give this kind of extra special care to Nubbin and other animals like her because of our village: the vets, foster coordinator, and other staff at OAS who believed in her and cared for her at the shelter; the foster family who took her in; and donors like you who are willing to help an animal live the best life possible.

Nubbin's foster family reported, "She's very sweet and loves being pet, held, and just being around anyone. She loves to fetch as well, something we never taught her!"

As her foster family waited for Nubbin to grow old enough to be fitted for her prosthesis and go through rehab, they found themselves growing attached. They brought her back to OAS one more time to sign the adoption papers: Nubbin is home.



Nubbin and her adoptive family

## OAS PROGRAM SUPPORT: FOSTERING Finding a Home for Each Animal

At Oakland Animal Services, any animal who comes through the door is welcome, regardless of his or her perceived adoptability. When a pregnant feral cat arrived she was no exception. And when she delivered her kittens, it was apparent that she and her new little family would need some special TLC and a quiet space outside of the shelter where they could be nurtured, since the shelter environment can be a difficult one for animals in this delicate time. Thankfully, our foster coordinator arranged for Mandarinina along with her kittens Weeble, Lego, Tinker, and Big Wheel to go into a loving foster home.



Mandarina and her litter of four



Weeble in his foster home

The nearly two months they spent in foster allowed their foster family to get to know Mandarinina and her kittens well, which was extremely helpful in finding the best placements for each of them. Weeble and her brother Lego (the tortoiseshell and tabby kittens pictured) proved to be best friends, so we knew we wanted them to go home together. This

felt especially important when something else emerged as well—little Weeble turned out to have cerebellar hypoplasia, also known as "wobbly cat syndrome." Thankfully little Weeble could walk and function mostly normally, aside from a little bobble to her head because her cerebellum was smaller than usual, due to not being fully developed.

Happily, Tinker and Big Wheel found their homes once they were old enough to be adopted, and Lego and Weeble did indeed find a home together. Mandarinina proved to be a truly feral cat who is happier without humans bothering her, and she is now relaxing in the new Cat Patrol HQ, awaiting placement in the Cats on Patrol Program.

## Coming Together to Stop Canine Flu



Kennels in the temporary off-site facility

Flu season is upon us now, but did you know that the flu can also wreak havoc in animal populations as well?

The canine flu, or CIV, is highly contagious among dogs, though humans cannot catch it and cats and other animals are at a much lower risk of infection. Some dogs affected with CIV will

show only mild symptoms, while others exhibit more severe signs of illness. The virus has been linked to some deaths in dogs, but most dogs recover with supportive care.

Over the summer, all of our shelter dogs were exposed to CIV, and over 100 dogs from OAS tested positive for the virus. OAS joined forces with the East Bay SPCA to transfer and quarantine all infected dogs to a temporary off-site facility, a warehouse space generously donated by Bob Connor, a local business person and animal lover. FOAS donors helped fund supplies for the emergency shelter space. Staff and volunteers ensured the quarantined dogs were provided with food, care, and love during their recovery, while the shelter got a thorough deep clean and sanitization.

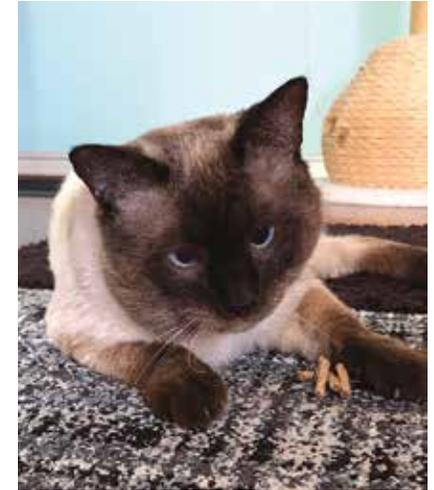
Some shelters have the option of halting dog intakes until the virus is contained. But as Oakland's only open-door shelter, OAS continued to take in sick, neglected, and injured animals while navigating this outbreak. The quick actions of OAS and our partners, and funding provided by FOAS donors, ensured OAS was able to keep its doors open to incoming dogs while maintaining a high level of care for the dogs in quarantine.



Bringing in supplies

## Other Victims of Gun Violence

Gun violence exacts a grim toll on our community, affecting all our residents—including animals. This spring, Oakland residents were shocked to learn that someone was shooting cats with a pellet gun within a two-mile radius of the Lower Dimond neighborhood. Oakland Animal Services rescued four severely injured cats in the span of a few weeks. The wounds appeared to be related and to have come from the same type of weapon. Unfortunately, one of the cats had to be euthanized because of the extent of his wounds, while another passed away while receiving treatment. The other two were stable but would require surgery.



Percy recuperating in his foster home after surgery

FOAS rallied the community and offered a \$10,000 reward to help find the culprits and put an end to this horrible situation. The outpouring of support was incredible—community members and media outlets shared the cats' story far and wide, and fortunately the shootings stopped before additional animals were hurt. This broad support helps us demonstrate that Oakland has a zero tolerance policy for animal abuse.

"Violence against animals is one of the strongest indicators for other crimes and violent acts," said OAS Director Rebecca Katz. "The cruelty of these acts is of concern to both the human and nonhuman members of Oakland's community."

And what of the two survivors? Thankfully, both survived their surgeries. One was adopted out soon thereafter. The other, a Seal point Siamese named Percy, needed to have his leg amputated before being transferred to one of OAS's rescue partners, Cat Town, to recuperate. He has since been adopted and is enjoying a calm, stress-free life in his new home.



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Cover photograph of Kathleen and Tate by Josh Norem, The Furrtoographer