

Kathy Flamson

Subject: FW: Napa Cnty shelter

COMMUNICATIONS RECEIVED: ITEM J-5

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To: Jim Barnes, Chris Canning, Richard Spitler & council;

Reading so much in the papers recently regarding the possibility of contracting, again, with the Napa County Animal Shelter, I felt the need to share a couple of experiences I have had with them within the last few years.

Early one morning, standing on my deck, I noticed a small dog, then saw four more, tiny puppies of the first running around in our fenced yard. Yes, an uncaring idiot had dumped this innocent mother and her pup's. I walked down into the yard and brought these innocent & frightened animals upstairs. It was so cold that morning, I gave them food, water, and a soft blanket to lay on.

Around 9:00, I called Dr. Franquelin's office and talked to Maggie. They were overloaded with strays and simply could not take any more. I called around looking for direction and could find none. Someone had suggested I call the Napa shelter. Not knowing any better at that point, I called them for help. I will never do that again.

After my call to Napa, it took nearly 2 hours for them to come. A large truck with cage panels on the side finally pulled up. A man got out holding a long metal rod with a noose at the end. The dogs were still on the blanket outside on my upstairs patio, tucked into a corner. When this man walked up to them, the mother tried to run keeping her pups as close to her as she could. This man, this representative of Napa Shelter, was angry. He told me he didn't have all day to chase dogs around, he wanted me to contain them somewhere. As he went back to his truck for more instruments to use, I put the mother & pups in our small guest house.

When he returned, I brought him in. Keep in mind, these dogs were small. The mother looked to be a terrier-chihuahua mix, the puppies were tiny, possibly 6-7 weeks old, and very frightened. All of the dogs had crawled under the bed to hide. This man again raised his voice to me & told me to hurry up. I crawled under the bed & first retrieved the puppies. He put them in a bag and took them down to his truck. When he came back, the mother had come out from under the bed, crying for her puppies. He tried to put the noose around her neck & she tried to run. I was talking to her and reached down to pick her up. He yelled at me to stay away from her, that she was a vicious animal and would bite me and that he would not be responsible if she did. This man was more of an idiot than the person that dumped them here.

I reached down and picked her up, trying to calm her. He put the noose around her neck and pulled it tight until she yelped. He did this while I was holding her and would not take it off. We walked down to his truck. He opened one of the cage panels and literally threw her in. There were no windows in this cage, no blankets or cloth of any kind, just a harsh & cold metal floor. He did not put her in with her puppies, they were in a separate holding cell.

As he drove away, I could hear them crying. I will never forgive myself for allowing this.

A few months later, I was helping a friend look for her lost dog. We drove to the Napa shelter. There was a tied, canvas bag on the ground next to a "deposit" area. The bag had obviously been there for a couple of days. We looked inside and there was a small dog which had apparently suffocated and died. A few feet away was a dead cat lying on the pavement. Do you honestly want Calistoga associated with these people?

More recently, this past Aug/Sep., another stray dog appeared outside our gate. He had been running up and down the road, lost and frightened. A neighbor saw the dog as well and called the Napa Shelter. When she told me what she had done, I told her "No, not the shelter, call them back and tell them not to come." I brought this dog into our yard, taking him later that day to Dr. Franquelin as another poor, little stray. I knew this lost pet would be safe and cared for. He was a German-shepherd mix, about 8 months old. Three weeks later, after no one claimed him, I went back and told Maggie I was taking him home.

I realize there are always financial issues to consider, but isn't the most important issue the care of these lost animals in need? I have used many veterinarian's over the years, and none are of the caliber of Dr. Franquelin. Have you forgotten what Dr. Steve has done for this community? Is he appreciated so little? Remember the chicken seen stumbling down Cedar St. a few years ago? Dr. Steve took her in, found an obstruction in her throat & treated her, all at his own

expense. And what about the giant tortoise that was run over on Petrified Forest? He took this animal in as well and tried his best to save its life, even calling outside experts. Who would do such crazy things? Dr. Franquelin would.

I have visited both the Napa County and Petaluma shelters, there is simply no comparison.

The Napa shelter should be ashamed. PAS is clearly the only, and best, option. Taxpayer money is being used for this contract, I want my money to be used for PAS and Dr. Franquelin, no question.

Kathy Bazzoli
Calistoga resident