

# World Homeless Day Spotlight: C.A.R.E.4Paws and Partners Help Unhoused Families Provide for Their Cherished Pets

*Critical partnerships with organizations like the Santa Barbara Rescue Mission help keep pet families together, one dog and cat at a time.*

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“

The companionship and unconditional love provided by a pet is invaluable. Sadly, many unhoused community members live in fear of being separated from their pets and not be able to provide them care,”

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understands the deep connection between pets and people and honors that bond by providing critical resources and building partnerships that support those struggling to care for their companion animals. This World Homeless Day, October 10, C.A.R.E.4Paws and [Santa Barbara Rescue Mission](#) celebrate the reopening of a joint Pet Resource Center at the Rescue Mission’s 535 E. Yanonali Street location. Here, unsheltered community members can access food, supplies and wellness services for their dogs and cats. Additionally, on October 11, C.A.R.E.4Paws’ mobile veterinary clinic team returns to assist unhoused families in the Santa Maria riverbed, working with three other nonprofit organizations.

Both events reflect the organization’s 15-year mission to improve the quality of life for pet families in need on the Central Coast and to collaborate with as many animal groups and human-welfare partner agencies as possible to maximize the reach into the community.

“The companionship and unconditional love provided by a pet is invaluable. Yet, sadly, many unhoused community members live in constant fear of being separated from their animals and not being able to provide proper care,” says C.A.R.E.4Paws’ Cofounder and Executive Director, Isabelle Gullö, who adds that people experiencing homelessness often report that their pets not only provide support, security and a sense of responsibility, but they are a reason to live. “This World Homeless Day, we want to shine a light on the bond between people and their animal companions and what we all, by working together, can do to help keep families healthy, fed and together.”

As part of the Pet Resource Center relaunch at the Santa Barbara Rescue Mission, C.A.R.E.4Paws has set up bins with pet food, warm pet jackets and fleece blankets for families in need. Pet parents can also sign up for future wellness and grooming appointments through C.A.R.E.4Paws as well as human welfare services provided by the Rescue Mission.

“We are so excited to have this pet resource center available for our guests’ animals,” says Santa Barbara Rescue Mission’s Homeless Guest Services Director, Jerianne Fletcher. “We always get asked for pet food and other pet resources, and now we will be able to fill that need. With animals coming by our shelter daily, this center will help us better care for our guests by caring for their pets.”

On Friday, October 11, C.A.R.E.4Paws, in collaboration with Good Samaritan Shelter, 5Cities Homeless Coalition and Community Action Partnership of San Luis Obispo (CAPSLO), hosts its third pet wellness event in the Santa Maria riverbed. C.A.R.E.4Paws’ clinic team will vaccinate, microchip and alter at least 15 dogs and cats. C.A.R.E.4Paws has done outreach in the Santa Maria riverbed since August to assist pet families affected by clearings, which are happening in riverbeds across California this year.

By working directly in marginalized communities, C.A.R.E.4Paws is uniquely positioned among Central Coast animal-welfare organizations to execute programs that make an impact for pet families in need. C.A.R.E.4Paws’ two mobile units deliver affordable veterinary care to under-resourced areas of Santa Barbara and San Luis Obispo counties. Also, in addition to the new Pet Resource Center at Santa Barbara Rescue Mission, the organization operates resource centers Santa Barbara Countywide with partners such as People Helping People, Santa Barbara County Animal Services, Companion Animal Placement Assistance (CAPA) and ASAP Cats. Plus, C.A.R.E.4Paws provides support for pet families exposed to domestic abuse through Safe Haven alongside Domestic Violence Solutions for Santa Barbara County.

For more information about C.A.R.E.4Paws’ Pet Resource Centers, mobile clinic program and other services and to make a contribution, please visit [care4paws.org](http://care4paws.org). For questions, contact



From right to left: Abigail Carter-Stephanopoulos and Jerianne Fletcher from Santa Barbara Rescue Mission with C.A.R.E.4Paws' Isabelle Gullö and Julia Black during the reopening of a Pet Resource Center for families in need at the Rescue Mission on October 11.

C.A.R.E.4Paws at 805-968-2273 or email [info@care4paws.org](mailto:info@care4paws.org).

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About C.A.R.E.4Paws

C.A.R.E.4Paws—short for Community Awareness, Resources & Education—works to reduce pet overpopulation and improve pet family welfare. Its critical services include free and low-cost spays/neuters, veterinary care and vaccine events in C.A.R.E.4Paws' mobile veterinary clinics; distribution of pet food and supplies; support for pet families exposed to domestic violence through Safe Haven; and Paws Up For Pets humane education. C.A.R.E.4Paws has worked in Santa Barbara County since 2009, and in 2022, the nonprofit expanded its mobile clinic services to San Luis Obispo County. To learn more or to make a contribution, visit [care4paws.org](http://care4paws.org).

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