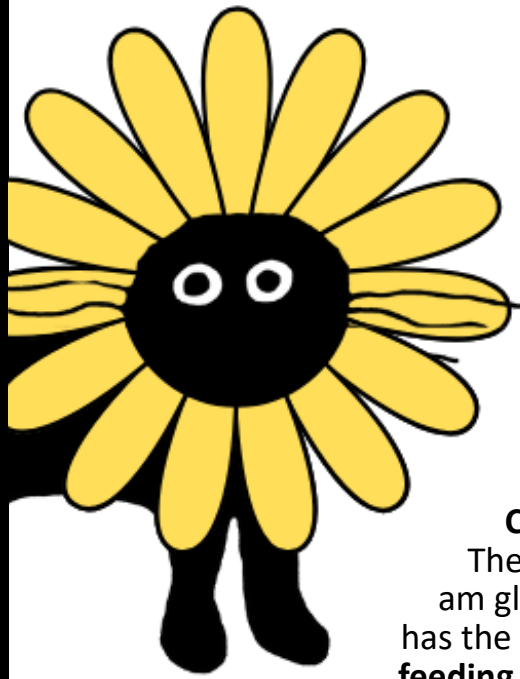


CATNIPS



Return of the Sun!

Cheers to sunny days and blue skies once again. Finally!

I sure missed seeing all those bright flowers pop up around town. A bunch of my community cat friends and I have been enjoying our daily strolls around the neighborhood, and wouldn't you know it, we recently bumped into **Amy Smith, a legend from Catalyst for Cats who now feeds for ASAP!**

They say never meet your heroes, but I sure am glad I did (and not just because she always has the best treats). **Read all about her midnight feeding runs on the next page!**

Speaking of cats who love to eat, my cousin **Cantaloupe** got a bit carried away when she and her brother arrived at their new home. I can't say I've never thought to chew a curtain, but eating one? Goodness! She's okay, but you can read all about her predicament on **page 5**.

I'm glad our little purple shelter has so many loving people within it, **especially our amazing vets!** Take a look at **page 6** to read about the compassionate vets we have on staff.

And before I forget...you already know what's coming back to town: **MY BIG BASH!** Dust off your cat ears and relace your dancing shoes, because we are going to celebrate good times, so come on! **Get excited for the Bash and read all about it on page 9.**

That about wraps it up for little old me. I'm thankful someone else is willing to type all this up – some people claim to be all thumbs, but I'm mostly whiskers. Anyway, enjoy the newsletter, and if you need me I'll be waiting patiently for Amy to bring me more Friskies. Yum!

Until then,

Basil, OUT



Olive



Spring 2025

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Feeding a Village, One Midnight Run at a Time

When Catalyst for Cats, Inc. merged with our organization earlier this year, ASAP Cats took on a major responsibility that Randi Fairbrother dedicated her life to: feeding and treating the community cats of North County, including Santa Maria, Santa Ynez, Los Alamos, Lompoc, and Buellton. Overseeing more than a dozen community cat colonies and hundreds of hungry felines would be quite the adjustment for any shelter – which is why ASAP is so fortunate to now have Amy Smith on our team.

In a nutshell, Amy's daily routine is as follows: Up before the sun to feed three colonies of local cats, then off to Gold Buckle Ranch a little after 6 a.m. Working with the horses and cats until the daily work is done, usually around 2 p.m. when everyone is fed and clean. Home for a cat nap and maybe a bite to eat, then back to the ranch before 4 p.m. to blanket and feed the horses, tend to the cats, and prep for the next day. Home for a quick dinner around 6 p.m. (feeding a couple of colonies on the way there) and a few hours of sleep, then up for the main feeding ritual of eight cat colonies around midnight. A few more hours of sleep, then up before the sun to do it all again.



The oldest kitty at Gold Buckle Ranch, Lupe spends her evenings in a warm shed with her buddy Blue.

She works six days a week and is off Sundays. “This is also my workout, so I can eat whatever I want” muses Amy. “Whatever animals I come across, whatever I see, knowing I can help and give them something they need...it feels good when you can do something.”

In addition to the 11 community cats at Gold Buckle Ranch, Amy personally feeds 11 cat colonies daily, oversees a team of feeders managing a dozen additional colonies, and orders (as well as delivers) cat food to around 20 locals. She and her army feed close to 400 hungry cats every single day. “They need an advocate,” Amy says, “and animals are unconditional and present, so if anything, they need an extra bit of love.”

Amy first forayed into animal welfare over a decade ago after learning about Catalyst from her vet, Dr. Brenda Forsythe, founder of Orcutt Veterinary Hospital. Amy began trapping in 2015 after learning the tricks of the trade from longtime Catalyst volunteer Debby Merry, and



When he's not stomping around the ranch and checking on his horses, Blue can be found napping just about anywhere.

soon took over feeding community cats near her Santa Maria townhome. She managed to TNR (Trap-Neuter-Return) around 30 cats who lived nearby, and not long after, stepped up to support Randi and Catalyst as their new lead feeder and trapper when Debby moved out-of-state. “There came the big ask from Debby: ‘Can you do what I do?’ But I didn’t realize it was for life!” Amy says with a laugh.

Amy became the district manager of Panera Bread around the same time she became the lead feeder, so she held a meeting at Panera and rallied some reliable members of her community to help. “And we just grew!” Amy says. “I have my army.” And most of her original army still help Amy feed to this day, nearly ten years later, though she’s always on the lookout for new



When Amy's Tacoma rolls up to a usual feeding spot, it's not uncommon to see a dozen cats suddenly waltz out of hiding, tails perked in excitement.

people ready to volunteer. Feeding cats and working with them over 80 hours every month, Amy is aware of how daunting her schedule seems. “I do sacrifice a lot of my time,” she says, “and having more volunteers feed with me would make a difference. It’s just tough to feed cats any time other than midnight, and not everyone wants to get up and do it.”

In addition to a tough schedule, the costs associated with feeding community cats are steadily increasing. Friskies Tender Crunchy

is Amy’s go-to due to its both soft and hard ingredients – ideal for cats with bad teeth, which many community cats often have. While packaged cat food can get rather pricey, it’s exceedingly helpful for needy cats, especially options like squeezable Churu or other soft, nutritious treats. On average, Amy used to spend close to \$4,000 every two weeks on food alone, but that number has since gone up. Yearly expenses for feeding these community cats are now closer to \$100,000.

While everyone who knows Amy appreciates how much she does to save animals, there is also the occasional naysayer. “The haters are the biggest challenge,” Amy says. “I always keep extra bowls so I can make sure the cats eat and drink water, because people will take them.”

During one of her midnight feeding runs, Amy was harassed by a local, claiming her feedings led to his dog developing mange. Many of Amy’s feeding sites are in underdeveloped neighborhoods, so being verbally assaulted close to midnight is enough to scare anyone away from the area – except Amy, who not only ensured the cats on site still got their food, but additionally returned the next day with dog food, biscuits, and topical medications for the stranger’s dog. “I get that not everyone understands, but we’ve helped so many people and families, so we’re ready to keep going.” Amy says. “These animals deserve to be happy.”

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



Scheduled feeding of local community cats is a great way to get some free vermin control!

Long hours, hard work, but community cats deserve our care

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 3

Despite the obstacles and the strong will required, Amy never turns down an opportunity to help an animal in need. “I remember being at Panera, seeing dogs on the street, and saying to myself ‘Well, I’m gonna take those dogs in,’” she says. “I’ll see strays, so I’ll call them in. I’ll text who I know, and they’ll dispatch someone.” Working in animal welfare all these years and being a staple in her community, Amy’s network has grown dramatically – allowing her to keep a watchful eye out for any animal in need.

“They deserve to have a good life and be happy too,” she said. “Life is hard enough, and we’ve created this world for them, so anything we can do to help them, I’ll do.”



While monitoring this specific cat for a few weeks, Amy has been regularly administering flea treatment for him!



Amy's feeding spots are relatively populated during the day, so feeding the cats at night allows them to have a quiet meal together in peace.

WANT TO SUPPORT AMY?

Feeding 400 cats a day takes a lot of food – and it isn’t cheap! ASAP projects spending around \$100,000 a year on food to feed these cat colonies previously supported by Catalyst, and we rely primarily on the generosity of our incredible supporters. Consider donating to our **General Fund** to help our community cats. We additionally have an Amazon wish list full of treats our community kitties love!

For more information and to give, visit our website at www.asapcats.org or scan the QR code to the right.



Cantaloupe's Insatiable Desire For Curtains

Although it's naughty behavior, it's not uncommon for cats to occasionally chew on something inedible. Plastic, cardboard, plants, cables – whether they're looking for attention or indicating they're bored, plenty of cats will push those limits and chew on something they're not supposed to. The real problem arises when they ingest these inedible items.

Young Cantaloupe was adopted alongside her brother Carrot late last year. Carrot came with a mild case of pica, a condition where cats will consume non-edible household items. There are several potential causes for pica, including behavioral conditions, medical issues, or even simply genetics, though it's a rather complex compulsion. Occasionally a bored cat will chew on something inedible, so playing with them can help limit this unwanted behavior.

Cantaloupe initially showed no signs of having the compulsion, but when her family discovered that she had eaten a strip of curtains, it became clear that both cats had pica and that Cantaloupe subsequently needed emergency treatment. Her family rushed her to an emergency clinic for a linear foreign body removal – a particularly expensive surgery – and thankfully they were able to remove the curtain remnants. Following her surgery, Cantaloupe was given a surgery suit to prevent her from licking any stitches, but after noticing her discomfort, the hospital offered a recovery cone alternative. Unfortunately the cone was tied with brown gauze, which Cantaloupe then consumed, and thus within 36 hours of her initial surgery she once again required an emergency linear foreign body removal.

Feeling the emotional and financial burdens of expensive (and intensive) back-to-back surgeries, Cantaloupe's family reached out to ASAP for assistance, and we were able to help the poor kitty. Our incredible vet Dr. Ginger White connected Cantaloupe with one of our partner clinics who performed her endoscopy and was able to remove the gauze. She is currently recovering at home with her brother and family, and will be given treatment to prevent any further unwanted eating habits.



Cantaloupe managed to consume nearly 3 feet of curtain strips, though all of it was able to be removed.

Saving Lives Behind the Scenes: ASAP's Vets

ASAP Cats has been helping felines for over 35 years, and during that time we have had some truly incredible people join our mission. We'd like to let our three extraordinary vets introduce themselves:

Dr. Ginger White

I graduated from UC Davis School of Veterinary Medicine and have been practicing for almost 18 years. I served as the Director of Shelter Medicine for Santa Barbara County Animal Services from 2015 to 2022, and I currently work part time with ASAP, SBCAS, Care4Paws, and as an Animal Services Specialist Associate with Citygate Associates. My favorite part about working with ASAP is working with a caring, compassionate, and talented team of staff and volunteers. The team at ASAP is capable of saving and improving the lives of so many cats and kittens, and it is truly something remarkable to be a part of. During 2025, I would love to see ASAP continue to strive to meet more of the ASV Guidelines for Standards of Care in Animal Shelters. I would also love to see further training of our Wellness team in order to continue improving the medical care provided to our cats.



Dr. Lisa Okuda

I received my undergraduate degree in Animal Physiology & Neuroscience at UC San Diego, then my veterinary degree from UC Davis, class of 2013, and I've been at ASAP since 2015. I love being able to help the cats that have no voice, to advocate for the ones that have no guardian, and to be their champion. What drew me to ASAP all those years ago was our strong volunteer base, who rallied to support the cats in need, which allowed us to go above and beyond what a typical shelter was able to provide. In 2025, I am hoping we can reunite more strays with their owners, collaborate to reduce OTIs, continue helping community cats with our TNR and Working Cats programs, and educate the public on preventative care with our community outreach services.



Dr. Brie Spells

I received my undergraduate degree in animal science at Cal Poly, SLO, and my veterinary degree at Western University of Health Sciences. I have been a veterinarian for 16 years and have been working at ASAP and the county shelter since 2009. Although I also work in private practice at St. Francis Pet clinic, I really enjoy working at ASAP and being there for the cats that have no owner to advocate for them. I enjoy spending time with the cats and imagining what their story is – where did they come from, what homes have they lived in, what owners have they had. It's comforting to know that they have a bright future ahead and that ASAP will do everything they can to provide each one with a wonderful quality of life. Something I'd love to see accomplished at ASAP in 2025 is purchasing and installing a dental x-ray machine. This amazing addition would add to our ability to provide high quality dental care to our cats and aid in extraction efficiency.



Only the Coolest Cats Volunteer at ASAP

Earlier this spring, the ASAP Cats team got together to celebrate community, companionship, and cats at our annual volunteer meeting and party. We are forever thankful for our dedicated volunteers and all the tireless work they do to keep our shelter running and our kitties happy. **From every cat at ASAP, thank you to our wonderful volunteers!**

We're proud of the culture we've established at ASAP Cats, and we owe a huge portion of it to the positivity and hard work of our volunteer force. Cheers to 36 years of ASAP volunteers!



KITTEN FOSTERS WANTED!



The seasonal surge of kittens returns! While our volunteers tend to all the cute cats in our shelter, we are always in need of new fosters ready to open their homes. If you're interested in adorable kitten meows and allowing a kitten to grow in a loving home, this opportunity is for you!

We provide the supplies and the training, you provide the love, and these kittens get to grow in a happy, warm home. Everyone win!

For more information, visit the **Get Involved** section of our website at www.asapcats.org.

A Letter From Our Director



In 2024, ASAP Cats achieved transformative growth, delivering critical care and lifesaving programs that brought hope and healing to Santa Barbara County's cats and kittens. This year, **we sheltered 1,318**

cats and kittens, providing them with medical care, compassion, and second chances they needed to thrive. With **881 adoptions** and **69 reunions of lost cats with their families**, we made countless dreams of companionship a reality.

A vital part of our mission included supporting Santa Barbara County Animal Services' North County shelters, which **transferred 277 cats and kittens** to ASAP Cats. Additionally, **we welcomed 61 cats from other shelters** within our partner network, **totaling 338 cats who found their way into ASAP Cats' programs**. These partnerships highlight the importance of collaboration in saving lives and ensuring every cat receives the care they deserve.

ASAP Cats expanded its leadership in specialized care by becoming the primary shelter in Santa Barbara County treating FIP-positive cats, giving these once-hopeless cases a chance at life through groundbreaking treatments. **36 hospice cats are now enjoying their lives in loving homes**, surrounded by the care and comfort they deserve, thanks to the compassion of dedicated fosters. Meanwhile, **90 unsocialized Tiny Lions™ with big roars entered our specialized training program**.

A major milestone of the year was our merger with Catalyst for Cats, Inc., a collaboration that strengthens our capacity to care for community cats and expands our volunteer network. Together, we are prepared to meet the challenges of 2025 with greater efficiency, more resources, and a unified mission.

None of this would be possible without the incredible dedication of our community. **Volunteers contributed over 35,800 hours of their time**, and donors made every rescue and recovery possible with their generous support.

As we close the year with a **95% live release rate**, we celebrate the lives saved and the futures created. But the work doesn't end here. Together, we're building a world where every cat has the chance to live, love, and thrive.

Thank you for being part of our story. The best is yet to come.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Jessica Wiebe". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long, sweeping underline that extends across the name.

Jessica Wiebe
Executive Director



Binx loves to watch birds, make friends, and run around. If you offer up a gentle hand, he'll give you a head boop in return!

The Best Party Around Returns to Town!

Break out your dancing shoes, dust off your cat ears, and get ready for another wonderful night to remember because Basil's Big Bash is coming back to town!

Returning to **The Carousel House at Chase Palm Park, Basil's Big Bash will be held Friday, June 13th at 5:30 p.m.** Tickets are coming soon, so make sure you mark your calendars and save the date.

Basil's Big Bash is ASAP's major fundraising gala, responsible for funding over 15% of our annual operating costs. Not only is it a great night of community, but the funds raised also have a tremendous impact on our organization and cats.

In addition to a night of dinner and dancing, there will be both live and silent auctions available. Bid on everything from luxurious getaways to local experiences to fine, feline art. There's something for everyone!

If you'd like to contribute to our silent auction, or if you have any questions, please send an email to our team at bash@asapcats.org.

For more information about the best party of the year and to purchase tickets, visit our website at www.asapcats.org.

INSTANT WINE CELLAR

Each Bash we auction off our "Instant Wine Cellar" made up of 100+ generously donated bottles of wine. All bottles have at least a value of \$20 and we like to get a nice variety!

Can't make it to the Bash, but still want to show your support? Consider helping us grow this wine cellar by donating a bottle or two to the auction!

If you would like to donate wine, please drop off bottles at the ASAP Cats shelter, located at 5473 Overpass Road #101. Thank you!



You are cordially invited to

BASIL'S BIG BASH

A Black Cat Affair

Friday, June 13, 2025, at 5:30 PM
The Carousel House at Chase Palm Park
223 E. Cabrillo Blvd., Santa Barbara, CA 9310

A black silhouette of a cat is shown in profile, facing left. It has large white eyes and several whiskers. The cat is wearing a necklace with a crescent moon and several small stars. The background is a purple gradient with a subtle pattern of white stars and dots. The entire graphic is framed by purple curtains on the left and right sides.

2024 In Review

Saving the Lives of 100% of Adoptable Cats and Kittens

1,318

cats & kittens sheltered

69

lost cats & families reunited

881

cats adopted

36

hospice cats
sleeping in homes

136

lifesaving surgeries
performed

917

spay/neuter
surgeries

151

public spay/
neuters

112

working cats placed
on ranches, nurseries,
greenhouses, and other
alternate placements

2,458

veterinarian exams
given

90

Tiny Lions™ tamed

126

feral/wildlife cats
taken in

51

cats TNR'd (Trap-
Neuter-Return)

35

public assists with
cats in the community

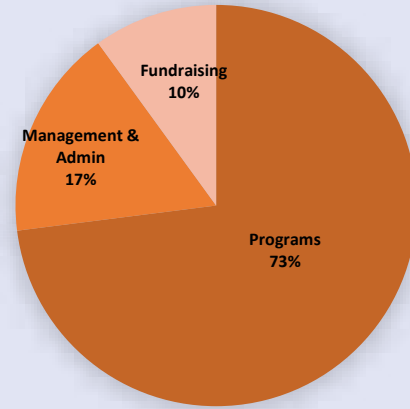
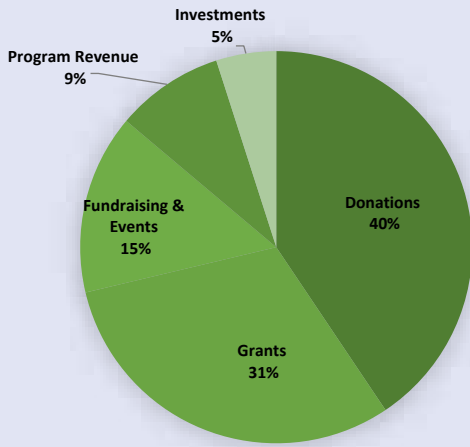
made possible by

35,800

volunteer hours

(equivalent to 17 full-time staff)





INCOME: \$1,252,787

41%	DONATIONS	\$515,216
9%	PROGRAM REVENUE	\$112,256
31%	GRANTS	\$383,375
4%	INVESTMENTS	\$59,772
15%	FUNDRAISING & EVENTS	\$182,167

EXPENSES: \$1,362,103

73%	PROGRAMS	\$989,189
17%	MANAGEMENT & ADMIN	\$225,781
10%	FUNDRAISING	\$147,133

ASSETS & LIABILITIES

CASH ASSETS	\$154,032
PROPERTY, EQUIPMENT	\$64,877
INVESTMENTS	\$1,789,465
TOTAL ASSETS	\$2,008,374
CURRENT LIABILITIES	\$7,655
TOTAL EQUITY	\$2,000,718

THANK YOU

to the following for their generous support:

Patricia and Paul Bragg Foundation
 The Wood-Claeyssens Foundation
 Animal Charitable Foundation of Santa Barbara County, Inc.
 May and Bill Allison Foundation
 RLH Foundation
 Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians Foundation,
 Tribal Government Operations
 Noble Family Foundation
 Goleta City Grant Program

Thank you for all you do to make ASAP possible! With your help, we have accomplished a great deal during 2024.

The outfitting of our donated Mobile Unit and our merge with Catalyst for Cats reflect the commitment and vision ASAP shares, to continue to grow and evolve to meet the needs of the feline and human community of Santa Barbara County. Together our work has kept countless cats from needing to enter the shelter system, and none of these accomplishments would be possible without your support!

With gratitude,

Bernard Kelmenson

Bernard Kelmenson
 Board President





P.O. Box 357
Goleta, CA 93116-0357

(805) 683-3368
info@asapcats.org
www.asapcats.org

 Facebook.com/asapcats

 Instagram.com/asapcats

Want to Join the ASAP Team?

ASAP Cats is always looking for new volunteers to join the team. Are you ready and willing to work with cats of all shapes and sizes? Do you have a soft spot for kittens in need? Consider joining the ASAP team and working alongside a crew of fellow cat lovers. You'll get plenty of time to make some new furry friends and will be supporting a great cause. Stop by the shelter and ask about applying today.



Volunteer Extraordinaire Donna Peterson and Marketing Coordinator Tanner Tait sharing a smile at ASAP's annual volunteer meeting and party. It's hard not to smile while swapping stories about your favorite felines!

ASAP - Animal Shelter Assistance Program

Shelter location: 5473 Overpass Road #101, Santa Barbara, CA 93111
ASAP is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization ■ Federal Tax ID: 77-0283500