

JOY

THE MAGAZINE OF
joybound[®]
PEOPLE & PETS

SUMMER 2026

CLEARED FOR TAKEOFF, POWERED BY PAWS

What Your Pet Already
Knows About Summer
(and What They Teach Us)

PLUS

The Cat Fix Fest Effect:
Where Care Becomes
Community Action





Bringing Joy to You

Dear friends and partners,

Because of you, every page of this summer issue of JOY Magazine tells a story of care in action. Each moment you make possible — every rescued pet, every family supported, every life changed — ripples outward in ways that are both powerful and deeply personal.

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This issue of the magazine captures what happens when love meets commitment. A child finds confidence by reading to a therapy dog. A once-fearful pup learns to feel safe again. Community cats receive critical care that improves and protects their lives. Service dogs-in-training practice navigating busy airports, preparing to support people who depend on them for independence and stability.

None of these stories happen by chance. They happen because of a shared belief that animals and people deserve connection, healing, and joy. That belief lives in every act of generosity, every hour of volunteer time, and every moment spent advocating for those who cannot speak for themselves.

Even in the busiest season, animals remind us to pause, to be present, and to find joy in simple moments such as a shady rest in a hammock, a quiet walk, and a trusted companion nearby. You make these moments happen.

Thank you for making this work possible. The difference you create extends far beyond Joybound's campus — into homes, families, and communities where pets find purpose and belonging. We are honored to do this work alongside you.

With gratitude and joy,

Susan Lee Vick
President & Chief Executive Officer



On the Cover:
Tony and Jake, a Joybound
Shelter to Service Team

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Connect with us online at joybound.org and on social media.

Less Hustle. More Hammock.

What Your Pet Already Knows About Slowing Down and Soaking Up Summer

If you share your home with a pet, you've probably noticed that they have a wonderfully uncomplicated approach to summer, embracing the season one shady nap and evening walk at a time.

While we're checking calendars and making plans, our pets are already in tune with the season. They stretch out in a cool spot when the day heats up, wander into the shade without hesitation, and come back to life in the early morning or evening hours. No overthinking, just small, natural adjustments.

"Pets don't try to maximize summer, they experience it."

Meanwhile, many of us approach summer a little differently.

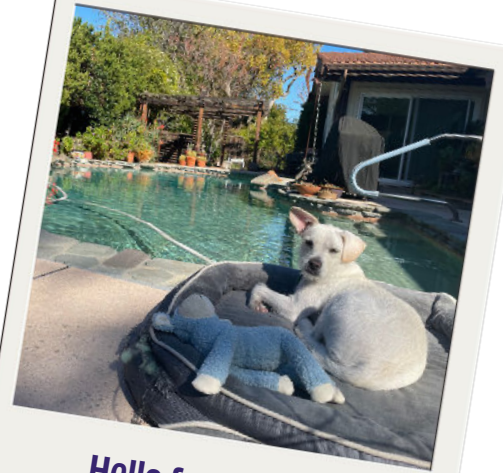
It starts with good intentions: longer days, time off, more opportunities to get outside. But "making the most of it" can quickly turn into something fuller: weekends booked, trips planned, schedules packed. Before long, summer can feel less like a season to enjoy and more like one to keep up with.

That's where pets offer a quiet contrast.

Pets don't try to maximize summer, they experience it. A short walk before the heat sets in, a breeze through an open window, a shady nap nearby. These moments aren't big or planned, but they're enough.

Spending time with pets can gently shift how we think about the season. Not by asking us to cancel plans, but by reminding us that there's another way to move through it. One that leaves room for both activity and pause.

This summer, maybe it's not about choosing between a full calendar or a meaningful moment. Maybe it's about making space for both, and noticing, like our pets do, that some of the best parts of the season are the simplest ones. 🐾



Hello from Rudy!



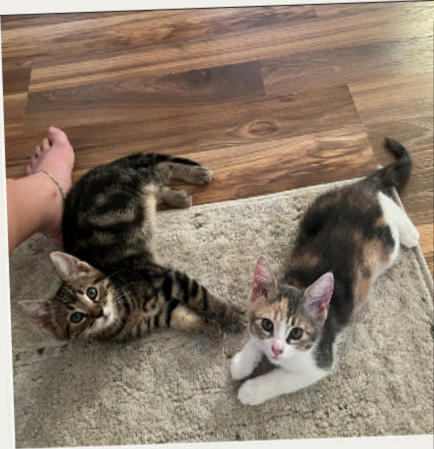
Hello from Goldi!



Hello from Hope & Ladybug!

Happy Tails Adoption Updates!

Visit joybound.org/story to Submit Your Adoption Update



Hello from Mister & Brie!



Hello from Elishka!



Hello from Mattie!

”

I love seeing their personalities shine. Mister is a lot more energetic and Brie is on the softer side.

”

She is a spunky and cuddly girl. She loves to sleep on her humans' laps. Thank you for your support.

”

She is an absolute love. She insists on meeting everyone we encounter. God Bless Joybound.



Shout Out to Our Corporate Partners

Their Support Helps People and Pets Find Help, Hope, and Each Other



From Street to Strong

Inside Joybound's Coordinated Efforts to Improve the Health of Free Roaming Cats

A few humane traps, dozens of dedicated volunteers, and a clinic full of determined veterinarians make a remarkable difference for cats in need. During *Joybound's Community Cat Fix Fest*, the veterinary clinic transforms into a fast-paced hub of compassionate care, all focused on helping vulnerable free-roaming cats live healthier lives.

Several times a year, Joybound's veterinary clinic transforms into the *Community Cat Fix Fest*, a focused hub of care for stray cats, the free-roaming felines who often lack access to consistent veterinary care. At the most recent event, Joybound helped 86 cats receive spay and neuter services, with support from partners including Tito's Vodka for Dog People, volunteers, and local community cat organizations committed to improving feline welfare.

Each cat is humanely trapped and transported by community partners, arriving for a single purpose: treatment that improves both immediate health and long-term outcomes.

Inside, veterinary teams work with precision, performing spay and neuter surgeries as part of a broader, evidence-based approach to care. These procedures reduce overpopulation, prevent disease, and improve stability within outdoor cat populations.

Every cat also receives core feline vaccines to protect against common illnesses, along with flea treatment and deworming medication. An ear tip marks each cat as sterilized, ensuring they are recognized and not re-trapped unnecessarily.

Behind the scenes, the work is continuous. Staff and volunteers manage intake, monitoring, documentation, and sanitation, maintaining a steady, coordinated flow of care throughout the day.

Each event supports Trap-Neuter-Return (TNR), the only proven humane method for managing community cat populations while improving their welfare over time. More than a single day of care, each Fix Fest is part of Joybound's ongoing commitment to community-centered solutions for animals in need. 🐾



Compassion in action at Joybound's Community Cat Fix Fest.



Cleared for Takeoff, Powered by Paws

Helping Service Dog Teams Fly with Confidence

What does it take to turn a rescue dog into a confident airline traveler? Thanks to a unique new partnership between Joybound People & Pets, Oakland San Francisco Bay Airport, and Southwest Airlines, psychiatric service dogs are getting the chance to practice the real thing, before ever taking flight with the people who depend on them.

"They don't just train to fly, they train to help people move through the world with confidence."

Recently, Joybound's Shelter to Service program brought three psychiatric service dog teams to the airport for a hands-on mock travel experience designed to simulate the realities of air travel. The dogs practiced navigating TSA-style security checks, crowded terminals, long lines, unfamiliar sounds, and even boarding a real airplane alongside passengers.



The goal? Helping these future service dogs become calm, confident, and paw-fect passengers in high-stimulation environments.

Among the participants was Tony and his dog Jake. Tony, a retired Chief Warrant Officer with 20 years in the United States Coast Guard who later trained canine teams for TSA before graduating from Joybound's Shelter to Service program with Jake by his side.

Together, the pair represent the power of partnership, second chances, and the life-changing bond between people and pets, both on the ground and far beyond it.

For many people living with disabilities, airports and air travel can be overwhelming. Psychiatric service dogs are specially trained to provide support through grounding behaviors, interruption tasks, emotional regulation, and other disability-related assistance. Preparing dogs to remain focused and composed in busy public environments is a critical part of their training and future success as working service animals.

Joybound's Shelter to Service program transforms rescued animals into highly trained companions who enrich and support people every day. These highly trained dogs provide support, independence, and emotional stability while remaining safe, focused, and unobtrusive in public spaces like airports, restaurants, hospitals, and theaters.

While some dogs are trained for specialized roles like psychiatric service work, many more (along with cats) become emotional support and therapy animals, helping people build lasting bonds, confidence, and connection. 🐾

Visit joybound.org/S2S to learn more!

Shelter to Service Team Tony and Jake confidently navigate their way through Oakland San Francisco Bay Airport.



From Fearless to Fearless(ish)

Isaac Learned to Love Again

Confidence looks good
on Isaac Newton



When a dog struggles with fear or anxiety, everyday moments can suddenly feel overwhelming, for both the dog and the person who loves them.

That was the case for Isaac Newton Asimov, a spirited Pomeranian mix whose reactions to routine handling made even simple interactions difficult. Petting, grooming, or clipping on a leash could trigger lunging or biting. But Joybound's behavior team recognized that Isaac wasn't being "difficult," he was communicating fear, stress, and discomfort.

That's where Joybound People & Pets' Behavior Specialty Services stepped in. Through a combination of training, veterinary expertise, and lots of patience, Isaac and his guardian began working with Dr. Wailani Sung and Behavior Specialty Services Manager Aldyn Markle to help Isaac feel safer and more confident.

Then came an unexpected setback. In 2024, Isaac survived a traumatic attack by two off-leash dogs. Although he physically recovered, the emotional

impact lingered. "We missed our little friend so much," his guardian recalled.

With time, consistency, medical support, and carefully structured behavior work, Isaac slowly began to trust again. A key part of the process was allowing Isaac to make choices and move at his own pace, helping him learn that touch and care didn't have to feel scary.

**"Now Isaac and I are
back on the love boat."**

Today, Isaac can calmly participate in grooming and handling experiences that once seemed impossible, even nail trims. "Now Isaac and I are back on the love boat," his guardian shared.

His journey is a reminder that progress doesn't always happen quickly, but with support, even fearful dogs can rediscover joy, confidence, and connection. 🐾

Tail-Wagging Storytime

Therapy Dogs Help Kids Fall in Love with Reading

What happens when an eager child with a book meets a sweet dog who loves to listen? Something special unfolds, turning a simple reading moment into a confidence-building experience full of comfort and connection.

Nine-year-old Holden arrived at the Walnut Creek Library ready to read, but it was his new friend Paisley, a gentle therapy dog, who made the experience unforgettable. At a recent “Read to a Dog” event, part of Joybound’s Pet Hug Pack® outreach, Holden found a calm, encouraging friend who listened without judgment.

**“He wanted to stay and keep reading.
He was so proud of himself.”**

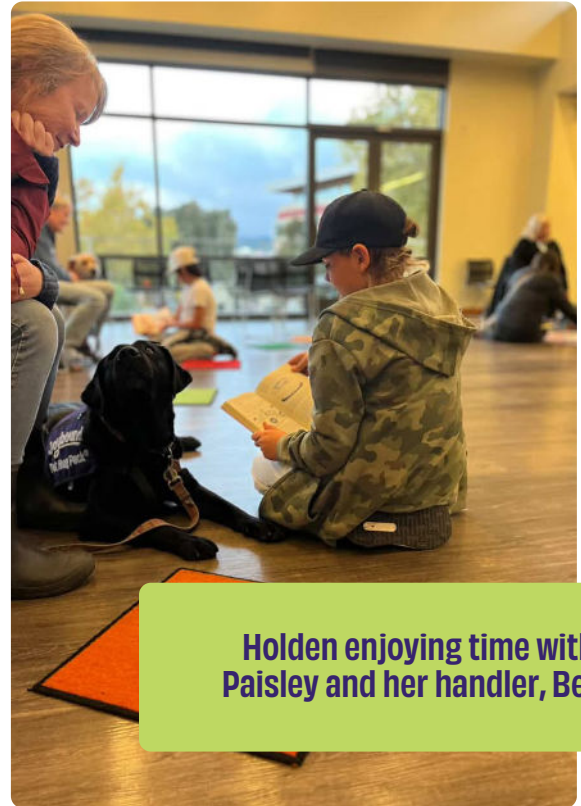
“Holden loved Paisley,” his mom shared. “She was very calm and affectionate, a wonderful listener.” With support from Paisley’s handler, Beth, Holden worked through tricky words and grew more confident with each page.

For Holden, who has mild dyslexia, reading can sometimes feel frustrating. But in this welcoming, low-pressure environment, something shifted. “He wanted to stay and keep reading even after his time was up,” his mom said. “He was so proud of himself.”

That’s the heart of the Pet Hug Pack®, a nationally recognized therapy animal program that has brought comfort and connection to hundreds of thousands of people since 2002. These trained animals and their volunteer handlers visit hospitals, care facilities, libraries, and community events, offering unconditional love and support.

For Holden and his family, the impact was clear. “It helps get him excited to read out loud,” his mom explained. “Programs like this build confidence and connection.”

Sometimes, all it takes is a kind, furry listener to help a child find their voice. 🐾



**Holden enjoying time with
Paisley and her handler, Beth**



Ready When Disaster Strikes

Hands-On Training to Rescue and Protect Animals in Times of Crisis



Animal Rescuers from across the West Coast and beyond gathered in Joybound's Nestle Purina Pavilion

When disaster strikes, animals depend on people who are trained, prepared, and ready to act. This June, Joybound People & Pets and Animal Search and Rescue (ASAR) brought together more than 70 animal emergency response professionals from across the West Coast and beyond for a two-day Animal Disaster Preparedness Workshop focused on collaboration, field training, and real-world readiness.

Held at Joybound's Walnut Creek campus, the workshop welcomed animal control officers, veterinary professionals, shelter teams, emergency planners, CART and DART members, and first responders, all united by a shared mission to protect animals during emergencies and natural disasters.

Day One immersed participants in hands-on field training led by ASAR instructors Eric Thompson and Greg Merrell. Attendees practiced wide area search techniques for companion animals, explored collapsed structure and confined space hazard awareness, and strengthened operational skills rooted in ASAR's nationally recognized rescue curriculum.

Day Two shifted to scenario-based collaboration, where participants worked through realistic disaster response and recovery situations alongside peers from across the region. Discussions focused on California's evolving animal disaster landscape, coordination challenges, and actionable planning for the critical first hours and long-term recovery efforts following a disaster.

Since its inception, Joybound has been committed to rescuing and protecting animals in crisis. Today, the organization continues that leadership by helping train and support the professionals who respond when pets need help most. 🐾

Presented in partnership with ASAR and supported by the American Humane Society, the ASPCA, CVET, Bay Alarm, and the Halter Project

A Night of Disco, Joy, and Impact

Groovy Glam for Good



The disco balls were spinning, the dance floor was glowing, and the energy was unmistakable. Joybound's 2nd annual Unleash Happiness Gala brought the community together for an unforgettable evening of celebration, connection, and purpose.

Hosted on Joybound's Walnut Creek campus, 180 guests arrived dressed in their Groovy Glam best, ready to embrace a night where people, pets, and community took center stage. Emmy Award-winning journalist Dan Ashley, emceed the evening with warmth and heart, setting the tone for a truly meaningful event.

The festivities began with an exclusive VIP welcome where guests enjoyed a special meet-and-greet with Jackson Galaxy, aka The Cat Daddy, beloved cat behavior expert and advocate. Throughout the evening, attendees explored beautifully curated silent auction baskets, connected with fellow animal-lovers, and spent time with some of Joybound's most charming ambassadors, adorable kittens and playful puppies!

Throughout dinner, guests shared stories and smiles rooted in a love for people and pets. That sense of community crescendoed to a lively raise the paddle. In all, the remarkable generosity helped raise \$300,000 to power Joybound's lifesaving programs.

The celebration carried on into a lively after party, and, of course, disco dancing.

Together, every moment of the evening helped make a lasting difference for pet families.

Save the date for **Saturday, May 15, 2027** and join us for next year's Unleash Happiness Gala. 🐾

Relive the fun (or check out what you missed) at joybound.org/gala2026



2890 Mitchell Drive
Walnut Creek, CA 94598

Joybound AROUND TOWN ON BROADWAY



**Sunday
September 13
11 AM - 3 PM**

**Broadway Plaza
Walnut Creek**

- ❖ Paw-Rade Walk
- ❖ Pet Festival
- ❖ Live Music
- ❖ Games & Prizes

joybound.org/aroundtown

