

JOY

THE MAGAZINE OF
Joybound[®]
PEOPLE & PETS

FALL 2026

TWO OLD GUYS, ONE UNEXPECTED FRIENDSHIP

Partners in
Emergency
Response

PLUS

Joybound Takes
to the Streets of
Walnut Creek



Bringing Joy to You

Dear friends and partners,

As the days grow shorter, the stories in this issue of JOY Magazine remind me what it looks like when people show up for each other.

A community partnership helped Jupiter, a playful cat, receive lifesaving care. Organizations came together to protect vulnerable kittens during an emergency. A foster placement grew into an unexpected, lifelong friendship. None of these stories would exist without you.

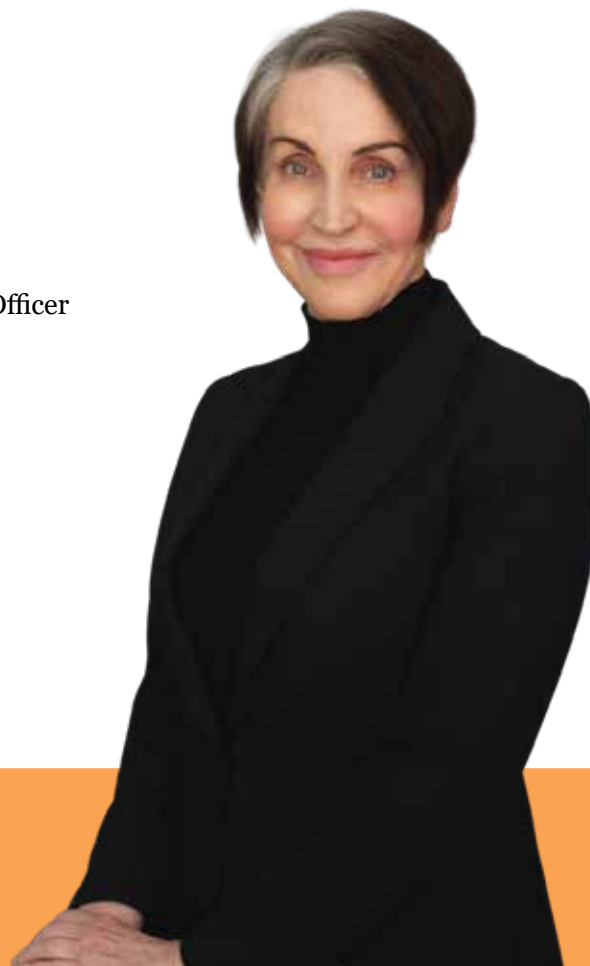
Your generosity builds a network of care that brings people, pets, and partners together when it matters most. Because of you, families find hope, animals receive the care they need, and communities grow stronger.

I'm thrilled to share that in September, the Walnut Creek Planning Commission unanimously voted to move forward with The Liberty Center, the future home of veterinary behavioral services, crisis boarding, and pet boarding and daycare. Thanks to your support, more pets and the people who love them will have a place to turn.

Thank you for making these stories, and so many more, possible.

With gratitude and joy,

Susan Lee Vick
President & Chief Executive Officer



Make This Fall Un-fur-gettable	3
Happy Tails: Adoption Updates	4
When Care Can't Wait	5
Two Old Guys, One New Beginning	6-7
Stronger Together for People & Pets	8-9
A Surprise Cat Encounter	10
Joybound Around Town on Broadway	11

On the Cover:
J.R. and Timmy, an adorable "foster fail"

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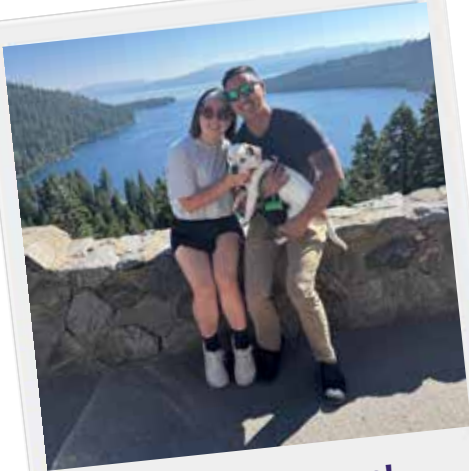
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Connect with us online at joybound.org and on social media.

Make This Fall Un-fur-gettable

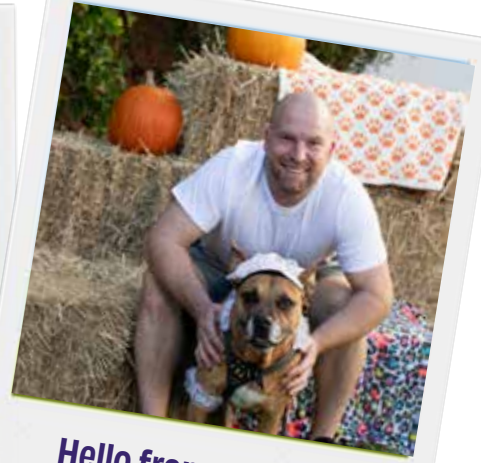
Simple ways to turn fall adventures into meaningful moments with your pet



Hello from Sierra!



Hello from Nisa!



Hello from Joybound!

Fall invites you to slow down, savor the season, and spend a little extra time with your pet. And with a little creativity, that time together can become an opportunity to explore, try something new, and strengthen your bond.

Ready for some fall fun? Here are a few ways to get started.

Take a Fall Sniffari

Trade the power walk for a leisurely adventure. Visit a pet-friendly trail and let your dog set the pace, stopping to investigate crunchy leaves, interesting smells, and new surroundings. Sniffing provides valuable mental stimulation, so there's no need to rush.

For indoor cats, bring a little fall adventure inside! Create a cozy seasonal play space with cardboard boxes, crinkled paper "leaves," tunnels, and a few hidden treats for your cat to discover. You can even set up a perch near a window for prime leaf, bird, and squirrel watching.

Visit a Pet-Friendly Pumpkin Patch

New sights, sounds, textures, and smells make a pumpkin patch an enriching fall adventure. Whether you have a leashed pup or an adventure cat who's comfortable in a carrier. Following their cues and giving them space to take it all in helps build confidence, connection, and trust.

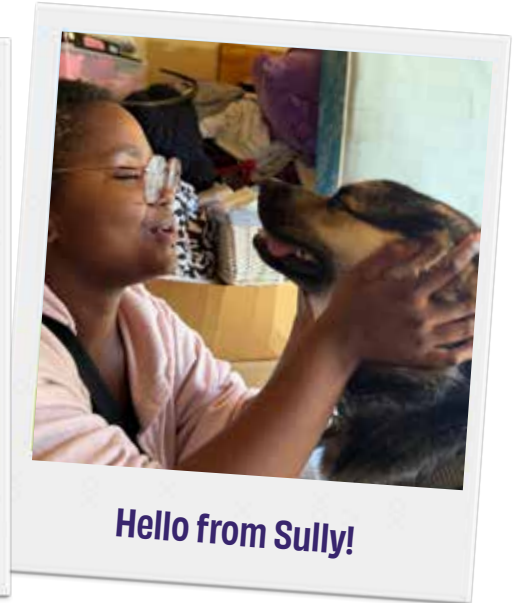
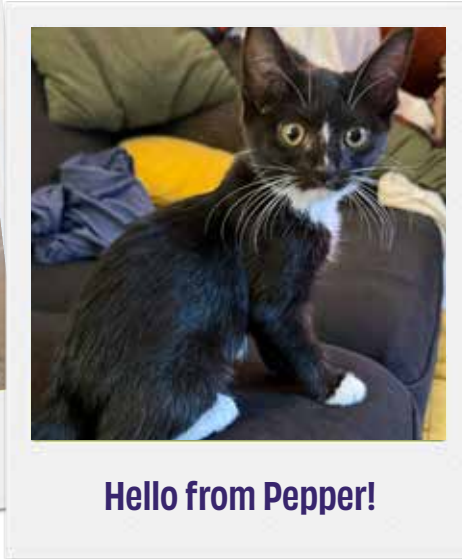
Plan a Fall Photoshoot

Find a colorful patch of leaves, grab a few treats, and embrace your pet's inner supermodel. Keep the session short and playful, rewarding participation and allowing plenty of breaks. For cats who like to stay indoors, grab a cozy blanket, a few pumpkins, and some autumn décor to create a seasonal backdrop without taking your cat into an unfamiliar environment.

This fall, enrichment doesn't have to mean adding more to your calendar. It can simply mean turning the moments already there into opportunities to explore, communicate, and enjoy the season together. 🐾

Happy Tails Adoption Updates!

Visit joybound.org/story to Submit Your Adoption Update



”

He's an absolute velcro dog and follows us room to room, always wanting to be included.

”

She is the sassy, joyful addition to our family that brings a smile to everyone!

”

Whenever he gets to the dog park he always rallies the other dogs into playing in a group.



Shout Out to Our Corporate Partners

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



When Care Can't Wait

Community partnership helped Jupiter through a medical emergency

Jupiter has never been shy about letting his family know when it's time for dinner. So, when the food-loving cat suddenly stopped eating, drinking and seeking out his favorite cuddles, Marselena knew something wasn't right.

Marselena adopted Jupiter from Joybound more than two years ago. Affectionate, playful and always interested in food, he quickly became an important part of the family. But when he began hiding in dark places and acting nothing like himself, Marselena grew worried. Then she discovered a bathing suit with a missing strap near one of his hiding spots. Knowing Jupiter's tendency to chew things he shouldn't, she feared he may have swallowed it.

"Having access to support through Joybound made all the difference."

A veterinarian confirmed that Jupiter had ingested the bathing suit strap and required emergency care. At that point, Marselena faced a challenge familiar to many pet families: how to afford an unexpected veterinary bill.

At her sister's suggestion, Marselena contacted **Joybound's Community Solutions** team. Through **Measure X** funding and a partnership with **VEG**, an emergency veterinary hospital, Joybound helped make Jupiter's treatment financially accessible, connecting his family with the urgent care he needed.

"I don't think you need to be rich to be able to have a pet," she said. "As long as you love them and care for them, that's what matters. But emergencies happen."

Today, Jupiter has fully recovered and is back to cuddling, watching birds and enthusiastically awaiting dinner.



Jupiter is back to cuddles, birdwatching and, of course, boxes.

For Marselena, the experience demonstrated what can happen when community resources, public funding and veterinary partners work together to help keep people and pets together.

"When Jupiter needed surgery, I didn't know where to turn," she said. "Having access to support through Joybound made all the difference for our family." 🐾

Read Jupiter's full story
on the Joybound blog.
[Visit joybound.org/jupiter](https://joybound.org/jupiter)

Two Old Guys, One New Beginning

J.R. gave fostering a try. Timmy had other plans.

He'd seen plenty of people fall in love with pets they never expected to bring home. But, J.R. never expected it to happen to him. This time, it was his turn.

"A chunky, senior Chihuahua isn't what I was envisioning for my next pet," J.R. admits. Then he met Timmy.

**"We are now known as the two
'old guys' driving around town."**

- J.R., Timmy's Guardian

Timmy arrived at Joybound as a senior dog needing care, including extensive dental work. Surrendered by his previous family, he had lost the security he knew and was very shy around new people.

That's when J.R. stepped in and offered to foster Timmy. It was his first time fostering, and the arrangement was only meant to be temporary.

Timmy had other plans.

As the two spent more time together, their connection grew. Timmy slowly learned to trust again, while J.R. discovered just how much he enjoyed having a little sidekick along for the ride. Before long, Timmy was accompanying him to work, the hardware store, the bagel shop, and just about everywhere in between.

The temporary foster officially became what Joybound affectionately calls a "foster fail": J.R. adopted Timmy.

Today, the pair are inseparable and are lovingly known as the two "old guys" driving around town.

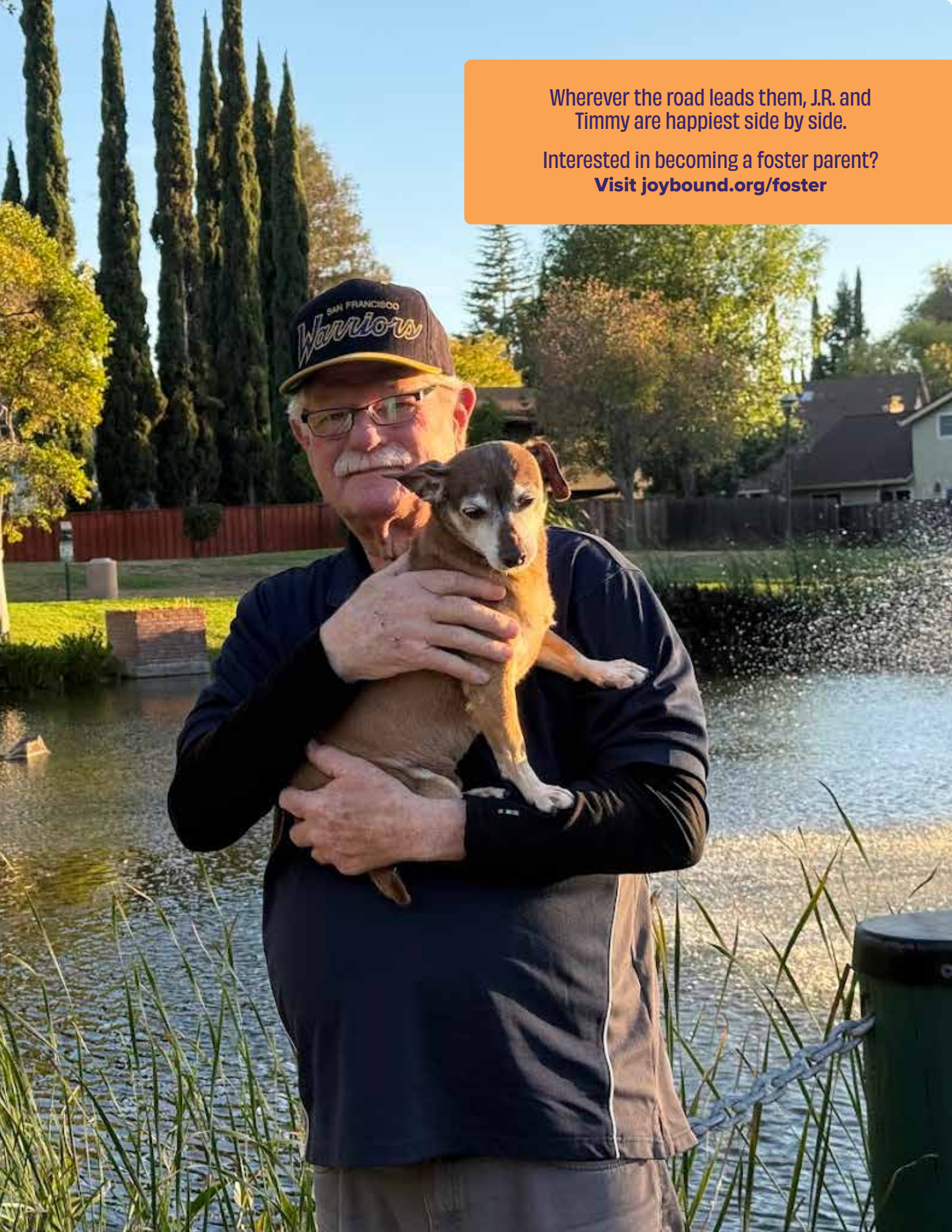
"Timmy found his person, and I found a love that I didn't know I was missing," J.R. says.

Sometimes the connection you need most isn't the one you planned for. It's the one that climbs into the passenger seat and quietly becomes part of your everyday life. 🐾



Wherever the road leads them, J.R. and
Timmy are happiest side by side.

Interested in becoming a foster parent?
Visit joybound.org/foster





Joybound welcomes 25 kittens to its headquarters in Walnut Creek during Orange County emergency evacuations in June.

Stronger Together for People and Pets

Connected when it matters most

When emergencies put people and pets at risk, connection becomes a powerful resource. No single organization can respond to every need alone.

But when animal welfare organizations, emergency agencies, and community partners build strong relationships before a crisis, each can step in with the resources, expertise, and support needed when circumstances change quickly.

That network of support was recently put into action during an emergency in Orange County earlier this year. An imminent chemical explosion threat prompted the evacuation of tens of thousands of households while local animal shelters were already facing capacity challenges.

More than 100 cats and kittens needed immediate placement as emergency resources were mobilized to support evacuations, displaced families, and their pets.

"By working together across organizations and regions, we can relieve pressure on overwhelmed shelters."

Joining forces with the **ASPCA** and **Orange County Animal Care** helped ease the pressure. Through a coordinated response, 25 vulnerable kittens were safely transferred from Southern California to **Joybound's Walnut Creek campus**.

The impact of that collaboration extended far beyond the 25 animals transferred. Moving adoptable animals out of the affected region immediately opened valuable shelter space,



giving Orange County teams more flexibility to care for pets displaced by the emergency and focus resources where they were needed most.

"This coordinated effort shows how emergency management agencies and animal shelters can work together in a crisis," said Miguel Abihassan, Joybound's Chief Programs Officer. "By working together across organizations and regions, we can relieve pressure on overwhelmed shelters, ensure animals receive immediate care, and support broader public safety needs."

Once the kittens arrived at Joybound, another part of the network went into motion. Veterinary and animal care teams provided examinations, vaccinations, preventive treatments, spay/neuter procedures as needed, enrichment, and ongoing monitoring. Healthy kittens could then move toward adoption, helping preserve capacity for future emergency needs.

Emergency response may happen quickly, but the relationships behind it are built over time. Communication, trust, shared expertise, and proactive coordination create a network that can mobilize when a community needs help.

That is the power of connectedness. Different organizations may play different roles, but together, they create a stronger safety net for people and pets. And for the 25 kittens who made the journey north, that network of support led to the best kind of next chapter: loving homes and families of their own. 🐾🐾

A Surprise Cat Encounter

Joybound's Pet Safety Net keeps Duchess and her Guardian Together

Tara thought April 29 would be just another day. Things took quite a turn when she crossed paths with a cat in need and brought her to safety. Turns out her new feline friend had one more surprise in store: four kittens, born that same day!

Tara named the new mom Duchess, and despite her uncertain past, Duchess quickly made herself at home. Affectionate and trusting, she settled in with plenty of purrs and companionship. Over the following weeks, Tara cared for the little family and eventually found homes for all four kittens. But Duchess had already found her place: right by Tara's side.

"I'm so happy to have saved such a precious kitty. I truly couldn't have done it without your help."

The decision to keep Duchess was easy. Finding a way to afford her veterinary care was more complicated. Tara had recently lost income and was searching for new employment. With finances stretched thin, the cost of spaying, vaccinations and other essential care felt out of reach.

Still, Tara was determined to keep Duchess and give her the care she needed. That's when she connected with **Joybound's Pet Safety Net** program. Through the program, Duchess received a spay surgery, FVRCP and rabies vaccinations, and a microchip, giving Tara the support she needed to continue caring for the cat who had unexpectedly become such an important part of her life.

Tara remained closely involved every step of the way, including during Duchess's recovery. Instead of the traditional post-surgery cone, Tara borrowed a lavender post-surgery recovery onesie.

Her first fitting didn't go exactly as planned. As soon as Tara put it on, she flopped over and refused to move. Fortunately, the protest didn't last.



Joybound's Pet Safety Net program served 1,146 pet families in 2025.

Before long, Duchess was peacefully snoozing on her cat tower, lavender onesie and all.

Duchess had gone from a pregnant cat with an uncertain future to a healthy, cherished companion, while Tara gained a steady source of comfort during a period of transition.

"I'm so happy to have saved such a precious kitty," Tara shared. "I truly couldn't have done it without your help. I'm forever grateful."

Sometimes keeping a family together takes a little support. For Tara and Duchess, it meant making sure the bond they had already formed could continue to grow; one purr, cuddle and lavender onesie at a time. 🐾

Want to learn more about
Joybound's Pet Safety Net?
Visit joybound.org/safety-net

Joybound Around Town on Broadway

Joy Takes to the Streets of Walnut Creek



For 26 years, **Joybound Around Town on Broadway** has brought people and pets together, and this year's celebration continued the tradition on Sunday, September 13, at Broadway Plaza in Walnut Creek. Around 6,500 people came out to enjoy the festivities, many with four-legged family members in tow.

The day kicked off with the 1-mile Paw-rade Walk, as pets and their people made their way through downtown Walnut Creek in support of Joybound's work to strengthen the human-animal bond.

Congrats to Ann Zeltner, our top fundraiser, who walked in the Paw-Rade in honor of Finnegan, a cherished Joybound-adopted beagle mix.

Throughout the day, guests enjoyed live entertainment, family-friendly activities, and the Pet Festival, connecting pet families with helpful resources and information.

And, of course, the pet costume contest brought plenty of creativity. Taking first place was a dog-and-guardian duo dressed as Woody from Toy Story. Second place went to kittens looking extra cuddly in fluffy costumes, while third place was claimed by a dog transformed into an adorable four-legged dragon. Every contestant brought their own personality and imagination.

Joybound Around Town was a celebration of the connection between people and pets. Thank you to everyone who walked, fundraised, volunteered, participated, and joined us for a day dedicated to bringing more joy to pets and the people who love them. 🐾

Ready to relive the highlights (or see what you missed?) Head over to

joybound.org/JBATPhotos.





2890 Mitchell Drive
Walnut Creek, CA 94598



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Visit Joybound's Thrift Store, Cat Lounge & Adoption Center

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[joybound.org
/thrift](https://joybound.org/thrift)

Expanded Hours:
Mon-Sun 🐾 10 AM - 4 PM