

# The ASK Report

THE ASK FOUNDATION

Animal Solutions Konnection

## ASK Gives \$9,000 to Riverside County Department of Animal Services



Pictured Above: Board Members Tom Miller, Marti Michalis, Wally Baker  
And Riverside County Supervisors Bob Buster and Marion Ashley

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On February 15<sup>th</sup> 2011 our foundation proudly presented a check of \$9,000 to the Riverside Department of Animals Services . We were granted the honor of presenting the check to Robert Miller the department director at the Riverside Board of Supervisor Meeting .The department has been sorely hurt by the Riverside budget cuts due to the recession and therefore they needed outside reinforcement to meet some of their operation costs and their goals of providing much needed assistance to the low income pet owners they serve. So far part of the donation has been spent on new transport cages for animals that require pick up and transport to the shelter and part was used in early March to provide spay and neuter surgeries for several pets of low income Riverside County residents. More will be used for necessary supplies and equipment needed by the shelter. We were elated to be able to do this for the Animal Shelters. And we thank our private donors, benefactors, corporate sponsors such as Union Bank and the Glide Foundation who helped make this substantial donation possible.

## Exciting Upcoming Events which Help us Help the Animals!

**Our Annual Shimmy For Critters** October 8<sup>th</sup> 11:00-4:00 PM

Put your best foot forward and join us for Belly Dance entertainment, music, food and craft vendors, Drum Circle and a guest star appearance by actress Megan Blake and Smiley the Dog

**Our Newest Fundraiser: POKER 4 PETS November 19th**

Put your best hand forward and come play poker for the pets!

Winners will receive prizes donated by corporate and private sponsors. Get more information at [www.theaskfoundation.com](http://www.theaskfoundation.com) We are currently accepting corporate sponsors for this event. Sponsor a table and promote your company for a good cause!



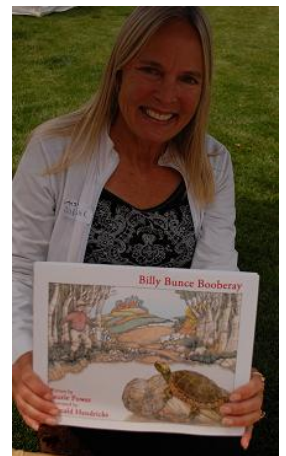


## Art for Animals and Park and Bark Increase Shelter Adoptions and Provide Riverside Community a Fun and Cultural Event

You really can't go wrong with a winning combination of sleek vintage cars, art and sixties music. These were the highlights of our annual Art for the Animals and Vintage Car show affair. The fair which took place on May 14<sup>th</sup> was a hit with all attendees. Several artist and craft vendors were on hand to display their art and wares. The Inland Empire Classic Mustang Club graciously donated their time to helping us attract several local antique car

collectors. And local 60's band Back Pages also donated their time and talent to the event. It was a smash hit and we want to extend our appreciation to all parties which helped us with this event.

We were able to increase adoptions that Saturday by thirty-three percent.



Writer Laurie Power was there to present and sign her children's book.

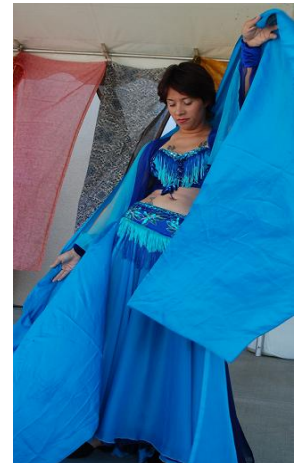
## Upcoming Event: "Shimmy for Critters" featuring Belly Dance Artists and Megan Blake from Animal Attractions Television

Shimmy for Critters, a belly dancing festival to benefit the Riverside City/County animal shelter, is scheduled 11am to 4 pm Saturday, October 8, 2011, at the shelter headquarters on Van Buren Blvd. Dancers and drummers will perform all day, and actress Megan Blake of Animal Attractions TV will perform with Smiley the Dog in a videotaped performance that will be featured on Youtube. Also on hand will be vendors, crafts, food and raffle prizes.

We enjoy hosting these fun cultural events in order to build community and to help familiarize the public with the Western Riverside County Animal Shelter. We have learned from past events that adoption rates dramatically increase on days that events are held at the shelter. We welcome you to come support us, watch the show, dance with Megan & Smiley, and take home a furry friend!



**October 8<sup>th</sup> 11-4 pm**  
**Western Riverside**  
**County Shelter**  
**6851 Van Buren**



## About Megan Blake



For those of you who are unfamiliar with Megan Blake, Blake is an Actress poet and deeply committed animal advocate. She is the co-host, writer and producer of Animal Attractions.

Animal Attractions TV is the new pet series which teaches a wide range of lessons from the secrets of choosing the right pet for your lifestyle to making the most of the visit to the vet. Throughout the series entertaining and informative segments present true-to-life stories of heroic dogs, therapy cats, natural born performers and more than a few surprises. Regular segment on pet health questions and answers, how to have a better relationship with your pet are also featured.

Megan a long time animal advocate became tired of all the deeply troubling and sad television public service announcements on shelter animals. She recognized a need for the production of

happy and upbeat PSAs on animal adoption and she filled it.

She started the first flash mob movement to promote animal adoption in the US. For those who do not know what a flash mob is, a song and dance flash mob is a group of individuals who collaborate on a song and or dance routine and then perform the routine in public places in order to promote an idea or event. They are never advertised and so the public is usually caught off guard which helps give the message and performance more impact. View Megan's flash mob with Smiley her rescue companion.

[www.youtube.com/user/meganblake](http://www.youtube.com/user/meganblake)

# Kids Kritter Camp: A Success Story

by Diane Falconer

The ASK Foundation is constantly looking for ways to ease the financial burdens that are an inherent part of running an animal shelter. So the Department of Animal Services and ASK put their heads together and two weeks of summer camp was the result. The kids explored, touched, created, discovered and somewhere along the way **learned** about animal care, treatment, training. The list goes on and on.

Kim McWhorter, a key player in making the camp run smoothly and DAS education coordinator, rounded up a host of four-legged guests - dogs, kittens, rabbits, snakes (really big one - no legs), llamas, turtles (again, a really big one) and even an alligator.

The kids learned some things along the way (cleverly disguised as crafts and games). For instance they learned how to read a dog. They learned how to identify if the dog was happy, sad, fretful, aggressive or shy. This taught them how to distinguish between which dogs they could pet and which ones to leave alone. They learned how to act like a tree when a strange dog comes nosing around. They also honed their dog-training skills using clickers and treats.

Diane Falconer, ASK Board member and retired naturalist, recruited two well-seasoned camp teachers, Margie Valdez and Mary Henry, who took time

Pictured: Kids learn to distinguish which dogs are approachable. This St. Bernard clearly is.



off of their full-time jobs as naturalists with the Riverside County Park District at the Hidden Valley Wildlife Area. All three have years and years of summer camps experience. They had all the teaching skills and talents necessary for this job. In addition to the teaching staff Diane Askren, Jennifer Askren, Sarah Drobnack, regular volunteers with the shelter worked as camp aides. They were instrumental in teaching the children about the ins and outs of the Department of Animal Services.

To build our craft supply arsenal we e-mailed our friends and contacts a long list of items that we needed, really just basics to be used year after year. Don and Marci J affiliates with board member Robbie Maxwell's grassroots group Inland Empire Pet Advocate Coalition answered the call and bought practically everything on our wish list. They gifted things like crayons, construction paper, pencils, pompoms, pipe cleaners, scissors, sacks. We also put the word out that we needed toilet paper rolls and baby food jars. The generous response from our community strongly supports the adage "Ask and ye shall receive" because WOW, did we ever! The community provided us with tremendous support. We want to take this opportunity to thank everyone for their generosity.

We've received lots of positive feedback from the happy campers and their parents. Many asked, "Will we do it again next year?" You bet!

-Diane Falconer

If you would like to make a donation or volunteer to help with our summer camp and educational programs please contact us at 951-777-5431



## ASK Turns a Tragedy Around and Gives a Grateful Pup a Second Chance at Life by Tom Miller

From time to time the Riverside County Department of Animal Services requests funding from the ASK Foundation for Special Assistance. A recent case of this was for a dog named Lance. ASK received a request from Director Robert Miller to help a young dog that was brought into the shelter. Lance was an eleven month old male cocker/corgi mix that someone had thrown out the window of a moving car. He suffered a fractured femur, the large upper leg bone. The femur was fractured at the upper end just below the ball that goes into the hip socket. In order to save Lance and bring him to adoptable status a special orthopedic surgery would be required. This type of surgery was not available at the shelter and outside veterinarian services would have to be used. This is not something that would typically be done by the shelter due to the cost

involved. The ASK foundation agreed to save Lance by paying for the cost of the outside surgery. In addition, ASK worked with the Department of Animal Services to allow Dr. Ronald Beeley, DVM to perform the surgery at the shelter while shelter veterinarians observed the procedure. ASK also agreed to purchase the special surgical instruments and a bone pack that includes bone pins, surgical wire, cutters, retractors, clamps, etc. so that shelter veterinarians could perform orthopedic surgeries in the future. The Femoral Head Osteotomy was successfully performed and Lance recovered from the surgery. He is expected to have full use of his repaired leg. A special adoption was held for Lance and he now has his loving forever home.

-Tom Miller

Lance with new owner



## ASK Offers Reward To Help Catch Person Who Shot A German Shepherd Pup With A Bow and Arrow

On July 27<sup>th</sup> a graffiti clean up worker for the city of Riverside discovered a young German Shepherd crouched near a fence laying still with an arrow piercing his backside. The worker alerted officials at La Sierra University since the dog was lying on Raley Drive a street which borders an enclosed field on the university property.

Two maintenance workers from La Sierra University Sanford Harlan and co-worker Aaron Hoover waited with the graffiti removal worker for about 10 minutes until an animal services officer arrived. Hoover said the dog was not moving, just lying by the fence and panting heavily. There was not much blood and the arrow was still in his back, Harlan said, " He was scared, that's for sure. It was hard to tell where the dog came from or how long he had been sitting in the dry weeds by the fence."

He was hidden from the road. Harlan said, "I just knelt down, petted him and talked to him. He would have made somebody a good pet. He probably was." Animal Service officials determined that the arrow had not only injured the dog's spine but it may also have punctured his lung making a full recovery impossible. Consequently the injured dog was euthanized. Anyone who has information which leads to the capture and conviction of the perpetrator will be awarded 575.00 by the ASK Foundation. Our foundation is still accepting donations to apply to the award amount. If you have any information regarding this mean spirited act please call the shelter and ask for Sergeant Sanders

**Shelter phone number: 951-358-7387**

## Interview with Robert Cabral director of Bound Angels

*In every newsletter we like to include an interview with an animal advocate celebrity who is making a significant difference in the lives of animals. We hope by doing so we can inspire ideas and educate the public about effective ways one can create positive change in the current state of animal welfare.*

Months ago I was at a luncheon with a group of animal welfare friends. One guest at the luncheon who is a volunteer with an LA rescue raved about the innovative media projects of Robert Cabral. He spoke about his non profit Bound Angels which uses media to help raise awareness about our challenge with pet homelessness and to increase adoptions of pets in shelters. I filed Robert's name and organization in my memory. Coincidentally weeks later on an uneventful Saturday afternoon while I was watching past Rescue Roundtable interviews on YouTube I came across Robert being interviewed by the Host of Rescue Roundtable Mary Catalano. In addition to being a committed rescuer and advocate for homeless animals Robert also works with animals with severe behavior challenges.

In the interview Robert said something about animals which hit home for me. He explained how animals respond best to leadership energy combined with short commands. I thought to myself after he said this, "Finally someone has articulated for me the solution to my own perplexing issue I have with my unruly Chihuahua mix". I began to reflect on my discipline tactics and realized that I use way too many words with my dogs and not enough assertive personal calm and consistent behavior. To calm my dog I speak in full sentences as if she is my human child, "It's o.k. Red, Mary is not going to hurt you. Sit down Red be a good girl." (Somebody just shoot me—I know) Robert reminded me that instead I need to stay calm, use a one word assertive command and exude as much confident, calm controlled and assertive energy as I can. In short, it dawned on me that my challenge with Red was not about her. It was about me and my inconsistent energy and overly emotional babble. O.k. I take responsibility. This epiphany increased my interest in Robert's work.

As I began to research Bound Angels a little more I discovered that Robert and I share a very similar desire to increase focus on "strategy" for getting animals adopted. As a community organizer and volunteer with rescue groups I have deep admiration for all the sacrifice and dedication of all parties involved with saving animals. Yet I see room for growth in our ability to think outside of the box to help get animals adopted. I believe there is an endless wellspring of strategies we can use to increase awareness about the plight of homeless pets and to help re-home them that we have not tapped into yet. Many of these strategies involve the use of online social media.

Bound Angels is an example of a Southern California animal advocate group that is maximizing their "creative potential" to help get pets adopted and raise awareness. I hope this interview inspires you and gives you some insight as to how you might increase adoptions through using the wonderful new online and print media tools, which are so easily accessible these days.

1.) Robert you published a book not long ago titled "Selling Used Dogs". It is currently available on your website to download for free and I know you are working on making it available in print as well. Can you first explain your title choice and how it relates to the content of the book?

*Selling Used Dogs may seem like an offensive title to some, and I'm ok with that. To me the title is a bit tongue and cheek and a good way to get attention to a serious problem. These are dogs that someone else had and didn't want any more, for the most part. So, I would say they are sort of used. What I personally find so offensive is the fact that when we can't "sell" them we kill them – that is offensive. In Selling Used Dogs I explain ways to truly "sell" these dogs, and that "selling" gives them a chance at LIFE. That is my only real goal – saving lives!*

2.) In the book you stress the importance of making the rescue animals presentable to the public. You share simple tactics such as placing a bandana around a dog's neck or giving a pair of animals unforgettable names which trigger associations and memory such as Bogart and Bacall. Describe what results you get by using this tactic.

*I think everyone sees these dogs and often looks through them. Giving people a focus point such as a bandana or a clever name makes people stop for a moment, and it is often that moment that allows them to connect. Adoptable animals need a special nudge from us sometimes and that nudge can save lives. I'm not a big fan of dressing dogs up, but if it will save a life – get the wardrobe ready!*

3.) What would help shelters and rescues in helping them make animals presentable?

*I think the primary thing that shelters need to focus on is availability to show dogs. I can't tell you how many times I've gone to shelters and walked around for 30 minutes and never found an employee. When people are in the shelter, they already feel out of place. They need to be greeted and approached by someone. This is paramount. I also teach shelters that the photos they put online or in their email should be well done. Nice lighting, clean background and nicely framed. . Oftentimes shelters rush through this part and end up stuck with the dogs. Remember, even used stuff on eBay needs a good picture to sell. Without the picture, the chances of selling it are slim to none. A nice photo of a dog with a cute name on it can go the distance in saving a life. The few extra minutes it takes is well worth it.*

## Interview with Robert Continued...

4.) Is this something that you and LA Animal Services work on together? Would you mind talking about some of the work you do with LA Animal Services?

*LAAS and I worked together under 2 different General Managers and had great successes. I chose to pilot several of my programs at a shelter that was more of a challenge than the others to really put it to the test. I found that each program increased adoptions, saved the lives of the animals we chose for the program and increased employee morale considerably.*

*Employees were suddenly seen as heroes to the animals and were seeing a change in the way the shelter was viewed. I value the friendships I made at this shelter and I still receive constant updates from the people who adopted many of these dogs and cats.*

5.) I'm a big fan of your YouTube adoption stories and stories which are aimed at getting animals adopted. Can you please tell me when you started using this strategy and how successful has it been.

*What you are talking about is the Shelter Angel Video Program. All of these videos are available to see on youtube at*

*[www.youtube.com/boundangels](http://www.youtube.com/boundangels)*

*I leave them all up there in hopes that people who have read *Selling Used Dogs* will use them as a resource to see the format. I started shooting these videos a few years back and found quickly the right way to do them. The first thing was to edit out the sound of the shelter and add a bed of music. All but a few have music as a bed and no talking and no dogs barking. These videos are mini movies and are fun to watch.*

*The results of our videos has been staggering. 100% of the animals we featured in Shelter Angel Videos were adopted or rescued, many within a week releasing the video. Again, this goes back to the art of selling. The reason people aren't adopting these dogs is because they don't seem to equate value to them. That value can come in an emotional value - which is what I'm selling. My point is that each of these dogs has a story and it's my job to tell it.*

6.) What type of equipment would a person need to make you-tube videos similar to yours with sub title captions. It's a brilliant technique of drawing in the viewer with story. Will they need graphic design skills? What kind of editing program can they buy

to help edit their videos? *There are no graphic skills that go into making these videos. Just about anyone with a digital camera can do it. I shoot with a point and shoot digital still camera that also shoots hi-def video. Everything can be edited in a basic editing program like iMovie available on the Mac, but I know there are simple programs available for the PC as well. I think the most crucial element is the ability to tell a story and make it compelling. Sometimes a team can make it work: one person who is good with dogs and another one who is talented shooting the video and editing and of course - telling a great story!*

7.) Robert you also produce PSAs. Can you describe for our readers what PSAs are and what people, equipment and funding is needed to make an effective PSA?

*PSA stands for Public Service Announcement. They are short videos that have a simple message, "Spay and Neuter Saves Lives." "Adopt Don't Shop." Simple points delivered oftentimes by a celebrity. PSA's are a little more work because scripting and sound are involved as well as getting exposure. The best exposure is now web based. I think with a good campaign, you can reach more people for a lot less money on the web than on TV.*

8.) Robert, Lastly I know that you re-home several pets out of state and out of country. This can be extremely expensive. Are you working with another rescue group to be able to do this regularly? Are there several foundations that are catching onto the need to ship rescues out of state in order to find abundant adoption opportunities.

*There are several foundations now joining in to help get animals to safe havens out of state. It is costly, but we (as well as other organizations) have special funds set up to help any of our animals if the need arises. There are also pilots who will fly rescue pets to rescue groups out of state. All in all I'm seeing more people get on the bandwagon of what I call the modern day "underground railroad."*

9.) Is there anything you wish our readers to know in relation to your work. Any message you are eager to share with shelters and those of us whose aim is to improve and give to our shelter. I know you have a

special place in your heart for animals which are deemed unadoptable and do not get picked up by rescue groups.

*My main focus is that rescue groups and shelters need to work together. It needs to be a symbiotic relationship. It's important to understand that shelters don't kill animals because they want to, but because (for a large part) they are forced to. People who dump dogs in shelters are responsible for the killing. Rescue groups need to work with shelters to help them do more adoptions, marketing and outreach - and shelters need to open up and work more willingly with rescue groups. Most shelters would benefit greatly from a team of volunteers that can do the adoption, rehabilitation and outreach work that the shelter is too understaffed to do. That is how Bound Angels started. I didn't want to see another organization that would pull dogs out of shelters and try to get them adopted. My goal was to show that an organization would leave the dogs in the shelters and then drive the people into the shelters. If we want to end this crisis, we're gonna have to get together.*

*Thank you so much for your time and dedication to all of the animals who need help!*  
**JOIN THE REVOLUTION!**

**To learn more about Robert Cabral and his Bound Angels organization or to download a free pdf version of his book *Selling Used Dogs* go to [www.boundangels.org](http://www.boundangels.org)**



*"My point is that unless we start to look at saving dogs a little differently and move from emotion to strategy- we will lose this battle and the casualties are the innocent dogs that look to us through steel bars..."*

*-Excerpt from *Selling Used Dogs**

## On Going Projects

### The Ask Website: [www.theaskfoundation.org](http://www.theaskfoundation.org)

The Ask Foundation has a website which we encourage members and non members to visit regularly in order to find out about up coming and on going ASK events and the shelter. We also have a donation page where one can make donations to the foundation online. The website address is [www.theaskfoundation.org](http://www.theaskfoundation.org) We hope to grow our website in the future to include links which are helpful to pet owners and the animal welfare community. We are open to suggestions about content on our site or tips on how we might improve the site. Please e-mail your comments to [TomMiller@theaskfoundation.org](mailto:TomMiller@theaskfoundation.org) ASK phone 951-777-5341

### Cell Phone Drive

We have an ongoing cell phone drive where patrons of the shelter can drop their old or broken cell phones off at our drop Box in the main lobby of the Western Riverside County Animal Shelter. We recycle these phones with an organization and receive money in return for our foundation. It's a win win for the environment and the animals.

### The ASK Foundation Newsletter

We are excited to bring you this second issue of our newsletter. It is a perk of a membership with our foundation. It will not be just any ordinary newsletter but we hope to deliver an informative newsletter that gives you a window into the events at the shelter. For each of our letters we will offer helpful tips for pet owners and a feature article where we interview an animal welfare celebrity from anywhere in the United States. We are open to feedback and suggestions for stories. Please e-mail your comments to our newsletter editor Robbie

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## Business and Individual Sponsorships

**Sponsorships** provide mutual benefits to the shelter and businesses. They assist in financially providing care for the animals up for adoption and they recognize businesses who give with a plaque outside the room and on our sponsorship wall.

Sponsorships are valid for one year and each sponsor gets the opportunity to decorate the room with any particular theme they can dream up because as we know presentation matters and can affect the chances of some animals being adopted. There are other types of rooms such as the grooming room which can also be sponsored. The sponsorship of these rooms would go toward much needed supplies and maintenance.

Another perk to sponsorship are the myriad of ways our foundation will recognize corporations and businesses for their charitable giving at our community events. We like to show our appreciation for our business and corporate sponsors because they are essential to our ability to increase adoptions and save lives. Working and building relationships with local business is as much a part of our focus as helping the animals at the shelter. The efforts go hand in hand. Below is a list of the different levels of sponsorship. Please visit our website at [www.theaskfoundation.org](http://www.theaskfoundation.org) for more information or call

951-777-5341

#### Cats

POD \$20,000  
Community Outside \$5,000  
Community Outside \$5,000  
Kitten Room \$2,500  
Cat Cubbies \$250

#### Dogs

POD \$20,000  
Puppy Room \$500  
Large Dog Yard \$500  
Kennel Outdoor \$350  
Kennel Indoor \$250

#### LifeRooms

Front \$10,000  
Mid & Back \$5,000  
CritterCorner \$5,000  
InterviewRooms \$2,000  
Children'sCenter \$5,000

#### BarnArea

Barn \$25,000  
OutsideStall \$1,000  
Inside Stall \$500

#### AgilityYards

AgilityArena \$1,000  
DemoArena \$1,000  
Training \$500

Meet & Greet \$500  
Medium size Yard \$500

#### Other

Grooming Room \$500

**THE ASK FOUNDATION**  
6851 Van Buren Blvd.  
Riverside, CA 92509



## **Animals Solutions Konnection**

*Making the connections to create sustainable solutions for our animal welfare challenges*

[www.theaskfoundation.org](http://www.theaskfoundation.org)

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## **Become an ASK Foundation Member**

*"Philanthropy is almost the only virtue which is sufficiently appreciated by mankind." -Henry David Thoreau*

As our way of broadening our supporter base and reaching out to the community we created an official membership program. We have several levels of membership and each level comes with perks and benefits to our members. We have memberships for children under the age of 18, adult individuals, and one for seniors on fixed incomes. Members will receive issues of our quarterly newsletter, monthly e-mail updates about events and news at the shelter, discounts to our events and discounts to local businesses which sponsor our membership drive. A thriving involved membership is crucial to our ability to help the animals at the shelter. We hope you will consider becoming a member of our ASK foundation. In doing so you will be able to directly impact the lives of animals in Western Riverside County.

Cut along dashed line and Mail along with check to: The ASK Foundation 6851 Van Buren Blvd. Riverside, CA 92509

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*Please check off which level of membership you would like and cut and mail this form to us with check for appropriate amount in the enclosed self addressed envelope.*

*Thank You!*

- Senior ( 65 +) cost: 15.00
- Child ( under 18) cost: 15.00
- Adult cost: 25.00
- Family cost: 50.00
- Life Saver Member cost: 100.00

Name \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_ phone \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

*If you have questions feel free to contact us at  
951-777-5431*