

# Paws for Hope

Highlighting the impacts of Doggy Protective Services and their biweekly adoption events

It's a sunny Saturday morning and group of teenage volunteers sit in cozy playpens with puppies, small dogs and adult dogs outside at the Charleston Shopping Center in Palo Alto. As people walk by the playpens, the volunteers introduce each dog, hoping to find these rescues a forever home.

Doggy Protective Services, or DPS, is a volunteer-run, non-profit organization which helps rescue dogs from all across the state. Tricia Carrasco, the volunteer coordinator at DPS, explains the specific process that each dog goes through to prepare them for adoption.

"We rescue or we take in dogs from shelters and generally bad, abusive, neglectful situations and bring them into our rescue," Carrasco said. "[DPS gives dogs] fosters, all the tools that they need to succeed, [we] spay and neuter them and make sure that they go into good homes."

Every other Saturday, DPS holds a meet and greet outside Pet Food Express, where

volunteers can play with the dogs in the pens, tell the public more about them and introduce Palo Alto citizens to the organization.

Sadie Voorhees, a Paly junior who is an experienced volunteer at the DPS adoption events, enjoys being surrounded by dogs and helping them find potential adopters.

"Being able to talk to people and getting these dogs adopted is a very rewarding

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**Xander Love, Sequoia High School senior**

feeling to me, because it feels like these dogs, who have been neglected, are getting into safe

homes," Voorhees said. "I think it's just an amazing feeling when you're able to make that happen for animals."

Not only is helping dogs find a permanent home rewarding, but interacting with the dogs and spending time with them can serve as a stress reliever. Xander Love, a senior at Sequoia High School, feels that these events help his mental wellness throughout a stressful senior year.

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been one of the things that has kept me sane and happy," Love said.

Similarly, Carrasco found DPS as a way to help her through mental health struggles, as it gave her ambition to help out.

"I found that it gave me a sense of purpose, especially during the pandemic," Carrasco said.

If someone comes across a dog they want to adopt at these biweekly adoption events, they can apply through the DPS website, and then come in for an interview to determine if the match is a good fit.

"The adoption events really help those kinds of people that really need to see the dog and click with them, or want that in-person connection," Carrasco said. "So it's just a great way for people to find that connection right off the bat."

Although you can come and interact with the dogs during the events, DPS doesn't do same-day adoptions and requires adopters to fill out an adoption application before adopting.

"We aren't a first come first serve rescue," Carrasco said. "We are really focused on matchmaking, so a lot of the time if we do same-day adoptions, it's rushed."

Kate Skeen, a sophomore at Paly, has not only volunteered at the rescue, but also adopted from there, adopting her dog shortly after her first event.

"We weren't really looking to get a dog, but I really bonded with Goji [her dog] at that event," Skeen said. "I'm glad I volunteered because that is the only reason I got to adopt the dog."

The longer and more in-depth adoption process helps potential adopters fully commit to their decision and ensure they will give their dog the best home possible.

"I make sure that they're not going into [adopting quickly]," Love said. "A core part of DPS is the idea that when you're going to adopt a dog you're not going to surrender that dog ever. This is going to be the dog for you. It's not an impulse on the same day."

Since DPS is a non-profit organization, it is hard to accommodate the medical funds needed to care for dogs rescued from dangerous and harmful environments.

Many dogs arrive at the rescue in harsh physical conditions, due to overcrowded shelters, homelessness and inhospitable environments.

"Like any rescue, we run into financial troubles, especially because we are a rescue that takes in a lot of medical dogs," Carrasco said. "That means thousands and thousands of dollars in medical costs and medical fees."

To take care of these dogs, DPS heavily relies on fosters to make sure that the rescues are in a safe environment while they wait to be adopted.

"Another issue is that we are foster based," Carrasco said. "We do have a safe

house, but it's not somewhere where we keep dogs on a long term or even really short term basis."

However, DPS has persisted through these struggles and reached out to the community to keep

their organization running.

"[DPS] uses social media, fundraisers and other outlets to get more foster homes and get more dogs adopted in order to take in more," Voorhees said.

Despite these struggles, DPS has remained an impactful organization. They continue to make a difference in countless dogs' lives as their community grows.

"Thinking that even if you save just one life, even if you can't save every life, it has made a difference," Carrasco said.

Arden Zhen, a Paly sophomore, adopted her dog, Archer, from DPS. Her family chose to rescue Archer from DPS a few years ago, and since then, he has been a perfect fit in his family.

"DPS was really helpful with finding us a dog. Because we were first-time dog owners, it helped that on each dog's description, you could see whether they would be suitable for kids and first time dog owners," Zhen said.

Furthermore, DPS will take in dogs from other shelters who may have planned to euthanize them due to overcrowding or severe medical issues. While buying from a breeder may seem appealing, adopting will ultimately save a dog's life.

"We chose to rescue from a shelter because we felt as though if we could save a dog from getting euthanized, it would be better than buying a dog," Zhen said.

Adoption can also have a big emotional and positive impact for the adopters.

"The most rewarding part of adopting a dog is the unconditional love that they give you," Zhen said.

DPS has been in Palo Alto for over 23 years, and its impact has made a difference for thousands of dogs across California. They have helped turn scared and neglected dogs back into their energetic and happy selves.

"I just cannot stress enough how much you can see these dogs light up and change [after being adopted]," Carrasco said. "When you are rescuing a dog, you are changing their lives."

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**Volunteer Coordinator**



**Tom and Cruise were rescued from a meat market in Korea and have found their forever homes through DPS!**



**Rutabaga is a 7-year old who was surrendered to DPS when her family was unable to care for her anymore. Full of love and sunshine, Rutabaga is looking for her forever home!**



**Roadie is needing donations for a surgery after being run over by a car. DPS took him in before his shelter was going to euthinize him.**



Scan the QR code to go to DPS's website to see those up for adoption!

or visit [dpsrescue.org](https://dpsrescue.org) for more information about fostering, adopting, and donations.

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Hello  
my name is  
MAX

Hello  
my name is  
ROADIE

Hello  
my name is  
DEF LEPPARD

Take a peak into a DPS adoption event!