

Spotlight on Non-Profit

Contributed by
Nicole Tanner, Operations Coordinator



BirchBark Foundation is a local 501(c)3 non-profit helping people with limited resources whose pets have catastrophic or life threatening medical needs. Local veterinarian Dr. Merrienne Burch has been witness to the devastating situation of pet owners who cannot afford medical care in an urgent situation even if the prognosis is good. Our mission is to end unnecessary economic euthanasia or the surrendering of a loved pet, for those whose pets are in a life-threatening but fixable medical situation. People whose pets are their emotional anchor and a precious part of their family may not have the resources to address such emergencies as intestinal disease, trauma, urinary blockage or fractured legs.

Since 2013, BirchBark Foundation (BBF) has helped nearly 150 animals stay in their loving homes. We benefit from the generosity of the veterinary community who discount their bill by 25%, we ask the owner to pay 25% and the foundation pays the remainder of the bill. Our website, <http://www.birchbarkfoundation.org/> offers educational resources for all pet owners to help people be advocates for their pets. We also participate in community building efforts such as "Paws in the Park" with Coastal Watershed Council and WoofPack831. Future plans include pet health events and bringing back our no-cost grief support group for pet owners who have lost their loved pets.

BirchBark Foundation depends on donations from the public and is working to increase revenue through community foundation grants and events generously hosted by local businesses. We are always looking for volunteers to help with events, administrative tasks including grant writing and mailings as well as community outreach in the veterinary and pet owning community. Nicole Tanner, Operations Coordinator, is helping us expand our visibility and community impact.

Here is an example of our impact on lives:

Duke is a sweet natured, big-hearted, young boy who is deeply loved by his 'parents' Shannon and Daniel. Two years ago, the couple found a local listing for an unexpected litter of puppies. The family with the puppies was unable to support the litter and posted all puppies up for adoption.

Upon meeting, Shannon fell in love with Duke, beginning an eternal connection between the two. Their relationship with Duke quickly blossomed, and soon they became a family.

One day the couple was driving to their local park when Duke got spooked and, jumped out of the car. While frightening in itself, the situation quickly turned to terror as Shannon watched Duke get hit by an oncoming vehicle. The accident left Duke with critical injuries including a spinal fracture, hip fractures in four locations, and a ruptured bladder.

After first taking Duke to a vet hospital that was unable to assist with the traumatic injuries, the couple was referred to Santa Cruz Veterinary Hospital for intensive care.

Given the nature of the injuries, the cost of the surgeries was beyond the reach of the couple even after receiving Care Credit and left the couple in a very difficult situation. Facing the potential of economic euthanasia, Shannon turned to BirchBark Foundation for Duke's care.

After review of their financial need and the proposed treatment by the Foundation's veterinary review panel, the couple was granted assistance of 50% of the cost and the partner hospital discounted their fees, as they do with all BirchBark Foundation grantees.

See more success stories list this at www.birchbarkfoundation.org/success-stories1/. We are ever grateful for the support of the generous, pet loving community we live in. If you would like to be involved and support BirchBark please contact us at info@birchbarkfoundation.org or 831-471-7255.

An advertisement for Brian Del Core, DDS. The top half features a sunset over a beach with the text "Providing compassionate, customized dental care to the Aptos and Santa Cruz community". The bottom half features a stylized logo for "BRIAN DEL CORE, DDS" and contact information: "give us a call (831) 688-3012" and "or visit delcoredental.com".

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