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Rescue a Worthy Rescue

How one person can make a difference at the National Humane Society

By [Deborah Bostock-Kelley](#) | July 6, 2011

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It's not often that I have an opportunity to become friends with people I interview, but when I met Carol Childs, something just clicked.

We're made of the same cloth, and our feelings about "paying it forward" are identical. What she is doing without government funding for homeless cats and kittens at the [National Humane Society](#) on Gunn Highway in Carrollwood is pretty amazing.

Her work with animals – not just cats – is known throughout the rescue society. When she receives a call for a rescue or a raid, it may be the next month, week, day or next few hours. She doesn't hesitate or make excuses or say that she's too busy taking care of her own 50-60 adoptable cat and kitten rescues.

It doesn't matter if it falls on a holiday and the rest of us are home celebrating with family and friends, or if it's the aftermath of 911, a devastating Tsunami, flood, hurricane, tornado or any other natural disaster.

It doesn't matter if she has to figure out where to find the hundreds of necessary yet non-existent animal carriers; that she and her team may be gone for days traveling in-state and out, or halfway around the world to assist in exhausting work; that these efforts are self-funded, by no means compensated and half the time, the wrong animal rescue is credited with her work. She just goes.

She contacts her team, fills up the one remaining mobile surgical unit when the need is domestic, (the second mobile clinic was sold earlier this year to keep the doors open). She goes where she is needed. She does this because it's her calling.

Last month, she helped a raid rescue 697 cats and kittens and a rooster in Gainesville. The rescue van and shed where items were stored at the shelter now sit empty and there are still mewing mouths to feed.

In this economy, charitable donations are on the decline. But I find it funny – or maybe funny isn't the right word – ironic, sad, frustrating - that she is not asking for anything expensive or anything you don't already have: old electric blankets (the kind that don't turn off) probably stuck up in your closet somewhere, old towels and blankets cut in half, old animal carriers, baby gates that your child has outgrown the need for, scissors, litter, cat food and paper plates from the Dollar Store.

I guess I can't understand why it is so difficult to pop into a grocery store, spend less than two dollars on a bag of cheap clay cat litter. I know gas is expensive and dropping it off may be an issue. Gather the items and call Carol at 813-695-4777.

Yes, you're busy, money is tight and everyone is struggling. But the *needs of* and the *reasons why* the National Humane Society is so desperately needed has not diminished in a challenging economy. Without this no-kill rescue, these animals have no future.

Even picking up a bag of laundry to wash is huge help to the rescue and so is volunteering there. And I'm not just writing this, asking for help and sitting back twiddling my thumbs. My teenage daughter began volunteering there this summer. I am actively involved, working with an organization to arrange a fundraising event.

If I didn't believe in Carol and this organization, it wouldn't mean so much to me to get people to take notice and to care.

Though adopting a furry friend may not be in the cards for you, I challenge you, our readers, to refill the empty van and shed.

Start a local drive. Boy and Girl Scouts, churches, networking groups – start a collection. If each person in the group brings in only one item, can you even imagine the impact you'd have, the positive difference you would make?

Carol simply trusts that the good people in the community will come through like they have in the past.

I think Carol summed it up best in our last conversation:

“Good begets good. If you want to learn to be good, just watch animals and children. They'll teach you how to be alive, loving, and happy. We strive to get back to that.”

I, for one, am waiting.

Editor's note: Deb Kelley is a Patch freelancer who has written news stories about the National Humane Society.

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