Will Santa’s Sleigh be Pulled by Kittens this Year?

Berkeley, Calif. – You might expect local animal shelters to be overflowing with kittens in springtime and early summer, but this year “kitten season” will include the holiday season.

So far this year the Berkeley-East Bay Humane Society (Berkeley Humane) has already found loving homes for over 600 kittens and there are no signs of slowing, in fact, on Monday, over 60 kittens were flown to the Bay Area to help relieve kitten overcrowding at a large municipal shelter in Southern California.

“Berkeley Humane was already at capacity but when we were asked to help another shelter we jumped into action,” said Jeffrey Zerwekh, Executive Director of Berkeley Humane. “It is unusual to have this many kittens so late in the year which means we will still be working hard to find homes for them through the holidays and into the New Year.”

The volunteers and staff at Berkeley Humane helped to organize a special air transport of 66 kittens from the Orange County Animal shelter that has been working overtime to manage a population of more than 500 kittens. Dubbed “Operation Winged Kittens” the kittens, almost all of which ranged in age from 2 to 7 months, were flown from the Van Nuys Airport in LA County to Hayward Airport in Alameda County by a volunteer pilot.

The transport was a huge success. Though it was raining, a welcoming party from Berkeley Humane and three other area shelters quickly loaded the kittens into transport vehicles. They were then driven to Berkeley Humane, ARF, East Bay SPCA and Marin Humane who will now all ready these kittens for adoption in the weeks to come.

While we can’t be certain of why this has been a record breaking year for kittens, the warm September and October months likely played a major role in cats having additional litters. Once pregnant, a cat’s gestation period is roughly 2 months, making it possible for her to birth as many as five litters a year.

About Berkeley Humane
With its origins dating back to 1895, today Berkeley Humane serves the people and animals of our community by providing life-saving programs for cats and dogs, cultivating compassion, and strengthening the human-animal bond. With the support of a dedicated and talented volunteer and staff team, Berkeley Humane intakes animals from municipals shelters around the Bay Area who are often in need of medical care, improved nutrition, enrichment and lots of love. In 2018, Berkeley Humane conducted over 1,200 adoptions and touched the lives of an additional 1,000 additional pets through related services. Learn more at www.berkeleyhumane.org.

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