



**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
**November 17, 2017**

**Tropical fish sent in the mail end up at Peninsula Humane Society**  
*Fish were shipped from Maryland to Hawaii  
but local post office intervened to save their lives*

**Burlingame, CA**—A concerned United States Post Office worker brought a shipping box containing Umbee Cichlids, a species of tropical fish to the Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA (PHS/SPCA). The box was en route from Bel Air, Maryland to Hawaii when the post office noticed the box was damaged and several of the fish inside the shipment had perished.

“The post office was unable to make contact with the individual who had sent the shipment and out of concern for the surviving fish they brought the box to us,” said PHS/SPCA’s Communications Manager Buffy Martin Tarbox. “Unfortunately twelve of the cichlids did not survive the journey, but twenty seven did and are now available for adoption at our shelter in Burlingame.”

PHS/SPCA staff was able to track down the person who shipped the box. As the legal owner of the fish, he made the decision to surrender the fish to PHS/SPCA instead of mailing them back to Maryland and running the risk of more casualties.

“While not a good practice, it’s not actually illegal to ship live animals through the mail system,” according to Tarbox. “However, we do not recommend doing so since it’s not a safe way to transport animals.”

Umbee Cichlids are a tropical, semi-aggressive fresh water fish that can grow to be 1 ½ to 2 feet long. Because of their size they will require a large aquarium. As adults they are predatory fish and should be kept solitary or with an aquarium divider to protect other fish. Umbee Cichlids are native to South America and have a life expectancy of six to ten years.

Adopters interested in adopting the Umbee Cichlids can visit PHS/SPCA’s Center for Compassion at 1450 Rollins Road in Burlingame. The Center for Compassion is open seven days a week, Monday through Friday, 11 am to 7 pm and 11 am to 6 pm on the weekends.

The adoption fee is \$5.00 per fish and they are recommended for owners experienced with this breed. The fish are available for filming by news cameras.

Photos of the Umbee Cichlids are attached and courtesy of PHS/SPCA.  
Photos attached of the PHS/SPCA Holiday Pop Up Store and Adoption Center.

**About Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA**

Peninsula Humane Society is a private, open-door, not-for-profit animal welfare organization. Primary programs include animal adoptions; animal rescue and sheltering, including specialty care for domestic animals with medical and/or behavioral challenges; wildlife rehabilitation; animal cruelty investigation; community outreach and education; low-cost spay/neuter; and obedience classes. This vital work is made possible by volunteers and donations. PHS receives no funding from national animal welfare organizations. Visit [www.phs-sPCA.org](http://www.phs-sPCA.org) to learn about all PHS’ programs and services, ways to help the animals and special events.



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