



Tom and Annette Lantos Center for Compassion
1450 Rollins Road, Burlingame, CA 94010-2307
650-340-7022 • 650-685-8428 fax • www.PHS-SPCA.org

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Peninsula Humane Society Rescues Eighty-Three Bats Found Behind Mural of St. Francis

Burlingame, CA—The Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA (PHS/SPCA) was called to a home in Menlo Park yesterday morning to help rescue a large colony of bats that had been nesting behind a mural of St. Francis, the patron saint of animals. Upon arrival at the home, PHS/SPCA staff safely captured the eighty-three Mexican free-tailed bats and transported them back to the PHS/SPCA Wildlife Care Center for evaluation.

“A group of workers hired by the home owner were preparing to power wash the side of the house. They removed a mural of St. Francis attached to the side of the house when they noticed a large colony of bats that had been nesting behind the mural,” said PHS/SPCA’s Communications Manager Buffy Martin-Tarbox. “When the bats started to fall to the ground, the workers called us for assistance. Our staff quickly arrived and were concerned the bats may have been injured so we carefully scooped them up and brought them to our wildlife center for evaluation.”

PHS/SPCA staff provided the bats with oxygen and put them into incubators to help with circulation and increase their body temperature. Mexican free-tailed bats are native to California and are a species of special concern in California as a result of declining populations. They are medium size bats, on average 3.5 inches in length. Their name is derived from the size of their tail, which is almost half their total body length.

All eighty-three of the bats were medically cleared and were returned to the wild last night to where they were originally rescued in Menlo Park. Many of the bats flew right back to the St. Francis mural.

“The bats responded well to the oxygen and heat treatment and were released back to the wild yesterday at dusk,” according to Tarbox. “This is the highest number of bats we have ever received at one time in our Wildlife Care Center. On average we receive one bat a month, so eighty-three bats were quite unusual for us.”



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“The irony of these bats being found behind a mural of the patron saint of animals was not lost on us,” said Tarbox. “We are grateful for the workers who alerted us to the bats and we were able to help restore them to full health and return them to the wild.”

PHS/SPCA’s Wildlife Care Center successfully rehabilitates 1,200 to 1,400 animals each year and is funded entirely by donations.

Photos of the bats, the St. Francis mural and a video of the bats can be found here:
<https://drive.google.com/drive/folders/13vGhr3LWjZumb24lySjvz97V4WvLLqZ-?usp=sharing>

Photos and video courtesy of PHS/SPCA.

About The Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA

The Peninsula Humane Society & SPCA (PHS/SPCA) is a local, private, non-profit charitable organization dedicated to animal welfare. Among our major programs, PHS/SPCA adopts fully 100% of the healthy dogs and cats in our care and also, through our charitably funded Hope Program, makes well and finds homes for thousands of animals who come to us sick, injured, or too young to survive without supportive care. PHS/SPCA is truly an open admission shelter, not only accepting many pet animals who might be refused at other shelters, but also taking care of injured and orphaned native wildlife from San Francisco through San Mateo and the northern half of Santa Clara County. Our work means 6,300 lives saved each year. Please visit www.phs-sPCA.org to learn about all our programs and services, ways to help our animals and special events.



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