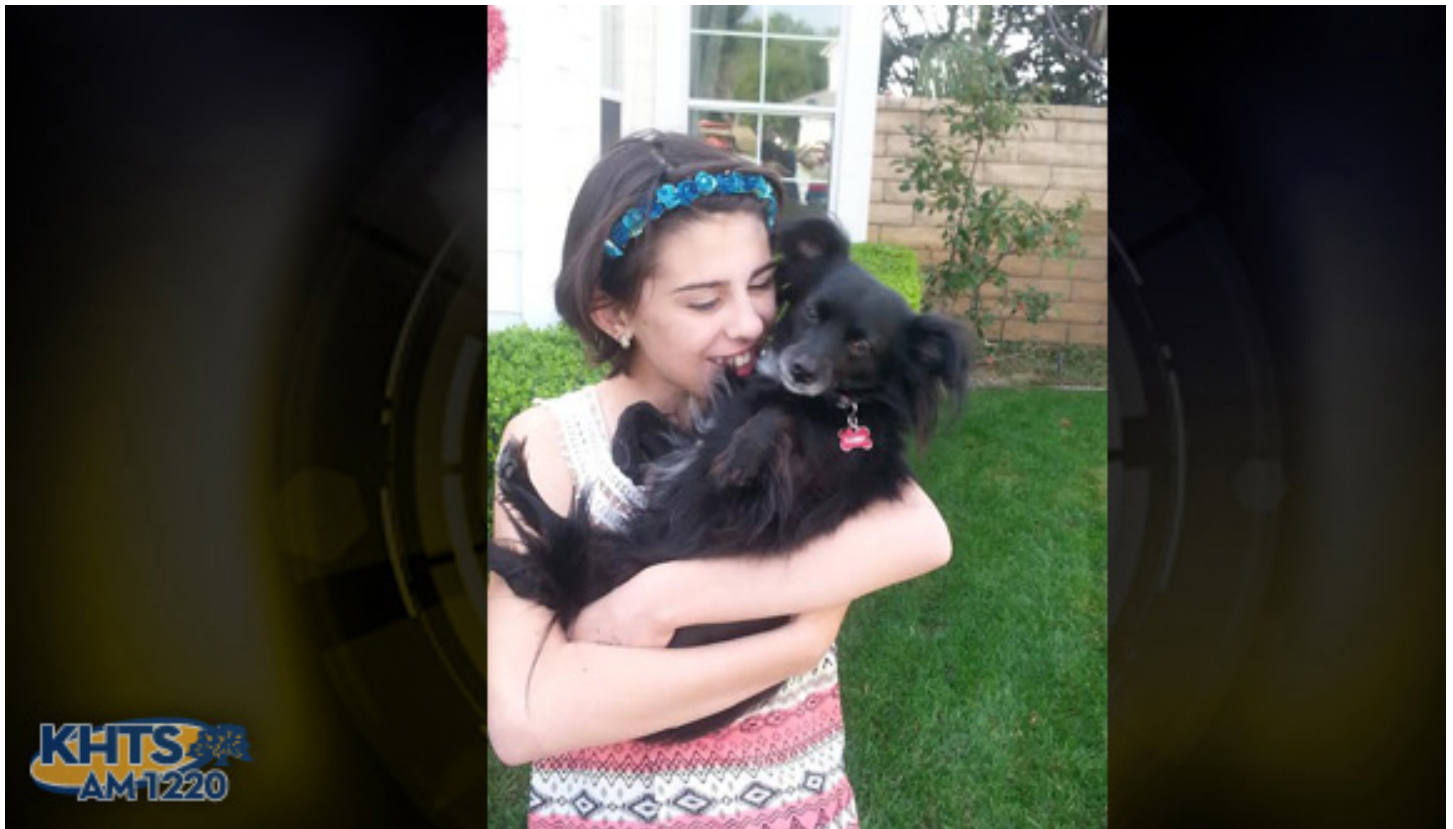




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An ambitious SCVi sixth-grader with a love of animals is putting her passion on parade with the inaugural SCV Pet Parade

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SCVi Student Plans Her First SCV Pet Parade

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An ambitious SCVi sixth-grader with a love of animals is putting her passion on parade with the inaugural SCV Pet Parade, she said Friday.

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Cora Sweeney's love of animals spurred her to start a Santa Clarita Valley chapter for Roots and Shoots, part of an organization started by Jane Goodall, one of her heroes.

And now she's organizing the inaugural SCV Pet Parade on Feb. 28, when people can adopt and donate to help local animal nonprofits.

Click here for a link to the Facebook page.

The inspiration began as a third-grade project three years ago, Cora said.

Her class was asked to do reports on women they admired, and while some chose Sally Ride or Rosa Parks, the animal lover in Cora drove her to discover Goodall's work.

"It really inspired me," Cora said of the project. "I've always loved animals and I've always loved doing good for the environment, and so I saw (Roots and Shoots), and I thought, 'Hey, that's my style.'"

Cora has seen the results of her efforts grow steadily.

The first year Roots and Shoots tried a fundraiser, Pocket change for Puppies, it raised \$50 to support the Castaic Animal Shelter, by gathering spare change and donating it. This year, she raised more than \$200, she said.

The SCV Pet Parade is scheduled to start on Saturday, Feb. 28

"(Roots and Shoots) gives them a grassroots responsibility and an opportunity to help do something they enjoy," said Brandy Sweeney, Cora's mom. "And the thing I love about it the most is, (Goodall) teaches children that even the little things you do matter a lot."

Cora was able to get together several community organizations to support the SCV Pet Parade, which will take place at SCVi starting at 11 a.m. on Saturday, Feb. 28, around Santa Clarita International charter school.



SCVi sixth grader Cora Sweeney

The K-12 is located at 28060 Hasley Canyon Road in Castaic.

Also supporting the event is the American Bullmastiff Association, the California Turtle and Tortoise Club, Canine Kisses Mobile Grooming, Hap veterinarians, Nulo and the Castaic Canine Camp, Brandy Sweeney said, in addition to an animal rescue and the local shelter.

The event is not only a fundraiser meant to help the Castaic Animal Shelter, as well as Tails and Scales Animal Rescue — it's also an opportunity to adopt a pet, Cora said.

"They're an eclectic group of kids that want to make a difference," said Brandy Sweeney, "and they want to do whatever they can within their make a change."

For Cora, it's also a thank you to the county's animal shelter for what it's given her, she said.

"We have two dogs and both of them come from the (Castaic) shelter," Cora said, "so we wanted to do something to give back to them."

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ABOUT PERRY SMITH



Perry Smith is a print and broadcast journalist who has won several awards for his focused, hyperlocal community coverage in several different regions of the country. In addition to his experience covering the Santa Clarita Valley, Smith, a San Fernando Valley native, has worked in newspapers and news websites in Los Angeles, the Northwest, the Central Valley and before coming to KHTS in 2012. To contact Smith, email him at Perry@hometownstation.com.



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