



ICARE

30th ANNIVERSARY EDITION 2026

Inyo (& Mono) County Animal Resources & Education

Dedicated to the welfare of the Eastern Sierra's companion animals since 1997

30 Years of Helping Pets in Need and Still Going Strong!

ICARE, Inyo and Mono Counties' original animal welfare organization, owes its 30 years of accomplishments to many people, but has its roots in the efforts of Ted and Lisa Schade. Before ICARE came into existence, Ted and Lisa were actively involved in the animal welfare community. Thirty years ago, in March 1996, while visiting the Inyo County Animal Shelter in Big Pine, they encountered a shelter full of Australian Shepherds. These dogs had been confiscated as part of an animal neglect case in Mono County, resulting in the seizure of over 100 animals. Due to the overwhelming number of dogs, Inyo County assisted Mono County by providing space at the Big Pine facility for a number of Australian Shepherds.

Recognizing the need for help, the Schades, who were members of the Australian Shepherd Club, reached out to Australian Shepherd Rescue. In Spring of 1996, two Ausie Rescue representatives visited the Inyo and Mono County animal shelters to assess the impounded dogs' temperaments and determine their best placement. The rescue group took several of the dogs into foster homes, leaving one particularly sweet dog named Rudy, who was fostered and adopted by the Schades.

During their initial rescue visits to the old animal shelter in Big Pine, Ted and Lisa became aware of the urgent need for improved living conditions for the shelter's dogs and cats. The shelter, an 85-year-old block cement dairy barn, was never designed to accommodate pets. Open outdoor kennels became unbearably hot during the summer heat, poor drainage made cleaning difficult and antiquated, rusty kennels were far from adequate for the shelter's "always overcrowded" conditions.

Determined to make a difference, the Schades purchased redwood lattice panels and, in collaboration with Inyo County

shelter staff, installed them over the outdoor kennels to create a protective shade cover. This project not only provided relief from the scorching heat, but also caught the attention of Inyo



County who developed a wish list of other desperately needed improvements.

In Fall 1996, Inyo County invited Ted, Lisa, and a small group of local animal lovers to a brainstorming session to explore ways to raise funds for further improvements to the shelter. This led to the founding of the non-profit organization, ICARE, which held its first fundraising dinner in April 1997.

The community responded with overwhelming enthusiasm; over 700 people attended that first event and we raised an impressive \$20,000 to enhance living conditions at the Big Pine shelter. As a result, a solid covered structure was constructed to house the outdoor kennels, the interior building underwent a complete renovation, epoxy coating was applied to the concrete floors, and new indoor dog and cat kennels were installed.

In 2015, a remarkable achievement

occurred when ICARE successfully raised \$416,000 of the \$800,000 the county needed to construct a brand new animal shelter. (To view shelter project photos, visit our website.)

With the completion of these much-needed renovations, ICARE was able to focus on its core mission of spaying and neutering. The ICARE Spay/Neuter Program began offering affordable sterilization surgeries to pet owners in need within the Eastern Sierra (Inyo and Mono Counties; i.e., Death Valley to Coleville). Additionally, ICARE subsidizes the cost of sterilizing every single cat and dog adopted from the Inyo County shelter, making adoption costs more affordable thereby increasing the chance these animals will find their forever homes. To date, ICARE has assisted nearly 17,000 cats and dogs with this vital surgery, ultimately reducing the number of kittens and puppies born to an uncertain future.

Our organization provides spay/neuter funding for an average of 560 pets each year (that's over one per day), including this past year, as well. Pet owners residing in Inyo and Mono Counties simply call the ICARE helpline and are interviewed to determine what level of funding best suits their needs. They schedule their pet's sterilization appointment at one of the local vet offices that provide discounts for ICARE clients. We believe that, by making this surgery accessible to everyone, overcrowding at our shelters will one day be a thing of the past. The humane solution is prevention.

ICARE is a 501(c)3 non-profit organization that operates without paid employees, rented office space or government funding. Instead, our programs are supported solely by compassionate donors. We hope you will consider supporting our work so we can continue to make a difference for the Eastern Sierra's beloved cats and dogs. 🐾

Message from ICARE President, Ted Schade:

ICARE presents the River Story

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I'd like to tell you the River Story. It's about a group of friends enjoying a picnic on a riverbank when, out of nowhere, the air is filled with the sound of frightened barking and meowing. They look up to see a puppy and a kitten floating helplessly down the river. Naturally, everyone jumps in the river to rescue the struggling pets, but, to their horror, they spot another kitten and puppy floating toward them. They hurry to save these two, but no sooner are those pulled to safety when they see yet another puppy and kitten. And still more appear; the river is full of them! Again and again, the people jump into the river, trying desperately to save the seemingly endless flow of drowning pets.

Suddenly, one of the group gets out of the river and begins running upstream. "Where are you going? We need to save these pets," her friends shout. "I'm going to find out who's throwing puppies and kittens into the river and make them STOP!" she yells as she sprints upstream.

The pet overpopulation problem is a lot like

that. Animal shelters and rescue groups try valiantly to save the "animals in the river" by finding homes for as many as possible. But adoptions alone can never truly solve the problem. While adopting pets is incredibly important, the real and lasting solution is to stop them from being "thrown in the river" in the first place; i.e., prevent them from being born.

ICARE, like the woman in the story running upstream, realized early on we had to prevent the deluge of puppies and kittens born each year. That was the catalyst for our Spay/Neuter Program, which provides financial help with spay/neuter surgeries for the Eastern Sierra's pets in need. Since 1997, ICARE is Inyo and Mono Counties' original animal welfare nonprofit organization and has funded nearly 17,000 spay/neuter surgeries at a cost of

\$785,000—thanks to the kindness of our donors.

ICARE operates solely with a volunteer workforce, so your donations go directly to helping the cats and dogs of Inyo and Mono Counties. If you'd like to be part of the humane solution to the pet overpopulation challenge, please visit our website to learn more. 🐾



Shout Out to ICARE's Board Members

One of the hallmarks of a successful organization is its ability to inspire trust and loyalty among, not only its members, but the people who serve as board members steering the mission. ICARE's first meeting in the Fall of 1996 was attended by a small group of animal lovers that Inyo County had assembled to brainstorm fundraising ideas for improving living conditions at the Inyo County Animal Shelter in Big Pine.

Our current board of directors consists of six committed members and represents a combined 156 years of service. ICARE President, Ted Schade, and his wife and CEO, Lisa, have been board members for 30 years each, Vice President, Lynne Almeida, joined the board 27 years ago, with board members Theona Wasson having served 29 years, Karen Cudney 21 years and Rose Kuljerich 20 years. Both counties of the Eastern Sierra are duly represented by the board with one member residing in Mammoth Lakes and three others calling Bishop their home.

Founding members, Ted and Lisa, currently live on the Central Coast and run the day-to-day operation of ICARE, including fielding calls for spay/neuter funding, from their home. The mission remains the same—to help pets in need.

Our mailing address is 1125 Pinewood Drive; Cambria, CA 93428 or scan the QR code. 🐾



Powerful and Lasting Partnerships

ICARE's longevity and success are a direct result of the partnerships we have forged with the Bishop Veterinary Hospital, Mountain View Animal Hospital and the Sierra Veterinary Clinic. These dedicated veterinary teams have performed thousands of spay/neuter surgeries, at a thoughtful discount for our Spay/Neuter clients, helping to reduce pet overpopulation throughout our communities. We appreciate their help with our Stitch Fund, which provides veterinary care for ill or injured shelter animals.

The thirty-year relationship with the compassionate and hardworking staff of Inyo County and Mono County Animal Services is very dear to us. They go above and beyond to provide top notch care to their residents and expertly promote them for adoption.

Our organization is fortunate to have formed a beneficial working relationship with CPA, Kevin Allred, who has generously donated his tax preparation services since 1997.

Our ability to help thousands of cats and dogs is due to the amazing support of our faithful donors. ICARE's long-time success would never have been possible without the teamwork of this diverse group of animal lovers. If you'd like to learn more about our mission and accomplishments, please visit: www.ICAREforPets.org 🐾