

Stu News Newport

Fair Game

By TOM JOHNSON

June 9, 2023

Two of my favorite people, City Council member **Robyn Grant** and Planning Commissioner **Jon Langford**, ventured off to **Sacramento** Wednesday of this week to represent and receive recognition for a group in town that's so deserving of such. That group is **FONBAS**, otherwise known as the **Friends of the Newport Beach Animal Shelter**. Both Robyn and Jon have been intimately involved with FONBAS, with Jon in fact currently president of the organization.

So why were they in Sacramento? Good question, but the even better answer is that FONBAS has been awarded one of **California's 2023 Nonprofits of the Year** after being nominated by California Assembly member **Diane Dixon**. FONBAS was one of more than 100 nonprofits that were honored at the Capitol this week by their state senators and assembly members for outstanding contributions to the communities they serve.

Now in its eighth year, the Nonprofit of the Year initiative provides the opportunity for each California state legislator to choose a nonprofit organization doing outstanding work in their district. The program culminated with a recognition ceremony at the Capitol on California Nonprofits Day, which this year was June 7.

FONBAS, in case you don't know, is dedicated to serving the needs of animals to restore their well-being and reunite them with their owners or find new forever homes. It was founded in 2017 by a group of local community leaders in a public-private partnership with the **City of Newport Beach**. Since then, FONBAS has been supplementing funding for the current Newport Beach Animal Shelter to provide upgraded amenities and medical care.

"The public-private partnership between FONBAS and the city is a remarkable example of the impact nonprofits can have in a community," said City Council member and FONBAS Board Member Grant. "In this case, the partnership was funded entirely by private resources with the city as a recipient of valuable permanent amenities and infrastructure that benefit the community."

FONBAS has just celebrated the completion of a multi-year capital campaign to purchase land and build a state-of-the-art animal shelter in the city. The new digs, which will open in July 2023, includes a single-story, 1,600-square-foot building with a 750-square-foot kennel to house dogs, cats and other animals, plus parking, two front yard greeting areas and a secure rear yard exercise space.

"With the completion of the new facility behind us, we will continue the important work of supplementing costly surgeries and other care for our animals – healthcare beyond the scope of a typical city," said FONBAS Board President Langford.

How important are nonprofits such as FONBAS to our community? Well, according to "Causes Count," a 2019 report commissioned by **CalNonprofits**, the nonprofit sector is the fourth largest industry in the state, employing more than 1.2 million people. Each year, California nonprofits generate more than \$273 billion in revenue and bring in \$40 billion in revenue from outside of California. The unpaid labor contributed by volunteers at nonprofits is equivalent to 330,000 full-time jobs every year.

"Assisting our seniors, educating our children, protecting the environment, caring for animals – this is the work nonprofits do and do well," noted Assembly member Dixon. "I am proud to present California Nonprofit of the Year to FONBAS to acknowledge their part in making a collective impact with other nonprofits in Assembly District 72 and across the State of California."



(L-R) City Council and FONBAS Board Member Robyn Grant, Assembly member Diane Dixon and FONBAS Board President Jon Langford proudly display recognition as a 2023 California Nonprofit of the Year