

## SHORTCUTS

# GIVING BACK



Photo: Kelli Uldall

## AFRP is a Savior for Local Animals

BY RENEE BRINCKS

**Sequoia Gandzjuk, age 5, looks at puppies with Animal Friends Rescue Project Executive Director Darla Smith. AFRP fosters animals and is based in Pacific Grove.**

**T**his winter, Pacific Grove-based Animal Friends Rescue Project (AFRP) took in a purebred pit bull puppy with a severe heart murmur. As they explored foster care options for Elvis, who was expected to live for about six months, Executive Director Darla Smith and her team sought a second opinion from Dr. Michael Lesser at Pet Specialists of Monterey.

A few months and one donation-funded heart surgery later, Elvis is thriving.

"This little dog was only going to be with us for a few months until he died," Smith says. "Now, he can live a long, normal life."

AFRP, which partners with area shelters and animal services agencies, found homes for 850

abandoned, abused or stray pets in 2018 alone. In addition to offering medical and surgical assistance for public animals, the organization hosts regular training and adoption events where attendees can meet animals, ask care-related questions and complete adoption applications.

AFRP welcomes volunteers, donations and families interested in opening their home to pets in need.

"The majority of our dogs are in foster homes, so the more foster families we have, the more animals we can rescue from shelters," says Smith.

AFRP will host several adoption events at Diggidy Dog, Pet Food Express and elsewhere. For details, please visit [www.animalfriendsrescue.org](http://www.animalfriendsrescue.org).