



Special Pals staff members Christal Chavez, Yira Arizmendi, Susan Rusie, Elizabeth Trick, Kristi Keathley, and Valerie Palomarez hope to find loving families for their pals, Dumbo, DJ, and Princess

Photo by Melissa Crowder

# Special Pals

Rescuing and rehabilitating animals, until they are placed in their permanent homes, for over 25 years

Written by Kristin Elliott Nelson and Kennan Buckner | Select photography courtesy of Special Pals

Special Pals is dedicated to giving animals a second chance. This no-kill shelter started as a means to reunite animals with their owners, and it has developed into a multi-faceted organization which provides hope to the neediest of pets. The Special Pals staff is committed to caring for animals until they are adopted. Volunteer Jackie Fowler says this is because, “Animals are not on a time frame.”

## A Second-Chance Savior

At Special Pals, animals are looked at for their potential to have a quality life, not for their financial burden or seemingly hopeless condition. Caretakers provide top-of-the-line medical treatment to wounded and sick animals, as an alternative to euthanasia.

In addition to volunteering at the shelter, Fowler has also adopted two dogs from Special Pals, who live up to their shelter’s name. Her fur-babies are Mack, who was born in the shelter, and Bernie, who was rescued in February 2010 after he was found tied to a dumpster.

Fowler is busy caring for animals both at home and as a shelter volunteer a few times a month. “I always say that I have a dog heart,” she smiles.

## Making a Lifetime Difference

Helene Bernstein wanted to volunteer during her free time and after talking with neighbors, this animal lover heard about the shelter. She has now been a Special Pals volunteer for 25 years. She’s helped answer phones, walk the animals, and more. “It’s a warm and wonderful place,” she says. “I highly recommend it to others looking to volunteer.”

Adopting an animal is nothing less than a rewarding experience for both owner and pet, but it is important to realize that it is a serious commitment. “It’s a process, but it’s a good one,” Fowler says. “It shows how much a person loves the animals when they are willing to become a forever home.”  
KM

*KRISTIN ELLIOTT NELSON is a recent Baylor graduate and wife to her sweet husband, Bobby. They are happy parents to their 14-month-old daughter, Grace.*

# Forever Homes Now Wanted

Profiles of loving pets up for adoption at Special Pals



**BABY BOY**

Baby Boy has a heart-melting personality. This rat terrier mix loves treats and is about 11 pounds. Male, age 4.



*Carmela*

Carmela is a multicolored spiral tabby cat who has been waiting for her permanent home for two years. She is independent and loves the indoor life. Female, age 4.



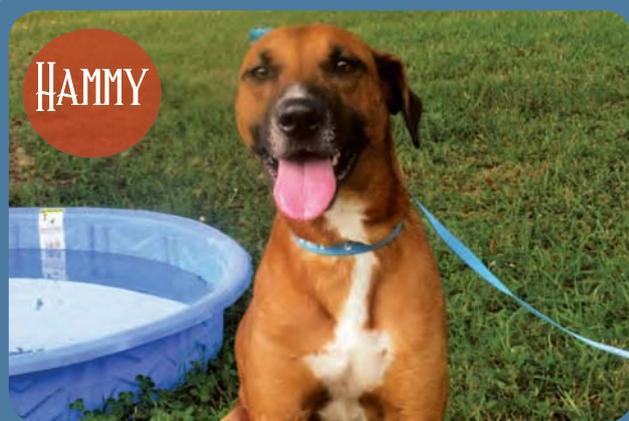
**Catarina**

Catarina is a hunter and can even catch flies. She also loves pouncing on crickets. Catarina is independent and wants a nice, soft bed of her own. Female, age 3.



**Dadas**

This chihuahua/pomeranian mix came to Special Pals in 2011. Dadas is energetic and loves his squeaky toys. Male, age 3.



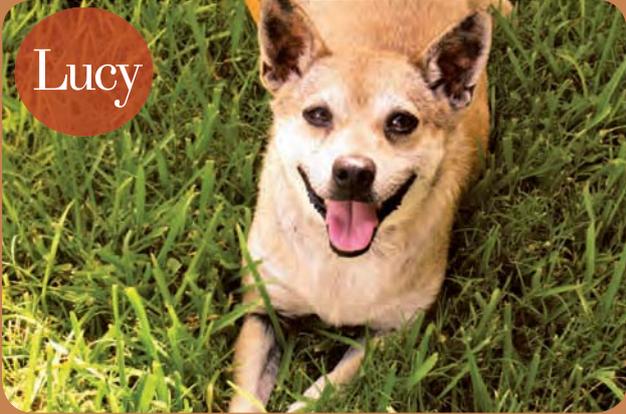
**HAMMY**

Hammy was found abandoned at a construction site when he was 3 months old. He is shy at first, but loves to give hugs and kisses. Male, age 2.



*Kisses*

This fox terrier mix loves to take walks and play with toys. She is looking for someone to cuddle. A home without young children would be best for her. Female, age 2.



**Lucy**

Lucy is upbeat and opinionated. She smiles and loves her second chance at life since being rescued from the pound in 2009. Female, age 7.



**Pinky**

This pint-sized chihuahua has a heart full of love. He can hear the crinkle of a treat bag opening from a mile away. He prefers the company of older people. Male, 5.

Special Pals also offers affordable pet care services such as boarding, deworming, shots, spay, and neutering to help fund their no-kill shelter.

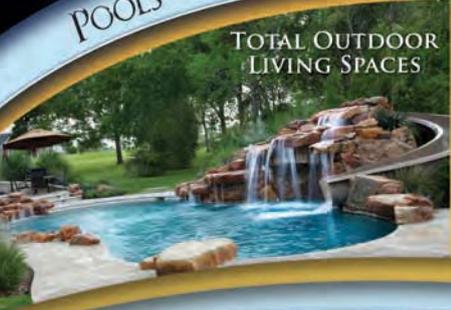
Visit [specialpalshouston.org](http://specialpalshouston.org) to find out how you can help make a lasting impact on the lives of these rescued animals.

*\*Some of these animals may have become unavailable after the time of print. Please check website for available adoptees.*

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