

## **Tammy Amaro**

Tammy Amaro grew up in St. Thomas, moving to the island when she was nine years old and calling it home ever since.

Self-employed, she's been working in accounting and bookkeeping for the past twenty-seven years. Also has experience in fundraising endeavors and community activities. Along with her husband and son, shares a home with three kitties and two dogs, all rescues. Tammy would love to be more involved and help the animals of St. Thomas in Board member capacity.

## **Barbara Birt**

My devotion to animals is evident in my diet – I stopped eating them when I was 17. I have three dogs, two cats, and two cows as pets (the latter not on STT). Killing animals, insects (save mosquitos) prohibited in my world.

In addition to my compassion for animals, my bio is as follows...

Born in Buffalo – raised in Chautauqua, New York – most recently the scene of the Salman Rushdie stabbing. Horror show – but I digress.

I attended the State University of New York at Buffalo, then got a graduate degree from the Columbia School of Journalism. I worked in radio, TV, newspapers and magazines. I later morphed into fundraising at the International School of Brussels, where I carried that experience to New York Methodist Hospital in Brooklyn and eventually to Antilles School on St. Thomas.

I have lived on this lovely island since 2003, and not a day goes by that I don't angst over our treatment of animals.

If there is a way to affect a change in that realm, perhaps being a Board member of the Humane Society is it.

Barbara Birt

## **Brianna Burks**

Brianna Burks has open-heartedly supported the Humane Society of St Thomas for over a decade. She moved to the Virgin Islands in 2009 to attend the University of the Virgin Islands and quickly immersed herself in various community-building projects and non-profit organizations. Throughout her career, she has developed extensive experience in program development, team leadership, grant writing, and has cultivated a strong network of support within the community. Initially a volunteer and foster, she jumped in as a full-time staff team member of the Humane Society immediately after the storms of 2017; most recently in the positions of Operations Assistant and interim Shelter Manager. Within the organization, Brianna is regularly involved with animal care, adoptions, foster coordination, veterinary assistance, community outreach, transports, program and policy development, emergency, and disaster response, liaising with VIPD, office administration, staff and volunteer training, property planning, and maintenance. She assisted with Spayathon for Puerto Rico, a multi-event high quality, high-volume spay/neuter program that has served to sterilize and vaccinate over 60,000 pets in Puerto Rico. She is persistent in expanding her non-profit and shelter knowledge through ongoing education and networking. As a Board Member, Brianna will continue to serve the VI community by bringing a strong voice of advocacy for animals and their caregivers.

## **Annice Canton**

Annice Canton was born and raised on the island of St. Thomas, USVI, hailing from the Savan community. The Parson(s), Crabbe, and Vanterpool families keep her anchored to the British Virgin Islands community as well. Annice's public education started at the Dober Elementary School in Savan and culminated as a member of the Charlotte Amalie High School graduating class of 1984. Ms. Canton's post-secondary education began at the University of the Virgin Islands and later at the University of Maryland, where she completed her undergraduate degree. Her culminating studies were with the University of Pittsburgh, which would prepare her to serve the Virgin Islands community as a librarian.

From her childhood, Annice's family had a profound respect for All of God's creatures, and there began her love of animals, especially dogs, cats, and birds. Her neighbors were also animal lovers, so her leisure time was often spent making new animal friends. This love developed into advocacy and caring for animals she came to know. In the past few decades, her interactions with the Humane Society of St. Thomas and Lucky Paws Foundation solidified her need to do more.

Although her schedule was challenging, she agreed when the opportunity came to serve on the Humane Society's Board. Now that the islands are springing back to life, it will be even more challenging. Still, she is committed to supporting the organization and hopes to be re-elected.

## **Niki Dawson**

I have served as an Executive Director of county and municipal shelters for over 30 years and have worked as a NJ certified animal control officer while in shelter administration. I currently work for a national organization that assists law enforcement around the United States in cruelty investigations and prosecution, as well as responding to natural disasters.

I was on the ground in Puerto Rico post Maria within two weeks, flying animals stateside and assisting local shelters with animal needs. After spending two months in PR, I founded Island Animal Alliance which flies dogs and cats to stateside rescues. To date, we have flown close to 3,000 animals to safety. I also consult with shelters around the country in my role with Guardians of Rescue, helping to build infrastructure.

I volunteer with Animal Balance which provides high volume spay/neuter to impoverished locals around the world including Ecuador, Pago Pago, and Honduras. I was a co-founder for the NJ State Animal Resource Team providing support and guidance to counties in development of County Animal Response Teams while serving as President for the State Federation of Shelters (Animal Welfare Federation of NJ). I served as President for 10 years. All of this was done on a volunteer basis.

## **Theresa Fabela**

Theresa Fabela is President of Dorchester Insurance Company, a U.S. Virgin Islands Insurance Company, and member of the Topa Insurance Group. She relocated to St Thomas and successfully guided the Company through Irma and Maria in 2017.

Additionally, Theresa is the President of the Virgin Islands Admitted Property and Casualty Insurers and the Virgin Islands Insurance Guaranty Association. During her tenure at the Guaranty Association, she oversaw the claims handling of liquidated insurance company, Real Legacy Assurance Company, managing 374 claims on behalf of the Association.

Theresa has over 20 years of experience in the Insurance Industry and holds professional designations including the Chartered Property Casualty Underwriter, Associate in Risk Management, Associate in Surplus Lines, Associate in Reinsurance, Associate in Claims, and Associate in Underwriting. Theresa is an active member of The CPCU Society and previously sat on the Board of Directors as Vice President for the Dallas Chapter of CPCU and prior as a Director for Pacific Northwest Chapter of CPCU.

Theresa is a member of the Rotary Club of St. Thomas and an active volunteer for the Humane Society of St. Thomas. A year-round resident of St. Thomas since 2016, Theresa started volunteering with the HSSTT in 2017. Theresa would love to help wherever its needed the most at the HSSTT and assist with the Board of Directors and staff in organizing events, working on the very important membership committee and take an active role in supporting the staff with volunteers. Theresa sees many ways that Board members and volunteers can assist in the success of making the HSSTT a place where people will love to help and volunteer for the best outcome possible for the animals.

## **Rodd Goldman**

Rodd was born and raised in Chicago and has recently moved to St. Thomas. He is very experienced with all types of dog handling including hard to manage dogs with behavior issues. He has had several pit bulls, currently a very dog aggressive pit named Spot. He has always adopted difficult to place animals He has been rescuing and volunteering with animals for over 15 years with Los Angeles Animal Services and Animal Rescue Volunteer Team HSUS and others.

Rodd is a Certified Public Accountant for over 30 years. He is Manager of The Strategy Group VI and excited to be able to use his CPA to benefit animals. His experience and resources will be a huge asset to the organization in streamlining the financial process. Rodd is interested in preparing financials and helping staff understand the process of the financial health of the Humane Society of St. Thomas. Rodd has already stepped in to assist so there is a smooth transition from the current Treasurer and has produced needed financial reports for filing deadlines. So coupled with his love of animals, Rodd wants to assure that the HSSTT is fiscally sound as well as providing care for the animals.

## **Beatrice Gumbs**

I am Beatrice M. Gumbs, I am a Program Manager at the Department of Health. I specialize in Procurement, Contracts and Records Management. I also research and write grants. I have a large and strong connection to the local community. I've worked with multiple Government Agencies to include:

- The Department of Licensing and Consumer Affairs(DLCA), Licensing Division specializing in business license requirements
- DLCA, Consumer Affairs, specializing in consumer laws and protection
- VITEMA specializing in disaster training, planning and preparation.
- and BMV, supervision team for Vehicle registration, transfer, Driver Licenses etc....

I was formally a part of the Humane Society staff, working through the catastrophic Hurricanes of Irma & Maria, and having the pleasure of being part of saving so many fur-babies lives. I went on to rescue approximately twenty-one dogs that required life saving space and/or dogs with behavioral issues. All babies were rehomed. I have foster failed on 3 of my current pets and approached constantly about pets at the Humane Society. The approach is usually to visit their homes and then provided a pet that their yards can accommodate.

I am a strong believer in Spay and Neuter of pets and long to bring those issues to the local public. This includes Education and providing information on pet, empathy and responsibility, health, vaccination and affordable care information to the local residents.

It will be a great pleasure to be part of the Humane Society's Board in the effort of changing the outcome of so many unwanted fur-babies.

## **Jessica Harrington**

Jessica “Jess” Harrington served 4 years in the U.S. Navy, after which she completed an EMT Certification and BA in history and anthropology. Jess utilized her degree in anthropology by working as an archaeologist and volunteer coordinator with PaleoCultural Research Group, and later at the Denver Zoo. At the Denver Zoo she conducted formal and informal training sessions with citizen scientist volunteers and graduate students, organized and executed animal behavioral observations, and designed solutions to address human-wildlife conflict.

Jess has extensive managerial and budgeting experience. In the Navy she oversaw and managed 13 personnel, 153 pieces of mechanical equipment, and a 5.2-million-dollar budget. As a regional manager for Invicta Security Solutions, she oversaw the training, scheduling, supply management, and payroll for 50 security officers, and 10 client accounts.

Jess has always loved animals and is dedicated to their wellbeing. She has cared for a multitude of animals and experienced the joy, security, and companionship they bring into our world. She believes it’s our responsibility to provide that same love and security to these animals. She has brought this belief with her to St. Thomas where she has volunteered walking dogs in the evenings. After working with the dogs at St. Thomas Humane Society, she wants to do more to help.

Although Jess just became a fulltime resident of St. Thomas in June 2022, she has already committed to volunteering at the HSSTT and is eager to do more. As a board member, Jess will work to build up the volunteer program, to allow for more efficiency and a higher level of support for staff. She will work to build rapport with the local population and organizations to ensure that HSSTT and the community have a mutually beneficial relationship.

## **Dellia Holodenschi**

Dellia Holodenschi has been a St. Thomas resident for over 44 years after relocating from NYC. Her work ethic has been molded by her extensive involvement in grant writing, event planning and non-profit animal organizations. Dellia's past service as a HSSTT Board Member has included her collaboration with past Board Members Christine O'Keefe and Joyce Doumeng in implementing major Spay/Neuter policy changes. She has also assisted in organizing numerous successful fundraising events such as the Valentine's Ball, HSSTT Calendar Contests, Spring Brunch, and Sea La Vie Dinners.

Extensive firsthand research resulted in the successful TNR/Cat Café program adopted by HSSTT in December 2007. Dellia founded Lucky Paws Foundation (LPF) to concentrate on essential spaying and neutering. LPF is responsible for the first-ever mobile spay/neuter clinic in St. Thomas utilizing stateside veterinarians, has facilitated the spaying/neutering of over 5,000 cats and dogs, and today feeds and maintains on a daily basis over 600 cats in colonies throughout St. Thomas.

As President of the Board for HSSTT since 2021 with the support of a strong likeminded Board of Directors, much needed new animal welfare programs such as the Dog Park and the Evening Dog Walking Program have been implemented. It was also the first year that a Government Spay/Neuter grant was awarded to the organization to offer FREE sterilization for pets and community cats. The ongoing support of Kym's Angels Foundation for spaying and neutering has also been an incredible asset to the organization.

Dellia would like to serve one more term to focus on the establishment of a full-service clinic on the HSSTT campus to improve care and contain costs and continue to make inroads in staff development and improve the setting for all animals while in our care. Most importantly through collaboration we can ensure that the organization is on stable footing for future generations.

## **Tanya Kling**

Tanya has been a Board Member since 2020 and served as Vice President and Chair of the Education Committee. Tanya also volunteers every Wednesday at the shelter doing much needed laundry!

Tanya was a teacher in the New York City public school system for 37 years and has extensive experience in creating programs and developing instructional materials.

During her tenure on the Board, Tanya chaired the Education Committee which developed a reading program to teach students about animal welfare, adopting a pet from the Humane Society and the importance of spaying and neutering pets to avoid overpopulation. All public schools on St Thomas received these reading kit.

Tanya is also taking care of a few colonies of community cats and is fostering a dog recently treated for heartworm. Tanya hopes to be re-elected to continue her work in the field of Education for our island's animals.

## **Kent Knight**

My name is Kent Knight and I have been a volunteer of the Humane Society of St Thomas since 2010. My wife Sherry and I have been coming to the island as “part time locals” for 26 years and have spent our vacation (up to 10 weeks) working in the shelter doing repairs, walking dogs, helping at the spay/neuter clinics and trapping/feeding the feral cats. Our rescue, Pet Search, located outside of Pittsburgh PA, has been involved in the Pets With Wings Program for many years, both on island with assisting with travelers escorting animals, as well as helping with the larger transports flying to Miami. We also have taken hundreds of dogs through private travelers and on large transports into our rescue.

I have been involved in animal rescue for 39 years...with my own rescue, Pet Search, founded in 1986 and have assisted other rescues and animal organizations. I am a volunteer humane police officer, licensed through the PA Department of Agriculture for Pet Search and have held various positions in this organization including CEO of the board of Directors, President, fundraising coordinator and treasurer. Prior to retiring in 2017, I was in a middle management position with an equipment service company. Even though I do not reside on St Thomas full time, I feel that I can bring much to the Humane Society. I feel my experience with fundraising can bring much needed funds to the shelter. My 36 years as CO-CEO of Pet Search a 501(c)3, an all breed foster based rescue will greatly enhance the overall operation of the Humane Society of St Thomas.

In closing, I feel my many years of animal rescue will benefit the Humane Society of St Thomas.

## **Ilana Reich**

Back in April 2020, Ilana started helping as a transport volunteer and walking dogs. She continued to walk the dogs every week for months, and due to the urgent need she saw, Ilana created a first ever, paid volunteer dog walking program. The trained dog walkers, in addition to giving the dogs the attention that they craved, were also role models, inspiring the community to help and were always available to greet and train any new volunteer that showed up. This much needed program, funded fully by Ilana gave the staff the needed time for other tasks on their perpetually long shelter to-do list.

The program was named the DogBuddy Program, and employed at its height 10 paid dog walkers and it planted the seeds of the very successful Dog Walking program that is continuing today through the “ Paws for Bedtime” program! Shelter dogs now have a routine to look forward to, and enrichment to aid in managing the stresses and difficult environment of living at the shelter. Her colleagues, Debbie & Carole were instrumental in making this happen. The shelter hours were extended and managed solely by volunteers. In addition, Ilana researched and provided all the needed tools to make the program a success by donating leashes, poop bags and a myriad of additional items.

Ilana has served 1+ years on the board, and since December 2021 has chaired the Volunteer Committee, and served as our shelter’s volunteer coordinator. Along with her committee members, she implemented an online volunteer portal, including the conversion of the New Volunteer Application to an online form, complete with QR codes and hotlinks to make access to volunteering seamless for new and returning volunteers.

Ilana’s family has owned a place on St. Thomas since 1981. She is a foster failure, and the proud owner of two dogs: her business partner Chestnut Sr., and HSSTT graduate Chestnut aka Coconut (who prior to adoption was a stray dog in her neighborhood). Her dedication and experience will continue to be an asset to the organization, and together with other like-minded individuals, Ilana hopes to be re-elected to continue her work for animals’ welfare.

## **Stacy Ulmer**

Hailing from the Chesapeake Bay in Southern Maryland, Stacy (*pronouns: she/her*) has always been drawn to living by the water. Having spent time living in the bustling cities of Valparaiso, Chile, Washington, DC and Oakland, CA, she was looking for a slower pace of life. Originally planning to only spend her teacher summer in the USVI, she quickly fell in love with the natural wonders on land and in the water and decided to make this her new home. While she misses the hustle and bustle of the culturally diverse cities and dramatic coastlines of the West Coast, she has settled into her relaxing Caribbean lifestyle here on the west end of St. Thomas.

Stacy has 15 years of hospitality experience in both fine dining and fast paced casual environments. She has transitioned to being a chef on a yacht in STT this upcoming season. She has taught ESL to at-risk youth in public schools in Baltimore, DC and most recently Oakland. She currently is working for the State Department as a Virtual Educator and her first project is co-teaching and mentoring future teachers in Mexico. She holds a B.A in Spanish/Latin American Studies as well as a Master's in Education, and is fluent in Spanish.

In her spare time, you can find Stacy hiking to off-the-beaten path beaches with her two dogs. She has always grown up with family pets from dogs to hamsters and gerbils. While in her twenties, she became involved with Mid-Atlantic Pug Rescue while living in DC and frequently babysat friends' dogs while they traveled. Years later and with much more time, she now has her own two dogs, Melu the pug, and Abby the chihuahua/min pin mix (a Stanislaus Animal Shelter "foster-fail" from the beginning of COVID). With more time to dedicate to Stacy's love for animals, she has started to foster and is a volunteer at the shelter. She would like to become more involved at HSST by joining the Board and share her ideas about educating young people about animal wellness and animal cruelty/neglect.

## **Lesli Van Deusen**

Lesli VanDeusen, originally from Michigan, has lived in the USVI since 2009. She holds a BFA with a focus on Interior Design. She practiced both residential and commercial design in New York City, but found her true passion for boats and food once she relocated to islands. Now her and her husband, Ryan, run week-long, luxury yacht charters. Since leaving the corporate world, Lesli has become a certified yacht chef, yoga instructor, divemaster and a 100ton captain. She has huge place in her heart for animals and although her current lifestyle does not allow her to have any of her own, she is eager and excited to donate her time to the animals in need on this island. She is proud to be associated with The Humane Society of St. Thomas and would like to be able to serve on the Board of Directors.