

VOLUNTEER HIGHLIGHT

If you could imagine spending your vacation days anywhere in the world, where would it be? Lying on the white sand of a tropical shore, snowboarding down the slopes of a ski resort or lounging aboard a luxury cruise ship? To most people, cleaning poop pens, doing laundry, feeding lots of little barking mouths and providing medical treatment to uncooperative patients is not the picture perfect vacation. However, this is exactly what you will find animal care volunteer **Ann Kusaka** doing on her vacation days. That's right, Ann spends her vacation and sick days volunteering every Thursday morning at FSLMMC.

If there is one person that appreciates Ann's dedication, it would be the Thursday Animal Care Supervisor, Dean Gomersall. "Through thick and thin, Ann has consistently been there by our side," says Dean. Dean also adds, "We are lucky to have her as a member of our team."

"I remember Ann's first day as a volunteer," recalls our Education Director, Beate Litz. "It was during the El Nino of 1998 when we were caring for over 70 sea lion pups. Ann was going to help me with feeding a pen containing 15 hungry sea lion pups that were eagerly (and somewhat aggressively) awaiting their meals. Ann's eyes opened wide with a mixture of surprise and anxiety with what happened next. I surrounded the two of us with a small fence as a means of protecting ourselves and shouted, "We're going in!"

Now years later, Ann has remained courageous at heart in her passion to care for these magnificent creatures. Yet, her ability to care for those in medical distress is not limited to marine mammals. Her "day job," as we call them around here, is at Hoag Hospital where she has been a Medical Technologist for 15 years. She contributes her time, knowledge and heart to FSLMMC. Thank you Ann for your dedication!



Photo by **Dean Gomersall**

Ann Kusaka (right)



WISH LIST

- Epson Color Printer 777 or C60
- Liquid Bleach
- Laundry Detergent
- Dawn Dishwashing Liquid
- Gift certificate to Staples or Office Max
- Powder Chlorine
- Blankets - NOT quilts
- Large Dog Kennels
- Karo Syrup
- Hoses