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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**  
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## **Golden Jubilee Celebration for Hannah Shirley!**

*North America's oldest pygmy hippo reaches her 50th birthday in grand style at San Diego Humane Society's Ramona Wildlife Center*

**RAMONA** — The rain stopped just in time for an incredible occasion to celebrate! Hannah Shirley, North America's oldest pygmy hippopotamus in managed care, turns 50 this month! Staff and volunteers at San Diego Humane Society's Ramona Wildlife Center, where Hannah lives, went all out with a *Golden* themed birthday party!

The big celebration on Wednesday, Nov. 15, 2023, included presents and a cake made out of a watermelon base, papaya "frosting," spaghetti squash, sweet grain and Purina Nicker Makers Horse Treat sprinkles. Despite being a nocturnal animal, Hannah Shirley decided to take part and enjoy the celebrations held in her honor!



Hannah Shirley is one of 15 wild ambassador animals at San Diego Humane Society's Ramona Wildlife Center. She has lived there since 2002 when she was discovered in a residential backyard in Escondido. Luckily for Hannah, she was rescued and transported to what was then The Fund for Animals Wildlife Center. San Diego Humane Society acquired the facility on Sept. 1, 2020, and has since assumed care of the beloved animal.

Hannah's enduring spirit is a testament to the remarkable care and dedication of San Diego Humane Society's Project Wildlife team. "You can tell how loved Hannah Shirley is by our staff and volunteers just by looking at the details in this celebration," said Andy Blue, campus director at San Diego Humane Society's Ramona Wildlife Center. "She's treated like royalty every day, but reaching 50 years old is an incredible milestone for an animal who wouldn't typically surpass 30 in the wild."

Hannah Shirley weighs about 500 pounds and lives in a 13,000-square-foot paddock, complete with a swimming pool and natural pond to play in. She enjoys a deservedly pampered life by Project Wildlife's team that includes back rubs, sprinkler showers and lots of food-related enrichment activities.

**Photos/b-roll and sound from Hannah Shirley's 50<sup>th</sup> birthday party for media use can be downloaded here: <https://spaces.hightail.com/space/hlkiaqL3TJ>**

**Photo/video credit: San Diego Humane Society**

### **About San Diego Humane Society**

San Diego Humane Society's scope of social responsibility goes beyond adopting animals. We offer programs that strengthen the human-animal bond, prevent cruelty and neglect, provide medical care, educate the community and serve as a safety net for all pet families. Serving San Diego County since 1880, San Diego Humane Society has campuses in El Cajon, Escondido, Oceanside, Ramona and San Diego. For more information, visit [sdhumane.org](http://sdhumane.org).