



HAPPY HOLIDAYS FROM RCHS!

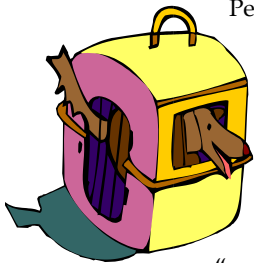
2012: T' WAS A VERY GOOD YEAR

Season's Greetings from the Randolph County Humane Society. Once again it is time to share our year's activities and reflect on the progress we have made and our plans for continued progress into the future. So go make yourself a cup of tea, find a soft chair and let us tell you about our year.

First, we would like to thank and congratulate Kelly Scheidegger, our shelter manager, on completing her 11th year with RCHS. We feel so fortunate to have someone with her experience, skills, and the compassion she brings to her work each day. Our animal residents and our community are the beneficiaries, which you will appreciate as you read this newsletter.

ADOPTION NEWS

During this past year, from January 1 through October 31, we have provided shelter for 1,184 dogs and cats. 107 were reunited with their owners and 427 were adopted in our community. An additional 564 were successfully adopted outside our community through various rescue organizations, including our valued partnership with the



PetSmart Charities® Rescue Waggin'®, program. This program continues to be a life-line for our animals. RCHS is one of only two shelters in WV that meets their strict standards and is recognized as one of their very top "favorite" source shelters on the east coast because we have "such nice dogs" and because Kelly

"does an outstanding job" completing the work required to prepare our animals for transport. It is because of our participation with PetSmart Charities® as well as other rescue organizations that we are able to keep our adoptions at an impressive rate of above 90%! (That compares to around 50% statewide.) Without this and other rescue programs, RCHS would be a sad place indeed. We simply take in far more animals than we could ever care and find homes for within our community. We thank you, Kelly!

NEW CAT RESIDENCE

Our feline residents have a lot to purr about these days after receiving a housing upgrade this past year. The roof won't be caving in this winter under heavy snow, their caregivers won't fall through rotted flooring, and the cats are now breathing healthier and living happier due to the foresight, hard work and direction of then RCHS Board President, Maria Kostakos. Initially it was assumed by all that the original block structure that once housed the dogs and now

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December 2012

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- RCHS Cat-astrophe!
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houses the cats would have to be demolished and replaced. There was not enough money to build a new structure, and even a trailer as a temporary solution would be expensive and inadequate to suit our needs.

Maria Kostakos and her father, Nick, found another option. Maria, who has a degree in architecture, and her dad who is "really handy" spent many hours meticulously examining the skeletal structure of the building and determined that it could serve our needs after a significant make-over. She first designed a new floor plan, complete with a detailed cost study analysis, and presented her proposal to the Board for approval. That was in January of 2012. Board members and volunteers soon rolled up their sleeves and got to work! A dumpster was delivered and demolition began...

The early stages of the project were the dirtiest. All of the original cinderblock kennels that lined the floor had to be broken out with sledgehammers and disposed of and the room was eventually stripped down to bare walls, floor to ceiling. This remodeling project included new concrete floors, windows, doors, shelving, wiring, lighting, plumbing, gutters, paint and more. A new layout was created with direct access to the laundry room, including 3 large fenced in outside play areas with direct access from inside the cat room. Overall, a clean, bright, open, organized and efficient environment was created to allow for a better quality of life for the animal residents and a better work environment for the dedicated staff and volunteers.

All of the costs incurred with this project were donated, along with the labor. This make-over was only made possible through the significant monetary, material and labor donations made by the following sponsors:

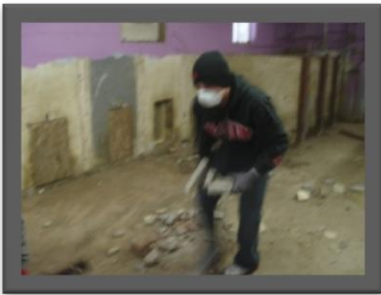
SPONSORS AND DONORS:

- 84 Lumber * Brian and MaryAnn McDonald
- Bruce Dillon * CGP Construction Co. Inc
- City of Elkins * Colonial Millwork
- Davis Electrical Services * Dick and Margaret Geiser
- Davis Memorial Presbyterian Church

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Nick and Betty Kostakos * RCHS Board Members
Reliable Roofing Company * Richard Kozer
Sen. Walt Helmick, Grant Sponsor
Sherwin Williams * Stemple's Ready Mix
Valley Supply Company and to:
Fordland * and * Performance Motors, for donating their
auto repair services, valued close to \$2,000, to repair the
shelter vehicle.

Please support our supporters ~WE THANK THEM ALL!~

Cat Residence Remodeling Project



BEFORE



AFTER

CAT-ASTROPHE!

Perhaps you read about it on Facebook. One week before Thanksgiving Kelly and Rich arrived at work to find over 30 cats and kittens had been dumped in the RCHS parking lot. We are typically at full capacity in our cat room, so this was not only upsetting but presented serious challenges as to how to house and care for these abandoned kitties.

Appeal from Kelly, Nov. 17TH):

“ATTENTION FACEBOOK FANS - WE ARE IN AN EMERGENCY SITUATION!

When we arrived at the shelter this morning, we found that over 30 cats and kittens had been dumped in the shelter parking lot by a heartless individual during the night. We have captured most of these precious babies, but are still in the process of seeing if there are any more out there.

Right now, we desperately need crates, food and litter to

take care of these little ones. Once they are checked in and evaluated, we are asking for foster homes and adopters...

Wow, what a great, caring and compassionate community we have. The out pouring of help today was nothing short of awesome. To all of you who brought food and supplies up, saying 'Thank You' just doesn't seem like enough. Please know that we are so grateful for the kindness you showed to the abandoned cats and kittens. To the families who came up and adopted and fostered, you truly made a difference...

Good morning Facebook friends. The dust is slowly settling after this weekend's emergency situation involving the many cats who were abandoned at our door step. In the midst of the hectic activity that was going on Saturday morning and afternoon, we failed to get the name of someone who made a very special donation to help these homeless and abandoned kitties. We are hoping to hear from the little girl who gave her birthday money to us - when we find out who she is we want to hug her! The little ones who were rescued are all safe and sound- some here with us, some at PURR WV, and several in foster homes. All are doing well and getting ready to go to their new homes. We are still so grateful to the public and to all who stepped up to help us in our time of need. The love and generosity of the public and help from other rescues has truly given us so much to be thankful for this holiday season. God Bless all our supporters and friends."



RUSTY'S RESCUE

Want to hear a feel-good story? Meet Rusty. This little guy had been at the shelter for about a year and 1/2, which was his good luck. He landed at RCHS in the hands of Kelly, her staff, and our loyal group of dog walkers who all knew he had the "right stuff" if he was just given a proper chance. Rusty is not one of those sloppy kisses, wiggle-bottom kind of dogs. He is more reserved, shy, a bit wary and doesn't suffer fools gladly. In other words, he will meet you on his own terms, which was causing him some trouble in the "take me home" department. Twice we watched him leave us on his way to a forever home, and twice he was returned (through no fault of his own!). We were heart-sick both times but glad to have him safely back with us. Then one day right

before Thanksgiving a young woman came looking and was introduced to Rusty. She squatted down low and they checked each other out. She grinned and said, "I like you!" Well, his walking mate spilled the beans about our favorite son. She wanted her to know he was a bit of a tough guy on the outside but a worthy candidate, if given the chance. She kept grinning! She is taking a break from college and lives on the top of a mountain with her parents, who decided it would be nice to once again have a dog about the house. Their previous pet had died and it had been awhile. She took him for a little walk and asked, "Would you like to come home with me?" There was a tiny bit of tail-wagging, but our boy was pretty lukewarm about the whole thing; this was the Rusty we knew and loved! Well, she never stopped grinning, and he now lives on top of a mountain with 13 acres all to himself. He tromps through the woods with this wise young woman and is the little man of the house. They love him and have no intentions of bringing him back. Our hearts were in our throats when we watched them drive off, and missing him now is bittersweet.

Rusty found his forever home because Kelly, once again, saved the day- his special day – by allowing him the time to find his match. He was picky! That adage, "the third time's a charm" now has new meaning for us at RCHS.

FOHO SPAY AND NEUTER INITIATIVE

Mary Ann McDonald, our current RCHS Board President, is also a Board member of the Federation of Humane Organizations WV, which works to protect the welfare of WV animals. One of their major initiatives has been to obtain spay/neuter funding assistance for companion animals through legislation, by adding a small surcharge on the manufacturers' fee paid for a permit to sell pet food products in WV. This initiative has been lobbied against for several years by the pet food industry, but FOHO is encouraged that they have been invited back in 2013 to meet with legislators, county commissioners, and mayors to continue to work on a solution to the problem of pet overpopulation.

Some Statistics:

- 67% of WV households have pets
- 35% of all WV owned pets are NOT altered
- 427, 928 dogs reside in WV households
- 496,643 cats reside in WV households
- **29% of WV pet population enter shelters compared to 4% of the US pet population.**
- 144,321 animals entered WV shelters in 2011; 77,000 were euthanized, the majority of which were healthy adoptable animals.

Over \$8 million dollars is spent annually for animal control throughout WV.

"We need to spend the money on preventing the pet overpopulation problem, rather than dealing with its aftermath. Failure to act is not just an inconvenience; it is a matter of life and death for companion animals." Theresa Bruner, FOHO newsletter, Fall 2012

Animal Lobby Day will occur during the 2013 Legislative Session. You can follow important animal legislation at www.fohowv.org. To learn more about the Federation of Humane Organizations WV and lend support, go to www.fohowv.org.

FINANCES AND FUNDRAISING

It costs \$200,000 to operate the Randolph County Humane Society. In the year 2012 RCHS received \$80,000 from the City/County and \$8,000 from the United Way. The balance must be raised through donations, grants, adoption fees and fundraising. Fundraising events for the year 2012 brought in \$20,000. Grant \$ is hard to come by and competition is fierce.

As a member of United Way, RCHS suspends fundraising from September through December. Fundraising events planned for 2013 will include Cocktails for Canines in January, Membership drive in February, a Spay-ghetti dinner in early March, Ramp Festival bake sale/ raffles in April, Furball in May, a June yard sale, Bark in the Park in July, and in August, the Applebee Breakfast. Please be watching for fundraising announcements. Your support is critical to our success! Go to www.rchs-pets.org.

ADOPTION TIPS

Should you get a pet for Christmas?

We, of course, want all of our shelter animals to find forever homes as soon as possible, and we want to see them all cuddled warm and safe with a family to call their very own through the holiday season. That's why we are here – to rescue pets from life-threatening, solitary situations and adopt them out to live in loving homes where they will be loved and cared for properly. So the answer to the initial question should be a resounding "yes!" right? Well, mostly....

First, a puppy or kitten should never be a surprise to anyone in the family. Everyone – even the smallest child – should be a part of the decision on whether, when, and what kind of pet to adopt. Everyone should be ready and willing to do their part in loving and caring for a member of the family, committing to the pet's care for its *whole* life. That means cleaning the litter box, walks in the snow and rain, toys, equipment, grooming, and regular medical care. The whole kit and caboodle.

What kind of pet to adopt is a big question. Working through it together with guidance from several sources (shelter staff, trainer, vet, internet research) will help you decide on a species and breed that is right for you and your lifestyle. It may not be the puppy you think is the cutest right now – because that puppy will grow up and have very different needs than she does when she is 7 weeks old. Breeds vary in their needs for exercise, food, grooming, training, and handling. Some are better with small children than others; some need specific training that honors what they were bred for; some need much more exercise than others to avoid behavioral problems; training tools and equipment vary depending on the pet; and all pets and

families need training together, starting *before* you bring an adopted animal home! If you have considered all these things and, as a family, have concluded the time is right to adopt a pet, it can be a family gift that you all choose together. Your shelter staff and Board members are ready to help match you with just the right pet that will bring you years of enjoyment together, and to ensure that your first weeks and months together lead to a lifetime of love!

Preparing to Adopt Your Pet

It is very important to fully prepare for your life with your new pet. Just as you would not bring a baby home from the hospital without preparation, the same is true for your animal. We want to help your family successfully integrate your new pet!

For a cat, you'll need a cat carrier to safely transport him; a litter box, scoop, and litter; cat food and food/water bowls; toys; a scratching post; a bed; and appropriate grooming tools.

For a dog, you'll need a properly-sized crate for transport and training; food/water bowls; dog food; appropriately-sized collar and leash; toys to chew and play with; a mat or bed; appropriate grooming tools; a plan for walking and exercising your dog every day; and a plan for getting training for you and your dog.

If you already have pets at home, introducing your new pet into the home may not be as simple as walking in the door with her. Proper introductions are important to minimize stress for your current pets and your new one. The best scenario would involve meeting with a trainer before your dog comes home so you can be prepared to respond appropriately right away and avoid any inadvertent training mistakes that could lead to behavior problems later. Our shelter works with a trainer who provides a complimentary consultation with every dog adoption.

Tina Vial, ABC Dog Trainer
Pups & Pals Dog Obedience Training

DONATE * VOLUNTEER * ADOPT

Become a RCHS Volunteer:

On-site:

- Animal bathing and grooming
- Dog walking, socializing
- Cat cuddling and play
- Laundry
- Dish washing
- Kennel, facility cleaning
- Photography
- Organizing supplies, office work
- Grounds keeping, lawn care
- Repair work – lighting, plumbing
- Carpentry

Off-site:

- Web management, book keeping
- Fund-raising committee work
- Sign/poster distribution and removal

- Donating needed supplies: Blankets, towels, newspapers, cleaning materials, cat litter, food
- Funds solicitor
- Animal sponsorship: (pay for the cost of spay/neuter and adoption fees for an adoptable animal)
- Become a card carrying member
- Become a board member

Children must be 16 or older to volunteer unsupervised

To inquire about becoming a RCHS volunteer, email us at volunteer@rchswv.org, or call Ginny Zuboy, the volunteer coordinator, at 304-636-2075. If you decide to be a volunteer, you will then be asked to fill out an application form and make an appointment with the coordinator for the purposes of introduction and orientation. Belong to an organization and want to learn more? **Invite us to come and speak about our work and the volunteer opportunities at RCHS.**

DONATE

RCHS remains open largely due to private donations. We appreciate all monetary donations, large or small. All donations are tax deductible. You may wish to donate to:

- Yelp for Help (emergency medical care)
- Spay and Neuter fund
- Adoption Sponsorship
- General Operations fund

To make a holiday donation, please make your check out to RCHS, noting how you would like your dollars spent, and send it to RCHS, PO Box 785, Elkins, WV 26241. In return, you will receive a confirmation from us, along with a robust



Thank You!

ADOPT Our primary goal at the Randolph County Humane Society is to find loving and lasting homes for all of our shelter residents. Providing a home for a shelter animal is the best of all ways you can show support for our cause, and the reward is one that keeps on giving. If you have friends or family members or coworkers who are considering a pet for themselves or their families, please suggest that they consider adopting a shelter animal rather than purchasing one from a pet supply house or private breeder. Shelter animals did not end up at RCHS through any fault of their own. They have simply been unlucky at love and they deserve a second chance. Please help us provide that second chance for our RCHS residents, who deserve nothing less.

Finally, **please spay and neuter your pets!**

Thank you for supporting RCHS. We wish you a



Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

RCHS Board of Directors and Staff

Family Name
Street Address
Address 2
City, ST ZIP Code



**RECIPIENT NAME
STREET ADDRESS
ADDRESS 2
CITY, ST ZIP CODE**