



By William Given

The Good Samaritan Pet Center (GSPC) was started in September of 2000 by Beth Springer and a handful of volunteers. Ms. Springer, executive director of GSPC, had been involved with a no-kill shelter in the 1990s in the Denver area. It was her experiences there that provided her with many insights into how a rescue operation might be run a good deal more efficiently and much less costly.

When GSPC first began, a significant number of the dogs coming in required veterinary care for injuries received from being hit by cars. At that time there were generally only a half dozen dogs in foster at any given time. GSPC currently has about 20 dogs and 12 cats in foster care awaiting adoption.

The mission of the GSPC is to promote healthy relationships between people and their pets. All of the volunteers at GSPC strive to prevent animal abuse and abandonment and to provide resources and support services to fulfill those goals.

Solid Numbers

In the first year of operation, GSPC rescued some 90 dogs and placed about 72 in adoptive homes. Last year they rescued 145 dogs and found forever homes for 116 of them. That is an 80 percent success rate. So far in 2012, they have rescued about 70 dogs, have placed 45 of them and have 2 adoptions pending. Beth informed me that overall the organization's adoptions are down a bit and she believes it is due to the failing economy.

A majority of the dogs which come to GSPC come from shelter situations. Owner relinquishments due to the continued economic crisis are continuing to increase.

The Flyer Program

GSPC's flyer program is unique to rescue organizations. It was designed to provide pet owners the opportunity to find a home for their pet without taking their dog or cat to a shelter. The main requirement is that the owner is able to keep the pet in their home while the volunteers at the GSPC search for a new and forever home.

Fabulous Fosters

GSPC has 25 active foster homes. "Our need for good foster homes is our greatest need," said Beth. The more foster homes a rescue group has the more dogs they can save. "If we had another 25 foster homes, I would have to wish for more."

It is nothing short of amazing that GSPC has managed to rescue and re-home so many cats and dogs given the small number of foster homes and volunteers they have. It would be hard to imagine a more caring and compassionate group of dog lovers.

Not ready for the long-term commitment of adoption but you still want to help? Consider fostering. As a foster parent you get all the joy and companionship of having a four-legged roommate, plus you have the knowledge that you are saving the life of a deserving animal.

The Costs Add Up

The bill for veterinary care last year added up to approximately \$40,000. In the first half of 2012, GSPC had already racked up almost \$24,000 in veterinary bills for the dogs rescued since January. Beth shared that about 40 percent of the dogs coming from shelters are diagnosed with a medical issue or relinquished by their owners with a known illness.

The cost of providing medical care to the rescued dogs is the single greatest expense of the organization. "Every so often we do get a dog with more complex medical needs," said Beth. "It only takes a few positive heartworm tests or surgical procedures to make a serious dent in the budget, and of course we just never know what kind of medical care or treatment the next rescued dog might need."

GSPC Needs

GSPC operates almost entirely on adoption fees and monetary donations. Their very reasonable adoption fees are \$90 for adult dogs, \$75 for senior dogs age 7 and over and \$125 for puppies. The adoption fee for cats is \$50 and the fee for kittens under nine months of age is \$80. These adoption fees ensure that all dogs and cats are spayed or neutered, receive their basic vaccinations and receive a dental cleaning or other veterinary care if needed. "Like all rescue organizations, the costs of operation far exceeds the adoption fees collected," Beth said.

Monetary contributions allow the GSPC to meet required and necessary expenses based on priorities. You can make a donation online or by mail. You can also buy a gift from the Good Sam Shop on the GSPC website. For those who want to help but are not in the position to make a monetary contribution, the GSPC has a wish list of items that people can donate. GSPC is always in need of pet supplies and office supplies.

Planned Events

GSPC has a number of fundraising events during the year. In February the volunteers host a big chili cook-off. Then in July they all get together to participate in an Independence Day adoption event at the Highlands Ranch Town Center where the Good Sam volunteers have a booth with items for sale and animals for adoption.

Near the end of November, the volunteers host an event called Christmas in Colorado. They have many unique and special handmade items for sale made by volunteers and supporters that make wonderful Christmas gifts for those lucky enough to be on your gift list. In December, the GSPC has a bake sale at the Broadview Veterinary Clinic.

Adopting a GSPC Dog

Most of the dogs can be adopted out to any residential situation, including condos and apartments, as long as the adopting parents are committed to providing the dogs with an outlet to meet their exercise needs. How social a rescue dog is will depend of course on how they were being raised at the formative stages of development. If a rescue dog was raised around children and cats then he or she will in all likelihood do very well with them.

Special Needs Dogs

Like all rescue groups, GSPC almost always has one or two dogs with special needs. They currently have a young shepherd mix named Wiley available for adoption. He is believed to be about four years old. Wiley was found abandoned, chained and living under a trailer home on the Southern Ute Indian Reservation in the southwestern portion of Colorado. He had obviously had it tough as he was quite thin, was severely infested with mange and had tapeworms.

Wiley is recovering nicely with his foster family which has two dogs. His favorite snack is cheddar cheese. He is a little bit shy, having lived in a remote area, so he needs a person who has patience and will give him the time needed to get used to the sights and sounds of the city.

Thank You

Beth and all of the volunteers of the Good Samaritan Pet Center would like to express their sincere appreciation to the animal care professionals at the Spay Today Clinic and Front Range Vet Clinic in Lakewood, and to Dr. Davies and the staff at Broadview Veterinary Clinic in Denver. They have provided free or discounted services, thereby making GSPC's continued success possible.

As with most rescue organizations, GSPC has an ongoing struggle to keep fosters and volunteers. If you are interested in more information on donating, fostering, adopting, or volunteering with the Good Samaritan Pet Center, please call 303-333-2291 or visit their website at www.thegoodsamaritanpetcenter.org. They will appreciate greatly your every effort to assist them in their mission.

Good Samaritan Pet Center Wish List

Pet Supplies:

- Canned dog & cat food
- Collars & leashes
- Exercise pens
- Jerky treats
- Nature's Miracle
- Pet first aid kits
- Stainless steel food bowls
- Washable dog & cat beds

Office Supplies:

- 8.5 X 11 reams of white copy paper
- #10 envelopes
- HP21 & HP22 ink cartridges
- Postage stamps

Adoptable Dogs - These and other great dogs are looking for forever homes



Anna
Terrier Mix
12-week-old female



Barkley
Irish Setter Mix
5-year-old male



Henslee
Dachshund
6.5-year-old male



Holly
Blue Heeler Mix
2-year-old female



Milo
Chihuahua
8-year-old male



Myles
Smooth Fox Terrier Mix
2-year-old male