



“Caring For Animals Takes A Big Heart!”

**By Kit Belcher, Executive Director
Beltrami Humane Society
Published in *The Bemidji Pioneer***

Each day at Beltrami Humane Society, we come into the building to be welcomed by our shelter animals (cats and dogs), who are waking up to greet a new day. The animals patiently wait until the kennel attendant gets to their kennels for cleaning. Perhaps today will be the day that they find their new forever home.

In the Cat Room, the cats or kittens may pace back and forth or rub up on the kennel doors purring, meowing, or reaching their paws out to touch their temporary caretaker. Some of them may bounce right out into their attendant's arms when the door opens for a little “lovin” or cuddling. They get new blankets, food, water and a new toy for the day, while they watch customers come through the doors with anticipation. They especially love to play with toys in the cat playroom (outside their kennels) with visitors or volunteers who pet, groom or even play hide & seek with them in the cat trees.

In the Dog Room, the dogs and puppies bounce up and down with joy, their tongues hang out as if to smile, some yip or bark quite loudly (often in unison) and their tails go into wagging mode--not slowly, but just as fast as they can wiggle without flying off the end of the dog. You can almost hear them telling you.....”gotta go, gotta go!” The attendant gives them fresh water, food and than lets them out for their morning exercise in the dog yards. They romp about the yard, taking in the fresh air and running off some idle energy. When it is time to go back to their kennel, those sad eyes seem to say, “do I have to?” But with a dog biscuit treat, they climb back into their kennel (til their afternoon break); to wait yet another long day for someone special to come and take them home. Some days, they get out more frequently as special volunteers (young & old) come and give of their personal time to play ball with them, brush them or take them out on the trails behind the shelter.

What is the average length of stay at the shelter? This number varies, but normally is 30 to 60 days. On a couple of occasions, we have sheltered animals up to one year. This makes me very sad when I think about the quality of life these animals are missing out on. They deserve better, don't you agree?

SPECIAL ANIMALS that I feel have waited much too long for their new forever homes include "Sally" & "Sugar" (cats) and "Sullivan" & "Laddie" (dogs). "Sally" came to us as a baby after being found at our local Transfer Station in a pile of trash. She is black/white, has short hair, is shy, but can be lovey, and is a great mouser! "Sugar" has been at the shelter 7 months. She is a beautiful black/white long hair Norwegian Forest cat. She is very cuddly and sweet. She loves her "Fancy Feast" cat food. "Sullivan" was born at the shelter in July of 2006. He is a lab-shep-x. He was adopted out, but came back to us when his family moved into a "no pet" housing facility. He is playful and full of energy. "Laddie" was found in the back pasture on a family farm. He apparently was born in the woods and raised by a stray mother dog. He was very frightened and his ears had been frozen off. He is a shepherd-x, somewhat shy, but loves attention and will warm up to you once he knows you. He also has lots of energy and loves to be out on the trails.

Do you like exercise? Join us for our annual "WALK FOR ANIMALS!" Meet us at the Rotary Pavilion, October 20th, Saturday, 11:00 a.m. Pre-register at the waterfront (prior to the walk), or pick up a sponsor packet at the Shelter, Pets Plus, Animal Care Clinic or the Pet Zone. Who can get the most sponsors? How many breeds of dogs will you see? Bring your very own dog to walk, or sign up to walk a shelter dog. Each dog will get a special 2007 bandana; you can participate in the "Draw Your Special Pet" contest. Enjoy lots of prizes, pizza, pop & fun! Come on down and enjoy the fall colors!

Shelter Wishes: Medical \$\$ are needed for vaccinations/medications of incoming animals & housed animals, Pea Rock donations (\$25.00 per truck load) – 4-5 truck loads needed, Laundry Supplies, Cleaning Supplies, Kitten Chow, Cat Chow.

Thank you all for your generous donations! We appreciate you!