

WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO GET A PET READY FOR ADOPTION?

COMMITMENT . . . COMMITMENT . . . COMMITMENT

Let's start with a small to medium sized dog that a shelter has held for the 5 days of stray time. No owner shows up. The shelter is full, now the pet has to die.

The shelter staff finds this dog (as they do many) to have a great disposition and knows it would make a great companion friend for someone. What do they do?

Truth for most shelters, they kill them. Cold hard facts!

However, there are some shelters today, that have developed good relationships with reputable rescue groups. Some of these have even gone so far as to contact the rescue groups when pets come in, so they can plan a head and find foster care homes and make veterinary appointments, should the pet find itself not claimed by its owner. All this is happening during the five day stray time. You can already imagine the phone calls that have taken place to prepare for this one small to medium size dog at one shelter location.

Moving along the day and time has arrived and the dog must be taken out of the shelter. More have already come in, many have been killed already and more are waiting to come in, some even sitting on the dog warden's truck that he had to go pick up off the street.

So, a rescue group arrives to get the dog. (whose run will be immediately filled with yet another stray, that is sitting on the dog warden's truck). By now a foster care home has been arranged and usually the dog goes directly to its veterinary appointment for shots, worming and heartworm test and health evaluation. From there, it goes on to its foster care home where he or she will be monitor for health and disposition for the next two weeks. During this time, the foster person will work with this dog on crate training and house training and walking on a leash. Some even take them for rides in the car. They will see if the pet is good with other dogs, cats, and kids. They will work on basic commands. They will bathe and brush the dog.

Are you tired yet? Remember this is one small to medium sized dog **AND** just one dog.

Once in foster care, continued communication is necessary to see how the dog is doing. Flyers are made and the dog's picture is posted on the web site(s). Foster care's evaluation of the dog is crucial to the successful placement of the pet. A well matched pet's profile to a family's lifestyle makes all the difference in the world. People who have pets that are part of their family almost NEVER give them up.

Our mission and our goal is to ***MAKE EVERY PET A WANTED PET.***

Moving on . . . so far so good, pet stays healthy and is a marvelous dog. An appointment to spay the dog is made and the dog gets transported to the vet early in the morning. She is picked up later that day after 5:00. Thank you foster families for this effort. During all this, emails may have come in that need to be answered about this pet, phone calls from flyers that have been posted, oh yeah, someone had to take on making and distributing them! And also, an adoption location has to be found to place this dog when she has recovered from surgery.

Okay, let's say she will go to an adoption site at PetsMart in Louisville at a specific date and time. Again, the efforts of the foster care family will make this happen.

At least two weeks have now passed. . . .

Remember, this is a small to medium sized dog **AND** just one dog.

If all goes as planned, this dog will find the perfect match for her with in 10-14 days while at the adoption site.

The picture looks pretty good. Two weeks, a planned time frame with certain commitments and you're done. Now let's consider the dog not staying healthy, or not getting adopted in 10-14 days. She will need to go back to her foster home. But by now, the foster person has another dog! Still, this situation is workable but again . .

Remember, this is a small to medium sized dog **AND** just one dog.

Now the reality of rescue.

Multitudes of dogs needing to get out of the **multitudes of shelters every day.**

Multitudes of litters of kittens, multitudes of adult cats, multitudes of litters of puppies everyday in multitudes of shelters.

Multitudes of cells phones burning lots of minutes, the coordination of the unimaginable, unbelievable and extraordinary rescues, more intense than the logistics of transportation of the trucking industry across the United States and mostly done without computers and by people who are not paid.

We haven't addressed ill or injured, or what happens when a puppy or kitten gets sick and all the vet clinics are closed and we have to go to 24 hours emergency clinic, we haven't addressed the **multitude of hours of lost sleep**, the extraordinary expenses, nor have we addressed the **multitude of phone calls from the public** who decide that they can't keep their pet(s).

Every day, we pray for a just one more person to lend a hand, give a donation, provide a foster care home, or volunteer a few hours a week. Then we pray for the **multitude of people** to take on the responsibility of pet ownership, appreciate and experience the gift of unconditional love and loyalty pets provide, spay or neuter their pets and to keep their commitment to them. For if the **multitudes** would respond, then maybe then, and just then there would only be just one small to medium size dog to have to rescue!