

Central Pennsylvania Humane Society Shows Us “Fur Real” Friends

By Janay Parrott

COMM 260W Staff Writer

Friday, October 30, 2015

UNIVERSITY PARK, Pa. — In honor of “Adopt a Shelter Dog Month,” the Central

Pennsylvania Humane Society (CPHS) was full of furry friends and eager potential pet owners on Saturday, when it put on its first ever CPHS Open House.

The society, which is located in Blair County, is a non-profit organization that helps find loving homes for animals. The society offers a plethora of services for the animals and for the convenience of their owners, including: a wellness center, spaying/neutering, private euthanasia and cremation and a cruelty and neglect-counseling center.

The event kicked off around 5 p.m., with remarks from Jill Reigh, who is the Director of Marketing, and Charlotte Ames, who serves as the vice president on the board of directors for the CPHS.

Directly after the speeches concluded, a screen dropped down to play a brief reel of the highlights from the past year at the shelter. After the video montage concluded, the crowded 75-person room was in eerie silence.

The video exposed the horrific abuse and the unnecessary and needless suffering that some animals have to endure at the hands of humans. The CPHS’s mission is to protect each animal and be their voice.

“Going out on a rescue call is one of the hardest things. Trying to gain an abused animals trust is so difficult,” said Tiffany Jarrett who is a longtime animal rescue volunteer at the shelter.

Reigh said she was simply “amazed” and the event exceeded her expectations. After she learned that 13 out of 83 pets at the shelter found new families, Reigh said, “I am so glad to know that these dogs will be in a loving home. It’s our hope that every animal that comes through this shelter will be adopted within the upcoming months.”

The society reached its goal and received more donations than they expected to. Joe Murgo, the treasurer for CPHS said, "We surpassed our goal by \$10,000. We raised around \$45,000 this year, which is great because this is our first time doing this fundraiser."

In addition to promoting adopt a dog month, the CPHS revealed its plans for the future. In 2016, the society plans to partner up with a service dog school, so that future rescue animals can be used for more than just companionship, instead they can be used to restore lives.

Service dogs are essential in assisting people with disabilities such as hearing and vision impairment. These specially trained canines can be extremely useful for a person who may need assistance with their everyday life. Things such as picking up change and crossing the street come easy to people who are not disabled because all of their senses are intact. However, not everyone is as fortunate. But service dogs give them a little more freedom and a sense of independence.

Leslie Kelly was at the event on behalf of the future service dog venture. Kelly, 65 of Altoona, completely lost her hearing at the age of 23. Since then, she has had to rely on the assistance of her service dog Noki to improve her quality of life. "Without my boy Noki, I would be and could do nothing," said Kelly, "He gave me another chance at life."

Word Count:530