

An Epidemic of Kindness

It is easy to overlook the quiet army of people that volunteer and donate to help the homeless animals in Georgia, but the outpouring of help that the Georgia SPCA has received over the last few weeks and months is worth taking a look at. These are people that have plugged into the network of volunteers who help us keep our doors open. It is easy to get a little beaten up over the sadness we see in the animal rescue field, but when I stop to reflect on how much kindness has come our way, it is truly heart warming.

The Georgia SPCA is relatively new to the rescue world; we opened our doors in the summer of 2007. We have had our share of ups and downs in this environment of economic unrest, but we are a testament to the kindness of the citizens of our beautiful state. Sometimes people get involved with us because they see the animals as voiceless creatures that cannot help themselves. Sometimes they get involved because they see for themselves how much adopting a shelter animal can enrich their lives, and the animals ask for so little in return for their unconditional love.

If you come to our facility this time of year, you can see for yourself how alive we are with kind people who are adopting, volunteering, and donating. These are people we count on to keep our doors open. We are open 365 days a year, and our staff and volunteers will be here everyday of the holiday season to care for the animals at our facility. We are much smaller than many of our counterparts, yet we have done over 1100 so far in 2011. Relative to the size of our budget, we rescue more animals than some much larger organizations in the Atlanta area. We are constantly finding ways to cut down on our overall expense so we can put more money into the care of the animals.

Over the last twelve months we have doubled the size of our facility, and 90% of the build out was done with donated supplies and labor. Our facility is clean and pleasant, but the floor is several different colors, and all of the walls may not have the same color paint. This is a product of using any help and donations we can, our battle cry is “cheap is good, but free is better”! People have come from all walks of life to help, and we appreciate every one of them. We need for the public to remember us this time of year. We do not receive any money from the government or bigger rescues like the ASPCA, we count on adoptions and the generous citizens in our state to keep our doors open.

The animal issues in Georgia can sometimes be overwhelming, but if we continue to work together, we can make this state a much safer and happier place for companion animals. Georgia is killing at least twice the national average of companion animals, but it is my opinion that we can tackle this issue if we educate the public and make low cost spay/neuter available to lower income families. In the mean time the Georgia SPCA and it's quiet army of volunteers will continue to pull as many cats and dogs as possible from animal control facilities throughout our state, and find loving homes for them. The army of volunteers that make this possible deserves a huge THANK YOU. We would like to invite anyone reading this press release to come by and experience the magic of this holiday season. It will give you a renewed faith in the human race to see what we are

doing for animals in need. We need to get the word out to anyone who does not already know, that we need the help and support of the community. Thank you to all of you who have covered our stories over the past years. The staff and animals of The Georgia SPCA wish you a very safe and happy holiday!

I am also including a poem that one of our wonderful volunteers wrote about the animals at the center. I thought you might enjoy it:

The Plight Before Christmas

'Twas the day before Christmas, when all through the shelter
Staff and volunteers dashed all around helter skelter.

The lobby was tidied, the litter boxes cleaned,
Everyone fed, the Christmas tree gleamed.

Puppies were bathed and dressed up with a bow,
Kittens were groomed, their eyes all aglow;

Leashes were hung by the kennels with care,
In hopes that adopters soon would be there;

Pups and kitties were nestled all snug in their beds,
While visions of a forever home danced in their heads;

Chores finished, and left with a few moments free,
I'd just settled down for a warm cup of tea.

When out in the kennel there arose such a clatter,
I sprang from the desk to see what was the matter.

And, what to my wondering eyes should appear,
But Santa and sleigh, and eight hardy reindeer,

"I have a long list, so step lively, come quick",
"The kids all want puppies and kittens," cried St. Nick.

With much woofing and mewling, tails wagging, they came,
Santa whistled, and shouted, and called them by name;

"Now, Jewel! now, Jana! now, Jonas and Jethro!
On, Eggnog! on Chestnut! on, Zeus and Halo!

"There's no time to lose, come jump in the sleigh!"
And quick as a flash, they all flew away.

In their wake remained the adult dogs and cats,
With shocked little faces, looking somewhat aghast.

Heads hung low, tails tucked, they whimpered and whined,
"Oh no," they lamented, "Santa's left us behind!"

They looked at each another, "But what about me?"
"I'd love to curl up beneath a bright Christmas tree!"

"The adopters, they come and they make such a fuss,"
"But always for the little ones, never for us."

"We don't ask for much, just a nice warm bed,"
"Some love and attention, a pat on the head."

"We haven't been naughty, we haven't been bad,"
"But we're still at the shelter and feeling so sad."

"Please give us a chance, and we'll give to you,"
"A lifetime of joy and a love so true!"

Jane Stewart
Executive Director
Georgia SPCA
www.georgiaspca.org
cell 678-457-7288
office 678-765-2726