

AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

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Give me a home

Brazos Valley animal shelter encourages pet adoption

By Kristin McNulty
THE BATTALION

Renee Ricker said she went to the Brazos Animal Shelter looking to adopt a cat, but instead found Sylvester on the day he was to be euthanized. "I knew he was the one for me," said Ricker, a senior history major, about the rabbit she adopted in October 2000. Located in Bryan, The Brazos Animal Shelter houses animals that have been picked up as strays or turned in by their owners. The shelter has everything from livestock to exotic animals. Since animals that have not been adopted within a designated amount of time will be euthanized, workers encourage people to adopt these animals before it is too late.

According to the 2001 national average census 60 to 70 percent of animals in shelters are adopted while the remaining are put to sleep. Ashley Wesp, interim director of the Brazos Animal Shelter, said that 20 percent of the animals taken in are put down because there is simply not enough space in the facility for them.

Landon Wran, a sophomore civil engineering major, said he was just a college student who wanted to have a pet when he went to the shelter. Upon adopting his lab mix, Shiner, Wran discovered she had been abused by her previous owners and he knew he could give her a loving home. "She seems to know I

saved her," Wran said.

The shelter has an adoption fee of \$70, which includes everything from spaying or neutering to grooming coupons.

"Because overpopulation increases the number of euthanizations, spaying and neutering is essential," Wesp said.

"With neutering, your dog or cat is less likely to roam and mark his territory at everything in sight," she said. "Spaying reduces the chance of mammary gland cancer in your dog or cat."

"We are running out of space at the shelter because people will not spay or neuter their animals, and this leads to more euthanizations," Wesp said.

When someone adopts a pet from the shelter, its first set of vaccinations are included along with an AVID microchip. The first set of vaccinations, along with an AVID microchip, are included when a person adopts a pet from the shelter.

"The microchip is an identification system that is used for every one of our animals at the shelter," Wesp said.

Owners receive coupons for a free grooming and a free physical exam along with discount coupons for obedience training and pet supplies. A leash or cat box is included when an owner takes his pet home.

The shelter also needs volunteers to bathe the animals, feed them and help out with additional cleaning tasks.

The Pajama Party is an event that helps promote adopting the animals.



PHOTOS BY SHARON AESCHBACH • THE BATTALION

There is a half price adoption fee if you come in your pajamas, and the fee still includes all of the benefits. Several local radio stations come out to the shelter to report on the event.

"Volunteer help is needed for the Pajama Party on July 25 from 7 p.m. to 12 a.m. at the shelter," Wesp said.

The shelter is also working to improve its facilities. "An 89 acre, fenced in, off-leash pet park is in the making and will be open in

a few years," Wesp said.

The pet park will include a farm education center and a pet memorial garden; an agility course and pond will be available for the more adventurous pets. The location for the pet playground is off of Farm Road 1179 across from the golf course.

For those looking to adopt a pet, Wran offers one piece of advice: "Adopt a pet that will be happy in your environment, not just because they are cute."

Top: This pointer was found in College Station last Thursday and is currently available for adoption.

Right: This puppy was found along with his brothers and sisters in College Station after being abandoned by his owner. He is also available for adoption.



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