



Humane Animal Welfare Society  
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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

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## **HAWS CREATES TASK FORCE FOR LONG TERM RESIDENTS**

*Waukesha's animal resource center announces life-saving initiative*

**WAUKESHA – May 3, 2022** **HAWS**, the Humane Animal Welfare Society, is again leading the way in the community by creating a life-saving task force to help reduce stress in resident dogs and enhance their time spent in the shelter. Assistance has been provided by a grant from Best Friends Animal Society.

Shelters nationwide are seeing the trend of dogs staying in their facilities longer than in recent years. As an open admission and no-kill shelter, it is HAWS' mission to support all pets for however long they need.

A number of facility-wide interventions are now in place, to strategically improve the lives of dogs in HAWS' care, specifically those residents who have a longer stay at the shelter. These normally medium- and large-size dogs often have had limited training prior to being surrendered, and can take longer to rehome.

### **The *benefits* of long-term shelter residency**

The K9 Task Force is responsible for creating and implementing an individualized enrichment/management plan for each dog at HAWS, with an emphasis on those dogs that remain at the shelter for longer time periods. The group is designed to support shelter residents through tailored enrichment, field trips, environmental modification, medical intervention and more as needed. Overall goals include improved quality of life, increasing desired behaviors and skills that ease the transition from shelter life to home life.

"A dog isn't 'bad' if they've been at the shelter for longer than a few days," notes Megan Arant, HAWS Behavior Department Manager. "With extended stays, we are able to collect more information from them, and find what family qualities they'd match best with."

HAWS' behavior staff and volunteers work with each animal providing things such as basic manners training, outings in the community, and playdates at the HAWS Schallock Center for Animals in Delafield. All shelter pets engage in activities designed to manage behavior and stress, and to enhance their time at HAWS, making them the best possible adoption candidates.

Arant adds, "We know the long term residents are the ones in need of most support."

Several current dogs highlight the work of this task force and the various initiatives being used.

- **Ladybug**, with HAWS since October, 2021, is learning through in-shelter enrichment programs: *Ladybug is a 5-year-old who has had little prior training. She is living in the shelter, working with the Mod Squad behavior volunteers to ensure she's growing her basic manners and life skills.*

- **Everest**, with HAWS since December, 2021, is currently in foster care: *Everest's foster home is monitoring and helping him cope with the after-effects of a previous leg fracture; it is being managed with joint supplements, a life-long treatment recommendation.*
- **Martha**, with HAWS since April 2021, is seeking an experienced foster caregiver: *While content living at HAWS, Martha has been diagnosed with severe separation anxiety; her best chance for treatment and future adoption would be time in an experienced foster home.*

### **A community plea**

The pets living at HAWS receive many hours of caring interaction and attention each day from volunteers and staff; they don't idly languish in their kennels while waiting for a forever home. Members of the community who aren't in the position to adopt can help give each pet the happy ending they deserve:

- Volunteer - dog walkers, behavior department volunteers and members of HAWS' Mobile Adoption team all give shelter pets the outlets they need for successful adoptions.
- Foster - give a dog, cat or small animal time away from the sometimes-stressful environment of the shelter.
- Donate - monetary gifts, a bag of food, treats or a comfy blanket not only help a dog inside the shelter but also assist the short- and long-term foster homes working with HAWS.
- Spread the word - via social shares on all platforms, using HAWS' video and photographs to capture the attention of that just-right person, or someone who knows that person.

HAWS is grateful for the support given both locally by our caring community, and on a larger scale by the partnership with Best Friends Animal Society. To learn more about HAWS and all of the life-changing and life-saving programs, log on to [hawspets.org](http://hawspets.org).

### **SPECIAL INVITATION FOR MEMBERS OF THE MEDIA:**

HAWS invites and encourages members of the media to come to the shelter for one-on-one tours and interviews with key task force members, as well as interaction with some of the pets benefitting from this initiative. Tours of both the main shelter facility in the city of Waukesha plus the Schallock Center for Animals in Delafield can be included.

Please contact Jennifer Smieja, HAWS Communications & Media Specialist, to coordinate your visit:

- [jennifer@hawspets.org](mailto:jennifer@hawspets.org)
- 262-542-8851, x107

*A non-profit organization established in 1965, the Humane Animal Welfare Society assists over 10,000 animals and welcomes more than 35,000 human visitors each year. HAWS is an open admission, no-kill shelter dedicated to strengthening the relationship between animals and humans through adoptions and education, making a more compassionate community possible.*

*HAWS is located at 701 Northview Road in Waukesha, Wisconsin.  
For more information call (262) 542-8851 or log onto [hawspets.org](http://hawspets.org).  
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HAWS: Growing Our Humane Community.*

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