

Matanuska-Susitna Borough

April 2010

Animal Shelter News

Always check at the shelter for your lost pet! 907-746-5500

Adoption Fairs with the Mat-Su Borough Animal Control

Adoption fairs offer the public a chance to see adoptable animals in an open environment far from the kennels and activity of the shelter. Dogs particularly are much more excitable when kenneled then let out for a few minutes. Dog owners know this from the exuberant welcomes they get when they arrive home even if they are gone for just a few minutes as dogs act as if the owners have been gone for hours. The dogs have a chance to "become themselves" when they are in public settings and often present more adoptable personalities.



On March 13th an adoption fair was held at the Wasilla PetZoo. Several cats and dogs were adopted.



Eight dogs mostly boys were on parade at the Mat-Su Home Builders Show on March 20th. A few kittens were adopted right away and the glee on the faces of four little girls was infectious. They would not sleep tonight but stay up watching their new kittens. Attendees to the Home Show stopped to look at the pets on their way in and out of the Menard Memorial Sports Complex.

Thanks to the tireless work of Volunteer Coordinator Sue Fujimoto and her group of volunteers for making these events successful and possible.



A special thanks to Julie Cascio for leading educational shelter tours to many groups over the past month. She has done a great job

At the adoption fair -Linda Henning

At the Mat-Su Valley Homebuilders show in March it didn't take long before I had a dog on a leash named Ginger. Ginger is a young husky mix, an odd but pretty colored, longhaired, caramel and brown brindle, possibly whippet and husky unaccustomed to being with a lot of people and a little shy. She challenged my dog handling by spinning and twisting the leash, I added one of my own so she was double leashed should she slip one collar I had a back up. Not use to a dog so skittish I was taking no chances of her escape.

We were at the show entrance and the people watching was fun and educational. Some people walked by trying not to look at the dogs, like they do if they think someone is going to try to sell them something. I know that look and maybe I was smiling like I was going to try to sell them something. Other people approached cautiously, reminding their kids to ask "Can I pet your dog?" while others bolted in to get a big lick and a mandatory jump up.

The stories flowed from the people who stopped of lost pets, their best shelter dog, a deceased, old friend. Some people got teary eyed when they came face to face with the shelter animals. And a few people stopped and said verbatim, as if it were a quote, "What you do is so wonderful, keep it up".



Ginger and I wandered around the entrance area and she began to calm down or just give in after a couple of hours. A few people asked about her but it was clear that Ginger needed an owner who could be very active; she was not for anyone who had any mobility issues. She was bred to run and be taught and probably would need special attention to deal with separation anxiety. Owning one sled dog kennel dog has taught me that dogs from kennels need others around and cannot be left alone during their transition to a new home, maybe forever. By 3pm Ginger's adoption was looking grim. She'd eaten pockets full of treats and cuddled against me when I sat down. I felt bad for her knowing I had to leave soon, leaving her to go back in the shelter kennel truck, back to her run, alone.

The mother had a bead on us from 100 feet way in the parking lot. She came straight toward me with two small children running behind her. Again the apprehension about Ginger fitting jumped into my mind until the mother announced her list of requirements. She was looking for a dog for their small family team, "an energetic sled dog, house pet, kid friendly and a companion". I couldn't help but butt in. "That's Ginger, ...that's her, ...yes it is." I said. She knew it and I knew it. It happens that way sometimes. The kids and then the father all greeted Ginger and she was happily taking the attention. They signed the papers and were about to write a check. Then an unpublished surprise, Ginger's last owner could not keep her and had sponsored Ginger's adoption in full. The shelter does not publish this until the adopter has expressed genuine interest. Until then it's a secret to prevent a "cheap dog" decision. Even more thrilled the new owners went into the Home Show to pick her up on their way out. We waited outside and happily I said "she was just adopted" to 5 more interested parties.

When the family came back we knelt down next to Ginger to take off my collar and leash and the words "are you ready to take her now" choked in my throat as I felt I was handing her over to a great new life. Thinking of Morgan, our re-homed sled dog kennel dog I mentioned to keep her on a leash or long line for a while, that she might get scared if left alone and to "hang on tight to that leash on the way to the car", twice. I gave the mother a handful of Ginger's favorite treats and was glad for the sunglasses hiding my teary eyes. One of the volunteers asked, "Doesn't that feel good?" It does, it really does.

907-746-5500

TO VOLUNTEER - CALL THE SHELTER TODAY
746-5500

Find more pets at www.petharbor.com