



Boone shelter unveiling adoption van

By Mark Hansel • mhansel@nky.com • June 22, 2010

BURLINGTON - The Boone County Animal Shelter will formally unveil its Mobile Adoption Van at the PetFest in Burlington Sunday.

The van, which cost \$124,755, was purchased with money generated through private fundraising efforts.

The Boone County Fiscal Court formally approved the purchase of the adoption unit at its June 8 meeting.

Becky Reiter, director of the Boone County Animal Shelter, lauded the local community for raising such a large amount of money so quickly.

"I thought it would take two or three years to raise the money," Reiter said. "But a lot of people worked really hard to make this happen."

Fundraising began on June 1, 2009, and included contributions from members of the community and area organizations that support the shelter. Reiter credits a generous donation from the group, Friends of the Shelter, with putting the effort over the top.

Friends of the Shelter is a volunteer organization that promotes the humane treatment of animals and supports responsible pet adoption and ownership.

"We have a tremendous relationship with the Friends of the Shelter and there are just so many things that they do," Boone County Judge-executive Gary Moore said. "To be able to fund this with no taxpayer dollars is an amazing feat."

Taking the adoption effort into the community,

Reiter says, should increase awareness and make it more convenient for people to adopt a pet.

"This will help those individuals that don't have the ability to come to the shelter, Reiter said. "By providing the means in the community, we hope to have more adoptions."

Reiter said shelters throughout the country have experienced adoption rate increases as high as 300 percent after putting a mobile adoption van into service.

The van was purchased from LaBoit Inc., whose bid was the highest of the three companies that submitted estimates, but the only one that met specifications.

Robin Curry, the assistant county administrator, said it was critical that the supplier be able to deliver the vehicle as it was designed.

"The importance is in the care of the animals, disease control, how you are able to handle the cages and out of concern for the employees," Curry said.

The unit was designed specifically to minimize stress and noise for the animals during transport. Because the animals are being taken to public places where there will be extensive interaction with people, Reiter explains, it is

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critical that the trip be as stress free as possible.

The van has 28 cages and six crates that can be pulled down from an upper storage area to provide the convenient and safe transfer of animals.

The idea is to take the adoption effort out into the community instead of waiting for people to come to the shelter.

The vehicle can also be used for education and emergency response and could be pressed into service in the event of a manmade or natural disaster to provide transportation and triage. It is also equipped with an emergency generator which allows it to function off-site.

Reiter plans to use the van at community events and for on-site visits throughout the county.

The shelter has identified team leaders and other community volunteers to staff the vehicle during the on-site adoptions.



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Beckey Reiter, director of the Boone County Animal Shelter, in 2004

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