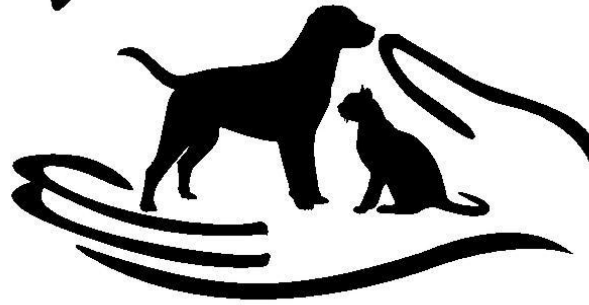


*Trempealeau County*



*Humane Society*

# Volunteer Handbook

**Shelter Hours**

Monday 1:00 – 4:00 p.m.

Thursday 4:00 – 7:00 p.m.

First and Third Saturdays of each month

10:00 a.m. – 1:00 p.m.

N27109 Highway 53, Blair, WI. 54616

608.525.2300

[TCHSpets@gmail.com](mailto:TCHSpets@gmail.com)

[www.trempealeaucountyhumanesociety.org](http://www.trempealeaucountyhumanesociety.org)

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## Introduction

If you love animals and would like to volunteer we are grateful to have you join the Trempealeau County Humane Society (TCHS). We are in need of volunteers in the morning and evening, seven days a week to help feed the animals, clean the kennels, walk the dogs, or pet the cats. We are flexible and will take your help just one day per month or more frequently. Children under 16 are welcome if accompanied by their parents. Feel free to ask questions because we believe all questions are important.

## General Information

We are a 100% volunteer based non-profit animal welfare/rescue organization.

- This organization is a [501\(c\)\(3\)](#) Public Charity .
- This organization is required to file an IRS Form 990 or 990-EZ.
- Financial information in this report is derived from the organization's December 31, 2003 Form 990-EZ.
- Additional narrative information in this report was last supplied by the organization on November 18, 2007.
- Contributions are deductible, as provided by law.

## Mission Statement

The Trempealeau County Humane Society is dedicated to: (a) providing safe shelter for stray/abandoned/ abused cats and dogs (b) promoting the placement of animals through adoption and foster-care; (c) requiring that all animals placed through us be spayed/neutered; (d) reuniting lost animals with their owners; (d) educating the public on issues affecting the well-being of animals; (e) working with the sheriff's department and Trempealeau county municipalities to provide shelter and care for cats and dogs.

## Our Vision

Our vision for the next year is to create and incorporate a general orientation session and cat/dog training orientation. In three years, we would like the residents of Trempealeau County to recognize us as the animal adoption site of choice. Our vision for five years from now would be that every pet in Trempealeau County has a loving, permanent home, and are spayed or neutered.

## Values

TCHS is a developing non-profit organization dedicated to educating the citizens of the predominately-rural farming community of Trempealeau County in the humane treatment of companion animals. We support a no-kill policy, provide safe shelter for stray/abandoned/abused pets, believe in a spay/neuter policy, promote adoption and foster care of animals. We also encourage collaboration with local government in the care of lost or abandoned animals.

## History

The Trempealeau County Humane Society opened its shelter doors on November 25, 2005. Our shelter was built through donations of materials, funds, and a lot of hard work. We are here through the generous donations of people and volunteers who have offered many hours of work.

## Services and Programs

### Pet Adoptions:

The Trempealeau County Humane Society adopts many cats and dogs each year to loving families where they will receive quality, stable lifelong care.

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### **Shelter for Unwanted Animals:**

We take in cats and dogs that are brought to us, including strays, and we work with several of the local municipalities in returning strays to their owners or finding a forever home.

### **Animal Cruelty Investigation:**

Preventing animal cruelty and neglect is extremely important. We work with the Trempealeau County Humane officer to investigate reports of cruelty or neglect against all animals.

### **Education and Community Outreach:**

We offer education programs for all area schools and youth groups that focuses on pet care and ownership.

### **Low-Income Spay/Neuter Assistance:**

TCHS offers a voucher to low income families for spay/neuter services for those who cannot afford traditional procedures. Except those that cannot be altered due to age or health.

### **Foster Care:**

To prepare for placement in a permanent home, many pets require foster care, which helps to adjust them to family life. Volunteers in our foster program take pets into their homes for a period of time, to develop family skills, provide ongoing socialization and prepare the pets for adoption.

### **Lost and Found Program:**

TCHS will attempt to help you to find your lost pet. We maintain lost-and-found reports and check these reports when we take in stray animals or receive inquiring phone calls.

### **Euthanasia Policy**

TCHS has a no-kill policy for the shelter.

## **Volunteer Information**

### **How to Become a Volunteer**

All shelter volunteers must fill out a volunteer application, medical history form, and provide personal references. Volunteers are given a general orientation and a cat/dog training orientation at the Trempealeau County Humane Society for all job descriptions. We require that an Agreement and Release of Liability form be filled out.













### **Youth Volunteers**

An adult must always accompany volunteers under the age of 14 when they come in for their volunteer shifts. Youth Volunteers are required to fill out a Volunteer Application and their parents and/or guardians must sign an Agreement and Release of Liability form.

Youth Volunteers can work with the cats and dogs doing a variety of chores including cleaning, grooming and socializing the animals. They are also encouraged to help at special events and fundraisers that are held during the year.

## Volunteer Code of Conduct

The **Trempealeau County Humane Society** believes that it is important that all of their volunteers follow a code of conduct, which represents our values.

-  I will be professional and friendly to staff members, visitors, and other volunteers.
-  I will show up for my scheduled hours or notify the TCHS director 24 hours in advance.
-  I will dress appropriately in long pants and closed shoes with my duties in mind.
-  I will immediately report any injury that I receive to the TCHS director.
-  I will follow directions given to me by staff members because is critical for disease control, safety, and liability.
-  I will not let dogs make contact with each other without the consent of staff on duty.
-  I will not bring cats into the dog adoption area or bring dogs into the cat adoption area.
-  I will treat all animals on the premises with care and respect -no striking, choking, hitting, kicking, of animals will be tolerated.
-  I will report any aggression or injury by any animal to another animal or staff member immediately.
-  I will wash my hands frequently
-  I will not bring in stray animals without Board approval because it is critical for disease and flea control.
-  I will not release an animal without prior consent, something to that effect

## Recording Service Hours

Volunteers should record their hours for any shelter related activity on the volunteer sign-in sheet, located at the front desk.

Why do we need this information?

- An accurate log of total volunteer hours allows us to apply for special grants from national organizations.
- Total volunteer hours need to be reported for local and national awards.
- An individual log is kept for each volunteer, and hours are calculated each month. This is used for recognizing volunteer service.

## Good Intentions

As a volunteer, you have two important distinctions to make - Opinion vs. Policy and Emotion vs. Fact.

The job of dealing with animals is often filled with emotion. Emotion, along with personal opinion can often become a problem. When opinions instead of facts are offered, usually with good intentions, it is often not to the actual benefit of the animals. The problem with misplaced good intentions is that it is often accompanied by the "I am the exception" condition and the "that has nothing to do with me" condition.

Never be embarrassed to say, "I don't know." Our staff has experienced many things that work and have proven effective, and those that have not. That's why we have a list of resources and telephone numbers to utilize.

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Passing along untrue information can cause problems. We cannot impress upon you enough the importance of checking with reliable resources before you act or offer any information. Remember that you could not only be damaging the credibility of an organization but also actually be harming animals through poor or inaccurate information!

### **Emergency Procedures**

All emergencies must be reported to the managing director or TCHS board president immediately. If they are not available, call a board member. It is not appropriate for a volunteer to make an emergency decision on their own unless all avenues have been taken.

### **Grievances**

If you have any problems with a staff member, another volunteer, or TCHS rules and regulations, please speak to the managing director or TCHS board president immediately.

### **General Safety**

- All cuts, bites or other injuries must be reported to the volunteer coordinator or your staff supervisor.
- Horseplay is strictly forbidden.
- If an item is too heavy to handle safely alone, get help. Avoid serious injury.
- When you must walk on wet, slippery, floors, slow down, and take shorter steps.

### **Personal Hygiene**

Many diseases can be transmitted from human to human or animal to animal. In addition, some diseases are transmitted from animal to man, therefore, good personal hygiene is necessary.

The following recommendations for your protection:

- Wear old clothes and closed-toe shoes when volunteering at the Humane Society
- Do not smoke, eat, or drink in the animal or work areas.
- Wear protective clothing and gloves when handling sick animals or possible contaminated material
- Keep your hands away from your mouth, nose, eyes, genitalia, and wounds after handling animals, their urine, or feces.
- Always wash your hands with soap and hot water:
  - After handling animals
  - After voiding bowels and/or bladder
  - Before handling food or eating

### **Ways to Lower Stress in Shelter Animals**

- Speak softly and reassuringly to them.
- Touch them gently.
- Do not stare at them.
- Never force or drag animals into or out of their cages.
- Remember that the natural habitat for dogs and cats is a home. To the greatest extent possible, make the shelter a home.
- Talk with the animals and tell them that they special.
- Be careful to not slam or bang things when you put them in or take them out of cages, especially stainless steel cages.
- Remember in handling the animals that they are in a potentially very stressful situation.

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- Let animals hide if they need to. Provide paper bags for the cats and crates for the dogs. Cover a frightened animal's cage door with towels or sheets. Give them a chance to adjust and relax.
- Give the animals time to deal with their stress. Help them cope.
- Offer all shelter animals a soft, comfortable, warm spot on which to lie and rest.
- Question, rethink, and reconsider everything you do at the shelter.
- Take time to play with a lonely dog or cat, sometimes just a few minutes play can make a big difference in an animal's day.
- Brush and groom any animal that needs it.

## Volunteer Job Descriptions

### Animal Care

#### Cat Socializer

##### *Purpose*

Cats benefit from the hugs, petting, grooming, exercise, and love they receive. So play with, brush, and love our cats to help alleviate stress and give them much needed attention. This increases their chances of being adopted by helping to teach them basic socialization skills. It is especially helpful for cats that may be with us a long time, helping them to remain friendly and adoptable.

##### *Duties*

- Brush, play with, and groom cats
- Make sure the cats have water
- Clean Litter Boxes
- Clean & straighten up the cat room

##### *Training*

Volunteers must attend the general orientation and a cat training orientation.

#### Cat Guidelines

Cats respond to stimuli in different ways and have different ways of showing their stress and happiness. To learn how to handle cats properly here are a few tips on cat behavior in a shelter environment.

Cats are social animals and form bonds with their owners, as well as with other cats and species in their household. They communicate by smell, body language, and voice. When a cat bumps its head against you, it is depositing its odor on you and, in effect, "claiming" you as its own.

Cats have very expressive body language. Arching the back and puffing up the tail are warning signs: The cat is telling you to stay away! Hissing, flattened ears, and backing away are defensive signs.

When a cat is vocal, it is telling us what a cat is thinking. A hissing, growling or spitting cat should not be handled. Purring is generally associated with contentment, but cats often purr when they are stressed. Sick or injured cats also sometimes purr.

Cats are often stressed when they first arrive at the shelter because they are in an unfamiliar situation. You can help reassure the cats and put them at ease if you

- Speak softly and keep your voice even.

- Pet them gently.
- Move slowly around them
- Handle them firmly and with confidence, but carefully

If you work with a cat that is frightened, leave it alone and tell the managing director. Once cats have been here a while and have calmed down, they often seek attention. Never go home thinking that you didn't do anything important, because you "just played with the cats." What you did is very, very important!

- Reinforce good behaviors. Don't tolerate things that you might tolerate from your own cats (play biting, etc.)
- Discipline by tone of voice or by placing two fingers on the cat's forehead with a gentle push – no hitting or yelling
- If a cat escapes from the cat room, follow it and say "loose cat" as you walk (not run). Others will join you in catching the escapee
- Pay attention to the cat's body language. Cats aren't always predictable
- Take standard health precautions -obey signs regarding sick rooms, wash hands often, and don't touch your eyes.
- Report observed behavior or health problems, including fur mats, excessively long claws, etc
- Brushing is good.
- Wear old clothing. Watch out for earrings and contact lenses
- Fill food if empty and water bowls twice daily

## **Dog Socializer**

### ***Purpose***

Exercise, play with, and walk our dogs, this helps our dogs to learn to interact with many different people. The exercise helps break up their day by offering a change of scenery and reduces stress, which increases their chances of being adopted. It is also a great opportunity for teaching the dogs basic socialization skills.

### ***Duties***

- Take the dog out of its kennel for walks
- Exercise and play with the dog
- Brush the dog when needed
- Make sure the dog's kennel is clean
- Make sure the dog has water

### ***Training***

Volunteers must attend the general orientation and a dog training orientation.

## **Kennel Cleaner**

### ***Purpose:***

Clean the cages and kennels for our dogs and provide fresh bedding, toys, and food and water.

### ***Duties:***

- Clean cages and kennels.
- Follow correct procedure for cleaning the designated area.

### ***Training:***

Volunteers must attend the general orientation and a cat or dog training orientation. The managing director will schedule additional training sessions on cleaning protocols, as needed.

## **Foster Care**

### ***Purpose:***

We always have a few cats and dogs that need a little more TLC than we can provide at the shelter. Many times, they are too young, hurt, or sick to be immediately adopted. Foster care gives them the opportunity to have a quieter environment and more attention before they are adopted.

### ***Duties:***

- Take animals into your home to care for them.
- Provide for all of the needs of the animal.

### ***Training:***

Volunteers must be approved to be a foster parent.

## **Dog Guidelines**

Dogs in a shelter are not the same as your dog at home. Dogs in our shelter are in an unfamiliar setting, surrounded by other dogs and handled by several different people during the course of a day. With staff and volunteers working together, we can reinforce good behavior that will help our dogs find wonderful homes. Always use caution and follow the TCHS guidelines when dealing with the dogs. If you sense that a dog is nervous or fearful, remove him from the situation immediately. Be alert to your surroundings and aware of what each dog is telling you.

It is easy to misinterpret what a shelter dog is telling us. When a dog licks the muzzle of another dog, it is a sign of submission from a dog within a pack. Pushing a dominant dog to give a kiss or to receive a hug may be asking for a nip. Hugging a dog tells him that you are dominant. Your dog at home might accept your behavior, while a strange dog may see your behavior as a challenge.

Remember, the role of our volunteers is to keep the animals in our care as stress free as possible and to avoid situations that promote inappropriate behavior.

- If a kennel card says "DO NOT TOUCH" - Do not touch the dog or put your hand into the kennel.
- Do not handle a dog that makes you feel uncomfortable.
- Handle only one dog at a time. If an adult is accompanying a young volunteer, only take out one dog at a time, so that the adult can properly supervise.
- Pick a dog appropriate for your size and skill level.
- Maintain control of the dog at all times.
- Always approach the dogs calmly, and encourage them to be calm.
- When removing a dog from a kennel, open the door, have a collar and leash ready. Slip collar over dog's head and adjust as needed. Keep your voice soft and even.
- Always make sure that the dog's collar fits properly. If in doubt, ask a staff member to check.
- Do not allow dogs to jump up or play bite. Correct them but never yell at or hit them. Remember, we want them to learn good habits, so that we can find good homes for them.
- Never leave a dog unattended.

## Community Outreach

### Education Assistant

#### *Purpose:*

Educating the people of Trempealeau County is one of the top priorities of TCHS. You would have the opportunity to help the educational director at schools and other community locations with various programs regarding responsible pet ownership, pet overpopulation, and animal cruelty.

#### *Duties:*

- Bring educational materials to the presentation
- Transport a puppy or kitten to share with the audience
- Help the education director in any way needed

#### *Training:*

Volunteers will work with the educational director during the presentation.

### Animal Transporter:

#### *Purpose:*

Help transport animals to various locations, usually a veterinary office or to a specific event.

#### *Duties:*

- Pick up or drop off the designated animal at TCHS
- Transport the animal to the specified location
- Give the carrier and information to the veterinary office

#### *Training:*

Volunteers must attend the general orientation.

### Special Event/Fundraising Volunteer:

#### *Purpose:*

Many people are unable to volunteer directly with the animals due to allergies or the fear of wanting to take them all home. As a special event or fundraising volunteer, you can post flyers, help advertise, help plan the special events, or spend time at fundraising events.

#### *Duties:*

- Transport animals for special events.
- Talk to the public about the animals present, as well as the ones available in our facility.
- Set up and take down displays for events.

#### *Training:*

Volunteers must meet with the volunteer special events/fundraiser coordinator. Listed below are a number of our yearly community events.

- January – February – Valentine Heart
- March – G.E.T. Showcase at Galesville
- April - Auction
- May – Brat Fry at Independence
- September – December – Calendar Sales

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- October – Longaberger Basket Bingo Fundraiser at Riverland Energy in Arcadia
- November – Santa Paws Photo Shoot at Ettrick Town Hall
- December – Festival of Trees Craft Show at Whitehall

## Adoption Policies

There are three easy ways to see our wonderful pets:

1. Visit us at N27109 Highway 53, Blair, WI. 54616
2. View our cats and dogs on PetFinder.com.
3. View our adoptable cats and dogs on the local cable channel 18

Adopting from the Trempealeau County Humane Society does not only help an animal find a forever family; it also makes good financial sense for you. All of our pets are:

- Spayed or neutered
- Up to date on shots and medical care
- Loved and socialized daily

When you adopt, you will information on local vets and pet-supply stores, and relevant brochures on issues like declawing, housetraining, and other topics.

Each adoption process should consider the following:

- We adopt family pets and encourage other family pets to meet with the prospective new family member
- We encourage **all** family/household members be present. All adults must be aware of the potential adoption and we strongly encourage all children under 10 years of age to be present at some point during the adoption process
- We require that landlords approve pet ownership and number of pets
- We encourage pets to be primarily kept indoors.
- Adopter must have valid identification (driver's license, major credit card, or current utility bill.)
- Adopter must have a working telephone number or cell phone in their household

## Adoption Fees

### Cats & Kittens

- Cats & Kittens: \$40.00
- Kittens: \$30.00 spay/neuter deposit
- Cats Previously Declawed: \$ 50.00

### Dogs & Puppies

- Puppies up to two (2) years old \$125.00 with a \$100.00 spay/neuter deposit
- Over two (2) years old \$100.00

When you adopt from the Trempealeau County Humane Society you are providing a pet a forever home and adding joy to your family.