

Photo courtesy of Kathryn Ketchum



Sugar Land Animal Services volunteers and staff encourage families who are ready to adopt a furry friend to visit them at the shelter

Finding Forever Homes

Fort Bend pet lovers share wisdom and encourage others to adopt abandoned and homeless pets

Written by Wendy Teng | Select photography by Sara Isola

A black cat's life was changed forever the moment Marti Preuss first laid eyes on her. Previously alone and abandoned in an alley, this female cat met Marti at an adoption event in November 2011. From that day on, she was no longer just a stray cat. She became Allie the Cat and has a special place in Preuss' heart for life.

A Lifelong Bond Is Formed

Preuss chooses to adopt because she has a fondness for animals that have been rescued by animal shelters. A big heart and dedication is part of choosing to adopt and raise a pet. "Adopting is a lifelong commitment," says Preuss. The financial responsibility of adopting a pet can range from moderate to very high. Preuss spends about \$300 per month on food for all eight of her pets, including Allie the Cat. For annual exams and vaccinations, Marti estimates the average veterinarian bills run about \$150 for each pet. "If one of them gets sick, the bill can be anywhere from \$250 to \$600."

Although the responsibility of raising a pet can be overwhelming, the return of the pet's devotion, loyalty, and love is genuine. "Dogs and cats give unconditional love. They don't care if you are rich or poor, what race you are, and they do not judge," Preuss says. "All they care about is that you love them for who they are inside."

The Miracle of Adoption

Kelsey Adams also chose the miracle of adoption. She says it's a rewarding experience to see a scared animal transition into an official member of a loving family. In addition to personally adopting a border collie that she named Dash, Adams also encourages others to adopt by sharing pets available for adoption and their images on social media pages.

Research is key in adopting a pet. Preuss suggests searching for a specific breed that fits the family's lifestyle. She also cautions prospective pet owners about the health of the animals. Animals may develop health issues in the future,

Pick me! I'm up for Adoption Now

Contact Sugar Land Animal Services for information on adopting the "still waiting" pets below.



Deuce



Bruno



Adopted!
By Marti Preuss

Suzy Q



Adopted!
By Marti Preuss

Molly Sue



Anita



Uno



Misha



Adopted!
By Marti Preuss

Katie Mae



Asher & Ace



Carla



Arden



Argo

Fort Bend Animal Control 1210 Blume Rd., Rosenberg 281-342-1512
Rosenberg Animal Shelter 1207 Blume Rd., Rosenberg 832-595-3490
Sugar Land Animal Services 101 Gillingham Ln. 281-275-2364

*Some of these animals may have become unavailable after the time of print. Please check with shelters for available adoptees.

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Marti Preuss says adopting animals is a lifelong commitment

or may have already experienced health problems. Those who are considering adoption should carefully consider the financial, physical, and emotional aspects to properly taking care of a pet for its lifetime.

“Sadly, 4 million animals are euthanized in this country each year. So the need for homes, responsible pet ownership, volunteers, and donors is great,” says Kathryn Ketchum, animal services manager at Sugar Land Animal Services. The length of stay for animals at the shelter varies depending on the physical attributes of the animal. Ketchum observes that small and fluffy animals are adopted faster.

Having a Pet Sleepover

Sugar Land Animal Services has a program called Sleepover, which allows a prospective adopter to take a pet home for three to five days before finalizing the adoption. It is a good method for prospective adopters to observe whether there are any allergies to the animal and to determine whether the pet is a good fit for the family, and vice versa. The pet must be returned to the shelter on the agreed upon date, and the prospective adopter can then either return the animal to the shelter or officially adopt the pet.

Donations of food, blankets, and all other animal necessities are always welcome at the shelter. “Canned kitten and dog food are the two things that we go through the quickest and are always appreciated, along with bath towels,” says Ketchum.

The shelter participates in events such as Bark in the Park, mega adoption events, and fun runs. Prospective adopters can also see the shelter’s animals at PetSmart store locations. Of course, there are also many animals patiently waiting at the various animals shelters in the community. Ketchum says, “People have good intentions, but animals require a lot of time, money, and commitment. Don’t make a rash decision. When you think you are ready, come in for a visit. Adopt; don’t shop.” SLM

WENDY TENG is a freelance writer. In her spare time, she enjoys reading, writing, volunteering, trying new restaurants, and learning about new organizations.

Resources

- Sugar Land Animal Services sugarlandtx.gov
- Fort Bend Animal Control fortbendcountytexas.gov
- Rosenberg Animal Shelter ci.rosenberg.tx.us