

Hall County Animal Shelter Forms Volunteer Advisory Board

September 12, 2013

The Hall County Animal Shelter is proud to announce the formation of the Hall County Animal Shelter Volunteer Advisory Board, a group charged with organizing volunteer and donor efforts as the agency moves forward with several significant projects.

Animal Shelter Director Mike Ledford said the board is made up of six longtime volunteers, chosen by the shelter's leadership because of their knowledge, understanding and overall dedication to the shelter.

"The Hall County Animal Shelter Volunteer Advisory Board will help organize fundraising and promotional events, coordinate volunteer activities at the shelter and help to promote the shelter and its overall mission," said Ledford.

He said the timing of the board's formation is crucial since the shelter is getting ready to begin major upgrades to its Barber Road facility. Those upgrades include the construction of a second outdoor kennel, which will be a major component of the Hall County Animal Shelter's Transport Program.

The transport program provides an opportunity for unwanted pets in Hall County to travel to northern states, such as Vermont, New Jersey and Connecticut, where they are in high demand. Before the pets can be driven up north by Hall County Animal Shelter staff and volunteers, they must be quarantined outdoors for two weeks. Because of the success of recent trips and the increasing number of stray animals brought to the shelter, the need to transport-and therefore quarantine-these animals is greater than ever before.

Ledford said the volunteer advisory board will be instrumental in raising funds to build the second outdoor kennel.

"The site has already been graded, but we need funding to pour the concrete slab, install fencing and construct some sort of roofing structure," he said.

Adrian Hanson, a local student working to attain the rank of Eagle Scout, is also participating in the shelter's upgrades. As his Eagle Scout project, Hanson will install underground water lines from the shelter to the existing outdoor kennel and the one that is in the process of being built, thus saving shelter volunteers a tremendous amount of time and effort when caring for animals.

Hanson is the second Boy Scout to complete his Eagle Scout project at the Hall County Animal Shelter. Eagle Scout Matthew Smith constructed the first outdoor kennel at the shelter for his Eagle Scout project last year.

"These are excellent examples of why our Volunteer Advisory Board is needed," Ledford said. "Having a group of people that can match the needs of the shelter with this community's desire to serve will only enhance our mission to find homes for as many animals as possible."

The Hall County Animal Shelter is living up to its mission. Between Jan. 1 and July 31 of this year, the shelter's adoption numbers have increased 36 percent compared to the same period last year. In addition, euthanasia numbers are down 10 percent during that same time frame. As these numbers

improve, the animal shelter is also continuing to capitalize on the success of the transport program, scheduling another transport for Nov. 16- 17 to White Plains, NY.

"I am thrilled to be a part of this new board," said Susan Allen, chair of the Hall County Animal Shelter Advisory Board. "The animal shelter has made incredible strides in recent years, and I look forward to continuing that momentum as we embark on these new projects."

More information about the Hall County Animal Shelter can be found at animalshelter.hallcounty.org.