

Northwoods Humane Society – Alecia Austin, Shelter Manager

When you think of shelter pets, you might picture adorable puppies or kittens looking for forever homes. But did you know that some shelter pets go on to make history? From record-breaking ages to unique abilities, shelter pets prove time and again that they're extraordinary in every way. Let's dive into some fascinating facts and records about shelter animals that will amaze you and might even inspire you to adopt your own history-maker

The Oldest Dog Ever: A Shelter Superstar

Meet **Bobi**, a Rafeiro do Alentejo from Portugal who holds the record as the **oldest dog ever recorded**. Bobi reached an astonishing **31 years old** (and counting!) as verified by Guinness World Records in 2023. What makes his story even more heartwarming is that Bobi was a rescue. He was saved from being culled as a puppy by a compassionate family who decided to give him a chance at life.

Bobi's longevity has been attributed to his peaceful rural environment, a diet of human food, and the love he received from his family. His story is a reminder that every shelter pet has the potential to thrive and do incredible things when given the chance.

Fastest Dog Ever: From Shelter to Star

Shelters often host a variety of breeds, including those built for speed. The title of the fastest recorded dog breed goes to the **Greyhound**, capable of reaching speeds up to **45 mph**. Many retired racing Greyhounds end up in shelters after their careers are over, waiting for loving homes. These sleek, gentle giants make excellent pets, often preferring to lounge on a couch rather than sprint around.

Most Unique-Looking Cat: Shelter Beauty Queen

Shelter cats are just as remarkable as their canine counterparts. Take, for example, **Venus the Two-Faced Cat**, a rescue with a perfectly split face—half black with a green eye and half orange tabby with a blue eye. Venus gained internet fame for her striking appearance and helped draw attention to the beauty and uniqueness of shelter pets.

Shelter Pets Saving Lives

Did you know shelter pets have also become heroes?

- **Zander**, a rescued Husky from New York, walked two miles to a hospital to visit his owner, who was recovering from an illness. Despite having never been to the hospital before, Zander's loyalty and determination melted hearts worldwide.
- **Dory**, a former stray cat, saved her owner by alerting them to a carbon monoxide leak in their home.

These incredible animals remind us of the unconditional love and dedication that shelter pets bring into our lives.

Shelter Pets and Guinness World Records

Here are more shelter-inspired records:

1. **Longest Tail on a Dog:** A rescue named Keon, a Borzoi mix, holds the record for the longest tail, measuring 30.2 inches!
2. **Smallest Living Dog by Height:** Milly, a Chihuahua who measured only 3.8 inches tall, was rescued by a loving family who provided her with the care she needed to thrive.
3. **Largest Litter Ever Born to a Dog:** A Neapolitan Mastiff named Tia gave birth to 24 puppies. Many of the puppies were adopted into loving homes.

Why Shelter Pets Are So Special

1. **Diverse Backgrounds:** Shelter animals come from all walks of life. Some are purebreds, while others are delightful mixes, making them truly one-of-a-kind.
2. **Healthier Pets:** Contrary to myths, many shelter pets are healthier than those bred for profit, thanks to genetic diversity in mixed breeds.
3. **Gratitude and Love:** Rescued animals often show immense gratitude toward their adopters, forming deep, lifelong bonds.

Shelter animals may not all make it into the record books, but they make an unforgettable impact on the lives of those who adopt them. From Bobi, the oldest dog, to the everyday hero pets who save lives, these animals prove their worth time and again.

Dates to Save March 7, 20, May 3, 17, May 1 Bingo at Powell's on Round Lake – 5:30 pm

April 27 – Spay-ghetti and No Balls – Vet Center 5 pm

May 23 – Dining For Cats and Dogs – 10:30 – 2 p.m.

June 7 – Raise the Woof – Eagles Cover Band – Park Center – 7:30 pm