

Northwoods Humane Society – Deanna Persson, President

Our Shelter manager, Alecia Austin, shared the following which was received from Shelter Animals Count and the National Data Base.

Shelter Animals Count (SAC), the most trusted and current source for animal sheltering data, urges potential pet parents to be holiday adopters, rather than holiday shoppers, when it comes to getting a pet this season. There's no better time to adopt, as new estimates show there are nearly 245,000 additional pets waiting in the shelter system this holiday season compared to last year. This means the shelter population has grown by nearly a quarter million animals in 2023. This is critical for shelters, who were already overwhelmed and overcapacity at the end of 2022.

“Opting to adopt from shelters or rescue groups not only saves lives and sends a message of support to struggling shelters, but it also fills the demand of pet-seeking families with pets from within already saturated communities,” said Stephanie Filer, Executive Director for Shelter Animals Count. “Adopting a pet is the most sustainable and socially-conscious choice, which helps alleviate the shelter crisis, rather than compounding it.”

“For those not ready to adopt, fostering is also a wonderful way to help, as it offers animals a break from the shelter environment, and lightens the load for overburdened shelter staff, even temporarily. In addition, fostering helps dogs get adopted. Recent research funded by Maddie's Fund found that brief outings and temporary foster stays increased dogs' likelihood of adoption by five and more than 14 times, respectively. As for the ages, sizes, breeds and types of dogs entering shelters, people may discover options they never thought they'd find available for adoption. SAC recently surveyed shelters and rescues to get a snapshot of what kinds of dogs are coming through their doors. With 314 responses from organizations across 45 states, nearly 80% of respondents said people would probably be surprised by the types of dogs coming into their organizations.

People who haven't checked out adoptable pets recently may not realize that more and more small-breed dogs, puppies, purebreds and “designer dogs” like doodles, oodles, and poos, as well as dozens of other non-poodle combinations, are arriving at shelters for the same reasons that other dogs do. So, people looking to bring a pet home for the holidays should check their local shelters and rescues, and adoption databases like AdoptAPet.com, which also features available pets for rehoming by individuals.

The holidays are a popular period for pet acquisition, so animal advocates encourage a shift away from buying from pet shops, breeders and online sellers, and toward adopting dogs and puppies from shelters and rescues who are desperate for adopters. Due to the increasing trend of home breeding as a side hustle, and the ongoing issue of puppy mills, many shelters are not only receiving people's pups they purchased and can't keep, but also leftover puppies that breeders can't sell, and adult breeder dogs that are no longer wanted or needed.

Other key findings from the SAC survey:

- ☑ Nearly 90% of survey respondents said they're receiving puppies from their communities.
- ☑ More than 60% of respondents said they're receiving doodles and other intentional mixed breeds.
- ☑ Almost half (44%) said they're getting more purebreds.

☒ More than half (54%) said they're getting puppies/litters from breeders who cannot sell them.

☒ Nearly 60% said they're receiving surrenders (or surrender requests) of dogs that people say they paid a lot of money for and now cannot afford to keep.

Plus pets adopted from shelters and rescues are generally already spayed or neutered, vaccinated, and often microchipped. Those services can cost hundreds of dollars, so when you adopt a pet, you not only save a life, you save a lot of money, which leaves more in your budget for future pet care.

Shifting from buying puppies to adopting homeless pets has become increasingly critical, as the recent Shelter Animals Count report highlights that animal shelters across the country are in crisis. Nationally, shelters are in their third year of having too many animals and not enough adoptions — especially for dogs. The current trend shows dog adoptions down 1.2% from 2022, after shelters saw a 2.5% increase in dogs arriving January- September 2023. Nationally, 5% more animals are entering shelters than leaving. Animal organizations continue to struggle with over-capacity status and urgently request community support, asking that people adopt or foster from local shelters or rescue organizations, spay or neuter their pets, and volunteer and/or donate.

Save The Dates:

Bingo At Powells on Round Lake – March 14, 28, April 11 and 25 and May 9