

## **SO YOU'RE MOVING - WHAT ABOUT YOUR PET?**

**by Cheryl Wicks, Sammie's Friends Animal Shelter**

The saddest stories we hear at the animal shelter are "We're moving and can't take our pet." When asked "How much time do you have to find a new home for your pet?" we are told "We're moving tomorrow." Unfortunately people often handle every aspect of the move, before making a plan for their pet. The person and the pet show up at the animal shelter at the last minute, expecting to drop their animal off, so they can get on with their move; loading household goods, enrolling children in new schools, changing addresses and all that moving entails. Often times the shelter is full and we will put your pet on a waiting list. The owners who have not properly planned for their the pets' future are furious with the shelter staff because we can't help at the drop of a hat. It takes time to find a home for your pet. The owner needs to plan ahead and put forth the effort to find that home.

A woman and man showed up on their last trip to the "dump" on their way out of town, with the cat in the trunk with the junk for the "dump" demanding we take their discarded cat. Transporting your cat in an enclosed trunk is a good way to suffocate or asphyxiate your cat. We felt that this cat, who had most likely been a good friend, had no value whatsoever to his family. Our heart breaks for everyone of these sad stories.

The rehoming of your pet is your responsibility. The pet is a member of your family and deserves the attention and effort it takes to find a new home. Of course the best solution is to find a home where the pet can be with you. Pets become disoriented and develop behavioral problems from the insecurity of being left behind in a strange place. Everyone knows that foster children do not do well when they get moved from place to place with no place to call home. It's the same for your pet.

People don't leave their children behind but expect they can leave their pets behind for someone to take care of. If you are moving and let us know we will give you many tips and suggestions on how to re-home your pet. With proper planning we will even take your pet in when we can, depending on the availability of space.

The pet you want to drop off may be your only pet, but it is not our only animal or our only request for the day. At the shelter we are inundated every day. It is relentless, All of this could be avoided by proper

planning. It is also a miracle that we manage to stay one step ahead of the next full house every day; but barely.

Please do right by your pet and plan ahead to ensure him/her a secure and happy future. Please spay/neuter so we do not have pet overpopulation and unwanted animals. Our furry friends are far too precious to be tossed aside with no regard for their suffering.