

## HATS Volunteers Make a Difference

Volunteers that work for HATS have 2 main things in common. Whether they are 18 years old or 78, they love animals and want to make a difference. Some of our volunteers have worked at the shelter for years and have found it meaningful and rewarding.

So many people would like to help but feel "It's just too sad" or they "would want to take them all home". Getting beyond those emotions is not easy but once you start working with the animals and see what a difference you can make in their lives, it becomes one of the most rewarding things you will do. You will make a difference in the lives of the animals by giving them love, attention and making them comfortable. With a little attention and love, the dogs and cats become more social and therefore improve their chances for adoption.

You can make a difference in the life of the shelter animals by offering a kind gesture and a little time to the homeless, abandoned pets. In return, they will touch your heart and bring you back for more. When you volunteer, you give of yourself, your time, your skills, and your energy to make a better life for the animals you care for.

### **Our Volunteer Requirements are:**

- Volunteers must be at least 18 years of age; Volunteers under 18 years of age may work with their parent or legal guardian only.
- Complete an application and mail it or bring it to the Isabella County Animal Shelter (Go to our web site: [www.HATSWeb.org](http://www.HATSWeb.org) for a printable copy or stop at the animal control shelter and pick up an application).
- Be able to volunteer at least one time each month and show up at the times you specify you will work.
- Must love animals, be patient and caring.

No matter what your expertise or experience, there is an opportunity for you to help. If you are not interested in working at the shelter but you would like to get involved, here are other ways to help:

- **Foster Care** - At times special care is needed for an animal that may be sick, rehabilitating from an injury or surgery, pregnant, or nursing. Volunteer foster homes provide a safe place for the animals to stay, nutritious food, socializations and health care to their animal guests. If you are approved, you may care for special needs animals in your home until they are able to be returned to the shelter and adopted.
- **Fund Raising Event Planning** - Throughout the year events are planned to raise much needed funds. These funds help HATS pay for medical expenses and supplies and also help to generate support and raise public awareness. Volunteers are needed for ideas, for planning and organizing events.
- **Adoption Clinics** - We bring adoptable animals to an outside location to meet with the public and volunteers assist in the appropriate placement of animals in adoptive homes.

- **Humane Education** – Volunteers to visit schools to teach young people about proper animal care to help prepare them to be responsible pet-owning adults.
- **Telephone Support / Office Help** – Make follow-up calls to check up on adoptees, answer questions. Enter volunteer information in database, type letters and coordinate mailings and promotion materials and thank you letters.
- **Web Site Design** – Web sites are often the first place adoptees check for an animal. Your ability to design or maintain a Web site, or answer email is an invaluable service.
- **Photographer** – Captivating photos are crucial in an adoption. Capturing the expressions of animals can touch people's hearts.
- **Shelter Newsletter** – Produce a newsletter to share information about the shelter and our activities, to encourage people to visit the shelter.
- **Maintain shelter Bulletin Board or Scrapbook** – Share stories of animals and their adoptive families.
- **General Maintenance** – Hard work is always welcomed to mend fences, repair cages and kennels, build shelves and other handy projects. Landscaping and yard maintenance keeps the shelter comfortable for the animals and for our visitors.
- **Sewing** – Beds and bedding are always needed for the cats, kittens and puppies. Toys made from scraps of material can entertain a cat or kitten for hours. Some sewing projects may help in our fund raising efforts.

If you are interested in volunteering, please call the HATS office at (989) 775-0830 and leave a message or call the Isabella Animal Control Office at (989) 773-9721.

**"No act of kindness, no matter how small, is ever wasted" –Aesop**

