



January 17, 2009

Dear Donor:

Friends of the Shelter would like to take this opportunity to address the recent series of articles regarding the Franklin County Dog Shelter.

We are deeply saddened and surprised by the allegations of mismanagement at the Shelter. In our years of working closely with the Shelter's staff, we have been impressed with their compassion towards the dogs and their ability to make tough decisions on a daily basis. It truly takes a special person to work and volunteer at the Shelter, where resources are usually tight and sad stories are the norm. Under Lisa Wahoff's vision and care, we have seen the Shelter change from a place of routine euthanasia of the masses to a caring and humane environment. We have seen numerous innovative programs put in place in recent years that demonstrate that homeless animals in Central Ohio are valued and not considered disposable. We look forward to the results of the County investigation, and believe the Shelter, and the dogs we care so much about, will come through this stronger.

Unfortunately, all dog shelters have incidences of communicable illnesses, but precautions are taken daily to reduce and mitigate those incidences. A pilot program, which eventually was named the Off-Site Infirmary Care Program, was initiated in 2005. The program started with just six shelter dogs suffering from mild kennel cough. All six dogs were treated successfully off-site, placed in foster care, and ultimately adopted into appropriate homes. From this modest beginning, the program has expanded to include other illnesses and injuries, serving 250 dogs in 2005 and 350 dogs in 2006, all of them subsequently adopted. This program remains the foundation of the Friends of the Shelter organization.

Through your generous donations, the Off-Site Infirmary Care Program has achieved the following successes since its inception:

- * It prevents the shelter from experiencing crippling medical crises as a result of respiratory/common cold/intestinal infections being spread from dog to dog;
- * It decreases the number of injured or sick, yet highly adoptable dogs that previously would have been euthanized;
- * It provides needed medical care for dogs that otherwise would not have been able to receive such care.

This innovative program is not funded by tax dollars and your donations have been instrumental in providing these dogs with a chance to survive their illnesses and to be adopted into loving homes.

On average, 50 dogs a day come to the facility and many have special needs or treatable illnesses that need care, a little time and TLC. We hope to continue the valuable services that aid these special needs shelter dogs through your support of Friends of the Shelter.

Sincerely,
Friends of the Shelter