



NEWS

WORKING TO CHANGE THE FACE OF THE MUNICIPAL SHELTER

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By Jennifer Parrucci, Best Friends Network volunteer

Dori Scofield is transforming Brookhaven Shelter

Dori Scofield, director of the [Town of Brookhaven Animal Shelter and Adoption Center](#), is trying to change the way people see municipal shelters. She is working to improve conditions at her shelter and move toward a no-kill facility that exemplifies the spirit of No More Homeless Pets. Scofield has transformed the shelter from a place that often had a grim reality for the animals that ended up there, to one where the future is getting brighter. I spoke with Scofield to ask her about her accomplishments and challenges.

Jennifer Parrucci: Can you tell me a little about Brookhaven Animal Shelter?

Dori Scofield: The town of Brookhaven is the largest municipality in the state of New York. Back in the 1980s it was still run on an eight day holding period, then the animals were euthanized. In the 1990s another shelter director came in to attempt no-kill. The shelter quickly became overcrowded and that's when I stepped in.

JP: What is your official title and how long have you been with the shelter? How has the shelter changed since you've been there.

DS: I am the director of the shelter and started July 6, 2010. Since that time I have been networking like crazy with rescue organizations and individuals to help curb the overcrowding. I have incorporated a volunteer program, foster care program, dog obedience classes, [Facebook page](#), had the [website](#) changed to a less governmental "official" look, and have begun off-site adoption days. I have also had fund-raising events to raise money for animals in need of surgeries that in the past risked being euthanized due to budget constraints. I have gotten all new beds, toys, trough covers (so dogs aren't falling in them or eating/drinking out of there or getting toys stuck). I have piped in classical music throughout the shelter. I'm trying to make it more family friendly and as comforting to the animals as possible.

JP: The goal of the shelter is to be as close to no-kill as possible. Tell us a little about why being no-kill is so important to you. What are the challenges you face?

DS: No-kill is important to me because that is why I began my life in animal sheltering in the first place. I founded the only no-kill shelter in the town of Brookhaven ([Save-A-Pet Animal Rescue and Adoption Center](#)) in 1994. I am trying to bring my philosophies to the municipal shelter environment. It is very tough because we are so overcrowded. I have gotten every adoptable dog out of here with the exception of the many pit bulls we have (about 150). That has been my biggest challenge. These beautiful, lovable pits! They are misunderstood and overlooked. We are trying to get a CGC (canine good citizen) program for our intelligent pits here, as well as an agility course. I'm adding more play yards for the dogs as well with the help of local Boy Scouts.

JP: In your opinion, what can the general population do to help the no-kill movement in this country?

DS: Education is the key to no-kill. Not just for spay/neuter, which is of course is at the forefront of animal welfare, but teaching people that shelter animals are not "misfits." They are beautiful, companions worthy of loving homes. Don't shop, adopt!! I have been diligently educating people on the subject of pet shops and puppy mills. That is a huge problem on Long Island. The general population also needs to properly identify their pets with collars/tags/micro chips. If your pet is missing you must go to your municipal shelter and look for him/her. So many of the animals that walk through our doors could be safely home if people did these simple things. I encourage people to come to the shelter and adopt, volunteer, network, fund raise, come train dogs in our obedience classes, socialize them and make a difference. Kids can do food drives, blanket drives, paper towel drives. There is something for everyone to do!

JP: How can readers help Brookhaven Animal Shelter? Do you have any upcoming events?



DS: Readers can help by donating to our "Help the Animals Fund" it is a 501(c)(3) set up to help the animals get the much needed surgeries, tests and extras they need. On December 11, 2010 [Santa will be arriving at the shelter](#) to take pictures with pets and kids. All proceeds go to help the animals. We will have 1/2 price adoptions, give-aways and of course plenty of hot cocoa and candy canes on hand. On February 20, 2011 we are having our first annual "Yappy Hour" from 7 p.m.-11 p.m. at J & R's Steakhouse in Islip, New York. Music, raffles, food and fun! We are always collecting blankets, toys and treats for the dogs as well as toys and treats for our over 100 cats/kittens. Donations are always welcome!

To donate to Brookhaven Animal Shelter, learn more about the pets for adoption and upcoming events, please visit their [web site](#).

Photo Credit: Photo of Dori Scofield and Boo. Photos of [Xena](#) and [Penny](#), pit bulls available for adoption at the shelter, courtesy of Jonnie Coe, Karin Schlee, and Susan Fox.



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Posted December 07, 2010, 1:51PM by [dixiesherman](#)

I wish you the very best Dori, and wish there were hundreds more just like you. Kathi



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