

Pet Crisis Center Opening Soon in Bellaire

The excitement is growing as WaLHFMF (With a Little Help From My Friends) gets ready to open the new Pet Crisis Center in Bellaire. This wonderful facility will offer a safe place for pets in true emergency situations that have nowhere else to go.



Many people have already experienced situations where they had no where to turn during an emergency. This can be due to a temporary hospital stay, entering a nursing home, a family member's death or a home fire. Pet owners may be forced to make a very emotional decision in the midst of an already stressful time. Animals will be given love and care while they wait for their owners to overcome their crisis and come back for them. In some cases when they can't be reunited, a new loving home will be found.

Many generous volunteers have donated their time to this project in addition to financial donations so that WaLHFMF could purchase building supplies. The plans are for the center to open in June. The 2,400 sq. foot building will have a meeting room, office and vet area with a quarantine room. There will be dog rooms for 5-10 dogs that are 8'x8' with glass doors, each with a dog door that leads out to separate kennels. Cat condo units arrive soon and will house 18-25 cats.



They have plexiglass fronts with separate litter areas. The cat room will have a cat door that leads to an outside area for cats with a garden around it for their viewing pleasure. Pets that come in to the Crisis Center together will be housed together. There is also room in the center of the building for smaller pets, such as hamsters and birds.

Unlike traditional type "shelters," this center is not a place where people can drop off their pets. Instead, the Pet Crisis Center will be used to assist Antrim county agencies such as animal control, fire, police, mental health and family services. There will, however, be hours for the public to come visit and adopt animals that cannot be reunited with their owner and there will also be opportunities for volunteers to help at the center. The center will be a resource in helping the public with pet issues and offer classes and workshops for community groups.

Future plans include a dog building to house more dogs, a possible boarding facility and more cat housing. The sanctuary property has five acres with more land available for expansion. It's a beautiful place for visitors and school groups to visit. Gardens around the Pet Crisis Center are being planned and planted by three MSU Master Gardeners with a gazebo in the main garden.

This center appears to be a one-of-a kind idea and WaLHFMF is hopeful that once the center has been open a while, other counties might get some ideas for a center in their own county.

You can follow the progress of the center or contact WaLHFMF at their website www.walhfmf.org or call them at 231-533-4070.