

## **PRESS RELEASE**

### **FOR MORE INFORMATION**

Kathy Finnie, Executive Director  
Vermont Veterinary Medical Association  
802-878-6888  
[Kathy@vtvets.org](mailto:Kathy@vtvets.org)

### **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

**Help a Dog Find a Forever Home - October is National Adopt a Shelter Dog Month**  
**By M. Kathleen Shaw, DVM**  
**North Bennington, Vermont**

Each October, national humane groups observe Adopt a Shelter Dog Month across the US. This observance helps shine a light on the needs of the millions of dogs in shelters and rescues across the country that need forever homes. Although accurate numbers are hard to determine, it is estimated that 3 to 4 million pets are euthanized each year. Maddie's Fund, a national pet rescue foundation, says that all treatable and adoptable pets from shelters could be saved with just 2 more pets being adopted from each shelter every day.

Adding a canine companion to your family has many benefits. Dog owners tend to exercise more than non-pet owners and children growing up in a household with pets tend to be well-adjusted and learn the importance of caring for another living being. The right dog can even be a wonderful companion for a senior citizen.

Shelter pets are often inaccurately portrayed as "damaged goods." Many worry that these pets come with behavioral or health issues. However, most shelter pets are examined by a veterinarian and undergo behavioral/temperament testing before being put up for adoption. And the fact is that many of these shelter pets were relinquished because of owner issues, not animal issues. Some owners ended up being allergic to the dog, others found that they didn't have time and sadly, many weren't prepared for the responsibility or costs of a pet.

It is important to consider your lifestyle and home environment as well as what temperament/breed/size of dog will be best for you and your family. If you have your heart set on a special kind of dog, another possibility is to look into pure-breed rescues in your area. These groups specialize in particular breeds and have great connections among quality breeders and other rescues across the country.

Take your time to research and visit the shelters and rescues in your area. Although most are legitimate and working hard to save pets, there are always cases of hoarding and some people looking to cut corners and make money from good-hearted individuals. Use your veterinarian as a good resource when deciding on a new pet. He or she may know the

reputation of local shelters and rescues and can help you understand the unique personalities or health issues of many dog breeds.

###

*The Vermont Veterinary Medical Association (VVMA), founded in 1898, is a professional organization of 340 veterinarians dedicated to compassionate animal care and quality medicine. For more information, visit [www.vtvets.org](http://www.vtvets.org) or call (802) 878-6888.*