

# VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION PACKET

We are delighted that you are interested in volunteering at the Bulverde Area Humane Society (BAHS). As a BAHS volunteer you will be an important person in providing the health, welfare and socialization needs of the animals in our care. BAHS has lots of volunteer opportunities for adults, families and junior volunteers. A junior volunteer (JV) is classified as anyone between the ages of 12-15. All JVs must be accompanied by a parent or guardian while the minor is participating in BAHS programs and activities and work as a unit.

**Our Mission:** Bulverde Area Humane Society is a non-profit organization that provides a caring and secure environment for homeless and surrendered dogs and cats. Our purpose as a no-kill shelter is to assist in the pet life cycle through education, spay/neuter assistance, and promoting pet-forever families. Bulverde Area Humane Society is powered by volunteers and tax-deductible contributions.

**How We Operate:** BAHS is powered by volunteers. We are managed and operated by a working Board of Directors. On the days that we are open to the public (Tuesday, Thursday & Saturday 10am-1pm) there is a shelter day manager who oversees adoptions, prioritizes tasks, and assigns duties for the day. The shelter employs part-time caretakers who feed the animals, clean the pens, and maintain the grounds. When the shelter is closed the telephone is monitored and messages are returned in a timely manner. Monthly board meetings are held at 6PM the fourth Tuesday of the month. Please see the website ([www.bulverdeareahumanesociety.com](http://www.bulverdeareahumanesociety.com)) for the meeting location. The public is welcome and encouraged to attend.

**Our No-Kill and Euthanasia Policy:** BAHS is a no kill humane society. We do not euthanize healthy, well socialized animals. We do practice euthanasia in the true sense of the word, to end suffering of a critically ill or injured animal, or as a last resort in the case of a dangerously aggressive animal. Such decisions are serious and must be made by the Board of Directors. As a BAHS volunteer we ask that you respect and support our policies. For more information please ask to read the full Euthanasia Policy.

**Admitting Animals:** Unfortunately we cannot take in every animal, though we wish we could. We can only take in healthy, well socialized animals and only as many as we can properly house and care for. Whenever possible we try to accommodate the requests of our volunteers but in reality there are times we just cannot help. As a BAHS volunteer your friends and neighbors will appeal to you for help with strays and unwanted pets. Please understand that we maintain a waiting list and prioritize based upon need; so notify us and work with us and the waiting list. Always remember we can only take in when we adopt out and you can be a huge help with this also!

**Professional Presence & Safety:** As a BAHS volunteer always remember that you represent the shelter. It's important that you maintain a polite and professional attitude. What you say will be taken as policy, so please don't offer comments, unless you are absolutely sure of the answer. The Shelter Manager or Volunteer Coordinator should be informed of any problems or conflicts. Safety is a primary concern so we require that you wear closed toe shoes. BAHS shelter T-shirts and hats are available for purchase and you receive a T-shirt at Orientation.

Approved: August 27, 2013

# **Bulverde Area Humane Society**

## **Dog Levels and Volunteer Classifications**

### **Dog Classifications:**

To enhance the well-being of our volunteers and our dogs, we've classified dogs into three different categories as indicated by the hanging metal tag on kennel door.

1. **Level 1** Dogs may be walked by all volunteers using either a clip lead or slip lead harness.
2. **Level 2** Dogs are a little rowdy, need practice remembering good manners they've been taught or need special equipment. These dogs also include some that are very fearful, potentially reactive dogs or in training. These dogs may be handled by Level 2 volunteers only. Level 1 volunteers can walk these dogs if they are assisted by a Volunteer Coordinator.
3. **Dogs in Quarantine** are usually in their holding period. They are not to be touched or walked by any volunteers.

### **Volunteers Classifications:**

Dog handler classifications are based on experience and training level.

- Level 1 – all volunteers start out at this level
- Level 2 – must be approved by Shelter Staff and/or Volunteer Coordinators
- Junior Volunteer – Volunteers between the ages of 12-15 who must be under the supervision of an adult.
- Volunteer Coordinator – Must be a Level 2 volunteer as well someone who is comfortable working with our volunteers of all ages.

### **Level 1 Volunteers:**

- Handle only level 1 dogs
- Help socialize cats, kittens and puppies
- Walk Level 2 dogs only with assistance from a Volunteer Coordinator or other Staff member.
- Are qualified to be a dog handler at adoption events.

### **Level 2 Volunteers:**

- Handle Level 1 and Level 2 dogs
- Understand and demonstrate how to properly place the slip lead harness on dogs.
- Slip lead harness strongly recommended for all Level 2 dogs.
- Demonstrated proficiency in handling rowdy, fearful and reactive dogs.
- Reinforce good manners / Shape good kennel manners
- Maintain complete control of dogs while walking.
- Interpret canine body language (recognize fear, stress, reactivity)

### **Junior Volunteers (JV) (under 16 years of age):**

- JV must always be under the supervision of an adult at all times including:
  - Sits in a kennel with a dog
  - Walks dogs
  - Plays with puppies or kitties
  - Or is in the Cattery
- For JV under 12, they may:
  - Play with puppies or kittens
  - Walk puppies with adult supervision
  - Sit with cats in the Cattery
- A JV can qualify as a Level 2 Volunteer at the discretion of the Shelter Manager or other Staff.

### **Volunteer Coordinators:**

- Oversee volunteers during business hours
- Works under the direction of the Shelter Manager
- Welcomes all guests to the shelter directing them to the appropriate area/person.
- Must always be respectful to other volunteers and guests.
- Give Volunteer Orientation
- Assist Level 1 volunteers with Level 2 dogs
- Provide backup for assisting potential adopters.