

Overrun Quebec SPCA asks adopters for help

Shelter full after 17 dogs dropped off over two days; Humane society blames recession on recent spike

An Aylmer animal shelter has been inundated over the past few days and is out of space to accept more dogs. Beatrice is one of 50 dogs looking for a new home.

An Aylmer shelter is asking people to consider adopting pets as they try to cope with "an almost unheard of" number of dogs turned in over the past few days.

"As of today we can't take anymore. We have no space. We have nothing," said Jennifer Montague, co-ordinator of the SPCA of Western Quebec.

Montague says 17 dogs were dropped off at the shelter Tuesday and Wednesday, bringing their total to 50. Twelve of the dogs are large, weighing between 32 to 38 kilograms (about 70 to 85 pounds). Three of the dogs are more than eight years old, making it hard for them to adjust to living in a shelter.

"Not that any dog is good in a shelter environment, but an older dog, it's really not good," said Montague, describing Kobi, an eight-year-old shepherd-collie.

"It's just devastating. He won't eat. He just faces the other way in the cage."

The SPCA of Western Quebec is a no-kill shelter, so no matter how tight space is, none of the animals will be put down.

Montague says a lot of the animals who are dropped off simply aren't wanted anymore.

"The way it comes across here is 'I just have no time and nobody wants to take care of the dog'," said Montague.

She's asking anyone thinking of getting a pet to consider the West Quebec SPCA.

"Give an older dog a chance, because they're great dogs," said Montague, who has adopted an eight-year-old pug.

The shelter is also caring for nine puppies.

"Everyone's in heat and people are not spaying or neutering their animals. People have to start taking responsibility. The immediate problem is what we have here," Montague said, with dogs barking in the background.



A spokeswoman for the Ottawa Humane Society says their shelter is seeing a rise in animals surrendered because of financial difficulties.

"It's just something that we're monitoring. We don't have any figures right now," said Tara Jackson.

Ottawa Humane Society investigators have seen recent cases where older or sick animals don't get veterinary care because the owners can't afford it.

Last week, two cats were dumped in a small park at the corner of Carling Avenue and Richmond Road.

While both had been alive when someone called the shelter about the cats, one died by the time the humane society arrived.

The society is seeking assistance from the public in locating the owner.

"These cats were obviously together and were owned at one time," said Miriam Smith. "If someone was unable to care for them for whatever reason, financial or otherwise, abandoning them anywhere ... is not the solution."

Jackson says owners can go to the humane society for assistance.

"If you're faced with that decision of dumping animals in a park or of letting an animal die without medical treatment, we are here to help," she said.

Anyone with information is asked to contact the Ottawa Humane Society at at 613-725-3166 ext. 224 or e-mail investigations@ottawahumane.ca.

Anyone interested in adopting a pet from the SPCA of Western Quebec can call them at 819-770-7722.