

Letters to the Editor

P.O. Box 1699, Forrest City, AR 72336-1699

A plea for volunteers at FC Animal Shelter

Dear Editor:

During a visit to Forrest City in April, I was privileged to visit the new animal shelter. What beautiful, wanting to be loved, wanting a home, these precious dogs that met me as they pressed against their cages.

I was introduced to three city workers, whom I presumed were in charge of the Shelter's operation. One was hosing out the middle cages. He was flushing the water and feces mixture under the kennels against the wall. The dogs in the kennels against the wall were standing or lying in this filthy debris coming into their area. This waste was also being sprayed into the dogs' water and food bowls and into their faces and fur.

Then I overheard someone explain to the city workers that if the bleach is not thoroughly rinsed off the concrete kennel floor, it will chemically burn the pads of the puppies' feet. It was mentioned that several puppies had been found with chemical burns. The city worker was surprised to learn this.

As we were about to leave, we saw another city worker standing outside staring down at an obviously very sick dog at the end of his catch pole. The yellow lab had wandered out from its cage and collapsed. It was suggested that a dog lead would be all that was needed to contain the dog. Upon closer observation, it

was apparent that the poor animal was suffering and in fact, dying. It probably had distemper. I learned that the dog had been there a few days and wasn't sick upon arrival. It had come from the side of the kennel that was receiving the daily spray from the fecal matter.

Having seen these wonderful creatures at the shelter and how great a facility it could be, my heart broke. As we drove away, I learned that before the week was over there would most likely be a massive euthanasia, approximately 30 dogs and pups, to be exact. I wondered if a better training in the maintenance of a shelter and animal care would have helped these city workers prevent a lot of the suffering and problems that I observed.

If you have the time, and a love for animals, please consider volunteering at the shelter or letting your voice be heard. If this is not a possibility, ask what sort of donations would be helpful in the care of shelter animals. You may contact the Humane Society at 870-633-7063 to leave a message and your call will be returned.

God bless you and may new life come back to Forrest City and its economy starting with the animal shelter and working its way around the city I love so well.

Sister Maxine Vogan
Beminstler, Pa.