

# Organizing an Adoption Festival



The L.A. Pet Adoption Festival was a great success and when all was said and done, 180 dogs and cats and a bunny found new homes. This was a big event, sponsored by Pets.com and K-Earth Radio, but a smaller event could very easily be done in your community on a modest budget. Here are some of the basics:

🐾 Sound out local groups about their interest in participating so you can get an idea of the space needed.

Identify a good location. A park, shopping plaza, or mall are obvious choices, but don't overlook schools, ball fields, or corporate atriums that stand idle on the weekends. A place that has foot traffic helps a lot.

🐾 Beg, borrow, or rent the best location.

Make sure that all participating groups understand the ground rules for adoptions, etc., that you establish and – very important – that each carries insurance. No known biters or dog-aggressive dogs. All dogs on leads; all cats in show cages at all times, etc.

🐾 Make sure that shade is available for the animals.

🐾 Invite some food vendors along so that the crowds won't have to leave to get a snack and to add a festive atmosphere. Other vendors can also be a source of money to help pay for things but will make the event more complex to organize.

🐾 Promotion – probably the most important component of the event. Send public service announcements to all local or area radio and TV stations as well as to the calendar section of the local newspaper. Poster the town and enlist the efforts of the participating organizations. Run off a few thousand letter-size handouts at a copy shop and ask the local supermarkets, pet stores, and other local shops to put the flyers on the checkout stands and have the baggers include one with each purchase. If you have access to mailing lists, by all means use them. If you have a budget, buy some ads in local papers. Also use the free ads in local Penny Saver type papers. Place large banners at the event site a week or two in advance.

🐾 Walk through the event with your volunteers in advance and diagram the layout.

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# Super Adoption Clears Out Shelters

Despite terrible weather, people showed up in droves for the first-ever **No More Homeless Pets** Super Adoption weekend in Salt Lake City. New homes were found for 390 animals.

Five shelters, including the Humane Society of Utah, were completely cleared out of adoptable animals. (By Saturday night, the adoption team was scrambling to have animals available for Sunday!)

Shelters and PETsMART centers were besieged by people who couldn't come to the event but wanted to adopt anyway.

Many thanks to all who took part.



## Mini-mule, Maxi-tude

Ornery Alex came to Best Friends from a home where he was biting and kicking at the other horses, the grandchildren, and even the adults.

Staffer Jenn Reid has been using natural horsemanship to help the waist-high guy learn his manners.

In natural horsemanship, pioneered by trainers like Monty Roberts, you work with the horse's behavior. "You communicate the way another horse or mule would communicate," explains Jenn. "You don't treat them like you expect them to learn English in three minutes, and you don't train them like you would a dog."



Alex has graduated to taking walks with other animals, and Jenn is introducing him to scary things

that he'll have to deal with in the outside world. For instance, she will crinkle a plastic bag so it makes noise, randomly move her hands in front of his face so he can learn how to react without trying to kick or bite, or make him walk over a large, yellow poncho without reacting.

And now, miracle of miracles, this little monster who insisted he didn't need friends has a pal! Faithful the horse walks with Alex, and Alex doesn't try to kick him. "He's become like the annoying little brother who follows Faithful around the stall," says Jenn. "It's like he's saying, 'What are you doing, Faithful? Let me go with you.' I think Faithful knows this is important for Alex, so he tolerates it."

## Everyone's a Winner!

Charlie the steer spent a week waiting outside the grocery store to see which customer won the store drawing and got to take him home to eat.

He's an affectionate fellow who was raised as part of a 4-H project. Since the grocery store is near Best Friends, a lot of staff members and volunteers spent their spare time going in and out of the store, buying one item at a time, and getting a new ticket for the drawing each time in hopes of saving him. None of them won, but the lady who did was happy to sell him for a dollar a pound!

Charlie is now grazing with the horses in the pastures at Best Friends, and we may have some good adoption news soon.



## Keep on Pushing!

Amy Steelman is on a mission to help her local shelter go no-kill.

She came all the way from Pennsylvania to attend a How to Start Your Own Sanctuary workshop and stayed for a six-week internship.

"Our shelter is looking to make changes," says Amy, and she wants to help them make the switch.

Amy learned a lot about spay/neuter and how to "push the adoptions," as she put it.

She also went to a Best Friends adoption



day in Salt Lake City, 320 miles from the sanctuary.

"Shelters often just expect people to walk in off the streets," she remarks. "But you have to do more – pushing the adoptions and making that a priority."

Amy is a sophomore at the University of Chicago and plans to apply to vet school when she graduates.

## Super Super Adoption

What turns an adoption into a *Super Adoption*? Twenty-three shelters and rescue groups, about 1,000 dogs and 500 cats, and a flood of people coming to see them!

That was the scene at the latest No More Homeless Pets in Utah event, held in Salt Lake City. During the weekend, 463 dogs and cats found good new homes. And the Big Fix spay/neutermobile was in high gear all day, every day, making sure every adopted animal was fixed before leaving the lot.

Congratulations to everyone who took part!



## Neighborhood "Adoption" Plan

**Taiwan:** As part of a new proposal to care for stray dogs, Taiwan communities are being urged to "adopt" dogs as neighborhood pets. Specific citizens would be designated to care for the dogs, who would be implanted with ID chips so they can roam at large but still be traced back to their communities.



"Taiwan still treats stray dogs as rubbish because the administration hunts and kills the dogs under the law governing garbage disposal," said Yu Hsiao-cheng, a professor at National Chiao Tung University who has successfully promoted community dog keeping plans in seven or eight neighborhoods.

A draft of the plan is being evaluated but is expected to pass the Taipei legislature.

Meanwhile, weekend adoption events are becoming increasingly popular around the city and on a university computer bulletin board system

## Each Dog Comes with a 30,000-Mile Warranty!

**Winnipeg, Canada:** For car dealer Jim Gauthier, finding homes for dogs is as important as selling cars. But he's found that it's good for business, too.

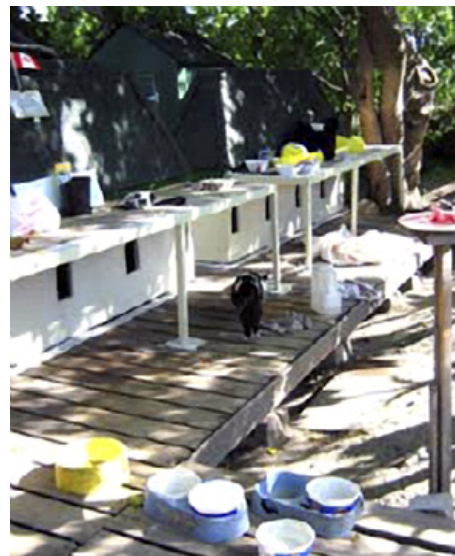
Gauthier advertises homeless dogs in his newspaper ads and has gone all out to help support the no-kill Winnipeg Pet Rescue, which takes in more than 100 dogs a year from the city pound to save them from being sold to research laboratories.

"They made a commitment to the pound that they would take every dog or cat that they were sending for research," he says.

Gauthier pays some of the shelter's monthly expenses and his employees donate cat litter and pet food and organize fundraising events.

"I've had so many people call us. They say 'Oh, what you're doing for the animals... We support you... Next time we need a car, we're going to come buy it from you.'"

Although it's certainly good for business, he says, that's not why he does it. "I couldn't sleep at night knowing what was happening to the animals."



## Condos for Parliament Cats

**Ottawa, Canada:** Rene Chartrand has been taking care of a large feral cat colony on Parliament Hill in Ottawa for many years. Recently, a group of volunteers constructed and painted "condos" for the cats.

Rene, who just turned 83, is hoping to find the right person to take over the colony's care. In the meantime, Brian Caines, a civil servant for the federal government, helps keep an eye on the cats. If you'd like to help, you can e-mail him at [Brian.Caines@cas-satj.gc.ca](mailto:Brian.Caines@cas-satj.gc.ca).



## Best Friends Super Adoptions

**Los Angeles:** Great news for more than 400 dogs and cats who went home after a Best Friends Super Adoption event at Johnny Carson Park in Burbank!

The event was so popular that there was a traffic jam on the freeway for a mile before the Bob Hope Drive exit. More than 60 humane groups and shelters brought homeless pets, and dozens of Hollywood celebrities toured the park, encouraging visitors to adopt furry friends.

**Salt Lake City:** In a whirlwind three-day adoption event, Best Friends invited rescue groups and shelters from all over the state of Utah to bring their homeless animals.

Tents were set up for the furry hopefuls from 31 rescue groups, and dreams came true for 442 "please pick me" pets who found a place to call home.

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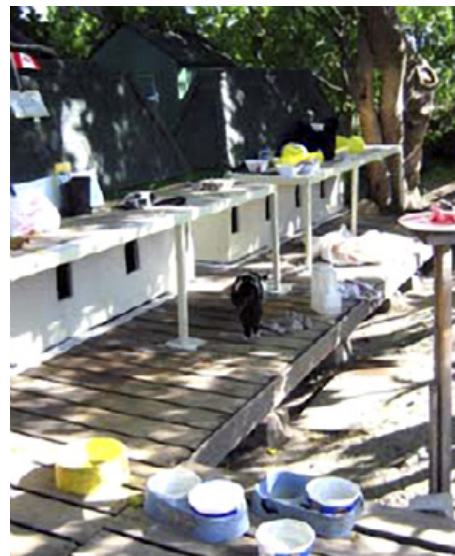
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# ‘Super’ adoption day in Brooklyn

## 260 pets go home for the holidays

Santa Claus wasn't the only big-name celebrity who showed up to support Best Friends Animal Society's Holiday Pet Super Adoption in Brooklyn, New York, prior to Christmas. The three-day event, held to raise awareness of the great dogs and cats available for adoption in the New York metropolitan area, also drew a few other famous faces.

On Friday, actress Amanda Seyfried of “Les Misérables” and “Mamma Mia” fame, and actor Justin Long (“Dodgeball”, “Going the Distance,” “Live Free or Die Hard”) stopped by to snuggle some adoptable pups and to say hello to Santa and a dog named Rice, a brindle-colored pit bull terrier mix, who had just found himself a new forever family.

On Saturday, Emmy-award winning actress Edie Falco shared a heartwarming moment with a dog named Stella. One of the hundreds of pets featured at the event, Stella was a Best Friends–New York dog who had been pulled from Animal Care & Control of NYC. Before finding a home of her very own, Stella stuck her nose out of her kennel to give Edie a big kiss. And Amir Arison, from NBC's “The Blacklist,” got the same treatment from Camo and Chase, two adorable kissy-faced pups.

Actors Kevin Conway, Emma Kenney, Bernadette Peters, David Mazouz, Will Estes and Jake Robinson, and model Marti Krupa also attended the event.

### Doing good for the animals

Attending events like the super adoption is also a fantastic example of celebrities doing good and giving of themselves. “There are a million important causes and issues that people care about in New York,” says Jamie Lyn Rubin, program manager for Best Friends–New York. And celebrities are being pulled in so many directions, especially around the holidays. So, “when they do take their time to help the animals,” and draw attention to the Save Them All mission, “it is so important to us ... and it says so much about who they are.”

The super adoption not only helped nearly 260 pets find homes, it was a platform on which to educate people on the plight of shelter animals and to let them know how many wonderful, amazing pets – of all sizes, shapes, breeds, colors and stripes – are out there waiting for their chance at a loving home.



Photos by: Dawn McCormack and MUTTography



Barbara Cardinelli and her husband adopted both Raisin (right) and Kirby during NKLA Adoption Weekend.

# Finding homes hundreds at a time

## THREE BEST FRIENDS EVENTS YIELD NEARLY 1,300 PET ADOPTIONS

**"I'M A MOTHER AGAIN!"** said Barbara Cardinelli as she and her husband walked through the busy pet adoption event site in Los Angeles. Barbara held the cutest Chihuahua, named Raisin. She first noticed Raisin because of her brindle-striped coat and frosted face. And you can't overlook the underbite, which gives the super-sweet little dog an adorable frowny face, even on the best day of her life — the day Barbara adopted her.

Now take that happiness and double it. Then double it again, over and over until stories like the one about Barbara and Raisin exceed 1,000. That's what happened at three Best Friends spring adoption events, held in late April and early May in Los Angeles, Salt Lake City and New York. Nearly 1,300 once-homeless dogs and cats (plus a few rabbits and one pig) are now happily settling in with their new families. ➡



Bill the kitten gets cozy in his new mom's arms at NKUT Adoption Weekend.



Eldin and his new dad, Ryan Devine, are all smiles at NKUT Adoption Weekend.

## NKUT ADOPTION WEEKEND: Salt Lake City

When a cat rescue group from a small town in rural Utah can find homes for 25 cats in two days, it's a big deal. That rescue group, Ashley Valley Community Cats, based in Vernal, Utah, was just one of the groups from all over the state that brought pets to NKUT Adoption Weekend as part of Best Friends' NKUT (No-Kill Utah) initiative, the goal of which is to bring Utah to no-kill by 2019.

"This year more groups attended than ever, and they did great," says Melissa Jones, Best Friends–Utah events specialist. "We're very excited about the number of pets who found homes, especially for groups in small towns, where the number of adopters is limited." By the event's end, nearly 470 Utah pets were home with new families.

## BEST FRIENDS PET SUPER ADOPTION: New York City

Best Friends has been holding super adoption events in New York for several years, always outside the city. But this spring, the big event took place in Manhattan. "There was a line down the block of people waiting each day when we opened," says Jess Bergeron, Best Friends–New York events specialist. Inside were hundreds of pets, each of them waiting eagerly for a home. **The animals were brought there by 30 rescue groups and shelters. By the end of the event, nearly 290 dogs and cats had gone home.**

Best Friends–New York also brought in pets, from Animal Care & Control of New York City. One was a sweet tan dog named Pikachu, who flashed her best puppy-dog eyes at just the right moment, and got to go home with Barry Gleitman. Barry's cardiologist had recommended that he get a dog to help him increase his activity level and reduce stress. In looking after his own health that particular day, Barry also saved a life.



PHOTOS THIS PAGE BY GEOFFREY TISCHMAN



## NKLA ADOPTION WEEKEND: Los Angeles

In Los Angeles, the adoption weekend is part of the Best Friends NKLA (No-Kill Los Angeles) initiative, which is designed to make Los Angeles a no-kill city by 2017. While Barbara Cardinelli was falling in love with Raisin at the L.A. event, her husband John was drawn to Kirby, another little dog sharing the same enclosure. There was only one thing to do — adopt them both.

**More than 520 pets found homes at the event, many from groups attending for the first time.** Bridget McDonald, Best Friends events and outreach coordinator in Los Angeles, says, "We had so many new groups participating this year, as well as the largest number of people attending ever."

Though the three adoption events were in different states, the goal was the same — to get more pets out of shelters and into homes. The great success of all three spring adoption weekends is proof that whether you live on the East Coast, the West Coast or in the mountains, as Bridget says, "More and more people want to rescue, and they know where to go to adopt." 🐾





PHOTOS BY BOPREY PHOTOGRAPHY AND CESAR BRITO



More than 8,000 people visited the three-day adoption event in New York City, and over 300 animals found homes.

RIGHT: A dog at the event meets some prospective adopters.

BELOW: Actor Kevin Nealon takes a turn ringing the bell to celebrate another adoption.

# A super weekend

## HOLIDAY DREAMS COME TRUE AT THE NEW YORK SUPER ADOPTION EVENT

ON AN ESPECIALLY WARM DECEMBER DAY, a crowd gathered outside the Altman building in Manhattan for a very special purpose. Inside, staff and volunteers from Best Friends, Animal Care Centers of New York City, and many other shelters and rescue groups had been setting up for hours, after weeks of planning for this moment.

They had brought more than 400 homeless pets to the Best Friends New York Super Adoption, presented by BOBS from Skechers, and judging from the long line outside, it was clear that New Yorkers were eager to meet those pets.

### A warm welcome

Elizabeth Jensen, executive director of Best Friends–New York, describes how, when the event opened, staff and volunteers gathered at the entrance to applaud the people as they came in. When people began to stream into the building, she says, “We clapped and clapped, then started laughing because our hands were getting sore from all that clapping. And people kept pouring in. I couldn’t believe it. Hundreds of people waited outside on that beautiful December day, all for the purpose of saving lives.”

Over the course of the three-day event, more than 8,000 people visited — some just to gather with others who love animals, and some to bring home a new pet. Every single adoption was cause for celebration, which was part of the fun, too. Staff rang a bell each time a pet got adopted, causing the crowd to send up a cheer every few minutes.



### Homes for the holidays

When the event came to a close, more than 300 pets had found new homes just in time for the holidays. Animal Care Centers of New York City — which Best Friends supports by taking pets into our New York adoption program — found homes for all the cats they brought to the event, except for three. Those three were placed with local rescue groups who had space to accept them as a result of their own success at the event.

Elizabeth says, “Seeing the huge impact we can make by working together gets me incredibly excited about what we can accomplish here in New York. Between the local rescue groups we partner with, the caring New York adopters and the donors who support us, I know for sure we have all the tools we need to help achieve and maintain no-kill here in New York City.” 🐾



Learn more about how Best Friends is working to help New York City become no-kill:  
[bestfriendsny.org](http://bestfriendsny.org)

# In a New York state of home

**MORE THAN 320 FURRY NEW YORKERS WERE ADOPTED AT 2016'S FINAL SUPER ADOPTION**

**RAIN, SLEET AND SNOW DIDN'T STOP** New Yorkers from turning out in big numbers to the Best Friends Super Adoption event, presented by BOBS from Skechers in December. After all, hundreds of adoptable dogs and cats awaited them, which made the trek worth every frigid step.

"New Yorkers aren't going to let a little sleet and snow stop them from helping our city's homeless pets get the second chance they deserve," says Elizabeth Jensen, Best Friends–New York executive director. "This year's attendance was astounding, and shows just how committed New York is to helping Best Friends achieve its mission of saving the lives of homeless pets."

In addition to dogs and cats from Best Friends–New York, animals from 28 area shelters and rescue groups were there in hopes of getting the best gift ever for the holidays: a new home.

One sweet puppy named Ewing was adopted by Ilana Wexler and Jhesse Jones, a recently-married couple who had noticed the pup on a local rescue group's website, and who came to the event just to meet him. While they cuddled the little black and white dog, falling hard and fast in love, Ilana said with a smile at Jhesse, "I just got married, but this may actually be the best day of my life." Puppies have that effect on people.

By the end of the event, more than 320 love connections like theirs had been made. 🐾

➡ Keep up with what's happening with Best Friends–New York:  
[bestfriendsny.org](http://bestfriendsny.org)

## F Y I

**Coming soon** from Best Friends–New York: a brand new pet adoption center. Go to [bestfriendsny.org](http://bestfriendsny.org) for updates.



Ewing with Ilana and Jhesse

PHOTO BY RYAN ARMSTRONG

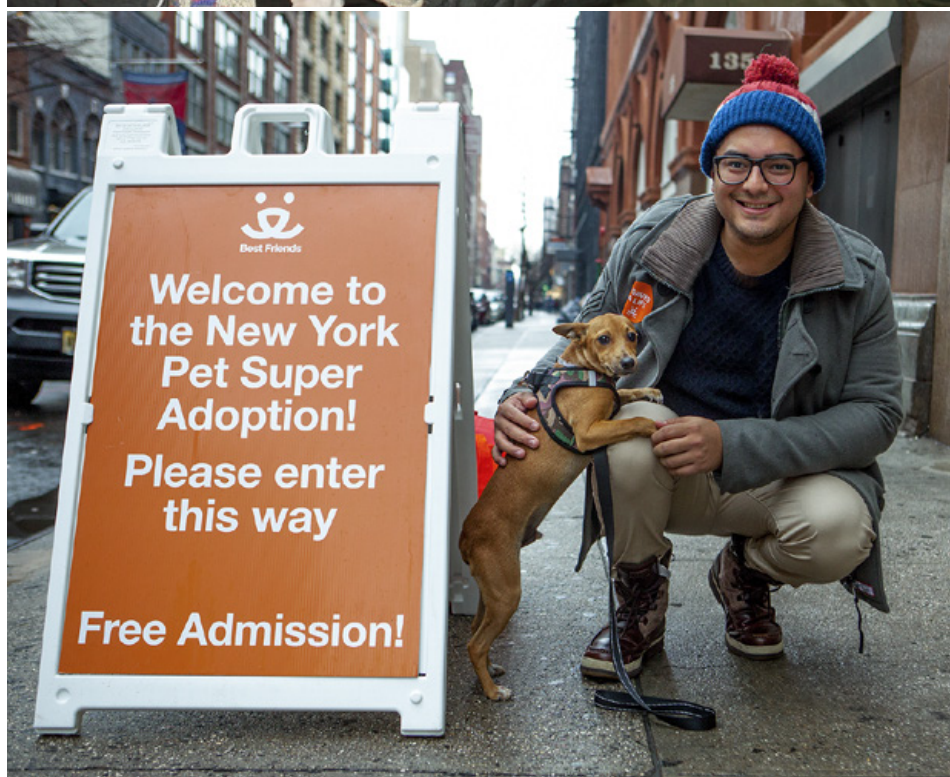


PHOTO BY ROBERT STOETZEL



After Hurricane Harvey, Smores traveled all the way from Texas to Salt Lake City in search of a home, and was scooped up at the super adoption by a family with two kids.

# Two cities, four days, 800 new homes

## SUPER ADOPTION EVENTS IN LOS ANGELES AND SALT LAKE CITY HELP HUNDREDS OF PETS GO HOME

**IT MAY HAVE BEEN RAINING IN** Salt Lake City, but that didn't keep people away from the Best Friends NKUT Super Adoption. And taking the event right to Los Angeles' city shelters for the Best Friends NKLA Super Adoption meant that the public headed where the need is greatest, and they were eager to do it.

As always, the goal of the two fall super adoption events was to help find homes for pets from municipal shelters in key areas where Best Friends is focused on creating no-kill

communities. We work with our coalition partners in Utah and L.A. all year long, but nothing quite compares to the excitement of super adoption events. Everyone pulls together for a whirlwind two days to help as many pets as possible get adopted, and there's a collective cheer at each adoption.

Hosting these events is one way that we're working toward making the entire country no-kill by 2025. And each pet's furry, happy face is a reminder of why it's a goal we care about so much. 🐾

➡ **We're not done yet:** Look for an update from our New York super adoption in an upcoming issue.



### FYI

**At Best Friends super adoption events,** shelters and rescue groups come together in one place, with one mission: to find homes for as many pets as possible. We host multiple super adoptions each year, with spring and fall events in Los Angeles, Salt Lake City and New York. It's all part of our ongoing commitment to Save Them All.



## SALT LAKE CITY



**CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT:**  
 Chocolate, with Best Friends volunteer Rachael Prenkert, came to Salt Lake City from Florida after Hurricane Irma. / The Shipman family adopted a pair of kittens, Mavis and Sparklina. / Caesar is about to go home with adopters Hailey and Justin Bates. / Waldo gets a hug from his new people.

This year's NKLA Super Adoption took place at the source — Los Angeles city shelters.



## LOS ANGELES



Special thanks to presenting sponsor BOBS from Skechers and national sponsors Instinct by Nature's Variety and Petco Foundation

