

Fostering:

Foster parents provide the “tender loving care” our newly rescued friend needs. Many of our animals require extra veterinary care, especially young, elderly, or nursing animals. Under-aged kittens and puppies sometimes need bottle feeding every two to four hours.

Kitten Season

April may bring showers, but spring is also the start of another kind of deluge - the annual flood of unwanted and abandoned kittens. Cats come into “heat” when the days grow longer, and will not cycle out until they are pregnant. This virtually guarantees that every un-spayed cat will become pregnant.

This kitten monsoon is, of course, in addition to the huge numbers of adult animals always in need of homes. Cute, playful little kittens and puppies are often chosen over calm, sweet adult dogs. Adult cats especially suffer low adoption rates during “kitten season”.

The unsung heroes in the battle to save these pets are the volunteer foster parents.

Becoming a foster parent can be rigorous, but it is always rewarding! Foster parents agree to take animals into their homes on behalf of the shelter, and care for them as if they were their own pets.

This involves feeding, cleaning, grooming, and playing with the animals. For some, though, fostering can go much further. Many rescued animals are sick, stressed, or frightened, and may require special care. A frightened or abused animal may require weeks of extra attention and behavioral modification to become ready for adoption.

Un-weaned orphaned kittens and puppies, affectionately known as “bottle babies”, require the most work of all! As with human infants, around the clock bottle feeding of special puppy or kitten formula is required. Most challenging of all, orphaned kittens and puppies are more likely to get sick because they aren't getting the antibodies normally passed on in mom's milk. Any foster will tell you that raising bottle babies is as much hard work as a human baby -- multiplied by 4, 5 or 8! And of course foster families become very attached to these special kittens and puppies, which can make it difficult to see them go to their new homes.

Fostering is challenging, fun and rewarding. If you love animals, and have the space and time to open your heart to a foster animal, you will find it enriches your life in ways you would never guess.