

I started taking pictures at the Wythe County Animal Shelter on 12/22/04 and placing them on my website in hopes of helping to find homes for the dogs that are surrendered by their owners and that are picked up. After the 3 month old puppy later named Spirit by my daughter was found at this very shelter with a compound fracture of his rear left leg was left to suffer needlessly, unable to get to food and water with his severely infected leg which eventually had to be removed, I was told that pictures would now be sent to me instead of me going down to the shelter to take them myself.

The custodian at the time did a good job of taking pictures and sending them to me. She sent several pictures of each of several dogs almost every week. This continued up till January 1<sup>st</sup> 2009. As of January 2<sup>nd</sup> 2009 there was no custodian so I did not receive pictures for awhile. I offered several times to go down and take pictures myself but was told that I would be sent pictures. I get 2 or 3 pictures, 1 each of 2-3 dogs sent every 10-11 days on average now. Here are the email dates I have received the pictures.

1/16/09, 1/17/09, 2/1/09-2 weeks, 2/10/09, 3/4/09-almost a month here, 3/11/09, 3/19/09, 3/30/09, 4/17/09-They said they sent pictures before this date but I did not get them until this date, email dated this date. 4/27/09, 5/7/09. During this time, January 8 through April, I was sending emails on a regular basis trying to get pictures sent and I offered to take pictures myself.

Through the Freedom of Information Act I requested all intake and disposition forms from January 2<sup>nd</sup> till March 31<sup>st</sup> 2009 from the Wythe County Animal Shelter. I had to pay for the copies and the Animal Control Officer's time, 20 cents a copy and 30 minutes of time at \$16.99 an hour or \$8.495 for 30 minutes. For the year 2008 the Shelter reached a 17.4% euthanasia rate, down from 74.5% in 2005 mostly due to the Wythe County Humane Society and their efforts. Every quarter of the year can vary but if we break this down and average it by the 4 quarters of the year that gives us around a 17.9% euthanasia rate for each quarter. Last year 96 dogs were adopted straight from the shelter, or 24 per quarter on average. That would be 14.8% adoption rate. The total dogs taken in were 647 or 162 average per quarter. I mention these stats to illustrate the following. Stats for the first quarter of 2009 is as follows. The Wythe Co. Animal Shelter has taken in around 177 dogs, euthanized 53 or 29.9%, adopted out 8 or 4.5%. The euthanasia rate is way up and the adoption rate is way down. I believe this has a lot to do with the lack of pictures and the large amount of time between new pictures and pictures being sent with the due date within a day or 2.

The Wythe Co. Humane Society is taking as many dogs as they can but rely on adoptions at the shelter to help find homes for some of the animals. The shelter GETS a \$20.00 adoption fee for every dog they adopt out. Seems like they would be trying to find GOOD homes for these animals instead of spending money to euthanize and dispose of them. Maybe the Board of Supervisors should look at requiring the ACO's to have to have so many adoptions per month. This is income for the County and is the right thing to do. These dogs did not ask to be here, they did not ask to be dumped at the shelter or be abandoned on the street. Spay and neuter your pet!

John Witt