

It's better than dog's life at Rescue League

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The cages are old and patched; there aren't enough dog houses and the roofs of the runs need repairing.

But the 30 cats and kittens and 60 dogs and puppies living at the Michigan Animal Rescue League, Inc. (MARL), don't care.

They get everything they need, despite the conditions. They get love from the volunteers and from caretakers Vicki and Frank McDaniel, are fed well, and are kept clean in sanitary living quarters.

What the animals don't realize is how difficult it is for MARL to shelter them as it does.

The league, in existence since 1953, is a non-profit organization that doesn't receive public funds or support from any government agency.

Donations come from people getting their new pets from the shelter and from people who care.

But the donations aren't enough to buy new cages, which cost \$1,200 for a unit of two large cages on the bottom and four on top, or to cover the amount of dog and cat food used daily or even the veterinary bills.

ROSELLEN THOMAS is president of MARL. She's been working there for 14 years because she loves animals, she said. A resident of Clawson, she drives to the shelter at 790 Featherstone in Pontiac to care over her brood, to be sure each puppy gets a substitute for mother's milk if his too young to eat puppy food, and to help the volunteers perform their tasks.

"We need money," she said bluntly.

"This place is run completely by volunteers, except for the McDaniels who live in the house next door and serve as caretakers. They've really turned this place around, making it a decent place. But even with their help, some things can't be repaired any more."

Students from Pontiac School System get paid by the school district to work there and each officer for the organization donates one day. In addition to Miss Thomas, the president, other officers are vice-president Clarence Cole, treasurer Mrs. Clayton Dibley, secretary Eleanor Kellogg, trustee Ada Kerr and trustee Gena Brangan.

They each help continue the original concept of the shelter, to help prevent cruelty to animals by giving any pet not wanted anymore a place to live.

"WE DON'T destroy animals if we can't find a home for them," said Miss Thomas. "We keep them for as long as they live."

To help them maintain their personalities, Miss Thomas often takes dogs and cats home with her for awhile. She spends time with each resident, checking on any health problems it might have or just giving it a scratch behind the ear.

"See this white poodle? He's seven years old. We just spent \$66 to fix him up. We have a large poodle that had no hair on him when we got him. He had a fungus disease. Now he has hair on him again, even on his tail. We still have to give him a dip bath every day."

She has stories to tell about each pet, whether it's the two beautiful



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Puffy white mother and daughter cats or the stunted sheltie with the heart condition.

Miss Thomas said one of the most frequent reasons why the shelter is given a pet is because a family is moving into an apartment. Other reasons are people are moving out of town and because of allergies.

The shelter gets animals in odd ways. Some people bring their dogs and cats in, others dump them over the fence at night. Others are picked up as strays, half alive and often injured.

"Many people bring them in. People

are getting to know about us. They know we don't put animals to sleep," Miss Thomas added.

WHEN A PERSON gets a pet from the shelter, she or he can be assured the animals has been properly cared for. Puppies and dogs get tested for heart worm and receive the proper prevention medicine; cats get special shots; and all are checked over by veterinarians.

To get a dog, puppy, cat or kitten from the shelter that's open Monday through Saturday, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m., just visit and pick out the animal that

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—Rosellen Thomas, president of Michigan Animal Rescue League, Inc.

tugs at your heart strings. It might be the two Golden Retrievers that you take home, or the Irish wolfhound, or the tiger-looking cats.

Which ever one you choose, you'll be expected to give a donation.

"We expect at least \$10 for an animal, especially, for example, when a shot for a kitten cost \$8," Miss Thomas said.

She softens, however, when a child comes in for a pet and only has \$5 to spend. But lower the price of an animal for adults, no way.

"People have to assume the responsibility of helping us," she said.

If you already have as many pets as you can handle or if you can't have a pet but want to help these who are

homeless, Miss Thomas asked people to contact the Michigan Animal Rescue League, Inc. at 333-9200. A person can become a member of the league for \$10. Student and senior citizen memberships are only \$2 per year. To be a sustaining member or a benefactor, one has to give \$25 and \$50 a year respectively.

Each donation is a help. Considering that the shelter is running at full capacity, accepting animals only after one has been taken home by someone, and that each animal is fed and cared for indefinitely, one can appreciate the help every dollar gives.

And if you don't want to give money, volunteer your time. Volunteers are always needed and appreciated.



Rosellen Thomas has donated her spare time to animals since 1964.



Life behind bars isn't so bad at Michigan Animal Rescue League, especially for young animals like these kittens who are naturally playful. But life for them would be better in a home with someone who loves them.



Chow time is a favorite time for the puppies. Here they eagerly greet caretaker Vicki McDaniel as she gets ready to serve lunch.



Miss Thomas, and other volunteers, always find a moment to visit with each dog, cat, puppy and kitten at Michigan Animal Rescue League. These people do all they can to make the animals' stay there happy and healthy. However, they could make them much happier with more money. Since the league is non-profit, it depends on donations from animal lovers in order to buy what's needed in the way of food, medical care and shelter.