



PHOTO SUPPLIED

Wayne and Carol Tischer hope to have rescued dogs like Mickey adopted.

Getting to the heart of the matter

Saving abandoned and unwanted dogs is no easy feat for Wayne and Carol Tischer.

As founding members of the Human Animal Rescue Team – aptly referred to as hart – the Tischers rely on caring volunteers to support their fledgling agency.

Founded in 2003, the organization began rescuing cats and dogs from rural areas around Edmonton, but soon discovered other organizations were doing the same kind of work.

“Cats and dogs are very different. So, eventually, we decided to put our resources towards dogs,” Carol explains.

Wayne adds that the rural focus came from seeing the appalling living conditions of stray dogs outside of Edmonton.

“There are dogs living terrible lives and simply starving to death. That’s what triggered it for us.”

Since its inception, HART has rescued more than 500 dogs.

Once the rescued dogs are in HART’s care, the Tischers seek volunteers to help house the dogs

Volunteer Edmonton

until permanent homes are found. Foster homes, says Carol, are the backbone of the organization.

“We never have enough. The only thing that we ask is to care for the dog. We pay all medical, food and supply costs,” she says.

While fostering a dog can be a rich and meaningful experience, it’s not always easy, Wayne notes.

Once the dog is chosen for adoption, some volunteers have a tough time letting go.

“You get attached but, of course, foster home volunteers are welcome to adopt. It makes it easier for us since they are already involved,” Wayne says.

The organization’s unique adoption process ensures that rescued dogs are matched through a screening and interviewing process that looks at a person’s lifestyle and personality to see which

dog would be a good match for the applicant.

“We try to work against impulse buying. That way you’ll have a friend and family member for life,” Carol remarks.

The process includes a series of meetings between the applicant and the dog, day visits and a ‘cooling off’ period.

Aside from foster homes, HART offers volunteer positions in areas like fundraising, special events, administration, rescuing and more.

The Tischers have also been fortunate to receive support from local retailers, manufacturers and even veterinarians.

“We’re really just doing this for the dogs,” Carol says simply. “It’s an amazing experience.”

Wayne and Carol hope more people become foster home volunteers.

“Without intervention many dogs will perish in the cold, particularly the pups and the unhealthy dogs,” Wayne mentions.

Visit their website at www.humananimalrescueteam.ca or call 780-455-4278.

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