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28 Pooches Spared From Untimely Fate By Caroline Simson



Traci Shapiro, a licensed veterinary technician with the Bideawee Adoption Center in Westhampton, holds one of the 28 dogs rescued from a Virginia shelter last week. These dogs, which include several puppies, were going to be euthanized due to overcrowded conditions at their previous shelter.

The 28 puppies and dogs taken in by Westhampton's Bide-A-Wee Adoption Center this week from a Virginia animal shelter were only minutes away from death—literally.

According to Lonnie Campbell, manager of the Bide-A-Wee shelter on Old Country Road in Westhampton, the dogs were rescued by a group called Paws to Adopt, based in Virginia. They were shipped up to New York last Wednesday, August 8, just moments before they were to be euthanized to make room for additional animals.

"Lee County, Virginia, has a very high euthanasia rate," said Ms. Campbell, explaining that the practice of spaying or neutering dogs and cats is not as prevalent in that area as it is in New York.

"The bulk of animals get euthanized, including puppies ..." she continued. "It's really sad to see such a huge euthanasia rate because they're so friendly. All of them probably would have already been euthanized."

In fact, she noted, several other dogs staying at the same shelter that could have come to New York had been euthanized the previous weekend.

As Ms. Campbell walked past the cages at the shelter containing the dogs, many wagged their tails and scratched at their cages attempting to get closer to her. The dogs will remain in quarantine until they are given clean bills of health by shelter veterinarians.

"They are really sweet dogs," she said. "They will make nice family pets."

Bide-A-Wee, a no-kill adoption shelter, took in the 28 hounds in the hopes of matching them up to the most compatible families. The dogs range in age from seven months to a few years old and are mostly hound and beagle mixes, including Tennessee walker hounds and coonhounds. Each of the dogs, which will be available for adoption within a few days, will be spayed or neutered before they arrive at their new homes.

The 28 dogs arriving last week were part of a second group that Bide-A-Wee has accepted from Paws to Adopt, according to Ms. Campbell. She explained that the shelter took in about two dozen dogs last month and the majority of them were adopted in less than four weeks.

"They're having an emergency down there," Ms. Campbell said, referring to Virginia. "They have volunteers who act as foster parents until the dogs can find a permanent home, but they're so overloaded they can't take any more animals."

A nationally recognized adoption agency, Bide-A-Wee was contacted by the rescue group just over a month ago after volunteers learned about the no kill shelter from another rescue group. In total, Ms. Campbell said, her organization works with about 50 rescue groups throughout the state and country to find new homes for rescued animals.

She added that it will most likely cost about \$1,500 to provide care for each of the dogs until they find new homes, and that donations are always appreciated. To make a donation, or obtain more information about adopting one of the rescued dogs, visit [www.bideawee.org](http://www.bideawee.org) or call the adoption center at 325-0200.



Suzanne Tesoro, an associate with the Bide-A-Wee Adoption Center, poses with Pansy, one of the dogs rescued from Virginia.