

# Addison County



# Humane Society

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FOR INFORMATION  
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## The Addison County Humane Society Launches A New *Senior to Senior* Program Uniting Citizens and Animals to Combat Loneliness

Sara Kurtz, shelter manager for the ACHS, became concerned last fall as the number of older animals in her shelter grew. "We kept watching as the young cats and dogs were adopted and these gorgeous adult animals were left behind. We knew we had to do something." As the numbers of adult animals increased, keeping them socialized and ready for adoption became a big challenge as well.

Now, thanks to a grant from the AD Henderson Foundation, ACHS has launched the **Seniors to Seniors** Program. The program matches senior shelter animals (6 years and older) with senior citizens throughout the county. Matches involve therapeutic visits of cats or dogs to nursing homes, hospice and residential living facilities and discounted adoptions and adoption support to senior residents (55 years and older) from Addison County.

ACHS is facilitating these programs through careful matching of animal to adopter, discounted adoption fees and in the case of homebound seniors, transportation assistance for veterinary appointments and periodic home care support. "Older animals are often calmer and easier to care for than younger animals. We are careful to match personalities and needs," says Jill Tucker, Executive Director.

"So far the response has been wonderful. We have visited a half dozen senior facilities and are now planning monthly visits and Mobile Adoption events in several of them," says Jeanne Lemner, ACHS President and **Seniors** volunteer.

By working with senior service organizations like the Champlain Valley Agency on Aging and their Meals on Wheels program, ACHS can find citizens who will benefit from a companion animal and in some cases can adopt them with some support.

"Nearly one third of all Addison County residents over the age of 65 live alone. With proven mental and physical benefits of animal companionship, this is truly a win-win solution, both the animals and our clients will benefit," says Mary West, Assistant Nutrition Director, CVAA.

Those interested in volunteering to support the program or who might know a homebound senior interested in adoption, please contact Sara Kurtz at (802) 388-1100.