

Volunteers clean up Tehama County Animal Care Center

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4H Blast Team member Dylan Speers puts down a paver stone on Saturday at the PETS Team Up to Clean Up volunteer workday event at the Tehama County Animal Care Center.

Red Bluff >> The cloudy, overcast sky that threatened rain early Saturday gave way to sunshine in time for the PETS Team Up To Clean Up event at the Tehama County Animal Care Center.

The event, hosted by Providing Essentials For Tehama Shelter, or PETS, a non-profit that supports the care center, had about 80 volunteers from various community organizations including Rotary, Tehama County 4-H, Red Bluff High School, PATH and church members, said PETS Vice President and event chairwoman Ronnie Casey.

“I am astounded and overwhelmed that the community participated as much as it has,” Casey said. “We have volunteers from 13 up to their 80s. Between donations and volunteers, it’s more than we expected. Tehama County has a lot to be proud of.”

The clean-up efforts included new bark and paver stones along the fence line of the play yards, new slats in the fencing, new gravel in other areas, new plants and other landscaping work.

“This is such a wonderful turnout by the community to help the animals and it will make such a difference,” said PETS President Sharon Russell. “I have to thank Ronnie Casey for organizing this.”

The turnout was the largest she has seen for an event at the shelter, said center manager Christine McClintock.

“This is probably the most amazing undertaking I’ve seen done,” McClintock said. “I haven’t seen this many people turn out at one time. The different businesses that donated and service groups that volunteered- it’s truly amazing. We were all shocked to see the number here to help and all the clubs. It’s a great thing for our volunteers and dogs.”

The project is something that should help with the stress level at the shelter and make it more inviting, she said.

“The work done today will make it easier for staff to maintain and the plants will make the environment more inviting for potential adopters coming out,” McClintock said. “This is above and beyond the work we can do. Our budget is focused on the animals and sometimes we get bogged down with the day to day. It’s one thing to visualize what it will look like, but another to see it. All the work done today will last a long time, especially the drip systems. It’s all something that will make a huge difference and it couldn’t have been done without the community.”

AB-109 alternative custody crews helped with getting the products to the site and in doing prep work earlier in the week.

A side benefit of the event is it got people into the shelter who wouldn’t normally come out and several had been looking at dogs so it was good exposure for the dogs, Casey said.

There are about 75 animals living at the care center with about 55 of them being dogs. The next big project for the care center will be kitten season, which is already starting, and there will be a need for fosters, McClintock said.

“Some are more intense and some just need a spare bathroom and someone to check on them,” McClintock said.

Interested parties can come fill out an application or call the shelter at 527-3439 for more information.

Jennifer Ragsdale of Poor And The Homeless, or PATH, brought her two daughters along with a large number of the transitional housing program participants.

“We’re helping because we want to make the community a better place and what better place than a large community event like this where we can leverage our resources to get something positive done,” Ragsdale said. “We have about 98 percent of our transitional living residents here. This is PATH’s way of giving back to a community who has given so much to us.”

Tehama County 4-H Blast Team Advisor and Bend Jelly 4-H Club Leader Debbie Spangler said the project was a perfect fit for BLAST Leadership Team Dylan Speers, who loves animals and his favorite project is dog obedience, to organize a group for. There were 14 Tehama County 4-H members helping and she was proud of the number who showed up to help, Spangler said.

“I wanted to do something to give back to the community,” Speers said when asked why he chose the event for his BLAST Community Service Project. “My mom showed it to me on Facebook and it looked like a great way to give back and help the animals.”