

## **Dec. 20 is “Christmas Pawty”**

### **Celebrities Push Adoption for Pets Languishing in Shelters in Northern Idaho**

HAYDEN, PONDERAY, BONNERS FERRY, ID (Dec. 13, 2011)—Animals in three shelters in Northern Idaho passed over for adoption time and time again, some for as many as five years, are receiving help from a dedicated and committed team of celebrities and shelter friends. They’re heading up a local Dec. 20 “Christmas Pawty” and rolling out all the stops to find homes by Christmas for the shelters’ most adoption-challenged pets.

That includes a lot of national social media plugging by Dr. Marty Becker, the veterinarian from Bonners Ferry, ID., who’s most recognized as “America’s Veterinarian” appearing on ABC’s “Good Morning America” and the “Dr. Oz Show.” He has teamed with his daughter, pet trainer and author Mikkel Becker, and various shelter board members and volunteers to organize the “Christmas Pawty” on Dec. 20.

The public is invited to come and share hugs and treats and a renewed sense of commitment for getting the harder-to-adopt animals a forever home. The locations and times on Tuesday, Dec. 20 are: Kootenai Humane Society at 11650 N Ramsey Rd., Hayden, ID, noon to 2 p.m.; Pandhandle Animal Shelter, 870 Kootenai Cut-off Road, Ponderay, ID from 3 to 4:30 p.m.; and, Second Chance Animal Adoption Shelter at 6647 Lincoln St., Bonners Ferry, ID from 5:30 – 7 p.m.

The Beckers will be there handing out treats and using their far-reaching Facebook and Twitter feeds to spread the word about each pet. Dr. Becker, whose articles appear on Vetstreet.com, recently pinned an article on Idaho local shelter pets.

Dr. Becker and Mikkel know first-hand the joy of adopting pets who have languished in no kill shelters for years. Dr. Becker adopted his lab-pit mix, Gracie, last Christmas. She had been at Second Chance Animal Adoption Shelter for the past two years—all her life. “She had something wrong with her legs, and she wasn’t particularly attractive, but Gracie and I looked at each other, and we both knew that she’d just found a new home. She’s been a beloved part of our family ever since.”

Less than a year later, Mikkel found her soul mate in a three-legged cat she named Nemo, after her daughter’s favorite movie.

“Animals who get overlooked at shelters are usually the ones with the biggest personalities,” says Dr. Becker. “Sometimes, they just aren’t as cute or don’t photograph as well as another pet does. Or, maybe, they have a quirky physical characteristic and people write them off right away as being high maintenance. But an eye out or a limp doesn’t mean the animal will be unhealthy. On the contrary, these are the scrappers in life who survive most odds.”

One pet that the “Christmas Pawty” is targeting for an intensive adoption campaign is Langley, a lab mix who has been homeless since last March when his family lost their home. He’s at the Kootenai Humane Society near Coeur D’Alene. “Black animals don’t photograph well, so you have a lot of black dogs and cats needing homes; but most are like Langley, who is a sweet and active animal perfect for a family with kids,” said Mikkel.