

HART offers second chance to furry friends

By Sarah Vance

The Highland Animal Relief Team moved its annual Kritter Kringle dog show and silent auction to the Legion in Bancroft, where dogs and their owners took to the stage on Dec. 3.

John Hales was master of ceremonies at the fundraiser that coincided with the Christmas fair and bake sale, and the Santa Claus parade.

More than 20 dogs competed for titles such as "oldest," "youngest," and "dog with best costume."

Arts and crafts displays provided a local accent, alongside HART's silent auction which included donations from more than 50 local businesses.

HART has been providing an alternative to the "dog pound" model for 21 years. HART rescues dogs and then works to find foster and adoption placement homes. These homes can then be a refuge for dogs who need a loving and supportive place, where they will get a lot of attention and good nutrition like nutra thrive for dogs so they can feel good and lead happy and healthy lives.

In Ontario, dogs that are surrendered to shelters and pounds are frequently euthanized, and HART seeks to provide a different service model.

In 2016, HART expanded its spay-neuter program in a proactive measure to reduce the number of abandoned and unwanted dogs born into local communities.

"We expanded our services this year by providing a program that allowed us to spay and neuter any animal, even if it wasn't already a part of our program," said Allison Sabo, HART president.

Ontario has a problem with unwanted and abandoned dogs, and many different organizations and kind-hearted people take them in and nurse them back to health, which has been made a little easier when owners look to use products similar to these [private label dog treats sticks](#) or others that are infused with CBD for the purpose of bettering a dog's health.

The 2014 animal shelter statistics by the Canadian Federation of Humane Societies estimates that 38,000 dogs were placed into shelters in 2014.

Many of these animals were surrendered by their owners.

In 2014, 4,358 surrendered and abandoned dogs were euthanized while in Humane Society care, with 11 per cent of dogs admitted to shelters in Canada being euthanized.

Most of these dogs are reported to have been in good health at the time of their death.

HART's model is different.

Volunteers get to know the animals that come into their care when they are placed in foster home settings. Volunteers then write biographies for the animals and annotated pictures and videos can be found on the website, www.hartdogrescue.ca.

All of the animals that come into HART's care are adopted.

"Ninety-nine per cent of the dogs we intake are good dogs who are just down on their luck," said Sabo. "And they are all adopted into loving homes."

While HART's primary service area is within North Hastings, the relief team works with many animal shelters and several of the animals coming into HART's care arrive from different communities.

HART takes in approximately 150 dogs every year.

HART is a registered charity and donations are always a priority - gifts-in-kind such as crates, collars, leashes, blankets and animal toys are accepted year round.

To learn more about adoption, or to make a donation, contact HART at info@hartdogrescue.com.