

## Pet Fest raises awareness of animals in need



**July 23, 2019 By Nate Smelle**

Animal lovers descended on Millennium Park in Bancroft on Saturday, July 20 for Home Again Animal Rescue's second annual Pet Fest. The extreme heat didn't stop Home Again supporters and their four-legged friends from enjoying their time together in the park. Throughout the day there was live music pouring from the bandshell while festival-goers, browsed the items available at the lawn sale and indoors at the Club 580 Boutique. Volunteers helped raise funds for Home Again by donating homemade baked goods that were also sold inside at the boutique. All proceeds raised from the event go towards Home Again's programs as well as covering the cost of food and vet bills for the animals they rescue. Home Again also used Pet Fest as an opportunity to raise awareness of the programs and services it provides throughout the community, such as its pet microchip program. This program helps prevent people from losing their pets by a microchip in their companion animal's shoulder or ear, so in the event it wanders away it can be found. If a cat or dog with a microchip is lost and is turned in, it can be scanned and returned to its owner. Max Williamson and his four-legged companion Moses were both excited to take part in this year's celebration. While visiting Bancroft from their home in Mississauga, Williamson said he found out about the event in Bancroft This Week and decided he would bring Moses to the park so he could make some new friends. Having been rescued from a puppy mill by an organization in Toronto doing similar work to Home Again, Williamson said Moses was not always "Mr. Social." In fact, for the first six months he said Moses would hide under the bed anytime someone new entered the house, and only come out to eat once they had left. "When I first got him, he wasn't as

friendly as he is now," said Williamson. "It is understandable though. He came from a puppy mill where he spent most of his time in a cage. They told me that when they found him he was covered in his own feces and pee and that it appeared he had been hit. It is amazing how different he is now. A little love goes a long way and he has so much love to give." Home Again volunteer Cathy Archambault was one of the team helping to make Pet Fest a success again this year. A long-time volunteer with the animal rescue group, Archambault said she initially decided to get involved with Home Again after realizing how many abused and/or abandoned animals are in need throughout North Hastings. "There is such a need, and it is so sad," said Archambault. "There are so many stories that are just horrific. We have seen animals that is being thrown out of car windows, and people who abandoned their animals. We are trying to educate people and raise awareness of the importance of getting your pets spayed or neutered. We also provide caring foster homes until we find them a forever home." With so many animals in need of homes, Archambault said it is absolutely essential that pet owners help to cut down the unwanted pet population by having their pet spayed or neutered. She said Home Again offers financial assistance for people that would like to have their pet spayed or neutered but can't afford it. Between all those helping Home Again through providing foster homes, adopting animals and pitching in at fundraising events, Archambault said it is amazing to see how many caring volunteers there are in this community. Despite the large number of people working together with Home Again to help animals in the community, she said they are always happy to welcome new foster homes and volunteers onto their team. Considering they are always taking in new animals, Archambault said they are also always looking for people to adopt the cats and dogs they rescue. She advises anyone wishing to get involved with the animal rescue group, or looking to adopt one of the animals they have rescued to contact Home Again at 613-338-0037. For more information on Home Again Animal Rescue, as well as the programs and services they offer, visit them online at [www.homeagainbancroft.ca](http://www.homeagainbancroft.ca); or on their Facebook page.