



Great River Rescue

VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK

Updated January 2021



SHELTER HOURS:

Tuesday – Friday from 12:30pm-5:30pm

Saturdays from 12:30-4:30pm

Sunday – Monday CLOSED (except for special events)

Visit us any time during shelter hours!

Mailing Address	1612 Carr Lake Road SE Bemidji, MN 56601
Email Contacts	info@greatriverrescue.com director@greatriverrescue.com
Phone Number	218-751-7910
Website	www.greatriverrescue.com

We are a 501c3 licensed facility, and all donations are tax deductible.
Thank you for caring about your area animals. We appreciate your support!

Directions to Great River Rescue:

Follow Paul Bunyan Drive SE (old Hwy 2, not Hwy 197), east toward Hwy 2, turn right at Carr Lake Rd SE (aka County Road 404) on the edge of the Industrial Park.

Our Mission Statement:

Great River Rescue transitions dogs and cats to loving homes, serves as a community resources, and advocates for kind, responsible pet care.

Our Vision Statement:

Envisions a society of responsible animal guardians in which every animal is treated with respect and care.

Value Statements:

Care, compassion and empathy for animals and people.
Accountability to high standards of professional and ethical behavior.
Respect and kindness with every decision and interaction.

Brief Shelter History

Great River Rescue was established in 1977 by a group of concerned citizens who felt a need for an organization that would provide shelter to homeless animals. We are proud to be a “no-kill” shelter. The “no-kill” policy ensures that animals are not euthanized except for untreatable illness, court order, or veterinarian recommendation.

Since 1977, Great River Rescue has helped thousands of companion animals with a second chance at life. We are very proud of our efforts to rehome abandoned, surrendered and stray companion animals and the service we provide to our community. Over the past several decades we have honed our services to provide an even greater quality service for more than 400 animals per year.

Currently, the shelter offers several services including taking in stray or unwanted animals, adopting out animals in need of homes, fostering animals before they can be adopted, providing quality animal care to all animals in our shelter, administering necessary vaccinations, and ensuring all animals are spayed or neutered prior to adoption. We also hold several community events throughout the year and have a vibrant volunteer program with over 150 volunteers participating yearly.

Current Members of our Board of Directors (2021)

Gerri Hickerson - Board Chair
Ara Gallo - Vice Chair
Jeanne Edevold-Larson - Treasurer
Ann Mork - Secretary
Kendis Scharenbroich – Member
Eric Sundem – Member
Jaimee Towers – Member
Barbara Godding – Member
Kevin Johnson - Member

Great River Rescue Welcomes You!

Joining Great River Rescue community affords you the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of all the homeless pets that come to our shelter. You, as a volunteer, are a valued and necessary factor in the long-term continuation of the shelter. Without your physical help and emotional caring, we could not survive.

Volunteers are one of the lifelines of our community; they help spread the word about our organization and the animals’ needs. Volunteers also improve our operations by providing services that would otherwise be fiscally and physically impossible.

Being a volunteer is rewarding, educational, exciting and fun. You can have a huge impact on the lives of homeless animals. In many cases, this is the first time someone has truly cared for them. The time and energy contributed by volunteers keep our programs functioning. Since your support as a volunteer is so important, your decision to participate must be made with the full understanding of the commitment and responsibility it demands.

Thank you for giving your time and energy to the animals at GRR. We hope the time you spend here will be as rewarding to you as it is to the animals.

Adoption Policies:

Cats

Cat Prices: \$106.60 + tax (**we do not accept checks for adoptions**)

Adoption Fees Include:

- 🐾 feline distemper vaccination
- 🐾 de-worming
- 🐾 flea/ear mite treatments (when necessary), ear cleanings,
- 🐾 spaying or neutering
- 🐾 a pre-registered microchip
- 🐾 Rabies vaccination
- 🐾 upon request, blood tests for \$15*

We require that cats leave in a carrier and we do sell permanent and temporary carriers at our shelter.

Dogs

Dog Prices: \$208.57 + tax (**we do not accept checks for adoptions**)

Adoption Fees Include:

- 🐾 canine distemper vaccination
- 🐾 Bordetella treatment (kennel cough)
- 🐾 de-worming
- 🐾 flea/tick treatments (when necessary), ear cleanings
- 🐾 spaying or neutering
- 🐾 pre-registered microchip
- 🐾 Rabies vaccination
- 🐾 upon request, blood tests for \$15*

You can bring your own collar and leash at the time of adoption, or you can buy what you need at our shelter store.

Rabies vaccines are given before adoption in most cases, but this takes coordination with our veterinary partners. In cases where we are unable to administer a Rabies vaccine before the time of adoption, adopters will be given a coupon for Animal Care Clinic to get a free Rabies vaccine, with the purchase of an animal wellness exam.

Trial Period

We understand that not all adoptions will work out. Therefore, we allow all adopters a period of time in which they may bring the animal back to GRR and receive a voucher good for another adoption within a year. Adopters are expected to remain in contact with GRR if they are concerned about their new animal adoption. Adopters who suddenly attempt to return an animal without communicating with us previously may be turned away.

Medical Treatment

Great River Rescue is committed to adopting out animals in good faith. All known medical, physical, behavioral conditions, and special needs have been disclosed to the prospective adopter. Any costs incurred relating to any disclosed or pre-existing condition are the adopter's responsibility as of the date of adoption.

Special Needs Adoptions

Some of our animals are listed as "special needs pets." These animals may have behavior or health issues, or maybe they have just been at the shelter for an extended period of time. These animals are available at a discount because of our Special Needs Fund which offsets the cost of the adoption.

Holding Animals


Great River Rescue does not, under any circumstances, hold animals waiting to be adopted. Any potential adopter who waits beyond the one-day waiting period to pick-up the animal does so at his/her own risk. We will not guarantee that the animal will still be available for adoption if an adopter waits.

Reclaiming Animals

If you find that your cat or dog has been placed at Great River Rescue due to being picked up by Animal Control (or for any other reason), you may reclaim your animal at a cost of \$25.00 plus \$10.00 a day each day the animal is at our shelter. You can re-adopt your pet if our adoption costs are less than the stay. Proper I.D. is required to reclaim your pet. Owners are expected to provide proof of ownership at the time of reclamation which may include photos, vet records, local government registration, microchip registration, or Pedigree registration. Owners will be required to complete an application to adopt and demonstrate the ability to provide a stable home, a safe environment, necessary veterinary care and nutrition, basic training, identification and companionship for the pet.

Foster & Other Policies

Fostering Animals

 **Foster-to-Adopt:** Great River Rescue maintains a 100% spay/neuter policy. Animals are not spayed/neutered until deemed appropriate by a veterinarian. In addition, sometimes animals cannot get into the vet clinic due to scheduling conflicts for several weeks or longer. Therefore, if someone wishes to adopt an animal that has not been spayed/neutered yet, they are required to foster the animal until it is spayed/neutered. After the surgery, the foster parent has the first choice to officially adopt the animal. Animals in our foster-to-adopt program still belong to Great River Rescue and are placed in the care of a foster parent. Those foster care providers who are more than 30 miles away or want to use their own vet can choose to have their pet

spayed/neutered at the vet of their choice. However, they would then have to follow the guidelines of our spay/neuter agreement.

- 🐾 **Fostering Animals w/Medical or Behavior Issues:** Sometimes animals become sick or injured and would recover better in a home setting. Other times animals have behavior issues and might benefit from being in a home with someone who can work directly with the animal on those issues. Still other times the Humane Society has pregnant or nursing animals that need to be in a home where they can be attended to as necessary. For all of these occasions Great River Rescue may seek foster parents to temporarily provide care for animals. These parents do not generally intend to adopt the animal(s), but may still choose to do so after the temporary foster period is over.
- 🐾 **Short-Term Fostering:** Great River Rescue offers two short-term fostering programs: Sleepover/Weekend fostering, and Field Trip fostering. These programs are meant to get the animals out of the shelter and into the community, and to help us learn more about the animals' personalities and behavior tendencies.
- 🐾 **Pet Safe Housing Program:** Great River Rescue has teamed up with Northwoods Battered Women's Shelter to provide temporary foster care for clients of Northwoods.

Surrendering Animals

If you can no longer keep your cat or dog and wish to surrender it to Great River Rescue, please call us and let us know. We will want to know why you need to surrender the pet, and get as much information about your pet as possible. We take animals by appointment only and will set up an intake appointment with you and your pet. At that time, we will have you fill out intake paperwork, and get your pet vaccinated. We require a \$20 fee at the time the appointment is scheduled, and we ask for a \$50 surrender donation overall. The \$20 fee at the time of making the appointment is meant to help reduce the chances of no-shows. No-shows significantly affect our ability to manage the waiting list effectively and save companion animals. If you do not have \$20 at the time we call you to schedule an appointment, we will keep you on the list until such time as you can pay the fee. Anyone who does not show up for their surrender appointment will not be able to reschedule their appointment for a minimum of 30 days. The \$20 appointment fee is non-refundable.

We will accept animals depending on space and resource availability. You may also choose to bring items associated with your pet such as their pet bed, dishes, favorite toys, food etc. We will call you once we get to your name on our waiting list. We only go back as far as two months on the list. If you have been waiting two months or longer and have not been called, please call us again to make sure you remain on the list.

We do not accept dogs that are overly aggressive, show signs of kennel rage or bite. We do not accept feral or semi-feral cats or kittens that cannot be safely handled.

Great River Rescue hosts a Home To Home website. Home To Home allows pet owners to post their own pets for adoption and connect directly with potential adopters. Home To Home is a great option for pets that won't do well in the shelter setting, or if we can't take your pet in a timely fashion.

Why the Waiting List???

We understand that it can be frustrating when trying to surrender an animal to give it a better life and we are not able to take it in right away. We also understand that it may be confusing when we have so few adoptable pets at

times. At Great River Rescue, we practice something called "managed intake." This is a practice in which we take animals in by appointment only. We do this to ensure we have the time, energy, and resources to properly care for every animal that comes to our shelter. When we are able to effectively manage the intake of new animals we can help more of them in the long run. We also want people to know that while our adoption floor may not always be full with animals, our quarantine and intake areas might be. We have very limited space in our intake areas, and this sometimes prevent us from taking in a higher quantity of animals.

It is our goal to someday be able to take-in animals on the spot and provide for their needs no matter what the situation. In order to that we need to continue to grow responsibly. Thank you for being patient and understanding this policy. Of course, we want to help you responsibly care for and/or rehome your pet. Even if we can't take in an animal immediately, we are here to support you.

Stray Animals

If you find a stray animal and live within the city of Bemidji, please contact the city at 218-333-9111.

If you find a stray animal and live in Bemidji, Northern, Frohn, Grant Valley, Ten Lakes, or Port Hope Townships, or the city of Tenstrike, please contact animal control at 218-760-6651.

If you live outside of the areas listed above, Great River Rescue may be able to take the animal for a fee of \$50 depending upon space availability. If there is no space, you will be added to our waiting list.






Reporting Animal Cruelty, Neglect, or Abuse

Great River Rescue believes that all animals should be treated with dignity, care and respect. We take reports of cruelty, neglect, or abuse very seriously. However, we do not have the expertise, resources, or authority to investigate any claims. Please contact local law enforcement and the Minnesota Federate Humane Societies. Make sure you as much information about the situation as you can, especially the address where the incident(s) has occurred.

You can call the Minnesota Federated Humane Societies at 612-866-8663 or email them at mnfedhumanesocieties@gmail.com.

Volunteer Rules & Responsibilities

General Rules

-  The ultimate goal is to ensure that the animals are happy, healthy, and well-socialized. This improves their chances for adoption and reduces the amount of time they spend in the shelter.
-  Volunteers must be 16 years of age or over to work on their own. Volunteers aged 13 – 15 must be accompanied by an adult while volunteering.
-  Potential volunteers must fill out a volunteer application, sign a release and waiver of liability form and pay a non-refundable \$15 application fee. The fee helps cover the costs associated with conducting volunteer training sessions. Parents of kids ages 13 – 15 will only need to pay one fee for them and their child.
-  Volunteers must attend one of our volunteer training sessions or view our online training to begin work as a volunteer. Anyone who has not returned to volunteer for one year must re-take the training.
-  All volunteers agree to allow Great River Rescue to conduct a sex offender registry check on them in the interest of safety of all volunteers and staff.

- 🐾 Volunteers agree to keep information gathered in regards to Great River Rescue business confidential.
- 🐾 Volunteers are asked to schedule their shift in one-hour increments through our online bookable calendar. The calendar can be found on greatriverrescue.com at the volunteer page, or on our GiveGab profile page.

Animal Handling Rules

- 🐾 Volunteers must demonstrate responsible and kind treatment to animals.
- 🐾 All staff and volunteers are required to wash hands (use sanitizer) between visits with each animal.
- 🐾 All volunteers are responsible for understanding dog and cat body language. There are examples at the end of this booklet, near the volunteer computer, and on our GiveGab page.
- 🐾 Volunteers should be very careful when moving animals around the shelter. Only one animal can be handled at a time. Animals should not be moved into or through an area where there is another animal outside of its kennel, even if it is on a leash.
- 🐾 Volunteers must alert staff of animals with fleas, ear mites, runny eyes, sneezing, coughing, diarrhea, scratches, bites, etc.
- 🐾 Volunteers must alert staff of any animal behavior concerns observed. There posters later in this handbook to help you objectively describe the behaviors you see.

Volunteer Responsibilities & Privileges

- 🐾 All volunteers must check-in at the front desk before beginning their session.
- 🐾 ALL volunteers must log their hours. Volunteers should use Give Gab to log hours.
- 🐾 Volunteers will receive special “GRR Volunteer” key chains. These key chains should be worn in a visible place while volunteering.
- 🐾 Volunteers must report ANY injury to staff, no matter how minor.
- 🐾 Volunteers who are sick or have a sick pet at home should not come in to work.
- 🐾 Volunteers must adhere to the privileges allowed them based on their level (Level 1 vs Level 2 volunteers and Mod Squad). An outline of privileges is given later in the handbook.
- 🐾 Volunteers must not use any cleaning chemicals without staff permission or authorization otherwise.
- 🐾 Volunteers must not answer any phone without staff permission or authorization otherwise.
- 🐾 Volunteers should answer questions from customers the best they can. However, volunteers should be honest and not give information unless they know for certain. Volunteers can direct customers to GRR staff with questions.
- 🐾 All media inquiries should be referred to the Executive Director.
- 🐾 Volunteers should use online Social Media for positive commentary about GRR. Complaints and other concerns should be addressed directly with the Executive Director.
- 🐾 We prohibit the sale, use, possession, or transfer of a controlled substance or alcohol on our property. We prohibit smoking in the shelter. Smoking is allowed only outside the building at least 25 feet from the entrance. We do NOT allow smoking on the dog trails or in the dog runs. Deposit your butts in the proper receptacles.
- 🐾 Volunteers are not allowed to bring their personal pets to the shelter unless authorized by the Director.
- 🐾 Volunteers should park at the far ends of the lot and leave the spaces closest to the door for potential customers.
- 🐾 If a volunteer does not adhere to shelter policies and rules, our staff may ask the volunteer to re-locate or the volunteer may be dismissed.

Dress Code

The dress code may change depending on which part of the shelter the volunteer is working. For most activities, casual, professional attire is appropriate, and should include:

- 🐾 close-toed footwear that completely encloses the foot, worn with socks
- 🐾 long trousers

Not Appropriate Clothing:

- 🐾 tank tops
- 🐾 bare midriffs
- 🐾 torn or overly tight jeans
- 🐾 sandals
- 🐾 dangling jewelry
- 🐾 shirts with offensive logos or slogans.

Social Media Policy

Representing Great River Rescue

Anything that uses the name of Great River Rescue also represents the entire organization. A social media presence helps to build and shape Great River Rescue's brand. It is not a personal forum, but a place where the writer can use personal experiences and ideas to inspire and motivate people to support the mission of Great River Rescue. All your public comments on social media sites should reflect the organization's mission to serve the best interest of companion animals. When GRR employees or volunteers choose to use social media, they must be aware of the following guidelines because of their connection to Great River Rescue. Employees are required to be professional and courteous in their dealings with social media. The social media guidelines are as follows:

- 🐾 Employees and volunteers are personally responsible for what they post through social media.
- 🐾 When talking about Great River Rescue, the employee or volunteer should always identify his or her name and role. If applicable, the employee or volunteer should make it clear he or she is not representing the organization.
- 🐾 When employees or volunteers are posting personally, they should include a disclaimer stating that the posted content expresses the view of the individual, and not that of Great River Rescue.
- 🐾 In all cases, employees or volunteers should respect applicable law, including copyright and trademark laws.
- 🐾 Employees or volunteers should not disclose confidential or sensitive information, or use social media to insult, embarrass, or expose any organization, donor, co-worker, another GRR volunteer, or anyone associated with these parties.
- 🐾 Employees or volunteers should not cite or reference donors, other employees, volunteers, or supporters of GRR without proper consent.
- 🐾 Employees and volunteers may not use slurs, personal insults, obscenity, or engage in other conduct that is inconsistent with Great River Rescue's mission.
- 🐾 Do not pick fights with, violate the privacy of, or make offensive remarks about others.
- 🐾 Employees and volunteers should be encouraged to state facts accurately and cite appropriate sources.
- 🐾 Employees and volunteers should avoid using public social media sites, such as LinkedIn or Facebook, to

have informational-sharing exchanges with other Great River Rescue employees or volunteers. Personal email is a better forum for such exchanges.





GiveGab

Great River Rescue utilizes an online volunteer management system called GiveGab. Volunteers are required to create an account on GiveGab and log their hours on the system. GiveGab is useful not only for logging hours, but for receiving messages about volunteering, downloading important volunteer documents, and signing-up for various volunteer opportunities. Please create your account at Givegab.com and make sure you follow the Great River Rescue page.

Volunteer Levels















All levels answer to and report directly to the Director and are responsible for following ALL GRR rules.

Drop-In Volunteers: These are usually one time or rare volunteers.

-  May enter cat colony rooms and spend time with colony cats.
-  May visit cats and dogs in front of kennels, but may **not** take animals out of their kennels.
-  May **not** walk or socialize dogs without a trained volunteer or staff person with them.
-  May wash windows, sweep floors, clean up sidewalks or the yard.




Level One Volunteers (Green Level):

Volunteer must complete a Level one volunteer training. Level I volunteers receive a green GRR keychain.

-  May wash windows, sweep floors, clean up sidewalks or yard, put toys away, refill toilet paper or paper towels, organize collars and leashes, water flowers, shovel sidewalk, or do various other regular shelter tasks.
-  General cleaning, washing animal dishes and litter pans, and laundry, mopping floors, empty trash, clean bathroom, sanitize leashes and collars.
-  Socialize cats and dogs that are **not** otherwise labeled as Staff Only or Do Not Handle.
-  Walk dogs that are **not** otherwise labeled as Staff Only or Do Not Handle.
-  Scoop litter boxes or pick-up dog poop.
-  Handle animals at off-site locations for events and interact with the public after receiving information from an event leader or GRR director.
-  Transport animals as needed.
-  Takes pictures for advertising, website, and Petfinder.com use after receiving approval from the shelter's director or kennel coordinator.
-  Help put up posters/flyers around town.
-  Join fundraising committee, animal welfare committee, or other committees.
-  Help fold, address, and/or sort mailings.
-  Help with writing thank-you letters or write appreciation notes to donors to send with receipts.
-  Hold animals so staff can take pictures of new incoming animals for profile.
-  Mowing, trimming, repairs/maintenance such as carpentry or plumbing or electrical or maintaining trails.

Level Two Volunteers (Blue Level):

Must complete a Level 2 volunteer training. Volunteers must have completed the Level 1 training, and worked a minimum of 40 hours. Level II volunteers receive a blue GRR keychain.

-  May do all of green level activities PLUS...
-  Socialize animals in the quarantine areas, depending on their reason for quarantine.
-  Brush extremely matted cats/kittens or dogs & trim nails.

- 🐾 Assist with cleaning cat/dog kennel areas after volunteers are done with an animal. This includes disposing of animal hair, cleaning equipment used and returning the equipment to its proper area, spraying combs/brushes with bleach/disinfectant, and washing cat litter scoops.
- 🐾 Assist with feeding schedules as directed by staff.
- 🐾 Work with animals independently and teach obedience skills.
- 🐾 Walk and socialize dogs that have special behavior needs.
- 🐾 Give baths to dogs/puppies, brush them, disposing of any hair, clean equipment used, and clean the area after finishing. **Please check with staff before giving a bath.**
- 🐾 Advanced dog training/positive reinforcement training.
- 🐾 Follows extra sanitation procedures to work with sick/injured animals **with** staff.
- 🐾 Follows extra caution for working with the cleaning chemicals used on GRR property.
- 🐾 Has permission to enter the warehouse at all times.
- 🐾 Assist employees with daily cleaning of quarantine/medical rooms.
- 🐾 Administer basic medications and apply ointments as requested by shelter staff.
- 🐾 Assist qualified personnel with vaccinations and intake procedures.

Fully or Specially-Trained Volunteers:

Someone with specialty training for a certain area of need at the shelter or for working with animals.

- 🐾 Has talked with the Director and made specific arrangements to help with special shelter needs, some of which may include...
- 🐾 Create promotional materials like brochures, ads, posters, flyers, etc.
- 🐾 Assist with newsletter.
- 🐾 Grant writing.
- 🐾 Web design and management.
- 🐾 Social media networking.
- 🐾 Animal behavior assessments.
- 🐾 Veterinary consultations.
- 🐾 Pick up doggy bank money at various locations and deposit at the bank.
- 🐾 Any other reasonable, relative duties as may be assigned.

Mod Squad Members:

Mod Squad is a volunteer-driven dog behavior modification and training program. Prospective members must apply separately to join this program and attend special volunteer training sessions. Volunteers must have spent a minimum of 3 months volunteering for at least 6 hours every month before applying to the Mod Squad. Call the shelter or stop at the front desk for more information.

Volunteer of the Month

Each month, one volunteer is chosen for their exemplary service during the previous month. That volunteer is recognized on our volunteer board and given a certificate of appreciation on behalf of Great River Rescue. The volunteer will also be recognized on our Adopt-a-pet Ad in the Pioneer newspaper.

Volunteer Job Descriptions

Dog/Puppy Socialization

- 🐾 Choose an animal and be sure the animal is willing to interact with you. Make sure the animal is available (there is no “do not handle” card on the kennel) and **wash hands or use sanitizer** in between handling animals.
- 🐾 If taking the dog on a walk, make note of the dog you are taking on the sign-out sheet up front.
- 🐾 Appropriately take the animal out of the kennel, or go into the kennel for quiet petting time/brushing – only take out one dog at a time and make sure there aren’t other loose dogs in the area.

- 🐾 Put leash on the dog as soon as you open the kennel door. Request assistance if needed. Remember to wear older clothing. You're going to get furred, licked, slobbered, and jumped on.
- 🐾 Check through glass door to make sure it's safe to bring the dog through to go outside or a visitation room (check to make sure the visitation room is free of cats.)
- 🐾 If you will be going outside to large run kennel/play areas remember to bring toys/balls to play with or a brush. Or just enjoy a nice long walk on the trails. Make sure you pick up the poop.
- 🐾 If you get a dog from an outside pen, be very careful not to let a dog loose when using the gates. Return the dog to the same pen from which you retrieved it.
- 🐾 Ask for help putting on a Gentle Leader or Easy Walk Harness if you have a dog that likes to pull. This equipment will make your walk experience much better.
- 🐾 Remember not to yell angrily or yank on leashes. Many of these dogs/pups have never been on walks, worn collars, been taught to play or follow rules, and may have been neglected or even abused. Do NOT look directly into the face of an animal you do not know yet. That is considered a challenge. However, you may need to be assertive with the dog to better get his/her attention.
- 🐾 If you know how to properly teach obedience; try your hand at teaching manners like sit, stay, off, leave it, etc.
- 🐾 Above all make it fun and loving for the animals and for you!
- 🐾 Watch for any medical needs: sneezing, runny nose, limping, cuts, diarrhea, etc, and report it to shelter staff.
- 🐾 If you notice any positive or negative behavioral traits, let shelter staff know about it. Please describe the behavior objectively using language from the poster later on in this handbook.
- 🐾 When you are done, look to be sure there are no cats present before going back through to the dog/puppy areas.
- 🐾 Entice the animal with a treat to get back into kennel if necessary and make sure the water bowl is full. **Make sure all gates are locked and kennel door is latched.**
- 🐾 **If you're going to take another animal out, wash hands with sanitizer.**
- 🐾 Did we mention thank you?! Hope you have fun!!

Cat/Kitten Socialization

- 🐾 Choose an animal, be sure the animal is willing to interact with you, make sure the animal is available (there is no "do not handle" card on the kennel) and **wash hands with sanitizer.**
- 🐾 Appropriately take the animal out of kennel or cat room or you may stay with a cat already in a cat room. Only take out one cat at a time.
- 🐾 Take the animal to a visitation room. Request assistance if needed. Remember to wear older clothing. You're going to get furred, licked, slobbered, and jumped on.
- 🐾 Check to make sure the front room is free of other cats. Only take out one cat at a time, unless taking kittens that are kenneled together.
- 🐾 Remember to bring toys/balls to play with or a brush. Remember not to yell angrily. Many of these cat/kittens have never been taught to play or follow rules, or have been neglected or even abused.
- 🐾 If you know how to properly teach obedience; try your hand at teaching manners like "no jumping" or climbing up legs, and teach them to play with toys NOT to chew or "play" with fingers, hands, and skin.
- 🐾 Pay attention to the cat's body language. If the cat is getting anxious, scared, or tired, it might be time to return to the kennel or ask for help.
- 🐾 Above all make it fun and loving for the animals and for you!
- 🐾 Watch for any medical needs: sneezing, runny nose, limping, cuts, etc, and report it to staff.
- 🐾 If you notice any positive or negative behavioral traits, notify shelter staff. Please describe the behavior objectively using language from the poster later on in this handbook.
- 🐾 Spend as much time as you want, but please allow potential adopters to use the visitation room if they want. When you are done, look to be sure there are no dogs present before going back through to the lobby areas.
- 🐾 Entice the animal with a treat to get back into the kennel if necessary and make sure the water bowl is full. **Make sure kennel door is latched.**
- 🐾 When returning a cat to its cat room, make sure you do not let other cats in or out of the room.
- 🐾 **If you're going to take another animal out, wash hands with sanitizer.**
- 🐾 Did we mention thank you?! Hope you have fun!!

Board/Committee Membership

As a nonprofit organization Great River Rescue depends on its volunteer Board of Directors for guidance and governance. Our Board of Directors creates and reviews policy, provides fiscal oversight, helps raise needed funds, and makes important organizational decisions. The Board is made up of people just like you; community members who believe in our mission of saving and rehoming lost, abandoned, and unwanted companion animals. We are looking for people from all different backgrounds and a variety of skill sets – you don't have to be directly involved in animal welfare or even have pets of your own!

As a Board Member, you will need to be available for monthly board meetings and you will be encouraged to help with special projects, and fundraising tasks. However, if you are not ready to become a Board Member, you can always join a committee. We have several committees such as the executive committee, fundraising committee, and animal welfare committee. Please thoughtfully consider becoming a Board Member or a committee member of Great River Rescue. You will be making a big difference for the animals, and for the community!

Why Become a Board Member with Great River Rescue?

- 🐾 You will be serving the premiere companion animal adoption center for Bemidji and the surrounding area
- 🐾 You will be part of a successful and growing nonprofit agency
- 🐾 You will be making a positive impact on the community
- 🐾 Your experience on our board will enrich your resume
- 🐾 You will meet lots of interesting people who also care about companion animal welfare
- 🐾 You will learn lots of skills such as how to read financial statements, and how to be diplomatic!
- 🐾 Serving as a Board Member is a great way to give back

If you would like to serve as a volunteer member of Great River Rescue's Board of Directors, please call us at 218-751-7910 or email us at director@greatriverrescue.com.

Thank you!

Special Volunteer Tasks

These are tasks may require special skills or training, or just extra time and attention. They are all important tasks for which we need help. Please contact the Director if you can help with any of these tasks.

Driving

- 🐾 picking up doggy banks – drive to various locations to pick up money from our doggy bank jars around town
- 🐾 transporting animals – help transport animals to and from vet appointments, or help transfer animals between shelters

Foster Care

- 🐾 being a foster care provider – take home an animal(s) for a period of time and care for the animal(s); this is usually for pregnant or nursing mothers, injured animals, or animals in need of special attention

Community Outreach

- 🐾 attending community events – attend local events as a representative of the shelter to promote GRR and its activities

- 🐾 sending thank you letters - send out thank you cards to our donors and other supporters that show our appreciation and helps us build relationships
- 🐾 networking with businesses & community organizations - reach out to other local businesses to help us build relationships and obtain needed resources (such as raffle prizes for fundraisers)

Online and Other Media

- 🐾 update social media sites – promote GRR on our social media platforms like Facebook, Twitter, & Instagram
- 🐾 update the shelter’s website - keep the shelter’s website updated and organized
- 🐾 photographer/videographer – quality photographs and videos of the animals are always welcome, as these materials help us promote the animals through online media
- 🐾 shelter newsletter – write articles about animal welfare, shelter happenings, happy adoptions, and more for our quarterly newsletter

Outdoor

- 🐾 lawn care – mow the grass in the front/back lawns, in the dog runs, and in the walking trails; trim weeds around the buildings and fencing
- 🐾 shovel and clear snow- shovel snow as needed during the winter months and/or clear snow with a plow if possible

Coordinators

- 🐾 Foster Home Coordinator - keep foster home files updated and organized; contact foster home providers as needed
- 🐾 Volunteer Coordinator - track volunteer hours, keep in-touch with volunteer base, and work with the director to maintain a vibrant volunteer program

Committees and Board of Directors

- 🐾 become a committee member - committees include finance, nominating, fundraising, animal welfare, facilities, and public education; committee members meet regularly to plan and make recommendations in regards to the committee’s service area
- 🐾 become a board member - board members oversee the governance of the organization by setting policy, as well as help ensure the financial health of the organization; board meetings are normally held once per month on a weekday evening

Fundraising

One of the most important aspects of a non-profit organization is fundraising. Great River Rescue is funded by donations and fundraisers. To have profitable and successful fundraisers, we need volunteers willing to work hard and come forward with new ideas that can generate desperately needed revenue. No one position is more important than any other.

Volunteers interested in helping with fundraisers please contact the Fundraising Committee through the GRR Director. Any and all help is needed and very much appreciated! Some of our popular fundraisers include: Adopt-a-Kennel, Memorial/Tribute, Paws to Recycle, Doggy Banks, Memberships, Furr Bowl, Santa Paws, Fall Harvest Dinner, and the Emergency Medical Fund.

Volunteers may be eligible to claim deductions on their tax returns for travel time to and from volunteer assignments or for donations. Please check with your tax professional for more information. Records of volunteer time may be printed out from our system. Please make requests to our GRR Director.

DOGGIE LANGUAGE

starring Boogie the Boston Terrier



ALERT



SUSPICIOUS



ANXIOUS



THREATENED



ANGRY



"PEACE!"
look away/head turn



STRESSED
yawn



STRESSED
nose lick



"PEACE!"
sniff ground



"RESPECT!"
turn & walk away



"NEED SPACE"
whale eye



STALKING



STRESSED
scratching



STRESS RELEASE
shake off



RELAXED
soft ears, blinky eyes



"RESPECT!"
offer his back



FRIENDLY & POLITE
curved body



FRIENDLY



"PRETTY PLEASE"
round puppy face



"I'M YOUR LOVEBUG"
belly-rub pose



"HELLO I LOVE YOU!"
greeting stretch



"I'M FRIENDLY!"
play bow



"READY!"
prey bow



"YOU WILL FEED ME"



CURIOUS
head tilt



HAPPY
(or hot)



OVERJOYED
wiggly



"MMMM...."



"I LOVE YOU,
DON'T STOP"

Objective Terms to Describe Dog Behavior

Eyes

- Blinks
- Looks away
- Open wide
- Pupils dilated
- Relaxed
- Round
- Squints
- Stares
- Whale eye

Ears

- Back
- Forward
- Neutral
- Relaxed

Tail

- Broad, wide wags
- Held tight to body/tucked
- High, fast wags
- Low
- Neutral, at spine level
- Neutral, hanging
- Small wags, tail tip wags

Mouth

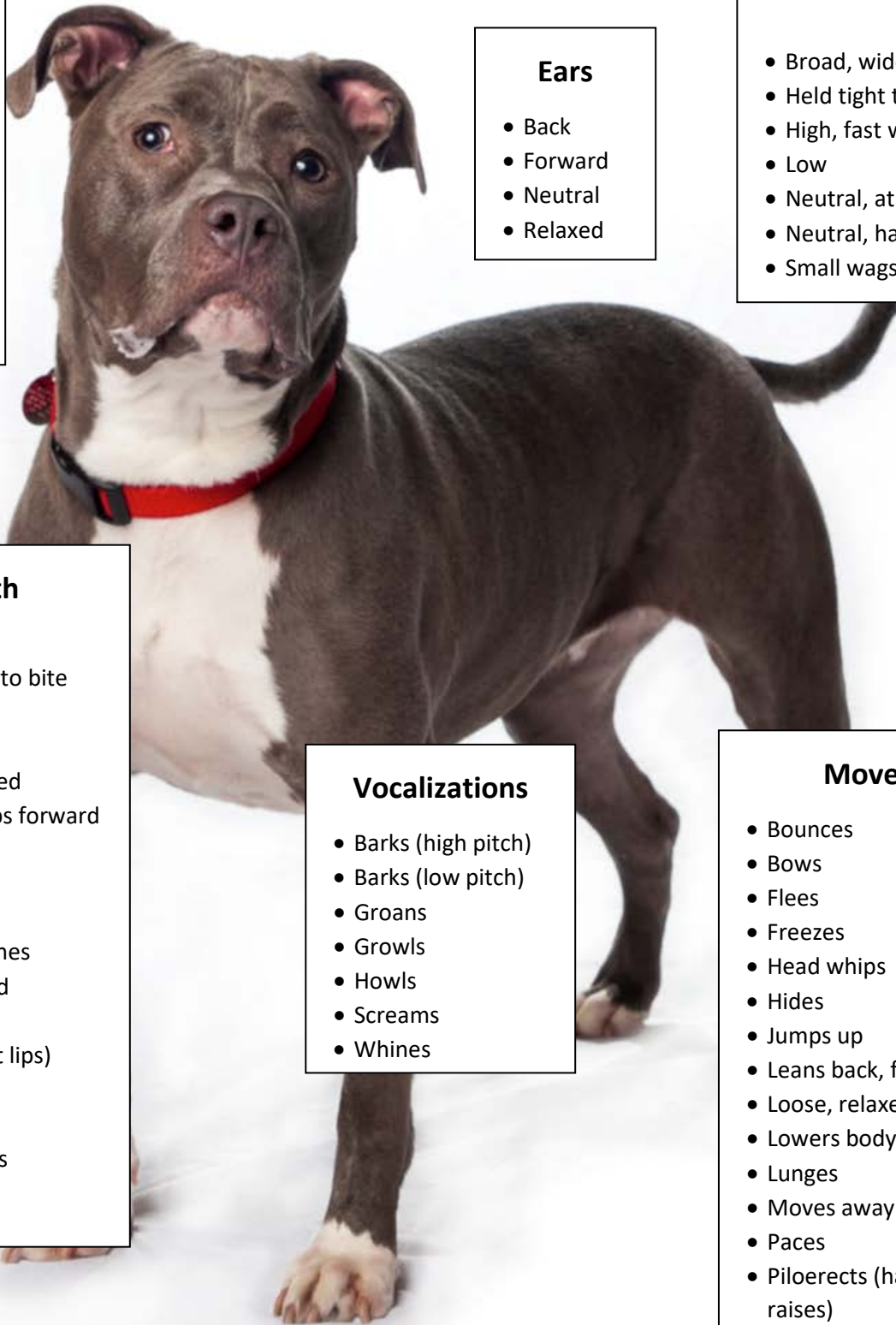
- Air snaps
- Bites or tries to bite
- Chatters
- Closed
- Closed, relaxed
- Corners of lips forward or back
- Licks lips
- Lifts lip
- Muzzle punches
- Open, relaxed
- Pants
- Pursed (short lips)
- Salivates
- Shows teeth
- Softly mouths
- Yawns

Vocalizations

- Barks (high pitch)
- Barks (low pitch)
- Groans
- Growls
- Howls
- Screams
- Whines

Movement

- Bounces
- Bows
- Flees
- Freezes
- Head whips
- Hides
- Jumps up
- Leans back, forward, or into
- Loose, relaxed, neutral
- Lowers body or head
- Lunges
- Moves away or toward
- Paces
- Piloerects (hair on spine raises)
- Pulls back or forward on leash
- Puts paws on
- Rubs against



CAT LANGUAGE



INTERESTED



FRIENDLY



ATTENTIVE



RELAXED



TRUSTING



FRIENDLY, RELAXED



CONTENT



CONFLICTED, CAUTIOUS



PLAYFUL



EXCITED



"THIS IS MINE"



ANXIOUS



PREDATORY



WORRIED



FRIGHTENED



THREATENED



TERRIFIED



SUPER TERRIFIED



IRRITATED



DISGUSTED

Objective Terms to Describe Dog Behavior

Ears

- Back
- Flat
- Forward
- Neutral

Eyes

- Almond-shaped
- Blinks
- Closed
- Looks away
- Open wide
- Pupils dilated
- Relaxed
- Round
- Squints
- Stares

Mouth

- Bites or tries to bite
- Licks lips
- Open, showing teeth
- Panting
- Tongue flicks
- Whiskers forward
- Whiskers splayed wide

Vocalizations

- Chatters
- Chirps
- Growls
- Hisses
- Purrs
- Screams
- Spits
- Trills



Tail

- End flicks
- Loose, relaxed
- Question-mark
- Slaps
- Straight up
- Taps
- Tucked under or around body
- U-shape downward
- Up over back

Movement

- Creeps
- Freezes
- Lays on side
- Leans into
- Low posture
- Piloerects (hair along spine raises)
- Relaxed
- Sits
- Skin twitches
- Tense
- Trembles
- Whips head

Paws

- Bats
- Claws in
- Claws out
- Kneads, "Makes biscuits"
- Neutral
- Reaches gently
- Scratches
- Swats
- Touches gently
- Tucked under body