

New projects for Old Fella

By Michael Griffin Intern



Richard Daniels makes friends with a cautious dog who was abandoned at the Waynesboro animal shelter.

Old Fella may be Waynesboro's current top dog, but that doesn't mean he or his owners are resting on their laurels.

Old Fella, who was rescued from a lonely death by Richard and Sue Daniels a few months

ago, is set to be the Grand Marshal of the Pooch Parade during Waynesboro's Dog Day of Summer on July 20.

"He's a symbol of all the old dogs out there," said Daniels.

Old Fella was also the star at the First Annual Old Fella Rally held in Branson, Missouri June 24. Forty-five people came to the rally and raised about \$500 for Waynesboro's animal shelter. Plans are already underway for next year's rally.

Old Fella's story has drawn people out from all over the United States and even Canada many of the Daniels' fellow RV-ers have even donated money and medicine toward Old Fella's recovery.

"He brings out the good in everyone," said Richard. "People are looking for something to draw them together."

And now that Old Fella is back in the pink, Richard and Sue are looking to help others like him. First up is improving conditions at the Waynesboro animal shelter.

The money raised at the rally will be used to clean up the dogs at the animal shelter, taking them to the animal hospital and giving them the shots they need in order to be adopted. Mayor Jesse Stone has approved a no-kill order for animals at the shelter until the money runs out.

The week before the no-kill order was put into effect, nine dogs were put down when homes couldn't be found for them.

Richard and Sue recently went to the Waynesboro animal shelter, an out-of-the-way shanty behind the water treatment plant off Woodland Drive.

Three dogs were languishing in the kennels, including an energetic puppy given up when he couldn't stay at his owner's apartment. There was also a friendly tan adult abandoned when his owners moved and a scared pit bull whose owner simply didn't want him anymore.

There was a question whether Tiger, the pit bull, would be unadoptable because of his breed's unfriendliness. But he warmed up to Richard when he saw him petting the other dogs.

Minutes after checking out the dogs, Daniels had scheduled exams for the dogs with Dr. Jim Alexander, and the city arranged transportation for them to be taken to the animal hospital.

"We're gonna save these dogs," said Daniels, who hopes to make a push for adopting the dogs at the Dog Day of Summer.

And he should have a large crowd, considering that former Congressman Max Burns is set to be a judge at the event.

The big problem is apathy, said Daniels. He related the story of a woman who was about to leave a litter of puppies at a dumpster. When she saw that someone was watching her, she took the puppies back and drove away.

"Every time we see a stray dog at a dumpster, or on the road, and

do nothing, we become part of the problem," said Daniels, petting a comfortable-looking Old Fella. "There are blessings we sometimes miss because we don't take action."