

Did you know?

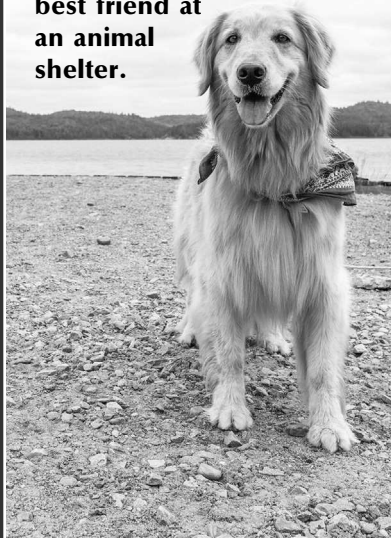
The Humane Society of the United States and the American Pet Products Association say 20 percent of the 83.3 million owned dogs in 2012 were adopted from animal shelters.

Of the 95.6 million owned cats in the United States that same year, 26 percent were adopted from animal shelters. With between six and eight million animals entering shelters each year, adoption should be one of the first considerations for people looking to bring pets into their homes.

In the Florence area, people are encouraged to check out Oregon Coast Humane Society for adoptable dogs and cats. The humane society, at 2840 Rhododendron Drive, is a no-kill, nonprofit shelter run by a dedicated staff and community volunteers.

For more information about pet adoption, volunteering or donating, go to www.oregoncoasthumanesociety.org.

People can join millions of other Americans in finding their new best friend at an animal shelter.



TRAVELING TODAY WITH PETS IN TOW

Many pet owners now take their companion animals along with them when they visit family, head home for the holidays, travel for business or go on vacation. Traveling with pets can be enjoyable, and more and more pet owners are bringing their companion animals along for the ride. TripAdvisor, the premier travel community resource, annually polls travelers about traveling with pets. Fifty-three percent of respondents travel with their animal companions.

Anyone who has traveled with pets understands the impact that dogs, cats, fish, birds and other animals can have on travel plans. Accommodations for the animals must be made in order to travel with peace of mind, and some people even forgo vacations when they cannot find accommodations for their pets.

Many hotels have pet-friendly rooms on lower floors near walking areas. Even many restaurants — where pet hair and food may seem like an unlikely combination — are open to allowing travelers dine with their pets. Animals may be allowed to sit in patio dining areas, and some restaurants even allow pets indoors.

Those who choose to travel with pets can heed some precautionary tips and plan ahead.

- The American Kennel Club recommends a veterinary visit prior to taking pets on extended trips. Make sure all vaccinations are current and ask for a copy of health certificates/records.

- Invest in a carrier or crate large enough for your pet. The crate should be large enough for the pet to stand, turn and lie down. A crate or carrier can keep pets secure in the car and may be recommended in pet-friendly hotels.

- Airlines may allow small pets to ride in the cabin in a carrier under your seat. Larger pets will have to ride in the cargo hold. Try to book a direct flight, so that the pet will only have to board and disembark the plane once. Notify airline personnel when you are traveling with a pet. Provide food and water for a long flight.

- Confirm the rules at hotels concerning pet stays. Recognize that you may



More and more, dogs, cats and other transportable pets are joining family trips.

have to pay fees when bringing pets into a hotel. Bring along your pet's food and water, as unfamiliar foods or water from unfamiliar dishes may cause stomach problems. Try to keep your pet quiet and be considerate of others who may not be animal lovers.

- Keep identification on your pet that includes your mobile phone number should the pet get lost. Even if pets are microchipped, it's important to make sure they wear collars imprinted with their owners' names, phone numbers, email addresses and any additional relevant contact information. Make sure the phone numbers listed on pets' collars are the numbers where you can be reached while on vacation and not just landline home phone numbers.

- International travel may require a different set of procedures depending on where you are traveling. Some countries do not allow pets to visit, while others may require pets to be quarantined for a predetermined period of time before they're allowed to travel within the country. You also may be able to apply for a pet passport to make international travel go smoothly.

Traveling with animals in tow is not as simple as beckoning the family pet to the car when it's time to hit the open road.

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals notes that travel can be stressful for both pet owners and their pets. To help ease that

stress and ensure all members of the family, including those covered in fur, have a great a time on vacation, here are some tips for taking animals on road trips:

- Prepare your pet. In the weeks before the trip, pet owners should start to prepare their pets for the trip by taking them on short drives. Lengthen each of these mini trips so you can build up a travel tolerance in your pet and acquaint the animal with car travel before vacation begins.

- Purchase appropriate travel gear. Crating pets during road trips is possible without making pets uncomfortable. It's also important to secure the crate so it does not slide

around in case of sudden stops or when driving on curvy roads. Pet owners who don't want to put their pets in crates should keep pets harnessed in the back seat at all times, never letting the animal hang its head out the window while the car is in motion.

- Pack some travel items. Human beings tend to bring snacks and beverages along on road trips, and such items are necessary for pets, too. Pack water, food and some snacks for pets, but never feed them in a moving car. Take some time to feed pets at rest stops. The ASPCA advises feeding pets a light meal three to four hours before beginning the trip and serving pets only bottled water to reduce the risk of stomach problems. In addition to food and water, pack some toys to keep pets occupied during the trip. Such toys can also calm animals' anxiety by providing them with something familiar.

- Do not leave pets alone in the car. Leaving pets alone in a car is unsafe no matter what the temperature is outside. Pets are susceptible to heatstroke when left in hot cars and can freeze to death when left in cars during winter. When planning your road trip, confirm that any hotels you plan to stay in accept pets.

Family vacations may not be complete without the family pets joining in the fun. But it's important for pet owners to plan ahead when taking their furry friends on vacation. — *Metro*