

QAWS sponsored dog walk to mark fire disaster anniversary

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Some of the dogs currently up for adoption from QAWS. Some have had difficult starts to their lives, while others have simply been abandoned. Friday’s dog walk will give prospective owners the chance to meet some of the dogs at the shelter.



By Peter Townson
Staff Reporter

Qatar Animal Welfare Society (QAWS) is holding a sponsored dog walk and barbeque event next weekend to mark the first anniversary of the devastating fire at the shelter in which a number of stray and rescued animals were killed.

The event will take place on September 3, and is open to anyone who wishes to support animal welfare in Qatar.

“We are looking forward to seeing everyone at the sponsored walk to mark the first anniversary of the fire and to remember all

the animals that lost their lives,” said Kelly Allen, adding: “Our hope is that this event will help us to cover September’s running costs and enable us to make a payment towards our escalating veterinary fees.”

Around 80 dogs are up for adoption from QAWS, and they will be taking part in the sponsored walk.

Other animals at the shelter up for adoption include 40 cats and kittens, three rabbits and six hamsters, and all money raised from the event will be going towards the care of the shelter’s group of animals and its running costs.

Dog walkers should meet at the QAWS shelter at 4.30pm when dogs will be assigned before the walk which begins at 5pm.

“With the extreme temperatures and it being the holy month of Ramadan, we are limiting the walk to just 30 minutes,” she explained, adding: “Everyone is more than welcome to join us back at the shelter for a BBQ with food available on sale from sunset.”

The event will also serve as a chance to educate people about owning pets – a mission about which QAWS is passionate and works towards at every opportunity.

“Members of the community who do not wish to take part in the walk are still welcome to come down for the BBQ and to see the animals - the day will be a good opportunity for children to see the full responsibilities involved with owning a pet and allow them to see the routines of feeding and cleaning,” said Allen.

Kelly Allen explained that the event has also been organised to thank the community for their support following the devastating fire last year, and to call on more assistance in helping QAWS continue to carry out their work here.

“Due to the continued support of the community, we have been able to re-establish ourselves with a far superior purpose built kennel block accommodating greater numbers of animals,” she said.

“Thanks to the generosity of SpaceMaker, our cats, kittens and puppies all now have dedicated housing and they have enabled us to create group housing units,” she noted, adding: “Without Byrne, who supply us with all our power, we would have had to closed down as in this climate, housing animals without air-conditioning is not acceptable.”

“Through various fund-raisers throughout the year, we have been able to cover the costs of these new facilities on top of our monthly outgoings,” she added.

QAWS have been operating in Qatar for more than five years, and now have a dedicated following of volunteers who often visit the shelter to offer their help walking dogs and caring for the animals there.

However, the demand for help from QAWS continues to mirror the growth of the population in Qatar, and they are always looking forward to recruiting more enthusiasts to join their efforts.

“Although QAWS has a new facility, we are still at full capacity and are turning away dozens of animals each week,” she pointed out, referring to the large numbers of pets which continue to be abandoned here, especially during the summer months when many families relocate and do not take their animals with them.

In these cases it is often left to QAWS to pick up the pieces, but the group simply cannot cope with the number of animals that need their help.

“Our hope for the future is to gain charity status which will enable us to build a state of the art facility with a far larger capacity,” noted Allen.

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