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## **Professional Photographers Give Time and Talent to Promote Pet Adoptions**

**WEST OLIVE, MI** – Pictures really are worth a thousand words. That's why three local, professional photographers have committed significant time and talent to helping Harbor Humane Society showcase its homeless pets.

Jennifer Waters of [Grumpy Pups Pet Photography](#), Brennigan Burnett of [\[bg\] Photography Studios](#) and Kate Jonkman of [Photography by Kate Elisabeth](#) volunteered more than 250 hours in April alone, taking portraits of animals currently living at the shelter. In addition to uploading the photos on the popular animal website PetFinder, new adopters will receive a copy of their pet's portrait as a thank you gift at the time of adoption.

"What moves me is that every one of these pets has its own personality," says Jennifer Waters. "I think it's easy for people to look at rows upon rows of animals in cages and think that these are the ones who are broken or bad. But when you take each one out of its kennel and spend some time with it, that's when you can see the potential each pet has."

The photographers spend approximately an hour with every animal in order to get just the right shot. Photographing animals is challenging -- especially so with a pet currently living in the stressful shelter environment.

"Having professional photographs of animals can bring out the best, most attractive qualities they hold," says Brennigan Burnett. "Whether beauty that's found in distinct coat patterns or blazing eyes, a playful cat rolling around on her blanket or a dog's silly tongue flapping out the side of his mouth. I feel so blessed to be able to help give a family to an animal who desperately desires to be loved again."



The photography project is ongoing and the Humane Society is already seeing the number of inquiries and adoptions rise.

“When people see a professional photo of an animal that captures their beauty and personality, they are more motivated to come and see them in person,” says Sue Ann Culp, Director of Development.

At the recent Pet Expo held April 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> at the DeltaPlex in Grand Rapids, Harbor Humane covered a wall 16 feet long and 6 feet high with these animal portraits. During the two day event, they received over 30 adoption applications with more arriving daily. Adopters are citing the photos displayed at the event and online as a significant reason they are choosing to visit the shelter.

Harbor Humane Society cares for over 5,000 animals yearly, many of whom are sick, abandoned or abused. The organization provides medical care, food, shelter, behavioral training and adoption services, and houses 250-300 animals daily with another 100 in foster care. They depend on public donations to fund their \$1 Million yearly budget and the help of 480 active volunteers. To learn more, visit [www.harborhumane.org](http://www.harborhumane.org).