



UDRUGA ZA ZAŠTITU ŽIVOTINJA

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TEN YEARS MARKED WITH REGISTRATION OF SHELTER

Čakovec, 11. February, 2011

Animal Welfare Organization “Prijatelji” is celebrating ten years of existence. It was founded in March 2001 with the aim of promoting animal rights and caring after abandoned and stray animals.

From 2001 to this day our organization has managed to find temporary or permanent homes for thousands of abandoned animals from all over Međimurje county. During 2009 we found homes for 286 dogs and 39 cats. During 2010 294 dogs and cats were welcomed to the shelter, and new homes were found for 282 animals. All animals were vaccinated and microchipped.

We would like to mention that we are one of the rare registered shelters **that do not euthanize animals after sixty days.** We try to find new homes for all animals and we try to secure best possible living conditions until they are given permanent homes. We are especially glad that in the last few years we managed to find new homes for some of the old timers in the shelter, even though they were ten years old or older. Happiness in their eyes is a motivation for us to carry on doing our job, because every living being has equal right to life, no matter how old they are.

At this moment the shelter is looking after 232 dogs and 12 cats.

During 2010 we were faced with a huge challenge of having to renovate the shelter in accordance with the conditions of the Shelters Act. Since 1 January 2007, with a transitional period of 2 years, all existing shelters and pounds have to go through a process of new registration in accordance with the new Act. Without that registration they can no longer collect and look after abandoned animals.

We needed to build the quarantine and new veterinary cages, renovate the kitchen and the office, make a storage room and build a two meter high, 1600 meter long fence around the entire shelter. We replaced the old roof on the house where the kitchen, quarantine, food storage room and office are located. We placed water pipes under all areas of the shelter and installed electricity. We put new metal plates on all stalls in the shelter, and over the hallways and part of the yard. We made new yards and new stalls for dogs. In early February we received the certificate by the Ministry of Agriculture, Fishery and Rural Development which verifies that our shelter meets the legal conditions for shelters.

Despite the great economic crisis, thanks to our hard work, goal-orientated thinking, great perseverance, collective work and donations we managed to achieve that which at the beginning of the year seemed almost impossible. Now we are really pleased to be able to say that **we are only the second non-profit run shelter in Croatia** which managed to meet the conditions for registration and get the aforementioned certificate.

We would like to thank all the people who helped us, all volunteers, and members, the media, veterinarians, veterinary inspectors, and companies for their great effort and donations which helped

us achieve the goal – registration of the shelter. We are especially thankful to the City of Čakovec for giving us the land for the shelter and for their support in this year, hardest for us so far, when, despite great crisis and recession, the impossible became possible. We are extremely thankful to our friends from the organization Tierwald Ungarn and Tierschutzprojekt Kroatien from Germany, to the Huerbin family from Switzerland, and to the Sprenger family from Austria. Without their help we hardly would have accomplished all of this.

We also thank Međimurje county and all local authorities that supported us. We still have to align the work of the shelter with the Animal Welfare Act, which obliges local authorities to finance shelters. Therefore we expect their support in the future, also.

In 2011 we will call for a solution of stray dogs in Roma settlements, whose population is currently estimated at 1000.

We have many new and beautiful plans for the future, especially those regarding the education of the public on proper care after companion animals and animal rights in general. Regarding the shelter, we would like to make a lawn where the dogs could run, replace the old fences in the yards and cover a part of each yard to secure some dry space where animals could, except in their kennels, stay during bad weather.

Most of all, we would like to secure best possible conditions for our proteges during their stay in the shelter, and also to find them best possible homes.

We invite all citizens who would like to volunteer for us to give us a call and help us.

We hope that we will continue to have and receive support for our work until we achieve our final goal – no stray dogs and cats in the cities and villages of Međimurje county.

Members of Animal Welfare Organization “Prijatelji”