

March 23, 2009

Sally Ellertson  
Public Information Officer  
141 West Renfro  
Burleson, Texas 76028-4261  
817-447-5400 ext. 286  
F: 817-447-6885  
[sellertson@burlesontx.com](mailto:sellertson@burlesontx.com)  
[www.burlesontx.com](http://www.burlesontx.com)

Being in an animal shelter can be a traumatizing experience for a dog. Playing soothing music to calm the four-legged charges' fears is a new concept touted by Through A Dog's Ear.

Animal Control Supervisor Michelle Spradlin heard about the program in January. She signed up for Through A Dog's Ear, which is free to animal shelters and other advocacy and dog rescue groups. The program offers two hours of clinically tested classical piano music in a two-CD set. All the shelter worker has to do is turn the music on and walk away.

After more than a month of using the music with the shelter dogs, the Burleson Animal Shelter began making that music available, free of charge, to those who adopt dogs. The CD that is included in the adopter's packet is one hour of classical music.

Spradlin said behavioral issues are the most common reasons that dogs are released to the City's animal shelter. The issues can vary from separation anxiety, thunderstorm anxiety, fear of fireworks, excitement when visitors arrive, boarding anxiety, and stress caused by changes in the dog owners' lives.

"We saw a noticeable difference," Spradlin said of the dogs' behavior. "The dogs would bark when they first came into the shelter, but they would calm down after that."

The music is designed to reduce the stress of not only the dogs in the shelter, but the shelter staff and even visitors.

The theory behind the program, and the supporting research, is that music, particularly classical music, reduces canine anxiety. Providing that music to adopters to take home with their new family member also helps with the transition of the dog from the shelter to the home, thus reducing the number of times a dog is returned to the shelter.



Maverick is an Australian Shepherd who is up for adoption at the Burleson Animal Shelter

"The good news is that in the two months since the shelter started using the music, only one dog that was adopted out has been returned," Spradlin said. "That doesn't mean the music is a cure-all for behavior issues, but it seems to have an impact on the dogs when they are here at the shelter."

For more information about this release, call the public information office at 817-447-5400, ext. 286.