

Recently in the Plainfield Enterprise there was a letter to the editor questioning humane society adoption fees. The writer may have been looking at a pet at HSP, we don't know, but complained that \$600 was too much for a shelter animal. IF they were looking at an HSP animal, a \$600 price tag would have been for a puppy (which would have been their choice, there are cheaper alternatives) and included Revolution Heartworm preventative (which again was her choice, there are less expensive alternatives).

Medical Expenses Adoption donation

Below is a chart that shows our average medical expenses vs our adoption donations.

	Medical Expenses	Adoption donation
Dogs (all ages)	Average \$300 to \$400	\$59 to \$399
Cats (all ages)	Average \$200 to \$300	\$29 to \$199

You can see that we typically lose money on almost every adoption. There are a few exceptions where we will ask for a higher than \$399 adoption donation for a purebred or toy/small breed puppy, but that's rare and when we do, the money is used to pay the bills for the older dogs.

While we require Heartworm preventative to be purchased, it is prescription medication and NOT an adoption fee that HSP receives. For a responsible pet owner, heartworm preventative is NOT optional, and while it IS a cost of pet ownership which is required yearly for the life of the pet, it is not an adoption fee and is misleading to suggest that it is.

Our overall finances are pretty simple with 90% of our income going to medical care for our animals. Our medical expenses are not only for routine care, but for treatment, which as a no kill shelter we provide for curable illnesses. In kill facilities, these animals are euthanized which is cheaper than treatment.

Also, as a private shelter we are not required to make our finances public, but we do, and they can be seen on our website at <http://www.helpsavepets.org/index-3.html>

It's also important to note that all our pets are altered with up to date vaccinations, tests and treatment for worms/parasites and a microchip. When compared to pets available at county or municipal shelters for \$100 to \$150 that do not have all these veterinary services included, our dogs are a good value and an HSP dog that costs \$59 or \$99 is even less than a shelter dog.

Puppies, being our most expensive pet, are generally NOT available at the county or municipal shelter and to compare our puppy prices to their prices is not valid. Puppies are however, available at Petland, Puppy Love and other pet stores for in excess of \$1,000 with NO veterinary services included. There is no sane reason (other than a desire for insolvency) for us to offer puppies at a huge loss, and the \$399 we do charge just barely covers our expenses, and still the puppies FLY out the door at that price. You can find Craigslist ads and breeder ads for puppies a low as \$300, but again, no veterinary services provided, so once you add veterinary services, the total price tag is over \$600. Kittens, while free in the country, require about \$200 of veterinary care for vaccines and altering, more if they have parasites. A \$199 kitten from HSP is a very good deal.

And lastly, in terms of subsidies, we receive none. We are private and not a government agency (like a county shelter) so we receive no funding from any county or municipality. In addition, the Humane Society of the United States does very little funding of local Humane Societies. This article http://www.insidebayarea.com/columns/ci_15152387 gives a good explanation of how the Humane Society of the United States uses its income.