

# Animal shelter honored nationally

## Animal rescue groups tour facility

By VICTORIA MANLEY

STAFF WRITER

WATSONVILLE — The Humane Animal Care Services facility on Airport Boulevard has been honored as the most outstanding design for small city shelters, a little more than one year after its grand opening.

Bill Meade, vice president of the shelter and overseer of the 2,800-square-foot shelter, said he is pleased with the honor, given by Doing Things for Animals, a non-profit organization that serves animal shelters nationwide.

Meade will make a presentation at the organization's national conference of animal shelter directors in San Francisco next month, highlighting the design and various features of the facility.

He participated in the design of the shelter, which was built with a bequest left to the city of Watsonville by Gabrielle Olive Vierra, a longtime resident and lover of animals.

"We think it's a real feather in the cap of Watsonville," Meade said. "It's a good building — it presents nice to the public."

Meade has been giving tours of the facility to people across the country who plan to build shelters in their cities and use the Watsonville facility as a model.

Jean Maxwell, director of animal control in New Albany, Ind., toured the shelter Tuesday. She recorded



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**Bob Palmer (from left) of Animal Care Equipment and Services, Bill Meade and Jean Maxwell in one of the two playing yards for animals at the Humane Animal Care Services shelter, located at 580 Airport Blvd. Meade holds a two-and-half-year-old poodle now available for adoption.**

the tour on video tape, which she will bring back to her city, which neighbors Louisville, and her architect's design table.

Maxwell said she was impressed with the facility. She learned about it through Meade, who she said she has worked with on other projects for the past 30 years.

The Indiana facility will be more than twice the size of the Watsonville shelter — 7,000 square feet — and will be a municipal and private

shelter.

Representatives from the Massachusetts Animal Rescue League of Boston, Mass., visited and toured the shelter last month.

"I think (the shelter) is fantastic for the size of it," said Bob Palmer of Animal Care Equipment and Services in Capitola, who worked on the facility's design with Meade. "It functions really well, with such a small number of people."

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The shelter currently is staffed for two and a half positions, which Meade said is not enough. "We're not able to do everything that everybody wants us to do," he said. "If the city wants a quicker response (to animal services), we're gonna need more people to do that."

Meade said he intends to approach the Watsonville City Council with a progress report of the shelter's first year in business and a request to hire more people for the shelter.

"The city is getting full utilization of the shelter," he said. "I hope this (honor) will help to enlighten them a little bit."