



• Martin Niemöller

They came first for the Socialists, and I did not speak out - because I was not a Socialist. Then they came for the Jews, and I did not speak out - because I was not a Jew. Then they came for the Trade Unionists, and I did not speak out - because I was not a Trade Unionist. Then they came for the sick, the so-called incurables, and I did not speak out - because I was not mentally ill. Then they came for me - and there was no one left to speak for me.

• Countdowns

- **84** more sleeps until Election Day
- **161** more sleeps until Inauguration Day

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11 Aug

[Second Chance, Clarion PAWS want PSPCA facilities](#)



Wellsboro Gazette

by Diane Eaton

August 8, 2008

Two animal rescue organizations – Clarion PAWS and Second Chance Animal Sanctuaries, Inc. of Tioga County - have attempted to either lease or buy one of the PSPCA facilities.

Clarion PAWS first attempted to lease the already-closed Clarion County PSPCA facility in Paint Township and then tried to buy it. Second Chance Animal Sanctuaries, Inc. of Tioga County attempted to lease the still open Wellsboro Adoption Center on Route 6 in Charleston Township, Tioga County.

Clarion County PSPCA facility

Explained Jan Ochs, president of Clarion PAWS, a non-profit animal rescue organization in Clarion County, “The lease offer for the Clarion facility was for \$1 per year. That included the main shelter building and the house behind the facility. A generous offer BUT...the buildings were to be leased ‘as is.’ Any necessary repairs and remediations would be the responsibility of Clarion PAWS. The PSPCA had no intention of spending any additional money on the facility.”

She continued, “The main shelter building was 23 years old and had a significant moisture and odor

problem. The rough estimate from a local contractor to remove interior wall panels and address the moisture-causing problems was at least \$40,000.”

“All cages, supplies and equipment that were movable would be removed by the PSPCA and utilized at one of their other facilities. That left only the kennel runs cemented into the floor and cages anchored to the block walls. Stainless steel bank cages worth approximately \$40,000 would have to be replaced.”

“Clarion PAWS suggested that we pay more per year for the lease, if the cages and some of the other equipment were left, but Howard Nelson, PSPCA CEO, indicated that they needed those items elsewhere within their own organization.”

“The house could not be made handicapped accessible and we were not permitted to use it for anything but volunteer training. We had hoped to utilize a portion of the house as a cage-free environment for adoptable cats, thus making some additional room in the main shelter building for dogs.”

Ochs said, “Clarion PAWS intends to adopt the no-kill advocacy shelter operation model, authored and taught by Nathan Winograd. Mr. Nelson indicated that the PSPCA could not be associated with potential animal hoarders.”

“After discussion with our attorney and board members, in December of 2007 we determined it was not in the best interest of Clarion PAWS to pursue the lease offer from the PSPCA.”

Ochs noted, “Late this past winter, Clarion PAWS instructed their attorney to ask the PSPCA if they would consider selling the Clarion facility to us. My understanding was PSPCA was interested and had the property appraised. Shortly afterwards, the Tiger Ranch cats were moved into the Clarion facility. We are no longer interested in the property.”

Clarion PAWS is shelterless but is planning to open its own facility in Clarion County. “We hope to be closing on approximately 10 acres of wooded ground within the next couple of weeks,” Ochs said.

In May of this year, Heather Redfern, director of the PSPCA’s outreach programs, said, “As far as the Clarion facility, PAWS in Clarion County did not want the building for \$1 lease per year and did not wish to buy the building, so the PSPCA is selling it.”

Wellsboro PSPCA facility

Redfern also said in May, “We plan to continue operations in Wellsboro for the near future. Second Chance has expressed an interest in the (Wellsboro) facility, but we have not had any further discussions regarding that offer. We have offered to meet with Second Chance in June.”

Last week, PSPCA CEO Howard Nelson said, “Lisa Rogers and I recently met with representatives from Second Chance and we are not currently pursuing this option.”

He continued, “It is my understanding that Second Chance has plans to build their own facility.... although I have cautioned them as to the need for two under-funded shelter operations in one county.”

Sue Cook, president of Second Chance Animal Sanctuaries, Inc., a Tioga County non-profit animal rescue organization, said, “Second Chance met with Mr. Nelson on Dec. 7, 2007. “We said Second Chance was interested in providing animal care at the Wellsboro facility on a lease basis, thus relieving the PSPCA for operating costs and, when the PSPCA vacated the Wellsboro facility, would reconsider

purchasing the property.”

“At that time, he told us to develop a lease agreement so we could temporarily manage the Wellsboro facility. He also said they were planning to sell the Wellsboro facility early in 2009 when they moved to Coudersport. He led us to believe that we would be able to take over animal care at the Wellsboro facility while they were building their new Potter County facility if we agreed on a suitable lease.”

She continued, “As Mr. Nelson requested, our attorney prepared the lease agreement and I emailed Mr. Nelson a copy on Jan. 14 of this year. On March 2, after hearing nothing, I emailed him again. On March 3, Mr. Nelson replied saying, “We are working on our Potter County sanctuary and when we are ready, we will get back to you. I estimate this will be in April.”

After hearing nothing for almost six weeks, Cook emailed Nelson again on April 30 requesting a decision on the preliminary lease agreement. Nelson responded the next day, May 1, saying “As I have stated before, our decision about the Wellsboro facility is linked to the acquisition of land and construction of a new adoption shelter and sanctuary in Potter County. We are still working on that project and that is why I have not been able to get back to you with dates.”

Cook immediately emailed Nelson back on May 1. She wrote, “We understand that, but our understanding in December when we met with you was that we would work out a lease agreement for us to temporarily use the Wellsboro facility until the time when you put the (Wellsboro) facility on the market. Then we would see where we were financially, etc. At that time, you advised us to have our lawyer draw up such an agreement, which we did.”

Cook then asked, “Are you not considering entering into a lease agreement with us while you are constructing the Coudersport facility? Or are you saying that the Wellsboro facility may not close if things don’t work out in Coudersport?”

Nelson emailed Cook on May 1 and wrote: “Let’s set up a time to discuss this.” Cook responded, “Are you thinking via phone or in person?” Nelson replied, “Phone would be perfect.”

On May 3, Cook emailed Nelson again. She wrote: “Howard – in speaking to the (Second Chance) board, we feel we should speak to you in person. This will provide more clarity to us and is a more professional way to handle this issue.”

On May 6, Cook emailed Nelson again and because he did not reply, she telephoned him on May 9. He told her he would be in the Wellsboro area in the next couple of weeks. Hearing nothing, she emailed him again on May 13. On May 14, he emailed the question, “Does either June 11 or June 12 work for your group?”

On May 14, Cook wrote: “Nearly six months have gone by since (our Dec. 7) meeting. Our architect is drawing up plans for the facility we plan to build. We have deadlines to meet. We feel we cannot wait another four weeks for some answer to a few rather simple questions.

1. Are you definitely planning to relocate to Potter County within the next 12 months as previously stated?
2. Are you considering having Second Chance occupy the Wellsboro facility within the next six months as originally proposed?

On May 14, Nelson emailed Cook and stated: “Yes, we are relocating when we find land and build a

shelter. We have not found land yet that has suitable zoning. This process could take a year or so, but we are very anxious to find land and get the process started.”

“Yes, I would consider a lease or purchase deal, but we need to have further discussions re: the lease, but it does not appear you can wait until the 11th or 12th so then the answer would be ‘we are not interested without further frank discussions about intended use, what happens to the animals, where would they go, procedures, etc.’”

Second Chance finally met with Lisa Rogers and Howard Nelson on June 18 in Wellsboro.

Cook said, “After six months of delay, Mr. Nelson told us he intends to continue their operations in Wellsboro until they are ready to move their operations to the Coudersport area. In the meantime, the PSPCA is not accepting animals because they are full and are not planning to enlarge the facility here. PSPCA often refers people to Second Chance but it is difficult for Second Chance volunteers to help without a permanent facility.”

Cook continued, “Dorothy Condict of Middlebury Center has donated 10 acres of land on which to build a Tioga County facility to provide for cat and dog adoptions and lifetime care. We are focusing on raising funds so we can begin construction of a new facility. We will soon be starting a capital campaign and are also seeking grants. More specifics about our proposed facility will be provided in this newspaper within the month.”

Cook said, “Second Chance has been very active in animal rescue and adoptions. People who must give up their pets are continually contacting our organization. Until the new Second Chance facility is built, our volunteers are working feverishly to find both foster homes and permanent homes for these animals. Foster homes are greatly needed to assist animals on a temporary basis until a permanent home can be found. That’s why we need more foster homes and more people interested in adopting a pet.”

Those who want more information about Second Chance Animal Sanctuaries, Inc. of Tioga County can visit <http://www.secondchanceas.org>.

Source: Wellsboro Gazette (an abridged version of this article is available online at <http://www.tiogapublishing.com/articles/2008/08/08/news/news06.txt>)

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