



Salem animal shelter moves to new home

By Tom Dalton

Staff writer

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SALEM — It wasn't quite Noah's Ark, but the Northeast Animal Shelter packed up the cats and dogs yesterday and journeyed across Highland Avenue. After 32 years in the basement of the New England Veterinary Clinic, the no-kill shelter moved to a new home on the other side of the state roadway.

"I dreamed about this building," said Director Julie Potter, as she stood in the former Kelly Honda at 347 Highland Ave. "I dreamed about all the animals we can save."

The new building has gone through a major renovation that cost more than \$1 million. It is 10 times the size of the old facility and has skylights, brightly painted walls, a nutrition center and a dog training room.

"I think the biggest thing for the animals is the dogs and cats are separate," said Laurie McCannon, the development manager.

Instead of cages, all of the dogs will have runs. The cats will be in cages, but also will have community rooms where they can lounge around — just like at home.

All of the animal rooms have speakers.

"We're going to pump in classical music," McCannon said.

It will be a few days before the shelter is open to the public. Concrete steps were still being poured yesterday, and other last-minute details remain to be completed.

But the doors should be open by the end of the week. A shipment of dogs is scheduled to arrive in a few days from West Virginia.

The biggest surprise yesterday was the arrival of a new guest. When employees got to work Tuesday morning, a cage was sitting near the back of the old animal shelter. Inside was a pregnant black cat.

The cat — quickly named Tanya — became part of the move.

A grand opening is scheduled for June 29.

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Photos



Randi Cohen, executive director at the Northeast Animal Shelter, prepares to move one of the dogs to the agency's new home at 347 Highland Ave. Staff photo



Laurie McCannon, development manager at the Northeast Animal Shelter, walks Doby, as Tallula plays with her chain, at the shelter's new location at 347 Highland Ave. Staff photo