

# The Doings Hinsdale

## Hinsdale Humane Society's operation manager's clients are dogs and cats

---

BY KIMBERLY FORNEK | kfornek@pioneerlocal.com June 17, 2013 8:24AM

---

Updated: June 20, 2013 11:41AM

HINSDALE — In August, Jennifer Vlazny, operations manager for the Hinsdale Humane Society, at 22 N. Elm St., will mark her 28th year working for the organization.

**Q. How did you first come to work for the humane society?A.**

I had always loved animals and I wanted to be a vet. But with the schooling you need and the cost, I didn't pursue that. I saw an ad for a part-time kennel assistant at the humane society and applied and got that job. It became full-time and within three years I was operations manager. Twenty-eight years later, I've never had any regrets.

**Q. What skills or qualities are most important to do your job?A.**

You need to be organized. Multitasking is probably the biggest thing and customer service skills are paramount, because you are the go-to person (for staff and people wanting to adopt). Most people are very receptive (to the suggestions of the adoption counselor). If they do get denied for a particular animal, some people want to talk to someone else. I may tell them basically what the counselor told them, but sometimes people just need to be heard.

I'm always learning about how to improve operations. What else can we do to better care for the animals and increase adoptions.

**Q. How much do you interact with the animals?**

**A.** I don't very much. I make the final decisions regarding what animals we accept, either from owner surrender because people can't take care of their pet anymore or transfers from downstate shelters.

**Q. The revenue for the human society comes from donations?A.**

It's entirely through donations.

**Q. What's your favorite part of your job?**

**A.** Any animal that walks out the door is a cause for celebration, whether they are reunited with their owner or they find a new owner.

The people I work with are phenomenal; they put their hearts and souls in the job. I take great pride in our facility and how it runs and operates. And everyday is different. You don't know what is going to walk through the door. With the job comes aggravation and heartache, but much more celebration.

**Q. What situations cause aggravation and heartache?**

**A.** We live in a disposable society. Sometimes people bring in their pets (to turn over to the shelter) because there is a problem instead of trying to work through it. Maybe somebody is getting a new apartment that doesn't allow pets. They want to get rid of their pet, instead of looking for an apartment that allows animals.

Or we get elderly strays. Here's an animal that has lived and been cared for in a home its entire life and it ends up a stray. You wonder where is its owner. You never know. You wish they could talk and tell their story.

---

© 2011 Sun-Times Media, LLC. All rights reserved. This material may not be copied or distributed without permission. For more information about reprints and permissions, visit [www.suntimesreprints.com](http://www.suntimesreprints.com). To order a reprint of this article, click here.