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are facing foreclosure, and some of their animals are abused, neglected or abandoned," she says. The Humane Society helps when it can and county animal control personnel sometimes find new homes for these animals. But Heartland takes in those animals that have no where else to go.

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Homeless, neglected farm animals have a home

By Teresa Penegay Paprock, Neighbors editor

When you think of abandoned, neglected, or homeless animals, most likely you think of dogs and cats. But what happens when a horse, goat, or rooster needs a home?

Heartland Farm Sanctuary, a non-profit organization located in the Town of Verona, meets a need that many of us didn't even know exists. The sanctuary takes in cows, sheep, goats, horses, poultry and other farm animals when their owners don't - or, usually, can't - take care of them anymore.

The current economic downturn has been hard on homeowners, but farm owners as well, says Heartland's founder and executive director, Dana Barre. "Farmers



Barn manager Sarah Solberg visits with some of Heartland Farm Sanctuary's rescued animals.

Farm animals

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"Imagine for a moment you are in your car driving down a country road when you notice a dog wandering across the road. He's not wearing any ID tags, and there aren't any houses nearby that may know the pooch," Barre says. "What would you do? At this point, many folks would load the dog into their car, and bring it to the local animal shelter. You know that the kind folks at the shelter will take good care of him until he is adopted by a loving family. Now, what if that dog was instead a 300 pound sheep (with horns, mind you), or a 1,200 pound dairy cow?"

With 26 acres of pasture, the sanctuary provides transport, vet care, rehabilitation, and shelter services for rescued farm animals throughout Dane County. Barre, an animal lover, started the organization in 2010. "There are only a handful of these shelters around the country," she says, "and we're one of the only shelters in the country that combines care for animals with helping hurt and healing youth."

Heartland brings the animals together with children who have physical, emotional or cognitive developmental delays; who have a history of delinquent behavior; or

who have been abused. Barre points to research showing that such children can benefit greatly by participating in animal-assisted therapeutic activities.

At the same time, Heartland staff and volunteers work to place their animals into permanent homes whenever possible, and continues to house the animals that cannot be placed. Currently, the sanctuary has 67 animals. Barre used her own money to create the shelter, which is also helped my grants and corporate or personal donations. No government funding goes to the organization.

Heartland partners officially with the Dane County Humane Society, and works closely with the Verona Area School District, Youth Services of Southern Wisconsin and the Boys and Girls Club of Dane County. Programs being planned include violence prevention, special needs and leadership.

In addition to making monetary donations, people who want to help can adopt an animal, or sponsor one. It only costs \$20 a month to help insure that a pig, goat, sheep, chicken, goose, duck or feral cat has a warm place to sleep, food to eat, and veterinary care.

More information about Heartland is available by calling Dana at 219-1172. ■