



For Immediate Release

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Hundreds of people celebrated the grand opening of the Buck Scheele Family Animal Center on Saturday, April 6. The milestone featured a program, ribbon cutting, tours, BBQ, vendor sales and much more.

The project has been a dream come true for early the founders and supporters of the MonDak Humane Society. The group was started in 1999 to protect animals and even though the name has changed, the mission has remained much the same, to find forever homes for animals without owners.

The Williston Area Chamber of Commerce Ambassadors helped celebrate the ribbon cutting at the Buck Scheele Family Animal Center recently in Williston. Williston Economic Development photo

Williston Economic Development Executive Director Shawn Wenko emceed the event and he shared his

personal story about adopting a dog from MonDak Animal Rescue (MDAR).

"I was always of the mindset that if you didn't pay a breeder a lot of money you kind of got a junk dog," explained Wenko. "About a year ago, Bo was a resident of the MonDak Animal Rescue. They knew we had a history with English Bull Dogs and asked us to look at him... after about a week, we took him home. We've had Bo for about a year and he is one of the most loyal dogs I have ever had. I've learned a valuable

lesson, don't count rescue animals out, who knows what his fate would have been had we not had something like this here."

The celebration honored the key benefactors of the project, Lois Scheele and her family. Lois, her children and grandchildren have donated more than \$5 million to the center. She said she was pleased to work with her family and others on the project.

"I just have a couple of thank yous and the main one is to my family, who has supported this from day one," said Scheele.

Lois also honored the significant contributions of Tamara Rooks, director of the Buck Scheele Family Animal Center and her niece, Lisa Patton, current president of the MDAR BoD. Rooks has been fostering animals at her home for the past five to six while Patton has been active in the construction phase of the project.

"This community needs a shelter like this," said Patton. "The adoption side is full, the boarding side is full and our phones ring non-stop."

The center has space dedicated to isolation and intake, a vet clinic for adoption animals, community room and doggie daycare area.

In addition to Lois, Char Scheele recognized her dad for his generous contributions to the community.

"We would like to thank our dad for the 50-plus years he gave to this community," said Char. "Without his work ethic, love of children and animals, this project would not have happened."

Other key benefactors included the Frontier Museum and Williston Parks and Recreation for donating land to the project and the City of Williston for its \$250,000 STAR Fund grant as well as complimentary usage of the city landfill.

Wenko concluded the project was another icon for Williston.

"As we grow, we want to build things that are the best in the state. This is a good representation the amenities we want for the residents of Williston," said Wenko.