



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: Tuesday, Dec. 12, 2023

CONTACT: Christopher Behnan, **Byrum & Fisk Advocacy Communications**, (248) 767-4377

Holly High School students launch animal shelter drive in honor of late classmate

Donation boxes for Oakland County Animal Shelter and Pet Adoption Center available through Dec. 21

HOLLY, Mich. — Holly High School senior **Brooke Lawrence** once planned to adopt a dog with fellow pet lover and close friend **Deegan Walton**. Following Walton's tragic death in October, Lawrence decided to honor his memory by collecting donations for the [Oakland County Animal Shelter and Pet Adoption Center](#) around the holidays.

In hopes of saving other parents, families and friends the trauma of suffering such a tragedy, Walton's family has acknowledged that he took his own life.

"Deegan and I had multiple conversations about adopting a dog from the Oakland County shelter once he turned 18, and I know this would mean a lot to him," Lawrence said. "Our community can help us honor his memory by donating supplies or money this month for the shelter. It is my sincere hope that our drive will help raise awareness of suicide and encourage anyone suffering emotional pain to reach out for help."

Needed items include wet and dry dog and cat food, dog and cat treats and toys, towels and blankets, food dishes and pet leashes. The shelter drive is scheduled around the holidays, a time when shelters often receive an influx of puppies given as presents but returned when people realize they don't have the time or ability to care for them.

Lawrence teamed up with fellow HHS senior **Lauren Henry** to assemble and decorate the donation boxes for each location. The Oakland County Animal Shelter and Pet Adoption Center donation boxes are available through Dec. 21 at:

Karl Richter Campus (main doors, north entrance): 920 Baird St., Holly, MI 48442

Springfield Township Hall and Library: 12000 Davisburg Road, Davisburg, MI 48350
Holly High School (for students and faculty): 6161 E. Holly Road, Holly, MI 48442

“I’d like to commend Brooke and her classmates for their dedication to Deegan’s memory, and I encourage everyone to stop by one of these locations and help support the Oakland County animal shelter this holiday season,” said **Scott Roper**, Holly Area Schools superintendent. “I’d also like to take this opportunity to remind everyone in our Broncho community that it’s OK to say, ‘I’m not OK’ when suffering from depression or just need someone to talk to.”

###

Learn more about Holly Area Schools by visiting www.hask12.org, or visit us on [Facebook](#) and [X](#) (Twitter).

For a full list of needed donation items, follow this QR code:





Cutline: Oakland County animal shelter donation boxes assembled by Holly High School seniors Brooke Lawrence and Lauren Henry



Cutline: Deegan Walton poses with his dog, Bella.



Cutline: Deegan Walton enjoys time in the lake with his dog, Bella.