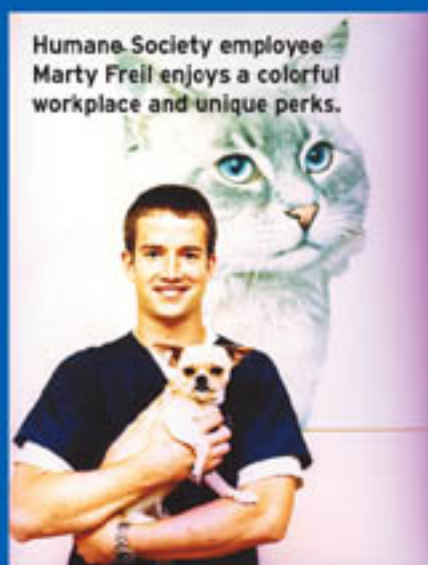


# BEST PLACES TO WORK

SMALL COMPANIES



Milwaukee  
MAGAZINE



Humane Society employee Marty Freil enjoys a colorful workplace and unique perks.

"THE GOAL IS TO FOSTER AN ATMOSPHERE IN WHICH EMPLOYEES TREAT CO-WORKERS AND THE PUBLIC WITH **COMPASSION AND DIGNITY.**"

— Jill DeGrave, Wisconsin Humane Society

SMALLER IS  
BETTER AT THESE  
**TOP 20**  
COMPANIES WHERE  
PERKS, PAY AND  
BENEFITS ADD UP  
TO JOBS THAT  
REALLY WORK.

## MISSION OF CARE

### Wisconsin Humane Society

*Animal rescue, adoption and veterinary;  
80 employees; 4500 W. Wisconsin Ave.*

A few years ago, the nonprofit Wisconsin Humane Society was at the center of controversy that involved, in part, disgruntled employees. So what's this organization doing on our list?

Much has changed since those days, say the society's managers. Probably the biggest change is the society's move to a colorful, modern shelter on Wisconsin Avenue. The old shelter, acknowledges Executive Director Victoria Wellens, "was like a dump" — cramped, unappealing and located at the end of a dead-end road off of Capitol Drive. "Now we have this Main Street mind-set."

With the move, the society has also refocused its mission. Once assigned the seemingly conflicting tasks of both animal control and promoting compassionate care of animals, it now has just one goal, says education director Jill DeGrave: "to build a community that values animals and treats them with respect and kindness." It does that through promoting animal adoptions, teaching proper animal care and

working to reduce human intervention with wildlife. Animal control duties have been transferred to a separate agency.

The society strives for a "disciplined environment that's flexible," says Wellens. "For me, it's really based on providing the staff with the tools and resources they need to be lifesavers." The organization's goal is to foster an atmosphere in which employees treat co-workers and the public with "compassion and dignity," she adds. "And if they do that for each other, that's how they're going to respond to animals."

Comments one adoption counselor: "I'm in my early 40s and this is the first job I've ever had that I leave happy and look forward to going to work everyday."

Pay, benefits and practices that give employees a greater voice all contributed to the society's favorable rating, but there's one perk that doesn't show up on the usual scorecard: Whenever these employees get too stressed, they can go and play with a puppy.