

Dog Day at the Movies

By T.L. Hamilton

THE WOODLANDS – The Montgomery County Animal Shelter took advantage of the popular new film “Marley and Me” as a chance to show off some real-life Marleys – Labrador retrievers the shelter has in its care and hopes to adopt out.

The film is about a newlywed couple who adopts an energetic yellow Labrador named Marley.

Of the 11 dogs on display Saturday in front of the Cinemark Tinseltown movie theater, located at Lake Robbins Drive and Six Pines Drives, eight were adopted.

The dogs ranged in age from young puppies to a few years old, with all adoptable on the spot.

Five of the adopted dogs were puppies, and three were full-grown, said Nicola Ostlund, shelter volunteer.

“It’s very good they were adopted because they were due to be euthanized on Monday,” she said.

The Rayford family saw the film Saturday afternoon and left the theater with their very own chocolate lab puppy.

“We haven’t decided what to name her,” said Michelle, who held the puppy next to her husband and four excited children. “We’ll figure that out in the car ride home.”

Two-year-old Tyson McDowell circled the dogs’ cages with and let out gleeful laughs as his father looked on.

“Big doggie,” he exclaimed when he saw the oldest dog in the bunch, a golden lab named Jake.

At about two or three years old, Jake was probably the least likely to be adopted, which is why The Woodlands Dogpark Club’s Operation: Save a Lab snapped him up, said Laura McConnell, club president.

The club coordinated its efforts with an adoption group called **Labs4Rescue** in Connecticut, and has so far sent about 81 Labradors to them.

“We’ve rescued about 115 labs from this shelter alone,” McConnell said.

Kim Tyler, a volunteer with the shelter, said the adoption program went so well Saturday that the theater has already given them permission to come back for another dog-related movie, “Pet Hotel,” which is to be released on Jan. 16.