

Humane Society of Elmore County News – 7 Oct '13

Rea Cord

Director

While the vast majority of our intake is dogs and cats, we do also receive small pets like Rabbits, Guinea Pigs, Ferrets, Hamsters, Mice, Rats, Gerbils, Birds, etc. Matter of fact we have seven Guinea Pigs, one rabbit and one Pot-Bellied Pig right now looking for their forever homes. In too many instances these pets were purchased to teach a child responsibility and are brought to us when the child loses interest. We have to wonder what kind of lesson is being taught to these children when the solution is 'getting rid of' that pet? Of course, we do agree that turning the pet into a shelter or re-homing it is better leaving the pet to possibly die or discarding it inhumanely.

While mice and hamsters may only live a year or two, rabbits live 8-12 years, Guinea Pigs 5-7 years, and many birds can live 15-20 years or more. Since these little critters live mostly in cages, they are completely dependent on their human caretaker for proper care & nutrition. Failure to pay attention to an empty water bottle has likely caused the demise of numerous caged pets. And while you may think it is easy to tell if a pet has enough food, many a parakeet or canary has starved because its bowl was full of empty seed hulls.

While many of these small critters are fairly cheap to purchase, their caging can be pricey and there will be continual expenses for their bedding and food. Far too many small pets live in cages that are actually way too small for them which makes routine cleaning and adequate exercise much more critical. While commercial foods will meet most of their dietary needs most will prosper with the addition of fresh vegetables & vitamin/mineral supplements. And knowing the sexes of these 'pocket pets' is critical if you get more than one since they tend to reproduce quickly resulting in babies that may be difficult to re-home and that no store will take back.

Having these little pets can be quite interesting and rewarding, but please think ahead since they deserve to be loved and well-cared for their entire lives. And if you do decide to add one of these pets to your family, check with your local shelter first as, just like now, we have a few in need of caring homes. As we do have staff experienced in the care of many of these animals, feel free to give us a call at 334/567-3377 or check out links on our website at [www.elmorehumane.org](http://www.elmorehumane.org) if you have any questions.

Please keep clicking for us at [www.shelterchallenge.com](http://www.shelterchallenge.com) until Oct 20<sup>th</sup> to help us win \$1000 for our shelter. We can only stay at #1 with everyone's help so please vote once each day from work, home, school and the easiest way to find us is to must type in Wetumpka, AL or our zip of 36092.

Our Annual Meeting is coming next Tue, 15 Oct, '13 at 6 pm, Trinity Episcopal Church, Hwy 231 in Wetumpka (across from Winn Dixie). We invite our members to join us so we can update you on our successes and challenges, elect our officers and look ahead to 2014.

And don't forget to stop by the shelter (255 Central Plank Road, Hwy 9, Wetumpka, AL 36092) for your ticket to win a week in a five-bedroom, ocean-front house in Nagshead, N.C. 25 May – 1 Jun '14. Tickets are only \$5 each or five tickets for \$20 and the winning ticket will be drawn on Sat, 14 Dec, 1 pm at the shelter - winner just has to answer one trivia question. Check out [www.elmorehumane.org/fundraiserevent.htm](http://www.elmorehumane.org/fundraiserevent.htm) for all the details. This awesome prize is good for lodging only and does not cover travel, food or any other expenses. All proceeds from these ticket sales go to helping our animals!