

Moving, can't afford, can't find homes for all in the litter, too big, digs, chewing everything, no time for, new baby, allergic, too old, too active, keeps running off, got a younger one, can't take care of, don't need any more, can't control, scared of, getting aggressive, keeps breaking the chain, sheds too much, won't housetrain, not using litter box, too many animals, new partner doesn't like, kept her puppy/kitten instead, jumps on people, needs too much attention, neighbors complaining, wrong color, chasing livestock, killed dog/cat/chicken/goat/calf/sheep, too lazy, children not taking care of, simply don't want .....

All of the above are reasons we have been told by owner's surrendering their pets. For those unpredictable life changes or unavoidable situations where re-homing a pet is in the pet's best interest or a true necessity for the owner we are glad our shelter is able to help both the pet and the owner. But our reality is that far too many pets are surrendered for lack of homework before getting the pet, or lack of a true lifetime commitment to that pet. Responsible pet ownership means making sure you are not only ready to take on a pet, but that you will commit to caring for that same pet throughout its entire life. That entails all the challenges of raising and training a puppy or kitten and then also dealing with it during adolescence when you are ready to throw in the towel until the pet matures and settles down. It means committing to providing adequate food and fresh water, shelter, containment to keep the pet safe, bathing and grooming, exercise, vaccinations and necessary veterinary care, pooper scooper patrol, cage cleaning (for a smaller critter), and spaying or neutering to prevent unwanted offspring. And it means dealing with all of this for the entire 10-15-20 year lifespan of that pet.

In this age of the internet, books, experts, TV and even our knowledgeable shelter staff, doing some homework before obtaining a pet is just too easy. You might find out that either the pet you were thinking of just might not work for your family or situation, or you can confirm all the good things you were hoping for and learn how to best raise that pet so that it becomes a well-adjusted and loved member of the family.

All of the above is why we want to work with our adopters to help try and find the best match for their family, energy level, personality and living situation. All puppies are cute, but if an adopter lives in a small apartment and works all day, then an active Labrador pup guaranteed to chew everything and that will eventually turn into a 70 lb adult just might not be a great fit. A reactive and nervous small dog might be risky in a home with a toddler, and a declawed kitty certainly doesn't need to go to an adopter who wants an outdoor cat! So, bear with us as we ask questions about lifestyle and home and family as we truly do have not only our pet's best interest at heart, but the adopter's as well.

In 2015, 37% or almost 1600 pets were turned in to our shelter by their owners, which was a 5% increase in owner surrendered pets since 2014. We implore prospective pet parents to please think before you obtain a pet, do some homework & take into account that any pet you get is completely dependent on YOU for its future. For those who find a stray and want to help – once you have done the due diligence to make sure there is no one missing the pet, please take it to a Veterinarian for a check-up, vaccinations AND make an appointment for spay or neuter surgery without delay. Far too many preventable and unwanted litters are brought to us from strays a family kept but never had spayed. Please be a part of the solution to pet overpopulation instead of part of the cause!