

## **Humane Society of Elmore County News – 2 Mar '15**

**Rea Cord**

**Executive Director**

Coming up on 9 May '15 is the 13<sup>th</sup> Cruisin' fer Critters by the Predator's Motorcycle Associations and we always look forward to this awesome event! But they aren't waiting until 9 May to get started as the Predators will be conducting a Supply Drive on our behalf THIS Saturday, 7 March, from 10 am – 2 pm, at the Wetumpka Walmart. So if you like supporting us but find it a bit out of the way to drop things by the shelter, this is a great way to help us out. We certainly appreciate all the Predator's for their tireless work on behalf of the constant flow of pets coming into our shelter every day.

For those of us in shelters, the reasons we hear for not keeping a pet are never-ending: 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 houstrain, 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 doing some homework before obtaining a pet is just too easy. You might find out that 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 try to work with our adopters to find the best match for their family, energy level, personality and living situation. If an adopter lives in an apartment and works all day, then a howling, lonely Beagle just might not be a great fit. A nervous Chihuahua might be risky in a home with a toddler but perfect for a calm, adult only home. 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 have not only our pet's best interest at heart, but the adopter's as well. While we might not be able to guarantee behavior or know everything about the many pets that come to us as strays, we do very often know enough about them to be able to help our adopters find the pet that has the best chance of success as "your" pet. And if we don't have the 'right' pet during a potential adopter's visit, we are happy to take an application so you can tell us about yourself and what type/breed of pet you are thinking of and we will add you to our 'Wish List.' And finally, if an adopted pet simply ends up not working out, we are always here to take our pets back as we want to always be their safety net and then we will work to find them a new home that works better for all concerned.