

# Shelter manager encourages pet owners to spay/neuter

by Tracy Berry

WEDOWEE - Every year thousands of animals find their way into local shelters across the country as owners abandon them for various reasons - Wedowee is no different.

Randolph County Animal Shelter (RCAS) continually feels the strain of overcrowding and underfunding, but remains dedicated to being a no-kill shelter. Shelter director of operations April Richardson knows the stress of no-kill operations all too well, but is optimistic about ways the community can help. At the top of the list is the importance and obligation of owners to spay and neuter their animals.

“Euthanizing is not the solution,” said Richardson. “It is result of neglectful owners who do not follow through on their commitment to alter their animals. As a community, we need to stop making excuses for neglectful people and blaming shelters and rescues that are trying to help for not euthanizing to make space for more animals.” She continues to say, “Kill shelters and euthanizing only give those who don’t want to fix their animals an out to keep having puppies; because they would have a place to take



An unsprayed female cat, her mate and all of their offspring, producing two litters per year, with 2.8 surviving kittens can total:

- 1 year - 12
- 2 years - 67
- 3 years - 376
- 4 years - 2,107
- 5 years - 11,801
- 6 years - 66,088
- 7 years - 370,092

them and dispose of them. That is not what we are about at RCAS.”

The American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals also lists medical, behavioral and financial benefits to spaying and neutering such as:

- Spayed females won’t go into heat
- Male dogs won’t want to

- roam
- Males behave better, mark their territory less
- Pets live longer
- Cheaper than caring for a litter
- Health benefits

In addition to all the benefits to a beloved furry friend and to owners, spaying and neutering can keep thousands of animals out of shelters



An unspayed female dog, her mate and all of their offspring, plus the offsprings' puppies, if none are neutered or spayed, add up to:

- 1 year - 16
- 2 years - 128
- 3 years - 512
- 4 years - 2,048
- 5 years - 12, 288
- 6 years - 67,000

each year. PETA.org estimates that just one female dog and her offspring can produce 67,000 puppies in only six years. The number for a cat and her offspring is a staggering 370,000 kittens in seven years. RCAS strives to

take in as many animals as possible, but with these figures, it is easy to see how we are just spinning our wheels.

There are benefits to being a no-kill shelter and neighboring shelters try to meet that goal, but continue to fall

short. No-kill shelters are more cost-effective than kill shelters, they attract and retain more volunteers, the staff has better morale, it opens the doors for more grant opportunities and is honestly something to brag about. At RCAS, Richardson is proud of the work she and her team put into maintain their no-kill status and hope that county residents are proud of them too.

“We will continue to promote the benefits of spay and neuter and hope that this gets everyone talking to their neighbors about the importance of spay/neuter as well,” Richardson said. “Like the old saying goes - it takes a village - and as a community we need everyone to get on board and start taking responsibility for the overpopulation in our county by doing their part.”

If you are thinking of adopting a pet, volunteering or donating, you can visit their website [www.randolphshelter.org](http://www.randolphshelter.org) or follow RCAS on Facebook. Information for low cost spay and neuter program can be found on both the website and Facebook page.