

Opinion

Helping our own animals in need

Anyone who watches television has seen the appeals from the American Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (ASPCA). The commercials consist of showing one after another abused and frightened dogs and cats followed by a request for a regular monthly donation of \$19 to help save the lives of these animals and others like them.

The ASPCA is a non-profit organization that depends on donations like this to do its important work. This work consists of rescuing, protecting and placing in homes animals that are homeless or in abusive environments. The ASPCA's work also involves investigating cases of abuse and neglect, with a focus on dog fighting operations and puppy mills, and working with law enforcement to ensure those involved in illegal cases of animal mistreatment are brought to justice.

(Their work in this regard has recently become more difficult under the new administration in Washington since the U.S. Department of Agriculture on Feb. 3, 2017 removed from its website documentation about thousands of animal-related facilities regulated by the Animal Welfare Act. Prior to this date anyone with internet access could view reports on the treatment of animals in zoos, breeding facilities and research labs.)

The ASPCA's appeals for donations are effective, especially when the slide show of animals in need is accompanied by Sarah McLachlan singing "In the Arms of an Angel." It's hard not to want to donate, and many people do, including some right here in Randolph County.

That's commendable, and their donations help the cause of easing the suffering of animals nationwide. Just imagine, though, what the impact could be here if that \$19 a month were going to the Randolph County Animal Shelter, which provides many of the services of the ASPCA locally and is also a non-profit where donations are tax deductible. It's worth considering the next time that heart-tugging ASPCA commercial appears on television.

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