



Photos by Trent Penny/The Anniston Star

ABOVE, BELOW: Debbie Freeman, manager of the Randolph County Animal Shelter in Wedowee, plays around with some of the animals kept there.

QUEST FOR SHELTER

BY JASON BACAJ

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CLAY COUNTY — County commissioners are tentatively wading into a deal to build a Clay County addition onto the Randolph County Animal Shelter.

The deal would bring Clay County into compliance with a 1950 Alabama law requiring each county to provide an animal shelter.

The Clay County Commission plans to form a committee with Lineville and Ashland to determine if the offer from Randolph County is the best way to meet the Volunteer County's need while remaining "fiscally wise," said Roy Johnson, who takes over as commission chairman next month.

Both the commission and the two cities were presented this month with a pitch to form the joint shelter by the Citizens for the Welfare of Animals in Clay County.

The local animal rights group got the Randolph County Animal Shelter's board of directors to invite Clay County to partner with the Wedowee shelter for an upfront cost of \$20,000 and a monthly fee of \$3,000, said Chuck Smith, chairman of the shelter board.

The upfront fee goes toward building an addition to house stray Clay County animals, while the monthly fee accounts for operational costs, Smith said.

"It's a win-win for Clay County," Smith said. "I don't understand why they're stutter-stepping."

All three governments within Clay County have agreed to work together



a chronic problem throughout the county.

A CWACC survey given to county law enforcement agencies and one veterinary clinic showed there were about 140 calls about animal control problems last year. The sheriff's office did not know how many animal control calls it received in 2010 because it doesn't document the calls, said Marie Greeshon, CWACC officer who administered the survey. The survey showed the overall number of animal control calls declining across the last three years, from roughly 190 in 2008, Greeshon said.

Lineville, where the Police Department responded to 74 animal control calls in the last three years, consid-

son said. The city didn't have money to hire an officer to enforce that law.

"We know it's something that I think we definitely got to consider," Adomson said. "You can always save money when you work together as a group."

Ashland — where police reported responding to more than 200 animal control calls over the past few years — already has a leash law and an agreement with an animal shelter in Sylacauga, Mayor Larry Fetner said. The contract with Sylacauga ends at the end of the year, Fetner believes.

Ashland would be "willing to work with our people here" if progress is made on the Randolph County agreement, Fetner said.