East Texas shelters hoping to save more animals

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By Holley Nees - bio | email

LUFKIN, TX (KTRE) – Jamie Shelton holds a puppy hoping it will find a home soon.

"Euthanasia is our last option, always," said Shelton, the supervisor at Nacogdoches Animal Services. "I mean we really do everything we possibly can to get them adopted."

Last year Nacogdoches Animal Services took in a little more than 4,000 animals.

They euthanized about 2,700 of them, that's about 300 more than in 2009.

It's a trend they're hoping to stop with their new spay/neuter clinic.

"This is something that we've needed for a long time," said Shelton.

It seems to help because some area shelters are putting fewer animals to sleep.

"I think a lot of that has to do with so many of the low-cost spay/neuter clinics that are popping up in the different cities," Shelton explained.

Across the river, Angelina County euthanized nearly five of the 7,000 animals they took in last year, but that's 600 less than the year before.

"A happy ending is a good thing for us because it's a tough job to do when you see thousands of animals come in and not thousands that are adopted," said Rhonda McLendon, the director of the Kurth Memorial Animal Shelter in Lufkin.

In Nacogdoches the cages are always filling up with new animals. They get about 15 surrenders a day and that number is only expected to increase in the spring.

"Spring-time is insane," said Shelton. "We may take in 50 a day."

The Humane Society ranks Texas 36th when it comes to animal protection laws. It's a ranking Shelton hopes will improve.

"I would like to see it closer to the top, I really would, and eventually we will get there with education," Shelton said.

Shelton said she would love to become a no-kill shelter in the future, but right now space is too limited. She also said currently they are only sterilizing shelter animals, but they hope to make it available to the public soon. The clinic services would be available to qualifying low-income customers.

For more information on spaying and neutering or adoption fees you can contact Kurth Memorial Animal Shelter in Lufkin at (936) 633-0218 or Nacogdoches Animal Services at (936) 560-5011.

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