

The pet population problem

Brazos Animal Shelter searches for practical solution to tough situation

By Traci Travis

THE BATTALION

Say goodbye to the stereotypical dark and dirty pound.

Kathryn L. Bice, executive director of the Brazos Animal Shelter, said she hopes to dispel many of the myths about animal shelters. But this is not your ordinary shelter.

What makes this shelter so different?

"Wonderful stories, happy reunions, wonderful rescues, happy adoption families," Bice said. "But it's a roller coaster because the next one may be a euthanasia request for a loved pet. Or someone may bring in a litter for one of their dogs they refuse to spay. Each one is dramatically different. We help every kind of person and pet situation you can imagine."

The Brazos Animal Shelter has become a temporary solution to an ongoing overpopulation problem in the Brazos Valley. The problem, Bice said, lies in the hands of an uneducated public.

Donald E. Bray, Class of '84 and supervisor for animal control at the shelter, said, "Students need to understand that with every animal you breed, another animal gets hurt."

Purchasing a pet should not be taken lightly, he said. College students need to be responsible for their pets.

The reason for euthanasia, Bray said, is overpopulation, plain and simple.

"In most cases, we use euthanasia to help severely injured pets end the pain that they are in. But, occasionally, a perfectly



Kyle Burnett/THE BATTALION

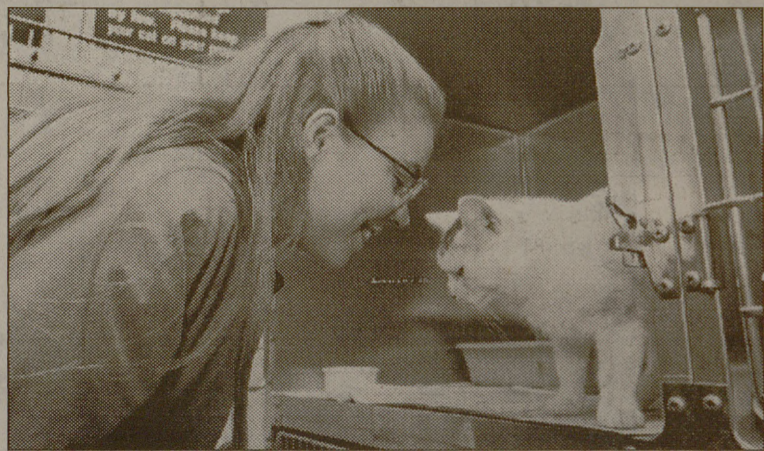
The fire hydrant in front of the shelter is reserved for the pound's patrons.

healthy puppy is euthanized, and to me, that is very disappointing," he said.

On an average day, the Brazos Animal Shelter may take in up to 100 dogs and cats. The Bryan-College Station Animal Control makes daily rounds throughout the area picking up strays that have wandered too far from home. Other animals brought in are referred to "surrendered animals." They have been discarded by pet owners who are no longer able to take care of them.

Once the animal is brought to the shelter, it goes through a series of evaluations. The animal is checked for diseases and its ability to be adopted quickly. After 72 hours, the animal receives its final rating which determines whether the animal will be displayed for adoption, or "put to sleep."

The only participants in the euthanasia process are staff



Kyle Burnett/THE BATTALION

April Hain, a junior biomedical science major, prepares to clip a stray cat's nails at the Brazos Animal Shelter. Hain volunteers at the shelter twice a week.

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UPD director: 'I've led a very interesting and exciting life.'

Life at A&M pleases Wiatt

By Margaret Claughton

THE BATTALION

Whether it be for the FBI, the county attorney or Texas A&M, Robert E. Wiatt has worn a badge of one sort or another for the past 43 years.

Although the duties of his current position, director of security for A&M may seem less than life-threatening, Wiatt has experienced more than his fair share of action.

During his 30 years of service with the FBI, Wiatt was held hostage, shot and even been stabbed with a sickle.

He was in charge of the assault against the 1974 Huntsville prison siege during which he was shot twice, but saved by his bullet proof vest.

While making an arrest in Georgia, Wiatt was attacked by a suspect's overly protective mother and stabbed in the side with a sickle.

During an incident in Burtleson County, Wiatt gave himself up as a hostage in exchange for two civilians; after which he convinced the fugitive to surrender. In addition, Wiatt led the chase to rescue a kidnapped highway patrolman; a pursuit that lasted 15 hours, went 300 miles and involved 125 police and news vehicles. This much publicized pursuit was turned into the movie "The Sugarland Express," a re-enactment Wiatt says is less than accurate. Wiatt was the man who shot fugitive Robert Dent. In the movie he is portrayed as a somewhat trigger-happy agent. But in truth, Wiatt regrets having to fire and said the producers "bastardized" the story to make it more entertaining.

Certainly Wiatt has been in some dangerous situations. However, he appreciates the irony that his most serious injury during his years of adventure occurred in his own garage. While doing push-ups with his feet elevated, the pressure of blood on his head caused his retina to tear irreparably, causing

the loss of sight in his left eye.

"After as much as I've been through, I think it's funny that my most severe injury happened at home," Wiatt said.

Throughout his tenure with the FBI, Wiatt met both notable and notorious figures. Some of the more esteemed include J. Edgar Hoover, Jimmy Carter, Henry Kissinger and Gerald Ford.

And since A&M started the Wiley Lecture series, Wiatt said he has also talked with Bush, Quayle and Margaret Thatcher.

Although he has rubbed elbows with the best of them, he has also locked horns with the worst.

"I have seen all kinds of notorious people, most of them criminals who made history," Wiatt said.

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Robert E. Wiatt, University Police director, came to A&M in 1983 after 30 years of service in the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

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