



Sheri Lipina, operations Manager of APET's Animal Center, generally performs her duties with a little help from a furry friend or two.

A Center for **Happy Tails**

Animal Preservation of East Texas, or APET, is the nucleus that all good efforts for a cause revolve around. Now the organization, which has been doing great work since 2003, has firmly developed its own center. A decade ago, APET was just a dream, but now it's an established brick-and-mortar safe haven where a whole lot of tail wagging happily goes on.

For APET and the people who conceived of it, it's been a long road to get to this good place where they are now. The overarching mission for APET has always been the same: reducing animal cruelty and neglect in rural East Texas and Wood County, specifically. But with such a lofty goal and starting from ground zero, one could expect some stops and starts along the way.

In 2003, Pat Sevenants and Betty Porter were some of the founders of APET. They were among the visionaries, the worker bees, the animal rescuers, the pet fosterers and the fuel behind the development of APET.

Together, they recruited board members and volunteers interested in helping raise money to build a shelter to care for and facilitate adoption of abandoned cats and dogs. These altruistic folks also began rescuing animals—lots of them. This was the root of what they all wanted to do, but the rescue activities from the start were expensive. The costs of food, vaccinations, medicine, vet bills and adoption efforts began to pile up. These tasks, while making a difference in the lives of animals, ultimately reduced the ability for the organization to save

money to build the facilities that were planned and would make an even bigger difference.

That's when the board decided it was time to take a step back and reposition to pave the way for long-range success. The board had learned that grant money was available but without a spay-and-neuter program, APET would not qualify. So, as counterintuitive to their goal as it seemed, they stopped pouring money into rescuing animals and instead began concentrating on spay-and-neuter programs. This new focus made real headway toward reducing the overall problem by helping control population expansion, but it also gave the organization breathing room to advance and channel efforts for the long-range goal of building a facility.

About that time, Sevenants had an idea to help raise the needed money—develop and run a thrift store. With all in agreement, the board bought a building on U.S. 69 in Mineola on a bank note. Many volunteers readied the building, and there was a call for donations. Little by little, the store filled up with donated goods and was organized by all-volunteer labor. The store opened in 2005.

The managers of the store place great value in merchandising. They'll only place items on the shelves that are clean, unbroken, useable and desirable. Thus, the store has earned a reputation as a valuable community resource. It's a wonderful place to donate unwanted or unused items, and all donations are tax-deductible. What's more, volunteers from the store will



George Carlisle is the manager of APET's thrift store, and Connie Carlisle is the assistant manager. He focuses on operations, while she looks after the merchandising. They're supported by a cast of loyal volunteers.

even come and pick up the items. For value shoppers, the thrift store is a super place to get "dog-gone good stuff," as it is billed. In fact, many customers compare it favorably to some of the antique shops and stores for gently used items in Mineola.

Because new items are always coming in, merchandise is continuously changing. In addition to bargains, the purchasers get the added feel-good aspect that their money has contributed to funding the APET SPCA Animal Care Center's work. Has the store been successful? You are doggone right it has! And a barking mad success at that, if you look at how far it has taken the organization.

In May 2012, APET bought a six-acre property on U.S. 80, 2 miles west of Mineola. The land had a house on it, as well as a barn and storage buildings. After hundreds of hours of volunteer labor and extensive renovations, the group opened the doors in December 2012. The house was converted into several distinct spaces. There is now a front office/lobby where visitors are greeted and animals are taken in and adopted out. What were three bedrooms before renovation were converted into a cattery. One room houses kittens, another is for the younger adults, and the third is for more senior cats. There's also another cattery on a screened back porch, called the "catio," for felines that are known to be more indoor/outdoor types or "barn cats."

There's also space in the main house for a few cages for smaller puppies that are too young to be housed in the main kennel, which is in the converted metal building. Here, the volunteers have built 20 large concrete-floored kennels. And surrounding the yard and the kennel, there are several spacious outside dog runs. There is also a small cabin for volunteers to wash up, take breaks or eat lunch, which was completed in the spring of 2013 with the help of the Meridith Foundation. Right now, the center can handle about 30 cats and 18 to 20 dogs. That is not a hard number, because capacity really depends on breed types, size, age, temperament and health conditions.

Currently, the center only accepts abandoned or stray cats and dogs from Wood County.

"A lot of people don't know we are here," said APET SPCA Animal Center Operations Manager Sheri Lipina. "I'd encourage anyone that wants a forever pet to visit or look on Facebook to see what we have available."

The adoption fee for a dog is \$100 and a cat is \$75. Before any APET animal is



Wood County Electric Cooperative

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Debbie Robinson

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Monday, First Methodist Church, *Van*
Tuesday, Family Dollar, *Mount Vernon*
Wednesday, City National Bank, *Hawkins*
Thursday, Brookshire's, *Winnsboro*
Friday, Economy Drug, *Grand Saline*



Contact Us

CALL US
(903) 763-2203

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The Dog-Gone Good Thrift store is chock to the brim with collectibles, antiques, furniture and a huge variety of everyday useable items.

released, it is fully vetted. The adoption fee helps cover some of those costs. Adopted animals will have had complete vaccinations, worming treatment, and spaying or neutering. The dogs have all been microchipped and tested for heartworms, and the cats tested for feline leukemia and feline AIDS. Also, while in APET care, the dogs have received regular heartworm preventative. Upon transfer, each animal has one month of free pet health insurance, which the new owner can opt to continue or not.

The spay-and-neuter program is stronger than ever. In both 2012 and 2013, almost 1,000 animals were spayed or neutered.

tion League, which also offers low-cost services.

Of course, there are enormous costs associated with all of the services that APET provides. Much of the labor is volunteer, but the center now has two full-time employees and two part-time. The operating expenses run about \$175,000 annually. The bulk of that is raised through the thrift store and by donations of money, goods and services. Wal-Mart has donated supplies from its distribution center in Palestine. ACCO Feed in Mineola has also helped, as has Mineola Tractor Supply. And many people bring in various supplies.

Connie Carlisle, assistant manager of the APET Thrift Store



Through the program, APET encourages the concept that pet owners should spay or neuter their pets as the first line of defense against overpopulation. An APET spay-and-neuter hotline is staffed by volunteers who refer callers to two options: People can get a voucher from APET and make arrangements to have their pet spayed or neutered by the Winnsboro Veterinarian Medical Center in Winnsboro. As another option, APET refers pet owners to the Animal Protec-

and an avid volunteer—along with the APET store manager, her husband, George—talked about all of the ways people can help APET make a difference.

“It’s great that we have two very different ways that people who love animals can volunteer,” she said. “The store is for the animals, but working there is a different type of volunteering. Some people can’t see or work with the animals because it makes them sad, or for other reasons. The store is where they



can help and there is always something to do there.”

At the center, the volunteer work includes staffing the phone, washing towels and bedding, washing animal food bowls, picking up after the dogs and cleaning litter pans, or helping at adoption events. The center is also in vast need of volunteers willing to foster animals.

“For us to be able to help the animals, we just can’t do it without the people,” she said.

Carlisle emphasized that “APET is a happy place. The animals that we care for were once out on their own. The center is much more than rescue, care, spay and neuter. When animals come to the center, they have a second chance.”

She also praised the people who step up to help: “Volunteers are such special people, because when a volunteer is doing their work, you know it is coming from their heart. They love what they are doing. Working with animals is a very rewarding thing to do!”

The Carlisles are long-term volunteers, and they say that any volunteers are appreciated for as little or as much time as they’d like to give.

John and Peggy Pellegrini are APET’s volunteer coordinators, and they are always happy to work with anyone, Carlisle said. “Call to volunteer and they will sign you up!”

Another way to help APET is to become a member. The fee is \$25 per year for family members and \$50 for business members. Members receive a newsletter every quarter, and their money helps out in every way possible. Also, there is an annual event, the Mineola Metric Century Bike Ride, that raises money for APET. It happens each year in early November, and it is one of the center’s largest and most successful fundraisers.

“The folks that put this on were very diligent and hardworking and simply fantastic,” Carlisle said.

APET’s goals include continuing its low-cost spay-and-neuter programs, working on educational programs, continuing to develop partnerships with municipalities and other rescue organizations for the betterment of abandoned and neglected animals, and improving and enlarging the center.

But for now, as a center of happy tails, APET is reducing the population of neglected pets. It’s also birthing hundreds of canine and feline tales with happy endings. Puppies, kittens, cats and dogs of every breed, age and size imaginable are finding their forever humans. And those humans are reaping the love, loyalty and affection that only a pet can bring. How purrrfect.

APET Facts

Always-appreciated donations at APET:

- ▶ Cat, kitten, puppy or dog food (without dyes)
- ▶ Clay cat litter (plain, nonclumping type)
- ▶ Paper towels
- ▶ Pet toys, treats and chew bones
- ▶ All types of yard tools including: Rakes, hoes, hedge clippers, weed trimmers and blowers, wet/dry vacuums, and lawnmowers. Water hoses with nozzles and accessories are also in demand, as are large tubs and fans.
- ▶ General cleaning supplies such as laundry detergent, bleach, scouring powder, hand soap and liquid dish soap
- ▶ Towels, blankets and pet bedding
- ▶ Good, old-fashioned money

APET-SPCA

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Mineola, TX 75773

EMAIL: apetspca01@gmail.com

WEB: apetspca.org

FACEBOOK: APET SPCA

APET-SPCA Animal Center

657 CR 2840, Mineola

HOURS: 10 a.m.-3 p.m. Tuesday through Saturday

PHONE: (903) 638-6902

Dog-Gone Good Stuff Thrift Store

915 S. Pacific, Mineola

HOURS: 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Friday and Saturday

PHONE: (903) 569-1250

Spay-and-Neuter Hotline

PHONE: (903) 569-0505





A Once-in-a-Lifetime Trip for One Teen!

One lucky WCEC teen will win an all-expense-paid trip to our nation's capital to experience a guided tour of Washington, D.C., June 12-20, 2014. WCEC is calling all eligible teens—high school students enrolled as a sophomore, junior or senior—to apply for the 49th Annual Government-in-Action Youth Tour.

It's simple to enter. Candidates must submit a 450- to 500-word (approximately one typed page) essay, which will be judged by an independent panel. This year's topic is devoted to "life before rural electricity." Essayists should write about the value that electricity brought to the rural farmers of the 1930s. The essays will be judged on composition, neatness, originality and knowledge of the subject.

The winner will travel with students from across Texas to Washington, D.C. This group will ultimately join approximately 1,200 Youth Tour participants from across the country. This tremendous learning opportunity will include tours of the Smithsonian museums, Washington National Cathedral, George Washington's home at Mount Vernon and other historical sites and memorials. Additionally, one day will be dedicated to Congressional visits and Capitol tours.

Those wishing more information about the tour should visit youthtour.org to see pictures and videos from past tours. Expenses covered by WCEC include airfare, transportation while in Washington, hotel rooms, food costs and tours of many exciting, educational and inspiring sites. Parents or guardians will be responsible for transporting the teen to and from Irving, Texas.

Eligibility and Rules

ENTRANTS MUST:

- ▶ Be a high school student enrolled as a sophomore, junior or senior.
- ▶ Be a dependent of a Wood County Electric Cooperative member with permanent resident status in WCEC's service area.
- ▶ Submit an essay not to exceed 500 words, which describes "life before rural electricity." No name should appear on the essay. Essay entries must arrive at WCEC on or before February 28, 2014 and should be mailed to:

Wood County Electric Cooperative, Inc.
Attention: Youth Tour 2014
P.O. Box 1827
Quitman, TX 75783
- ▶ Attach a separate cover sheet to the essay that includes: student essayist name and age, name and address of parent/guardian who is a member of WCEC, contact telephone number and WCEC account number.

Reference materials from various sources including libraries and the Internet may be used, but the essay should be in the student's own words.

Get a Pet Door That Saves Energy

You've weatherstripped your doors and windows, caulked around electric outlets and other wall penetrations and had your heating system checked by a pro.

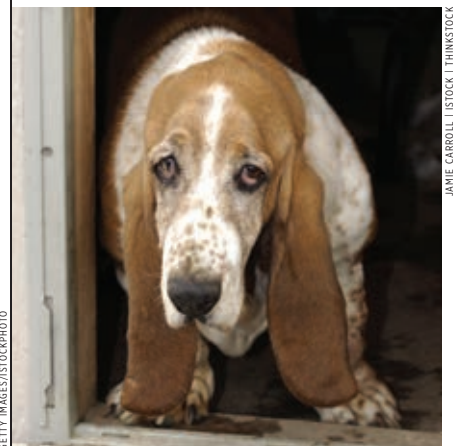
Yet you let your dog or cat push through a flap in an uninsulated pet door whenever nature calls.

There's no reason to lose expensive, heated air through a pet door. Manufacturers make energy-efficient models that allow your animals to come and go without wasting electricity.

Here are a few features to consider when replacing your energy-wasting pet door with a more efficient model:

- ▶ Look for an Energy Star-rated model. These are guaranteed to be substantially more energy efficient than older pet doors.
- ▶ Choose a door with magnetic striping so it fits into the door opening as snugly as possible.
- ▶ If you buy a wooden door, look for one that is filled with an insulating material such as polyurethane foam or fiberglass.
- ▶ If you prefer a glass door, buy one with two panes of coated glass that are filled with a nontoxic gas for an extra layer of efficiency.
- ▶ For security, find a door that you can lock at night to keep your pet indoors and unwanted animals out.

Help Fido enjoy his freedom with an energy-efficient doggy door.



GETTY IMAGES/ISTOCKPHOTO

JAMIE CARROLL / ISTOCK / THINKSTOCK



If you have to flip a breaker every time you flip flapjacks on your electric griddle, it's a good idea to have your home wiring inspected and to make the necessary upgrades.

Wiring Warning

Electrical problems cause thousands of house fires each year.

If the wiring in your house is 40 years old or more, it might be time to have it checked out. As wiring ages, insulation can get brittle and wires can short circuit.

U.S. fire departments responded to an estimated annual average of 47,820 reported home structure fires involving electrical failure or malfunction from 2007-11, according to the National Fire Protection Association. These fires resulted in 455 civilian deaths, 1,518 civilian injuries and \$1.5 billion in direct property damage.

About half of such fires involve wiring, switches, outlets or lighting equipment, the NFPA reports.

If you don't know how old your wiring is or the last time it was inspected, you can watch for these warning signs of electrical system danger.

- ▶ Outlets or switches feel warm.
- ▶ Fuses frequently blow or circuit breakers trip often.
- ▶ Lights dim or flicker.

If you see any of these problems, contact a qualified electrical contractor for a thorough wiring inspection. While the contractor is there, ask about having arc-fault circuit interrupters installed. Those devices cut the power to an outlet if they detect a short circuit.

Other home electrical fires, the NFPA reported, can be attributed to equipment and appliance malfunctions.

To reduce the chances of starting a fire, replace or repair damaged or loose electrical cords; avoid overloading outlets; and place lamps on level surfaces, away from things that can burn, using bulbs that match the lamp's recommended wattage.

Use extension cords only on a temporary basis. If you find that you are using an extension cord routinely to plug in an appliance or lamp, consider having an electrician add a circuit or outlet.

When you use an extension cord, first inspect it to make sure it's in good working order with no cuts on the insulation and all prongs to fit an outlet. Never remove a grounding pin from a cord to make it fit an outlet. Don't run cords under rugs, where they can overheat.

WARNING:

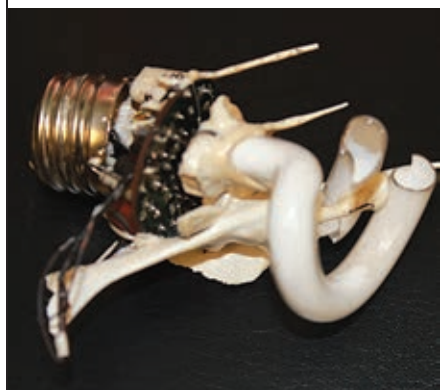
Don't Bake All Bulbs

Oven lights are handy. Curious if a casserole's ready? Flip the switch. There's no need to open the oven and release heat. But be careful when replacing this little light. Never put a bulb in the oven that's not built for high heat.

Compact fluorescent lamps use less energy than classic incandescent bulbs, but they're not safe in extreme temperatures. Most lighting labels designate safe temperatures, but warnings may be in fine print.

NEED TO REPLACE YOUR OVEN LIGHT? Look for appliance lightbulbs. These bulbs are designed for extreme temperatures in ovens and refrigerators. The hardy bulbs are here to stay; 40-watt appliance bulbs are exempt from federal lighting efficiency standards.

WHY WON'T CFLS WORK? Instead of heating a filament until white-hot to produce light like an incandescent bulb, a fluorescent lamp contains a gas that produces ultraviolet light when excited by



CFL lightbulbs are great—but not for every application. A co-op member scraped this melted CFL off the side of his oven. The CFL wasn't designed for oven use.

electricity. The UV light and the white coating inside the bulb result in visible light. Because CFLs don't use heat to create light, they are 75 percent more energy efficient. But the technology that cuts energy use doesn't stand a chance in an oven's 400-plus degree heat.