

Best Paw Forward

Humane
Society looks
for new support

BY DEAN POLING

THE VALDOSTA DAILY TIMES

VALDOSTA — The Humane Society of Valdosta-Lowndes County took the first steps Wednesday to increase public awareness of its mission to help regional animals and pet owners.

During a ribbon-cutting ceremony with the Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce, the Humane Society discussed the need for more donations, plans to create a spay-neuter clinic, and introduce its new board members.

'We've let area veterinarians know that we wouldn't be providing any other veterinary services other than spaying and neutering.'

Needing approximately \$500,000 to open and operate a spay-neuter clinic, the facility would employ a full-time veterinarian and technician, said John Gates, Humane Society director. This vet would work only with spaying and neutering cats and dogs while possibly giving the animals rabies shots if needed.

“We’ve let area veterinarians know that we wouldn’t be providing any other veterinary services other than spaying and neutering,” Gates said.

Humane Society President Jamie Catikos said a spay-neuter clinic is essential for the region. Last year, Lowndes County put down approximately 6,000 animals, he said. If more pets can be spayed and neutered, there would be less need to euthanize unwanted strays.

In the Humane Society’s 23-year history in Valdosta-Lowndes County, it has rescued approximately 16,000 animals, seen nearly 16,000 animals adopted, spayed and neutered nearly 340,000 animals which prevented an estimated 2 million-plus unwanted cats and dogs in our region, according to the organization’s statistics.

A spay-neuter clinic would prevent even more unwanted animals in the region and give the Humane Society’s service a centralized location for pet owners to bring their cats and dogs, instead of currently traveling to different





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The Humane Society of Valdosta-Lowndes County President Jamie Catikos cuts the ribbon during a Wednesday afternoon ceremony. With donations down and plans to open a spay-neuter clinic, the Humane Society is increasing its public presence.

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locations to visit participating vets.

The Humane Society would like to locate the clinic in its 307 E. Jane St., offices, but zoning has made that impossible so far. The group hopes to see the zoning amended for the clinic or possibly move to another location.

The Humane Society seeks additional contributions to open a clinic and continue its current services, such as a task force dedicated to battling and prosecuting animal cruelty, matching animals with good families through its foster and adoption programs, etc.

The new board of directors wished to increase awareness of the Humane Society's mission and role in the community. The Humane Society of Valdosta-Lowndes County board is Jamie Catikos, president, Kelli Affeldt, Don Brotherton, Judy Haverkamp, Clay Moseley, Sara Riley, and William Whitesell.

The Humane Society of Val-



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Valdosta-Lowndes County Chamber of Commerce representative Mike Meeks, right, speaks with Humane Society of Valdosta-Lowndes County Board Member Sara Riley at an event Wednesday at the Humane Society.

dosta-Lowndes County charges \$40 to neuter a male cat, \$55 to spay a female cat, \$60 to neuter a

male dog, \$65 to spay a female dog. More information or to donate to the Humane Society of Valdosta-Lowndes

County: Call (229) 247-3266; 307 E. Jane St., Valdosta GA 31602; or visit www.humanesocietyofvaldosta.org