

Westmoore Elementary Fourth Graders Advocate for Pets!



The Speuter Story Contest winners

At the end of April, the fourth graders at Westmoore Elementary School gathered to celebrate their “graduation” from the Pet Responsibility Program.

Once a week, over a period of five weeks, they had been attentive listeners and great learners, taking to heart all they can do going forward to make the world a better place for pets.

During the review of important information about being responsible pet owners, the students’ responses impressed the parents who attended.

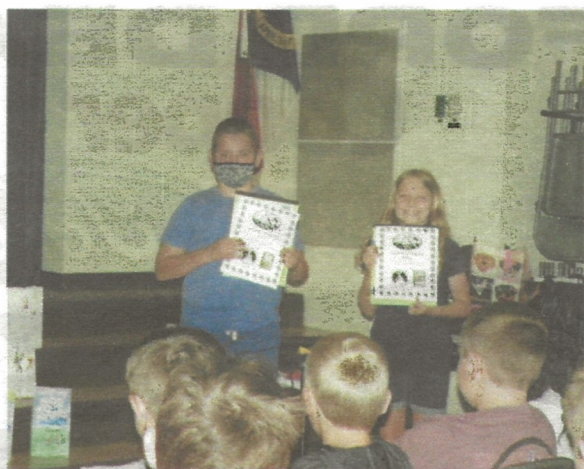


Trainer Neil Copeland with Elmer Surface

Ms. Wendy Ritter and Ms. Dawn Early, the fourth grade teachers, together with some students, surprised the Pet Responsibility Committee (PRC) volunteer teachers who had presented the program (Tammy Foster, Liz Surface, Joanne Conrad, Cindy Gansen) with a small geranium plant each as a token of their gratitude!

The students were treated to a visit from Speuter, the PRC kitty mascot. Speuter read a poem about her humble beginnings as a stray cat on the street. The students learned that Speuter was lucky to have found someone to love and care for her and went on to live a happy healthy life. Speuter encouraged the students to think about how much better the world would be if we all took it upon ourselves to save just one animal in some way.

As part of the program, the students were asked to write a "Spouter" story about how their pets would benefit from being spayed or neutered. Ms. Ritter and Ms. Early had assigned the story as a writing project. All the stories were wonderful and showed how much they had learned. The Pet Responsibility teachers selected a total of 14 students to be winners! Each student received a framed certificate and a voucher for a free spay or neuter for a dog or cat.



2 of the Clinic Bag Award winners.

Aaron, Aby, Ashlyn, Brayden, Brooklyn, Cooper, Emma, Jacob, Joshua, Landon, Miley, River and Sadie were all announced as winners! Because of their concern and their efforts, 12 pets will be fixed and not add to the pet overpopulation situation in Moore County.



A winning clinic bag with a loving message.

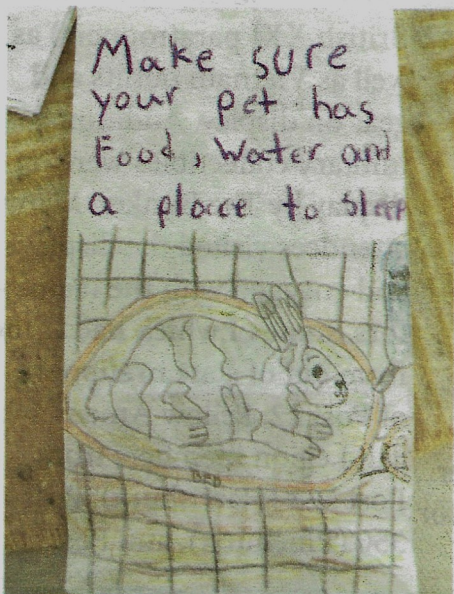
The winners whose pets were already spayed or neutered exemplified advocacy by giving their voucher to a relative or friend or back to the PRC for other pets in need of the surgery.

The students at Westmoore Elementary carefully decorated paper lunch bags to be donated to the Sandhills Spay Neuter Veterinary Clinic in Vass. Each bag carries an advocacy message and will be used to carry medications for pets after their surgery. There were some wonderful bags. Eight students were awarded certificates for their artwork and messages. Among the winners were Aby, Brayden,

Brooklyn, Iyana, Miley, River and Shylyn.

There were two very special guests at the Assembly. Neil Copeland of Seven Lakes Kennels talked to the students about how he trains dogs. He trains dogs who work with the military and the police or dogs who are pets and need some training to thrive. He took a lot of questions from interested students and parents. His training "part-

ner” was Liz Surface’s Elmer. Elmer was adopted out of a bad situation which Liz described to the students. Neil trained Elmer who is now a certified therapy dog, joining the PRC team in the classroom.



A winning clinic bag featuring a rabbit.

Throughout the program, the students had followed the story of Snowball and Barney, two pets who had ended up at the county shelter. Snowball was a white Pit Bull who proceeded to give birth to 12 puppies or “flakes”! Barney was a black cat who ended up scared and alone at the shelter after his owner died. They represent all the pets who are hard to place in good homes. Snowball and Barney’s stories had happy endings. In fact, Tammy Foster, the PRC volunteer teacher, fostered and placed Snowball and all of her puppies.

All the students recited a Promise together, carefully taking to heart the words they were saying and then signed the Promise Poster, sealing their intent to do their best for all animals going forward.

Each student received an Animal Advocate sticker which they can proudly wear and use to start a conversation with friends and family about caring for pets. They also received a bookmark with important information that all pet advocates should know.

Congratulations to all the Westmoore fourth graders for being part of the team that makes life better for all pets!

For more information about or to volunteer for the PRC, visit www.mcprc.org

Contributed by Angela North Zumwalt, President, PRC

Photos by Angela North Zumwalt and Mary Ann Root