

McDeeds Creek Students Hold Pet Supply Drive for Area Nonprofits

BY ANGELA NORTH ZUMWALT

Special to The Pilot

Towards the end of the recent school year, the fourth-graders at McDeeds Creek Elementary School participated in the Pet Responsibility Program, brought to them by the two and four-legged volunteers from the Moore County Citizens' Pet Responsibility Committee (PRC).

As part of the six-session program, they were given the option to organize a pet-related service project at their school. The students also learned about the various types of rescue groups and shelters in the area that help with the pet overpopulation situation. For their service project they chose to collect pet food and supplies to be donated to one of these organizations through the PRC.

Conducting a service project at the end of the school year has its challenges. The students rose to the occasion and worked with the McDeeds K-Kids Club to collect a bounty of food and supplies. One of their teachers, Katherine Fowler, contacted the PRC just as school was concluding for the year. PRC volunteer Tammy Foster drove to the school to collect the generous haul.

Foster met up with the co-founders of Moore Animal Alliance to deliver the donations.

As an organization, they not only collect and organize pet food donations for pet owners in need, but they also have a large, committed foster network for dogs, cats, kittens and puppies, which is always in need of pet supplies. The donations from the McDeeds Creek families will go far.

The Pet Responsibility Program was presented in 33 classrooms to around 850 fourth-graders this past school year.

Katherine Fowler and Jackelyn Winters, the two classroom teachers at McDeeds, made the following observations.

"The Pet Responsibility program has been a wonderful addition to our fourth-grade science curriculum. It gives students the opportunity to learn about animals and responsible pet ownership while also helping them develop empathy, compassion and respect for living things," said Fowler.

"One of the most rewarding parts of the program is seeing the impact it has on our students. The lessons encourage them to think about the needs of animals, make responsible choices and show kindness to others. These are skills and values that extend far beyond the classroom," Winters added. "This program provides a meaningful way to support that growth. We hope the lessons they learn stay with

them for years to come and inspire them to make a positive difference in the lives of both animals and people."

The teachers also passed along comments from McDeeds Creek K-Kids President Laney McKenzie. "For our last and final service project for our community, we chose to collect items for pets and animals in need. We then thought of the idea to donate it to the Moore County Pet Responsibility Program. This organization comes to our school and teaches every fourth-grade class how to be a responsible pet owner. We thought this would be the perfect place to donate the food, blankets, towels and toys that we collected. We are so proud to be able to give back to our community through our McDeeds K-Kids Club."

A PRC spokesperson added, "These moments, when the stars of generosity and awareness align, validate everything we do."

For more information about the program and how you can get involved, visit www.mcprc.org or www.mooreanimalalliance.com.

Angela North Zumwalt is the president of the Moore County Citizens' Pet Responsibility Committee.



CONTRIBUTED
McDeeds Creek Elementary School students display various pet food and related items collected during their spring collection drive.