

Red Hats to meet

The Red Hat Society will meet Thursday, February 2, at 11 am at Pena's Red Barn in Bronte.

You are welcome to join this group where there is fun after 50 (and before) for women of all walks of life. Red Hat is one of the things that we look forward to where there is lots of good fun and fellowship.

Letter to Editor

Dear Editor:

Recently, I was asked to come to Robert Lee and visit with several citizens who are interested in trying to develop a plan to address the problem of feral, or community cats. Community cats are cats that were pets that have been abandoned or lost, the numerous offspring of those once-tame pets, and the term also applies to pet cats that are allowed to roam.

These cats are a problem in all of our towns and cities in this part of the world and I wanted to share with you some of the successful steps in helping to reduce these numbers. For years, the way people dealt with community cats was to kill many of them; they were often shot, poisoned, or taken to a shelter to be put down. These control methods are often inhumane and/or illegal, and, very importantly, do not offer any long-lasting solution. The number of cats may temporarily be reduced, but soon more are born or more are dumped in these colonies and these numbers quickly begin to increase. When cats are removed from a colony, the "vacuum effect" allows for the entrance of new cats to the area and the survival of more of the offspring of the remaining cats, quickly filling the vacuum created by the removal. A stable colony of cats repels newcomer cats, protecting the colony and its food source.

In the last several years, a program called TNR has shown to be the most effective way of reducing the number of community cats and ensuring that the cats in the colony are neutered and healthy. TNR stands for TRAP-NEUTER-RETURN—a non-lethal method of population control that is more effective than trap-and-kill. TNR advocates humanely trap community cats and kittens and have them neutered and vaccinated by a

veterinarian. Extremely sick cats are humanely euthanized. Healthy, adult unsocialized cats are released back to their colonies, while adoptable cats and kittens are socialized and adopted into good homes. The breeding stops. Populations are gradually reduced. The annoying behaviors of breeding cats, like yowling, fighting, spraying, stop or are greatly reduced. The cats are vaccinated against disease and actually serve as a barrier against wildlife that might be infected with rabies.

This program takes volunteers who believe in its implementation; it takes time it takes money. The program I work with, Critter Shack, offers a low-cost community cat program at our clinic that many people are beginning to take advantage of—many of the caretakers of the colonies we work with have seen a remarkable reduction in their now-healthier colonies. We help them adopt out the socialized cats and kittens and we try our best to educate people about TNR.

We always say, "if you like cats, TNR makes sense; if you don't like cats, TNR really makes sense because it is the only effective, long-term method of reducing the numbers of community cats." Smaller numbers of ferals,

healthier colonies, humane treatment of community cats—these are attainable goals that we can work for in Robert Lee and everywhere.

If you are interested in getting involved in this program or would like to ask any questions, please call any of the following numbers.

- Connie Weant
325-650-5862
- Beverly Hawkins
817-312-6149
- Renee Smith
325-473-1512

Thank you,
Sharon Halfmann

Commissioners Court minutes posted

The Coke County Commissioners Court met in regular session January 10, 2017 at the courthouse in Robert Lee. Members of the court present included County Judge, Roy Blair, Commissioner, Pct. #1, Donald Robertson, Commissioner, Pct. #2, Paul Williams, Commissioner, Pct #3, Marshall Millican, Commissioner, Pct. #4, Joe Sefcik. Clerk Mary Grim was also in attendance.

The meeting opened with prayer given by Comm. Williams and pledge to the flag was recited.

Judge Blair announced the

presence of a quorum.

Comm. Williams made a motion to approve the minutes for December 27, 2016. The motion was seconded by Comm. Robertson. Motion carried.

The Treasurer's Report was presented by Treasurer Hal Spain. Comm. Sefcik made a motion to approve the Treasurer's report. The motion was seconded by Comm. Williams. Motion carried.

The Extension Report for Agent Kandice Everitt was given by Judge Blair.

Sheriff Wayne McCutchen presented his report.

Tax Collector's Report was presented by Tax A/C Deputy Randi Hardesty.

County/District Clerk Mary Grim presented her report.

Constable Precinct 2 Marty Boyd's report was presented by Judge Blair.

Justice of the Peace Jackie Walker presented her report.

The D.R. Report was presented by Judge Blair. No activity.

The Trapper's Reports was unavailable.

Comm. Robertson made a motion to reinstate the burn ban. The motion was seconded by Comm. Millican. Motion carried.

Comm. Williams made a

motion to purchase caliche from Wayne McCutchen for Pct. 2 and 4. The motion was seconded by Comm. Sefcik. Motion carried.

The Court received a request from Tommy Parker with the Kickapoo Dance Club to waive or significantly reduce the rental charges for the Bronte Large Recreation Hall. No action taken, dies for lack of motion.

The Court received a request from Erin Oleksiuk and Katy Drennan with the Daddy Daughter Date Night to waive or reduce the rental fee for the Robert Lee Recreation Hall. No action was taken, dies for lack of motion.

Judge Blair reported on the letter of intent for the Coke County Detention Center and the TDCRS rate.

Comm. Millican reported that he and Comm. Robertson will be attending the VG Young Conference and also about water in the basement.

There being no private road work requests no action was taken.

Comm. Sefcik made a motion to pay bills. The motion was seconded by Comm. Williams. Motion carried.

Judge Blair adjourned the meeting at 9:30 am.

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If you wish to be included, contact Morgan Brigham at (325) 277-9210 or everythingcokecounty@gmail.com.

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For our Bronte customers' convenience, there is a Drop Box at SHIRLEY'S PLACE