

Kill rates are unacceptable

It is amazing to me that Monroe County can praise itself for contracting with animal control shelters that have high kill rates.

In 2015 the Humane Animal Care Coalition of the Upper Keys killed 7.5 out of every 10 cats that were brought to them and 3.2 of every 10 dogs. That's right, and this is their "reduced" numbers from previous years. Florida Keys SPCA is right behind them in the kill numbers. No wonder people who cannot keep a pet would rather turn them to the streets than take them to the gulag. That thinking perpetuates the problems and traumatizes the animals.

The shelter three-day rule is very disturbing. Imagine if your cat/dog had a caretaker that accidentally let it escape over a long weekend when you were out of town. Your pet loses its collar, is caught by a stranger, transported in an unfamiliar vehicle and finds itself at one of the kill shelters. Would your animal purr or wag its tail? Most likely not. If it growls, snarls, bites, nips due to fear, it is deemed "not adoptable," and guess what, you could come home to discover your animal, who was not redeemed in three days and deemed "feral" or "unadoptable" is dead.

Euthanasia is not what is done to healthy cats. That is killing pure and simple. Euthanasia is a term used for animals that are so sick or injured that it is in the best interest of that animal not to suffer — not for the convenience or laziness of shelter personnel.

Florida Keys SPCA states the cat kills are down because of fewer "feral cats." The thanks there should be going to the non-profit organizations such as Forgotten Felines (an organization who successfully practiced humane trap-neuter-return-feed and monitor techniques for the past 18 years), MarrVelous Pet Rescues and caring private citizens who volunteer to have abandoned cats fixed.

Let your commissioner and shelters know these kill rates are unacceptable. Stand Up For Animals of Marathon had a 17 percent euthanasia rate and Safe Harbor Animal Rescue of the Keys 30 percent. These shelters were blown out for the kill shelters, and why? When making those tax-deductible donations to help the animals, you may want to think about the various organizations mentioned and who really is looking out for the welfare of the animals.

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