



March 13, 2015

Contact: Blake Rexroat
Office: 817-598-4209
Email: brexroat@weatherfordtx.gov

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Animal shelter helps dogs after human negligence

WEATHERFORD (CITY OF WEATHERFORD), Texas — The Weatherford Parker County Animal Shelter recently had in its care a family of feral dogs living behind a business on 51 South.

The feral dog family included female Labrador mix named Lucy, her longtime male Heeler mix partner named Lucas and their 10 day old puppies. After multiple attempts, Animal Control Officers (ACOs) caught Lucas and were able to pick up Lucy's puppies. It was determined that the puppies were too young to survive on their own without their mother and the Weatherford Parker County Animal Shelter arranged care for the dogs through Tall Tailz, a nonprofit rescue. The mother, Lucy, was later picked up by a concerned citizen and reunited with her puppies at Tall Tailz until they could be weaned.

Lucy was later accepted into the Weatherford Parker County Animal Shelter after it was determined she was at risk of escaping from her current environment. After retrieval and evaluation of Lucy, she was diagnosed with severe heartworms and given immediate medical care. Heartworms are a parasite contracted from mosquitoes that cause disease by clogging the heart and major blood vessels leading to the heart. Unfortunately, after spay and neuter surgery it was also discovered that Lucy suffered from Pyometra. Pyometra is an infection in the uterus that poses a serious and life threatening condition that must be treated immediately.

"If Lucy had not been treated for Pyometra, it is a high probability that she would have died within weeks," said Dr. Kent Glen, Veterinary Surgeon. "Unfortunately, Lucy's heartworm condition is equally bad and we are working with a rescue group to treat the disease. The Weatherford Parker County Animal Shelter saved this dog's life and is giving her the best chance for survival."

Many animals each year, like Lucy and Lucas, are illegally dumped inside the community with the false hope that 'someone' will take the animal in and care for it. The City of Weatherford has an animal abandonment ordinance that makes it illegal to dump animals. People who knowingly leave these animals on the street not only put the animal's life in danger, but contribute to the costly overpopulation of pets in the community. These stray and feral animals are more likely to contract



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and contribute to the spread of dangerous diseases. It is also important that individuals who identify a stray animal notify the animal shelter immediately.

"Lucy and Lucas are unfortunate examples of the need for animal control and the importance of heartworm prevention," said Assistant Director of Community Services Dustin Deel. "Lucy's case was very critical. We did not expect to find that she was also suffering from Pyometra during her spay. Now that we have addressed the Pyometra, we can focus efforts on getting her help with her heartworms. Unfortunately her condition is so severe that is experiencing pulmonic click. A pulmonic click keeps the heart's valve from properly opening and closing."

Apollo Support & Rescue pulled Lucy and Lucas into their foster program March 8. Apollo Support and Rescue are hopeful that both Lucy and Lucas will be able to ultimately end up in a loving permanent home. However, both animals must undergo heartworm treatment before either will be adopted.

Heartworms are endemic to much of North Texas and the animal shelter estimates that at times nearly 1 in 5 dogs come into the shelter with a minor to severe case of heartworms. Heartworm prevention medication is easy to get from your local veterinarian and only has to be given orally once a month. Animals without the preventive are at high risk of contracting heartworms.

For questions, please contact Weatherford Parker County Animal Shelter at 817-598-4111 or animals@weatherfordtx.gov. If you would like to make a donation to Apollo Support & Rescue for Lucy and Lucas recovery, you can find them online at <http://apollosupportandrescue.org/>.

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More information on the City of Weatherford: www.weatherfordtx.gov

More information on the Weatherford Parker County Animal Shelter: www.weatherfordtx.gov/animalshelter

City of Weatherford

Weatherford, Texas is a service oriented, yet still "small town" community that upgrades its infrastructure, celebrates and shares its rich history, and fosters quality economic growth – in a fiscally-responsible, even revenue-generating fashion.