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Animal Control Advises Caution When Giving Pets As Gifts

FAYETTEVILLE **–** Cumberland County Animal Control reminds citizens to make careful, informed decisions when giving pets as Christmas gifts this holiday season.

Animal Control Director Dr. John Lauby said pets should not be given as gifts unless the giver knows the recipient is serious about taking care of the animal. Lauby also encourages anyone who wants to give a pet as a gift to consider a dog or cat from the Cumberland County Animal Shelter. Lauby said shelter pets are already healthy, vaccinated and properly socialized.

The animal shelter is located at 4704 Corporation Drive in Fayetteville. Regular adoption hours are Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5:30 p.m. and Saturday from 1 to 4:30 p.m. Anyone who wants a shelter pet should adopt the animal by Dec. 21 to allow time for the pet to be spayed or neutered. The animal shelter will be closed Dec. 23-Dec. 27 for the Christmas holiday and will re-open Dec. 28.

"If you want to give a pet as a gift, consider adopting one from the animal shelter," Lauby said. "If you feel you have to give an animal, get educated about the pet and what it means to be responsible for an animal."

Lauby said the animal's size and breed characteristics, as well as the age and maturity level of the intended recipient, should be considered. Lauby also cautioned against giving pets to children who are too young to appreciate responsibility.

"Some people give pets to younger children in attempts to make them responsible, but the parents end up taking responsibility for the animal," Lauby said. "Usually, when children reach about age 10 or older, they understand responsibility for animals much better."

Profiles and photos of pets available for adoption at the animal shelter can be viewed online at co.cumberland.nc.us/animal_control. Call 910-321-6852 for more information.

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