

ANIMALS

suffering here for a long time.

The SPCA urges citizens to take action and contact legislators to stiffen laws and penalties that will eliminate the market for mass-bred pets. We must stop the unnecessary addition of countless animals to an already tragic problem of pet overpopulation."

Sheriff's office lieutenant Jackie Buccafurno made contact with Williams in 2000. At that time Buccafurno told Williams to clean up the area.

"At that time she only had a few animals in the front of her residence. She did clean it up at that time and SPCA came out and it checked out. Since then Pat Jordan has been out there several times. The suffering of animals has got to stop," said Buccafurno.

She went on to say, "When we initially came out here there was no water in the dishes, the only thing that was in the water bowls was green mildew, in every dish out here. Williams said that the mildew happened overnight and we all know that is not true. There were also claw marks in the bottom of the bowls, trying to get water."

Buccafurno said since Friday, Williams had put out some water and cleaned a little, but it was not enough.

"She (Williams) failed to comply. The animals are still in deplorable condition. Since Friday, we acquired a warrant to seize the animals. We have many excellent breeders in Van Zandt County that has excellent facilities. They care for their animals. They love their animals and the animals are very clean. I have been impressed with a lot of our breeders in Van Zandt County. There are just a few that we have to deal with," said Buccafurno.

The Van Zandt County Sheriff's Office gave Williams a warning on June 23 and repeatedly visited Williams over the last year, warning her to improve the animals' living conditions.

Precinct 4 Constable Pat Jordan has given warnings at this location at least five times in the last five months, as well.

*Photo by
Sheila Kunick*
**Van Zandt
County Lt.
Jackie
Buccafurno
and Con-
stable Pat
Jordan are
shown as they
assist the
SPCA in
rescuing 26
cats, 37 dogs,
22 sheep, one
rabbit and
two wolf
hybrids.**



"I came out here five months ago and left a notice. I have been checking back. I came here last week and saw Williams out. I think she has been here before but she would not answer her door," Jordan said. "When I saw her outside, stopped, and I immediately went to the front cage and saw a dead kitten lying in the cage. The kitten was just skin and bones. I just kept coming by to see if she was going to take care of the problem."

"I believe if you are going to have animals, you need to take care of them. It is a good feeling to see the animals getting help. People need to support the SPCA," said Jordan.

When the sheriff's office initially went to the property on June 23, the animals did not have water or food and there were scrapes on the bottom of the bowls where the animals had tried to get water or food.

On June 23 there were 40 cats, 40 dogs and 25 sheep, and at this time it is unknown where the remainder of the animals are that were not at the location on the arrival of the SPCA.

Also on June 23 a dead kitten was found in a cage with other kittens.

"If this were a legitimate business and she was giving the animals shots and the animals had proper space, and giving the animals proper care, that would be a good thing for the animals and the owner," said Van Zandt County Sheriff R. P. 'Pat' Burnett Jr. "Apparently you can make a

profit by abusing and not feeding and not giving medical attention to the animals. This has got to stop."

Burnett went on to say, "The cats are in worse shape than any of the animals. The sheep are very malnourished. This is not a legitimate business. These animals are not being taken care of."

"We do not have any shot records for any of these animals, so we suspect that they have not been vaccinated. The reason that we have been investigating so many puppy mills in Van Zandt County is because the local law enforcement agencies have contacted us," said Anita Edson with the SPCA.

"We have the resources to take the animals and give them the care that they need. We are grateful that the local law enforcement agencies in Van Zandt County have been working with us," she added. "We can't do what we do without their cooperation. The conditions here are deplorable. They have all been bad that we have seen to so far. It is hard to rate one worse than another because an animal is suffering."

The animals were taken to the SPCA in McKinney at 8411 FM 720, where they will be examined by veterinarians, vaccinated, wormed and cared for until final custody is determined.

SPCA is seeking donations from the public to cover the costs of this and other rescue operations. To donate contact 1-888-ANIMALS.