

Animal rescue group takes message to classroom

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While the number of animals saved through the group's efforts grows, so does the Old Fella mission.

Now, Old Fella Burke County Animal Rescue (OFBCAR) has developed its own humane education program, "Old Fella's Kids," in hopes that area children can learn what it takes to be responsible pet owners.

According to Julie Cole, chair of the education committee, 300 of Burke County's fourthgraders have already seen the OFBCAR presentation, which is given by Sandy McFeat, a retired elementary school teacher from England, and Herb Mihan, a retired business owner from New Jersey.

The presentations include poster boards and handouts that discuss the importance of spay and neuter programs, and students are also taught that animals have some of the same feelings as people, such as fear and loneliness. Cole said the core values of compassion, empathy and respect for all living things are talked about, and at the conclusion of the program, each child receives a "Kind Kid" certificate and a bracelet proclaiming, "It's Not Cool to Be Cruel." Each classroom is also given a poster - 100 Ways to be Kind to Animals.

Cole said the response from both students and teachers has been a positive one, and she and other volunteers have seen several students in the community sporting

their bracelets and have also been approached by grateful parents.

In the near future, OFBCAR hopes to present the program to the remaining fourth-graders in the community as well as to expand it to other age groups and youth organizations.

For more information about OFBCAR or to request a program, visit the Web site www.olfella.org or call 1 (888) 846-3792.