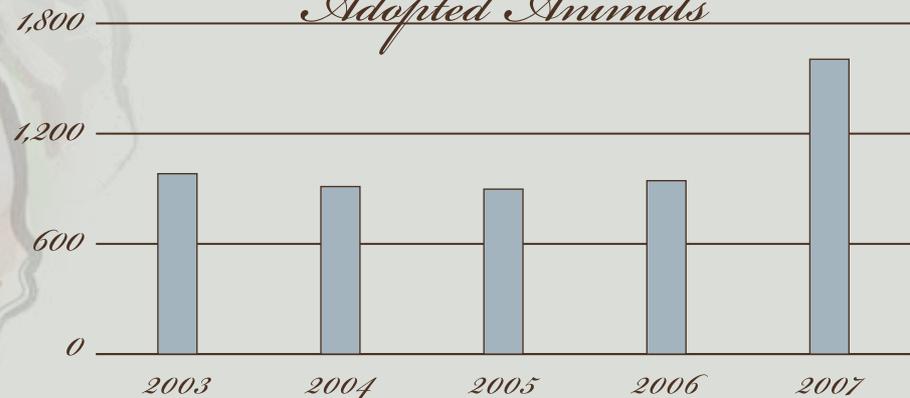




Color of compassion

The Department of Public Safety, Animal Services Division, opened a spay and neuter clinic this past fiscal year to assist with pet adoptions. A dramatic 70 percent increase in adoptions over the last year can be attributed to this new service. The Division also put its new wildfire evacuation plan to good use in May 2007 when a 2,500-acre brush fire near Sorrento threatened livestock and household pets. With the help of local ranchers, a convoy of horse trailers arrived in the community to transport livestock out of the path of the brush fire. After the rescue mission, numerous letters and donations soon followed thanking the Division for being there to protect these unique members of their families.

Adopted Animals



A range of composition

Exhibit of vigilance

The Department of Public Safety continues tireless efforts to prepare for future emergencies. The largest-ever disaster drill to be conducted in the County occurred in July 2007. The multi-agency drill included the Sheriff's Office, Fire Rescue Division, Health Department, Lake-Sumter EMS and Lake County Schools. Joint training opportunities help these agencies respond to urgent situations, such as the rash of wild fires that threatened life and property in the spring of 2007. The Lake County Fire Rescue Division worked in concert with fire departments from local municipalities and neighboring counties, as well as the Florida Division of Forestry, to control the blazes.

Reflecting change

The Code Enforcement Division strengthened the County's abilities to enforce County codes with the addition of a new officer to perform commercial site-plan inspections. The Division also enhanced proactive enforcement by acquiring a code trailer to collect illegal signs and to offer public-education activities. An illegal sign is generally one that is placed in the County right of way. In addition, Code Enforcement is working with the Community Enhancement Area Partnership Program to use the trailer for neighborhood cleanups in blighted areas of the County that are scheduled for revitalization.

"Like many other drills, this exercise gave us an invaluable opportunity to train our staff in disaster preparedness, evacuation methods and rescue techniques in coordination with other local and regional agencies," said Jerry Smith, Director of the Emergency Management Division.

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