

# Commissioner Gale Walldorff



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## County News from Commissioner Walldorff

### Celebrating a Life Shared

Jan 18, 2006

ATLANTA - January 18, 2006 - There wasn't a dry eye in the Decatur Old County Courthouse room as families gathered to honor, celebrate and remember the lives of their pets that passed in 2005. While the event, sponsored by the Delilah Foundation and Paws, Whiskers and Wags pet crematory, was a one-day gathering, the message to address the needs and support homeless and sheltered animals in metro Atlanta is one the Delilah Foundation plans to continue to drive support for in the community.



Commissioner Walldorff with Andy and their new rescue dog at the celebration on Sunday.

DeKalb County Commissioner Gale Walldorff, who lost a pet this year, addressed the issue in her keynote address, "Every year, nearly 10,000 pets are destroyed in DeKalb County because there is not a viable adoption program currently available. That equates to eighteen thousand pounds of animals a month. In other words, of the pets turned in to or picked up by our Animal Services Division, 79 percent in Fulton, Cobb and Gwinnett, the average is around 50 percent. It saddens me to have to report statistics, but it underscores the amount of work to be done."

Many supporters of animal rescue and adoption groups are those who have first-hand experience with an adopted animal. Commissioner Walldorff recently adopted new dog Mr. Goodbar from a small rescue program and he joined her on stage during the final part of her speech: "I encourage each one of you to get involved. Help educate our citizens about the responsibility of pet ownership, work with an adoption group, and give generously to the Delilah Foundation."

James and Victoria Blaine created the Delilah Foundation for the purpose of benefiting the lives of animals in memory of their beloved dog Delilah. In closing remarks, Victoria touched on the emotions experienced by many families there after the sudden loss of a pet. "When a loved one dies, there are many support groups available to you. But how many of us have heard 'It was just a cat, just a dog, you can get another'?"

The Blaines, the Commissioner and many of the event's invited guests found solace and comfort during a difficult time through Christine Hunsaker, owner and founder of Paws, Whiskers & Wags pet crematory. The event provided a time for the families to come together to remember their animal friends and to find support as one available resource for those grieving.

"Delilah was a pound puppy and not just a pound puppy but also a dog with special needs. I remember when I adopted her from the Atlanta Humane Society, I knew when I saw her that she was meant to be part of my family," says Victoria. "I would give anything to have Delilah back. I know that cannot happen. I believe that at least part of the reason Delilah came into our lives was to bring attention to the needs of shelter animals."

The Delilah Foundation will provide grants to animal shelters in DeKalb and Fulton counties that support animal adoption. For more information, or to make a donation, please contact the foundation at [DelilahFoundation@earthlink.net](mailto:DelilahFoundation@earthlink.net) or 404.370.6000.

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