



**People Power**  
BY CARRIE ALLAN

**Dan Woodruff**

**Position:** Animal control officer with municipal police department (he's the whole animal control department, actually) for Arab City, Alabama.

**Community size:** 8,000+

**Annual intake:** 300 animals

**Annual budget:** \$3,000, which is about enough to cover electricity and water. Woodruff asks for food donations from citizens and local businesses.

**How he got into the field:** A 30-year veteran of the police force, Woodruff "thought animal control was going to be a 7 a.m. to 3 p.m. job, Monday through

Friday. The guy that did it before me told me there was a lot more freedom and better hours ..." he says with a chuckle. "He lied. He sold me this thing hook, line, and sinker. I'm never out of contact with work." But when he started going to animal conferences in the state and learning more, Woodruff started loving the job—and he's been at it for three years.

**His favorite part of the job:** Getting out and meeting people and occasionally sensing that he's reached them. "You see the light go on and they go, 'Yeah, I guess that a collar and tag is a good idea. I don't know why I didn't think of it.'"

**His challenges:** The Arab City shelter has space for ten dogs and an 8-by-10 cage for cats and kittens. Community members let unsterilized animals run at large, so cats and kittens "are running loose all over town."

**His frustrations:** The city has an ordinance that specifies people must keep their pets on their property and not let them run loose. "You don't have to pen them up, you don't have to stake them out—just keep them on your property and we'll not have any problems," he says. "People in this town do not do that. I mean, there are several that do and are responsible and have their pets

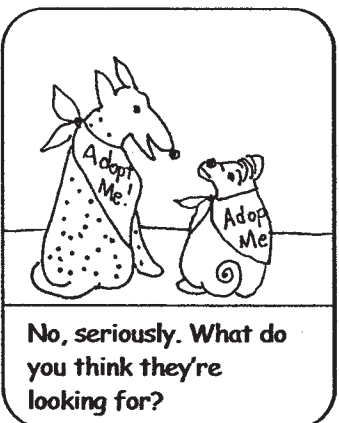
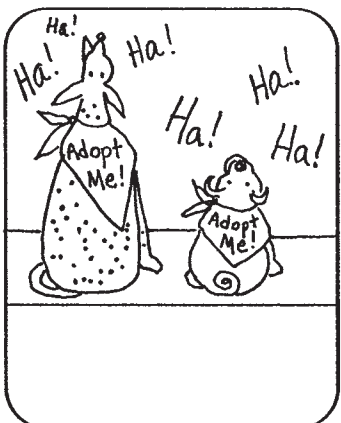
spayed or neutered ... but the other seven thousand nine hundred and ninety some ..." At a pet registration event Woodruff held, a total of eight citizens showed up to get their dogs registered. "And I'm like, 'Come on, people—I pick up 15 to 20 a week. I know good and well there's more than eight dogs in the city of Arab!'"

**What he's most proud of:** He's gotten help from several loyal volunteers who are really interested in animal care and do a lot of work for the shelter. "And those are [volunteers] besides my wife and kids, who have to help if they want to keep me."

**His most memorable moment in the field:** When a neighbor asked for help with a skunk in his garage, Woodruff said he'd be over in a minute. But by the time he'd arrived, the impatient neighbor had taken matters into his own hands: He'd managed to get the skunk out of the garage and into the driveway, but it had doused the whole neighborhood with stink.

His secret for survival in the animal sheltering field: "I just try to have a funny, good time and do my job. ... Sometimes it's aggravating, but you gotta just sit down and start laughing about the stuff you do and the people you meet and the situations you run into. Because if you don't ... you'll probably go nuts."

**Dog Park**



By J & J Hubal