

FORT MYERS FLORIDA WEEKLY™

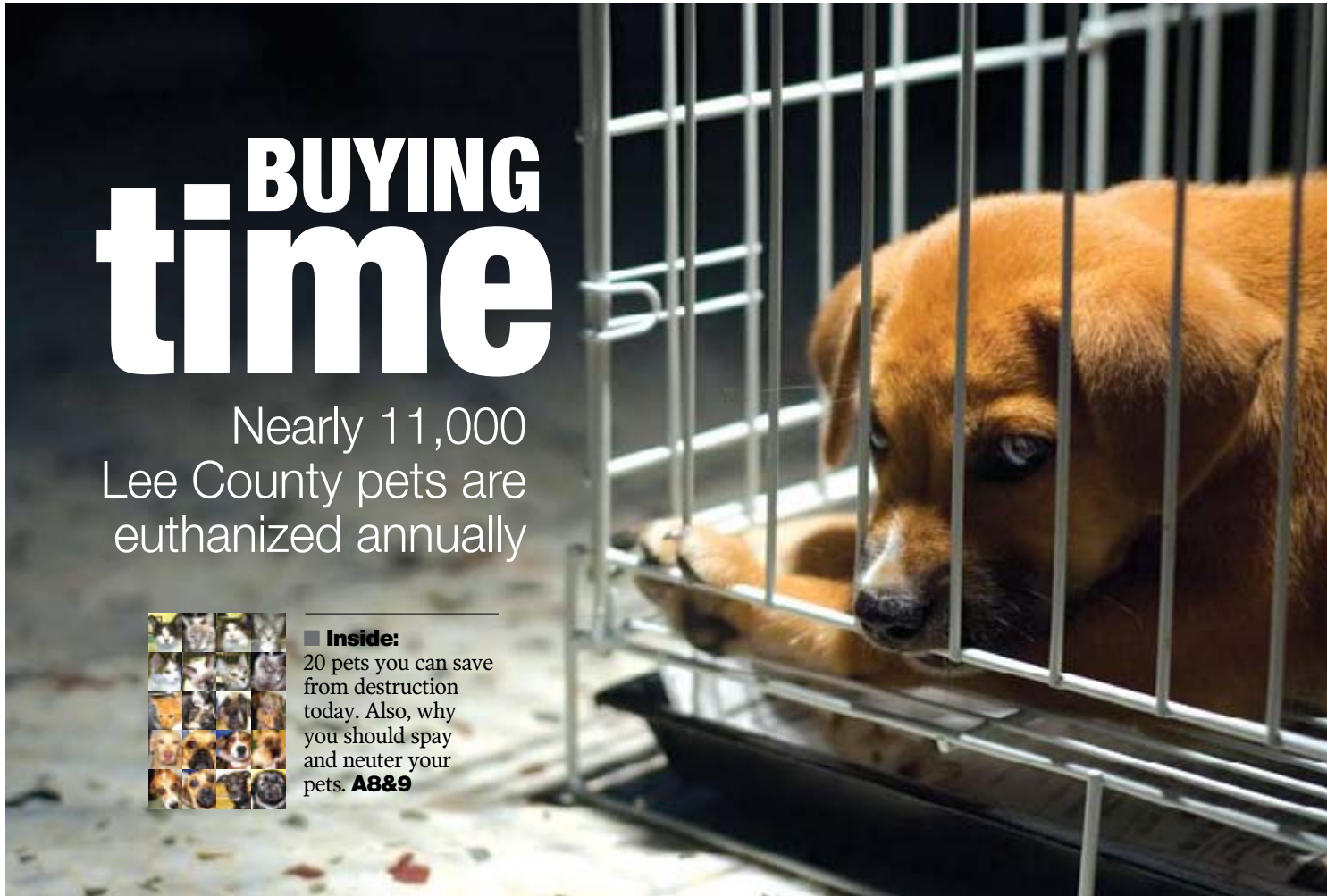
YOUR NEWS AND ENTERTAINMENT SOURCE

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WEEK OF NOVEMBER 1-7, 2007

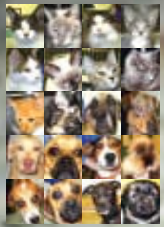
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Vol. 1, No. 31



BUYING time

Nearly 11,000 Lee County pets are euthanized annually



Inside: 20 pets you can save from destruction today. Also, why you should spay and neuter your pets. **A8&9**

BY KAREN FELDMAN
Florida Weekly Correspondent

It's human folly, frailty and misfortune that's caused the problem, but it's millions of innocent, surplus animals that pay the price.

The reasons people cite for giving up their animals vary - "too many pets," "allergies," "landlord wouldn't allow," "divorce," "stray," "moving" - but the result is the same: Between 6 million and 8 million dogs and cats wind up in U.S. shelters every year.

Half will be adopted.

The other half - that's 3 million to 4 million - will die there.

This is the gut-wrenching daily reality

at Lee County Animal Services in south Fort Myers, where officials euthanized close to 11,000 of the 16,240 animals they took in last year. They expect to take in 17,000 animals this year.

Walk through the shelter's cavernous room that houses upwards of 100 homeless dogs, or the smaller but equally heart-rending cat room, and read the slips clipped to cage doors. Each tells a sad tale.

There's Missy, a velvety silver fluff ball of a cat who purrs at the first touch, returned because her owner said she didn't eat well.

Nearby are Tygar and Kya, siblings rescued from a Dumpster and adopted

"Owner surrenders are going up. Many people can no longer afford to care for their pets."

—Ria Brown, spokeswoman for Lee County Animal Services.

SEE EUTHANIZED, A8 ►

"The idea is, you want to make the outdoor space more enjoyable, more culturally oriented, and one of the best ways to do that is public art." —Sharon McAllister, ArtFest director

Public art projects coming to Fort Myers

BY EVAN WILLIAMS
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Construction cones, strip malls, graffiti, gated communities, car dealerships, or a man drunkenly urinating on the side of a gas station, are all examples of what is not generally considered "public art," and are appreciated more by some than others, in the often picturesque city of Fort Myers.

Not that that's all bad—or all that's there.

But the nine-member Fort Myers Public Arts Committee, which meets monthly, seeks to enrich the city and reflects markedly different artistic principles. A public arts project it initiated will commission artworks, which "exhibit the highest quality of skill and aesthetic principles recognizing that the art will become integral, lasting components of the cityscape."

The cost of the art may be funded in



FLORIDA WEEKLY PHOTO

Sharon McAllister of the Public Arts Committee is drumming up support for downtown arts projects.

SEE ART, A18 ►



Excitement in the air

The Southwest Florida Symphony opens its season with Schubert and Beethoven. **C1** ►



Wishmaker's Ball

And other folks out and about in Fort Myers society. **C15,16 &17** ►



Blast from the past

LuLu's Gift Emporium is a glimpse of fresh-retro nostalgia. **A27** ►



The best dog in town

Meet Joe D'Acunto, he's been dishing out dogs at his Fowler Street stand for 16 years. **A6** ►

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OUTDOORS A24

BUSINESS A27
NETWORKING A32&33
REAL ESTATE B1
ARTS C1

EVENTS C6&7
FILM REVIEW C11
SOCIETY C15, 16 & 17
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