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Animal shelter, animal control now separate

by Al Summers

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Gilmer County Sheriff Stacy Nicholson has announced the duties of the county animal shelter and Gilmer County Animal Control enforcement have been separated as of Saturday, April 4.

The sheriff said anyone needing to request an animal

control officer should call 706-635-8911, or in an emergency situation, dial 911.

Nicholson told the *Times-Courier*, "In the past, such requests have been referred to the county animal shelter. The animal shelter is now a separate entity from Gilmer County Animal Control enforcement. The enforcement duties fall under the Gilmer County Sheriff's

Office umbrella, and include things such as nuisance animals, animal attacks, animal abuse, etc."

The decision to separate the two entities came earlier this year at a Gilmer County Commission meeting and it is hoped it will save the county government and the sheriff's department money. Volunteers will run the animal shelter.

The animal shelter should be contacted by those who are inquiring about animal adoptions, if a missing animal may have been located or if one is interested in assisting the shelter with adoption issues.

The animal shelter is located on Hwy. 52 East just past the Gilmer County Detention Center on the right.

Winter in Spring



Photo by Michael Andrews

Tuesday's early Spring snowfall tries to put a damper on these daffodils in Gilmer County.



Sheriff Nicholson explains current mission of census workers

by Al Summers

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Gilmer County Sheriff Stacy Nicholson has told the *Times-Courier* there will be people out in the county gathering information over the next few months, but in most cases Gilmer County residents should not worry. The information gatherers are working for the U.S. Census Bureau, and they are gearing up for the 2010 Census.

Nicholson said, "The Census Bureau has begun an address canvassing operation in conjunction with the 2010 Cen-

sus. The address canvassing began Thursday, April 2, and should run through the middle of July 2009, based on information the sheriff's office has received from the Census Bureau."

He went on to say the operation is solely to verify that addresses from their master address list are accurate so that they will accurately be able to deliver questionnaires to housing units in early 2010.

"The census workers will be able to be identified by a Census Bureau badge," said Nicholson.

He continued, "Most importantly, cit-

izens should be aware that census workers will never ask for banking or social security information."

Some of the census workers may have to enter yards or ask questions of residents by knocking on doors.

The sheriff concluded, "This public service announcement is being released in order to make citizens aware that there may be unfamiliar cars in their neighborhoods. However, if there is any question of the legitimacy of any suspicious activity, do not hesitate to call 911 and request a deputy."

Census workers to verify addresses in the U.S.

U.S. Census Bureau

www.2010census.gov

The Census Bureau launched a massive operation Monday, March 30, to verify and update more than 145 million addresses as it prepares to conduct the 2010 Census.

Nationwide, more than 140,000 census workers will participate in the address canvassing operation, a critically important first step in assuring that every housing unit receives a census questionnaire in March 2010. All information is kept confidential. The countdown to the 2010 Census is officially less than one year out on April 1.

"A complete and accurate address list is the cornerstone of a successful census," said Tom Mesenbourg, acting director of the U.S. Census Bureau. "Building on the achievements of the 2000 Census, we have been testing and preparing for the 2010 count all decade, and we're ready to fulfill our constitutional mandate to

count everyone living in the United States."

The first publicly visible activity of the 2010 Census is ahead of schedule. Address canvassing kicks off a week earlier than originally planned and should conclude by mid-July. The operation will use new hand-held computers equipped with GPS to increase geographic accuracy. The ability to capture GPS coordinates for most of the nation's housing units will greatly reduce the number of geographic coding errors caused by using paper maps in previous counts.

"The primary goal of the census is to count everyone once, only once, and in the right place," Mesenbourg said. "Because the census is used for reapportioning seats in the U.S. House of Representatives and the

First major 2010 Census operation to employ 140,000

distribution of more than \$300 billion in federal dollars every year to state and local governments, it's essential to get this first step right."

Over the last several years, the Census Bureau has been actively working on updating its geographic databases and master address files. From implementing the Local Update of Census Address program where more than 11,500 tribal, state and local governments participated in a review of the Census Bureau's address list for their area, to increasing the precision of the GPS mapping, many advances have been made to compile the most comprehensive listing of addresses in the nation.

The address canvassing operation will be conducted out of 151 local census offices across the U.S., with most offices beginning on April 6. In most cases, census workers will knock on doors to verify addresses and inquire about additional living quarters on the premises. This is the first census to include group quarters (such as dormitories, group homes, prisons and homeless shelters) in the address canvassing operation, which should improve both the accuracy

and coverage of the final count.

There will be one final opportunity to add new home construction in early 2010 prior to the mailing of the census questionnaires.

Census workers can be identified by the official Census Bureau badge they carry. During the address canvassing operation, cen-

sus workers may ask to verify a housing structure's address and whether there are additional living quarters on the property.

2010 Census workers will never ask for bank or social security information. All census information collected, including addresses, are confidential and protected by law.

By law, the Census Bureau cannot share respondents' answers with the FBI, the IRS, CIA, Welfare, Immigration, or any other government agency. No court of law or law enforcement agency can find out respondents' answers.

All Census Bureau employees — including temporary employees — take an oath for life to keep census information confidential. Any violation of that oath is punishable by a fine of up to \$250,000 and five years in prison.

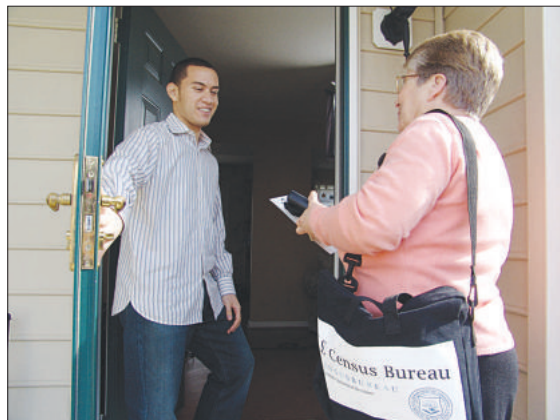


Photo courtesy of U.S. Census Bureau

U.S. Census Bureau workers will be knocking on doors over the next few months to update information and addresses in preparation for the actual census that will be taken beginning in April, 2010.

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