

Pinecrest

ONE OF MIAMI'S COMMUNITY NEWSPAPERS

Giving the gift of animal companionship

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We've all seen this scene played out on TV before: A child is eagerly waiting to open his or her birthday present when the parent brings in a box with holes on the side and a

big bow. When the child opens the box, there is an adorable puppy jumping out to lick his new best friend's face. What the camera doesn't show us is the responsibility that comes with the gift of a new pet.

While pets can certainly make a wonderful present, they are also one of the top reasons animals are surrendered to shelters. To avoid getting a headache from something that is supposed to bring joy, the gift giver should evaluate if the person is really prepared to become responsible for a new pet. Even then, try to match the personality and lifestyle needs of the animal to its new owner. Talking to an expert, like one of our Paws 4 You Rescue volunteers, can help you make a better decision about which pet is right for your gift recipient.

If you're still not sure which pet is the right one, a great alternative is to give the person an IOU or a pet adoption voucher. In light of this, Paws 4 You Rescue has teamed up with our friends at Bissell and the Pet Promise Program to offer gift givers the Pet Promise Certificate. The certificate acts as a



voucher allowing the gift giver to present a certificate stating that they are promising the recipient the chance to adopt a pet. Once the gift recipient is ready, the gift giver can bring the new pet-parent-to-be to their local shelter or adoption event where they can pick out the perfect pet together. This option allows the gift recipient to have the freedom to adopt a pet that best suits their lifestyle and personality, while also ensuring peace of mind for the gift-giver.

The financial commitment of owning a pet is significant and should also be considered by the gift giver. The Pet Promise Certificate is also beneficial in this respect because it allows the gift giver to wrap some necessary pet-care items such as a bowl, collar, a leash, and a carrier into the gift.

Adopting a pet can be as challenging as it is rewarding. Yes, puppies and dogs are adorable, but they are also a lot of work because, after all, they are animals. It is easy and fun to gift someone with a pet, but the novelty of getting a new animal will eventually wear off. This is when we see animals surrendered to shelters, which, as a pet rescue organization, is ultimately what we try to avoid and why we suggest looking into programs such as the Pet Promise Certificate. For more information, visit

<www.petfinder.com/petpromise>.

You can also visit us at the Colonial Palms PetSmart, 13621 S. Dixie Hwy., every Sunday from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. or visit our Web site at <www.paws4you.org> for more information.

Paws 4 You Rescue is a volunteer run organization of persons dedicated to giving life a second chance. Our mission is to save animals from euthanasia, re-homing abandoned pets, providing necessary medical treatments as well as educating the community on the importance of spaying and neutering. Contact us with any questions.

PET OF THE WEEK

Chandler is a black lab mix only two years old and available for adoption through Paws 4 You Rescue. Please go to <www.paws4you.org> and fill out an application or email <info@paws4you.org> for additional details. Paws 4 You rescues dogs from the euthanasia list at Animal Services. Chandler is from there and Paws 4 You has a beautiful black female lab available as well.

Carol Caridad is president of Paws 4 You Rescue. She may be contacted by calling 786-242-7377, by addressing email to <carol@paws4you.org> or by visiting <www.paws4you.org>.