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The deadline to apply for the Burleson Animal Shelter's Paw Pals Animal Care Academy is Friday, April 26.

The shelter is hosting the academy for students who are entering the sixth grade in the 2013-2014 school year and who are interested in animal welfare. The academy is a chance for students to learn about the proper care and handling of family pets and how animals are cared for at the Burleson Animal Shelter. The class is limited to 15 students who must either live in Burleson or attend school in Burleson.

This is a free four-week course. Class is 90 minutes, noon to 1:30 p.m., every Saturday, June 1-June 22. Each session offers hands-on experiences in animal care or special tours of the animal shelter operations. Animal shelter staff as well as professionals from the community – veterinarians, animal trainers and groomers – will teach the classes.

Week 1 is bite prevention, responsible pet ownership and veterinary care. Participants will tour the shelter and meet with a veterinarian. Week 2 is animal grooming. A licensed animal groomer will explain why pets should be groomed and participants will get a chance to test what they have learned on shelter pets. Week 3 is animal training. A professional animal trainer will teach basic techniques, then students will practice those techniques on shelter animals. And, Week 4 is graduation. Families are invited to see what the students have learned and to see them receive their certificates.

The Paw Pals Animal Care Academy application, which requires a one-page essay, must be signed by the student's parent or guardian and turned in by April 26. The application is available online at www.burlesontx.com/pawpals.

The Burleson Animal Shelter is located at 775 S.E. John Jones Dr. Shelter hours are 11 a.m.-6 p.m., Tuesday-Friday, and 11 a.m.-4 p.m. on Saturday. For more information about Paw Pals, call 817-426-9283 or email animalshelter@burlesontx.com.