



ON THE PATIO, Clarice Leake (left) held a cat in her lap during the pet parade on Friday. Mitchell Wittman (top) showed his little turtle off before the show. Chloe Withington (above), 3, held a white-and-brown bunny while heading out to the courtyard.

Furry, fun friends visit center

Twelve little eyes peered out of the brown wicker basket Roma Grafel carried.

The eyes belonged to black, yellow and white balls of fur that were only a couple of weeks old.

She brought the basket full of barn kittens to town for the annual Pet Parade at the Decatur County Good Samaritan Center on Friday afternoon.

Kids of all ages brought in pets of all shapes and sizes to share with residents. They then each paraded their pets around, letting everyone pet and love them.

Residents at the center smiled and reached out hands to pet furry animals. Some held the cats and small dogs in their laps for a minute or two.

Before leaving, each pet owner received a prize for their pet, from smallest to the one with the longest

tail.

Besides the basket of kittens, there were rabbits, some on leashes and others that were just carried, and scads of cats, ranging from under a year old to adults.

Some brought their dogs. One big black dog was dressed in clothes, with blue nail polish on its feet. There were matching black daschunds with ribbons around their necks and a 7 1/2-week-old puppy named Gidget.

The smallest pet by far was a tiny turtle that was carried into the show in a big five-gallon bucket. The little turtle didn't even cover a fourth of owner Mitchell Wittman's hand.

Although the parade is tied to the Decatur County Fair, it is open to anyone who wants to bring in their pets. Entrants don't have to be 4-H members, although many are.



WITH BLACK DASCHUNDS IN HAND, Heather Glodt and Lacey Ream (above) talked with Sarah Marcuson during the parade. Joseph Hirsch (left) held Gidget before showing her off to the residents.

**Herald staff photos
by Kimberly Brandt**