

Pet Food Drive Honors Memory Of Alton Teen

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ALTON - Local nonprofit, Trinity's Way, is hosting a pet food drive on Aug. 7 from 10 a.m. to noon at Piasa Park in Alton. The drive will benefit the pet food pantry operated by Metro East Humane Society. This pantry program provides free pet food to eligible applicants who need assistance.

Trinity's Way formed in 2018 after 17-year-old Trinity Buel was killed in a car accident. The nonprofit was started by her mother, April Gray, and her godfather, Chris Unthank, to carry on Buel's kindness and compassion for animals and the environment.

The pet food drive is a fitting way to honor Buel's memory for her birthday on Aug. 6. "When Trinity was a little girl, instead of presents for herself, she'd ask for pet food and supplies for her birthday so that she could donate those to local animal shelters," Gray said. "She was always thinking of animals in need before herself." Trinity's Way hopes to collect 500 lbs. of food for the pantry.

Acceptable donations for the drive include dry and canned dog and cat food (open bags of dry food accepted), dog and cat treat, kitty litter, collars, leashes, bowls, blankets, and toys. Donations will be collected in the parking lot at Piasa Park on IL-100.

In 2019, Trinity's Way collected over 200 lbs. of food for the pantry. Organizers are hoping to increase that amount significantly this year. "We know the pandemic continues to hit many people especially hard financially," Gray said. "There are people who never thought they'd have trouble feeding their pets. Now, they're in a position where they need help or risk losing them. More donations mean keeping pets with their families and out of already crowded shelters."

In addition to the pet food drive, Trinity's Way will also be hosting its bi-annual litter clean-up at the park from 10 a.m. to noon. The park was one of Buel's favorite places to spend time with friends and family. In 2017, Buel's writing about the caves at the park was published in Orion Magazine. In her writing, she voiced her disgust with the littering that takes place here.

For more information, visit Trinity's Way on Facebook or at www.trinitysway.org.