



Welcome to the Wake County Animal Center Community Newsletter: Wags and Brags! This seasonal newsletter features adoption information, responsible pet ownership tips, updates from the center and much more. Thanks for reading!

Foster Feature: Sonny

In honor of National Adopt a Shelter Dog Month and National Pit Bull Awareness Month in October, we want to share with our readers the story of Sonny. Not only did Sonny find a better life through our foster and transfer programs, he is now making other people's lives better in Brunswick County. Bonnie Keyes, Sonny's former foster mom, updated us on Sonny's story, which brings attention to how wrong stereotypes about pit bulls can be.

Sonny arrived at the [Wake County Animal Center](#) in January 2016 when his owner surrendered him because he was moving. WCAC staff determined Sonny would thrive best outside of the shelter environment. He was placed with Bonnie because of how shy, un-socialized and intimidated he was by other dogs, along with some health issues that may have stemmed from neglect.

After a decompression period, dog training and an integration period with Bonnie's other dogs, Sonny was ready for adoption. To ensure that Sonny found the right home to match his personality, as well as his training and medical needs, he was placed with the Merit Pit Bull Foundation. MPBF board member and current intake coordinator, Angela Keith, introduced Sonny to Tommy Tolley with the Brunswick County Sheriff's Office. Bonnie was not surprised when Tommy fell in love with Sonny and determined he would be a great fit for their working dog program. After completing his heartworm treatment, which was covered by MPBF, Sonny was welcomed into the Brunswick County Sheriff's Office family in May 2016 to begin training with his new partner.



The Wake County Animal Center is honored to have been a part of Sonny's journey, and Bonnie still receives periodic updates from the Brunswick County Sheriff's Office singing Sonny's praises. Thank you to foster parents like Bonnie, who care for our animals with such compassion, and to organizations like Merit Pit Bull Foundation, who help change the perception of pit bulls and support their adoption processes.



We Cleared the Shelter!



For the second year in a row, the Wake County Animal Center participated in the national Clear the Shelters event, hosted locally by WRAL on Saturday, Aug. 19. The event was a success! We were able to find homes for 140 animals.

Clear the Shelters is a great event that showcases the best in the community - from our staff, fosters and volunteers, to the dedication of local partners in promoting this event, to the adopters who come out to provide loving homes for hundreds of animals.

THANK YOU for another successful year!

Pictured left: Dr. Federico standing in front of empty kennels after the Clear the Shelters event.

Fostering "Bully" Breeds

So, you are interested in fostering a "bully" breed. That's great! These dogs often take the longest time to find forever homes because of negative stereotypes. Foster parents are an important part of the process to help them become ready for adoption. If you are interested in fostering a bully breed, there are three key points you should consider:

1. A dog is a dog, regardless of breed. There are golden retrievers that should never be around children. There are bullies who can live happily with cats and dogs of all sizes. Individual dogs should be judged by their individual actions, not their breed. Bully breeds tend to be energetic and perennial puppies until they are into the senior age of seven or more years old. They are terriers bred and raised initially to hunt, and therefore, most do have a prey drive. This isn't a character flaw, but a trait bred into them ages ago. Nobody fears a cairn terrier coming around their cat or smaller dog, but they have a similar prey drive to a bully, just in a smaller package. Just like people, there are exceptions to every rule. Each dog is different, and that should always be remembered.

2. By fostering a bully breed, you are taking on the likelihood of public criticism and/or ridicule. This must be taken seriously. You will be your dog's biggest champion and public voice, in addition to being an educator. Stereotypes and misconceptions have created fear in society. Yes, bully breeds are strong and powerful and may inflict more damage to a person than a dachshund (which happens to be the number one bite breed in the country). Therefore, when there is a bully breed incident in the news, it is met with more fear associated with the breed class than other dogs that actually have higher number of bite incidents. By the numbers, there are millions more bully breed dogs that have never done anything wrong than the number of those that have. When you are out with your bully, socializing them and exposing them to things they may have never seen or experienced before, you may be met with resistance in many forms. Be ready for it, and know how to react appropriately and with facts, not emotions and opinions. You are their voice, and we want our best feet put forward, both dog and foster.



3. We rely on our fosters to differentiate between a good potential adoption situation and a bad one. You will meet those who are in it for the novelty of adopting a pit bull. You will meet those who are wearing rose-colored glasses and think they are getting the most loving and trustworthy new pet and unintentionally put the dog in situations that will set them up for failure, such as trusting a young child to walk the new dog past a house with small dogs or outdoor cats, or allowing young children to play on the dog. You will stumble upon those who view the breed as something that should be feared and should be used only for protection or as a scare tactic to outsiders instead of the family pet they are intended to be. Because of their public perception, we need to do our very best to place them in situations where they will succeed and become the breed ambassadors they were always meant to be.

Still think you want to foster a "bully" for us? Then, we want to meet you! Come, join our foster family, learn about these great dogs by actually working with them one on one, learning their strengths and weaknesses. And help us promote this breed class by showcasing them in a more positive light. Visit [our website](#) to learn about the process for becoming a foster. Thank you!



Welcome to Pittie and Kittie Present: Responsible Pet Ownership! In every issue of Wags and Brags, we'll feature important information for the health and well-being of your pet. This month, we bring you:

Halloween Safety

Halloween is almost here. While ghosts and goblins are trick-or-treating, here are some ways to keep your pets safe on the scariest night of the

year.

- **Keep candy away from your pet** - Chocolate and sugar-free candies containing the artificial sweetener xylitol can be very dangerous. Symptoms of chocolate poisoning can take hours to develop and may last for days. Symptoms depend on the amount and type of chocolate ingested, and can range from vomiting, diarrhea, increased thirst, panting, restlessness, excessive urination and racing heart rate, to cardiac arrest in older dogs that eat large amounts of high quality chocolate. Symptoms of xylitol poisoning in dogs develop rapidly, usually within 15-30 minutes of consumption. Signs may include vomiting, weakness, lack of coordination or difficulty walking, depression, tremors, seizures and/or coma. It is important to contact your veterinarian if your pet ingests chocolate or xylitol. You can also call the Pet Poison Helpline at 800-213-6680.
- **Be careful with the costumes** - Some pets love getting dressed up, and some pets hate it. The first thing to do is see if your pet wants to wear a costume. If it stresses out your pet, then it isn't fun for them. Let them wear a less stressful, but festive bandanna instead. To help them relax further, spray the bandanna with Feliway for cats or Adaptil for dogs. If your pet thinks the costume is awesome, make sure it fits well. You don't want it to rub

them or cause a tripping hazard that may lead to injury. Also, make sure that there are no small pieces that could cause a choking hazard.

- **Avoid Dangerous Decorations** - Jack-o'-lanterns are a fun holiday tradition but may be unsafe around animals. Pets can knock them over, and the candle inside can cause a fire. Instead of a real candle, try fake candles that are battery operated. Pumpkins and corn are traditional fall decorations. If ingested by your pets, they may cause gastrointestinal upset or blockage. Glow sticks and glow jewelry are another concern for pets. Although not likely toxic, if ingested, the liquid may make your pet salivate excessively and possibly cause a GI blockage.
- **Identification and keeping pets from running away** - Ding Dong! ... Door opens ... "Trick or treat!" the kids sing out. Then it happens, Sparky bolts out the door. How do you prevent it? First, keep pets secure in your home while accepting trick-or-treaters at your front door. Keep cats locked in a room and dogs in their crate or locked in a room away from the front door. All pets should also have an ID tag on their collar and have a microchip with accurate information, just in case they do get out.

Small Cat Beds Needed



Due to a recent Facebook post and local media coverage, we received an overwhelming amount of donations of blankets and towels. Thank you! Our animals are so much more comfortable because of your generosity.

So, what other comforts do we need for them? Our kitties could use some small cat beds.

The center also has an [Amazon Wish List](#) of needed items. On behalf of the staff and animals at the center, thank you!

Adoption Specials

October and November are great months to welcome a new pet into your home! During the month of October, all pit bulls and other select dogs will be available for adoption for only \$25 in celebration of National Adopt a Shelter Dog Month and National Pit Bull Awareness Month. During the month of November, name your price and adopt a cat eight years and older, or bring home a dog eight years and older for \$25, in celebration of Adopt a Senior Pet Month. View all pets available for adoption at pets.wakegov.com



Upcoming Events

Rabies and Microchip Clinics

- Oct. 21 - Rabies and microchip clinic at the Wake County Southern Regional Center, 9 a.m. to noon. 130 N. Judd Parkway, Fuquay-Varina.
- Nov. 18 - Rabies and microchip clinic at Town and Country Veterinarian Hospital from 2 until 5 p.m. 2010 N. Salem St., Apex.

Adoption events

- Oct. 14 - Adoption event at Haunting at Harris Lake, 1 to 6 p.m. 2112 County Park Drive, New Hill.
- Oct. 21 - Dogtoberfest from noon to 3 p.m. at Knightdale Station Park. 810 N. First Ave., Knightdale.

View our [Events page](#) for more info!

WCAC Monthly Reports

The Wake County Animal Center tracks the number of animals that are brought into the center, adopted out, transferred to rescue partners and other important statistics on a monthly basis. These numbers are compared to previous months and past years to give a complete picture of trends, while helping staff determine what areas can be improved upon.

These reports can be found on [our website](#).



Mission Statement of the Wake County Animal Center: Determined to make a difference for the animals and citizens of Wake County through education, adoption, enforcement and community partnership.