



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!

Upcoming Events and Adoption Specials

Adoption Events

- August 19 - Clear The Shelters. The Wake County Animal Center will participate in this national adoption event for the second year in a row. Follow [WRAL](#) for details.
- September 16 - Pagan Pride Raleigh adoption event, N.C. State Fairgrounds, Raleigh, 12 p.m. to 3 p.m.

Microchip Events

- August 15 - Check the Chip Day microchip scanning event and microchip clinic, 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Additional details below.
- September 9 - Responsible Dog Ownership microchip clinic with American Kennel Club, N.C. State Fairgrounds, Raleigh, 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. Microchips are \$10 and first come, first served due to limited quantity. Clinic is open to dogs only.

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



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:

Beat the Heat

Summer in North Carolina means heat and humidity! In addition to keeping yourself and your family cool, follow these tips to keep your furry

friends safe in the summer heat:

- Exercise pets during the cooler hours of the day, such as early mornings or late evenings. Pets need exercise. Walking your dog and playing with your pet outside during these cooler hours will make it a much more pleasant experience for everyone.
- Make sure they have protection from the sun, and plenty of water. If your dog or cat spends time outdoors, ensure they have a cool place to lay that is protected from the sun. Secure water bowls so that your pet can't dump over their water during the day when you're not home to refill it. Also, provide enough water bowls so that your pets have access to water all day! Keep water bowls in shaded areas so that the water stays as cool as possible. Consider putting ice cubes in the water bowls to help keep water cool.
- Know the signs of heatstroke. This life threatening condition requires immediate veterinary care. While you may not see all of these symptoms, you should contact your veterinarian immediately if you think your pet is suffering from heatstroke. Signs include:
 - Excessive panting
 - Dark or bright red tongue and gums
 - Seizures
 - Bloody diarrhea or vomiting
 - Drooling
 - Mild weakness, stumbling, stupor or collapse

Animals with flat faces, such as pugs, bulldogs and Persian cats are more susceptible to heat stroke since they can't pant as effectively due to their short noses. Also closely monitor elderly or overweight pets, as well as those with heart or lung diseases.

- Avoid sunburn. Pets can be susceptible to sunburn in their lighter colored areas such as their bellies or around their noses. Use sunscreen that is made for pets. Ingredients in human sunscreen, such as zinc oxide, can be toxic to dogs if ingested.
- Who doesn't love a nice cool treat in the summer? A great way to provide cooling enrichment to your dog is to provide treats such as KONGs that have been frozen with peanut butter and dog biscuits in them.
- **DO NOT LEAVE YOUR PET IN YOUR CAR!** We can't stress this enough. Pets have died when left in hot cars. It can be 70 degrees outside and the inside of your car will heat to over 90 degrees in a matter of minutes. It is never safe to leave your pet in a car in the summer. If your pet cannot go into the building with you, leave them at home.
- Don't leave your pet unsupervised around a pool. See our [Spring Newsletter](#) for tips on water safety.
- Don't shave your dog. The layers of a dog's coat protect them from sunburn and overheating. Many owners think their dogs will be cooler if they shave them, but that is not always true. Trim their hair coat, but do not shave them down.
- Hot asphalt can burn sensitive paw pads. If the ground is too hot for you to walk on barefoot, then it is too hot for your pet.

Fireworks Safety

Fireworks are considered by many to be a staple of summer celebrations. While we may enjoy watching the sky light up for the Fourth of July and Labor Day, our pets don't understand fireworks and may be startled by their loud noise. Follow these tips to keep your pets safe during your summer celebrations:



- Whether you are going to your town's firework display, or a neighborhood celebration, it is best to leave your pet at home. They are safest and most comfortable in their own surroundings. If your pet is already sensitive to loud noise, like thunder, leave a TV on for some soothing sounds. If your pet is crate trained, it may be best to leave them in their crate if you don't think they will injure themselves. Choose an area in your home that is quiet, sheltered and escape proof. Don't leave your pets outside during fireworks.

- Hosting a celebration at your home? Make sure that guests know to not feed your pet table scraps. Ensure that your pets are secure in an escape-proof room before any fireworks begin. As the host of the party, ask your guests to leave their pets at home.
- Glow jewelry is awesome for kids to wear while watching fireworks, but it can be dangerous to pets. If they chew the glow sticks, they may begin to drool and get gastrointestinal irritation. Swallowing a large piece could also lead to intestinal blockage.
- Never use fireworks around pets. People get burned and severely injured by fireworks every year. This is also a risk for your pets!
- Even with the best precautions, your pet may escape. Be prepared and make sure your pet is wearing a collar with ID tags with current information, and that they are microchipped with up-to-date information. If your pet goes missing, begin searching and make sure to check the Wake County Animal Center!
- On July 5, the celebration is over and life is returning to normal. Make sure you check your yard for any firework debris that may have landed there before letting your pets out. Fireworks contain toxic substances that can harm your pets.

August 15 is Check the Chip Day

When lost pets come into our facility, staff will scan them for microchips and identification tags in hopes of reuniting them with their owners. While many owners have their pets microchipped, too many times the information on the chip is out of date, and staff is unable to reach out to owners successfully.

In celebration of National Check the Chip Day, the Wake County Animal Center wants to help pet owners make sure their pet's microchip information is up to date. On Tuesday, August 15, staff will be available from 9 a.m. until 4 p.m. to scan your dog or cat for a microchip, tell you the microchip number and give you the contact information for the company that issued the chip. Owners can go to their microchip company's website and update their information, add their veterinarian's information and even add alternate contacts. If your pet isn't microchipped, we will offer them that day for \$10, cash or check only.

In 2016, only 3.1 percent of stray cats and 23.4 percent of stray dogs that came to the WCAC were reclaimed by their owners. Having collars with ID tags and microchips with up-to-date information, as well as immediately looking for your lost pet will help us reunite more stray pets with their families.

MICROCHIP YOUR PET

Microchips don't replace a tag and collar, but they can make all the difference when it comes to getting your pet back.



Did You Know?





1 in 3 family pets will get lost



But only about **6 out of 10** microchips are registered



Microchipped dogs are more than twice as likely to be returned to their owners.



Microchipped cats are more than 20 times as likely to be returned to their owners.

Successful Reunions



Gidget, a dog from Pittsburgh, PA, was found more than **2500 miles** away in Portland, OR



George, a cat in California was reunited with his family after **13 years**

When a microchipped pet isn't returned home, it's usually due to incorrect or missing owner information in the microchip registry.

In 2015, HomeAgain reunited **227,274 pets**



To date, HomeAgain has reunited over **1,000,000 pets** with their owners



Register and update your pet's microchip!



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Resources:

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<http://www.scientificamerican.com/article/the-incredible-journey-microchip-id-reunites-cat-with-owners/>
<http://pittsburgh.cbslocal.com/2014/09/19/missing-jack-russell-terrier-from-pa-turns-up-in-oregon/>

National Preparedness Month

September is National Preparedness Month. The goal of this month is to increase the overall number of individuals, families and communities that prepare for emergencies in advance.

For most of us, pets are members of our family and will be right there with us in the event of an emergency. Our goal at the Wake County Animal Center is to make sure all owners have an emergency plan in place for their pets.

Make sure your pet is just as ready as the other members of your family by creating a "Go Bag" including supplies and important items such as:

- Current photos
- Three days worth of pet food and water
- Medications
- Copies of your pet's medical records, especially their rabies vaccination certificate
- List of pet friendly hotels and emergency shelters
- Leash and collar with ID tags for dogs, carrier with ID tags attached for cats
- Favorite toys and treats
- Pet first aid kit

Keep these kits with the rest of the kits for your family.

To learn more about disaster preparedness, visit www.ready.gov.

For more information regarding emergency preparedness for animals, visit www.ready.gov/animals, or www.wakegov.com/pets.

Items to include in a Pet First Aid Kit:

- Pet first aid book
- Gauze roll and pads
- Towels
- Adhesive tape for bandages
- Hydrogen Peroxide (3%)
- Digital thermometer and petroleum jelly
- Eye dropper
- Leash and muzzle
- Scissors (blunt tip), tweezers and penlight/flashlight
- Antiseptic wipes
- Disposable gloves
- Ready-to-use ice pack
- Sterile saline solution
- Compact emergency blanket
- Sterile eye lubricant



WCAC Employee Profile Joanne Duda, Foster Program Coordinator

To say that Joanne Duda is perfectly cut out for her role as Wake County Animal Center Foster Program Coordinator is an understatement. Although Duda has been with WCAC since 2011, her passion for providing safe, loving homes for homeless pets as they prepare for adoption dates back to the early years of the center's Foster Program.

As a student at N.C. State University, Duda desired to become a veterinarian, but ultimately realized that it wasn't the right path for her. She earned her bachelor's degree in Animal Science in 1995 and went to work at a boarding kennel following graduation. In 1997, Duda switched gears and started working for the N.C. Department of Corrections, but her passion for helping animals never faded.

About halfway through her 14 year career with NCDOC, Duda met the head of dog handlers for the department's K9 program. After being promoted to Sergeant, she was given the opportunity to work with animals again - this time with dogs on drug interdiction teams. Duda would travel to various facilities and set up check points to monitor what was coming into and going out of prison facilities. This wouldn't be the last time dogs would enter her life and change her career.



Joanne Duda with Frank

Enter: Dax the Great Dane Mix.

During the summer of 2009, Duda adopted Dax from the WCAC and decided that very day to volunteer as a foster parent in the newly-formed program at the center. Less than two years later, Duda left NCDOC and was hired at the center as the Foster Rescue Outreach Coordinator.

"The first year for me was insane. I always had my phone on me and didn't know if I was coming or going most of the time," said Duda.

Duda credits her ability to stay calm and focused during unexpected stressful and emotional times on her previous experience with the prison system.

"Nothing surprises you anymore when you come from working in a prison," said Duda. "Things that are hard to deal with, like the unexpected death of a foster animal due to natural causes or because of other factors - you can never prepare your foster parents enough to deal with situations like that. It's an emotional experience every time because these animals are living, breathing beings that we all care about. Having to remain stoic is easier due to my background, but it's also hard when you see the emotional toll the situation takes on foster parents."

During the first year of the program, approximately 300 animals were placed in foster homes. With Duda at the helm, the program has grown and in 2016 approximately 2,000 animals were placed in foster homes. In 2014 her role changed from Foster Rescue Outreach Coordinator to Foster Program Coordinator.

There are currently between 100 and 200 active foster parents in the program, with 300 to 400 in the system. No matter what kind of animal they are fostering, they all impress Duda, especially kitten fosters.

"Our kitten fosters work so hard to save as many of those little lives as they can," said Duda. "Because they are in a time-sensitive situation, they work together and coordinate moving the kittens from home to home in order to ensure that they are getting the best care possible. It's amazing."

Duda is passionate about helping her foster parents because she is still one herself. Since her first foster experience in 2009, Duda has opened her home to approximately 70 dogs, cats, kittens and puppies, ranging from rescue-only to ones that have been at the center for a long time, as well as ones that need extra love and care due to behavior issues. For her it's all about making sure that these animals are ready to be adopted into forever homes.

Sometimes that forever home is her own.

In 2011 Jilly, a paralyzed, abandoned pit bull, came into the center on protective custody. Instead of Jilly being euthanized, Duda fostered her, set her up with a set of wheels for mobility and ultimately adopted her. Duda's family also includes Koko, an American Staffordshire Terrier who does dog testing as part of behavior assessments at the center. Dog testing helps fosters and rescues see how animals will react to other dogs and various situations. Koko has become an ambassador for the center and for her breed. She attends outreach events and speaking engagements with staff around the community.



Duda with Jilly, left; and Dax, right.

As a foster parent, Duda knows firsthand what her fosters are going through and the challenges they face. "I fight for them because I was once one of them and I am still one of them," said Duda. "They are volunteering. No one is paying them to do this. I fight for what they need and what they deserve."

She even started a Facebook group as a support system that foster parents can use to meet each other, share stories and best practices, and support each other in difficult times.

While the need for fosters continues to grow, so does the number of volunteers answering the call. In order to meet this growth, Duda hopes to one day have a volunteer assistant to help with the program. She is also planning to form an official mentor program in which senior fosters mentor new fosters.

Meeting with foster and rescue coordinators from around North Carolina and other states also opened Duda's eyes to how fortunate Wake County is to have the Foster Program and support system in place. She wants all of her foster volunteers to know that their time is valuable and how much they are appreciated.

For Duda, it's all about trying to change the world, one foster parent at a time.

"When a foster is so happy because their first foster pet is being adopted, and when you see an animal that has been transformed thanks to being in foster, those are the moments that make everything worth it."

Donations Needed - Cookies and Treats for Dogs and Cats

We love our dog walkers and other volunteers who give their free time to the animals at the center! If you can't volunteer, a great way to help the center is to donate items that our volunteers and staff can use for the animals. We are currently in need of the following items:

- Cats: Stinky cat food (fish flavors), soft treats
- Dogs: Medium-sized dog biscuits (any flavor and kind), soft treats such as Pupperoni

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

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.