

East Tennessee Spay & Neuter, Inc.

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This has been an exciting year for ETSN. With the support of our many friends near and far, we have continued to grow and expand our local programs to help our community's pets and people have a better life. Here's some of what we've done:

- ✦ **Spay & neuter**...it's our name, after all! In 2015, our service helped about 500 pets, bringing our total to over 3,500 pets fixed since starting in 2009! (That's over 14,000 births prevented at just one litter of four each!) Thanks go to: Paws of Hope Animal Wellness Center; Animal Defense League of Washington County, Virginia; State of Tennessee; and East Tennessee Foundation. With their continued support, we hope to do even more in 2016!
- ✦ **Education** Long-time volunteer Stacey Heiden donated her amazing talent and untold hours developing handout materials, YouTube videos, and our Pinterest page so that we now have a small library of information, all with upbeat, encouraging messages about proper pet care. We also appreciate coverage by WBEJ radio, WJHL, and The Elizabethton Star.
- ✦ **Pet Food Pantry** This is an essential program for the families of over 500 pets in Carter County. Each month we provide about two weeks' worth of food for their beloved furry family members, and this enables them to spend that money on their own needs. Thanks go to: NAVS Sanctuary Fund, On Shore Foundation, Build-a-Bear Workshop Foundation, Blue Dog Bakery, Big John's Closeouts, Elizabethton Federal Savings Bank, 3B's Thrift Shop, Cantech Industries, Tractor Supply Company, Kroger, Walmart, and others. We are also grateful to the many individuals who so faithfully support us throughout the year, and to Patsy & Jim Schang for running the Roan Mountain pantry.
- ✦ **Trap-Neuter-Return of Feral Cats** We expanded our collaboration with Appalachian Feral Cat Allies to fix and vaccinate wild kitties in Carter County. Judy King, AFCA's Director, works tirelessly to educate and implement the TNR program. TNR is the only proven method to stop the population boom; removing colonies only encourages more cats to move in. If we could just stop the thoughtless people who abandon their unfixed pets, often pregnant, in rural areas of our county! Since starting in 2011, AFCA has fixed over 3,000 cats!

The outlook for 2016 is also bright...

- ✦ **Cooperation** In the New Year, we plan to work even more closely with AFCA and the Elizabethton-Carter County Animal Shelter to target those areas of Carter County most in need of our assistance. Spay-neuter and TNR are often too expensive for these residents, so we continually look for ways to cover part or all of the costs when necessary to get the job done. We also hope to see our volunteers work together to make sure that the programs offered by each organization function most effectively. By combining our efforts, we all hope to keep even more animals out of the shelter.
- ✦ **Availability** We've outgrown the Purr-ple Bus, and hope to find affordable office/work space so that we can be more available to the pet owners who need our help. Not everyone can make it to our Saturday sign-ups, and sitting outside in all kinds of weather is rough on the volunteers. Plus, packing and storing food for 500 pets takes more room than we've got.
- ✦ **Expansion** We will continue to provide our current services and hope to reach even more pet owners with programs that address their needs. One way is by starting the BooBoo Fund, named in honor of BooBoo Giorgi, a special little dog who triumphed over truly difficult medical problems. The fund will help us to provide low-income families with basic wellness care for their pets to keep them healthy, and financial assistance when serious problems do arise.
- ✦ **Updating and Fundraising** As ETSN has continued to grow, we've tried to keep up with the times with our website, YouTube channel, Pinterest, and Facebook pages. This summer we held an online crowd funding campaign to support the pantry. Our friends at 3B's Thrift Store in Hampton still donate 15% of their proceeds, and now Mountain Star Wares, an Etsy store, sells items to raise money for us. We also hope to have a new streamlined website to reach people from other areas with online sales and fundraising items, which we hope will eliminate some of the need for constant local fundraising events.

As you can see, we've got big plans for the year ahead. Our number one priority is still spay-neuter; it's the best way to end the stream of unwanted pets into the shelter. But once a pet is fixed, there are other lifelong needs to be met. We think our programs are cost-effective and life-affirming, and that they benefit the entire community. We hope you agree, and that you will continue to support us in 2016!

Best Wishes to You and Your Family

From All of Us at ETSN!