

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
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Animal Services Shelter Buddies Reading Program Begins May 30

Summer reading can be ‘**paw**some’ fun for everyone!



Photo courtesy of Pitt County Animal Services

PITT COUNTY, N.C. – Pitt County Animal Services (PCAS) announces the **2023 Shelter Buddies Reading Program** will begin on Tuesday, May 30, 2023 at 4550 County Home Road, Greenville, N.C. 27858. Learn more: www.PittCountyNC.gov/ShelterBuddies.

The free reading program incorporates volunteerism and reading literacy to increase animal socialization efforts for shelter dogs up for adoption.

According to the University of California, Davis 2010 study ‘All Ears Reading Program’ an animal-assisted therapy program, researchers found reading literacy improved by 12 percent in one group of children and 30 percent in homeschooled children. (UC Davis, 2010)

The ASPCA launched their Storytelling Program in April 2014 with more than 560 volunteers of all ages logging over 10,000 hours reading to dogs to reduce shelter anxiety and stress. (ASPCA, 2019)

“Last summer, 165 children participated in our innovative program that fosters reading proficiency in children while socializing the dogs waiting for adoption. Shelter Buddies Reading Program truly embodies the Pitt County Mission to enhance the health, safety, and well-being of our community, by encouraging and enhancing reading skills while bringing joy to our children and shelter pets,” says Janis Gallagher, Pitt County Manager.

“Shelter Buddies is designed to bring comfort to and reduce the anxiety of our shelter pets while nurturing empathy in children. We’re excited to share this opportunity again and children who read for 5 hours will receive a special Shelter Buddy t-shirt,” says Miranda Guinn, PCAS Shelter Supervisor.

Sign up at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090F4DABA62DAAF94-shelter> or call 252-902-1725.

“The program is run at little or no cost to the County and Pitt County students and children’s groups **ages 6-15** years old are invited to join the reading fun on **Tuesdays, Wednesdays, Thursdays from 1:30 p.m. – 3:30 p.m.** at the Animal Shelter. The 2023 program will run through **May 30 through August 17, 2023**,” says Chad Singleton, Director, PCAS.

Program requirements include: children must be accompanied by a parent or guardian, bring a book (sitting pillow if desired), wear closed-toed rubber-soled shoes, and read as little or as long during their assigned 30-minute time slot. Cancellations should be made via email or phone at least one hour prior to the scheduled session. **Reading sessions are by appointment only** and limited to five readers daily.

For more information, visit www.PittCountyNC.gov/ShelterBuddies or contact Miranda Guinn at 252-902-1726 or Miranda.Guinn@pittcountync.gov.



Courtesy of Public Information Office

The Mission of Pitt County Government is to enhance the health, safety, and well-being of our community by advocating for and providing quality services in a friendly and cost-effective manner. Learn more: www.PittCountyNC.gov.

USDavis.edu. (2010, April 16). *Reading to Rover: Does it really help children? Veterinary school says 'yes'*. <https://www.ucdavis.edu/news/reading-rover-does-it-really-help-children-veterinary-school-says-%E2%80%98yes%E2%80%99>

ASPCA.org (2019, September 16). *Read A Book to Benefit Yourself and a Furry Friend!* [Read a Book to Benefit Yourself and a Furry Friend! | ASPCA](#)

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