Dear Citizens:

It is both my privilege and honor to serve you as your Sheriff. I take this responsibility seriously and I will do everything within my power to see that you receive exceptional service. Our primary responsibility, as always, remains to you, the citizens of New Hanover County.

We assumed responsibility of New Hanover County Animal Control on March 1st, 2012. We immediately renamed Animal Control to Animal Services. We also desired to increase the adoption rate at our shelter and have made great strides by extending our operating hours, creating a Facebook account, and advertising through public service announcements and other media outlets. We are constantly striving for improvement and ways in which we can continue to be a premier law enforcement agency. We will continue to set high standards and goals for the New Hanover County Sheriff’s Office Animal Services Unit.

We, the officers and members of the New Hanover County Sheriff’s Office, are committed to Professionalism, Responsibility, and Accountability in the performance of our duties. These doctrines will enable us to give you, the citizens, the service you expect and deserve.

Your Sheriff,

Edward J. McMahon

1 Did You Know? New Hanover County Laws for Animal Owners
City ordinances and rules.

2 Adopting a Shelter Pet
Is a shelter pet the right choice for you?

3 Rabies and Our Pets...
Information and Prevention
What you need to know to protect your furry family members.

How your pet’s health is dependent on his dietary needs.

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How to keep your pet safe when you need to seek shelter.

14 Tips for Finding Lost Pets
What to do when your furry friend has gone missing.

15 Pet Grooming...More Than Meets the Eye
The importance and benefits of grooming.
It’s a fact, pet owners think of their pets as family and are, for the most part, good people. Good people who are also law-abiding citizens. There are, however, some laws regarding pet ownership in New Hanover County that many people are unaware of. Listed here are a few of the laws most commonly violated, in most cases due to lack of knowledge.

Be aware:

- It is against the law to tie a dog out in New Hanover County. When dogs are left alone outside on their owner(s)’ property, they must be ‘secure’ (i.e. a fenced yard, chain link fence, kennel). Dogs cannot be restrained by ropes, chains, or tethers while unsupervised.

- It can be unsafe to leave an animal in a car on a hot day, even with the windows rolled down. Any animal control officer, law enforcement officer, firefighter or rescue squad worker who believes an animal is confined in a motor vehicle in a condition likely to cause harm may enter the vehicle by any reasonable means after making a reasonable effort to locate the person responsible. The person responsible may also receive a citation or a fine.

- Outside enclosures must meet certain criteria based on the size of the animal:
  - Dogs 25lbs or less must have a minimum pen size of 8’ x 10’ per dog.
  - Dogs 25lbs or more must have a minimum pen size of 10’ x 10’ per dog.
  - Each dog kept outside must have a dog house (top, bottom, 3 sides) large enough for the dog to be able to stand up, turn around, and lie down.

- County-wide ‘leash law’ dictates that when a dog is off its owner(s)’ property, it must be controlled by means of a leash.

- Breeding:
  - If you own or breed dogs and have more than four litters per year, you must apply for a kennel permit at Animal Services. The permit must be renewed annually.
  - Any person owning or in the care of a cat or dog that has a litter (planned or not) must purchase a breeders’ permit from Animal Services no later than three business days following the birth of the litter. A breeder permit must be purchased for every litter born. Please call the office for the cost of the permit.

The City of Wilmington has a pet waste ordinance that requires the following:

- Fully and immediately clean up after pets on any public property.
- Carry a clean-up device (i.e. bag, scooper) at all times.
- Show the clean-up device to a Code Enforcement Official, if requested.
- Bag and dispose of pet waste in a closed trash receptacle or refuse container.
Adopting a shelter pet is an enormously rewarding and joyful experience, but it’s also a serious responsibility and there are a few questions you should ask yourself before grabbing that leash.

You may think the most difficult part of adopting a dog is choosing from a pack of adorable, available pooches that may be eagerly awaiting to find a great home, but you need to pay attention to some pertinent facts on the information card of that precocious puppy or disarmingly charming dog. Most puppies and dogs available at the shelter are “mixed breeds” and that’s certainly not a bad thing, but if the dog is still in the puppy phase of life or even a young adult, you need to be prepared that a Labrador or Newfoundland mix may still be growing, so allow for the possibility that the dog you are interested in may result in “more to love” given a little more time of growth and development.

Other important considerations include breed temperament, grooming and activity and time demands. In other words, remember that toy breeds such as a Yorkie, Jack Russell or Chihuahua may require more time and attention than a dog who is perfectly content to lay around the house. If you spring for that Poodle or Schnauzer, are you prepared for the grooming expense? Does excess shedding cause you anxiety? If so, you probably need to stay away from breed mixes that have coats which leave blankets of hair all over your home.

While adopting a shelter dog is much less expensive than purchasing a purebred from a breeder, the costs after you bring your new family member home will equalize. Can you afford the necessary yearly vaccinations, annual heartworm test and the preventative medication which must be given year round? Much like humans, dogs also require a few other laboratory tests and as a responsible pet owner, you need to be prepared for annual check-ups and the possibility of ailments that might occur between yearly visits.

Speaking of pet health and maintenance, will your budget support another mouth to feed? While feeding your pet is generally less expensive than feeding a human, it’s still not cheap. There are a multitude of varieties of pet food available on the market from standard fare to breed specific options, but even with dogs there’s no such thing as a “free lunch” and you will have to keep the pet larder stocked. It’s also possible that your dog may develop an allergy.
or health condition that may require a specialty food and, as a responsible pet owner, you need to be prepared to meet that need.

What about your travel plans? Will your vacation take you to places that will welcome your dog or will you need to seek a place to board your pet while your away? While boarding your animal(s) won’t be as expensive as accommodations at the Plaza, they are an expense that is part and parcel of owning a pet.

Other costs to figure in your pet budget include yearly fees such as county registration fees and rabies vaccination. Also, you need to be aware of leash laws, where you can and cannot take your pet on local beaches and parks.

Finally, are you committed? Adopting a pet isn’t to be taken lightly and should never be a “spur of the moment” decision. You need to understand that at a minimum, this is a YEARS long commitment which may range anywhere from 8 to 18 plus years. While no one can see the future, please understand the animal that you are considering making a part of your life, who will become part of your family, is depending on you to be his or her “forever” companion and you need to understand that if a move or marriage is in your future, your pet is part of the package. Thinking about moving into an expensive apartment or townhouse in a choice location in a couple of years? Will the landlord welcome your pet as well as you? What about your roommates? Is everyone on board with the decision to adopt an animal? Take the time to cover all of your bases because your prospective pet is counting on you to do everything possible to ensure that you will love and take care of his or her needs forever.

One word about “forever” concerns your age when adopting a dog. While it’s not fun to think about, part of being a responsible pet owner is making provisions for your beloved pet should your animal’s lifespan exceed yours. While puppies are always fun, they demand a great deal of time and attention and there’s usually a learning curve that involves housebreaking, chewing, and boundless energy. There are so many dear and beloved Senior Dogs begging for homes that need someone to love them in their golden years and often, a retired human can be the perfect fit for a more seasoned, older animal companion. Usually, it’s a “win-win” situation for both the adopter and adoptee and should be considered if one finds that life is slowing down a bit. What better way to enjoy this time of life than sharing it with an animal in a similar season of life? Regardless of what age your new forever friend is at adoption, please make plans to find someone who will step in to love and cherish your pet if the time comes. It’s simply the responsible thing to do.

The fee for adopting a dog from New Hanover Sheriff’s Office Animal Control Unit is $70 if you live in the County of New Hanover, which includes registration fee and $60 if you live outside of the county. You will also need to bring a driver’s license or photo ID. The reward for adopting a pet cannot be measured or quantified. The love these shelter animals bring to your home is deep and boundless and these pets return your investment in them a hundred fold. Make sure you are prepared to be a responsible and loving pet advocate and you will be rewarded with love and loyalty beyond measure.

Rabies and our Pets...Information and Prevention

By Kristen J. Smith & Jennifer Hoyt

As responsible pet owners, our first and foremost concern is the well-being of our pets. This involves, for the most part, their health and their safety. We feed them appropriate diets, give them fresh water, groom and bathe them. And just as important, we take them to a veterinarian at least annually for well-checks, required immunizations and subsequent boosters. The most important of these is the rabies vaccine. Rabies kills thousands of animals annually, both wild and domestic. Exposure to rabies is common and occurs more often than any of us might think.

What is rabies?

Rabies is a viral disease that affects the nervous system of mammals. In the last stages of the disease, the virus moves from the brain into the salivary glands and saliva. From there the virus can be transmitted through a bite or by contact with mucous membranes (nose, mouth, and eyes). The incubation period for the disease is variable: between 2 weeks and 6 months. Rabies is almost always fatal once symptoms occur. Changes in behavior are common in rabid animals: nocturnal animals are seen during the day, animals are not afraid of humans, become aggressive, attack other animals or people without provocation, may have paralysis of the limbs or throat, or just lay down.

What should I do if my pet gets bitten by a rabid animal?

If your pet is bitten or scratched by another animal (domestic or wild), call Animal Services or the county health department immediately. Do not attempt to capture the attacking animal yourself.

- continued on next page
Rabies and our Pets...Information and Prevention (continued from page 3)

If your pet has a current rabies vaccination, a booster must be done within 5 days of the incident (in the US). If the attacking animal is captured, the brain will be tested for rabies.

- If your pet is not vaccinated, and the attacking animal was rabid, your pet may be disposed of as required by law.
- If your pet was not booster within five days of the exposure, your pet is no longer considered currently vaccinated and shall be quarantined for up to six months or euthanized, at the discretion of the local health director.
- You are responsible for the cost of the quarantine and this must be done at the local animal control facility.
- All dogs or cats that bite a person will be quarantined for 10 days.
- Animals that have been exposed to rabies and are NOT current with rabies vaccination at the time of exposure will be held for six months at the owners expense.

Source: http://www.ncagr.gov/vet/FactSheets/Rabies.htm (TAKEN FROM NC Department of Agriculture)

Does a currently-vaccinated pet have to be quarantined after a rabies exposure?

No, but the dog, cat or ferret must receive a rabies booster within five (5) days after the exposure to maintain its "current" vaccination status under the law. The animal should be under the owner’s control and carefully observed for 45 days thereafter. If not booster within five days, the animal is no longer considered currently vaccinated and shall be quarantined for up to six months or euthanized, at the discretion of the local health director.

What should I do if I am exposed to rabies?

If you are bitten or scratched by a suspect rabid animal, or saliva from the animal enters an open wound, or comes in contact with your nose, mouth, or eyes, wash the wound or contact area with soap and water, call your physician or 911 and get medical attention immediately. Remember, rabies is a fatal disease. Post-exposure prophylaxis should be started soon after the exposure. The treatment, when needed, consists of injections of rabies immune globulin on the first day and 5 vaccine doses in the arm over a 28 day period. 🐶

By Nathan W. Mendenhall

Any article about pet nutrition should begin by noting that there are many opinions about the dietary needs of cats and dogs. As is true in people, an animal’s health begins on the inside and moves outward. A holistic pet food store is a good place to begin researching and learning about different healthy foods. One thing that is very important to note is that buzzwords such as “organic,” “natural,” “balanced,” and even “holistic” and “healthy” are used very often and can mean drastically different things. Yet there are several important factors to look for and consider when making choices about your pet’s diet.

First: the protein source. The animal the protein comes from should be plainly identified and avoid any food that contains byproducts even if the animal is stated. There are many misconceptions about proteins labeled as “meal.” During this process the meat is dehydrated and some ground bone may be included. Though some pet owners choose to avoid meal altogether, there are several benefits that ought to be considered. To begin with, dogs and cats need the phosphorus provided by ground bone in order to regulate their own phosphorus levels.

Speaking of ingredients of debatable necessity, the next facet to explore regards fillers and grains. While some grains can be beneficial, “fillers,” such as corn and soy, are useless as they have little to no nutritional value. However, whole grains are a good source of carbohydrates. There are, of course, many grain-free food options if one wishes to avoid them altogether.

A few other things to avoid include synthetic preservatives such as BHA, BHT, and ethoxyquin. Although cheap, they have been linked to health issues and there are plenty of natural alternatives. Also, look out for artificial coloring and flavoring. Essentially, these are the equivalent of sugary cereals and candy – okay in moderation, but not as one’s complete daily diet.

One of the main reasons people are inspired to learn more about pet food is because their animal begins showing signs of allergies. Some allergies are so severe and persistent that they must be treated medically, however many – if not most – can be solved through dietary changes. The most common protein allergen is chicken. Immediately following chicken, grains should be removed. As noted earlier, some grains can be beneficial, but many dogs and cats cannot process them completely. Grain-free pet foods generally replace grains with sweet and white potato or legumes as the carbohydrate source.

The best method for finding a diet that works for your pet is a 4 to 6 week process called a “food trial.” During this time the dog or cat should only receive the food being tested – nothing else (including treats and chews). Speaking of... treats should be examined with the same scrutiny as food to determine what the ingredients are and where they are manufactured. Another common issue that arises around chews is the use of rawhide. While dogs may love this revolting byproduct, they cannot digest it. Though there is no nutritional panacea in the world of pet food, a raw food diet is as close as it is possible to come. A raw diet is generally a very successful approach for dogs and cats with allergies and other health issues. However, there are some drawbacks to going raw. Three important considerations are storage, handling, and preparation. Another major drawback to feeding raw for many pet lovers is cost. In issues of affordability, supplementing some raw into a kibble-based diet can still have positive health effects.

As mentioned at the opening of this article: there are many opinions about any aspect of pet care and well-being. When it comes to your pet’s diet, the best thing you can do is research. While some people balk at the expense of natural pet foods, they generally save the pet owner money and heartache in the long run. Ultimately, regulating a healthy and nutritious diet for your pet will help ensure he or she has a long, healthy, and happy life.

For more information, feel free to visit us at Aunt Kerry’s Pet Stop where we pride ourselves on our intense scrutiny of the manufacturers and products we sell as well as our thorough researching and caring customer service. In addition to our fine pet foods and supplies, we also offer works by many local and NC artisans including jewelry, ceramics, collars and accessories, pet fleeces and coats, and much more. Bring your furry and not-so-furry family and come on down to see us at Aunt Kerry’s Pet Stop, your locally-owned authority on pet nutrition...and fun. ☺
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How to Register Your Pet in New Hanover County

By Kristen J. Smith

All dogs, cats, and ferrets are required to have a current rabies vaccination (issued by a licensed veterinarian) starting at four months of age, which must be maintained for the duration of the pet’s life. It is then necessary to acquire and maintain a county license. The county registration serves as a means of ensuring that the rabies vaccination is kept current. Neutered animals cost a lower fee to register than intact animals, to encourage reduced pet overpopulation.

Registration should both initially (if possible, you do have up 30 days from date of rabies vaccination to obtain the county license), and subsequently for renewals, coincide with the animal’s rabies vaccine schedule. The license/registration is only valid for the duration of the rabies vaccination. For example, if your pet receives their rabies vaccination in October, but the registration isn’t done until November, the license will still expire on the anniversary date of the rabies vaccination (the next October).

You have the option to purchase a one or three-year registration, with the exception of ferrets. Ferrets can only get a 1 year rabies vaccination and a 1 year county registration.

The fee schedule is as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Registration Period</th>
<th>Spayed &amp; Neutered</th>
<th>Not Spayed or Neutered</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Cat/Dog/Ferret</td>
<td>1 Year License</td>
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<td>Cat/Dog/Ferret</td>
<td>3 Year License</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cat/Dog/Ferret</td>
<td>3 Year License</td>
<td>$25.00</td>
<td>$50.00</td>
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There are also ‘specialty license’ registration prices available; for county residents owning greater than 5 animals, Pet Kennels, Show Kennels and Hunter Kennels. Certain criteria must be met and retained in order to purchase, maintain, and renew this license. Please contact a staff member for more information.

You may mail in registration forms with payment, pay in person at our office (180 Division Drive), or call to make payment over the phone. Be sure to check with your vet; some vets will accept your payment for county registration at their office.

For further information you can contact our office at (910) 798-7500 or visit us on the web at:
www.newhanoversheriff.com/Support%20Services-animal.html
Dog Friendly Locations!!
Tips for Photographing Your Pet

By Felecia Prowant

One of the most commonly asked questions we receive from clients is “Can I bring my dog?”. That’s because those sweet furry faces are family – and we all love to include them in those special moments. So here are some of my favorite tips for photographing pets!

1. Turn off the flash
   Flashing lights are pretty unpleasant for all of us, pets included, they will often squint or your image will have the dreaded “laser eye” as a result of the reflection of the flash on their retina. Natural light will result in the most aesthetically pleasing photo of your pet. It will give the most true to life coat color and texture results in your image. For animals that don’t do well outside, such as indoor cats, natural light from a window is your best bet.

2. Everybody loves treats!
   If possible, keep small treats in your packet while photographing your pet. They are great for holding near the camera to capture your subjects attention and hopefully enable you to catch that great, excited, ears up, expression. And of course, every working model needs payment!

3. Get a new perspective
   We almost always see our pets looking down at them from above. Why not get down on their level when photographing them? Laying down on the ground/floor will give you a much more personal and visually interesting image.

4. Utilize a high shutter speed
   Many pets are hard to photograph because they’re on the move! So in order to catch that action you need a fast shutter speed. If using a point and shoot digital camera you can use “sports mode” and even “continuous mode” to take a quick sequence of shots.

5. Have fun!
   While trying to capture that perfect image of your fur baby remember to keep it fun! Fun for your pet and you. Try not to stress over catching that perfect posed shot – some dogs and particularly cats don’t take well to posing. So bring along a favorite toy, giant stick, or special treat and catch those candid moments that really reflect your pets unique personality.

Memorialize your pet in our Remembrance Garden

Pets are beloved family members and the passing of your 4 legged friend can be a sad and difficult time.

Memorializing your pet by purchasing a brick in our Remembrance Garden not only provides a lasting testament to your pet but also benefits other animals in need in our community as all proceeds go to the ASU Charitable Trust Fund. A portion of the funds will benefit our spay/neuter clinic and shelter play yard area.

If you are interested in purchasing a memorial brick, please contact the shelter at 910-798-7500.
I’ve Been Bitten!

What to do if You’ve Been Bitten by a Domesticated Animal

By Kristen J. Smith

Try as we might to avoid it; bites from animals, even pets, occur. The neighbor’s dog who’s known you for years is startled by a siren and bites. Or a neighborhood dog pulls the leash out of his owner’s hands and decides you are a chew toy. A neighbor’s dog roaming free comes around the corner and bites you.

Here are some tips to handle a bite from a domesticated animal:

- Get the owner’s information on pet: Owner’s name, address and phone number, dog’s name, Rabies tag number if applicable, what vet they use. Obtain a picture of bite animal if possible.
- Wash wound thoroughly to remove saliva.
- Call your local Animal Services or 911.
- Contact your doctor, even if the wound is minor (all animal bites to a human must be reported to Animal Services Unit. Healthcare professionals are required by law to report animal bites to their area animal services agency).

Official procedures for the bite animal:

- If the animal is current with a Rabies vaccination it may be home quarantined for 10 days, provided the home has a secure location to house their pet.
- If not current with Rabies vaccine the animal will be quarantined at Animal Services or a Veterinary Hospital, at owner’s expense.
- Any animal running-at-large at the time of the incident must also be confined at the ASU shelter, a veterinary hospital, or an approved kennel, at the owner’s expense.
- No animal shall be rabies vaccinated prior to or during the confinement period once a bite has occurred.

Protect Yourself from Rabies

Rabies is a deadly viral disease that can be prevented but not cured. Follow these guidelines to make sure you and your pets are protected:

- Wash every wound to remove any saliva from yourself and/or your pet, which is how the virus is carried (be sure to wear protective gloves to handle exposed pets).
- Call Animal Services to report any exposure. Be sure to provide an accurate description of the attacking animal and the owner’s name and address, if known.
- Contact your doctor and/or your pet’s veterinarian, even if the wound is minor.
- Capture and isolate the attacking animal if possible. Keep children away from all animals involved.
- If your currently vaccinated pet is exposed to a rabid or potentially rabid animal, you must re-vaccinate it within five days.
- Keep your property free of garbage and pet food that may attract wildlife. Be sure to secure all trash container tops.

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When making preparations to drop your pet off for the first time at a boarding facility, it can seem a little confusing. Though each facility is unique in their boarding operation, there are some similarities. Here are a few pertinent things to keep in mind that should help smooth out the process.

Do some research before making reservations. Go online and find the kennel's website and look for reviews. Most clients make a point of reporting both positive and especially negative experiences and many kennels have ratings and ample reviews. Read through them and get as much information as you can so that you can make an informed choice.

Let's face it – our pets are important members of our family. For this reason it is important that you, the pet's owner, be relaxed and casual when handing them over to the kennel attendant so they can see that everything is fine. If you are nervous or upset or anxious about handing them to the attendant, then your pet will be too. It's a good idea to tour the boarding facility of your choice, to see the grounds and meet the staff, prior to dropping your pet off. This will also give you a chance to communicate any special needs your pet may require or particular concerns you might have when you leave your pet in their care.

Another thing to consider when dropping your pet off to board is that a reputable kennel should have a wide variety of required paperwork. This will be easier to fill out either over the phone or in person at a point prior to bringing in your pet. Just like daycares for children, boarding kennels require proof of various vaccinations, signatures on various forms and contracts, vet information, contact information, etc. It can be time consuming and if you are in a rush to get out of town, you might find yourself 15 minutes behind schedule if you haven't already dealt with the formalities.

If you plan to provide your own pet food or have supplements or medications that your pet is currently taking, make sure to bring the food in its original container and any and all medications and supplements in their original bottles. Not to be an alarmist, but should your pet require veterinary attention while you are away, it is best for your kennel to be able to provide as much information as they can concerning the care of your pet, down to milligrams of pill dosage and particular food ingredients. Do plan on providing your pet's food because a sudden change in your pet's diet can cause an avoidable upset tummy, not to mention the added stress your pet will be dealing with having his or her routine and environment changed.

Something many pet owners find surprising about boarding kennels is that they aren't much different from hotels. They have hours of operation, cancellation policies, and often a large demand for limited availability. It's very important to provide your kennel with detailed drop-off and pick-up time and to familiarize yourself with their policies. Likewise, if your plans change and you need to pick up earlier or later than originally scheduled, you should contact your kennel and inform them of the change so that everyone is on the same page.

If you plan to bring items such as bedding and toys from home, make sure to label them in some way because most kennels have a wide variety of their own beds and toys and you don't want to lose anything. These items should also be somewhat expendable due to the fact that some pets will inevitably feel the need to un-stuff and, possibly, destroy anything that is provided to them. Your kennel can help you decide what to bring for your pet and what is better left at home.

The last thing to remember when dropping your pet off is that this is really their chance to take a vacation as well. Most kennels offer a multitude of extra services to customize your pets stay, from grooming and bathing to the option of purchasing extra services and treats. Make sure you know what you are asking for and that you get what you pay for. Once again, it may be better to go over these options prior to dropping your pet off so that you fully understand the choices available to you and the cost of signing your pet up for those services.

Hopefully keeping these suggestions in mind when you drop your pet off to board will make the process much less stressful on both you and your pet. It's all about communication.
If you are like millions of animal owners nationwide, your pet is an important member of your family. The likelihood that you and your animals survive an emergency such as fire, flood, hurricane or terrorist attack depends largely on planning done beforehand. In New Hanover County our greatest natural threat is a hurricane. In order to prepare, every pet owner should have a firm plan in place for the two situations you may be presented with: One; if you are going to stay, how will you keep your pet safe? Will you keep your pet with you or take advantage of a shelter? Two; if you are going to evacuate, do you plan to take your pet with you and therefore have a pet-friendly location in mind, or do you plan to take advantage of a shelter?

Why must pet owners plan? There are many reasons which include but are not limited to: most public shelters set up for evacuations will not take pets. If you are forced to leave your pet behind their well-being cannot be guaranteed as you can’t possibly know when you will be permitted back after the storm. Pets lost during/after a storm are likely to die from exposure, starvation, predation or consuming contaminated food or water. Remember: If you must evacuate, conditions are not only unsafe for you but also for your pets.

The best way to start; develop a written plan now. Identify your evacuation zone and determine in which situations you would stay and which you would evacuate (Are you located in a storm surge flood plain? Are you near/on the beach?). In a hurricane always prepare for a category higher than what is forecast. Should you choose to evacuate, family or friends in a safe area is your best choice. Determine if they will house both you and your pets. If they cannot house your pets, arrange shelter at a veterinarian or boarding facility. Keep in mind; your pets are going to fare better with you. If you plan to evacuate to a hotel/motel, find out in advance which ones are pet-friendly, and if they have any special rules that apply (maximum weight, kennels/crates mandatory, deposits, etc.).

Evacuating:
If you must evacuate, leave EARLY. An unnecessary trip is better than waiting too long to leave safely. Be sure your animals have everything they need to be safe during travel; carriers or collapsible crates, collars, leashes, ID tags, and be sure if your animal is micro-chipped their information is updated with the provider. Be sure that carriers are large enough for the animal to stand up and turn around in, and that they are labeled. Be sure to expose your pets to the carriers/crates prior to actually needing them. You want the carrier to be a source of refuge for your pet, not stress. Hurricane season begins on June 1st in New Hanover County. Before the season begins be sure your pet is up to date on immunizations, and try to have these records with you if you must evacuate. Also keep a picture of your pet with you.

What do you need for your pet in case of evacuation? Your pet survival kit should include at least a 2 week supply of food, water/food bowls, medications (if needed), newspapers/trash bags for handling/disposing of waste, cat litter, hygiene items, toys/comfort items, and muzzles if necessary. Remember a can opener for wet food! First aid supplies are also a good idea.

Do your best to remain calm during a storm and/or evacuation. Your pet looks to you for comfort. Keep as close as your pet(s)’ normal routine as much as is possible. Use a calm, reassuring voice.

*If you must evacuate and you do not have time to prepare your pet, New Hanover County Animal Services (180 Division Drive) will house your pet. Space is limited and this should only be your LAST resort.

If you stay at home:
It is just as important to plan for your pets even if you don’t evacuate. Carriers, collars with proper ID and leashes should be maintained for your pets at all times. It is a good idea to secure your pets in their carriers/crates during the brunt of the storm. If your home is damaged, your pets may escape and become disoriented during or immediately after a storm. Place food and medications in water tight containers in a cool, dry area. Store adequate water as your water source may become contaminated. In the event that it does and you have none stored, you can purify water by adding 2 drops of household bleach per quart of cool/cold water (never add bleach to hot water!), mix, seal tightly, let stand for 30 minutes before drinking. If you bring plants into your home before the storm, remember many ornamental plants are poisonous, keep them away from your pets!

Make a back-up emergency plan in case you can’t care for your animals yourself. Develop a buddy system with neighbors, friends or family. Be sure someone is available to care for or evacuate your pets in the event that you are unable to do so.

After the storm:
Walk your pet on a leash until they become re-oriented to your home and surrounding areas. Be very cautious of debris and downed power lines. Don’t let your pets eat or drink anything they find outside, they pose a risk of contamination. If your power is out, be very careful using candles or oil lamps around pets. Never leave them unattended.

If you need shelter for your pet:
Noble Middle School is a Pet Co-Location Shelter. You should only come to Noble if you have a pet. It is for NHC residents only, and only for cats and dogs. The maximum weight for a dog is 60 lbs. Owners must remain at the shelter with their pets. Pets are housed in a separate area of the school, and trained Animal Services unit staff will care for them. The shelter will provide care, food and water, and visitation guidelines. Owners provide any necessary medications, special dietary needs, and vaccination records (including current rabies certificate). *In the event of a Category 4 or 5 hurricane and major evacuations of the entire community are called for, NHC will operate its Pet Co-Location Shelter at West Johnston High School just off of I-40 near Smithfield.
Tips for Finding Lost Pets

By Erica Peterson & Kristen Smith

As loving pet owners, one of our greatest fears is our pet getting lost. Like children, even with a close eye being kept, things can happen. A dog can slip his collar, a cat can bolt out of an open door, or a thunder boom or fireworks scares a dog into digging his way under a fence. It happens to even the most diligent of pet owners, and it’s a terrifying experience. Let’s go over some of the best ways to avoid losing a pet, and avenues to pursue should you lose a pet.

Let’s start with the easiest and most logical step; prevention. The best way to avoid the worry of trying to locate your pet is not to lose him/her in the first place. Always be sure your dog has a collar on, with at least a rabies tag on it (if someone calls the shelter the staff can trace that number and locate you). Even better, make sure your pet always has on an ID tag with your name and phone number, that way the person who finds your pet can call you directly and rapidly return your beloved pooch home to you.

Many people don’t collar their strictly inside cats, and this is where the microchip is helpful for them, as well as dogs. Microchips are very affordable and if you register your chip and keep the information updated, Animal Services and local veterinarians will always be able to scan and identify your pet if they go missing and are located, and notify you. After purchase, make certain to register the chip online with the provider. Include your name, address and phone number as well as a photo of your pet. Some companies will even send out an alert on your behalf to other users in your area when you report your pet missing. Should your pet go missing without ID, your chances of recovering him/her increase from 30% to over 90% with the chip. Be sure you pay your renewal fee, if needed, annually and update any info necessary if you move.

If you keep your animal outside at all, especially when you are not home (please remember it is illegal to leave a dog ‘tied up’ outside alone; i.e. on a runner, tied to a pole, doghouse, etc.), be sure everything is secure: the door to their kennel, your gates, ensure fencing is flush to the ground and too high for your dog to jump over.

Even if despite your best efforts you find you have lost your pet, here are some of the best tips and resources offered locally:

- Visit your local animal shelters frequently to look for your pet
- Fill out a lost report with your local animal shelter
- Contact the media
- Visit www.dogdetective.com
- Visit www.craigslist.com, look under lost and found, pets, pets for sale
- Wilmington Star News (910) 949-2323 will run a free lost or found ad on your behalf
- Wilmington Ad-Pack (910) 791-0688 will run a free lost or found ad on your behalf
- Post to New Hanover Sheriff’s Office Animal Services Unit’s Facebook page
- Animals are picked up by these agencies and forums to connect with other people who may have lost pets, too.
- Full medical and surgical care
- Dentistry • Prescription diets
- Boarding • Hospitalization • Grooming
- Separate cat boarding
- Nutrition counseling • Laser surgery
- In house diagnostic laboratory
- We encourage you to support your local shelters and rescue groups through adoption, donation and participation.

Highsmith Animal Hospital
3335 Wrightsville Avenue • Wilmington, N.C. 28403
910-799-5587

www.highsmithanimalhospital.vesuite.com

Sanitation (city) 910-341-7875, (county) 910-341-0500, (Carolina Beach) 910-458-2999 Animals that are deceased are picked up by these agencies

Do a Web Search: Several online databases track lost and found pet information and help facilitate reunions. You can also join lost pet message boards and forums to connect with other pet owners who may have lost pets, too.

Highsmith Animal Hospital
Basic care of your pet includes grooming and hygiene. Think of your pet in terms of being a young child that cannot care for its own needs. They cannot brush their teeth or hair and need to be bathed. Imagine if said child didn’t have a bath or brush their hair for over a month? You probably wouldn’t want that little guy snuggled up next to you on the couch and you would receive some looks of disdain when out in public.

Grooming is important for the health and well-being of your pet and necessary for most pets. It is also something to consider when choosing a pet. If you decide to get a pet that has long hair, it will require brushing and trimming and even more of a financial commitment on your part.

Here are a few suggestions when looking for a groomer:

- Call around and ask local veterinarians whom they recommend. Most vets will recommend groomers that work closely with them to alert owners of health concerns with their pets.
- Ask other dog owners you know whom they recommend.
- Stop in to the shop and check it out for yourself. Do the dogs seem happy? How willing is the groomer to talk to you? How clean is the Grooming shop? How clean will your pet be if it is getting groomed in a place that is smelly or dirty?

A lot of times people will bathe and attempt to groom their dogs at home rather than taking it to a professional. If you plan on doing ‘home grooming’ here are a few helpful tips for the safety and well being of your pet:

- Never bathe a dog with human shampoo or dish detergent. Use a pet shampoo that is light on or fragrance-free, and high in natural ingredients. Oatmeal shampoo or a hypo-allergenic shampoo is best.
- Rinse! Rinse! Rinse! If traces of shampoo are left on your pet it can cause major skin irritation and itchiness. Always double check behind ears, armpits and tummy. These areas are most commonly missed. Don’t forget feet! If your pet is standing in soapy water make sure to rinse his feet before taking him out of the tub.
- Don’t wash a pet with long hair until it is thoroughly brushed AND combed out. Any little tangles and mats will become BIG tangles and mats if exposed to water. You also won’t be able to get all the shampoo rinsed out of the mat.
- Dry ears are healthy ears. Use cotton balls in your pet’s ears when bathing them followed by using a ‘drying ear product’ to clean them. Water in your pet’s ears can cause infections. Bacteria breeds and thrives in a moist, warm environment such as ears.
- Drying. Pets are not very tolerant of heat. Warm water and warm/cool dryer setting only. To dry a pet faster you can use a technique called ‘bundling’. With several towels, wrap up your pet for 5-10 minutes. You will be surprised how well this works!
- Proper brushing is critical! Brushing not only removes dead hair and prevents matting but it also stimulates your pet’s skin and keeps it healthy. Ask your vet or local groomer what brush you should be using on your pet.
- Pawdicures. If your pet is not active or wearing its nails down, they should be trimmed every 2-3 weeks with special attention to the dewclaws, which can curl into the dogs pad. Nail trimming can be tricky. There is a vein that runs down the inside of the nail called the ‘quick’, and if this gets cut it is painful and will bleed. Once you have injured a pet by cutting its nails too short, it will be very reluctant to let anyone do it again. Use caution and take a little off at a time or better yet file them. If your pet is wiggly nail trimming is best left to the professionals.

Should you ever have questions about grooming, most groomers will be happy to answer them.
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Sean Skutnik
Coldwell Banker Sea Coast Advantage
There are more than a few myths that have been passed around over time, concerning dogs and cats. But one of the king-sized myths swirling about claims, ‘you don’t know what you’re getting if you adopt a homeless pet.’

The reality is this: Shelter dogs and cats are the best and their level of unconditional love is special. I can’t count the number of times I’ve been sitting in a veterinary office or paying a visit to an adoption event, when someone says to me something on the order of, “my rescue dog seems to know I rescued her.”

It’s true, rescued pets are grateful and they return that gratitude a special way. So what is the best way to adopt a pet?

If you visit the New Hanover County Animal Shelter or any other shelter or contact any local rescue group, the staff or volunteers or foster families can answer your questions.

They can match you up with the best pet to be your new best friend. The staff, volunteers or fosters typically spend extended time around the dogs, for example. They know how they interact around other animals or around children.

The likelihood of getting ‘what you want’ is greater with a rescued pet. Why do I say this? Because buying a puppy without engaging in extensive research into the breeder in question and without visiting the breeder’s facility for a full tour is more risky.

Is the breeder actually engaged in practices that take into account cancer, overall health and behavior? Are they well-versed in genetics? I’ve seen and heard too many sad stories.

Actually, rescued dog and cats are the survivors of a bad system. Sure, some will have physical ailments and some might have behavioral issues. After all, they were bred through some process.

But in nearly every case I’ve experienced or heard about, the unconditional love of a rescued pet far outshines any of these issues. And the gift of saving a life is a gift like no other. 🐾