



City of East Ridge

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Press Release

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East Ridge Animal Shelter Seeks Community’s Help During Maximum Capacity

EAST RIDGE, TN — The East Ridge Animal Shelter is currently facing a capacity crisis and is reaching out to the community with an urgent plea: adopt or foster a shelter pet today! Each day, an overwhelming number of dogs and cats find their way to the shelter, and every adoption not only saves a life but also opens up space for another animal in desperate need of safety and love.

Jennie Van Ausdal, Animal Services Supervisor for the East Ridge Animal Shelter, said the facility is currently at max capacity.

“Our shelter is full; no - overflowing with amazing dogs and cats. We need the community's help now more than ever to show them that they matter,” said Van Ausdal. “In these times now more than ever, we all need some extra love in our lives. These incredible companion cats and dogs are just waiting for you to come and change not just their lives, but yours as well.”

Many in the community understand the plight of the shelter animals but are unaware or just not sure how they can help. In addition to adopting a pet, Van Ausdal provides four additional ways anyone can help.

Spay and Neutering Service: A recent grant from the Tennessee Department of Agriculture is enabling the shelter to provide spay and neutering services to low-income households. With the cost of this critical service potentially exceeding \$100 or more, qualifying East Ridge residents are encouraged to take advantage of this beneficial program by the end of December 2025.

Fostering: The East Ridge Animal Shelter has pets of all sizes, ages, and an array of wonderful personalities, and if you aren’t able to adopt, temporarily fostering also provides lifesaving support. Foster parents provide a safe environment and meet the animal's needs, helping it to recover from illness, socialize, or simply take a break from a shelter environment. It is a vital way to help shelters care for more animals and is a rewarding experience for people who love animals but may not be able to make a lifetime commitment at the moment.

Volunteers: If you are looking for a way to give back, the East Ridge Animal Shelter is always in need of volunteers. Whether it’s walking dogs, taking pictures of new shelter animals, or simply helping with laundry, every little bit counts. As a volunteer, you can offer much needed socialization, training, and care that prepares these animals for their future homes. Your time, love, and generosity can transform a frightened and skeptical animal into a trusting, loving pet.

Volunteering at the shelter also has the added benefit of being around animals, which has shown to lower stress and blood pressure. Cuddling and petting animals also help boost your serotonin and dopamine levels, which in turn help you relax and feel happy.

Financial Donations: Any financial contribution to the East Ridge Animal Shelter is helpful in fulfilling their important mission. Financial donations can be beneficial in maintaining operations, expanding programs, and providing comfortable environments. Donations of food, bedding, toys, and cleaning materials also provide valuable support. Community members can additionally help by sharing adoptable pet profiles on social media, expanding the reach of animals seeking homes.

Potential adopters are encouraged to visit the shelter and meet animals such as Rusty, Elvira, Peter Pan, Reba, and many more who wake each day with the hope that a special someone will open their heart and pick them to go to their forever home. These four precious animals are among the numerous cats, dogs, puppies, and kittens that continue to call East Ridge Animal Shelter home.

The shelter is open Monday through Friday, 10 AM until 5 PM, and the 1st and 3rd Saturdays from 10 AM until 2 PM. Call 423-468-1432 for more information or on Facebook or Instagram [@EastRidgeAnimalServices](#). You can also go to www.eastridgeanimalservices.com to view adoptable pets or stop by the shelter at **5302 Stone Street** during operating hours to find your perfect match and potentially your newest family member.

Join us in making a difference and give a deserving animal a second chance at happiness!

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