



what's inside



What are the benefits of adopting senior dogs or cats?

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Are you allergic to your pet? Read to learn more about it.

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More benefits of adopting senior dogs or cats.

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Reduce Euthanasia and Spay or Neuter

REASON for Burke

voice of REASON: saving dogs and cats in our county

Spring 2026



state of REASON: homeless animals? crowded shelters?

Don't complain.
DO something!

If you can't TNR: Adopt
If you can't Adopt: Foster
If you can't Foster: Sponsor
If you can't Sponsor: Volunteer
If you can't Volunteer: Donate
If you can't Donate: Educate

Be part of the solution!



REASON stands for "Reduce Euthanasia and Spay or Neuter." We promote low-cost spays and neuters to prevent unwanted litters. But the truth is that our county still struggles with pet overpopulation and overcrowded shelters and rescues. It truly takes a village of concerned citizens to make a difference.

Facts About Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Clinics: A Dose of Reality

When you hear "low-cost spay/neuter," do you wonder how these clinics operate? Does "low-cost" equal "low-quality" care?

There are many misconceptions about low-cost clinics. Some people fear they have lower standards, are high risk because they perform surgeries quickly, and don't give the same quality care as a "regular" vet. But what are the facts?

Low-cost clinics provide high-quality care at reduced prices.

Some low-cost clinics are actually nonprofits funded by donations, grants, or subsidies. This funding allows them to provide high-quality care at reduced prices. They can usually buy supplies in bulk and have a large enough volume to do multiple surgeries in less time.

Low-cost clinics have surgeons who are skilled from experience.

These surgeons generally perform more spay/neuter procedures than a general vet because this is their focus. They become skillful through repeated, daily experience.

Low-cost clinics offer the same care as a "regular" vet.

These clinics often have strict rules, such as specific age/weight requirements, and some clinics will turn away cases that require monitoring or hospitalization. Their service menu is kept simple for one reason: they are not intended to be your pet's permanent regular vet.

Why REASON uses low-cost clinics in addition to private vet practices.

REASON and other local rescues depend on affordable spay/neuter surgical services to do our lifesaving work. By keeping spay/neuter surgeries affordable, we reduce pet overpopulation, prevent suffering, and support the owners who love their animals and want the best for them. Without low-cost spay/neuter options, shelters would fill faster and more animals would be at risk.

You may have heard that our clinics and vets offer their surgeries to REASON for free. **We can assure you this is not the case!** While our clients are responsible for a small copay, REASON pays the remaining portion of each surgery. We pride ourselves on being good stewards of our funds with at least 92% of our revenues

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applied directly to surgery expenses. The more cost-efficient we keep each surgery, the more dogs and cats we can help. Every dollar saved on a procedure allows us to fund other surgeries.

While we don't yet have a low-cost clinic in Burke County, we are fortunate to have two clinics in neighboring counties. We understand that transportation can be hard for some of our clients, and we are extremely grateful to those who can make that effort. When clients are willing to travel, this helps us multiply the impact of our donor dollars, leading to more surgeries and fewer unplanned litters that end up in shelters. Sometimes a little extra distance makes a

big difference for other members of our community. Every pet owner deserves the opportunity to do the right thing.

Our relationships with our out-of-county clinics are super important. We have a genuine partnership with them, and they meet the same medical standards as our local private vets. They are a way for us to stretch limited resources and provide more services to our community. This benefits everyone involved, even those without pets!

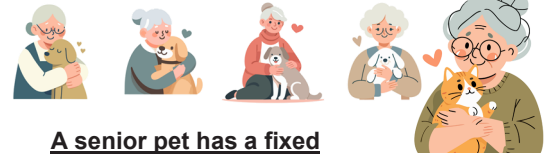
Conclusion

In reality, low-cost spay/neuter clinics are a lifeline — and often the only practical choice — for many responsible, but low-income,

pet owners in our community. For households living paycheck to paycheck, even a routine surgery can feel out of reach.

Low-cost spay/neuter programs don't cut corners: they remove barriers. Affordable services help families protect their pets *before* a preventable crisis occurs. These clinics offer basic services for a lower cost which is helpful to working families, seniors, and people in rural areas...and for REASON, which operates on a tight budget!

Low-cost care isn't about charity. It's about community.



be a hero: give seniors a second chance



Are you looking to add a new furry family member to your home? Have you considered adding a pet that has some mileage on him or her, but still has a lot of love and a lifetime of experience to give to the right family?

Open Volunteer Application

Click above or type in browser: reason-burkenc.org/volunteer/



Total Spays/Neuters Supported by REASON (as of March 31, 2026)

6,661

The average mature dog or cat, 7 years or older, is often the last to be adopted and the first to be overlooked in a shelter or rescue because of the cute puppies and kittens. These seniors are homeless because of circumstances beyond their control, and they just want a second chance in a loving and safe home.

There are 10 benefits of adopting older pets.

Adopting a senior pet actually saves lives and supports shelters.

Most people visit animal shelters or rescues looking for a cute puppy or kitten. Sadly, this means that senior dogs and cats receive little attention and may spend their final years in a rescue. Even worse, they may end up being killed in an overcrowded shelter to make room for new arrivals. If you open your heart and home to an older pet, you could be saving his life and giving him a second chance to be a loving, loyal companion. In addition, you are allowing the shelter to accept other deserving pets.

A senior pet is cheaper to adopt.

Most shelters and rescues work hard to find safe, loving homes for their older animals. Some animal shelters may have reduced or no adoption fees for senior dogs and cats. In addition, the older dogs and cats are already spayed or neutered, dewormed, immunized, and possibly microchipped.

A senior pet has a fixed

personality, temperament, and size.

Kittens and puppies are still developing their personalities and it can be a guessing game as to how they will act when fully grown. And never mind wondering whether your teeny, tiny puppy or kitten will end up small, medium, or large!

With seniors, there are no real surprises: what you see is what you get! Their behaviors, quirks, needs, and preferences are fully formed and predictable. In addition, shelter staff most likely can volunteer information about the pet's likes and dislikes based on input records and how the pet responds to staff and other animals at the shelter.

A senior pet is already trained and needs less attention.

Puppies and kittens are a LOT of hard work! They are cute, mischievous bundles of energy who are always exploring their world and getting into trouble. As a result, these fur babies will need round-the-clock support and training. Just like human babies when teething, they often chew on anything or swallow dangerous objects like shoelaces and hair ties that can lead to expensive vet bills. Are you ready to deal with scratched furniture, chewed electrical wires, broken items, and constant bathroom accidents?

Senior pets are more independent and low energy, leading to simpler needs than rambunctious puppies and kittens. Because they have already learned many basic life lessons, adopting an older pet allows you to skip the growing phase. Seniors are less likely to scratch furniture or destroy property. In addition, adult cats are usually litter-box trained, while dogs know that potty time is an outdoor activity. And while regular exercise and playtime are still important, these activities won't be as time-consuming with an older pet who prefers to nap in the sun.



To find out if you qualify for pet spay or neuter surgery assistance, contact REASON at 828.403.3675.

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ah-choo! animal allergies explained

Do you find yourself saying “I’m allergic to cats” or “Dogs make me sneeze”? The truth is, any animal with fur can cause humans to have an allergic reaction! You are not the only one suffering from pet allergies. According to the Asthma and Allergy Foundation of America, about 6 out of 10 households in the United States have a pet. As a result, allergies to cats and dogs affect 10 to 20% of the world’s population.



Allergic reactions occur when our immune system reacts to a foreign substance. According to the Mayo Clinic, “When you have allergies, your immune system makes antibodies that identify your allergen as something harmful, even though it isn’t.” Pets can expose us to many of these irritants, leaving us sneezy, itchy, coughing, or struggling to breathe. It is not their fur that has your nose itching: the most common allergen is produced in the tongue and can be found in pet dander, hair, and saliva. Another common allergen is serum albumin in the dog’s blood. Dog urine comes with its own set of allergens: there is a unique male-specific allergen found in the urine and saliva of intact male dogs (another reason to get Fido fixed!).

Pet dander is one of the leading causes of allergic reactions to animals. Dander, or dead flakes of skin from our cats and dogs, sheds whenever they scratch, roll around, or just exist really! Dander floats freely through the air and can remain airborne for quite a while with the gentle circulation in our homes. These lightweight and jagged allergens are a type of protein called *Canis familiaris allergen 1*. They stick easily to surfaces and even transfer on your clothing to locations without a pet!

In cats, the oils from their glands often cause allergies. These oils are in their hair, dander, and saliva. The most allergens are found on the cat’s face and neck because of the oil glands in those areas. These allergens may then be spread across the cat’s

body by regular licking and grooming. Every time your cat does that cute thing where he rubs his head and neck on you, he is exposing you to allergens. Getting your cat spayed or neutered helps lower their oil gland production, which will help control your allergies at home. The benefits of fixing your animals don’t end at controlling pet overpopulation.

Considering a hypoallergenic dog? Keep in mind that no living animal is hypoallergenic, but there may be some animals who are advertised to have fewer allergens. According to the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma, and Immunology, “scientific studies have found no consistent evidence that hypoallergenic breeds produce fewer allergens. In fact, some ‘hypoallergenic’ breeds have been shown to have equal or even higher levels of *Canis familiaris allergen 1* in their hair and dander compared to non-hypoallergenic breeds.” No matter the breed, allergens are present, but we can find ways to lessen and control these allergens!

Are you suffering with pet allergies? Do you believe you can never have that dream pet? A pet allergy diagnosis doesn’t necessarily mean you must say goodbye to pet ownership. According to the American Lung Association, ways to lessen allergies include keeping pets off furniture and out of bedrooms; cleaning furniture, carpets, and clothing regularly after contact with your pets; and grooming your animal outdoors or in a closed off area from the rest of the home. Changing your air filters or using air purifiers regularly can ease allergy symptoms. In addition, healthcare providers can recommend medications to help manage symptoms. To ease your allergy symptoms, you may consider allergen testing as the best path forward toward owning a pet.

Our furry friends have many positive impacts on our lives! Controlling allergens may be a way to keep Fido and Felix in your home and your sneezes under control! Let’s not forget that getting our pets fixed has many benefits, allergen control being one of them! Check out REASON’s website for affordable ways to make this happen!



Watch the slideshow on our YouTube Channel; see our YouTube link on this page.



5 ways to get information from REASON

Did you know that REASON posts valuable information on the internet? From our website to social media accounts, you can read tips or get updates on our spay/neuter schedules.

Our website

Copy and paste this web address in a browser to open our website:

<https://reason-burkenc.org/>

Our YouTube channel

Copy and paste this web address in a browser to view our YouTube channel:

<https://www.youtube.com/@REASON-SpayorNeuter>

Our Facebook page

Copy and paste this web address in a browser to view our Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/REASON.SpayNeuter>

Our Instagram account

Copy and paste this web address in a browser to view our Instagram videos:

https://www.instagram.com/n_burkenc/

Our email address

You can contact us directly by sending an email to the REASON webmaster:

webmaster@reason-nc.org

Remember: Please like, follow, or subscribe to our social media to get the latest updates.

(cont. from page 2) **be a hero: give seniors a second chance**

A senior pet is like a pre-programmed, relaxed furry friend, ready to settle into your life and heart. These pets are more interested in quiet companionship, but they have also learned to amuse themselves while you are gone.

A senior pet can adjust quickly and learn new behaviors.

There's a saying that "with age comes wisdom." Certainly this applies to older pets who are already familiar with household routines. They often quietly observe their new surroundings until they are ready to join your family on their own terms.

Although grown, adult dogs *can* learn new tricks. No matter their former life, they can adjust to your way of doing things, such as walking on a leash, solving puzzle toys, or asking to go outside. If they don't have health issues, older dogs can run, hike, and play just like any puppy; they just need less intensive exercise with more time to rest. And a benefit of learning new skills is that it also helps keep their cognitive functions sharper.

A senior pet is perfect for senior citizens, first-time owners, or homes with young children.



Adopting a senior pet can provide a smooth transition to homes with special needs.

Senior citizens may enjoy an older, calmer dog or cat. These laid-back pets don't want to play all day, but would rather curl up with their favorite person or take leisurely walks. This makes them the perfect companion for any owner who might have limited mobility.

First-time pet owners or families with busy schedules often worry about the need for extensive training and constant care. A senior pet who is already trained and well-behaved can ease those fears.

Sometimes small children can be a little rough with puppies or kittens. Older pets who have lived in a family setting are often calmer and more tolerant of children. Additionally, these

seniors have usually lived with other pets, including at the shelter. If given time, they are more likely to bond with your other pets. At the very least, they will carve out their personal space and mind their own business.

A senior pet involves a shorter commitment.

Some people, especially senior citizens, are uncertain about committing to pets for decades. What would happen to the pet if their health fails or other circumstances change?

Enter the senior dog or cat. They can be a loving, loyal, and gentle companion without the lengthy obligation. All they really need is someone who loves and cares for them during their second chance.

A senior pet can have many good years ahead.

Adopting a healthy senior dog or cat doesn't mean they will die shortly after being adopted. After all, age is just a number!

The average cat lives an average of 12 to 18 years, so a healthy senior may have up to a decade to spend with you.

Many dogs can live to be 14, 15, even 16 years old, while smaller dogs tend to live even longer. That means that if you adopt a healthy senior dog, you may have many years to reassure them that they are still loved.

A senior pet shows love and gratitude.

Senior dogs and cats end up in shelters for many reasons beyond their control. No matter the reason, they suddenly find themselves scared, confused, and depressed. Studies show that adult cats who have been adopted will express gratitude and love. They are generally more responsible and will never forget your kindness. A senior dog may bear a few scars from his past life, but he can form a deep, loving bond with his adopter. The senior dog who experiences love in a new home can quickly blossom into a gentle and loyal companion.

These seniors don't care what you look like, where you work, or how much money you have; they will spend the rest of their lives thanking you for saving them and giving them another chance.

A senior pet can improve the owner's life.

Many people have experienced loneliness, depression, anxiety, or stress. Caring for a senior pet can bring purpose to an owner's daily life through simple routine tasks: feeding, petting, playing, grooming, walking outside... in short, loving them. Owners often report that they feel happier, more focused, and less lonely after adopting a senior pet.

In addition to psychological benefits, senior owners have also experienced health benefits when caring for an older pet. Scientific studies report that older adults can lower blood pressure, improve heart health, enhance immune function, and increase joint flexibility by staying active. Caring for an older, calmer pet encourages senior citizens to stay active without overexerting themselves.

In short, adopting a senior pet is a step toward a healthier, happier life for both the older pet and the adopter.

Conclusion

Adopting a senior pet isn't just an act of kindness; it's one of the most rewarding decisions you can make. What senior dogs and cats may lack in time, they more than make up for in heart, loyalty, and gratitude.

Dogs and cats see the world differently than their owners. In the next issue, we will discuss your pet's superpowers.



call us:

828-403-3675

email us:

reason.nc.org@gmail.com

write us:

PO Box 633

Rutherford College, NC 28671

REASON's mission:

To eliminate the killing of healthy and unwanted cats, dogs, puppies, and kittens.

We accomplish this by:

- ◆ providing low-cost spay/neuter surgical fee assistance through partnerships with private practice veterinarians and low-cost clinics,
- ◆ collaborating with other animal welfare groups,
- ◆ promoting education on the humane treatment of animals.

