



Monthly Newsletter

November 2024



Executive Director – Elena Gowe & Veterinarian – Dr. Rachel Ripley

A Season of Success and New Beginnings

As the leaves turn and we embrace the season of giving thanks, Monroe County Friends of Animals (MCFA) has much to celebrate and even more to look forward to. Our community has come together in remarkable ways, and thanks to your support, we continue to make significant strides in animal welfare and community engagement.

Welcoming New Leadership We are thrilled to introduce two pivotal additions to our team. Joining us this season is Dr. Rachel Ripley, our new Veterinarian, whose expertise and passion for animal care have already begun to make a profound impact. Under her care, our veterinary services have expanded, improving our ability to provide for the health needs of our shelter animals and community pets alike. Additionally, we warmly welcome Elena Gowe as our new Executive Director. Elena brings a wealth of experience in nonprofit leadership and a deep commitment to animal advocacy. Her vision for the future of MCFA is inspiring, and we are excited about the direction under her guidance.

A Gala to Remember The success of our recent Gala, "Wags & Whiskers," was nothing short of spectacular. This event not only celebrated our achievements but also significantly boosted our funding, enabling us to continue our mission. The evening was filled with joy, generosity, and community spirit, and it reminded us of the powerful impact we can have when we come together for a common cause.

Vaccine Clinic Achievements Our recent Vaccine Clinic was another highlight of the year. Thanks to the meticulous planning and dedication of our staff and volunteers, countless pets received vital vaccinations and microchips. This clinic is a cornerstone of our commitment to public health and pet welfare, ensuring that all pets have access to necessary medical care.

Daily Rescues and the Pet Food Pantry Amid these events, our daily rescue operations have persistently provided hope and new beginnings to many cats and dogs. Each rescue story adds to our resolve to fight for those who cannot speak for themselves. However, the need in our community continues to grow, particularly highlighted by our Pet Food Pantry. The pantry's shelves are often quickly emptied as many families rely on this support to keep their beloved pets fed and healthy. The pantry is a vital resource; we urgently need donations to keep it stocked.

How You Can Help Your support makes all the difference. Whether through volunteering, donations, or participating in our events, every bit of help counts. We especially encourage ongoing contributions to our Pet Food Pantry—every can of food helps keep another pet with their family.

As we look forward to the holiday season, let's continue to build on our successes and support the vulnerable animals in our community. Together, with your help and the new energy brought by Dr. Ripley and Elena Gowe, we can look forward to a future where no pet in Monroe County goes without the love and care they deserve.

Thank you for being a part of our community and for everything you do for our animal friends. Let's keep the momentum going!

-THE MCFA TEAM

In this newsletter
you can expect:

Welcome Executive
Director – Elena

Successful Gala
Event

Thanksgiving Pet
Safety

MCFA Pet Food
Pantry- Donations

New Vet – Dr. Ripley

Whiskers of
Gratitude, Paws of
Hope



Introducing Elena Gowe: MCFA's New Executive Director

Monroe County Friends of Animals is thrilled to welcome Elena Gowe as our new Executive Director! With over two decades of experience in animal welfare, Elena has dedicated her career to supporting both animals and the people who love them. She began her journey by founding a rescue in 2001, which grew into a dynamic center providing therapeutic programs, outreach, and comprehensive rescue services. Her early rescue experience with a horse named George, who needed round-the-clock care to recover, made her realize her calling was to help animals find new hope and loving homes. Since then, Elena has worked tirelessly to expand her impact, rescuing countless animals and gaining valuable skills in grant writing, fundraising, and organizational leadership.

Elena's vision for MCFA is rooted in the belief that animals bring joy, unity, and hope to people's lives. She aims to expand MCFA as a social enterprise that serves the community by supporting pets in homes and reducing shelter overcrowding. Elena is especially excited to collaborate with the local community, exploring new ways for the center to meet Monroe County's unique

needs. Her goal is to create a sustainable future for MCFA, ensuring its positive impact continues for generations. Outside of her role, Elena is an avid equestrian and enjoys training horses with behavioral challenges and even competing in barrel racing. Her guiding philosophy, inspired by her mother's encouragement, is "The hero is you"—a motto that reflects her dedication to creating lasting change in animal welfare.

Please join us in welcoming Elena Gowe to MCFA as she leads us into an exciting new chapter of compassionate and innovative animal care!



Support Our Pet Food Pantry This Season

As the holiday season approaches, we're reaching out for support for the MCFA Pet Food Pantry. This program is crucial for helping families in Monroe County keep their beloved pets during challenging times by providing them with necessary food supplies.

How to Help:

- **Donate Pet Food:** Drop off unopened and unexpired cat and dog food at Eastbourne Animal Center, located at 130 Kefauver Ln, Madisonville, TN, seven days a week, 11 am-4 pm
- **Monetary Contributions:** Financial donations help us purchase food when supplies are low. Donate online or send a check to our center.
- **Spread the Word:** Share our mission with your network or on social media using #MCFAnimals.

Your support directly contributes to keeping pets in their homes and preventing them from entering the shelter system. Every donation, no matter the size, makes a difference. Thank you for your generosity and helping us ensure that no pet goes hungry in Monroe County this holiday season.



November Vaccine Clinic Announcement

Mark your calendars for our upcoming November Vaccine Clinic! Ensure your pets stay healthy and protected by keeping up with their vaccinations and microchipping.

Date: Thursday, November 21st

Time: 1:30 PM to 4 PM

Location: Eastbourne Animal Center
130 Kefauver Ln, Madisonville, TN

Services Offered: Rabies, DAPP, & FVRCP
Vaccinations & Microchipping

Join us to keep your furry family members happy, healthy, and safe. We look forward to seeing you there!

Meet Dr. Rachel Ripley: MCFA's New In-House Veterinarian



We're thrilled to welcome Dr. Rachel Ripley to the Monroe County Friends of Animals team! Dr. Ripley, a University of Tennessee College of Veterinary Medicine graduate, brings over eight years of experience in general, emergency, and shelter medicine. Before joining MCFA, she served as the supervising veterinarian at a high-quality, low-cost spay and neuter clinic in Memphis, where she focused on making compassionate, affordable care available to all pets. Now, she brings that same dedication to MCFA, envisioning Eastbourne Animal Center as our community's welcoming hub for pet care.

At home, Dr. Ripley is adored by her family of animals, including eight cats, her wonderful dog Gordy, and even a twenty-two-year-old leopard gecko named Geico. Passionate about empowering pet owners and shelter staff alike, Dr. Ripley is excited to improve the quality of life for pets and their people here in Monroe County. When she's not helping animals, she enjoys drawing, reading, and spending time in nature with her husband and daughter.

Please join us in giving Dr. Ripley a warm welcome!



Celebrating Safely with Our Furry Family Members

As Thanksgiving approaches, many of us look forward to a day filled with family, gratitude, and a lavish spread of delicious food. It's a time to gather with loved ones and reflect on what we're thankful for—and for many, this includes our cherished pets. Here's how to ensure a safe and enjoyable Thanksgiving for every family member, including the four-legged ones.

- **Mind the Menu:** While sharing your Thanksgiving feast with your pets is tempting, many traditional dishes can harm them. Foods like onions, garlic, grapes, and raisins are toxic to dogs and cats, and rich, fatty foods can cause pancreatitis. Instead, prepare a pet-friendly treat, such as plain turkey, pumpkin, or a little sweet potato without added sugars and spices.
- **Secure the Space:** With the hustle and bustle of guests arriving and the kitchen in full swing, ensure your pets have a safe, quiet space to retreat to. This will help them feel secure and prevent them from sneaking food or escaping through the open door as guests come and go.
- **Decorations at a Distance:** Keep an eye on festive decorations that could become hazardous. Decorative corn, candles, and centerpieces can intrigue pets but may lead to gastrointestinal blockages or accidents if played with or ingested.
- **Time for Togetherness:** While the kitchen may not be the safest place for a pet during meal prep, there are safe ways to include them in the festivities. A post-meal walk or some quiet downtime together can help you bond with your pet and work off some of that turkey!



A Grand Success: 2024's Wags & Whiskers Gala

"Oh, What a Night," as the song lyrics say. Our 2024 Wags & Whiskers Gala celebrating Twenty years of MCFA's existence was a true success. Some 170+ people attended and enjoyed the silent and live auctions, the fun Heads & Tails game (you had to be there!), a spirit pull, and a lovely plated dinner. We also had a special book signing, "Saving Tucker" by Kit Sexton and illustrated by Ed Burley. All this at the elegantly decorated (by volunteers) great room of the Tellico Village Yacht Club.

We want to thank again our sponsors who so generously donated to our cause: Chris Purcell, ReMax realtor as Adoption Sponsor, Carmen Trammell from Peaceful Kingdom as Animal Rescue Sponsor, and People's Bank of East Tennessee as Spay & Neuter Sponsor. Our gala patrons are also much appreciated: JTECK (BWoods) and Cotton Eyed Joe (CWard). The donations this group made and the other funds raised due to the gala make a real difference in our ability to continue the many programs and services MCFA provides, including the operation of the Eastbourne Animal Center. Though not all the promised monies are yet in hand, we know we have surpassed the tally from our 2023 Wags & Whiskers event!

Thank you to everyone who participated, donated, and volunteered. Your support not only made the gala a night to remember but also strengthened our ability to positively impact the lives of animals in need. We look forward to next year for another fantastic event and hope you will be there too!



Whiskers of Gratitude, Paws of Hope

In the quiet warmth of grateful hearts, Cats curl softly,
where comfort starts. Dogs with tails that tell of glee,
Thankful for the love that set them free.

Within the walls where kindness dwells, Each rescue
story fondly tells Of gentle hands and soothing words,
And human kindness, sweetly heard.

Yet, for every joyous leap and bound, There are silent
paws still shelter-bound. Eyes that watch, and hearts
that wait, For a loving touch to change their fate.

Thankful whispers from those rehomed, To cozy
corners where they now roam. Dreams of hearths
where they're adored, And the simple joy of a favorite
board.

But hope still flickers in sheltered spaces, In wagging
tails and purring graces. Each day brings a chance
anew, For dreams of a forever home to come true.

Let's not forget the ones still there, With hopeful eyes
and so much to share. This season, may we spread the
word, Till every purr and bark is heard.

For gratitude grows in places touched by love, In
rescue stories, below and above. May every cat and
dog soon find, A forever home, sweetly entwined.

Thank you for your support!

MONROE COUNTY FRIENDS OF
ANIMALS

423-436-2900

MCFriendsofAnimals.org

130 Kefauver Ln.
Madisonville, TN 37354