



Judge/Executive Harry L. Berry

Waggin' Tales

Two of our community's most vulnerable groups have the opportunity to succeed together this summer. **Waggin' Tales** is a program where children read to shelter dogs. The program, launched in June, benefits children by giving them an uncritical audience on which to practice their reading skills and benefits shelter dogs by helping them become more socialized.

This program is cosponsored by the Hardin County Public Library and Friends of Hardin County Animal Shelter. It will run through July from 10:30-11:30 am. Children ages 5-10 are invited and a special session is scheduled on August 1 for children 10-13. Children are given a lesson on dog safety with instructions on how to sit by the kennels, and when to give the dog treats. After the reading session, they share their dogs' reactions to the reading.

Shelter dogs need socialization activities, such as this program, to help them relax and make them more likely to be adopted. They become curious instead of scared and begin to trust the people again.



Nan Hildesheim, Head of the Youth Services at our Public Library is thrilled to demonstrate early literacy is not confined to a classroom or a bedtime story; but rather a wonderful way to build children's reading confidence.

You see, the dogs don't expect perfect readers!

Register your children at WWW.FOHCAS.org or get a form at the Public Library

Reading comes easily for some students but for others, reading is a challenge. The pets in a shelter face their own challenges. Some pets are insecure and fearful, others become overstimulated by living in a kennel," said Jo Thomas, Co-Founder of Friends of Hardin County Animal Shelter. In addition to helping the children build confidence with reading, they also learn empathy toward the shelter dogs and enjoy giving the dogs a better chance at finding homes. The shelter dogs are not forced to interact with the children, but can approach their kennel gate at their own pace and level of confidence.



We are so happy to partner with Friends of Hardin County Animal Shelter and our local animal shelter to show the connection between reading and listening and how everyone, even dogs and cats, can benefit from a good story."

Rene Hutcheson
Hardin County Public Library Director

