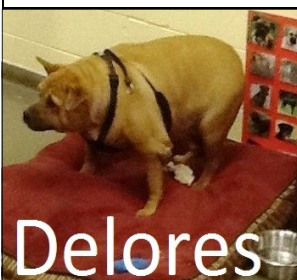


## What you should know about Williamson Co Animal Control & Adoption Center

Laura Chavarria, Director of WCAC&AC  
B.S. in Biology from Ohio State University

Shelter animals can make amazing companions. Additionally, shelters often offer proactive programs that save lives, e.g. spay/neuter clinics and other services that improve animal welfare- lost & found, pet food donations, cruelty investigation, etc. Why then, are some people still hesitant to adopt shelter pets or visit their local shelter? Experience has shown me that the main reason is their misconceptions about shelter animals or shelters in general. I can tell you first hand that these misconceptions are not true at Williamson County Animal Control and Adoption Center.

The first misconception is that WCAC&AC “euthanizes everything.” We actually do everything possible to avoid euthanasia. We rely on heavily on foster homes. Because we are an “open admission” shelter—accept all animals that are stray or surrendered by owners living in Williamson County-- we have animals of all ages, colors, sizes, temperaments, and health at our shelter. You can imagine then how many animals we take in that are elderly or ill. If these animals have a good temperament, we will utilize donations to provide needed medical



We recently had a dog named “Delores” come in who was a stray and morbidly obese. She weighed 86 pounds and could barely move due to tumors. She had a wonderful temperament and would be very adoptable if she received long-term, loving care. The staff found a local clinic willing to provide water therapy to facilitate weight loss and a foster home dedicated to supporting her continuing need for weight loss. She has now lost 30 pounds and is a wonderful companion. (As we go to print, she is still waiting for her forever home.) Delores is just one prime example of WCAC&AC’s commitment to each animal in its care.

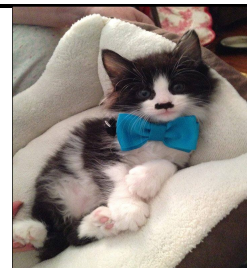


A second misconception is that the animals at WCAC&AC are on a time constraint; if they are not adopted within a certain time frame or if space becomes limited, they will automatically be euthanized. Some animals are adopted in days; others stay with us for many months. We have animals that have been here for months that are shelter favorites. The longer an animal is here at the shelter, the more chance that staff and volunteers develop a deep connection with the animal. We had a cat named “Mark” that was brought in as a stray in May of 2013 and was adopted last week! We provided Mark with love and care and never gave up that a great family would one day come and adopt him. It’s bittersweet when our “long-timers” get adopted, because they’ve become part of our daily lives, but knowing that they are now in their forever home makes all the worry and work worthwhile.

More briefly, a third misconception is that our shelter is full of only “stray” dogs and cats. While many wonderful animals do find themselves abandoned through no fault of their own, about half of our animals walk through our “open” door belonging to the person bringing them. They are being surrendered to us...also most often through no fault of their own. We care for them all—mixes, pure-breds, owner surrenders and strays--with all of the energy and resources that we have.

### Other misconceptions and enlightening facts to the contrary about our shelter:

- \*The shelter is just a dog pound with no proactive programs, like our **community spay/neuter clinic**.
- \*Shelter animals are just left in cages. There is no enrichment, **like cat toys and a screened cat porch or 3-6 walks a day for dogs!**
- \*Adoption efforts only take place at the shelter. **We have almost weekly off-site adoption events in the community.**
- \*Tennessee animal welfare laws are very archaic. **Williamson County has strengthened its Rules and Regulations governing dogs and cats and animal control officers enforce them regarding tethering, provision of food, water and shelter, running at large, etc.** You may call 790-5590 with any concern you may have about a Williamson Co. animal’s care or condition.



Our mission at WCAC&AC is to take in stray and owner surrendered animals of Williamson County and provide stellar care for them while in our guardianship, ultimately adopting them into the community as healthy, loving pets. We also provide proactive spaying and neutering services and enforce rules and regulations to ensure a safe community for both people and pets. We are passionate at WCAC&AC about changing the public’s perception of what our shelter does. We are not the “dog catchers” of yesteryear. We are your local shelter that gives of ourselves and our resources to provide a better quality of life for the animals of Williamson County.