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LOOKING TO ADOPT?

Are you looking for a new furry family member?

Visit www.aforeverhome.org or stop by an adoption event to find the perfect one. We have many wonderful dogs waiting for forever homes. Once you've fallen in love, the next step is to fill out an adoption application to get the ball rolling.

Go to www.aforeverhome.org for our adoption schedule and available pets.

Happy New Year from all of us at AFH! We want you to know that we appreciate every single one of you! Thanks to all of you (adopters, supporters, and volunteers), we were able to save almost 1,000 puppies and dogs last year – no easy feat!

There is a tremendous amount of coordination that goes into every single rescue we do – from selecting dogs who we feel would appeal to our fosters and adopters; to arranging for transportation, foster homes, and vet care; to marketing our dogs to potential adopters. It's a lot of work but it is a labor of love.

Many of our adopters are looking for puppies, some are looking for adult dogs, and a precious few special families are interested in senior dogs. We love senior dogs and it is particularly satisfying when we are able to save them and find them loving forever homes for however much time they have left.

Unfortunately, senior dogs are abandoned by their owners frequently. The main reason is because medical costs increase as dogs age – just like people! This is why AFH highly recommends pet insurance. If you buy it when your dog is young, coverage can be a lifesaver as your dog gets older and starts developing medical issues.

AFH has teamed with Toto Cares pet insurance. Please visit <https://www.totopetinsurance.com/AForeverHome> to learn about their insurance offerings. AFH gets a donation for every enrollment and you get peace of mind knowing that you have help if you face unexpected (and significant) vet costs.

Later in this newsletter we share tips on caring for your senior dog.

Thanks again for everything you do for our homeless puppies and dogs, and here's to a successful 2019 – during which we hope to save even more lives!

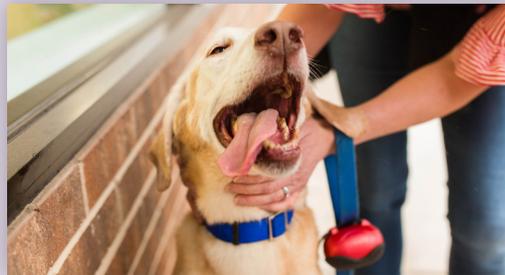


SPOTLIGHT ON MASON



MASON
Male (Neutered)
Breed: Plott Hound Mix
Age: 10 years old

Mason is a Plott Hound/Mix. He is a puppy trapped in a senior body! Mason is the perfect guy. How can you not love that sweet face and those puppy dog eyes? You wouldn't know that Mason is 10 years old based on how much energy he has. He loves to go on long walks, and even runs. He will do tricks for you as well if you have some yummy treats.



AFH HAS A NEW HOME!

As you may already know, the Petco where we held adoption events for 16 years closed at the end of 2018. We know that all of you were used to seeing us there every Sunday but we are inviting you to join us at our new home – Weber's Pet Supermarket. Most of our adoption events will be at their Chantilly location, but there are a few scheduled for their Herndon location. Also, please note that our adoption events are now on Saturdays – not Sundays. Be sure to check our website – www.aforeverhome.org – for details. We look forward to seeing you at Weber's!



SAVE THE DATE

Mark your calendar for the 1st Annual Inspiration Across Nations Soirée, a cocktail party that will be held on April 4, 5:30-8:30pm at Capo's Backroom in DC.

Inspiration Across Nations is a platform to highlight organizations and people who give back to the community. This event will feature three organizations who will be the beneficiaries of 100% of the proceeds. A Forever Home Rescue Foundation is very grateful to have been selected to participate.

"I wanted to put together an event to showcase a variety of organizations who do so much for the community" said Megan Eunpu, Founder of Inspiration Across Nations. "I am beyond excited to partner with A Forever Home for the 1st Annual Inspiration Across Nations Soiree. I adopted my pup Keeley from A Forever Home 8 years ago and she brings me joy every day. I have A Forever Home to thank for that!"

This is an event not to be missed! Visit www.inspirationcrossnations.org for more details and to purchase a ticket.

FALL WALKATHON

Kaitlin Springer is the Vice President of Hospitality of the DECA chapter at Potomac Falls High School. DECA is an organization that prepares emerging leaders and promotes careers in business, marketing, and finance. She reached out to AFH to ask if we would be interested in participating in and being the recipient of donations from a walkathon that she was going to plan. We jumped at the chance!

November 3, 2017 was a beautiful Fall day at Algonkian Regional Park. Almost 110 people participated in the walkathon and approximately 70 dogs joined in the fun! Some participants took turns walking AFH foster dogs, who were exhausted at the end of the day!

Katie and her team raised almost \$1,600 for our puppies and dogs, and we received another \$200 in donations. It was a wonderful, fun-filled day and AFH is grateful to have been invited to participate in this event.

Joining Katie in planning and executing the walkathon were Madeline Miller and David Cao (also seniors at Potomac Falls High School) and their DECA advisors William Smallwood and Lena Kibsi.

Katie told us that they hope to continue this event in the future!



DECA team

GOODBYE ANGEL

Ronald Moak contacted us to let us know of the loss of his AFH dog Angel Twila Moak.

I meant to contact A Forever Home earlier last week, however, I have been busy and mourning the loss of my pet companion, Angel. Angel was adopted from AFH in January 2013 and was an awesome member of the Moak brothers family (my brother Richard and me) in addition to being a constant companion to Lily Marie Harrison who was also adopted from AFH by Kindra Harrison. Angel and Lily were like two peas in a pod and spent time together each day.

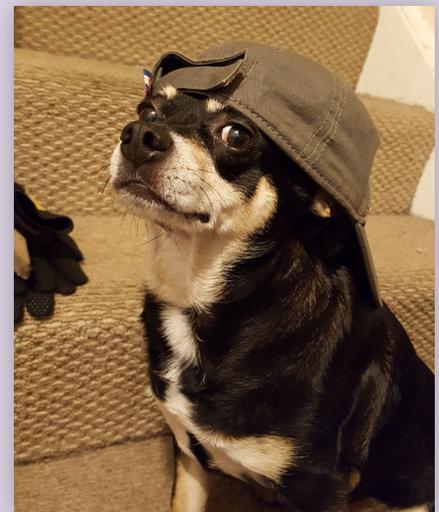
Angel fell ill last Sunday, the 26th of September, and was diagnosed as having a blood

disease by our veterinarian at the Centreville Square Animal Hospital. We took Angel to the Veterinary Referral Center of Northern Virginia where she was given a transfusion and kept overnight. With little or no hope of recovery, Angel was brought home Tuesday to spend her last hours with the family, and for Lily to see her one last time. That evening, Tuesday the 28th, Angel was put to sleep by our veterinarian Dr. Mongola. It was a difficult event for us, and we were happy that we at least attempted to save Angel before we said our goodbyes.

Angel was a true blessing to me and my brother. As a disabled veteran with PTSD, Angel was my mainstay and true companion, as she was for my younger brother.

She will be greatly missed by all of us, and though we will adopt another pet, she is the one and only Angel for us.

Thank you AFH and all who give their time and energies. Surely you are also greatly appreciated by many pet lovers.



11 TIPS TO CARE FOR YOUR SENIOR DOG

1. **Consider the Use of Ramps** — If your dog has mobility issues that make getting up on your bed or couch difficult, try adding a ramp or stairs so she/he doesn't have to jump. This can also help prevent injuries in aging dogs. You can also purchase ramps to help them get into and out of your car
2. **Take Precautions to Prevent Injuries** — If your dog is having trouble with balance or vision, consider gating off stairways or adding safety treads to prevent slipping. Be sure to add rubber grippers under any throw rugs to prevent falls. Cover slick surfaces with yoga mats to prevent slips, trips, or falls.
For dogs with failing vision, you'll also want to avoid rearranging furniture, which can make the space difficult for your pet to navigate, and use extra care to ensure they don't wander off when they're outside.
3. **Keep Your Pet Active** — Senior pets still need exercise. In fact, exercise requirements increase as pets age due to muscle atrophy issues. You'll need to watch for signs of pain and you may need to start slowly with a short walk, gradually increasing the distance as your pet's endurance grows.
4. **Stimulate Your Dog's Mind** — An aging dog can still learn new tricks. Go ahead and teach them to shake hands, ring a bell to go outside, or balance a cookie on their noses!
5. **See Your Veterinarian Twice a Year** — Aging dogs typically need to see their veterinarian twice a year to monitor for any changes to their health.
6. **Watch for Signs of Pain** — Arthritis and degenerative joint disease become more common with age, so watch for signs of pain such as trembling, not putting weight on a leg, crouching, changes in appetite, restlessness, or excessive panting.
7. **Get Your Dog a Comfy Spot to Sleep** — A natural soft or orthopedic dog bed is essential for any aging pet. He or she will need somewhere comfortable to rest other than on the floor, so be sure to provide a cushiony spot.
8. **Keep Your Pet at a Healthy Weight** — Obesity in pets can make getting around more difficult for your aging pet. It also places excess strain on joints and muscles, which can exacerbate injuries and pain. Losing even a small amount of weight can make a major difference in your dog's mobility, even encouraging more active play sessions and exercise.
9. **Care for Your Dog's Teeth** — Regular brushing and professional teeth cleanings can keep your dog's teeth healthy. Oral disease, left untreated, can cause or worsen systemic diseases in your pet as well as be painful.
10. **Adjust Your Dog's Diet** — Consult with your veterinarian to determine if your dog will benefit from food designed specifically for seniors.
11. **Consider Supportive Supplements** — There are a wide range of supplements that can be added to your dog's diet to help maintain healthy tendons, ligaments, joints, and cartilage as they age. Consult with your vet for guidance on which ones are most appropriate for your dog.

VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

I have been a foster for A Forever Home for almost 12 years. During these 12 years, I have fostered dozens of puppies, pregnant dogs, dogs rescued from puppy mills, and dogs rescued from hoarding situations. Each group I get teaches me more about the unfortunate situations these helpless animals find themselves in. It is rewarding to provide a safe, clean, loving environment that all animals deserve while waiting for their forever homes. People often say to me “ I don’t know how you do it”. When you volunteer for an organization that saves lives, it’s incredible the feeling you get when a family is full of excitement to bring a new family member



CASEY MCCOLLUM

home. Their smiles and love is worth every minute of hard work it takes to care for animals. The biggest honor I received for my volunteer work was in 2016 when my community nominated me and voted me the Citizen of the Year for the Braddock Road District. I was honored and speechless that my neighborhood recognized my dedication and commitment. This has led to several of my neighbors adopting from AFH and learning about our mission. That is wonderful! Volunteering has been amazing and I look forward to a life-long commitment helping every deserving dog find their forever home.

My first experience with AFH was in 2004 when our family adopted a five year old Black Lab mix named Sadie. After adopting Sadie, my children and I volunteered at some AFH adoption events. I loved handling the foster dogs, working with the other volunteers, and talking to potential adopters. My children were always excited to help manage the puppies in the puppy pens. My life changed when I volunteered for transport! I love every aspect of the transport process. I enjoy driving to the destination to meet our shelter partners,



JULIE HIEMSTRA

transferring each dog and puppy to my vehicle, and driving away listening to the dogs stirring in their crates and then finally settling down during the ride back to Chantilly. I wish I could keep every dog I transport because they are each special with unique qualities. I feel such pride and fulfillment knowing that the dogs saved through each transport will be starting a new life in their new forever homes. It is an honor to be a part of the AFH team.

AFH VISITS THE GULF COAST

Late last Summer we were contacted by a rescuer in Alabama. She told us some horror stories about some of the animal shelters in her area (Alabama and Mississippi). One shelter had capacity for 160 dogs and was housing 350 – they were keeping 3, 4, and 5 dogs per kennel in order to avoid euthanizing any. Other shelters were extremely overcrowded, had few adopters (most people in the area dump dogs at shelters rather than adopt from them), and had few resources. One shelter was reportedly euthanizing 300 dogs per week because of overcrowding.

We couldn't sit back and allow this to happen without trying to help so two of our senior volunteers made a trip to the area.

What they found was hard working dedicated staff and volunteers doing the best they could with very little help. We committed to partnering with them to bring dogs to Virginia.

In December we were able to rescue 29 dogs from the area thanks to our foster parents. They opened their hearts and homes to these poor dogs – most of whom have already been adopted!

Our plan going forward is to do more transports as often as we can and we look forward to a long relationship with our new rescue partner!

Some of the lucky dogs who made the trip north are pictured below.



SCHOONER AND SANTA

We know that Christmas has passed but we just couldn't resist sharing this picture of the very photogenic Schooner with Santa. Mary Ann Walsh, Schooner's adopter, sent us this picture.



CHICO

Amaryllis Seabrooks wrote to update us on her AFH dog Chico. She writes:

I wanted to share an adoption story. I adopted Chico through A Forever Home Rescue in 2010. He was a senior dog at the time - 8 years old! Friends questioned why I would adopt a senior dog as their life expectancy wouldn't be long. Well, Chico just celebrated his 17th birthday this month!

Ines Castro, Chico's foster mom, had him for a few months before he was placed with me in Maryland. Chico was a stray who was taken to a shelter in West Virginia.

Well we sure have come a long way - in 2013 we moved from Maryland to Manhattan and earlier this year we moved to London, England! He is doing well and loving his new life near Hyde Park and Kensington palace. A real wags to riches tale. ;)

Senior dogs rule!

HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS TO THE RESCUE!

Calley Lwin, Abi Schlechty, Natalie Bardach, and Skye Ehlert are all friends from high school. They are dog lovers and wanted to do something to help them so they arranged a bake sale to raise money! They raised an amazing \$665 to help our puppies and dogs! Thank you girls!



From left to right: Abi, Natalie, and Skye



Calley and Skye volunteering

How You Can Help A Forever Home Rescue Foundation

A Forever Home Rescue Foundation is a 501(c)(3) animal rescue organization located in Northern Virginia. Our goal is to rescue, rehabilitate, and rehome abused, abandoned, neglected, and unwanted puppies and dogs.

There are many ways that you can help a homeless puppy or dog. Please save this list and consider helping with one or more of the items on it. Please feel free to share it with interested dog lovers.

Monetary

- Donate one time or set up recurring donations at to-afh.org/JustGive. Recurring donations help us budget more efficiently and even \$10 a month makes a huge difference to a homeless, abandoned, or abused puppy or dog.
- Donate just by walking your dog – visit to-afh.org/WoofTrax to download the app.
- KARMAKARMA offers you the chance to make an impact through micro-donations. Go to www.karmakarma.com and register. Once you log in, click on Get Karmapoints to see how to get points and/or click on Make an Impact and then Animals to navigate to A Forever Home Rescue Foundation’s page to make a donation.
- Include AFH in estate planning – leave a lasting legacy. Email info@aforeverhome.org for information.
- Donate your used car. Email info@aforeverhome.org for information.

Hands-On Volunteer Help

Our greatest need is for foster homes but we also need help at adoption events (interviewers, dog handlers, etc.); with conducting home checks; or with driving transports. Please email volunteer@aforeverhome.org if you can help with any of the volunteer activities below.

- Fostering – Without fosters, the rescue ceases operation. Fostering can be long- or short-term and AFH provides all supplies and pays for all approved veterinary care. You can choose what dog(s) you want to foster too!
- Drive a dog or dogs from our rescue/shelter partners to their AFH foster parents.
- Help at adoption events - We always need dog handlers, setup and tear-down crews (to set up our table and puppy pens and pack up our supplies after the event), and interviewers (training is provided). Interviewers also conduct interviews via phone.
- Home Checkers - We need home checkers throughout Virginia, Maryland, and the District of Columbia (and sometimes beyond) to perform home checks as part of our adoption process.
- Do you have a special talent or skill? We would love to talk to you about using it to help us help homeless puppies and dogs.

Shopping

- Shop at Amazon through our website. Simply go to www.aforeverhome.org, scroll down to Ways to Support AFH (on the right), and under Shop Related Products, enter what you are shopping for in the search box and press Go. You have just generated a donation for AFH at no cost to you!
 - Once on Amazon, enter smile.amazon.com in the address bar and start shopping! If you are not already enrolled in Amazon Smile, you will be prompted to sign up.
 - Donate an item through our Amazon wish list. After following the steps above, go to to-afh.org/WishList and select and pay for any item. It will automatically be shipped to us!
- You can select AFH to be the beneficiary of a percentage of your eBay sales! Just select A Forever Home Rescue Foundation when you are creating your listing, and indicate what percentage of the sale gets donated to us.
- Shop with any of our partners:
 - Barkbox: www.BarkBox.com/AFHRBBX1
 - Jeanne Taylor Pet Portraits: to-afh.org/JTPetPics
 - Hale Pet Doors: to-afh.org/Hale
 - Bissell: to-afh.org/Bissell
- Shop through to-afh.org/GivingAssistant and donate all or part of your cash back to AFH.
- Purchase pet insurance from Toto Cares at <https://www.totopetinsurance.com/AForeverHome>
- If you or someone you know is looking to buy or sell a home, you can refer them to us by emailing Homes@aforeverhome.net. For every home referral successfully closed through this program, A Forever Home will receive a \$500.00 donation in your name.