



In this issue...

Spotlight On	p. 2
Adoption Updates	p. 2
Adoption Updates (continued)	p. 3
Phoenix Rises from the Ashes	p. 4
In Memory of Kiba	p. 5
Goodbye to Cami	p. 5
In Memory	p. 6
Volunteer Spotlight	p. 7
Saved Mississippi Dogs	p. 8

Editor: Patti Stinson
Graphic Artist: Cheryl Sims

A Forever Home Rescue Foundation
PO Box 222801
Chantilly, VA 20153
Phone: 703.961.8690
Email: info@aforeverhome.org
Facebook: www.facebook.com/afh2002
Twitter: [@aforeverhome](https://twitter.com/aforeverhome)
Instagram: [aforeverhome](https://www.instagram.com/aforeverhome)

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.

Social distancing – a foreign concept to all of us until just two months ago. Now the whole world has changed and there isn't anyone who is not affected by what is happening around us – including animal shelters and rescue groups. The pandemic has had both a positive and a negative impact on everyone.

On the negative side, many animal shelters are closed to intake. This means that they will continue to care for the animals in their facilities but will not accept any more. The sad downside of this is that many animals will be abandoned instead of being turned over to shelters. Once this crisis has passed and shelters are open for admission, there will be a huge need for rescue help. AFH will be there. On top of that, as of the writing of this newsletter, several states have banned animal transports across their borders – which means that hundreds of transports from southern states to northern states can no longer operate. You likely know that many rescue dogs come from southern states.

On the positive side, adoptions are way up – not only for AFH but for our colleagues and animal shelters as well. This is great news! Also, just like after Hurricane Katrina, interest in fostering is way up and AFH has signed up over 150 new foster parents (so far) and gets applications for more every single day. If you would like to save a life by fostering, please email info@aforeverhome.org.

We have adjusted our adoption processes to keep everyone safe while continuing to adopt out dogs. We are doing virtual home visits and adopters sign their adoption contracts and pick up their new family members one person at a time at a private home (instead of in a group at Weber's) – while honoring social distancing of course!

We are continuing to work with our rescue partner in Mississippi to save dogs who have no chance of finding homes in their area and we are still working on raising money to treat some of them for heartworm; five have been treated so far but we still need to raise \$10,000 to treat the remaining 20 dogs. If you would like to donate to help them, please visit to-afh.org/Donate or send a check to AFH, P.O. Box 22801, Chantilly, VA 20153 and mark it "Mississippi Dogs". In this newsletter we will highlight some of the 187 puppies and dogs we have rescued from Mississippi so far this year.

We care about you – you are part of the AFH family. Please stay safe until this crisis has passed and remember that we are all in it together. You can still hug your dog!

SPOTLIGHT ON HUNGARY



HUNGARY IS LOOKING FOR HIS FOREVER HOME

Male (Neutered)
Breed: Hound Mix
Age: 2 years

Hungary (we call him Gary) is a gentle soul that has shown some great personal growth over the past couple months. The kids used to call him "scaredy Gary" and we'd laugh at Gary's initial attempts to hide from us behind a thin lamp (a.k.a. Gary going into "lamp mode"). Of course, the more love we shower on him, the more he trusts us and feels safe and now runs to us instead of away. Gary did not seem to know a single word when we took him in, but now knows the basics (sit, lay down, and, most importantly, Gary). Gary could not walk on a leash without tugging away from life's sounds and performing military crawls to the nearest shelter. Now, he is SO much better and getting better every day. Gary loves to play, but is mostly a lower energy guy. He is excellent with the kids, but he truly shines when around other dogs. Other dogs seem to have a very calming effect on him and he becomes very at ease around them. We think Gary would make a great pet for a lot of families and would do especially well with a family that already has a dog.

ADOPTION UPDATES

Adopter Lynne Clegg recently contacted us with an update on Ozzie...



We adopted Ozzie from AFH back in February 2019. Our Ozzieboy (on the right) is a wonderful addition to our family. He is such a happy little dog who loves his sister Lucy (on the left). He is

also very attached to us and loves being held as much as possible. He is such a baby, which I love - and he is truly a family dog. We camp a lot and even though he still does not like riding that much, he loves it when we get to our campground site - Lucy and Ozzie are both great campers! We take Ozzie to the groomer for a bath and a haircut and he does great with our groomer. He does well with his routine visits to the vet too! My vet says that he is in great shape. Ozzie is happy and thriving wonderfully in his new forever home. I can't thank you enough for helping him find his way to us. He has made our family complete.

Adopter Shauna Hidlebaugh sent us an update on her recent adoption...

Jake (formerly Duke) joined our family in March and is having the best puppy life. He LOVES his Elwood (the Blues Brothers!) and is copying his every move, and he is and playing so gently with his much-older sister Bailey. He's picking up training quickly and loves to cuddle. Such a good boy and we all couldn't be happier!



ADOPTION UPDATES (continued)

Adopter Sally Horton emailed us about Hot Pocket/Biscotti...

Everyone has their own COVID-19 story; ours just happens to include a dog! My husband and I have been long-distance for three years and we were looking forward to his visit in March 2020. As the pandemic spread, flights were cancelled, travel banned, and we came to the realization that we weren't going to see each other as planned. I moved my students online and discouraged family from visiting, and suddenly I would be spending the next weeks, maybe months, alone... the perfect time to join AFH's foster program!

Fostering allowed me companionship and but gave us the opportunity to pick a pup together later on.... Little did we know! The first pup I fostered was lanky and timid, with scars on her ears and legs, yet she seemed to trust me completely. She paid attention on walks, treasured playtime and crate-time, and was quiet during teaching hours; I couldn't believe my luck! When video-calling my husband, he could see the bond we'd developed. I wanted so badly to adopt her, but I refrained because of our plan to adopt when we were finally together. Then one glorious day, my husband encouraged me to do it. "You're never going to find a dog quite like this one, and I can see how happy you two are together."

Hot Pocket (now Biscotti) came into my life when I needed her most, and she constantly brings me joy. I cannot wait to share her with my family, but until then, I treasure the "alone" time we have together.



The Atkins Family wrote to tell us about Luna...

After years of begging for a dog my boys convinced us that 2020 was the year. We decided to push past winter and begin our hunt in March and then COVID-19 hit. We applied to many rescues and waited patiently. We waited some more. Rescues were at a standstill, working out their new procedures for adoption events and foster meetings. We first looked at A Forever Home's website on a Sunday evening. We applied that night for four dogs and received multiple inquiries back from foster families that very night. We met our girl, Greta (now Luna), for the first time on Monday. We went back for another visit on Tuesday and signed our adoption agreement on Thursday. A Forever Home was extremely safe with every step of the process given the world's current situation.

Luna has given us such light in what surely would have been a dark time for our family. My boys, 13, 10, and 6, have barely had time to think about what they are missing because she brings them such joy



and is keeping them busy. We decided to adopt a little younger than we had originally decided because we have the time to train her and it has been a lot of fun. In one short week this girl is our forever family member and we love her to death!

*The Atkins Family,
Trish, Craig, Cole, Brooks, Drew and Luna*

IN MEMORY OF KIBA – BY HANNIE GONZALEZ



KIBA (JAN 2012 TO FEB 2020)

Before he was surrendered to AFH, Kiba had been neglected and spent most of his life in a crate. When we met him, he was scared, nervous, extremely skittish, and so fearful of being touched. Every day was a battle for him. Being free in a new, unfamiliar, large home was terrifying to him. We understood it would take him a while to trust people again.

I have an anxiety disorder, and to see a tiny little dog who was just as nervous as me was somehow comforting. We needed each other and I think he saw that as well as we became the best and closest of friends. He began to open up to my family and I by allowing cuddles and kisses, seeking attention, and showing us that he was much stronger than before by acting like a big guard dog in the house - ignoring the fact that we already had two 60 pound dogs!

Kiba's favorite pastime was to sleep on the top cushions of our couches. My mom likened him to a bird, always wanting to be perched somewhere high so he could see his grand domain. He was always SUCH a trooper; we could walk for miles and miles and he would never get tired. Kiba made everyone smile. He had such an enchanting spirit to him and boy did he love his winter car rides!

Kiba was an incredibly feisty little animal. We found it funny when he was banned from Petco because despite barely having any teeth left, he was not having it with the groomers. Kiba taught me so much about resilience and how to embrace the good moments. He keeps a piece of my heart for always.

GOODBYE TO CAMI – FROM DENISE LESNIEWSKI

Back in July of 2004, I had an unfortunate accident. This is when A Forever Home came to my rescue. To make a long story short, we adopted my little "Cami", who at 8 weeks old, looked like a little gremlin with her big ears and little face. She bonded right away with me and was my sidekick for the next 15 ½ years. She was such a good girl. For all of her 10 pound stature, she felt as though she ruled the neighborhood. She walked by my side everywhere we went. She was so well behaved.

We had an inside joke for whenever our daughters would bring a boy home for us to meet; we would say "you have to pass the "Cami test". We laughed, but we were serious. If Cami liked you, you were a keeper. Not many passed.

Cami started going blind after she was diagnosed with diabetes in June of 2019. She went downhill from there. Unfortunately, we had to put her down on January 31, 2020. We loved her so much. I miss her sleeping with us and greeting us at the front door. It is so hard to lose a loved one. Thank you AFH for

knowing that Cami was the right dog for our home. You were right!

Cami would have been 16 this May. We miss her so much. We look every day on your site for the next love of our life.

Thank you so much for everything you do.



THE PHOENIX RISES FROM THE ASHES

Her name was Phoenix and this is her story.

Back in 2014, Phoenix lived in Kentucky with an owner who neglected and mistreated her. She was chained outside as a “watch dog” but she was “too friendly” so her family started breeding her and selling her puppies to make money even though she was too old to be having puppies. When we heard about her, she was emaciated and living on a chain in a pile of garbage nursing her pups. The picture was and still is heartbreaking and haunting – and unfortunately this is reality for a lot of dogs.



AFH was contacted by one of our colleagues who wanted to help her but didn't know how to go about it. It takes a certain finesse to save dogs from owners who don't see anything wrong with how they are treating their dogs. With a little guidance from AFH, our colleague went to speak with the owners for three days in a row and eventually secured her release.

Phoenix came to AFH and was lucky enough to be adopted by Duc and Wendy Nguyen who changed her name to Coco – a new life needed a new name! Duc and Wendy have stayed in touch with AFH over the years and we recently received an update and some pictures.

Duc writes:

Thanks to AFH, Coco is today a happy and spoiled dog. She is living a life full of love and comfort. She has three beds (with a favorite blanket in each), has

learned many commands, plays with her collection of toys, and most importantly, she gets two balanced meals a day and treats. She is a wonderful and patient sister to her mini schnauzer brother, and a sweet companion to us. Coco has taught us what resilience is. She is the most loving girl and we are forever grateful to have her in our lives.

She's slowed down a lot, and sleeps most of the day, but she's still the sweetest girl. Sadly, we lost our Pepper 1.5 years ago, but Coco has been a great big sister to our new miniature schnauzer, Nacho. She's so patient with him and she still has enough energy to play with him every day. He loves to “fight” with her. We are so lucky to have Coco as part of our family. Every year I also wish Jan (the woman in Kentucky who rescued Coco) a Happy Mother's Day from Coco, because Jan calls her the mama pitbull!

Thank you for bringing Coco to us and for all you do,
Duc and Wendy Nguyen



IN MEMORY

Volunteer Allison Browning wrote to tell us about losing Timber and Pearl.

Timber the chocolate Lab was 14 years old! He was the most beautiful boy, an amazing hunting partner for seven seasons, and the best family dog. He came from a family in West Virginia with AKC papers, but the original family bit off more than they could chew. Lucky us! He passed away peacefully last June because he had developed a large tumor that was at severe risk of rupturing and bleeding internally.

Pearl, my cattle dog, was my little shadow and came to us by chance. After losing our cattle dog mix Scout, we were heartbroken. We continued fostering but expressed an interest in adopting a female cattle dog puppy. No sooner did we make that statement we were told about one who AFH wanted to rescue. We offered to foster her and the rest was history! Pearl was by my side every day for almost 14 years, through three babies and a move overseas and back. Pearl passed away last month, just seven months after her constant companion Timber.

We miss them both terribly but so it goes with pets. You know it's the deal going in that chances are you'll have to say goodbye to them. These two enriched our lives for 14 years and for that and for your role in it, I'm eternally grateful.



Some of the Dogs Saved From Mississippi in the First Three Months of 2020



VOLUNTEER SPOTLIGHT

EMILY AND KRISTIN REICH



My sister Kristin and I have been fostering for AFH for over three years. I always say I consider myself lucky to have stumbled upon one of AFH's adoption events when we made a routine trip to Petco in 2016. Upon arrival, we saw all these beautiful dogs walking around everywhere and asked a volunteer what sort of event was going on. Once we found out that AFH was saving dogs from rural shelters and an uncertain fate, we immediately wanted to start fostering. I got approved to foster, and the very first email I received was about saving a litter of seven five-week old puppies (aptly named "The Magnificent Seven"). I jumped at the opportunity and a week later Kristin and I picked up the puppies from the transport van.



We were busy, outnumbered, and a bit overwhelmed, but our hearts were full. We fell in love with the whole adoption process. Meeting

the families, adopting the puppies out, and seeing their joy fulfilled us immensely. As many other long-time fosters might admit, fostering becomes addicting. We love seeing the puppies transform while in our care. Between Kristin and I, we have fostered more than 60 dogs.



We admire the fact that AFH doesn't discriminate when saving dogs - old, young, disabled, and everything in between. For example, Kristin fostered a 10 year old hound and I fostered

a rambunctious Husky born with a fatal heart condition. Many rescues would overlook these dogs but AFH found them loving homes. Over the years we have fostered for AFH both of us have "foster failed" (adopted one of foster puppies), but that did not deter us from taking in new dogs when we can! Each foster pup has made us fall in love with rescuing more and more. While saying goodbye to the dogs is never easy, we feel comforted by the fact that they are going to amazing homes. Kristin and I bond over our love of rescuing dogs and hope to stay involved with AFH as long as they will let us!



Some of the Dogs Saved From Mississippi in the First Three Months of 2020

