

FOREVER *tails*

MAY 2022

www.aforeverhome.org

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AFH will soon be on the road again (*cue Willie Nelson!*) We are so excited to be able to purchase our first new transport van in 14 years!

After doing our research, we selected a Mercedes Sprinter van. Mercedes is a quality brand that will provide many years of safe, comfortable transportation for both our precious cargo and our volunteer drivers.

Thanks to your generosity, we raised **\$50,000** toward the purchase of this van. The total cost will land somewhere around \$80,000. We are still accepting donations to help

with the cost, so if you would like to help us, please visit: <https://to-afh.org/Donate> to donate online or mail a check (*note that it is for a new van*) to **AFH, PO Box 222801, Chantilly, VA 20153**.

Due to supply chain issues (which unfortunately are a reality right now), we won't actually be able to take possession of our van for approximately six months, but we are looking forward to delivery day! •



AFH ADOPTION EVENTS!

AFH is now doing in-person adoption events again!
Go to www.aforeverhome.org for the schedule.

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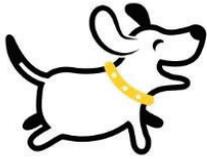
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Looking to **ADOPT?**

Are you looking for a new furry family member? 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 to see our available pets.



Playful Pack

DOG DAYCARE & BOARDING

*AFH is happy to announce a new partnership with **Playful Pack**! They approached us with an offer to foster some of our adoptable dogs at three of their locations—Alexandria, McLean, and Annapolis—and of course we jumped at the chance!*

We look forward to a long and successful partnership.

Please visit them at <https://playfulpack.com>

PLAYFUL PACK is a growing dog daycare and boarding company based in McLean, Virginia. In business since 2016, **Playful Pack** currently has stores in Alexandria, McLean, and Fairfax Station, Virginia as well as Annapolis, Maryland.

Being in the dog business is amazing. We say that we try to always be the best place for dogs to stay and play. We work hard to ensure that our clients' dogs come running back into the door at **Playful Pack** every single day! We do our best to make sure that all of the dogs who enter our facility stay happy and healthy throughout their stay, and we hire and train only people who want dogs to have the best lives possible.

As we grow our company, it's important to us that we do what we can to give back along the way. We're a small business, so we don't think we can change the world overnight, but we want to help when we can. To do so, we've partnered

with amazing rescue groups like **A Forever Home**. Rescues are always full so we help by fostering their dogs solely at our cost and we become a place for their dogs to stay and play. It is also great for these rescue dogs to have a chance to socialize with other dogs. This has given us the amazing opportunity to welcome these dogs into our facilities and help take a little bit of the burden off of **AFH**.

In the future, we'll continue to open more **Playful Pack** locations. This year we are hoping to open more stores in Arlington, Leesburg, Centerville, and Rockville to name a few. As we grow the company, it's important that we grow the work we are doing with rescues so we can continue to help. Thanks to all of the amazing rescues that work with us, and an extra thanks to all of the incredible families that adopt these dogs.

Playful Pack wouldn't be the same without you! ●

BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION BENEFITS AFH

Balaji and Harini Sugantharaman are members of the **AFH** family. They have both adopted from **AFH** (Jake) and fostered dogs for us. As part of a family birthday celebration, they encouraged friends to donate to **AFH** instead of bringing gifts and they raised **\$300** to help our puppies and dogs!

Thanks Balaji, Harini, and Jake!





TREVOR DOES IT AGAIN!

*If you've been reading our newsletter, you may know about Trevor, an **AFH** adoptee. Trevor was adopted by Diana Hong in 2014. Fast forward eight years and Trevor has won numerous titles. Diana has kept us updated over the years and recently wrote to tell us about Trevor's latest accomplishment.*

"Trevor earned a 2021 national ranking in obedience competition in the Companion Dog Sports Program (CDSP). He is ranked #12 in Open A class in the country! He is nearing 8 years of age and with patience and consistency early in his life, has overcome his reactivity and anxiety to become a wonderful dog and my best friend. He has gone farther than anyone could have dreamt, and we are so proud of him." •



AFH ADOPTTEES CORNER

Brittany Pritt wrote to tell us that Miss Thomas, now **DOLLY**, settled right in to her new forever home— "She is adjusting well and did great her first night in her furever home!! We love her!" •



Michelle Howard adopted **MOLLY** (previously Hope) in 2010 during a big snow storm—"Molly has been such a big part of our family as the military moved us from state to state before settling in the finger lakes region of New York. She is a senior now but still looks and acts like a puppy most of the time. She is loved by everyone who meets her and loves everyone she meets." •

Volunteer SPOTLIGHT

KAREN KENNEDY

My name is Karen Kennedy and I live in Bristow, VA. After adopting my Beagle Jessie from **AFH** in 2005, I was so impressed with the rescue that I signed up to foster. My two children (Matthew, 19 and Emily, 13) and I fostered many pups over the years and enjoyed watching the excited smiles of new adopters. We happily foster-failed in 2016 with our second AFH pup, Leia. I have really enjoyed learning about how **AFH** works and I've gained unending respect for the challenges and complexities of rescue. Over time, I added local home visits to my volunteering repertoire and found I really enjoyed engaging with new dog owners. Home visits are vital to the adoption process, ensuring that adoptive homes are compliant and safe, helping prepare adopters for all the aspects of dog ownership, and making sure all their questions are answered.



The pandemic pushed us virtual, which enabled me to meet so many people from all across the area through Zoom! During a time of such uncertainty, these home visits provided a source of connection with others. After a large influx of volunteers, the rescue asked if I would assist and help train new home visit volunteers and I happily accepted. I'm excited to meet more new volunteers and help them learn the ropes. I am so proud to volunteer for the absolute best rescue in Northern Virginia! ●



MARY SOUSA MONIE

We adopted our dog Bandit from **AFH** five years ago and were so impressed by the organization that I was driven to help. I began doing in home visits shortly after that and have been helping out ever since. We then adopted another dog, Sadie, almost two years ago after she was returned to **AFH** at about four months of age. Having dogs in my life is a great joy and I love helping others find their new forever friends. Working with **AFH** affords me the opportunity to do that. ●

You can donate to AFH at no cost to you!

Shop at Amazon through our website. Simply go to www.aforeverhome.org, scroll down to "Go to Amazon Smile" and click the link. You have just generated a donation for **AFH** at no cost to you!

If you are not already signed up for Smile, you can do it then!

IN MEMORY

MAGGIE MOO *from Hillary Marshall*

I was the lucky one to adopt “Sassy Britches” from your organization 11 years ago. I changed her name to Maggie Moo (see the resemblance in the photo) but always thought her original name captured her personality. To the people who were lucky enough to call her a buddy she was the sweetest dog who had a whole body tail wag that could practically knock you over. Some dogs have a smile and hers was one of the biggest. It would always brighten the day. She just wanted to be around us—whether it was a long hike or lazy afternoon. She will be missed terribly. Thanks to **AFH** for bringing Maggie Moo into my life. ●



HUDSON *from Andrew Bartlett*

Hudson left us on 2/3/22 at 15 years old. He was a lovely soul who we considered our first child and he will always be in our hearts.

We adopted Hudson in February 2007. He quickly adapted to his new home. Even when we accidentally left the door open after leaving the house, Hudson knew it was his job to wait patiently for our return—even if that meant waiting in the middle of the driveway for a few hours. Who’s a good boy??

Hudson took on the role of protector of two human siblings. He liked his food and water bowls to be full at all times and if a bowl was empty, he would paw at it to let you know to fill it so that he could sniff it and walk away. He learned to ring a bell to go outside, he loved to play fetch, and he adored running in the snow. ●

OLIVE HAILEY *from Susan Howard*

In March 2007 we adopted Olive Hailey. The tiny dog with oversized ears grew up to be a Pembroke Cardigan Corgi! Olive, incredibly smart, was often described by others as a “person, not a dog!” She loved to run and she would hide her treats to savor them at a later time. She trained in her younger years to run Agility; she was also trained in Good Citizenship with AKC. Her favorite game was hide-and-go-seek with her toys.

Olive loved hiking and her favorite activity was swimming. She listened patiently to children reading. She traveled many places to share love with relatives with disabilities and health issues. She will always be loved by myself and her family. Olive passed at 14-1/2 years old. I thank **AFH** for saving her and allowing me to have her in my life. Olive will forever be in my heart. ●



MAEKO *from Margo Guillory*

We adopted Maeko from **AFH** in 2014. He was shy at first; he didn’t wag his tail and he would walk as if trying to hide. He came to us with a soft stuffed toy so one day I tried throwing the toy to see if he would get it. He suddenly jumped up, ran to get it, tossed it in the air, whirled around, ran back to his bed, and gave a happy bark! He finally started to wag his tail as he walked.

Maeko grew more social and loved to be pampered. He remained independent but became a “lap-pooch.” In March 2022, he became very sick and he left us age 16. Our family was blessed by his presence and saw him as a gift from God to be enjoyed. We are thankful that we were able to have this sweet pup as part of our family. ●

THE BURKE TEAM

From left to right - Alex, Kathy, Patti, Maribel

Some of our wonderful volunteers have taken the initiative to create foster teams. A foster team is composed of 3-6 people who all pitch in to care for a litter of puppies. One foster might not have physical space for a litter of puppies but another foster does. One foster may have space but not enough time to care for them. Some volunteers may have limited time available—which prevents them from fostering—but they have enough time to assist with a litter in someone else's home.

Finally, some volunteers may have an allergic family member at home so they can't bring in dogs, but they want to help. Having the puppies at someone else's house allows them to get their puppy fix!

Foster teams save lives and allow volunteers who otherwise wouldn't be able to help to do so! The Burke Team is one of these teams. It is comprised of Patti Burke, Kathy Schrader, Maribel Taylor Mattox, and Alex Alahmed. As this newsletter is being written, these ladies are caring for 14 puppies!



You could say that the Burke Team formed by serendipity or perhaps a perfect storm, depending on how you look at it.

It all began when a plea went out for foster families willing to foster large litters of puppies. We were all long-time volunteers who happened to live on the same small court and very much wanted to help, but individually, we were unable to do so.

Maribel Taylor-Mattox, a founding member of the rescue, had the misfortune of being married to a man who is highly allergic to dogs. Even attempts to foster hypoallergenic dogs resulted in asthma, so fostering was out of the question for her.

Kathy Schrader had worn many hats within the rescue, including running the information table at events and performing adoption interviews and home visits. She even fostered a number of dogs but had to limit it to small and hypoallergenic dogs due to her own allergies. Although she very much wanted to continue to foster, the chances of fostering appropriate dogs came along rarely.

Patti and Patrick Burke had been very involved with the rescue, doing home visits and helping at events. They also had fostered many litters over the years, both big and small. Sadly, they had to take a break when Patti had to care for her ailing mother. Recently, things changed and it seemed they would be able to help out again when Patrick's health began to suffer. It seemed that their fostering would have to take yet another hiatus.

Then someone got a wonderful idea! Although we can't remember exactly how the idea came about, a plan soon developed. Patti would foster the pups in her basement, Maribel would help before and after work with the pups, and Kathy would be roped into mid-day clean up as she worked from home and was able to pop over during her lunch time. Of course Kathy agreed and The Burke Team was formed.

Our first project was a litter of seven chocolate lab pups, the Edinburg 7. Who could resist? Things were running smoothly after just a few days and then "somebody" (it was Patti!) offered to "maybe" foster a litter of 14 pups who were in desperate need of rescue. Of course the "maybe" became reality just two weeks after the arrival of the Edinburg pups.

Shortly after the 14 arrived, baths were desperately needed and were the first thing on our agenda. A minor panic set in as the battle of the puppy baths made us realize that we might have over estimated how prepared we really were! We really needed to add a fourth daily visit to take care of the puppies and just in the nick of time, in stepped Alex Alahmed, another neighbor, and now The Burke Team was complete! •





LOOKING FOR MY FOREVER HOME



HARRY

Age: 14 years | Breed: Beagle | Gender: Male (Neutered)

Harry is a sweet, quiet, gentle soul who was a stray in Maryland. His owner came to pick him up and decided to abandon him there instead of taking him home. He got him originally at two years of age. Harry is a very laid back boy. He has lived with children of various ages and did very well with them. He also visited regularly with other dogs and was always nice and well behaved, but he has no history with cats. Harry is such a good boy. He knows "sit" and "stay". He would love a home where he can enjoy his senior years. •

If you would like to join the AFH team as a foster parent, please email volunteer@foreverhome.org



GIRL SCOUTS TO THE RESCUE!

We are Paige and Virginia Rowland and currently live in northern Virginia. We are a part of girl scout troop 4520 and are currently working on our silver award. For this award, we made blankets for animal rescues. In 2018 we adopted our dog Bennett (formerly Darcie's Pancake) from **AFH** and he is the best dog ever. We now want to give back by donating these blankets. •



Top / from left to right: Virginia, Paige, and AFH Treasurer Maribel

Bottom / Bennett



Me and Biscotti
on our first day
of rehearsals

PLAY ON DOGS

It's March 2020. The theatre world goes dark. Productions are cut short, and those that persevere have dwindling audiences for every performance. Theatre-makers must make the difficult decision to shut down amidst the unknown threat of coronavirus. At the time, I was understudying a touring production. We were given one day's notice that contracts would be dismantled. Suddenly, I was without a theatre job. In this time of uncertainty, I realized I would need a companion throughout the weeks (possibly months or years) of quarantine ahead, so I reached out to **AFH** about fostering dogs.

The day after I got approved, Patti sent an email with two sister dogs—Hot Pocket and Brownie. It was my chance to make a difference! I put my name in for Hot Pocket—my very first foster AND my proud foster fail.

Throughout quarantine, I was able to foster more pups. Some were extremely fearful at first, but all warmed up to me and Hot Pocket (now Biscotti) in no time. I am so grateful to these pups and to the families that ended up adopting them. They all hold a special place in my heart, and I'm lucky that the families have kept in touch.

Now that theatres are opening back up, I'm returning to my previous lifestyle. I am over-the-moon for my next role back on stage—Annabel Glick in *Lucky Stiff*. Funnily enough, Annabel works for her local dog rescue and is extremely passionate about dogs and doggie fundraising! She goes on a hilarious pursuit throughout the musical, all the while advocating for the pups. The show plays at Nextstop Theatre in Herndon from May 19-June 12. I would love to see my **AFH** family there! I couldn't have imagined where fostering would take me, but I am ecstatic with how this biscotti (see what I did there) crumbled!! ●

<https://www.nextstoptheatre.org/lucky-stiff>

YOU CAN HELP US WITH VET BILLS AND WIN UP TO \$20,000!!

AFH is happy to announce our first 50/50 raffle and YOU can win up to \$20,000 while helping us to save lives! As you may know, **AFH** has saved many thousands of abused, neglected, abandoned, and unwanted puppies and dogs over our 20 years of operation. As you also know, vet care is expensive, and prices continue to rise.

Not only will proceeds from this raffle help us to continue to provide quality vet care for the animals in our care, but it will give us a little cushion to cover extraordinary medical costs such as surgeries, heartworm treatments, and emergency medical situations.

Tickets are \$20 each and ticket sales will be limited to only 2,000 tickets! These odds are much better than playing the lottery!

The winner will be drawn on the 4th of July to celebrate America and hopefully YOUR win!

Note: *this is an online event. You do not need to be present to win.*

Due to the potential value of the cash prize, we are asking you to provide more contact information than we typically do for our raffles. ●

Get your tickets at <https://www.aforeverhome.org/event/50-50-affle/> and be sure to read the Terms and Conditions for more information