

Forever Tails



Finding Forever Homes
For Dogs In Need

February 2016

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Adoption Information

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.

Please see our website for our adoption schedule.

Contact Information

Phone	703.961.8690
Fax	866.863.6890
Address	P.O. Box 222801 Chantilly, VA 20153
Email	info@aforeverhome.org
Website	www.aforeverhome.org
Facebook	www.facebook.com/afh2002
Twitter	@aforeverhome twitter.com/aforeverhome

As this newsletter is being written, it's 18 degrees outside. The temperature has dipped into single digits at night and the forecast is calling for snow – the first real snow of the season.

Most people are thinking about stocking up on food and supplies in case they are snowed in; others are worried about their car batteries dying; some are concerned about the additional heating costs they may incur in order to stay warm; and others are concerned about power outages.

We at AFH are thinking about the dogs who are living outside – some tied to trees, some with substandard shelter, and some with no shelter at all. Some belong to uncaring owners and some are staying with rescuers and shelters that have few resources. It's hard to believe but there are rescue groups and shelters out there that don't have foster homes or a building in which to keep their dogs warm. The dogs live outside in pens with whatever shelter is available. Shelter can be anything from a tarp over their pen to a doghouse. The people caring for them are dedicated and hardworking. They are doing the best they can but they usually work alone or in small groups, rarely have any money, and have few outlets to move dogs to. Basically the dogs are being kept alive and are being fed – that's it.

That's where we come in.

We are lucky enough to have a strong support base and an amazing team of volunteers, including our wonderful, dedicated, hardworking foster homes. At any given time we have 90-125 dogs in our rescue. This is quite an accomplishment but we know that we can do more.

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Ginger

is searching for
her forever home

Read about her on Page 2

In Search of My Forever Home: Ginger

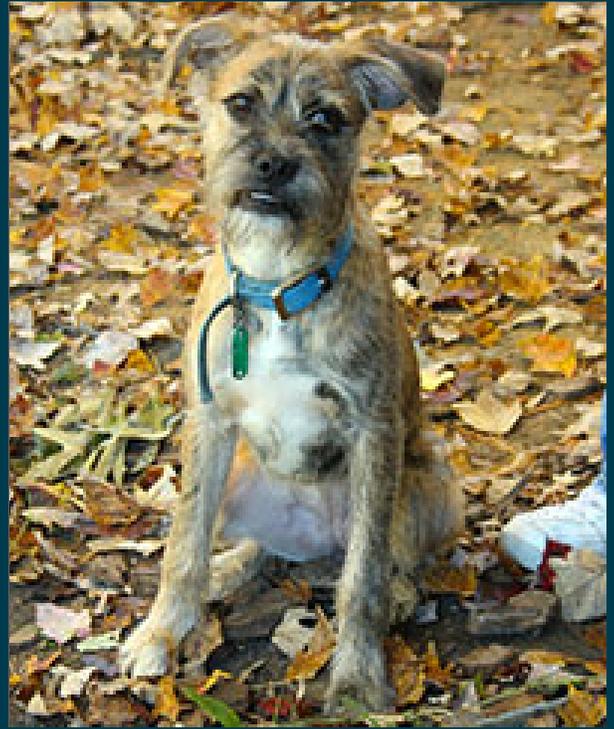
Female (Spayed)

Breed: Terrier Mix

Age: 8 months

Ginger is probably the cutest terrier mix you have ever seen. She has a classic terrier face, VERY long legs, and beautiful brindle coloring. She is currently working on her leash and crate manners, as well as housebreaking and basic commands. Unfortunately, it appears that her original owners did very little with her, so she has a bit of catching up to do. Fortunately, she is an EXTREMELY smart girl, and is progressing quickly through basic skills.

Ginger is being fostered by a professional trainer who has taught her the skills she needs to know to be a well-behaved dog. She is ready to be adopted by anyone who is willing to provide structure and consistency. She is a gorgeous, smart girl who is without a doubt worth the effort!



...continued from Page 1

Chances are that your dog(s) is next to you while you are reading this newsletter. He or she might even be laying on the floor with their head on your feet or snoring on your couch or your bed. You can't even imagine your dog being outside in the frigid cold, but there are thousands of them who are, and they need our help.

Please consider fostering a dog in need. Fostering does not have to be a long-term commitment. We sometimes have a need for temporary fosters for anywhere from a few days to a week or so. On the other end of the spectrum are those volunteers who foster pregnant dogs (a 3-4 month commitment), and those who foster dogs who might take a little extra time to find homes (special needs or senior dogs). Most of our foster dogs spend just a few short weeks in their foster homes before going to forever homes.

Typical foster arrangements require a commitment of a week or two up to a couple of months. Litters of puppies are adopted quickly; fosters sometimes get an entire litter adopted within a week or two, although they can't go home until they are at least eight weeks old. Adult dogs average a few weeks before finding their forever homes. Whatever your availability, we can find a foster dog for you. We take into consideration your working hours, the activity level of your household, and the personalities of any dogs in your home.

The bottom line is that fostering saves lives and we can save even more with your help. Right now we are concentrating on saving dogs from the cold; in the summer months our attention turns to those living outdoors in the scorching heat. AFH covers all required veterinary expenses (thanks to your donations) and supplies, food, leashes, and collars.

If you would like to save a dog (or puppies) from a bad situation, please email info@aforeverhome.org. You will experience the satisfaction of directly saving a life!

How YOU Can Help...

There are many ways that you can help a dog in need. We hope you will 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.

Become a foster parent for a dog in need by emailing info@aforeverhome.org

Learn how to conduct adoption interviews or homechecks

Shop at Amazon.com. Go to www.aforeverhome.org. Scroll down to the Amazon box, type what you are looking for into the search box (below the word Keywords), then hit Go. That's it! You have now earned a donation for us simply because we are an Amazon affiliate and you searched from our web page!

Log in to Amazon Smile. After you have accessed Amazon in the step above (Shop at Amazon.com), go to the navigation bar at the top of the page, delete the text that is there, and type in smile.amazon.com. If you have already signed up for Amazon Smile, just shop and we get a second donation! If you are not already enrolled in Amazon Smile, you can sign up! It's that easy!

Purchase an item from our Amazon Wish List and have it sent directly to us. Once you are logged in to Amazon.com (using the steps above), roll your mouse over Your Lists and then scroll down and click on Find a List or Registry. Type A Forever Home Rescue Foundation in the search box and click Search. You can then select your purchases, pay for them, and they will be sent directly to us!

Sign up to shop through Giving Assistant at <http://to-afh.org/GivingAssistant>

Sign up for Wooftrax and make money for AFH every time you walk your dog! Visit <http://to-afh.org/WoofTrax> to sign up. Everyone walks their dog, so downloading this app is an easy way to raise money for dogs waiting for forever homes. Are you a dog walker or do you know one? This app is perfect for you!

Sign up for Barkbox at <http://to-afh.org/BarkBox>

Donate directly through Igive.com at <http://to-afh.org/iGive>. Can you help us with a recurring donation? Even \$10 per month (less than the cost of two cups of that fancy coffee) can make a huge difference to a dog waiting for a forever home.

Purchase Bravelets at <http://to-afh.org/bravelets>

Use Goodsearch to search the Internet. Just bookmark <http://to-afh.org/search>, create a free account, and we get a donation every time you search.

Shop at Popnod by visiting <http://to-afh.org/popnod>

Shop at Chewy.com by visiting <http://to-afh.org/Chewy>. AFH gets a \$20 donation for your first purchase!

Ebay. 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.

Pet Portraits. Long time supporter Jeanne Taylor donates a portion of every portrait she does to AFH. Visit <http://to-afh.org/JTPetPics> to see her work.

Purchase a Hale pet door at <http://to-afh.org/Hale>

Purchase a Bissell product at <http://to-afh.org/Bissell>

Help at adoption events. We always need handlers (to hold dogs), set up 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). Email info@aforeverhome.org for more details.

Home Checkers. We need home checkers in all areas (from Baltimore to Richmond, and from Annapolis to Front Royal) to perform home checks as part of our adoption process. Home checks allow potential adopters to ask questions in a relaxed setting, and allows us to point out any potential issues (such as poisonous plants, fences that are not secure, etc.). Training is provided and you can learn more by emailing info@aforeverhome.org

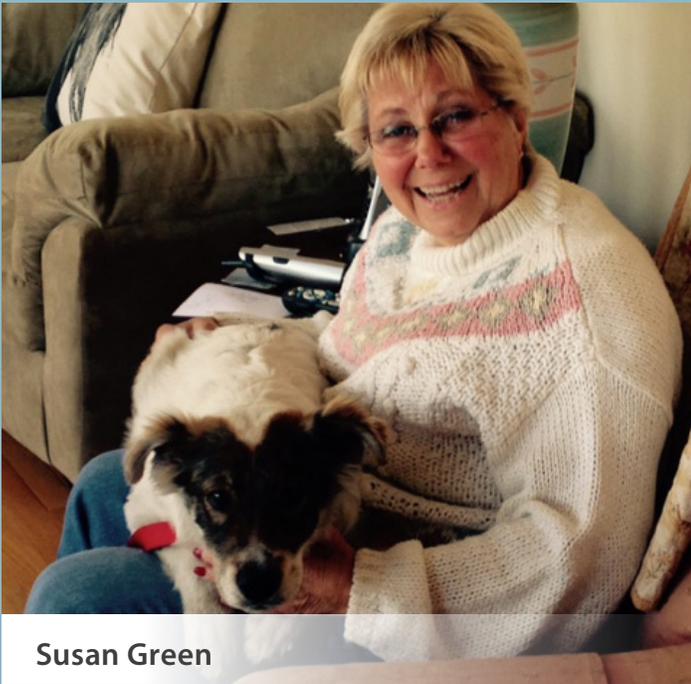
Donate your car. Email info@aforeverhome.org for more information.

Estate Planning. Leave a lasting legacy. Email info@aforeverhome.org

Not ready to commit yet? How about signing up for our volunteer list? You will get emails asking for help with everything from driving a transport to helping at an event to fostering. Email info@aforeverhome.org to sign up!



Volunteer SPOTLIGHT



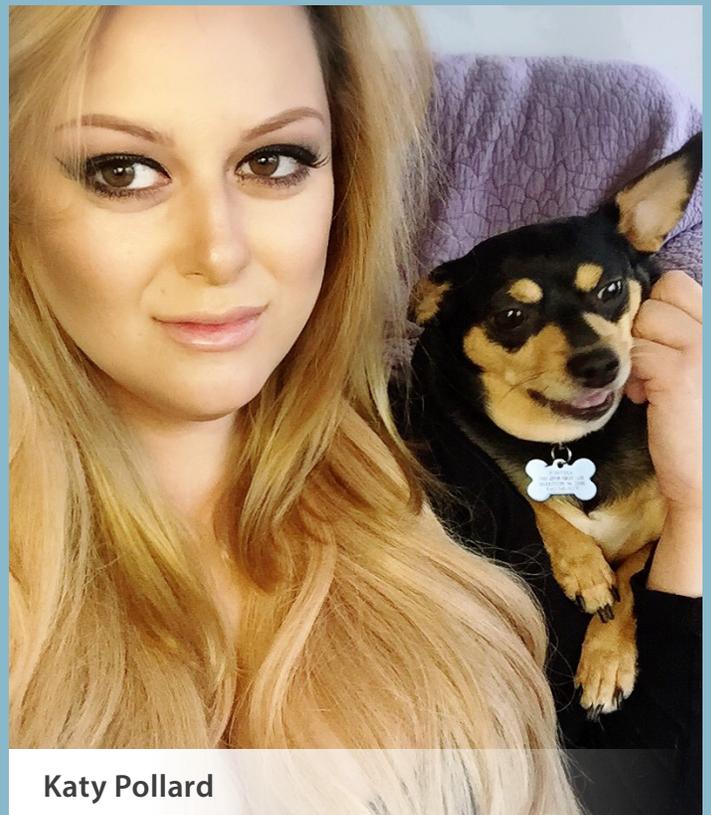
Susan Green

A labor of love - and because the need is so great. That's how I answer people who ask why I add more hours a day to my full schedule by volunteering for A Forever Home - and because I meet people who want to adopt rescued puppies and dogs and they're the nicest people in the world! A few years ago I lost my last personal dog, a Doberman who was over 15 years old at the time. I missed my best friend and of course I thought he was absolutely the best, smartest, most beautiful dog in the world and could never be replaced. I went dog-less for a year, but as time passed I missed the joy of canine companionship and so an AFH volunteer friend suggested I try fostering. My first fostering experience was a litter of nine Labs. Boy, was I busy and I cried when every one of those babies went to their new homes! That made me think I wasn't really cut out to be a puppy foster! Lots of people wonder how I can bear to give them up, but it soon became apparent that for every litter of puppies I fostered who all found their forever homes, I could help save yet another litter of unwanted babies whose lives

might be cut short. And really, is there anything better than winning over the trust of an abused dog or cuddling a furry little baby who snuggles into your neck, licks your nose, and then goes to sleep in your arms? It doesn't get much better than that! Susan is pictured with Ranger, her 232nd foster dog!

I start every morning off right, with a trip to Starbucks. The staff there don't know me by name, but they know my dogs' names. I always have at least two or three tail wagging passengers in tow, including AFH foster dogs. The baristas are always so excited to hear who is new, and their story. It's so very important to foster animals. Not only are you saving a life, but you are opening up a spot in a shelter as well. I can't imagine my home without my dogs, it just wouldn't be a home in my mind.

It can be challenging at times, but it is so rewarding to see your foster dog go to a great home and start a new, wonderful life. As soon as one goes to their forever home, I'm always anxious to help another. I encourage everyone to at least try fostering once. Dogs are very therapeutic and bring many people so much joy. AFH has so many ways you can help, even if you are not able to foster. You can start off by just offering your time. I have met such amazing fellow animal lovers that have turned into friends. In 2015, I had 18 foster dogs! Thank you to A Forever Home Rescue for all my positive experiences, and I hope to have so many more in 2016!



Katy Pollard



Dear Dr. Pawsington,
I have a healthy five year old pup that sees the vet once a year for a head to tail check up. What are some things I can do in between his wellness visits to keep tabs on his health at home?

Sincerely,
Curious in Culpeper

Dear Curious,

Besides feeding him high quality food and making sure he gets plenty of exercise and love, there are a whole bunch of things you can do at home to help maintain his health. Performing your own regular pet check ups can help you know what is normal for your dog so you can recognize when something seems "off".

Dr. Becker, a well known veterinarian, gives the following guidelines for a monthly at home pet exam:

- First check the nose for debris and take note of whether it is wet or dry. Your pet's nose will not always be wet;

Dr. Elwood Pawsington

it will typically vary from moist to dry throughout the day, depending on your pet's body temperature, activity level, and hydration.

- Take a look to see whether there is abnormal eye discharge. Again, you will likely know what is normal for your pet. For instance if your cat or dog never gets eye discharge and suddenly has it, it's a sign that there could be a problem.

- Check whether your pet's pupils are symmetrical and look at the whites of their eyes. Red sclera (the part of the eye that is normally white) could mean inflammation of the eyes.

- If your pet is not accustomed to having its mouth examined, slowly acclimate your pet to facial massages so that you can eventually check their mouth, gums, and teeth. When you can, check inside their mouth for lesions, swelling, and bad breath. Their gums should be pink, their teeth free of tartar and plaque, their tongue clear, and the roof of their mouth clean and free from debris.

- Check the jaw line to see if it feels normal. Check the ears for debris, odor, and cleanliness. Brush back the hair and look at the skin and coat. Check for excessive flakiness, lumps, and bumps on the sides of the spinal cord, and evaluate muscle tone and weight

- Look at their claws and the pads of their feet. There should be no debris between their toes. Check for heat and swelling over your pet's body, and test

the range of motion of the joints; do the joints move freely, without resistance or difficulty?

- Gently palpate their belly to look for lumps and notice if your pet seems to experience discomfort. This is a good time to also gently check both mammary chains (do this for male dogs too). Even if you don't know the names of all the parts you are touching, if you examine your pet regularly you will begin to know what is normal for your companion. When there are changes you will notice them quickly because you are familiar with the terrain of his or her body. Also examine your pet's bottom for cleanliness.

If you notice anything unusual for your pet while performing your check up, make a note of it and give it a few days and check again. If it persists, or you have concerns, don't hesitate to make an appointment to get it checked out by the vet. No one knows your pup better than you – and he sure will appreciate the extra care at home!



Pay tribute to a lost pet at our memorial page

<http://to-afh.org/InMemory>

Petco Holiday Wishes Story

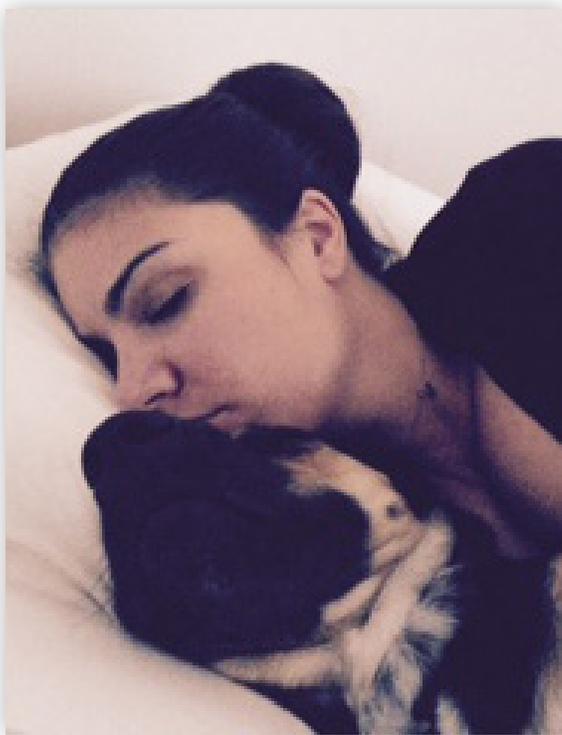
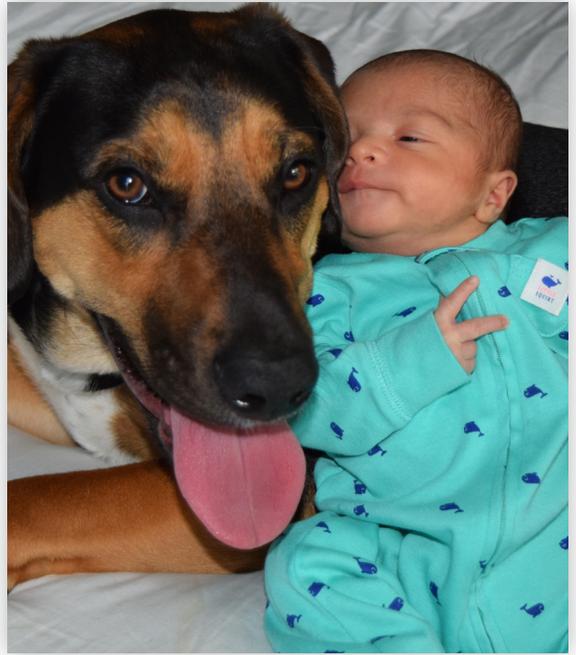
As you all know, we asked you to submit stories about your AFH dogs to Petco late last year in response to a grant notice we received. Our thanks go out to everyone who submitted a story on our behalf. Not only did we receive a number of wonderful stories, but one of them won us a \$5,000 grant. Kelly Davis submitted the winning story and we are publishing it below. Thanks for the wonderful story Kelly!

I thought that adopting Teddy would save his life. Little did we know, he would save mine.

Our adoption story is pretty straightforward. My husband did not want to adopt a dog before we had kids, but I convinced him to go to Petco in Chantilly one Sunday just to look. We saw Teddy with his two brothers and his sister and I picked him up. He licked my face and that was it. One week, an extensive application process, and a home inspection later, Teddy came home with us.

One week after our adoption day, I started feeling strange. I took a pregnancy test and BOOM, our lives changed again. We went to the doctor and confirmed that I was, indeed, pregnant with our first human child.

For the next few weeks, Teddy would never let me out of his sight and slept on my feet all night long. Fast forward four weeks and we were at the doctor for our 12-week visit. The doctor puts the doplar on my tummy. She was having trouble finding the heartbeat, so she brought us into the sonogram room. They realized that our little peanut did not have a heartbeat. Our baby had passed away at 9 weeks and 3 days, just 3 days after we had heard his heartbeat for the very first time.



We came home from the doctor's office and I collapsed on the ground, sobbing inconsolably. Teddy was right there licking my face and snuggling me. My husband picked me up and put me in bed. I did not get up for two straight weeks. It was like Teddy knew I needed him because he stayed with me the ENTIRE time. He slept with his head on my tummy and would not take it off, no matter what. Every time my husband tried to take him outside for a walk or to relieve himself, he would pull my husband back inside and run back to me.

This may not seem amazing, but what you have to understand is that Teddy is a ball of energy. He gets a run and two long walks every day, and that is barely enough to keep him contained. One time, he ran laps around our friend's house for SIX hours, and I am not exaggerating. He would take breaks to get water and to catch his breath, but for the most part, he was running.

The fact that Teddy stayed with me for two weeks straight is nothing short of amazing.

We eventually found the courage to try to get pregnant again. On April 11, 2015, we welcomed our second son Jackson to the world, and Teddy is an amazing big brother.

Teddy truly saved my life. If he was not with me, I really don't know if I would have made it. Having him there, lying on my stomach, was his way of letting me know everything was going to be all right.

Our fifth annual Casino Night and Silent auction will be held on Saturday, May 21, 2016. Once again it will be held at the Piedmont Club in Haymarket, VA.

If you have attended any of our casino night fundraisers in the past, you know how much fun they are. There are casino games, slot machines, a silent auction, raffles, good food, and drinks. It's a time to socialize with friends while raising money for *Imagine* – which will be our own forever home. *Imagine* will initially provide office and storage space, an adoption center, and a kennel. These features will enable us to host our own adoption events, and to generate revenue that will not only reduce our reliance on donations, but also enable us to enhance our service delivery capabilities.

As we get closer to the date, we will send out an email with information on how to purchase tickets, and the event will be widely advertised via our website and social media.

An important part of having a successful event is to collect silent auction items. In the past we have had everything from pet products to airline tickets to electronics to personal services. The planning has already begun for this event and we hope you can help us make it a huge success.

Do you know a celebrity who might donate an autographed item or be willing to have lunch with an auction winner?

Do you own, manage, or work at a business that might donate an item or service? Do you have a relationship with a company or individual who might have a service or item to donate? We are particularly interested in travel items/packages (such as airline tickets, cruises, hotel stays); electronics (think gaming systems, TVs, iPads, Apple watches); fine jewelry; pet items; cooking lessons; and experiences (hot air balloon rides, flying lessons). If you have an item or service to donate, please email info@aforeverhome.org.

Finally, we are once again soliciting sponsors to help cover the cost of this event. We have been very lucky in past years to have generous sponsors supporting our work. If you would like to consider a monetary donation to help us cover the costs of this event, please email us at info@aforeverhome.org. Sponsors receive a variety of benefits based on their level of support, and some sponsorships come with free tickets to the event! It's a great way to get your name in front of thousands of animal lovers.



Dancing for the Dogs!

Thank you to Javier Buentello from Fred Astaire Dance Studios in Fairfax Virginia for sending AFH a check for \$2,700! Javier, an AFH adopter, hosted DC's Dancing Stars Gala and AFH was the recipient of money raised that night. We are extremely grateful to Javier for his dedication to animals. The picture includes some AFH pups!





P.O. Box 222801 | Chantilly, VA 20153

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If you know anyone who would like to receive our newsletter, please ask them to email info@foreverhome.org



Editor: Patti Stinson
Designer: Cheryl Sims
Elwood's Assistant: Tanya Rapp

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